

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN  
August 11, 1992

The Assembly met at 9 a.m.

Prayers

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, by leave I would move that we would move to government business, Bill 87, an Act respecting amendments to Certain Farm Income Insurance Legislation.

Leave not granted.

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, with respect to question 49, I hereby provide the answer.

Mr. Speaker, as it relates to questions put by members, 50 to 59, I would ask that they be converted to motions for returns debatable.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS**

**Resolution No. 40 — Consultations on Labour Legislation**

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The members of the government seem to be expressing some concern that we wouldn't want to dwell on the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) issue this morning, but this issue, while it is not in the same area as GRIP on the surface, is certainly of as much importance to those people that it concerns as the GRIP Bill is to those people which it concerns.

There are some dynamics involved, Mr. Speaker, in the labour industry today that need attention. If, as the members of the government probably would realize by now, if there was concern about the breaking of contracts and that kind of problem with the GRIP Bill, other sectors of our society are seeing the very same kind of situation developing in the labour Bills and labour approaches.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that it requires a bit of time for us to discuss with the government today the reasons why they should consult more effectively with the labour industry in our province. The employers as well as the employees have very many concerns about the direction that government might take in their proposed changes to the labour legislation.

The draft Bill, I guess we would call it — I think the government members referred to it as a working paper on the matter of the constitutional changes under law — this draft Bill, one which we tabled in this very Assembly ourselves for the government after it was leaked, because of fears from people within the union structure that it would in fact cost them many of the jobs in the province, will probably in effect become the basis of the new Bill. That's what white papers and that's what draft Bills are all about. They're the foundation that you build from.

And if you see things within it that are troubling or not going to assist the industry positively, then you have to work very hard to get them changed before in fact the government brings them in and introduces them into law.

That reality was recognized by many people within the structures of the construction industry, and the labour people within our province through the unions themselves have seen that there are some really big problems that could develop if this Bill were to be passed as it stands in its original draft.

And so what these folks have been saying, Mr. Speaker, is that we've got to get together, sit down and talk for a while. We've got to talk for a while about what's in the Bill and what effects it will have on individuals, as well as society as a whole.

There are some tremendously big things that could happen within the structure of this Bill, and they need to be talked about. Things like driving your folks who want to hire contractors across the borders, looking for contract companies to come in and do the work within our province. And if that would happen, our own labour force could sit idly watching people from outside the province come in and grab up their jobs.

And of course that would be devastating for the entire province. That would be devastating for our tax base. It would be devastating for the individuals trying to make their livings. Families no doubt would have to sell their homes and move out of this province again.

And it just seems to compound the problem, Mr. Speaker, that we've seen happening in Saskatchewan over the past few years with the recession on. This type of legislation would have the effect of deepening the recession in our province. And there's absolutely no way that we can justify going along with a Bill if it's going to deepen the recession within the province. We have to oppose that and we have to oppose the process. And so in that opposition, Mr. Speaker, what we are saying is that the only resolution to this situation is if we have meaningful, rather lengthy, and very intense negotiations and consultation with people from all segments of the province that will be affected by this potential legislation.

Now the proposed changes to the labour legislation is causing concern to a great majority of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, and the concern is over the NDP's (New Democratic Party) lack of consultation on this issue. We need only take a look at letters sent to the Premier in this regard, and of course in the normal flow of common respect for the political process, copies of these letters are also sent to our office, and so we have had a chance to read them and to study them in some length.

A letter which spurred the Premier to finally meet with the business people is here in my possession. And the letter very clearly outlines how frustrated the business community is with this government — frustrated because they have not received equal time in their attempts to discuss the situations that are involved with this Bill.

I have a copy of the letter, and I think in all fairness that I

should read a little bit of it so that the members of the government can be reminded they may not in fact have had the opportunity to read this, as it was addressed to the Premier. I'm not sure how their caucus handles these things. It is addressed:

Dear Mr. Premier:

The following Saskatchewan business organizations have recently met to share and discuss our serious concerns about the economic future of our province. All of us share concerns about the need for a co-ordinated vision of the economy of Saskatchewan. We need a positive climate to maintain existing jobs and help create new employment and investment. We have all been frustrated by your government's "consultation" process to date and the lack of balance in recognizing the vital role of our private wealth creating sector in a mixed economy.

We feel that the need for a joint meeting with you at this time is extremely timely and urgent. We need to meet with you before some very sweeping new Act amendments are passed this session, before your government releases its Discussion Paper on an Economic Development Strategy, and before your full Cabinet meets in your fall long-range planning conference.

We are very anxious to work with you and your Cabinet colleagues in partnership, not in confrontation. However, the business community is feeling . . . overwhelmed and frustrated by your government's legislative agenda and we must discuss this privately and immediately.

We would be pleased to arrange such a confidential meeting in an appropriate location.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this letter was dated on July 28, and we're very happy to say that a very short meeting was arranged with members of this group. And there were in fact some discussions that were held, and those discussions appear to have been somewhat productive. Because just as we have been saying ever since this Bill came into our hands some time ago, consultation is absolutely essential.

And the reality of that being right is proven by the fact that after just a very brief meeting the other day with the Premier and a few of his group, it was reported in the newspaper now that the Premier is suggesting that there be some consultation, or in fact that the legislation might even not be passed at this particular summer session, that it may be held over. So that shows that exactly, Mr. Speaker, what we have been saying is the right direction that we have to go.

