



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

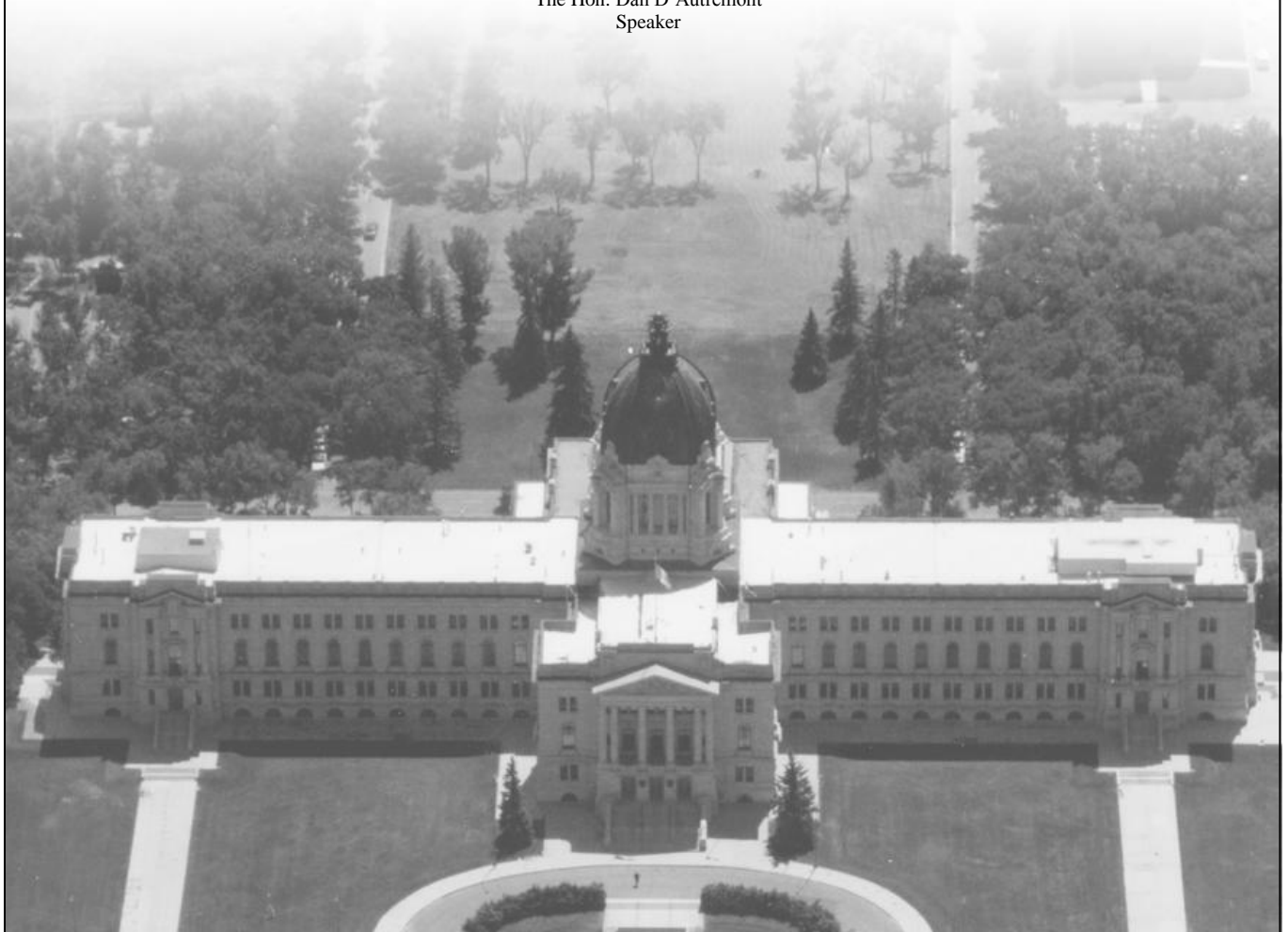
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Dan D'Autremont  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Dan D’Autremont  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — John Nilson

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Broten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Cox, Herb	SP	The Battlefords
D’Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Hon. Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Hon. Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu’Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Tochor, Corey	SP	Saskatoon Eastview
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Hon. Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Hon. Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you to my colleagues. As we get going this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend a special welcome to a number of individuals who have come to join us here in the Assembly. I won't go through every name, but I recognize a number of New Democrats in the crowd who were some of many present at the convention on the weekend and who wanted to be here today. So I thank you very much for being here, and I want to extend a thank you to everyone, Mr. Speaker, who played an important role in making our leadership process a success, everyone who contributed to that process and made the convention as successful as it was.

There is one individual, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a special thank you to, and that's to Mr. Lindsay Martens. Lindsay has served as my campaign manager in both provincial elections and managed the leadership campaign and was later joined by Trevor McKenzie-Smith, and they both did a fine job. Lindsay is excellent at what he does. And I'm certainly grateful for everything he has done, but more importantly I'm grateful for his friendship. And I'm happy that he's here today.

So I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming the guests to the Assembly today. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to make an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — The Premier has requested leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleagues for that leave. Joining us in your gallery today are four important leaders in the field of education in the province of Saskatchewan. With us today are Ben Grebinski from the Prairie Valley School Division, Julie MacRae from the Regina Public School Division, Don Rempel from the North East School Division in Melfort, and travelling from my hometown in Swift Current is Liam Choo-Foo. He's the director of education for the Chinook School Division.

Mr. Speaker, later this day Minister Marchuk and I will meet with these . . . Sorry. The Minister of Education and I — it was only a week; you'd think I'd remember, Mr. Speaker — we are going to be meeting just in a few moments after question period with these individuals, with these leaders in education because, Mr. Speaker, they are already leading in terms of

standard-based assessment in the province, so long as it is accompanied with targeted resources in terms of finances.

Mr. Speaker, the Chinook School Division introduced the balanced literacy initiative in 2008. Sixty-three per cent of the students were meeting their grade level reading standards at the time. After four years of the program, that number has jumped to 84 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Prairie Valley School Division also, with the help of some standards-based assessment, Mr. Speaker, has seen a year-over-year improvement in 23 of 26 areas including reading, including math, Mr. Speaker. Eighty-one per cent of Prairie Valley students graduate from grade 12 on time compared to 72 per cent province-wide. Melfort is also using these tools to improve outcomes for students, Mr. Speaker.

These examples and the work they've done with teachers will inform this government's process with respect to student achievement. It will ensure its success. So we look forward to the meeting. We thank them for their leadership, and through them we thank the teachers and the staff that have made the leadership possible. Mr. Speaker, we welcome them to their Legislative Assembly today.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to join the Premier in welcoming these guests to the legislature. Now I can't quite see them because they're behind the clock. But in my new role as the critic for Education, this is something that's very important, that we want our students to achieve. And it's great they're making that commitment to do that with the additional resources to make sure that happens and there is balance between testing and teaching. So with them, I would ask all members to join me with welcoming the leaders in education that the Premier has introduced.

I was going to say, while I'm on my feet, I'd like to introduce two more special guests to the legislature from the building trades who are here to witness this very, very important day. We have Gunnar Passmore and Kent Peterson from Building Trades who really think the work that we do here is critically important, and I would ask all members to join in welcoming these folks to our legislature. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and to all members of the legislature, I'd like you to welcome some guests in your gallery. John and Tolanda Baker are here from Kindersley today. John has 40 years of experience in mechanical trades and holds an interprovincial journeyman's ticket in plumbing and heating. He is the current president of Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan.

World Plumbing Day is an international event on March 11th, initiated by the World Plumbing Council, celebrating the important role plumbing plays in the health and safety of modern society. The name of the day is to raise awareness about the critical role which today's plumbing industry plays in relation to public health and the health of our planet and environment. You'll be hearing more about this in a member's

statement later.

Since 1919 the association has continued to mandate and encourage, support, and promote the advancement of the mechanical contracting industry here in Saskatchewan. Known as the MCAS [Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan], the association represents the plumbing contractors in the province, who help to ensure that here in Saskatchewan we are taking care of one of our most important natural resources — water.

Mr. Speaker, please join with me in welcoming those guests in your gallery here today.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Lakeview.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce Mr. Allen Engel, who is sitting behind us. He's the former member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. And he has been obviously following politics for a long part of his life, and we welcome here today. Along with him up in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, are his wife, Joyce Engel, and friend Ed Zalinsky. And so we welcome them as well.

And while I'm on feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to introduce Mr. Cory Oxelgren, who is the president of the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, seated in your gallery, it's a pleasure for me to introduce just a few guests. And often we are speaking of standing orders in this Assembly. Today I'm introducing some Standingreadys, Mr. Speaker, starting with a good friend and constituent Donna Standingready who's also the president of the Aboriginal New Democrats of Saskatchewan. Donna is a constituent, a great friend important to Stephanie and I and our entire New Democratic family, and she's joined here today by her daughter Erin Crowe. Erin is in her first year of business studies at SIIT [Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies]. I certainly introduce these two individuals to their Assembly. I ask all others to join with me in welcoming them as well.

While still on my feet, I'm pleased to certainly welcome the educational leaders that are here today. Certainly we've had the opportunity to meet over many years and thank you for your leadership to our province.

And I see just a few other individuals that certainly I'd like to say hello to Ms. Renu Kapoor that's joined us here today, Ms. Muna DeCiman that's here today, Ms. Rani Bilkhu that's joined us, Mr. Tom Cameron, and our friends from the building trades in the east gallery. It's so nice to welcome all these members to their Assembly here today.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce two individuals seated in your gallery: Jesse Todd and Brenda Baergen. These are family members of the late Howard Willems. They were in Regina earlier this morning as recipients

of the posthumous award that was given to the late Howard Willems with regard to his work with regard to the workplace hazards and health hazards of asbestos. The award was given to them by the Cancer Society earlier today. And I would like to ask all members to join them in welcoming them to their Assembly, but also to congratulate them for the work that they've done in raising awareness and moving the understanding of the threats posed by asbestos forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to rise and welcome my constituent Brenda Baergen and her son Jesse to the Assembly. Brenda's an active member in our community. I've known her for a number of years, and she's no stranger to community causes. She sponsors the bike-a-thon every year and raises a lot of money for various groups in Saskatoon and area.

And certainly the work she's done with SADAQ [Saskatchewan Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization] has been a very important piece of work and it honours Howard's memory. So I'd like to as well welcome my constituent Brenda to the Assembly, and her son Jesse. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — It's my pleasure to introduce to the Assembly some guests that are here to listen to the Queen's message on Commonwealth Day. Seated in the Speaker's gallery we have Mrs. Renu Kapoor, Mrs. Rani Bilkhu representing the Commonwealth country of India; Ms. Muna DeCiman representing Sierra Leone; Mr. Mike Luti representing Uganda.

We also have members of the Saskatchewan branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society: Dr. Michael Jackson, the president; Reverend Derek Nicolls; Reverend Ted Giese; Reverend Dr. Mark McKim; and Mr. Keith Inces. I would ask the members to welcome them to the Assembly today.

#### PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And as I get closer to you, you seem to get better looking, Mr. Speaker.

I stand today to, I'm very proud to present a petition on the cellphone coverage, Mr. Speaker, and the prayer reads as follows:

To undertake, as soon as possible, to ensure SaskTel delivers cell service to the Canoe Lake First Nations, along with the adjoining communities of Cole Bay and Jans Bay; Buffalo River First Nations, also known as Dillon, and the neighbouring communities of Michel Village and St. George's Hill; English River First Nations, also known as Patuanak, and the hamlet of Patuanak; and Birch Narrows First Nation, also known as Turnor Lake, and the community of Turnor Lake, including all the neighbouring communities in each of those areas.

And as I said, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from all throughout Saskatchewan and all

throughout the province. And the people that have signed this particular petition that I present today are from Dillon, Saskatchewan. And I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to call for the reconsideration of passing Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. And we know the proposed Saskatchewan employment Act that was introduced in December is a sweeping rewrite of our labour laws. And we know if the bill becomes the new consolidation of labour laws in this province, that your working people — particularly young workers, immigrant workers, and other vulnerable workers — will suffer from a hasty watering down of our current labour standards.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the Government of Saskatchewan to not pass Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* in this current session before the end of May and to place it on a much longer legislative track to ensure greater understanding and support for the new labour law.

Mr. Speaker, I do so present. Thank you.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government Whip.

#### World Plumbing Day

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in this Assembly to recognize that today has been proclaimed World Plumbing Day in Saskatchewan. The goal of World Plumbing Day is to raise awareness about the essential part of today's plumbing industry and how it plays in relation to the public health as well as the health of our planet and the environment.

Mr. Speaker, it's easy to take for granted the availability of safe drinking water and sufficient sanitation systems until those systems cease to function properly. The Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan asked that everyone takes a moment to think about where their water comes from and what they can do to ensure it's available for future generations. The safety and abundance of drinking water is of course a concern for most people around the world, but what is not often emphasized is the work the plumbing industry contributes every day to alleviate these concerns.

Mr. Speaker, World Plumbing Day works towards bringing a better understanding of the largely misunderstood role that plumbers play in keeping everyone safe and healthy each and every day.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in recognizing World Plumbing Day and the vital job that plumbers do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

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

#### Welcome to the New Leader of the Official Opposition

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege today of welcoming to the House the new Leader of the Official Opposition, the leader of Saskatchewan's New Democrats, the member for Massey Place.

For the last six months, Ryan Meili, Erin Weir, the member for Massey Place, and I participated in a leadership process that gave us the opportunity to listen to the people of our province having shared with us ideas and priorities of everyone in Saskatchewan, from the beautiful North to the southern border. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to join the NDP [New Democratic Party] MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] in getting behind and standing with our new leader. We look forward to putting forward a modern, relevant, and future-focused vision for Saskatchewan.

Our new leader is a familiar face to the members of the Legislative Assembly. He was first elected in 2007, re-elected in 2011. He has served in the legislature, holding very important critic portfolios. I also want to mention we're so grateful to our leader's wife, Ruth, and his precious daughters, Ingrid and Clara, for being willing to share their husband and dad with our province.

We have a big job to do, but working together with our leader, Saskatchewan people can count on us to get the job done. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in congratulating the member from Massey Place on his new role as Leader of Saskatchewan's Official Opposition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

#### Constituent Participates in Freedom Climb

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The old adage on why someone would climb a mountain is because it's there. But what happens when it's more than that?

I'm honoured today to recognize one of my constituents, Denise Heppner, and the amazing adventure ahead of her. Denise will be the only Canadian climber participating in Freedom Climb. This initiative is part of Operation Globalization, and its purpose is to raise awareness and money for women and children around the world who suffer exploitation, enslavement, and human trafficking. The organization helps provide shelter, education, and training.

The climb symbolizes support for those who are unable to climb out of their current circumstances on their own. Denise will be one of 44 women who will lend that helping hand to these women and children. In April they'll be trekking to the base camp of Mount Everest and then summit Mount Kala Pattar. In Denise's own words, and I quote:

I thought, "It starts with us." I thought it was other people that could go out and make a difference. Then I thought I

want to be the one who makes a difference in this world. It's everyday people that will change the world.

Mr. Speaker, I'm so very proud of Denise and her fellow climbers for making a stand and being a voice for the voiceless. I ask my colleagues in joining me to say thank you to Denise and the other women who will be joining her, who make our world a better place to live. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

#### Canadian Cancer Society Award to Howard Willems

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to invite the members of the Assembly to join with me in honouring Howard Willems's family. Howard Willems was awarded today, posthumously, the 2013 Impact Award for Leadership and Public Policy from the national council of the Canadian Cancer Society.

This is the highest award given in the area of public policy by the Canadian Cancer Society, a national organization, and the only one that is granted each year. Howard Willems passed away at the age of 59 from a rare form of cancer that was directly related to his exposure from asbestos while working. Asbestos is the leading cause of industrial cancers and death in Canada.

Howard has worked tirelessly until the very end of his life to bring Howard's law, Bill 604, forward to protect his fellow workers from harm. Howard's wife, Brenda, and his two stepsons, Jesse and Lee, continue the advocacy that he started. They share Howard's belief that everyone has the right to know if their workplace, school, health care facility, or daycare is safe. Mr. Speaker, Howard's law is a common sense solution to help keep the public informed about where asbestos is located in public buildings by creating a mandatory online registry.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask my fellow members of the legislature to listen to the families of Howard Willems and the people of Saskatchewan and vote in favour of Howard's law on Thursday. Thank you.