And what we're saying today is that we have to have more consultation. That was a nice start to have that short meeting, but it can't just end there. These folks are going to have a lot of input because, facing reality, this Bill covers a tremendous amount of ground within the structure of how our society's going to develop over the next four years until this government is replaced. And we

can't just look forward to the concept of replacing the government in four years. We have to look forward to the potential of having anything left in the province at all worthwhile governing.

If you have a draft Bill that becomes law and that law forces all of the labour people in the province to sit idle while other provinces come in and take up their jobs, and they in effect are caused to go broke and lose their homes and have to move out of the province, then in four years time we won't have very much of a population base or a structure of a labour force left.

And so we've got to be very careful here, Mr. Speaker. And I caution the union folks to look at this as well, because it could be killing the goose that lays the golden egg. And if you eliminate your job, what good is it to have a raise? And that's the thing that folks have to kind of take a hard and serious look at here. It's all well and good to negotiate to get a better condition at the work place, but if in fact your work place is eliminated, it's all for naught.

And so we have to be very careful that we go into these kind of meaningful negotiations on an honest basis with folks genuinely willing to bend both ways. I'm not just saying that everything in the past would be right, because times change. It may in fact be necessary for us to update a lot of these things to bring them into the time frame that we live within. But if we go too fast or if we go too far, we could in fact destroy more jobs than what we are attempting to create and the stability for our working people could in fact be lessened instead of broadened.

(0915)

I just think that I should read for the record, Mr. Speaker, some of the people that were involved in the letter that I quoted to you so that the people of the province as well as government will have an understanding that this is not just a handful of people that are represented here.

We have first of all the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce. Now that's the entire group of chambers of commerce's organization for the entire province of Saskatchewan. That's a big body of people, Mr. Speaker. It represents many, many, many people — thousands of folks.

And we have the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. They are again a tremendously large organization that represents a very big group of people that are very, very concerned about the implications of this Bill.

The Prairie Implement Manufacturers Association. Unfortunately here we have an organization that is somewhat depleting in size because of the very nature of the recession that we have, not only in the food production industry but in the recession as a whole throughout our province. But they're hanging on and they're very concerned about this legislation, as well they should be, and they do still represent a fairly significantly large number of people.

Now the next one we have on the list was the Hotels Association of Saskatchewan. Here again this is a rather

unique group of individuals, but they represent just about every town and certainly all of the cities within our province. And the reality, Mr. Speaker, is that they represent themselves as a very significant and reasonably large group, but they also reflect an awful lot of public opinion, Mr. Speaker, because these are the folks that deal on a day-to-day basis with a lot of people that come and go throughout their inns and stay for the nights and for weeks at a time in some cases. And they see an awful lot of people coming and going, a very big cross-section of our society.

And these folks are very concerned about the lack of consultation in this process of introducing this draft Bill. And they certainly want to see us take a long and careful and deliberated look at making changes to the draft before it does become law because they feel, I'm sure — as everyone in this letter has indicated — that without consultation we will end up with a Bill that will in effect do more harm than good for our province.

And in all fairness, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the government's intention is to try to destroy the province with this Bill or any other. I think they genuinely had hoped that it would be of benefit. Unfortunately they got caught up in the rhetoric of the election fever where the bigger unions in our province backed the government of the day in their attempt to get elected, and there was a feeling of some need to pay back those union folks for their assistance and their help in the quest to attain government.

Now that's fair ball that you want to help the folks that have helped you. I feel that way about my friends too. But in the situation of government, it doesn't quite play out in that scenario. It happens to be that in the role of government, you can't just help the people that helped you unless you take a look at how it's going to affect the rest of the people around. And what we're saying here is that we have to consult with the people that are going to be affected because if we don't do that, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, a lot of folks will be hurt and hurt seriously and economically in a very adverse way.

So we've said to the government that they should take some time, talk to the folks, get their pencils sharpened back up again, get some notepads out, go through this Bill clause by clause, sentence by sentence, and word by word, with each one of these groups collectively in conferences, and perhaps even individually in private meetings, and do it and do it right, and do it with an open mind, with an open heart, and with consideration to how you're going to affect all of the people that are involved.

Now the Saskatchewan Home Builders' Association have also signed this. Now there's another significant group of people in our province. The home builders, of course, are often times accredited with being the catalyst to an economy. Home building seems to be the part of our measuring stick within our society that tells us whether or not recessions are serious or whether they're less serious or, in fact, if we happen to be coming out of one.

I'm not sure how that got to be the measuring stick for a lot of people to use, but it is in fact that way. We often hear on the news media, Mr. Speaker, when the recessions are

being talked, about folks will get on the media and say, well, home building has gone up by 3 per cent or 4 per cent. And everybody gets a big smile and says, yes, it looks like we're pulling out of the recession.

And of course, if the next two months down the road it suddenly goes down by minus 2 per cent, everybody gets a big frown and says, oh, this is really getting tough.

So this is an important segment of our society and, of course, labour legislation has got to affect the people involved with the home builders because they do employ such a large number of people. And of course, there's an awful lot of spin-off dollars that goes into our society, so it makes eminent sense that we sit down and talk to these folks before we draft legislation that's going to affect their entire role within our economy.

We then had the Canadian Petroleum Association, and again here is an association that employs a lot of people through various methods and at various levels. Thinking of the petroleum association, Mr. Speaker, you can think of jobs all the way from the surveying and exploration and from the searching for of the product, oil and natural gas, to begin with, and you've got people then that go out and actually do the drilling of the wells and discover the products. You've got the development of those wells, you've got the development of the collection systems, and then after that, the distribution systems. And so they employ just thousands of people within our province. It's one of our bigger industries as well.

I suspect that close to the production of food, the petroleum association, while it doesn't have a whole lot of companies that belong to it, it does in fact account for a tremendously large part of the economic base of this province and provides many, many thousands of good-paying jobs throughout our province.

For example, out in my community, an awful lot of the farms would no longer exist if the farmers hadn't had the opportunity to be able to work for someone associated with the petroleum association and supplement their farm incomes. In fact, it's almost come to the point where most of the farms out our way are hobbies and everybody else works at some other job to make their living. And that's unfortunate, but it's a fact of life. And the petroleum association certainly has to be involved in any kind of meaningful negotiations with regard to a Bill that is going to change labour standards within our province.

Even though the Bill might be touted as being directed at the construction industry, the reality is that any Bill of this nature will have a spin-off effect into all other segments of our society. No question about the fact too that it could encourage the adoption of further Bills and further amendments. And so it's better to start right at the beginning and get everybody a chance to look at it and have their input before it gets put into law, than to make a law and then try to change it in retrospect.

It just simply never is easy to get an amendment changed once it becomes law. Maybe that shouldn't be quite so difficult, but in fact it is the reality of life that we've seen in the development of our political process.

Now we also, Mr. Speaker, had the Independent Petroleum Association of Canada sign this letter, and they of course are expressing the same views as the rest of the petroleum interests of our province would be expressing. And they certainly need to have the government take a long, hard look at this legislation before it becomes law.

We then had the Regina Chamber of Commerce. Now you have to admit right out front, members of the government, that the Regina Chamber of Commerce would not be here asking you to consult with them if they didn't have some very serious concerns about what this Bill was going to do to the city of Regina and to the economy of the city of Regina. These people represent the entire business community of the city of Regina, I'm sure. They have some major conferences that are reported on a regular basis and they take positions on the development of our economy and the development of the direction of the city here in Regina as well that of the entire province.

And their views are certainly necessary and should be taken a long, hard look at before any legislation that concerns the labour force in our province goes into effect. I expect that in the city of Regina, probably the labour force is very, very significant in terms of numbers, and obviously by looking at past situations within our province, that seems to be the fact, that the labour group is large here and very important to the structure of this city.

We also have the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce expressing their opinion through this letter of wanting more negotiations, Mr. Speaker, because there too a big city with a large base of labour-oriented people looking for legislation that will give them fair play and the ability to have jobs. They, I think, have recognized the reality that this Bill, while it could be intended to assist unionized workers, might in fact be hurting them more than it is helping them, if in fact it is written in such a way as to become a detriment to the maintaining of jobs and the maintaining of construction business.

So, Mr. Speaker, those folks have some real concerns. And they want to talk to the Premier and to the ministers in charge of this Bill and to the cabinet people who will make the final decision. They want to talk to them and they want to go over this Bill. And I think they should have that right to do that.

And that's why we, as a member of the opposition caucus, decided this morning that while the GRIP program is extremely important to all of us on this side of the House, this issue, as well, needs some time of this Assembly to be discussed and to have the points made that this piece of legislation is also important to many people of our province, and that it too needs to be considered. And there has to be meaningful consultation with the people involved before it becomes law.

We don't just run on one law in this province, Mr. Speaker. It's a fact that we are controlled by probably many hundreds, possibly even thousands of different laws that are on our books. And many of them while they are more important in terms of effect than others, many of them have a direct influence on our lives.

This particular Bill happens to be a rather big type of a consequence on the folks of Saskatchewan and the people that live in our province. It potentially, I suspect, could rank about second to the effects that the GRIP Bill will have on the people of our province in terms of what we've been dealing with in this particular session. The potential for this Bill to cost thousands of jobs in the province is definitely there, and that's what has gotten people excited to the point that they have written this kind of a letter to the Premier and have done some very extensive lobbying with the Premier and with the cabinet to try to get them to take a long, hard, second and third look at this whole proposal before drafting it into a final Bill.

We also have the Saskatchewan Construction Association and that too, Mr. Speaker, is a very large group of people that have expressed a lot of concern about the fact that they need to consult with the folks involved in government decisions before any final draft Bill has been put together. The Saskatchewan Construction Association represents hundreds of people and thousands of people's interest in the province of Saskatchewan, and they certainly have to be listened to very carefully.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that now that we have had a chance to get this process started in terms of having the government take a second look, that there will be significant changes to this Bill if these kinds of consultations are allowed to go on.

The Saskatchewan Mining Association, also very concerned, signed this letter and they too are concerned about the potential of this Bill.

Now we've got everything from mining to construction and chambers of commerce, all of these segments of our society, showing an extremely worrisome attention to the fact that this Bill was drafted and started into the process of becoming law without what they had considered to be meaningful consultation and an opportunity for them to put their thoughts and views in front of the decision-making process.