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

#### Congratulations to Saskatchewan Curling Team

**Mr. Doke:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in this House today to recognize Saskatchewan's Jill Shumay curling team of Maidstone curling club. During the week of February 16th to 24th, all eyes were on the Jill Shumay rink as they proudly represented the province of Saskatchewan at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Kingston, Ontario. This accomplishment fulfilled a long-time dream for Jill and her entire team. After starting out with an impressive four-straight win record, they finished the tournament in fifth place, representing the province of Saskatchewan in spectacular fashion. The team consists of skip Jill Shumay, third Kara Johnston, second Taryn Holtby, and lead Jinaye Ayrey; fifth Patty Hersikorn; and coach Gene Friesen.

To qualify as Saskatchewan's representative, they first had to

compete on the provincial level at the SaskPower provincial tournament. They went in as the underdog, ranking seventh in the province. They won their first five games, propelling them to be named Saskatchewan's representative at Kingston.

Mr. Speaker, competing at this level has its challenges. Each team member holds down a full-time job and devotes countless hours honing their skills. It takes tremendous dedication and commitment, setting aside almost all of your spare time devoted to your sport. As most of you know, Kara Johnston competed in this tournament seven and a half months pregnant. That's dedication.

Team commitment coupled with the support of family, friends, employers, and community cannot go unrecognized. It's always been the Saskatchewan way to encourage everyone to do their best and be proud of excellence achieved. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating the team for their success, professional conduct, and great sportsmanship. All of Saskatchewan is proud. Thank you.

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

#### Sergeant Inducted into Council of Women's Hall of Fame

**Mr. Hickie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise in this House to acknowledge a former colleague and constituent of mine, Sergeant Rhonda Meakin of the Prince Albert Police Service.

Sergeant Meakin was recently inducted into the Prince Albert Council of Women's Hall of Fame at a ceremony on March 2nd, at which myself, the member from Saskatchewan Rivers, and the member from Northcote attended as well. The council's president, Marie Mathers, saw the great work being done by Sergeant Meakin and said, "Our motto this year is women nurturing, so we look at people who are giving to the public — preferably it's a youth or young adult, and Rhonda fit in every category."

While Sergeant Meakin protects and serves the public in her capacity as a police officer, she's also a volunteer coach in bowling, golf, and curling. She participates in the Salvation Army Christmas kettle campaign, has coordinated police ventures. She also mentors with Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Prince Albert and is a member of the Compassionate Community Response Team.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Meakin has been involved with the Carlton school and personally initiated and implemented D.A.R.E. [drug abuse resistance education], which is a drug awareness program in our community.

To add to this impressive list of accomplishments, Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Meakin was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for her continued commitment and significant contributions to the community. And, Mr. Speaker, 20 days ago, Rhonda became a new mom. Her daughter Grace has a great mother and mentor to follow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

### Agricultural Safety Week

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in this House today to announce March 10th to the 16th as Agricultural Safety Week in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, there are risks in farming and ranching, and we want to remind our province's producers to take the steps necessary to keep themselves and their families safe.

Each year approximately 14 people are killed and many others are injured on farms in incidents that could have been prevented. Agriculture safety should be a priority for all farmers and ranchers to ensure the continued success of not only their operation but also the agriculture industry as a whole. The theme of this year's week is Get With the Plan, which focuses on encouraging farmers to develop written health and safety plans for their operations.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan Agriculture provides \$70,000 in funding to the Agricultural Health and Safety Network, which provides agricultural health and safety programming to over half of the farm families in Saskatchewan. As well more than 200 rural municipalities also contributed funding for this health and safety programming. Saskatchewan Agriculture also provides 30,000 in funding to the Saskatchewan Association of Agricultural Societies and Exhibitions for farm safety workshops for youth.

Mr. Speaker, I would like this Assembly to join me in asking our farmers and ranchers to take care this spring during the calving season and as they look forward to putting in this year's crop. We wish you a safe and healthy growing season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Performance of Government and Opposition

**Mr. Broten:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank my colleagues, especially the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, for the welcome, and thank all members for the welcome that they have extended. It's an exciting time for our party, and I'm excited about this next chapter for our party as well as the province. And I would like to thank the Premier also for making a phone call Sunday afternoon and for the conversation we had. In many instances we will be on opposite sides of the fence in the debate, and question period is perhaps probably the best example when we will debate the issues and be on opposite sides of the fence.

One issue, Mr. Speaker, where we have different opinions is the government's track record when it comes to keeping their promises, especially the promise, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier made that their government would admit their mistakes, that they would take responsibility for their mistakes and fix them. Too often this has not been the case. The first example, Mr. Speaker, was adding three more MLAs to the Legislative Assembly, something that people in the province saw as a mistake.

My question to the Premier: does he still follow the belief that

his government is one that admits its mistakes?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you. Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. And just before I get into the answer, I again want to congratulate the hon. member on becoming leader of his party, Leader of Her Majesty's Official Opposition, Loyal Opposition. Mr. Speaker, I also want to acknowledge the deputy leader across the way and his campaign, as well as that of Dr. Meili and Mr. Weir who also ran campaigns. We are better served when women and men of goodwill step forward to serve. And as a province, Mr. Speaker, we're grateful for the process that the opposition party has just undertaken. We thank in advance the new leader's family for sharing him, agreeing to share him a little bit more, frankly, than they have already with the province. Although should they choose to be selfish and decide not to share him as much, we're okay with that too, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say to the hon. member, we have worked hard to be a government that's kept its promises. In fact I think that's very much a part of the brand on this side of the House. I want to say that we have acknowledged mistakes when they've happened, including just since the last election when SaskTel, I think, made a bit of a miscalculation around rural coverage. We backed that process up. We're seeking solutions. We've done the same thing with respect to the motorcycle rate change announcement, and there'll be more on that coming forward, Mr. Speaker.

The short answer to my hon. friend's question is, yes.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Increasingly what's becoming part of the Sask Party brand is that of being stubborn and not willing to admit mistakes. Let's look at the next example, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government's decision to eliminate the film employment tax credit.

This is something that people in Saskatchewan supported, something that people in Saskatchewan saw as good common sense — whether they were small-business people, whether they were in the film community, or whether they were just citizens that appreciated our story from Saskatchewan being told in a good way. This was a mistake to eliminate this program, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier: does he recognize that it was a mistake to eliminate the film employment tax credit? And if it was a mistake, will he be fixing this in the upcoming budget?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, the premise of my hon. friend's question is interesting because the premise was stubbornness.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in his first full day as leader, he had the chance to comment on the policies of his party and the election platform of his party, the Lingenfelter platform, the \$5 billion platform of excessive promises, of big spending that would

cause deficits, of special revenue-sharing deals with First Nations. He said he supports the Lingenfelter platform. We ought not to be surprised about that, Mr. Speaker, because he helped write it. He wrote the policy book that was its foundation, Mr. Speaker.

Are we stubborn about some things, Mr. Speaker? Yes, we are. We're stubborn about balanced budgets. We're stubborn about continuing to invest in health care and education and infrastructure. We're absolutely determined and continue to make this province the best place to invest. And it seems to be working, Mr. Speaker — 3.8 per cent unemployment was announced last Friday right here in the province. That's the number one employment record in the Dominion of Canada.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to see on the second question that the Premier is carrying on the lines that the member from Martensville provided yesterday, suggesting that myself as a 34-year-old was part of the old guard. Well, Mr. Speaker, I may have a little bit of grey hair, but if 34, Mr. Speaker, is part of the old guard, I think that's news to most Saskatchewan people and perhaps disappointing to many of the baby boomers and seniors within our province.

A mistake, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite made was the elimination of the Aboriginal employment development program. If we want success, Mr. Speaker, in this province for everyone, it means extending opportunity to more and more people. Of course the long-term answer is improved education, but there are short-term decisions that also have a huge influence, especially the elimination of the Aboriginal employment development program. And economist Eric Howe has very accurately described how this has had a negative effect on employment numbers over the past year.

My question to the Premier: does he recognize that it was a mistake to cut the Aboriginal employment development program? And if he recognizes that it was a mistake, if he is about admitting mistakes, will he fix this in the upcoming budget?

[14:00]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's not just members on this side of the House that are suggesting he was part of the Lingenfelter team. Mr. Speaker, it was his fellow leadership candidate, Erin Weir, Erin Weir. He accused this member, now the new Leader of the Opposition, of plagiarism because the 2011 policy document, the Lingenfelter document, the Lingenfelter platform and his leadership platform were almost identical.

Mr. Speaker, of course we know that Mr. Weir is wrong. He didn't plagiarize the document. He wrote both documents, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these are his policies. They're Mr. Lingenfelter's policies. If he's changed them now, or changed them as a result of his campaign, he should say so.

With respect to Aboriginal employment, this particular budget

coming forward in just a number of weeks has a number of initiatives that focus on this particular issue. We do have the best employment record in the country. We saw a small improvement for Aboriginal people in the last numbers, but we need to do better. And, Mr. Speaker, the track record on this side of the House is that we will do better, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. As I talk to other young families in the province, a concern that comes up more and more, Mr. Speaker, is around the area of education and the concern that we're not taking the steps right now, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that our children and the next generations have the brightest possible future.

We hear of crowded classrooms, Mr. Speaker. We hear of the lack of supports for students who are studying English as an additional language. And, Mr. Speaker, we've heard about the huge reduction in the number of educational assistants here in the province — more than 350.

My question to the Premier: does he believe it was a mistake to see a reduction in the number of educational assistants here in the province? And if it was a mistake, Mr. Speaker, is he going to fix that in the upcoming budget?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, school boards have made some decisions with respect to educational assistants. And by the way, Mr. Speaker, the product of some of those decisions is that in terms of the overall number of student support in the classrooms, we're at a higher level now than we were before. Some of them are professionals in different areas; some of them are EAs [educational assistant]; but, Mr. Speaker, there are more than there were before.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the level of increase for education operating is up significantly from when those members were in office. It's been up every single year, year over year, in significant ways — education capital, Mr. Speaker, finally investment in schools, not just new schools that we need for our growing economy, but the renovation of existing schools. Now 200-plus schools have been renovated.

Mr. Speaker, we will put our record on education against the NDP's every day of the week.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, part of admitting mistakes, in order to admit mistakes, the government needs to be open and transparent and accountable. And that was a promise, Mr. Speaker, that Sask Party government members made. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that is the stubborn approach that we're seeing, Mr. Speaker, of members opposite, of not admitting mistakes.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, the province has learned the details of the IPAC [International Performance Assessment Centre for geologic storage of CO<sub>2</sub>] affair, the issues that have happened here in Regina. The information has not come to light, Mr.



Speaker, because members were open, members were transparent and willing to share information. Information came to light, Mr. Speaker, through the media and through the hard work of opposition members.

My question to the Premier concerning the IPAC affair: does he believe that his ministers, his cabinet, his team have handled the IPAC affair properly, or does he see this as a mistake?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I would hope the Leader of the Opposition is following this issue a little bit more closely than his last question might indicate. I think the minister responsible, the Minister for Crown Investments Corporation, very much acknowledged here in recent days that if there was a challenge, if there was a mistake made by government, it was not forcing the University of Regina, which is independent and autonomous and actually under whose auspices some of the challenges and concerns occurred, Mr. Speaker, it was perhaps this government's mistake to not force that autonomous agency to produce the information.

Mr. Speaker, that is candid in terms of this government's accountability process, and it stacks up very favourably versus what we've seen from members opposite — even, Mr. Speaker, over what that member had a chance to do yesterday. The Leader of the Opposition had the chance to stand up and say, we made a mistake in the last election. Our \$5 billion platform was a mistake. First Nations revenue sharing or any special deal is a mistake, Mr. Speaker. He had the chance to start off on the right foot; he didn't do that. Will he do that now, Mr. Speaker?

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

### IPAC-CO2

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, you know, it's that very sort of deflection that we saw just there, Mr. Speaker, that has people questioning the former claim of that government to be open and transparent. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the IPAC affair, Mr. Speaker.

On Friday the federal government weighed in and said they had serious concerns about how public money is being spent. They're concerned about how assets, including a \$600,000 computer, ended up in private hands, let alone the unneeded, unboxed computers that are sitting in storage at IPAC.

Mr. Speaker, last week the minister dismissed wasted money as somehow not important to Saskatchewan people. The minister can't be serious. Is the minister standing by that outrageous position here today?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, time and time again I've answered questions on the details behind IPAC. We know when, Mr. Speaker. We know that this started in 2009. We know what, Mr. Speaker. We know that there was a sole-sourced, overpriced contract for IT [information technology] services. We know where. We know that this

happened when IPAC was under the management at the U of R [University of Regina]. We know why. We know there were a few individuals that were employees of the U of R that did not follow the processes of the university. And we know, we actually know who those individuals were although the member opposite wasn't interested in that when he had the opportunity to find out.

So, Mr. Speaker, there has been a number of audits. There's been a forensic audit done of what happened under IPAC when it was under management of the U of R. There was evaluation of the IT equipment that was done, Mr. Speaker, and going forward, their audits have been clean, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister references that she keeps talking on this file. That's correct. The problem though is that her words keep changing, Mr. Speaker. She keeps saying something different.

Let's remember last week that there were deals that were exposed with CVI [Climate Ventures Inc.] and ClimBIT that were revealed and deals that the minister hadn't told anyone about. And it's a result of a handshake deal with a company that the Sask Party actually funded the start-up with taxpayers' dollars, Mr. Speaker. It's been like pulling teeth to get straight answers where taxpayers' money has gone on this file, Mr. Speaker.

Now the federal government's investigating and one would think the province would want to know the whole truth about what really happened to taxpayers' dollars. We know there are conflicts. We know there is waste. It seems though that, it seems in many ways that this is nothing more than a flow through of public money into private hands. And people of Saskatchewan deserve to know who benefited from their wasted dollars.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: who has personally gained on the backs of the taxpayer?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, there was a forensic audit done of what was happening with IPAC when it was under management of the U of R. That was done by Meyers, Norris, and Penny, and they could not identify anyone who personally gained, although they recognized that there was an overprice that was paid for the IT equipment.

Mr. Speaker, as soon as the IPAC incorporated and a board was formed, actions were taken immediately. I think those steps were appropriate. They severed the contract with the CVI. They also took the management and the control of the money away from the U of R, Mr. Speaker. They asked for a forensic audit as well as an evaluation of the IT equipment, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know who the member opposite is trying to identify that personally gained from this, but one thing I can tell him is, not one Sask Party member personally gained from any of this.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, when that minister's story is not changing, she's certainly brushing aside very serious concerns, and we've seen that all the way through when she should have been stepping up and providing answers and ensuring accountability, Mr. Speaker. Now the federal government is investigating, and last week we called once again for the Provincial Auditor to investigate, something we've been calling for for the better part of a year. But the minister sat on her hands last week, Mr. Speaker. But the Premier is here, and he's heard how the minister has failed to be open and transparent and he should know that this is a mistake. Will the Premier finally do the right thing and call on the Provincial Auditor to investigate and clean up the IPAC affair?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor did do an audit when IPAC was under management of the U of R. You can find the report; it's a public report. And, Mr. Speaker, when IPAC incorporated and a board was formed and the difficulty with the contract was identified, it was cleaned up.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Lakeview.

#### Hyperbaric Chamber and Health Services in Moose Jaw

**Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, in the city of Moose Jaw, residents are very concerned about what the Sask Party government plans to do with the hospital-based hyperbaric chamber for the treatment of burn victims. Over 2,400 people have signed an online letter to keep the hyperbaric chamber in the plans for the new hospital.

The local residents raised funds to bring the chamber to Moose Jaw and are concerned with the minister's comments that it's not in the plans for the new hospital under development. Instead he wants a private clinic. It appears that their new hospital will have fewer beds and be smaller than the current one. This uncertainty is another blow for the city and to the residents concerned about their health services.

To the minister: why is the Sask Party government removing the hyperbaric chamber from the services provided in the new Moose Jaw hospital?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member for his question. Mr. Speaker, I am fully aware that the member is a former Health minister. In fact I think he served . . . the longest serving Health minister in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker, which he reminds us from time to time.

He will know, Mr. Speaker, that the hyperbaric chamber in Moose Jaw is not a provincially provided service. It was a donation to the health district that then became the Five Hills Health Region, Mr. Speaker, and it's certainly not . . . Mr. Speaker, the hyperbaric chamber doesn't belong to the province of Saskatchewan or the Ministry of Health, and it's certainly not

our decision to make in terms of the future.

What the member will also or should know is that that hyperbaric chamber is reaching the end of its life cycle, Mr. Speaker, and plans will need to be made on a replacement, Mr. Speaker, but we're certainly a couple years away from that decision, Mr. Speaker. In the meantime, the hyperbaric chamber will continue to serve the people of Moose Jaw in the existing hospital.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Lakeview.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to come and answer some of these questions, but the Sask Party should listen to the people of Moose Jaw. They've very proud of this hyperbaric chamber. They raised money to put it there, and it's the only one between Edmonton and Toronto. So it's providing services outside the boundaries of our province. This equipment allows patients placed inside a pressurized steel chamber to breathe 100 per cent oxygen, and this, in treatment, is used for carbon monoxide poisoning, soft tissue infections, skin grafts, and burns.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that the minister needs to listen to what the people in Moose Jaw are saying and figure out how this can be part of our provincial health system. Because right now it appears that his decisions, both on the size and services in the hospital and on this particular aspect, are not meeting the needs of that community.