The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce was the last group to sign this letter, Mr. Speaker, and I think all together that looks like about seven or there and 10 . . . 12 different groups and organizations representing almost every segment of our Saskatchewan economy. They have signed this request for meaningful consultations with the members of the government before making this a law.

And there are other people who probably are still going to be asking for some input as well as these people, Mr. Speaker. Because the reality is that the food production industry — and while I don't see them directly through any of their organizations on this particular sheet of paper — certainly it as well has a very big interest in how labour legislation is going to affect the province of Saskatchewan. And so I think that having any opportunity to be included in these kind of negotiations, those folks would certainly want to be at the table as well. And there are many, many others.

(0930)

Now we have a situation, Mr. Speaker, where I guess the minister in charge of Labour probably thought that he would get some professionals to write up a Bill. He possibly threw some ideas at them. But on the other hand, he may not have bothered. And either way, we have to jog his mind and we have to take that time this morning to get him to listen to the concept that he has to do more meaningful negotiating with the folks that are involved. And he has to consult with them and get their input into this Bill before in fact it becomes law.

The rush meeting that was held may have quietened these groups for the moment, Mr. Speaker. But these people will be expecting to see more of these kind of meetings with, as I've pointed out, more lengthy deliberations. These people, Mr. Speaker, are reasonable people, and they will not forget that the Premier has made somewhat of a commitment to them. And even though it seems like a long time until the next election, I would caution the government not to take lightly the needs and opinions of these folks that are involved in this request for consultation. Because these are, as I've said, the backbone of the economy of Saskatchewan and they're not the kind of people that will forget easily. They expect to see an NDP economic plan for Saskatchewan.

I believe that that's so very important, Mr. Speaker. It's not just that they want to talk about this particular Bill at this time. These people see the need to press even further and ask for the government to present an economic plan for the development of our province throughout the future.

We seem to be swimming aimlessly, like a swimmer perhaps caught in the middle of Lake Ontario and losing his directions and not having a boat around to assist him; he may flounder and start to swim one direction or the other but he's got three chances out of four of going wrong. And that seems to be the way our Saskatchewan economy is drifting around in circles at the moment.

We don't seem to know which direction to go or which direction we should go, and that has to come down to a lack of an economic plan of direction for our province by our government of the day. We have to have the government sit down and talk to these folks, consult with them, talk to them, and get an idea of which direction this province should go.

There are a lot of decisions that can be made by a government that can assist in the economic development of a province. I think I've said it before, Mr. Speaker, and I'm going to say it again, that the decisions made by government are the ones that will not just start the direction that you're in today and solve the problem tomorrow, it's got to be sort of you go this direction and you achieve something way out there that's rather aloof. Sometimes it takes three and four years to develop a direction of an economic plan to a focus point of where you're trying to get to in terms of development of jobs, in terms of developing an economy.

One of the reasons that this province has always gone into recession ahead of the rest of the country and come out of it last is because we are connected to the basic production industries of food and natural resources.

These are the primary elements and they get affected always first in terms of recessions when they set in. But the reality is that if you set an economic plan, a direction, you can bring yourself out of recession with the rest of the country or ahead of it, and we have failed to do that.

This is the kind of consultation that the folks that have signed this letter would be talking about, Mr. Speaker. There is no question in my mind that this is the kind of economic development that these kind of folks would be wanting to have the government discuss and set up a plan for. If you don't set up a direction of where you're going to go to to get there, it'll never happen.

These folks are very concerned. They want to consult with the government. They want to give their input. They have a lot of ideas. I'm not sure that they would all work, of course, but there's bound to be, in a think-tank of that calibre of people, some ideas that would come forth that could in fact bring us to a point where we might not only be a province that wouldn't go into recession first always, we might be the province that would go into recession last in the next round if we have some economic developmental process within our province.

And instead of coming out of the recession last, we might be the first one out for a change. Not in this particular round, of course, because we're solidly into this recession and it will take some time to get out of it. But . . . Not a whole bunch of time, I'm sure, but it will take time.

But we could set that direction as a future goal, and that's why these people want to consult with the minister in charge. And they want to give their opinions and their ideas and do it in a meaningful way through this Bill and through the process connected to this Bill. And while they're doing that, they would take that one step further and develop some kind of an economic strategy for our province.

I had an opportunity to speak to an individual who took part in the trade union review commission, Mr. Speaker. Some of the union proposals sent in were shocking, to say the least. And I expect that they might have come from the leadership more than from the rank and file. I realize that the present government owes organized labour a huge favour, but to impose its desire without proper consultation would be extremely disruptive to this province's economy and to the small-business sector.

I suggest it would also have a serious impact on the bigger businesses in our province as well, but the reality is that Saskatchewan is based more on smaller businesses than on big businesses. We often hear the administration and the people surrounding the present government speak adversely about multinational corporations and big business, and they do that, saying that they are of course bad for us and all that.

But the reality is that we don't have a whole lot of influence by those kinds of companies in our province. Most of our business is done by small-business men who don't employ a whole lot of people within their one little business structure. So most of our concern has to do with the smaller business sector in our province.

As I understand it, the first big fight the trade union review commission had to deal with was the Act's name. And there was no way that the Act's name will be changed.

Now I don't know why anybody would be hung up on the name of an Act. It just seems to me that if you wanted to change the name of an Act to make it more receptive to people, that ought to almost be the easiest thing that anybody could do. There are many words that have the same types of meanings, the same types of direction in their description. And so, Mr. Speaker, I quite frankly can't see why we should have started out on the wrong foot over something like that.

So I'm saying that today let's sit down, government members and folks from these industries and from business, and talk about these things. And do it meaningfully, with some flexibility. Don't just dig in and say, this is the way it's going to be; my way or no way; if you don't play by my rules I'm taking my marbles and going home, kind of attitudes. Those kinds of things won't work in today's society. We'll have to have some meaningful discussion.

And I'm glad to see that members of the government are now taking some note of what we're saying. I was worried that maybe I was talking on deaf ears. But they're taking some notes now, Mr. Speaker, and I'm happy to see that they are listening.

The folks from the entire construction industry will be happy to take note of that fact, and while they can't observe this through the media, they will obviously be happy to hear me say and report that in fact members of the government are now taking some note of this discussion. And hopefully that will end up with some meetings being organized where people from the construction industry and business around our province will be invited to go through this Bill on a line-by-line basis with the minister and his colleagues.

Now as far as the unions are concerned, it is their Act. They feel that it's something that is being done for them and it will remain union legislation, even though it affects employers as well as employees. And that, Mr. Speaker, is where consultation is so extremely important, because this can't just be a law for one side. Even though the labour unions may feel that the government owes them a debt as a result of their participation in the election, in all fairness, when this legislation is drafted it's going to affect not just the union people but it's going to affect everybody in our society.

And so they have to back off of that attitude that this is just being done for them. It has to be done for all of the people in Saskatchewan. They have to share that role and they have to share that limelight, if that's what it is to them. If they feel that they need for this government to do something special for them and if this is it, then that's fine. But it can't just be done for them alone. Otherwise, as I've explained earlier, they could end up killing the goose that laid the golden egg. And in fact, they might have legislation that gives them all of the powers and rights that they want, when in reality what it does is lose the very fabric of our economy, lose the job, and winds up with no one having any job at all.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is the way it's going to be, and the unions won't even allow for consultation and they want to do this in a kind of a ramming-through way, that won't be too good for anybody. And if that is the amount of co-operation that we have to look forward, it is frightening. Because the labour unions represent the workers of our province, and they are extremely important.

After all, how much work could you get done if there was no labour force there to do the work? These folks are extremely important, but their co-operation is also extremely important. One side is not more important here than the other. And I don't want to leave the impression when I picked on the union leaders that I'm trying to pick on the rank-and-file workers that belong to the unions, because obviously without them we'd have nothing in our society either. And they must know that, and they must be proud of the fact that without them, our society cannot operate.

I think we could operate better if we got rid of some of the union leaders some days, but then that's just a personal opinion. And I think sometimes maybe the rank and file ought to examine their leadership a bit more closely, especially when they come forward with concepts like, let's push through a piece of labour legislation that isn't consulted by all of the groups involved.

Now the people actually want to eliminate an employer's option to diversify, in their request to the minister. And that can't possibly happen, Mr. Speaker. If we eliminate the rights of individuals and small business to diversify, in this province especially, we certainly would be in a lot of trouble.

Now the legislation apparently is dealing with the needs of the union bosses to want anti-scab legislation to make it illegal to hire replacement workers. Now I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, that this is out of my personal scope. I have never belonged to a union that where . . . As you realize, I'm sure, things like the farmers' union and those types of things that I as an agricultural food producer would have been involved in in my life, we've never had anything to do with this type of labour situation. And so I can't possibly say that I could understand the frustrations that the workers have when there's strikes and when there are anti-scab types of movements and those kinds of frustrations.

And I guess because I haven't got a personal understanding of it from personal experience, I would say that here then consultation before a Bill is passed that would affect these areas is absolutely, extremely important because part of the people may be like myself and don't really understand what all of the implications involved would be. And if you don't understand what all of the implications are, how could you make a meaningful or anywhere close to a right decision.

The folks involved with this type of legislation are going to have to take the time to explain themselves to the people that don't understand it. I suspect that the minister himself may not have ever belonged to a major union. The minister having a law background, I'm quite sure has

never been attacked by scab legislation; he's never been replaced by outside workers.

(0945)

And I don't suspect in reality, Mr. Speaker, that this individual would have any more knowledge about what is going on in this Bill in this area than I have. And if he doesn't, then he owes it to the people of this province to consult with those people that do know what's going on and have an understanding of how this process works.

That's why we have to take some time, Mr. Speaker, today to discuss with the government the need for taking a second look at this whole process. The Premier did suggest the other day that he is thinking about pulling this legislation for this session. And I want to take the time today to encourage him to do that. I think that would be the proper thing for him to do.

I think if he's serious in that direction, serious in that thought line, he ought to do it. Pull it off the order paper totally. Take it right back to square one. Start some meaningful negotiating processes. Perhaps start them this fall in October when the busier season of the construction industry starts to wind down. Because we do have a lot of seasonal work in our province — I think that's recognized the world over — because of our climate.

And so the meaningful consultations can only take place when the majority of the people involved have the time and opportunity to be able to get involved directly into these kind of talks, and have the time to put together their homework; have the time and the resources available to be able to take leave from their business activities and go into a board room and sit down and discuss these matters.