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly we are listening to the people of Moose Jaw because a number of years ago the people of Moose Jaw said that this city needs a new hospital and, Mr. Speaker, we're providing for a new \$100 million hospital that will be a modern, state of the art facility, one of the first designed, Mr. Speaker, in this country using lean principles and the first in this country to be constructed in a lean manner, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly though, we are listening to the residents of Moose Jaw, and I'm certainly listening to my colleagues on this side of the House that represent the city of Moose Jaw. And they have indicated that this is, Mr. Speaker, an issue of concern for the people of Moose Jaw.

But I'll say this, Mr. Speaker. Since 1997 the hyperbaric chamber has provided service for just over 200 people, Mr. Speaker. When you look at the example of hyperbaric chambers across Canada and, I would dare say, across North America, Mr. Speaker, that sometimes they're located within a hospital, oftentimes they're not located within a hospital, Mr. Speaker. And when you consider that for those 220 individuals, 96 per cent of the time it's been used as an outpatient procedure, Mr. Speaker, are there more applicable places to use this, Mr. Speaker, and that's what we're looking . . .

[14:15]

**The Speaker:** — Next question. I recognize the member for Regina Lakeview.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, the point is that the Saskatchewan Party needs to listen to the people of the province. It needs to listen to the people in the Five Hills Health District. And it means that they have to look at all of the options. This particular service, which is provided here in Moose Jaw, is providing a service for Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and other parts of the Prairies. And so this option needs to be fully reconsidered by the minister. Will the minister confirm in the House today that he will reconsider the position of the department and keep the hyperbaric unit as part of the new hospital in Moose Jaw?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And certainly I know that people in Moose Jaw, and in fact I think this government, is certainly very excited about this new project, Mr. Speaker. This is going to be a modern, state of the art facility that's going to serve the people of Moose Jaw and the Five Hills Health Region for many years to come, Mr. Speaker.

In fact when you look, Mr. Speaker, at the services that are going to be provided, Mr. Speaker, they're going to be provided in a different fashion than has been provided in the past, Mr. Speaker, by ensuring that services are pulled to the patient, rather than having the patient being pushed around the facility for services.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the number of beds in the facility, when you look at all the acute care beds, the observation beds in this hospital, flex beds, as well as surgical beds, the facility will go from 121 beds to 115 beds, Mr. Speaker. And we believe that with that level of support, as well as support within the community, that it will serve the people very well for many years to come, keeping in mind that we don't build hospitals the way that we did 50 years ago and 100 years ago. Mr. Speaker, this is going to be a state of the art facility to serve the people for many years to come.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

### Housing Availability

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the disturbing reports keep coming about how the Sask Party's ignoring the need to build affordable housing. On Friday the CMHC [Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation] released the February construction numbers of new multi-family housing. And the numbers are grim, Mr. Speaker.

Year over year Regina has seen a 70 per cent drop in multi-family dwellings and it's worse in Saskatoon where it's been a 91 per cent drop from February last year. And clearly the Sask Party's Throne Speech commitments to build 10,000 new units of affordable housing, such as apartments, is off track.

The CMHC says there's a huge demand and we definitely know that to be true, and the vacancy rates are dangerously low in our cities. To the minister: why has the Sask Party failed to keep the housing construction on pace with demands?

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

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite should be looking at some of the other stats that we've had an opportunity to look at and to celebrate since we became government. We've had 4,988 rental units developed since we became government. That's 4,988. That's \$114 million in investment on top of the repairs that we're giving.

Mr. Speaker, we also had the highest number of housing starts since the 1970s; that's nearly 10,000 housing starts. And as far as multi-unit starts, they have quadrupled, Mr. Speaker, quadrupled since 2007. Mr. Speaker, we have an increased number of people moving in to our province and an even larger number of houses being built. In fact last year there was over 9,000 houses built in this province. Mr. Speaker, that is a huge number and we know that we have to be working not only as a government but with developers and with municipalities to continue that trend.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker, having a good year for housing starts is a step in the right direction, but the problem, the problem is if that trend doesn't hold. CMHC says Regina saw a 70 per cent drop from 126 new units last year to 28 this February. And in Saskatoon, those multi-family units went from 173 last year to a mere 16 this February. When family dwellings — apartments and other multi-family units — have fallen, it's a clear sign the Sask Party is just not focusing on the proper priorities of decent, affordable housing for Saskatchewan families. Their short-sighted approach doesn't plan for our long-term needs.

To the minister: why can't the Sask Party make affordable housing a real priority and act on it?

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

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you what the priority is for this government when it comes to housing. \$344 million is what we're going to be investing in five years. We know that that's going to create over 12,000 units and it's going to help repair over 24,000 units.

Mr. Speaker, we know that within our government we've got developers. We've got municipalities. We've got meetings with business people that are saying, where can we . . . what we need now is more developed land so that we can actually put houses up.

Mr. Speaker, we have 744 more family units in this province. We have 4,988 more rental units in the province, and we built nearly 10,000 units last year. Mr. Speaker, I know that the government cannot do it alone, so does developers, so does municipalities. That's why we're working in conjunction with each other and having the summits and an opportunity to speak together. The only people that aren't excited about the work that's being done are the nine members on the other side of the House.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. That includes the Minister for the Economy.

MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY  
QUEEN ELIZABETH II

**The Speaker:** — Will you please all rise for a message from Queen Elizabeth II, head of the Commonwealth:

This year's Commonwealth theme, 'Opportunity through Enterprise', is a celebration of our achievements, particularly those that may have seemed challenging, daunting or even impossible, which have helped to build strength, resilience and pride in our young people, in our communities and in our nations.

Great achievements in human history have a number of common characteristics. From climbing the highest mountain, to winning a sporting competition, making a scientific breakthrough, building a successful business or discovering unique artistic talent — these outcomes all begin as a simple goal or idea in one person's mind.

We are all born with the desire to learn, to explore, to try new things. And each of us can think of occasions when we have been inspired to do something more efficiently, or to assist others in achieving their full potential. Yet it still takes courage to launch into the unknown. Ambition and curiosity open new avenues of opportunity.

That is what lies at the heart of our Commonwealth approach: individuals and communities finding ways to strive together to create a better future that is beneficial for all.

Our shared values of peace, democracy, development, justice and human rights — which are found in our new 'Commonwealth Charter' — mean that we place special emphasis on including everyone in this goal, especially those who are vulnerable.

I am reminded of the adage, 'nothing ventured, nothing gained'. As we reflect on how the Commonwealth theme applies to us individually, let us think about what can be gained with a bold heart, dedication, and teamwork. And let us bear in mind the great opportunity that is offered by the Commonwealth — of joining with others, stronger together, for the common good.

Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada

Thank you. You may be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

**Bill No. 86 — *The Regulatory Modernization and Accountability Act***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to move second reading of a bill, Bill No. 86, *The Regulatory*

*Modernization and Accountability Act*. As members of this House are aware, the Ministry of the Economy is focused on further improving the regulatory environment in Saskatchewan. When and where barriers to growth arise, as has been caused by duplicate or outdated regulations, we recommend and will help to implement the necessary steps to break them down.

The Act is a product of the government and the private sector following extensive consultation that will make government accountable to report on what is being done to reduce the red tape being encountered by business and the citizens of our province. The red tape reduction initiative was first highlighted in the October 2010 Throne Speech. The 2011 election campaign included the promise of reducing red tape on businesses and barriers to growth by legislating red tape accountability measures, public reporting, and targets for red tape reduction. The Ministry of the Economy is working with other ministries and agencies to implement the initiative.

This Act instructs ministries and agencies to report on the progress of red tape reduction and regulatory modernization initiatives across government to increase regulatory competitiveness. It will help ensure government's regulations are up to date and create a more positive business climate that will attract outside business opportunities in investment and support the growth and expansion of existing businesses while ensuring proper protection for consumers, employees, and the government, and the environment. The bottom line is what we must make more efficient for business to do business in Saskatchewan and interact government to be prosperous and help our economy grow.

Saskatchewan is one of Canada's economic leaders, Mr. Speaker. We're expecting to be among the top provinces in Canada for growth this year. We have the lowest unemployment rate in the nation. When Saskatchewan business people go to work, they should be able to focus on serving their clients and creating jobs. We are enabling this by creating a regulatory regime that is efficient, effective, and relevant — in short, business friendly.

We feel this legislation is in the best interests of the current and future provincial economy and the people of our province. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move *The Regulatory Modernization and Accountability Act* for second reading.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister for the Economy that second reading of Bill No. 86, *The Regulatory Modernization and Accountability Act* . . . Is it the pleasure of the Assembly . . . I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter debate briefly here today as it relates to Bill No. 86, *An Act respecting Regulatory Modernization and Accountability*.

Certainly I can say that the principles of building out a thriving small business and local economy is something that this side of the Assembly greatly values, and listening to those entrepreneurs, those businesses is something that's important to this side of the Assembly.

That being said, we need to make sure we're going about our

due diligence to fully understand what the minister has put on the table here today — very broad, very vague language here today relating to regulations in this province, Mr. Speaker. And certainly it's fair to say that we will be supportive of reducing the term "red tape," Mr. Speaker, where it's redundant, where it's not serving a purpose of protecting people or the environment or its expressed purposes.

But it is of concern to ensure that what this minister and what this government's going about isn't simply a very narrow-minded agenda of deregulation, Mr. Speaker, because of course regulation plays a very important role in the lives of Saskatchewan people in protecting their interests, protecting their livelihoods, protecting their lives, protecting our land, air, and our water, Mr. Speaker. And those are all aspects that we're going to be making sure we fully understand and comprehend as to the true intent of this legislation and the practical application of the legislation that's put forward.

Certainly I can say to the entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan that you can count on this side of the Assembly to support changes, as I say, to reduce red tape where it's, as I say, redundant or possibly built for a different era or a different time within our economy and no longer having the purpose that we need to . . . It doesn't have the same purpose to our current circumstance.

So I recognize the words that were utilized of being effective, efficient, and relevant. I guess we'll flesh out from the minister in the days and weeks to come from stakeholders, what he means by that, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

I think that at the end what I didn't hear in this presentation was much discussion or focus around the whole purpose of regulation in the first place. And that's the role of government to ensure that, as I say, communities and people are properly protected. And we've seen, Mr. Speaker, far too often where we see sort of a right wing conservative agenda of deregulation be implemented and the costs, the consequence are sometimes felt in a very tragic way in the lives of people, Mr. Speaker, lives of communities.

And we can think of circumstances, whether it's the protection of our meat and meat-packing, Mr. Speaker, we can think of the importance around drinking water itself or our watershed, Mr. Speaker. I care greatly about the impact and the concerns right now as it relates to the Qu'Appelle chain of lakes, Mr. Speaker, as one example where it would seem we have a government dragging its heels to address the critical challenges of the pollution that's going into those lakes and those chains, Mr. Speaker — a very critical resource in our province, and I know all members should certainly care about these important resources.

So when we're talking about, as I say, red tape, sometimes this discussion gets a little too simplistic. We need to make sure we understand who this minister has consulted with on this front, Mr. Speaker. Certainly very fair stakeholders that should be involved in this discussion are our entrepreneurs, are our business community. Just the same, Mr. Speaker, we should ensure that we have involved in this consultation those that care about our environment, Mr. Speaker, and all those stakeholders,

those that care about the rights of working people, Mr. Speaker, and all of those that stand up in such a strong and proud way to do that, Mr. Speaker.

I know I've met down with business stakeholders in the past who have shared with me circumstances of redundancy of regulation, Mr. Speaker. And I'd certainly be more than willing to support the elimination of a regulation that wasn't achieving its intended purpose or that by way of a change in an industry or a change in technology or a change in circumstance that is relevant to the future is no longer needed. But I think for us to go down this simplistic sort of right wing notion, Mr. Speaker, to sort of tar all regulation as something that's somehow not supportive of business, Mr. Speaker, is reckless and unnecessary, Mr. Speaker. I believe in building out a strong modern economy with a thriving small business sector, Mr. Speaker.

We need to make sure that we have the full protections of workers and people in our land, in our air, in our water, Mr. Speaker. And to not be willing to look at the legitimate evidence that exists on all of these fronts and to make decisions that factor in all of the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, is short-sighted. And so we need to make sure what's being contemplated, and now what's being pushed forward by this government, reflects consultation with an entire province, reflects consultation with all stakeholders and will provide the sort of regulatory regime that will of course not be a redundant environment for business, Mr. Speaker, but making sure that it's purposeful in the lives of Saskatchewan people in communities and providing the kinds of protection that it must, Mr. Speaker. And as a secondary consideration, we need to make sure that it's certainly not cumbersome in an undue way to business, Mr. Speaker.

But of course it's in all of our interests and certainly in the interests of business and entrepreneurs in our economy that we get right that balance of proper oversight, proper protection, proper regulation. And we want to watch this one, Mr. Speaker, carefully because as I say, we've seen in other environments with right wing governments like this one, Mr. Speaker, pursuing legislation that, pursuing changes that pulls out the important role of regulation or the important role of government, Mr. Speaker, in serving and protecting people and communities not just today but for future generations, Mr. Speaker.

So we'll have many questions on this front. We'll be doing a lot of consultations ourselves, and certainly we're going to need more answers than we were provided here today, with the vague and broad language of the minister in introducing this bill that could have significant intended or unintended consequences.

But at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, I will adjourn debate for Bill No. 86, *An Act respecting Regulatory Modernization and Accountability*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 86, *The Regulatory Modernization and Accountability Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 85

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 85 — *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course a period of adjustment for us all but good to rise today in the debate on Bill No. 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*.

And again, you know, as is often the case with the legislation brought forward by this government, Mr. Speaker, a great number of things to be drawn to attention that I'd like to discuss in my remarks this afternoon, and again part of a pattern with this government where things not campaigned on suddenly pop up as unwelcome surprises for the people of Saskatchewan, and again, Mr. Speaker, failure to recognize the lessons from the past.

The first term of the Sask Party government of course, a kind of debacle we saw with the, well various pieces of labour legislation, Mr. Speaker, but certainly with the essential services and the fact that this government made such a hash of the legislation that they, of course, were taken to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal where Justice Ball, again you know, a well-respected justice in this province but somebody that's got a pretty interesting perspective on the different sides of the legislation . . . Anyway, Justice Ball found their legislation to be unconstitutional.

This of course followed on the heels of the International Labour Organization, the labour arm of the United Nations, condemning this government for that piece of legislation. And you know, these again were things that were brought forward with a lot of hype about how they were "fair and balanced."

Mr. Speaker, I guess any time you hear this government talking about fair and balanced and labour legislation, it's sort of like Colonel Sanders talking about this lovely wellness home he's putting together for the chickens, and it automatically defies belief that it's going to be either fair or balanced. But with this piece of legislation it's, to quote Yogi Berra, "déjà vu all over again," as regards the way that these members opposite approach labour legislation generally but working men and women who have availed themselves of their constitutional rights to organize and bargain collectively.

And where did this piece of legislation come from, Mr. Speaker? Well it certainly didn't come from the Sask Party platform. It didn't come from the offerings in the election. But what we're told, when the first round of proposals came out, Mr. Speaker . . .

And I guess I might add parenthetically, at least Bill 85 in front of us today wasn't as bad as the initial presentation and proposals that would attack the Rand formula that would've brought no end of chaos into workplaces across the province and that in a lot of ways amounted to a pretty . . . not just a frontal attack on organized men and women in this province and the very notion of trade unionism, but the way that it was fronted as having arisen is that somebody had said something to the now Labour minister on the doorstep. And of course there is some rumours back and forth about this, rumours that no less a person in that party than the Premier said there would be no call for messing around with the Rand formula or the automatic checkoff in the campaign.

But of course when it comes to things like labour legislation, where we know this government isn't approaching it in a fair and balanced way but approaches these matters with a fair amount of hostility and, you know, a pursuit of an ideology that isn't grounded in common sense but owes more to the right wing sort of nostrums that we see their cousins like Tim Hudak bringing forward in Ontario or the various sort of so-called right-to-work campaigns that have gone in the United States and the different sort of hijinks that we see the federal Harper Conservatives getting up to as regards the federal aspect of labour legislation, again it's not necessarily a surprise when these members come forward with legislation that attacks the rights of working men and women. But it should be noted for the public, and people should pay attention to this aspect of how it goes.