They may have to find some outside expertise. It was mentioned in this Assembly that other provinces have legislation along this line. I see nothing wrong with calling in some folks from Manitoba and Alberta, or even Quebec for that matter, or maybe somebody from the American trade union bases; or the other side of the coin, the business communities in the United States. Bring some of those folks in, have them make some presentations of explanation as to what has happened in their jurisdictions, how the legislations that they have work, or where they perhaps fail. If you're going to pass legislation that's going to affect as many people as this particular Bill is going to affect, Mr. Speaker, I think you have to take the time, and yes, spend a few dollars paying some folks with some expertise to come in and give us guidance.

I've always said, you know, if things are so good in Alberta, why don't we do it like they do in Alberta, and why don't we consult with folks over there? So then people say, well we kind of know what's going on and it costs a lot of money and then we sort of don't do it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it's time we did it. It's time we talked to other people. It's time we got out there and find out what's going on in the real world around us and try to make things better by their experience.

We also had some suggestion that they wanted the

Labour Relations Board to impose an agreement if a contract dispute exists. What Labour Relations Board want . . . rather the Labour Relations Board to have the power to interfere in collective bargaining processes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, here again I can't possibly see how a union group would justify asking the government for that. And if they did ask for it, I seriously would say to them that they ought to reconsider that position because the whole structure of the union concept is based on collective bargaining. That's the one thing that almost everyone agrees is the benefit of people getting together and forming unions for. The reason they do it is so that they can bargain collectively and get fair play for their workers.

It's even the concept that I personally believe is good. And yet if they would bypass that, then they make themselves nothing but powermongers attempting to dictatorial control the labour industry. And so that's almost a two-way street. You may end up having to form unions within the unions to collectively bargain against your union leaders after a while because they would set themselves up in a mafia-style control mechanism. And that certainly cannot be allowed to happen in our province.

It's just simply not acceptable and we have to preserve that right of people to be able to collective bargain freely and openly in a positive way. And I'm sure that those are the kinds of things that will be brought out, Mr. Speaker, if these negotiations and consultations are allowed to continue.

The SFL (Saskatchewan Federation of Labour) alone presented 61 changes that they want to see in the legislation. Now that is a lot of changes in a province where a lot of us, I guess, thought that labour relations weren't really all that bad. Now certainly there are some instances that have gone by where folks haven't been very happy. And, you know, there's always those kinds of situations.

But in general, in general when you look around the world and watch the late-night news in our province, we've had an awful lot less labour problems than just about any place else in the world. Life is not really in the fast, fast lane in Saskatchewan, but we happen to be on a pretty solid and safe road. And I think, metaphorically speaking, Mr. Speaker, that life really hasn't been all that bad in Saskatchewan for the majority of people, as compared to a lot of the other countries in our world.

And the result of that, even though we're into some extremely difficult times right now and have been for the last four or five years, the result of that long-term kind of stability that we've had is that we have produced a rather peaceful society, a rather safe society. Now you might not think that if you parked your car on Albert Street and had your window broken by a rock some day — that happened to a member of my family, incidentally, not too long ago — and of course that might sway your thinking for a little while.

But generally speaking, compared to the rest of the world, we live in a rather safe society here, a rather comfortable

society. And if we can get our economy turned around and get out of this recession, we can build this province into the best place in all of the world to live — the safest, the soundest, and yes, we can be on that high, fast road to success and happiness for most people.

There are always going to be exceptions, and I know you'll always be able to dig up some instance of where somebody's hurting or somebody's being given a bad deal. But in all fairness, we've got a good foundation here. And for the unions to suggest that labour legislation is so badly outdated, so badly archaic in our province that it needs 61 changes in one fell swoop, done by a strong mandated government without consultation, that to me is an insult to our province and to the development of our province. There certainly aren't that many big-time problems here that we have to change the entire legislation without anybody being talked to, without anybody else's input.

And as I've said earlier, Mr. Speaker, this cannot be a one-sided program or situation. This has to be a give-and-take proposal. We've got to have all sides of this . . . life in this context has to work in that metaphorical circle where people all contribute equally to the rotation or evolving of society around us. And we certainly have to have those consultations if one side is going to start suggesting those kind of massive changes and wanting it done in an arbitrary manner.

Apparently there was even a presentation by the Grain Services Union, and they want to unionize all the domestic and farm labour. They want a sectoral bargaining, and of course this would probably be a bit of an outrageous proposal at this particular time because we can't just throw our whole society into a totally new concept without having tremendous spin-off effects.

This is the type of situation, Mr. Speaker, above all other things, where we have to gradually evolve into a system that is workable, because you're bound to make some mistakes and you're bound to have some things go wrong and you have to change them gradually and slowly. Otherwise you will have such serious repercussions that too many people get hurt and the economy itself might be destroyed in the process.

I expect that there would be an awful lot of concern — not only through the food production industry at the producer level, at the farm-gate level — if in fact the grain services unions were to come in and be allowed to unionize all of the workers in the domestic and farm labour forces. This has got tremendous implications for our province. All of these areas that have never been unionized before, if they were suddenly to be flung into a forced situation of having to become unionized members in one fell swoop, would certainly disrupt and upset the economy of our province beyond recognition.

I'm not saying that this will never happen; I'm saying that there is a tremendous amount of reluctance to have it happen at this time. And even though it may happen some day, it certainly shouldn't happen without meaningful consultation by all of the people and principals involved in the process. So we draw your attention once again to this need to consult with people

before you take the advice of one side or the other, no matter how much you owe to that one side.

And of course again I will allude to the fact that there are some union leaders out here who believe in our society that this government owes them something. If you owe them something, you will probably feel a need to accommodate that. But do it without destroying the economy of the entire province. Do it without destroying the jobs themselves for the basic needs of our province and for the basic needs of the individuals involved.

The ordinary worker on the street can't afford to lose any more jobs in this province. We are a job-poor province, in spite of some of the statistical data that we've been shown in the last few days, Mr. Speaker.

It's a bit of a deceptive type of use of figures, the way we throw these averages and numbers around. At the moment we can take some pride that our province has the lowest percentage of unemployment in terms of numbers that compare with the rest of the provinces in the country. But the reality is that unemployment numbers are really up as compared to last year. But then your job force increases by numbers and the whole thing becomes a mishmash of figures being used to prove whatever point that you want to prove.

And so it's little comfort to the 8 or 10 or 12 per cent of the people in a city like Saskatoon that don't have a job and can't find one to know that we have the lowest numbers in the country. That would be little comfort to me if I were sitting around doing nothing and had no way of earning an income to feed my family or to educate them. And I'm sure that their feelings are exactly the same.

So that's not just good enough, is to say that, well compared to the bad, we are the least of the worst or anything like that. That's not good enough. We've got to try to find ways to bring more jobs to our province, and this legislation won't help to do that, Mr. Speaker.

And the people that are involved in signing this letter that I showed you today, those folks are definitely, definitely concerned, and they want to consult, they want to get their input put into this whole process, they want to help the government to find ways to develop an economic long-term strategy, they want to help the government to find a way to diversify our province to bring in more jobs.

These are the people that are genuinely concerned with the direction our province goes and with the way that the economy of our province is going to develop. And they want a bigger job market for people that need work. And they're willing to sit down with the government and discuss these things and talk about them and give their suggestions and their opinions. And I think that's the opportunity that they should be availed, Mr. Speaker, without question.

And the process could be started now and worked on through the winter. I can't see the world coming to an end if this particular draft legislation weren't passed by next year. I really can't see that the province of Saskatchewan would stop in its tracks at all. We do have labour legislation in the province that keeps things going at the

present time. And we can work on this draft for six months or a year with meaningful consultations and develop it so that it in fact can give us the direction that we need to go.

It's no wonder, Mr. Speaker, that the business community fears this legislation, because it was put together one-sided. Only one group had any input into it. And of course, with this draft having been leaked — and I suspect it was done so deliberately because they needed to have some input into it — with that draft being the basis, it was no wonder that there would be a lot of fear and a lot of concern. And I'm not surprised at all that the amount of pressure that was exerted is in fact being exerted to have some consultation before the rest of this package is put together.

It's no wonder, Mr. Speaker, that the official opposition wants to take a hard look at this sort of thing, because we've had an awful lot of approaches by the construction industry, by the entire provincial base of our economy, to assist them to bring to the attention of the government their genuine needs and concerns.

And just to reinforce our argument with the government that they should give this matter more consideration, we have many other letters that we have received from various sectors. And I just want to read little bits of them to reinforce our argument with the government that they should give this more serious consideration and not just say well, one meeting is enough, now we'll ram it through.

(1000)

The "Business sector airs grievances with Romanow," and I'm quoting from the Saskatoon paper here. And it goes on:

Saskatchewan business is "overwhelmed and frustrated" by the government's legislative agenda and says there is no apparent plan for economic renewal.

Now that's pretty serious stuff, Mr. Speaker. And that sort of headline has been going on for quite some time.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Speaker, with leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you and to the Assembly I would like to introduce Mr. Jim Gunningham who is the director of education for the Eston-Elrose School Division. Mr. Gunningham at one time was the director of education down at the Oxbow School Division. I'd like to welcome him to the Assembly and ask all the other members to welcome him also.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — With leave, for the introduction of guests as well.

Leave granted.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to welcome Mr. Gunningham to the legislature this morning. Mr. Gunningham worked long and hard for the situation with respect to the radon gas in the Eston school and the people of Eston and area certainly appreciate all his efforts in that area. So welcome to the legislature this morning, sir.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

### Resolution No. 40 (continued)

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was going to just read a few of the excerpts from some of the letters and from some of the media that has been going around in the last little while here, because I think it's important that we, at this point, reinforce our argument with the government that they should carry on with the consultation before introducing the final draft of this labour legislation. More meaningful consultation has to mean more than just one meeting, Mr. Speaker, and I want to reinforce that argument for you by the comments that are being made by a lot of people.

It says here, "Labor Act excludes the majority," and I will quote here from . . . now this one is from the *Leader-Post*, not the *Star-Phoenix*. The *Leader-Post* says here:

Organized labor's demand for what it calls "fair-and-open tendering" by the provincial government is perfectly understandable. The problem arises when you examine what labor actually wants.

There is no doubt that during the 1980s, the labor movement took it on the chin in this province. The former Devine government came to power believing 11 years of NDP rule had tipped the labor-management balance in favour of labor. It quickly set out to reduce the power of unions in the province.