This is something that was denied in the campaign by the Premier and then of course advanced after the dust had settled and the ballots had been counted. And I guess, you know, for the legislation itself, it's sort of like you go to see a terrible movie, and about the best thing you can say about it is that it wasn't longer. I mean in terms of this legislation, we'll see how things play out, again in terms of not just the legislation itself and the way that that is continually being analyzed and questions are arising, but of course what happens in terms of the regulations, Mr. Speaker.

And when you combine these things together on the development of public policy, you know, where did this come from? Well there's certainly not a mandate for it from the campaign. There wasn't a request made of the people to say, you know, here is something that we are running on. Here is our plan in terms of employment legislation, in terms of labour legislation in this province. And you know, people of Saskatchewan, what do you think? They didn't have that courtesy or that forthrightness, Mr. Speaker, in the campaign, but of course it comes forward after the campaign.

It builds upon past experience, where you've seen again, particularly with Bills 5 and 6, where the government stubbornly bowls ahead. And I think the member from Lakeview had talked about sometimes it's like watching someone with not the best driving skills in the world rumble around on a bulldozer. And again a bulldozer's a pretty good piece of equipment if you're using it for the right thing, but if you're just sort of tearing around smashing into things, not so much. And again, a government has a mandate to introduce legislation, but when it comes to labour legislation, you know, it seems to be the bulldozer approach more often than not, Mr.

Speaker.

In terms of the consultation process, once they'd put out their discussion paper, the 90-day consultation period where they were accepting written submissions or fax submissions or email submissions, not having the fortitude to go out and talk to people face to face throughout the province, again that draws a pretty bold relief in terms of whether or not legislation of this magnitude is being properly done.

One of the great examples I recall from this, Mr. Speaker, is there's simultaneously a consultation going forward on branding for livestock, Mr. Speaker. And you know, 12 pieces of labour legislation and literally hundreds of pages of labour law and a greater magnitude than that of regulation as well to be considered, you know, in 90 days, and branding I think was up for six, I believe it was six months. So again, Mr. Speaker, it's important to get the brand right. You know, I receive the point. But surely to goodness labour legislation deserves at least the same kind of consideration in terms of having an adequate period of time to really do that analysis and to talk to the folks that have expertise.

And again in terms of . . . This is the legislation that governs the workplace. This is about people's livelihoods. This is about their conditions of work, their conditions of employment. And if you're going to approach that, Mr. Speaker, you'd better get it right. You've got to take the time, and you've got to ask the right questions, and you've got to make sure that it's not about ramming something home.

And again, the conclusion that is inescapable when it comes to the different ways that this government has approached this legislation is, again, not bringing it forward in the campaign, having a totally inadequate consultation period and process, Mr. Speaker. And now of course that we have the legislation in place, one of the sops that was thrown to try and again placate and to try and at least keep people at the table was the appointment of an advisory council and with advisors from both the management side of the equation, business side of the equation, and labour side of the equation.

[14:45]

And you know, again, Mr. Speaker, there was an opportunity to get something right. And the first thing we see with what could have been a vehicle to correct some of the rumbling around in the bulldozer that's gone on, some of the wrongheadedness, some of the goodwill that has been squandered, some of the good faith that has been drawn into question, you know, the offer went out to different folks in the labour community to participate in the advisory council. And one of the first things we see as regards that body, Mr. Speaker, is when that council brings forward advice, it's being completely ignored by this government.

And of course, you know, one of the things that . . . And it's well represented by a labour leader, Hugh Wagner. And again to speak a bit about Mr. Wagner's credentials, Mr. Speaker, here's an individual that's Saskatchewan born and bred, well respected, well-educated, with a lifetime of hard work in the labour sector, and an individual whose voice has been sought out, whose opinion has been sought out by not just NDP

governments in past, Mr. Speaker, but I would point out that Mr. Wagner served as the labour representative on Enterprise Saskatchewan for . . . well, from its inception to when it was unceremoniously shut down last budget.

But again, Mr. Speaker, here's somebody that is well known for the contribution, a lifetime of contribution to the province of Saskatchewan, someone whose credentials are impeccable and someone who is, you know, again it's not just the NDP seeking out the opinion, but this government has as well. And so it is with, you know . . . The executive director is, or Hugh is the general secretary of the Grain Services Union. And the kind of role that he's played in terms of the public life of this province, it's led to him being again sought out for that advice in his past as a member of this advisory council.

So what is the advice of Hugh Wagner and the advisory council in terms of the legislation? And there's a really thoughtful opinion, editorial piece that ran in the *Leader-Post* on March 6th, and I'd like to quote from that at length, Mr. Speaker. But the title is "New Sask. labour law: why the rush?"

And if I could add parenthetically, Mr. Speaker, you know, we heard last Thursday about how this government just wants to bull ahead and ram it home and make the legislation happen before the spring session concludes. And again, Mr. Speaker, if you're going to be fair and balanced, if it's not . . . if you're going to be sensible and moderate and if you're going to live up to the hype, you would think that when you do things like appoint advisory councils, you would listen to their actual advice.

But again, judging by the remarks that we heard in the Chamber on Thursday and certainly the attitude of the minister, which has been one of bulling ahead, again they're not alone in these things. These aren't isolated incidences because of course the Premier himself has got a pretty interesting record in terms of saying one thing out on the hustings and then legislating something else when it comes to the labour law that is brought forward.

And again, Mr. Speaker, with the labour law, they've already got one mess outstanding as regards essential services. I'd also add, Mr. Speaker, a mess that they said that there was no need for essential services legislation in the days leading up to the 2007 election. And then the days after the 2007 election, it of course was brought forward. They could hardly bring it forward fast enough, which again, Mr. Speaker, goes to the kind of credibility or the kind of chicanery that we see being played in terms of what is campaigned on and then what is acted on in terms of the legislative agenda. But that piece of legislation of course has been fought to the Court of Appeal and is now due to be off to the Supreme Court.

And again if past is indeed prologue, you'd think that they would try and fix their mess before they embarked upon something of this magnitude. But they haven't, Mr. Speaker. And instead of fixing the mess, we see them repeating some of the patterns of behaviour that were evident in the labour legislation file from last . . . from the previous government session from 2007 to 2011.

Anyway, it's a good letter, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to quote

from it at length. And again, this is somebody that's not just . . . It's not just my opinion that Hugh Wagner is somebody that should be listened to but it's certainly been the opinion of past governments, if you can judge by appointments, as to the worth of the opinion of Mr. Wagner, again something that was reaffirmed in his appointment to this advisory council to oversee what's happening with labour legislation. So March 6th, *Leader-Post*, title "New Sask. labour law: why the rush?"

As labour leaders, business leaders and government, we have a responsibility to work together to maintain a stable, balanced and fair work environment for all people in Saskatchewan.

Not exactly . . . You'd think those were reasonable statements, Mr. Speaker, and certainly I think we on this side do. And it's unfortunate that it's not reflected in the actions of the government opposite. But fairly good counsel. To carry on in the quote:

We have been charged to preserve the rights and freedoms of choice we all enjoy resulting from the solid foundation of labour legislation we have built together over the past 70 years.

We challenge ourselves to be thorough in our review of any major legislative changes so that we may reduce the risk of unexpected and unintended outcomes that could harm the livelihoods of the people we serve and the community we seek to enhance.

Saskatchewan stands at the precipice of labour instability with the introduction of a sweeping and rushed overhaul of the province's labour laws in Bill 85 — the new Saskatchewan employment Act.

Bill 85 combines 12 previous workplace-related laws — among them, *The Labour Standards Act*, *The Occupational Health and Safety Act*, *The Health Labour Relations Reorganization Act*, *The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act*, and *The Trade Union Act*. The new bill repeals nearly 1,000 pages of current provincial legislation and consolidates it into 184. In total, 33 pieces of legislation are repealed and/or amended — a substantial undertaking that, logically, should require far more public, labour and business input than what has been provided for to date.

An advisory committee, comprising both business and organized labour representatives, was established by Labour Relations Minister Don Morgan to provide input on the changes being contemplated. What may come as a surprise to many was that this committee reached relative consensus on most issues relating to the changes. It is therefore even more surprising this consensus is not reflected in Bill 85.

It raises a question: what is driving the government's rushed efforts to pass Bill 85 in the spring sitting of the legislature? There is always a danger that . . . [far-ranging] legislative changes, when driven by undue haste, can create unplanned consequences, as seems to be the case in this instance.

What is of equal concern is if the people of Saskatchewan understand how these changes will impact them, their families and their businesses.

For individual workers, the balance of current legislation will shift dramatically in favour of employers.

Under Bill 85, employers will have the discretionary power to limit whether employees are able to access the traditional two consecutive days off in a work week. Scheduled lunch and rest breaks may no longer be the common standard as employers will be able to unilaterally deem breaks to be unreasonable, and eight-hour work days could potentially be extended to 10 hours, raising the overtime threshold without employee consent. This amounts to an unwarranted erosion of individual rights in the workplace.

For unions, businesses and governments alike, costs could soar as all are forced into negotiating and administering multiple contracts as a result of changes to employee and supervisor definitions. The same would apply for health care, provincial institutions and the civil service, with taxpayers footing the bill.

There are clearly mainly unknowns and much work still to be done to get Bill 85 to a place where it works for everyone.

We are all part of the "Saskatchewan advantage" and the biggest economic boom in our province's history. We have the lowest unemployment rate in the country and more people are moving to our province than ever before.

All of this has been achieved under the current labour legislation — there clearly is no crisis requiring a hasty fix.

Modernization of laws is a good thing, but it requires thoughtful and inclusive review and that will take time.

There is no harm in taking time, but there is a worrying potential for real damage if passage of this legislation is rushed.

Close the quote, Mr. Speaker. And again, that's from Hugh Wagner, general secretary of the Grain Services Union and someone who's made varied and valued contribution to public life in this province. And again I would point out that that contribution has been made under governments of different stripes, Mr. Speaker.

So again, given that there was no advance notice of this legislation in the election in the campaign, given the dubious way that the consultation process has taken place to date, given the questions that are outstanding as to the implication of this legislation, given the sweeping scope of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Wagner's remarks, we, as legislators in this Chamber, would do well to heed them. We'd do well to listen to them.

And if this government is not listening to what I think is the very level-headed and common sense advice being offered in



this case by Mr. Wagner from the Grain Services Union — again someone that's been appointed to the government's own advisory committee on this labour legislation — if the government is going to live up to the sense of, the talk about how this is going to be fair and balanced labour legislation, if they're concerned about both sides of that labour-management equation and not just an attack on labour rights and labour practice in this province, Mr. Speaker, if they've got an interest in something that works for everybody and not just for a few or for their friends and insiders on the other side of the coin, Mr. Speaker, they would do well to listen to the advice being offered in this letter from Mr. Wagner to the *Leader-Post*.

What is also interesting, Mr. Speaker, the different sort of work that has been done to marshal a response. I would commend my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Centre, the Labour critic for the official opposition, and the work that he had done to get out around the province throughout the summer and into the fall in terms of giving people an opportunity to voice their opinion of the then proposals. And again I want to commend the work he had done, the work that staff had done to do what is essential for opposition or for any legislators to do, Mr. Speaker, which is give people that opportunity to voice their concerns, give people an opportunity to voice their ideas.

And there wasn't that same sort of opportunity afforded the people under the process put forward by members opposite.

[15:00]

So again, you do what you can, but we're going to be wondering when it is that this government learns the lesson and, if they're going to talk about being fair and balanced and involving both sides, when they're going to live up to those words, Mr. Speaker?

If they're going to talk about seeking advice and appointing people to do that good work and to provide that expert opinion and those informed opinions, Mr. Speaker, if you're not just going to waste their time, Mr. Speaker, then there is some onus on seeking that advice, on listening to that advice. That that is not being done, again, goes back to the kind of railroad that we fear that this piece of legislation represents.

And again, Mr. Speaker, we've seen this movie before. We've seen the kind of wrong-headed and, as it turns out, unconstitutional approach to labour legislation that this government has brought. And if they have any interest in what the working men and women have to think . . . And again that's one thing the current minister I commend him for is, you know, he gets out across to speak to different labour groups. I believe he spoke at the CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] Saskatchewan convention last Thursday. And I guess if you're going to go to those things, maybe listen to what people have to say, maybe actually take that into account.

And again if it's not just some kind of shallow charm offensive, if it's more than that, Mr. Speaker, then that genuine listening, that genuine engagement shows up in pieces of legislation like Bill No. 85 or in a genuinely respectful, thoughtful process. But we don't see any evidence of that, Mr. Speaker. What we see is a continued-on-way, a carried-on approach of ramming it home and driving a railroad on these particular pieces of legislation.

And again if we're going to bring people together, if we're going to really realize the potential of this province, if we're going to ensure that benefit is there for all and not just for the few, there is in fact that balance that needs to be brought in in legislation. And I guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we just want them to do what they said they were going to do on the hustings. We want them to, if they said they're going to be fair and balanced, then we want to see them live up to that.

But again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the consultation and in terms of the legislation itself and in terms of the myriad of questions as to how this all works out that need to be not just asked but answered, these are things that continue to give us concern in terms of whether or not this is a decent piece of public policy or a decent piece of legislation or if it's just the continuation of the same old Sask Party attack on working people in this province.

And I guess if that's in fact the case, Mr. Speaker, or if they're going to seek to divide people, if they're going to seek to mess around with the general terms that govern people's workplaces, if they're going to jack around with the basic conditions of employment, they should be upfront about that. If they're not going to be fair and balanced, then they should say, yes, labour we've got you squarely in our sights. We don't like unions. We're going to break you at every turn and, you know, expect nothing less. And at least then it would have the sort of virtue of honesty, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And you know, maybe it saves some of the guff that passes for public opinions but at least then, you know, everybody'd know where they stood. At least then you wouldn't be wasting people's time, and they could make their own decisions as to how they wanted to respond.

But again, Mr. Speaker, you know, it seems to be part of this ongoing sideways approach to labour legislation in this province, this sideways attack on the rights of working men and women that, again, it's almost like if you hear them saying that it's going to be fair and balanced, you know, the advice is, check your wallet because it's bound to be anything but.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we think this is . . . You know, not just the content of the legislation but the process in terms of the unanswered questions that remain, in terms of what may or may not show up in regulation, and again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of there's no mandate for this coming from that election.

And again, if they're going to embark on something like this, they should go to the people and say, guess what? We hate labour, and we're going to seek to break unions. You know, that'd be great. That'd be kind of refreshing. But we don't get that. Instead we get these sideways Acts where people's livelihoods are screwed around with, where the province winds up being taken through the different levels of court, and we'll see how the Supreme Court action works out. But that's no way to govern a province, Mr. Speaker, and it's no way to bring forward public policy that is legitimate, that actually improves the lives of the great many instead of a select few of friends and insiders.

And again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you're going to, you know, preach fair and balanced in the temple, you should live it on the street. You should act it in the legislation. Would but that was the case, but instead, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you hear them

talking about fair and balanced, and it's almost like something else is coming.

Mr. Speaker, I think I've got more remarks to make, but I'd draw your attention to my colleague from Athabasca.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask leave to introduce a guest.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Athabasca.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As an Aboriginal MLA, I often speak and highlight some of these successful Aboriginal people we have throughout our province, whether they're First Nations, Inuit, or Métis. And it's always comforting to know as an MLA that there's these highly skilled individuals that are out there. And there are many, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to point out that I'm very proud of them and encourage many of the younger children and youth in our communities to go forward and seek an education and to become a very productive, proud citizen of whether it's your band or whether it's your local or whether it is your community and family. We have such an individual that is visiting us here today and sitting in your gallery.

I'd like to introduce Carl Swenson. Carl is from Saskatoon. He's with the Aboriginal Law Group. And he's an in-house lawyer, and he's working on residential school claims through the independent assessment process. But Carl grew up in Prince Albert and, as you can see, he has a great amount of support from his family.

And I would ask all members of the Assembly to welcome Mr. Swenson here today and to also indicate to him that I'm very proud of his accomplishments as an Aboriginal lawyer. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

#### **Bill No. 85 — *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* (continued)**

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So to recap from where I had left off to cede the floor to my colleague to allow the introduction, with Bill 85 you see a government, instead of learning from mistakes they had made in the past in course correcting or maybe thinking that, you

know . . . Perhaps if you're going to say it's going to be fair and balanced, it should actually be fair and balanced. And it shouldn't be like a Fox News sort of fair and balanced, but it should actually be legitimately fair and balanced. And that it shouldn't seek to further divide people in this province, but maybe there's a way to bring people together.

And maybe there's a way that the current legislation has been part of the success of the economy to date, but we don't see that, Mr. Speaker. Instead we see less than a genuine request for consultation, inadequate process. And again the main thing to keep in mind here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that if it was all about process that would be one thing, but this is how you govern people's workplaces: you govern their employment. You take care of how they earn the bread to put on the table and to keep the bills paid and keep the lights on in their homes and to be able to put aside the money to educate their kids and to live something, a good life that we think here in Saskatchewan should be there for the great many and not just for a lucky few. And again, you know, people working an honest day's labour, you know, should be receiving that honest day's wage.

It's not too much, it shouldn't be too much to ask for this government to live up to its words in terms of when I say it's going to be fair and balanced. It's not too much to ask of this government to say that if you're going to deal with legislation that is so fundamental and so sweeping and so important to people's lives that the time is taken to get it right. And if those are seriously your intentions, if those are seriously your motivations in approaching labour legislation, then that would be the hallmark of your approach: genuine consultation, an adequate process, and maybe, you know, God forbid, a penchant to listen to what people are saying when you appoint them to advisory councils.

But we're not seeing that in this legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're seeing a government bull ahead in a way that is somewhat concerning given the seriousness of this legislation being involved. You know, it's 70-odd years since *The Trade Union Act* was introduced in Saskatchewan — one of the first, most comprehensive pieces of labour legislation in North America as regards comprehensive trade union Acts. And there have been lots of ups and downs in terms of the labour history of this province, but a lot of firsts and a lot of proud things as well.

I think of the work that was done in the '70s around occupational health and safety, and again the way that Saskatchewan led the nation and led in North America; the good work of people like Bob Sass, who's very much connected to the late Howard Willems who we discussed here this very day. And in those different pieces of legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and in those different initiatives, we saw Saskatchewan leading the nation and leading the continent in terms of making improvements to the working lives of men and women in this province. And you know, it wasn't a government acting by itself; it was a government acting in consultation and in genuine engagement with the broader community. You know, would that . . . Too bad that that is not the case in this regard, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And again it's not like there isn't the opportunity to do that engagement, there isn't ample opportunity for this government

to get it right instead of following down the same path, as I've said, has seen Saskatchewan taken to court and now, you know, all the way to the Supreme Court. But again, Mr. Speaker, it's a sign of a government that doesn't want to listen, that is stubborn, that refuses to admit mistakes but instead doubles down on them or compounds them. And we see that in this piece of legislation in spades.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that other of my colleagues have pieces of legislation they'd like to discuss. So to wrap up my comments, in so many different ways you see a government that isn't listening. You see a government that when they proclaim it to be fair and balanced, it means something entirely different. You see a government that is taking a lot of . . . is approaching hard-won labour rights and practice in the province of Saskatchewan in a very, at best, cavalier way and, at worst, a very hostile way, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the province is poorly served by that.

This province is best served when you have people coming together to, as the motto reads, from those many peoples bringing us strength. But when you see something that seeks to divide and seeks to pit one side of the point against the other and seeks to make imbalance and unfairness, it's a wrong-headed approach and one that we do not agree with in Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*.

[15:15]

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 69

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 69** — *The Information Services Corporation Act* be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a great pleasure today to rise to speak to this bill.

Information Services Corporation is a very important Crown corporation that was established in the early 2000s to deal with the electrification of the records in our land titles registry. That was its primary purpose when it was first created. And as we know, at the time the view of the government of the day was not only to modernize the land titles registry but also to take the extra step to modernize the land surveys registry, which this new corporation did. And as well, they added a number of other important registries over the last few years to be included in this corporation.

As the name suggests, information services, that's what it provides, is services relating to information. Obviously land titles is nothing more than data and records of the history of our province through land titles, the same with the land surveys and also all the geodata that the corporation has amassed in its hard-to-believe 13 years of existence already, Mr. Speaker. So that's a significant accomplishment, and I think this corporation is really an unsung hero in our stable of Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker.

The name itself is kind of uninformative. Although it's about information, when you say ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan] to most people in Saskatchewan, they go, what? They don't really understand what it is. And I think that's one of the sad things about this corporation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that a lot of people don't really realize the important function it serves and it ties to our history. And I'm going to be talking about that a little bit today.

Information Services Corporation is a proud Crown. I think it's one that we can really hold out as an important Crown in our stable of Crowns. And it's this bill, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, is destroying what has been built over the last 13 years in terms of a solid, reliable, profitable, and properly public corporation. And this government's attempt to privatize it is one that's backwards. I think it's ill-advised and it's just really disappointing and disheartening to see the agenda of privatization strike out at this particular Crown corporation. It's not the right time and in fact probably should never be privatized because of the nature of the information and the history that this corporation is the inheritor of.

So to just go back a little bit before Information Services Corporation came into being, we need to take a bit of a look back at how the land titles system in Saskatchewan evolved, and the land survey system. I mean this is a very, very important part of our history and I would recommend for anyone that is interested in knowing a little bit more about the original land surveys when they started out in . . . I think 1871 was the first survey in Saskatchewan. The second survey was in 1881, I believe, and the third survey. So Saskatchewan was done in three waves.

We have 555 rural municipalities or more, maybe 600, that were surveyed by these intrepid people when they came out back over 100 years ago. And the book I read recently about this is one by a Regina author whose name is Garry Wilson — happens to be my dad's first cousin — but he wrote a book called . . . Oh, the name's going to escape me at the moment but it will come to me. And in this book he really wrote about the history of Saskatchewan from about 1850 to around 1900. It was an exciting time on the prairies. And the first Dominion Land Survey was part of that, as was the arrival of the North West Mounted Police in this area which was known as the North-West Territories at those times. It's also the time in our history when the numbered treaties were signed with the First Nations, all around at the same time. And I believe Treaty 1 was signed in 1871, and that's the year of the first Dominion Land Survey.

So the story that he tells in the book is of these surveyors. They were incredibly organized and skilled people, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They had all the plans and supplies they needed to get

them through a harsh winter in the prairies, and certainly through all the plagues of prairie fires and, you know, blizzards, all the weather hazards that were present in those days which continue to this day of course.

And these surveyors were in fact so organized that in his book, Garry Wilson describes their organizational skills as that which actually saved the North West Mounted Police who were not quite as organized and, in fact, horribly organized according to the book, where they were short on food, short on horses, short on supplies. And if it wasn't for the supplies that had been prepared by the Dominion Land Survey, I think the North West Mounted Police story would be quite a different story to this day.

So we start out with the treaties being signed. We have a vast tract of land known as the North-West Territories which was established by I think it was King . . . It was in 1670 when the first charter for the Hudson's Bay Company was established and that was the area that they were given the rights to treat in and trade in. So by the time settlement was coming, they knew that it was important to have these land surveys done, and the whole goal of the land surveys was to provide for orderly settlement of the dominion lands in the prairies.

We had the treaties being signed because I think the government of the day obviously recognized that orderly settlement would include treating with the First Nations and so that's a proud part of our history. I think when we actually had the treaties signed, I won't get into the subsequent treatment of the treaties in the years following, but certainly at the time of the treaty commission in the 1870s when Treaty Commissioner Morris came out and entered into solemn treaties with the First Nations, this was an important part of our history and one that is still considered sacred by many First Nations. And those of us who are from European heritage, it also is our treaty as well. And the Dominion Land Survey then was in a place to take place.

And you may hear of people talking about the Torrens system and that's the system of land survey that was established in Saskatchewan. And there was a fellow named Mr. Torrens from Australia actually and it was his brainchild that we should have this orderly system of land as we do these surveys. So what they chose to do was establish townships which are 36 square miles, so 6 miles by 6 miles, and as the refinement from the first survey to the second survey took place, there was the establishment of road allowances which many of us are familiar with in the farming communities where there is a grid, a rectilinear grid that establishes that every quarter section in Saskatchewan would have access to a public road allowance, usually about 66 feet wide. And that, if you've ever driven on a gravel road in Saskatchewan or many of our highways as well, but most of our gravel road grids are based on that township arrangement with the road allowances.

So it really was a remarkably significant time in our history. And part of what the dominion land surveyors did is they actually physically took these . . . They had hip chains, they had their chains and they would go out and measure the land and put in stakes. And many of those stakes are still in the ground. In fact, it's illegal to remove a surveyor's pin to this date. And one of the things I enjoyed the most in my former career as a

Crown counsel for the federal government was I had to do a lot of research into those original township plans because I was involved with interpreting the subsequent Indian reserves that were surveyed at about the same time.

And those maps and those records, those township plans, are an amazing record of history and of the geography of the day. So you can see all the little potholes that existed, the water. They would describe the hills and the type of terrain, and they're actually written in text on the dominion . . . on the township surveys themselves. And because of Information Services Corporation, you or me or anyone sitting in their own homes can actually sign up online and order up these grants and have a look at them. And they really are fascinating pieces of our history.

So we have our original township grants. Then we have the actual land patents that were issued to people like my grandfather in 1909 who came out west from Nova Scotia looking for a better life. And those patents were issued to him, and then he was able to take his land patent, and once he proved up his 160 acres, he could get his first homestead grant. And those grants are another incredibly significant part of the history of this province. And our family had a proud moment in 2009 when we received the 100-year family farm certificate from Information Services Corporation, and we all got a copy of the original land grant that my grandfather received when he proved his homestead.

So you can see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the function and purpose of the land titles offices is an integral part of the history of our province, and it also is an integral part of our function of government. And this is one of the things I think that's most important when you look at Information Services Corporation is, what is its function? Although it became a Crown corporation, it inherited the rich history of every one of our dominion land offices. I believe there was at least maybe even 16 originally. And these offices were the place where the original settlers went. And they came from all over North America, Europe, and they came to be part of our Saskatchewan history.

And one of the things they have at Information Services Corporation, if you're ever over at their offices, is they have Gabriel Dumont's original land grant. And they show . . . It's framed and it's hanging there, as I think Mr. Diefenbaker's original land grant.

So these are, for me, important ties to the past. And we know what happens when people forget their past. They often say history repeats itself. So we want to make sure that these types of documents, this part of our history . . . And you could actually go to . . . All those paper documents are still retained, and they're in storage. And they're all here in Regina in one large warehouse. And as the electrification — not electrification, the creating of electronic records — proceeds with all of these documents, they eventually will be converted to an electronic record as well, but you don't always get the same quality with the electronic record as you do with the original document. And quite often the scanner doesn't pick up on all the nuances, for example Gabriel Dumont's original survey of his township. And his patent was a river lot.

And that's another important part of our history at St. Laurent and at One Arrow and Batoche — all those Métis people received 160 acres, but those were river lots because in those days the river was still an incredibly important route for transportation. And that's another part of our history that's protected by this public institution that we now call Information Services Corporation.

So it's those types of things, I think, that we tend to forget when we rush into privatizing Crown corporations, and we see that with the agenda of this particular government. And I guess that's something that is disheartening, as I said earlier. And it's of grave concern to the people of Saskatchewan who recognize the importance of public registries and the important function and role that they play.

The second piece that I think is very protected by the public nature of this registry is our land surveys. And again as we have the whole series of land titles and as you do search, you see the history of each parcel of land that's been owned. You can also see the stories of towns and communities. And in fact the community that I live in, Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, was part of the Temperance Colony that first came when John Lake came to Saskatoon and met with Chief Whitecap of the Dakota Sioux. And Chief Whitecap assisted him in settling there. They created the Temperance Colony, and that is exactly where my home is located now in Saskatoon.

And I was able to do a historical search and find every owner of my home back to the day when the original township plan went through and the 36 square miles were created. And I can see . . . And I have the file at home that tells me. And I could certainly do that online. When I first did the search, I had to do it by paper.

So the benefits and advantages of having this done in the electronic format — it's now accessible through the Internet — is an incredible, incredible achievement. And I think Information Services Corporation needs to be commended for all the work that was done in the beginning and certainly the work they've done over the years. Not only is that a great service to the public in terms of the history of our province, but the second piece that's going to be missing if this bill goes through is that this corporation has been returning significant returns back to the public purse.

So we know it took a lot to get it established, but over the years the amount of money that this company has returned back to the people of Saskatchewan is significant. And to just privatize that is something that I think is a shame and it's short-circuiting or shortchanging the people of Saskatchewan because they deserve to benefit from this public registry. It was created by public dollars. And the earlier establishment of land title offices, it was all on public dollars. And all of a sudden the benefit of that is going to be sold off to shareholders. And I'm not sure it's even going to be valued properly because that kind of information wouldn't even be taken into account by the bean-counters when they're putting a dollar value on this company.

[15:30]

We understand that this Crown made \$17.2 million in profit, I think, in 2011, and of that money, a \$15.5 million dividend was

paid back to taxpayers. So it's really giving us over \$1 million a month right now in terms of the profits. And this is something that this government is turning its nose up at. They say it's not necessary, and they figure that it's more important . . . And I'll look in a minute at the preamble in the new bill that outlines their philosophical agenda here. And they just figure that that's not good enough for the people of Saskatchewan and somehow only private individuals should be able to benefit from that.

I will speak to the bill itself right now and maybe go through a few of the clauses that we find in the bill. So the first thing — and this is something I think my colleague has also pointed out, from Regina Lakeview — is that the use of the preamble in legislation is an important flag by any government because it's not used very often. So when governments do this, there's a special message that they want to send out to the people. And so this bill has a preamble in it, which is in and of itself somewhat unusual.

So the first statement in here is one that I'm not sure where this government got this idea because I don't agree with it. It says it's “. . . desirable and in the public interest that voting shares of Information Services Corporation be offered for sale to members of the public.” Well, Mr. Speaker, I would disagree wholeheartedly with that statement. It is not in the public interest to offer sale of this corporation to individual members of the public. It is not in the public interest to turn down over \$1 million a month to the general revenues of this province to help with important programs that this government should be focusing on. And it's simply short-sighted, and I think an ideological approach to privatization that doesn't make sense for this particular corporation. I don't think it's been thought through carefully. And certainly the minister's agenda, he hasn't been very vocal or articulate on it; he hasn't been clear why he thinks this is in the public interest.

It goes on to say that it's desirable and in the public interest that the government and the corporation enter into an agreement to allow this corporation to continue as a provider of the functions of the registry. And there's a few caveats that the preamble insists on which are appropriate, the integrity of the registries and the rights and protections be carried on, they're not going to be adversely affected by the sale of the voting shares. Whether or not that's possible when you privatize a company, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think remains to be seen. So certainly the intent of clause (a) of the preamble appears to be on the right track. But unfortunately, I think, we will see what history has to say about whether or not it's achievable.

Secondly, the decisions of ISC with respect to the registry activities and functions would continue to be subject to government policy, direction, and review — again a noble intent. But again, when you have privatized something, you lose a lot of control. And although it's easy to say, I think it's going to be harder to do, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And certainly we in the opposition will be holding the government to account to ensure that this information and these public registries are protected despite the fact that it's being privatized.

There is an interesting part in clause (c) where the government will continue to own the information. So I don't understand how you can sell something and still own it. So there's a little bit of explaining to be done there, and we'll continue to watch

how the government intends to own records and data when they've actually privatized the company.

And finally "that the Government of Saskatchewan will continue to operate the vital statistics registry." Vital statistics is of course one of the registries that Information Services Corporation has taken on, and it's absolutely essential that these remain in the public. So if the Government of Saskatchewan's going to continue to operate that, that makes sense. What doesn't make sense is why the government would continue to operate one small part of this company and not all of it because they're just creating more work and division, where the original intent of the company was that indeed it would deal with all these registries because on economies of scale and efficiencies it made sense. This does not make sense, Mr. Speaker.

So the preamble goes on, and it says again — so I think the emphasis is trying to make us believe that this is good — again it's desirable and in the public interest, that the sale of the shares will protect the public interest while promoting the successful operation of an independent company. Again the logic of that escapes me. I don't know how, when you sell something to private people, you can protect the public interest.

So we'll look to the minister to explain that or perhaps maybe the head of Information Services Corporation could give us a little more information on how that might actually look because, to me, when you sell something to somebody privately, it's hard to protect the public interest. It's contrary to itself.

The Act then goes into the first part which is some preliminary matters. There's a number of definitions. One of interest of course is the idea of golden share. So we don't really have a classic privatization here where a company is sold. And again this is a weird hybrid that this government is establishing here where they're creating something called the golden share which the private purchasers won't have any ability to share in. It's a special share that would have a lot of veto powers. This is the share that the government's retaining. And this golden share will do a number of things which I think in the terms of protecting the public interest are appropriate. Whether it's appropriate in terms of privatizing a company again, I'm not sure it makes sense but they will veto.

The veto that the golden share carries with it is "a transfer of ISC's registered office to a jurisdiction outside of Saskatchewan." So it protects the head office of ISC. The second thing that it does is provides a veto for the transfer of any of ISC's head office operations outside of Saskatchewan, so none of the registered offices or their operations can be moved outside of Saskatchewan. And the third thing that's prohibited or vetoed under the golden share is the sale or lease or exchange of ISC's property. And ISC does have a substantial amount of property in terms of its offices here in Saskatchewan.

And the fourth part, or the second part of the golden share clause is something that says it's "carrying the right of the holder of that share to vote, by separate vote as a class, on any proposal: to apply for continuance in a jurisdiction outside Saskatchewan; or amend the articles." So basically it makes sure that again the company itself won't be moved outside of Saskatchewan and that the articles can't be amended. The

articles of the company can't be amended without the consent of the golden shareholder.

There's a number of other definitions that I won't go into today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There's a number of rules that are established in section 3, in section 4. And these are the rules about affiliates, controls, and votes. And then rule 4 is about associates. Pardon me, section 4 is rules regarding associates. And then the part II gets into the actual structure of the company.

So what happens here is that ISC in section 5 is removed from *The Crown Corporations Act*, and it just becomes an ordinary business corporation. Of course this ordinary business corporation, which is the normal route of privatization, is not ordinary because there are a number of other clauses in here that overrule *The Business Corporations Act*.

So despite the fact it's been continued as a company, a regular company under *The Business Corporations Act*, there's all kinds of strings attached here within the bill and that's the way this government is distinguishing its sale from the ordinary privatization that would occur.

Again, Mr. Speaker, these were the things that were explained to us in the minister's comments when he introduced the bill, and we are waiting to see what kind of take-up he's going to have because it's difficult to understand what the values of these shares are going to be and certainly what the uptake is going to be by the members of the public.

Now there's just a few other points about this bill that I think need to be raised at this point. First of all is the record of the Sask Party on privatization. And we have a number of promises again that were made that aren't being kept. We know that this government . . . Well you look at the 2003 election, when there was promises made regarding privatization that have now been broken, basically.

Let's look at what happened during the Throne Speech for example, Mr. Speaker. There wasn't a single word mentioned about this company either in the election of 2011 or in the Throne Speech of 2011 or 2012. Well this bill was introduced already. So the problem is that this government — and we've seen it over and over again — is a government of hoisting surprises on the public. You would think that if there's something as important as a privatization of a Crown on their agenda that this government would have at least given the public notice during the election itself or even during the Throne Speech.

So the hidden agenda is clearly there, Mr. Speaker. And that's the way this government operates, is by stealth. We see the Premier just dangling this thought to the media, and then we hear through the media that the legislation was already drafted before any members of the public or certainly the members of this Assembly had any opportunity to comment on the notion itself. This is a surprise, and this is certainly not what the people of Saskatchewan voted for.

We have a government that's selling a Crown that turns in over \$1 million a month to the public purse. This is a government who's having trouble managing the money that they are

receiving. They're introducing — again last Friday, big surprise — a bunch of new fees that are being introduced to increase the costs for farmers and business people in this province. Another \$8 million is being gouged out of the pockets of farmers in the community pastures, the Saskatchewan community pastures. And also the lease fees that farmers are paying are being increased significantly. I'm hearing already from people out in the rural areas about their concerns about these fees. And then — surprise — there's a bunch more fees for people wanting to register a prospectus with the Securities Commission. We see a government that's desperately looking for cash, and yet what are they doing? They're selling off a Crown corporation that provided \$15 million and more in 2011. And we'll see what the dividend was, Mr. Speaker, in 2012 once it comes out.

This is just not smart growth, Mr. Speaker, and unfortunately the privatization agenda seems to be rearing its ugly head over and over again. And this is sort of the most egregious example of it since this government came into power. But as I said earlier, this is not something that this government was promising.

There is a quote that I want to find; I think it's from 2007. This is the current Premier of this province, in 2007 when asked by the media, the quote says, and this is in a media scrum, August 21, 2007. The question to the Premier was, would you be willing to support the sell-off of some aspects of Crown ownership? And this Premier's response was no. The Premier said, "We have said they're not for sale." That's a quote. "We have said they're not for sale, that they won't be privatized, and that's exactly what we mean." So, Mr. Speaker, I wish somebody could explain to me how this quote from the Premier from 2007 translates into the sale of Information Services Corporation. It does not fit. It is not what this Premier promised to the people of Saskatchewan. He's turning his back on them. He's doing it by surprise, and he did not let the people of Saskatchewan know in the election campaign. He deliberately did not talk about this, and in 2007 he clearly indicated that they were not for sale.

So what does that mean, Mr. Speaker, when we have a Premier who says one thing and does something else? We saw it in question period today where he was asked about why he was doing certain things he's doing. He refused to answer the questions, and he chose to not take the responsibility of giving the people of Saskatchewan his true views. And this is just another example of that. And I think the people of Saskatchewan are starting to figure it out, and they're concerned. We are hearing about that.

We know that once it's privatized, ISC . . . Now we see, I know the minister has often talked about what's going on in other provinces. What he neglects to point out is that in BC [British Columbia] where there is a corporation running, independent corporation running the land titles, it's a not-for-profit corporation, Mr. Speaker. It's still one that's owned by . . . Or it's not a shareholder-based corporation. It's a completely different entity with a different purpose, so that doesn't equate when he talks about BC.

In Ontario it is privatized to a certain extent, not in the same way as this proposal is at all, though. It's a different beast, and I don't think it's comparable. So we just need to look about

what's right for the people of Saskatchewan, and I think that the track record that we've seen from the land titles systems, the way the land registries are set up, and even all the GIS [geographic information system] work that's been done since Information Services Corporation came into being.

[15:45]

You know, I was fortunate in 2003, as part of my practice with the Government of Canada, to be seconded to Information Services Corporation as a Crown land expert. And one of the things I think people don't realize with Information Services Corporation, not only is it the recipient and the depository for privately held interests. It is also, the registrar of Information Services Corporation is also responsible for abstract directory. The abstract directory is that directory where all of the government's land is registered. Federal government and provincial government lands that have never been patented, there's never been titles raised — the registrar for Information Services Corporation is now responsible for those lands or for the registration and the records relating to those lands.

And this is something that I have no idea why it would be appropriate for a privately-owned company to manage the records of the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan. This is just not a function, I think, that a registry should even be privatized, and certainly this directory of abstract lands is something that, I think, the government needs to look at. The government needs to look at their own holdings, particularly Agriculture which has a lot of Crown land, Environment has a lot of Crown land, and all the northern administration district. All of those lands are lands that the government's responsible for. And to turn the registry over, the directory over to a privately-held interest of Information Services Corporation is simply not in the best interests of the public lands that this government is responsible for.

So that's just another reason why I think this hasn't been carefully thought through. We don't see anything in the bill that identifies what's going to happen to the abstract registry . . . sorry, the abstract directory. I have to get the words right. It's the abstract directory, and whether or not the registrar will still continue to exist and serve the functions that they did. I know that the registrar of land titles was always a very important position in the public service, and again to lose that position and see it become corporatized, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is something that needs serious examination. And certainly I think once we get this bill to committee, those are the kinds of questions that we're going to have to ask because it doesn't appear this government has thought about them at all.

So again the history that this corporation is responsible for maintaining, the fact that this corporation has been highly successful and turned a great rate of profit to the people of Saskatchewan, the fact that this government promised in 2007 that it was not going to privatize, and yet we see them go back on that promise, we see them sneak this into the legislative agenda without raising it through the Throne Speech process or even in the election process. It should have been one of their planks in their platform so the people knew what was coming. But no, it was a surprise on us last October, and through the media and through a leak, I mean, the bill was already drafted before the review of the asset was completed. And this minister

obviously had an agenda that was well under way before any of the things he said he was looking at.

So I think people have cause to be concerned. And I think we have a lot of questions that we're going to want to ask once we get an opportunity to sit with the minister and his staff and the people from ISC in committee. And I was looking forward to being able to do that as critic for this portfolio, but my colleagues will, my colleague from Regina Lakeview is now going to be responsible for this. So I will look forward to his questions that the minister will be . . . or that he will be asking the ministers at that time.

At this point, Mr. Deputy Minister, I think we are now prepared to move this bill to committee, and I would propose that that's what we do.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure that Bill No. 69, the information services Act be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — It's carried.

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

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This bill stands referred to the committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

#### Bill No. 48

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff that **Bill No. 48 — *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in on debate on Bill No. 48, *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Amendment Act, 2012*, definitely is an interesting bill coming before the House. And it's amending, I guess, provisions and it's to do with the, I think, jurisdiction of federal-provincial boundary.

And I think some of the provinces now, the federal government has turned over . . . Instead of having duplicate services and using resources in two ways, I think government's trying to find a way where provinces meet the requirements or meet the conditions that the federal government has put out. They will turn the jurisdiction of monitoring, and this is what I think it is, of monitoring, ensuring the reduction, certain targets that the federal government had wanted.

And you know, when you look at this bill, and I guess everything will have to come out in the end, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Clearly there is provision here — and this is what the provincial government is asking for in this Legislative Assembly — to amend the Act, to be able to take on the ruling and I guess the provision for monitoring greenhouse gases in the province where they would have the jurisdiction turning it over. Having said that, we see some of the targets that the Sask Party government said they would achieve and we've seen them reduce them. And if I'm clear, people out in the communities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are very concerned.

Environment and protecting our lakes, our rivers, our source of water for human consumption, people take that very serious — our air, our trees. In northern Saskatchewan — I want to talk about that because I think it's so important — people want to make sure we protect our lakes. They want to make sure the rivers, they want to make sure the wildlife, our trees, the quality, the culture of life, to make sure the animals can survive, our commercial fisherman. But we see concerns raised by our elders, by traditional people who live off the land. And they're talking about their concerns around the table and you'll have stories. And you hear about the concerns they're having and you see some of the damage that they see. And they ask those questions; they're wondering. And they say this with the most sincere for their next generation. They worry about for their grandchildren, for the next generation. What are we doing in a society? What are we doing?

So there are so many people concerned about our environment and the quality of life that will be there for my grandchildren, and many of the members' in here grandchildren, and the next generation. What are we doing? Do we know the impact? And are we trying clearly, are we trying clearly to take care of our environment for the next generation? And we're just not talking about the next generation. Is it 50 years? We want to make sure there is a plan, there is an opportunity for our young people to live off the land, to hunt, fish, to go and enjoy the rivers, the lakes, to enjoy safe drinking water.

So we see all these concerns being raised. And you know there's a movement and I want to talk a little bit about the movement, the Idle No More movement. And if you talk about some of the concerns that have been raised by many groups — and I've gone to support them, whether it's walk, whether to hear some of the words, some of the concern — and you know, it isn't always about themselves. It's about all of Canada, all of Saskatchewan, our next generation — whether they're Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal — the citizens. And they care about everyone's grandchildren.

And to hear some of the concerns where they see the change from the Harper government and then you see what's going on and why the Idle No More movement is moving. And you know, it's the Bill C-45 that's going on, and there's such a concern from so many grassroots people — such a movement, such compassion from people saying, here's what we're concerned about; here's the challenges. They understand you have to look at certain regulations and laws and bills, and they understand that. And they're not opposed to that, from what I've heard so far and if I'm clearly understanding what I'm seeing. They're concerned about the protection being taken away, so much being given up, so much power being taken



away from Canadian people given to politicians, whether it's the pipelines . . . So this omnibus bill is huge, and the impact . . . And they're trying to bring the awareness to the everyday citizen to understand. Are you aware what can happen to the next generation? Are you aware about our waters, our environment? Are you aware about the lands, protecting our lands, the air?

So there's so many concerns. And I commend the Idle No More movement for what it's done. You know, to see the movement and the groups where I've listened to and the individuals that I've talked to and I watch on Facebook — just amazing to watch. And I've been to some of their rallies where — it's youth, whether it's our elders, whether it's families — you have so many individuals just truly wanting to make the government stop and look at this bill and to stop the damage that they can do. And that's what individuals are asking, and there's so many of them. It's such a large movement. It's amazing to watch. They're not going away. This government cannot, cannot close their eyes, put their heads in the sand and say, we don't see it, because the movement's all over. It's not only in Saskatchewan and our provinces, but it's all over. It's gone . . . So many other countries are involved and they're supporting the Idle No More movement.

And I think at the end of the day it's the same, this bill here that we're dealing with today. Bill 45, Mr. Deputy Speaker, speaks to some of that and the concern that people have. You can turn over the monitoring of it, you can turn over some of the powers from the federal government to a provincial government, but it's about ensuring . . . And people want to trust. And I've said that many times in this House, people want to trust. They want to think their government looks after the lands, whether it's protecting the dollars, whether it's protecting our environment, whether it's protecting the citizens, whether you're a senior, whether you're a student making sure you have a good quality education, making sure you have a bus route, STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], in their communities so that seniors can get to their medical appointments.

There are so many things that governments have an opportunity and they have the decisions to make whether it's going to be right for our citizens. Or the government makes decisions based on its own policies, and as a bulldozer or bullheaded, and they move on it. And they don't consult. They don't talk to anyone. They just go ahead and do it. People are watching and people are very concerned.

And the Idle No More movement is not going away. It's a young population of First Nations, Métis, of non-Aboriginals together in solid support. And there's many young people getting involved. And I'm amazed to see it, the strength they have. And I've said this when I've talked to the youth: they have power. You have the strength. You have the power if they will make sure that they get out and vote. And I've said this to them, send a message in protest — vote. Make sure you get out and vote. Send a message to the governments that are telling you they're going to change things without consulting you. Send them a message. You can do that. You have power, and I'm watching it. And it's amazing to watch the movement. And the young people in our province and in Canada and around the world, they're idle no more. And it's amazing that word, idle no more. And they're moving, and I respect. It's peaceful. And

watching the way they're trying to use social media, the way they're addressing the issues.

And some of them it's truly from the heart, and they want to make sure they do their part. And they're not going to sit back and let governments jeopardize their children, their grandchildren's future, or their future. They're not going to sit back. They're going to wake up. They're going to make sure they have the ID [identification]. They're going to make sure they have the ability to cast a vote, and they're going to show it. And I encourage them, get out and vote in protest of governments that are passing legislation and laws and bills that impact you without consulting with you, with having no respect for you. Send them a message — a strong message. Don't sit back any more.

[16:00]

You know, we think about a bill like this and — you know, clearly, Bill 48 — you watch this bill. And I know it's going to work out in the end and that the government will say, well we're going to amend it. And they're going to go ahead at the end of the day. We'll debate this bill, how important this bill is, we will. We'll make sure we do what we can do, and as official opposition, we have and we will. And we'll ask a lot of questions in committee. And we'll ask the government to explain for the people that have asked us because the Idle No More movement, because of the Aboriginal people, our young people, our First Nations, our Métis, our non-Aboriginal supporters who are out there saying, this can't happen. We can't allow governments to just take us for granted, take the next generation.

There is so much concern, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with this bill that people are concerned watching it. And I tell, this is clear.

You know, you talk about individuals, and there are members who may hold a Sask Party membership, members in this Sask Party that hold Conservative memberships as well with the Harper government. They're a federal Conservatives and they carry a membership. That's fine. The people need to find out who they are. Those individuals in our province, you need to find out. See the connection: how many Sask Party members hold a federal Conservative membership? Do they? They need to ask. And if you're in an area, they need to find out and do a little bit of work. And they need to research that and say, who, who is it?

And that's really good . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . There, thank you. There is a process, and I'm glad the member says that. They can go and look at the Conflict Of Interest Commissioner. It's part of the process. We all know you have to disclose that. I'm glad. So a lot of them are members of the Conservative party. That's good, she says, but they disclosed that. That's great to know.

So we now can do that, and we'll pass that information on. I think that's good. People need to know when we talk about individuals who are concerned about the Conservative government doing what they're doing, the damage they're going to do. The Idle No More movement . . . And there's many people watching, to know that those members opposite are card carrying and they're telling, advising them to go ahead and do

the research to find out. Well that's good. I hope they do. And I will encourage them that are watching out there — the Idle No More movement people, the youth, the people that are concerned — research that. Find out how many of them are card-carrying Conservative members and find out, and make sure you do the work. Remember who they support, and see if they support you and why.

So let me make it very clear: this is an important bill. This is an important bill, Bill 48. It's got a lot of concerns from people watching it, unsure what's going to happen. It's a trust thing. I've said earlier, it's a trust thing.

So when you have . . . Whether it's our trappers in northern Saskatchewan who do an excellent job, and we have an industry that's starting to see some true benefit in the price of fur, and they live traditional lifestyles. And you have a government, and for instance the Sask Party government sends out letters to them and, you know, to the trappers when the trappers ask to be consulted and be considered before you come out to their traditional territories whether they're being impacted.

What happens? You know, they get a response from the minister and from the government. Well if you're a commercial trapper, we won't, under our framework for co-operation, the framework that the Sask Party developed, that FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] has rejected, the Métis nation has rejected their framework for duty to consult and accommodate has been rejected by the Aboriginal people who they say will trigger the mechanism. If you're a commercial trapper, well it's not going to work.

Well I'll tell you something and I'll make it very clear. There are trappers who live a traditional life, and they're out there and they eat the meat from the animals that they catch and they live the traditional life. And yes, they use the fur for themselves and they make their clothing, and some of them do that. It's amazing to watch the traditional life. And I have respect for those trappers, the northern people. And there's trappers in the South as well, but the northern trappers are the ones that I represent, I'm talking about.

And when you see that . . . So they take a little bit of their fur, and then they're going to go sell them to provide them for, whether it's for coffee, flour, for traps, to provide them with the opportunity to go back to the land, their traditional land, where there might be generations, generations of trapping, living off the land. And then the government turns around, says, well if you're a commercial trapper we don't . . . The mechanism will not be triggered because you're a commercial trapper. Well I think if that's what they're using, that is a terrible injustice that they're doing to the northern trappers of Saskatchewan, and any trapper. They deserve more respect than that government's giving them. And they should be ashamed of themselves.

Now let me get back to this. It is clearly Bill 48. And I've been using examples of how people are watching and making it very clear the concern that are out there in northern Saskatchewan. And I've said, and I think we have to be very clear from the people back home. They want the government to know of their environment, their traditional lifestyle, the life they have, the rivers, the lakes. They want to share that with all Saskatchewan residents. They want to share that with Canadian residents.

They want to share that with individuals that come to our province, to come and see the tourism. They want people to invest to come to see our lakes, to see our beautiful sceneries, to enjoy a good life.

But you know, you have some northern communities that are very concerned, and I've had individuals tell me in their homes. I have someone who's very close to me who lives in Camsell Portage, talks about the winds. And when these winds come from a certain direction, there's a film, and this ugly film comes on their trees, on their house. And she said it was getting worse over the years, it's been getting worse and worse. And that's the concern that the elders are talking about, the pollution. And whether we talk about greenhouse gases or we talk about the forest and we talk about the fires and the damage, and we see the ash on the river. And I was talking to some of the commercial fishermen and they say, you know, even the forest fires, they're allowed to burn, and when we don't respond in a proper way to manage the forest, and if we don't use the resources we have to extinguish fires, to put them out the way that it used to work to clearly . . . Those fires get so big, and then we see the damage it does with the ash, and the fish eat the ash. And I was listening to some of the fishermen saying . . . You know, it was amazing. Some of the elders tell me their concerns, that it does impact the quality and it does impact fish when you have a fire going on. There is damage.

And I'm not an expert at it. But when I have elders telling me and I have the commercial fisher telling me about some of the concerns they have about that and why it's so important about this fire . . . So when we talk about greenhouse gases and the impact that's happening in northern Saskatchewan and the rest of the province, we have to do a better job. And we have to make sure we're consulting with our traditional land users. They are the ones. They know. They know what's going on in our environment. They have been there for years. They listened and they have so much wisdom.

But we see a government, a Sask Party government who doesn't like to consult First Nations, Métis, doesn't like to consult the citizens of our province. Instead they push ahead on their agenda. And we see what happens when they're bullheaded and they push ahead on their agenda. And we see the challenges.

And for the people in our province who are suffering under the Sask Party, I say this. We have a leadership race. We had that this weekend, and one of the members opposite was there at our convention, being in the media, which is good, and maybe said some good words, and that's great. I didn't see the story, so I just assume it was all positive because there was so much excitement, unity. There was so much coming together. I'm very happy to see . . . yes, hard work done by everyone. And we heard some of the story. Our Leader of the Official Opposition said today clearly, coming together, and that's what he's going to work on.

So when I say that . . . We look at the issues and the people will hold this government to account for the actions or the inaction of the Sask Party government to respect and consult with the people of our great province. They will hold those members to account, the backbenchers. They sit there and, you know, it's fine. You're here now, and I know sometimes they're pretty proud of their accomplishments. I congratulate them. I've done

that when they came into the House. But I tell you, when you turn your back on Saskatchewan people, they will send you a message. When you don't fight for Prince Albert and their bridge, when you don't fight for what your community is asking you to fight as a member of this House — and we heard today interesting questions at Moose Jaw and the hospital — you will pay a price for that. You will pay a price.

So government makes its decisions, and on Bill 48, the government's going to make some decisions. But I have made examples of how our communities will be impacted by this bill. We don't know all the details. And it's a trust thing. People want to know. But I want to, for the record today, make it clear that we want to make sure our environment is protected. We want to make sure for my grandchildren and all citizens of this province, for the next generation, their grandchildren, there is protection, that we are taking it, we aren't spending today. And we see the way the resources have been spent, record revenues coming into government. And they've spent, spent, spent. And now we'll see.

You know, you have an option as a government. And you know, the people have entrusted, and I said that, on how government's going to spend money — whether it's \$22,000 on hardwood flooring for the Premier's office or it's 92,000 public dollars to use out of caucus or wherever. That's your money. Yes, the people have given it to you. It's entrusted. And you want to run advertising telling them to get ready to tighten up, or whatever you're using that for to tell them. Maybe you wanted to . . . well you sent the message out there so that people's expectations are a little down or, oh well, it wasn't as bad as . . . whatever.

But I'm just saying clearly, Mr. Speaker, the people have entrusted the Sask Party government and those backbenchers and the ministers and the Premier and the government of the day with their resources, while many people are struggling in this province to make ends meet, to pay their bills, to pay their rent. We've seen individuals come here, seniors, their concerns.

So when we see a government taking money . . . And Bill 48, I want to show the example, Bill 48. The government has the choices clearly to use the resources they have the way they want. And their priorities have been — but they never told the public — it will be millions for more politicians, millions for more politicians when our seniors are asked to pay more for their prescriptions. When they need to call an ambulance to get them to a hospital, you will be asked to pay more. People on fixed income having trouble to make ends meet to provide food, pay their rent.

You know, when you listen to some of the stories . . . And I know they're not the only ones struggling. We have people who live in poverty. We see the record, this government's choice. We see the choices this government has when it comes to the Aboriginal population. They had a choice, just like on Bill 48 they have a choice. They're going to make the decisions. And I want to make it clear. I want to show the examples. Government has made their choices. We have to ask all the questions.

And we see the struggling, the middle class, even the middle class who's had a pretty good life in our province under the

previous administration, under the previous NDP. Now we see the cost going up and they're struggling. We see the hardship that the middle class is feeling today, and I've heard it. I've heard the stories and the struggles and how they're trying to make ends, to keep their kids in sports, to keep the quality of life they've been used to. They're making it hard. They're asked to give and they're asked to tighten their belt while we see the government making choices and spending money in ways that does not take care of the middle class, does not take care of their kids, does not take care of their future. It puts them in more.

And you look at . . . And again, I want to go back to this. So here we have a government who has some choices on Bill 48, greenhouse gases. Will they provide the resources to make sure our lakes are protected, to make sure there is quality of life in Saskatchewan and Canada?

So when we see all those concerns and we see our trappers, our northern people, we see our farmers and the rural areas and you hear from the rural farmers and, you know, I may not because I'm in northern Saskatchewan, but it's nice to talk to some of the farmers. And this weekend I got to talk to some of the farmers who are struggling out there. They're not the big farmers. They're just small family farms trying to make ends meet and the struggles they talk about. The struggles they're talking about. And we have record revenue and they're having so many struggles in the rural area as well. And I do, I feel for those individuals and I say to them: the government, we have to do better for you and we will do better for you. It's not easy.

So when I see governments making decisions with the resources that they're having, pushing ahead, not consulting, not respecting, not utilizing the good resources of our province — whether it's our rural farmers, whether it's our northern communities, whether it's our urban centres — clearly this government has lost touch with the people of this great province. And they will pay a price. Mark my words. They will pay a price.

And when I look at this bill again, I go back to it, this government has some options. I hope at the end of the day in committee we can encourage the government to do the right things. We're willing to work with the government. The leader, our Leader of the Official Opposition, has made it very clear he's willing to work with the government. And we've shown that, Mr. Speaker, time and time again. We will work with the members opposite to try to find the right answer, try to find . . . And we've encouraged them to consult, to talk with individuals, to make sure together the people of our good province benefit. That's the job of all 58 of the MLAs in this House is to make sure we do the right things for the people of this good province. We owe them that, and they deserve no less than that.

[16:15]

Now at this time I'm going to . . . and I'm prepared . . . And I know I had more to say, but my colleagues are telling me I've made a good point . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh, now he's telling me I should go on. So I'm going to go on a little more because I want to use some comparisons here with Bill 48.

**An Hon. Member:** — What are you talking about?

**Mr. Vermette:** — And yes, we have members over there that are yelling out, what are you talking about? That's just the problem. That's exactly what the people of this province are saying. That's exactly it. That's what they're saying. What are you talking about? He hasn't heard the serious things I've said? Members want to say stuff like that? These are times where people are truly suffering, and you have outbursts like that? Is that the respect, Mr. Speaker, that people deserve in this good province? "What are you talking about?"

I'm talking about people and their feelings, and they're struggling in this province. They're not doing as good as many. So you have . . . You know, sometimes, Mr. Speaker, I wonder why, why can't individuals just hear, hear what the people are saying? But no, they want to be stubborn — bullheadedness — and they don't want to hear. They don't want to admit they're wrong. It's always their way. Well just remember, Mr. Speaker, they'll pay a price. Mark my words. The people of this good province . . . They will, they will, they will pay a price.

Now all people are asking for is them to take good care of the resources that the people have given them, entrusted them with. They've asked them to clearly take good care. And I've had my colleague, the member from Athabasca, clearly say, the people have asked you one thing: just take care of the resources. Take care of our resources. Do right with them. Use them wisely; use them to benefit all. Make it fair for all Saskatchewan people — not just some people, all Saskatchewan people, clearly.

And we have members that want to yell out because they don't understand that. That's the problem. They have lost touch with Saskatchewan people. And they will, they will get that message. Mark my words on that. We're going to work hard in the official opposition to bring the concerns of citizens in this province, of organizations, of the business world, the small business that are struggling, the rural farmers that are struggling. There's a lot of people out in this province that are struggling.

And sometimes when you have a government that takes people for granted and thinks they own that area, the people will send a message. The people will send a message. And this government one day maybe . . . [inaudible] . . . understand, will not have the 49 seats over there because you didn't earn them. And the people gave you the trust, and they wanted you to take care of them. And that's what's going to happen, Mr. Speaker.

Just like Bill 48, just like Bill 48, just like Bill 48 as I referred to. Clearly these concerns are of the people of our province, and I'm here to express the concerns that those people have. And they can yell and scream, and they may not like what I'm saying, but I'm being told by citizens who care. And they're not all living in the Cumberland constituency that have shared this with me. They live in many of our rural areas, the cities, and the North, and they're concerned about their future, their children's future, and their grandchildren's future. And those members over there should pay attention, should.

Now I'm using examples, Mr. Speaker, to show Bill 48. And I want to make sure . . . The government has the right to make choices, and in here they're going to make some choices. They're proposing some changes that will allow them to take over, I guess, the federal government handing over some of the

jurisdiction to the province. But there are conditions that the federal government has asked the province, you have to meet. And we're going to find out what exactly are those . . . [inaudible] . . . And in there it says individuals have to have the opportunity to bring their concerns forward — individuals.

You know, I wish we would pass a bill that would say the Sask Party has to listen to Saskatchewan citizens, whether you're one, a group, or not, you have to listen. Because they don't listen. That's the problem. So maybe we should come up with a bill that would make them listen.

**An Hon. Member:** — The have-to-listen bill.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Yes. Yes, I like that. And maybe we can bring that forward. But, Mr. Speaker, having a little sense of humour — sometimes you have to have a little sense of humour, and some days, you know, to be fair, on both sides.

And I've said this: we have tried to work in co-operation. And I will always try to work in co-operation when I take care of the people back home. And their concerns are Bill 48, the environment. They're concerned about the environment. They're concerned about the quality of life. They're concerned about where they live.

And it's not just about the environment of the air and water. There are so many things. We look at the environment even in the households, in the poor houses, if you look at the conditions of some of the houses in northern Saskatchewan and rural Saskatchewan and communities where we have people who are clearly saying, we need better housing from our government, a better plan. Enough with the summits. Let's get down to doing some work to make sure there's housing, affordable housing for individuals, you know.

So, Mr. Speaker, I've tried to make it very clear, and I want to again give so much recognition to the young people of our province who have taken up the stand, the Idle No More. And you know, to look at the movement within our own party, with the membership that I'm so proud of, to see such an increase in young members to our party, who are listening, who are raising concerns, who are Idle No More, waking up, Bill 48 that they're concerned. And they're getting on board and they're saying, we're going to make sure we're heard. We're going to make sure we have a voice. You know what? And I want to give credit sometimes where credit is due, and the hard work of my colleagues on this side of the House to hold the government to account for the citizens around here in this beautiful province who bring their . . . whether it's emails, who sign petitions, who bring concerns to the official opposition to raise in the House about the concerns and the way this government doesn't listen.

So we have heard them, and I'm going to encourage them to continue the movement of Idle No More, to bring their concerns forward so we can deal with Bill 48. And Bill 48 clearly is going to allow the government to have some provisions to manoeuvre, to make sure they meet the guidelines of the federal government in order for them to turn over to the provinces the jurisdiction or how to handle the greenhouse gases emission, how to monitor. So the government's going to say before they turn it over to the provinces, there's provisions you have to meet. And the federal government wants to see that.

So this bill will help to meet the federal government's obligation that it can say to the province, you've met that; now we will turn this over to you. And it's talking about using the resources so that you're not duplicating services. So it's not the federal government; it's not the provincial government; you're not both doing it. So co-operation, I guess, in one way, but people are concerned about that, very clearly.

But I want to show examples. Government has the choice, and the government's going to make the choice. And they're going to do things their way because it's the government. And in this bill the government's got some choices. And I know we're going to go in committee and we're going to discuss this bill and we're going to talk about it. And I know my colleagues are going to ask a lot of tough questions and they're going to make sure that those questions are asked because the citizens of our province expect nothing less. And I'm excited for the simple reason, clearly, it's to hold the government to account because that's what the official opposition role is. That's what our role is, and the people expect no less, and we will continue to do that.

But at this time, Mr. Speaker, I think I've got my point across. I could go on longer using examples. But today, you know what? I feel like I've got a chance to talk it out and express some of the frustration and the concerns I've heard from people back home, how they've expressed it to me and their concerns about the future. So at this time I'm prepared to move this bill, Bill 48, to committee.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of the Environment that Bill No. 48, *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Amendment Act, 2012* be read the second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. To which committee shall this bill be referred?

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on the Economy.

**The Speaker:** — Okay. This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

### Bill No. 49

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff that **Bill No. 49 — *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to enter debate here this afternoon as it relates to Bill No. 49, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012*. It's always a pleasure to follow, Mr. Speaker, the member from Cumberland who . . . Anyone who would've been listening to the speech that was just provided would've witnessed great passion from the member from Cumberland, and taking forward the

circumstances that he sees, the real circumstances that he sees in his community and all across the province, the voice that's shared with him and then the voice that he brings to this Assembly. And I'm certainly proud to stand in this Assembly with good people, good members like the member from Cumberland.

As it relates to Bill No. 49, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012*, Mr. Speaker, there's a fair amount of changes that are being brought forward here and it's suggested that the reason these changes have been brought forward are because of the New West Partnership, Mr. Speaker. So it's not because of goals of this government that are driving this legislation, but in fact an agreement that's been entered into and possibly an agreement that's now bound changes to this legislation and to an industry here in our province which begs the question, Mr. Speaker, whether or not this legislation itself and these changes are in fact in the best interests of Saskatchewan people, or whether or not we're having another jurisdiction drive our legislative agenda here in Saskatchewan.

The general statements of the minister on some of these fronts are certainly aspects for which I would support as he lays out some of the objectives. That being said, we really don't know the detail to what's being suggested, potential other consequences as well. I do find it interesting, of course. It's an honour to speak about our forestry sector in Saskatchewan and a proud industry that dates back many, many years in this province — a proud industry where you've had generations involved, Mr. Speaker, and an industry, to be frank though, that is not as strong as it should be, Mr. Speaker, and that often seems to be sort of passing concern to the current government, Mr. Speaker. And when I think of our forestry sector and what it means to our entire province and certainly to northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, I believe it's incumbent of the current government to give more than the passing concern they do to its vibrancy and livelihood, Mr. Speaker.

I know I look at the . . . When I started reading the bill, the government's talking about a reconfigured forestry sector, and I hope the reconfigured forestry sector that they speak of isn't indicative of the really sad state that our forestry sector is in right now in this province. And I hope there's not an acceptance that this is good enough, Mr. Speaker, for Saskatchewan people or good enough for communities throughout the North, whether that's Meadow Lake — certainly not at full capacity and not providing all of the employment and all of the opportunities that it could, Mr. Speaker, and not being as supported as it could by this government — or Big River where you have the stud mill that's not being utilized at all and certainly those employment benefits and economic benefits aren't being derived the way that it should be.

So when I look at this sector, it's a sector that has long and deep roots in this province and it's a sustainable resource and one that needs good, solid sustainable management. But it also needs an active government to care about the industry and then to act in its interests and to be willing to take steps to make sure that we can redevelop and regrow the forestry sector because it's an economy in Saskatchewan, a forestry economy that has been beleaguered under this government. And certainly many of those pressures I understand go beyond the boundaries of Saskatchewan, but our government certainly does have a

responsibility to be working with our entire province, and certainly our forestry sector's an important part of our province.

[16:30]

So I guess, as I say, I hope the reconfigured forestry sector that's being mentioned by the government isn't a weak forestry sector. What we need to do . . . Or I hope they haven't given up on the forestry sector, Mr. Speaker, as I know many through the North seem to feel as though they have.

I know I've heard from those in through Prince Albert and area who are so disappointed with the lack of foresight and vision for something like the bridge in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, that plays such an important and critical role to those communities but also to that northern economy and certainly to the forestry sector. For some I know, through Prince Albert, that are wanting a government to be there, to work with them, to listen to the concerns, hear the opportunities in the forestry sector, and work to redevelop that industry. Many feel that a government that's now saying there's no need for that important artery in Prince Albert feel as though it's a government that in many ways is giving up on the economy in the region. And part of that economy is certainly the forestry sector.

And as I say, we have this incredible resource in Saskatchewan by way of that sustainable resource in our forest, but also our people. And both are being underutilized on some of these fronts, Mr. Speaker. And when I see a piece of legislation like this as well, what just concerns me — well it concerns me more than a bit — is that it seems that it's being driven by an agreement entered into by this government to bring us into compliance with regulations and legislation from our Western provinces, and not driven by the interests of Saskatchewan people.

And certainly through . . . What we'll be doing is consultation. You can count on members of this side of the Assembly to be doing that consultation. You can count on the member from Cumberland and our northern MLAs to be doing that consultation. But you can count on all of us to be doing that. We'll be making sure that this legislation doesn't impact Saskatchewan people in a negative way. So again it seems, you know, in many ways, by signing on to some of these far-reaching agreements, it seems that this government failed to fully understand the consequences of doing so and is now letting that agreement drive the legislative agenda here in Saskatchewan and impact an industry that has such a rich and proud history dating back to the formation of our, and beyond the formation of our province, Mr. Speaker.

So those are a couple comments that I would have. A couple other considerations are that when we're talking about the forestry workers, forestry professionals that are engaged in this important sector, as I say, we should have a government doing a better job of making sure that sector is stronger and more vibrant, not just giving it sort of passing concern or passing mention. But we should also make sure that the decisions that are made that impact those workers, that region, fully involve those very people, those that are on the ground, those that understand the industry.

And far too often with this government we've seen a lack of

willingness to listen, a set of selective hearing. They only want to hear from some, Mr. Speaker, and in many cases we're realizing that it's sort of friends and insiders of that government, Mr. Speaker, and not the people of this province, the communities of the province, the real stakeholders, Mr. Speaker. And we should be expecting better of our government on those fronts.

We do have at play in these changes a sector that certainly has close contact into impacting our environment as well. And we have an important responsibility to make sure that the forestry sector is both strong but also sustainable in the way we manage it. And we need to make sure that what we're doing is making sure that the activities and work and development is certainly not going to be to the detriment of our watershed, for example, Mr. Speaker.

And I know when you think about who does that work in the forestry sector, we need to make sure we're supporting those professionals, those hard-working individuals, those families to make sure they have the resources, the legislation they need to be able to fulfill their employment and be able to do so in a way that certainly protects our environment. And many of those working in the forestry sector of course are building roads in through the North. A lot of that work is movement of hazardous goods that if not handled properly are certainly a direct pollutant to watersheds and to our land, our air, our water. And we also deal an awful lot with water crossings and the building of water crossings.

So these are certainly important considerations when building out legislation. And we should be making sure that any changes we're making bring into full protection that environment, at the same time allowing us to harvest our resource in a sustainable way and build the opportunities that we must in through northern Saskatchewan.

So it seems this government is more caught up in the legalese of the agreement they signed with the Western provinces and less concerned about the northern interests of the industry — our forestry sector, the workers, the communities. And they're sort of playing a little bit of catch up here with their legislative agenda. And in this case, they're bringing legislation into a certain standard that exists in other provinces, probably British Columbia that has likely set the standard on this front. What we have to do is make sure that those standards are in the best interests of Saskatchewan people and communities, our industry, our environment. And certainly what's been put forward here certainly lacks the detail for us to have any certainty to that.

We're also aware that these changes are resultant from the proposed changes and activities as it relates to the Saskatchewan Environmental Code or environment code, something that in many ways is still unclear to Saskatchewan people. And certainly many stakeholders have weighed in to highlight the fact that it lacks the mechanisms, effective mechanisms, to really achieve the goals that we must as it relates to protecting our environment.

Not only that, the environment code, there's a lot of uncertainty in place. A lot of it's been driven into regulations, Mr. Speaker. And I know you can understand the importance of or the impact

of that is when you're pulling away important aspects of legislation and putting it into regulation, what it does is it takes those important discussions, democratic discussions outside of this Assembly and simply leaves those changes to be made within the government itself, without the proper discussion that we certainly require for important areas such as the environment, Mr. Speaker.

So when I look at this piece of legislation, I see a government that has, I see a government that has been making — is making — changes that are simply to come into compliance with an agreement that it signed with other Western provinces for an industry that has such proud history and great potential in this province. And we deserve better than that, Mr. Speaker. We deserve a government to in fact be working to rebuild the vibrancy in our forestry sector, a sector that's been really beleaguered under this government. And I hope the stated reconfiguration and weak state of that sector or weakened state of that sector isn't acceptable to this government. And I hope they're not somehow now stating that this is acceptable because we certainly should be expecting better.

And when you think of those who have harvesting rights, if you think of our communities in through the North, the people of the North, they certainly should be included in these sort of changes and discussions and the proper consultation that needs to be in place. And we need to make sure that a government's considered all of the impacts, all of the . . . So first of all, what are they trying to achieve? And then have they set out by way of this legislation, in the most effective way, to achieve the changes that they've pushed forward?

But certainly we need to make paramount in this discussion public safety and the environment at the same time as a strong, vibrant forestry sector, and I simply see that discussion to not be going on by the current government.

When I look at some of the other pieces, it reflects that this here takes away some of the regulations that are in place. And regulations of course are built out with a level of purpose. We need to make sure that the regulations that are being changed are . . . making sure that they're not going to now put the public at risk, put workers at risk, put the environment at risk. And we've, you know, we've introduced here today in the Assembly a bill that basically takes away many of the regulations in this province. We want to make sure that we're going about these sorts of changes in a thoughtful way and not pursuing sort of a race to the bottom where we're taking out the important protections that Saskatchewan people and communities deserve.

And when I look at this piece of legislation, I actually see some of the language here. It talks about how there was a role of government dictating how things would be done. I guess what I want to know from the minister is, what was being dictated and what should be, what should be the certain standard that we're aspiring to and what are the best mechanisms to make that happen?

So as we go about our consideration of the bill at hand, we'll be doing full consultation with the entire industry — with workers, with northern communities and people, environmental stakeholders — making sure that they've been heard as it relates to this bill. Far too often we see the government opposite

push forward its own agenda with a set of selective hearing in many ways, Mr. Speaker, only listening to a few, Mr. Speaker. We need to make sure that any of the changes that relate to the forestry sector, Mr. Speaker, are made with respect for the industry as a whole, its proud roots in the province, and certainly for the important place for those workers in communities that are impacted.

So with that being said, Mr. Speaker, we have probably more questions than we've had answers from the government on this piece of legislation. We look forward to further discussion on the floor of this Assembly but also specifically in committee and specifically with stakeholders to make sure that the changes that are being brought forward are in the best interests of our province as a whole and not simply being forced upon this government by way of being bound by the New West Partnership that this government signed.

So we'll be doing that sort of analysis, and we'll be making sure that we've heard all of the voices, Mr. Speaker. And we will commit to bringing those forward. At this point in time as it relates to Bill No. 49, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012*, I don't have any further comments, and I'll adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 49, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 50

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 50 — *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to rise and join the debate on *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2012*, Bill No. 50.

To begin, just a few sort of observations off the top, Mr. Speaker, and I'll get to the content of the legislation itself. But certainly health care often is not . . . And this is a very good . . . [inaudible] . . . in many regards, Mr. Speaker. It's highly regulated. The professional bodies and the economy that goes into the different organizations is jealously guarded. Sometimes that hierarchical dynamic is going to overtake other things that are attempted to be accomplished under, say, the heading of primary care or a more holistic approach to health care. But again, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that you've got that right balance between regulation and room for manoeuvre or room to best apply that scope of practice, that standard of care by the professionals themselves with — as is the fundamental component of health care — with the patient.

So in terms of the legislation here today, I note with interest from the minister's second reading speech wherein the ministry worked with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association, the Saskatchewan Medical Association, the Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses, the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacists, the Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association of Saskatchewan, and all the regional health authorities. So you know, good to see the work undertaken there, Mr. Speaker.

And I guess as sort of an extension of what I've stated around that hierarchical nature of health care and the different sort of bodies deployed in the system, one of the great sort of hybrid professions or scopes of practice that has emerged over the last decade in particular is that of nurse practitioner. I guess we'll have to wait until we get into committee to find out whether or not . . . what sort of involvement or what sort of implication for nurse practitioners this legislation holds. But again it seems to be fair enough.

[16:45]

In the minister's second reading speech it talks about the self-regulating health professionals and the importance of patient safety. *The Medical Profession Act* itself had been brought in in 1981. The amendments here in particular having been ". . . requested by the College of Physicians and Surgeons to support safe patient care and to update its bylaw-making authority." Again fairly reasonable propositions on the face of them, Mr. Speaker.

Also referencing the fact that:

The Ministry of Health supports the physician and registered nurse engagement in the full scope of practice of medicine and nursing respectively. This will also permit the college to respond more quickly to the anticipated national changes in the categories of licensure of health professionals.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we're glad to see the organizations referenced in terms of the work that has been done to, again, update their abilities around licensure, around the changing national practices and implications for Saskatchewan. We're glad to see that, and again we'd be interested to hear from the professions themselves.

Again, the scope of practice issues, those standard-of-care issues and how the health care team fits together, or what are the overlaps? What are the conflicts? And is there a way to better mediate them through the legislation such as that contained in Bill 50 or the amendments to *The Medical Profession Act*?

Carrying on with discussing the minister's speech, the amendments also aiming to:

. . . help keep patients' personal health information more secure. [stating that] The college will now have a greater ability to maintain current address and contact information for physicians. The college will be better able to communicate with physicians and keep information up to

date when physicians join or leave a practice, and the way that this supports proper and secure storage, disposal, and transfer of patient files and improve disaster planning processes.

Again, Mr. Speaker, health information privacy protection is something that the citizens are increasingly aware of and interested in. Certainly this digital age that we live in opens up new sort of worries or concerns or opportunities for mischief in terms of people accessing information that should be, quite frankly, between an individual and their health care professionals.

And certainly the way that things like the health information privacy Act, the HIPA [*The Health Information Protection Act*] regime has been introduced and evolved over the past decade, and then the way that these sort of circumstances . . . We certainly were witness to an instance where you had, a couple of years back, a dumpster filled with the personal records of patients from a particular doctor and that concern that was well voiced by the Privacy and Information Commissioner, Mr. Dickson, around whether or not (a) the radical powers of oversight but additionally, Mr. Speaker, the means of censure or the punishments that were there or the penalties that were there to be exacted on individuals that were negligent in a regard like that.

So we'll be looking to see what that does to increase the outcomes and increase the situation, the security of those documents. And again it's at the base of the circumstance where they were in the dumpster, those files. I'm sure we all know what it's like to go to the doctor and have your file written up — and that's obviously as personal information as personal information gets. So that we've got better oversight in terms of the regulations, in terms of the avenues available for the regulatory bodies themselves, we're glad to see that. But we'll be vigilant in making certain that this stated intention of better privacy oversight is actually held up to. I guess some of the things that weren't in the legislation or could have been more clearly addressed by the legislation, any reference to requiring physicians to have a privacy policy, it begs a whole other round of conversation with the College of Physicians and Surgeons around privacy issues generally.

And again, it's right to go on record as complimenting the work of the Privacy and Information Commissioner and the staff in that office or for the independent officers. Both the education work and the enforcement would be . . . well not the right word, but the way that people know more about the safeguards that should be guarding the system to guard your personal information and improvements that continue to audit and examine the system.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I know there are other of my colleagues that are interested in participating in the debate and, as I had noted, there's some work to be done in terms of following up and gathering clarification on different aspects of this legislation in committee. But with that, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 50, *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2012*.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 50, *The Medical Profession Act, 2012*. Is it



the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Bill No. 51**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 51 — *The Public Inquiries Act, 2012/Loi de 2012 sur les enquêtes publiques*** be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to enter into the debate on *The Public Inquiries Act, 2012* or Bill No. 51. I just want to talk a little bit about the minister's second reading speech and what exactly a public inquiry is and what the government proposes doing here. So:

... inquiry commissions are temporary bodies that are created by order in council to review and investigate a specific incident or matter. Commissions of inquiry have statutory powers to conduct their proceedings. They are limited by any terms or conditions placed on them by the Lieutenant Governor in Council [or Executive Council].

I think we generally think of the more judicial function of public inquiries. We could think about, here in Saskatchewan, the Milgaard Inquiry or the Stonechild Inquiry where there was some recommendations made particularly around policing here in Saskatchewan and the Saskatoon Police Service and how policing could be more, I think, be better, more culturally sensitive, more in line with the needs of people in Saskatoon and in Saskatchewan around First Nations and Métis people and how perhaps the police service was failing people in Saskatchewan and in Saskatoon in this particular case.

And I know the city of Saskatoon, the police service there has worked very hard under Chief Weighill's stewardship to ensure that many of those recommendations from the Stonechild Inquiry were in fact put into place to improve relations between First Nations and Métis people and the police service, which is in fact, as it's not a police force, Mr. Speaker, it is a police service and is designed and set up to serve the people of Saskatoon. And I know that they've done lots of work following the Stonechild Inquiry to address some very serious concerns that people in Saskatchewan had about the police service.

So we're very familiar with the judicial functions. But in the minister's second reading comments, he points out that this particular Act will provide for the creation of two types of inquiries, both "... study commissions to research, examine, and provide advice on public policy", which personally, as a bit of a policy geek myself, I think that that is a really interesting and good idea. I'm curious to know if ... So they're putting forward ... I know that they're very interested. These study commissions are a very interesting idea.

The second piece, there will still be a place for hearing commissions to investigate and make findings in matters where there's a possibility of finding failing or misconduct. So that's

the second piece. That's the judicial piece.

But I'm wondering around the study commissions if the government — in fact they've put this out there — I'd be interested to know if they really plan on using this study commission piece of the Act, Mr. Speaker. Study commissions I think hold promise for looking at difficult policy issues that we face here in Saskatchewan.

I would say that perhaps we could have had a study commission on labour in Saskatchewan. Instead of reviewing 100 years of labour legislation in 90 days and putting forward an Act that we aren't sure whether or not it will benefit people and that we have some questions and concerns, a study commission maybe could have taken, properly resourced, could have taken the time to really look at 100 years of labour and where we should be going in 2013 and forward, Mr. Speaker. So I would argue that this notion of having a study commission is a really great idea.

Something that's near and dear to my heart is supporting families in child care. And our child care system, Mr. Speaker, is an absolute mess. Our subsidy system is broken. Our subsidy system is broken. The recruitment and retention of child care workers — huge problems. We have far fewer child care spaces than we should, than we need to actually serve the people of Saskatchewan. So I could recommend that perhaps I would suggest the government perhaps think about pursuing a study commission on child care in particular or better supporting families in their work-family balance.

So I think this promise of study commissions is interesting, but the government needs to be committed to, and tackling, some of these difficult policy discussions or issues that are facing people here in Saskatchewan. I think that we need to talk about the government being committed to funding these when the rubber hits the road, Mr. Speaker.

Anyway I know I have colleagues who are interested also in speaking to Bill No. 51, *The Public Inquiries Act*, and they'll be eager to enter debate on this particular bill. So with that, I would like to move to adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 51, *The Public Inquiries Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. It now being near ... I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the attendance at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association function this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This House stands adjourned to 1:30

p.m. Tuesday, March 12th.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:59.]



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