One of the changes was to eliminate legislation governing the construction industry that had been established by the previous Blakeney government. It had required provincewide bargaining in the various building trade sectors and forbid the practice of what is known as "double-breasting", where union contractors form spin-off, non-union companies.

The Tory government believed that by opening the labor market to non-union contractors, competition would be enhanced. As well, the end to provincewide bargaining would allow local economic conditions to become a greater factor in the bargaining process.

Naturally, the changes by the Devine government were bitterly opposed by the labor movement. And not surprisingly labor is demanding the NDP government bring back a new construction industry labor relations act similar to the one under the Blakeney government.

One of the primary tools labor is using to win public support is this call for "fair tendering." Implicit, and explicit, in the campaign is the message that tendering was not fair under the Tory government.

On the surface, labor's case seems to be built on the double-breasting issue. It argues that by allowing spinoff non-union companies, union workers are shut out of jobs by their own union contractors who create non-union companies and bid on jobs.

But in fact, the issue goes further. What the building trade unions and the Saskatchewan Federation of Labor are saying is that all major government contracts should be tendered only to union companies.

(Now) the union case was stated in a pamphlet handed out on an information picket line recently and the same case was made Friday in a demonstration on the steps of the Legislative Building.

"In spite of the NDP's announced pro-union policy, SaskTel, SaskPower and other Crowns have now awarded major construction contracts to the non-union sector. This merely continues the legacy of union-bashing and corruption left by the previous government.

"Crown corporations have a responsibility to further the public good. At no additional cost, by encouraging union work the Crowns could help ensure good pensions, comprehensive health and welfare benefits, safe and decent working conditions and a real future for Saskatchewan workers."

This is a fascinating argument that tells you a great deal about organized labor's priorities. It is based on the traditional labor doctrine that, by definition, the public good and what's good for labor are indivisible.

In this case, what labor wants is effectively a union monopoly in the labor market. If major government contracts, and by extension sub-contracts, can go only to unionized companies, it means non-union companies and their workers will be shut out.

And what does that mean?

In Saskatchewan it means the vast majority of working people would be excluded from work by their own government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's an extremely important sentence to note. It says, and I will have to repeat this just to make sure that the folks on the government side take note of this:

In Saskatchewan it means the vast majority of working people would be excluded from work by their own government.

According to the Labor Department, in 1991 one-fifth of the total workforce, or 103,647 people, was unionized. Of that unionized total, less than 30,000 — or 28 per cent of all union members — work in the private sector. If you extrapolate further, that means about 5.6 per cent of the labor force in the private sector is unionized.

A logical labor response to these figures would be that the low numbers of people in a union is proof the labor movement needs to grow to improve the condition of wage earners.

But a national poll conducted by Angus Reid for the Canadian Federation of Independent Business last year found that the highest level of job satisfaction was in small, non-union businesses. It also found that 56 per cent of employees in businesses of (let's see now) 50-299 employees did not want to be in a union.

The point here is that there is no social justice when organized labor expands its argument against double-breasting to demand that people who work for non-union companies be excluded from government tendering.

If the provincial government was to adopt that kind of policy, it would be aggressively discriminating against the vast majority of working people in the private sector, who do not belong to a union.

Now it goes on to say that:

That is not to say that the building trades are not right to demand "fair-and-open tendering." Everyone believes it should be exactly that. After all, we're talking about public money.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that kind of summarizes a whole lot of the kinds of things that the people that signed the original letter that I read this morning are saying, that it reinforces their claim that consultation could not have taken place. Because surely, if the union leaders are demanding that the government pass a Bill that in effect would cost the majority of Saskatchewan people not to be able to work for its own government, then it has to be a one-sided argument. And that one-sided argument leads to the conclusion that we have to have meaningful consultations with those people of the opposing views in order to get a balance in the legislation. And that is what we're seeking, Mr. Speaker, more than anything.

We're not trying to stop this Bill from ever being passed or from the amendments being done in some way. But what we're saying is that we want it to be done with a balance.

We want a balance that will allow people to have fair and open tendering. We want a balance of the labour force being able to in fact continue to work in Saskatchewan. We want more jobs for Saskatchewan people. Those are the kinds of things that we as an opposition want.

And we want the government to take the time to listen to the other side of the story from those people who may have even differing views than ours. We're not saying that they will necessarily . . . all of the people that signed this letter will necessarily say and want the things that we will agree with. In fact they may even come up with a Bill in the end that promotes some of their ideas that we would be opposed to. And we might in fact even at that time have to oppose some parts of the Bill.

But at least it will be a balance through consultation, and we would have to, at least if it's done in that process, concede that everybody's had a fair and open opportunity to have input.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think I have to wind my remarks up because there are some of my colleagues that are going to want to discuss this matter in some depth and they want to have some input in this as well because it is such an important and crucial issue.

I hope that the members of the government have taken enough notes and have considered enough what we have said this morning so that in fact they will pull this Bill, not introduce it this session — that's what we are asking for. Bring it back in after meaningful consultation. And once they have done that, next year if they bring it back in, then we won't be probably in a position to argue so strongly to have it held off.

I do want to move a motion, Mr. Speaker. The original motion resolution no. 40, moved by myself, the member from Maple Creek. It'll be seconded by the member from Kindersley. And the motion is:

That this Assembly urges the government to engage in genuine public consultations before introducing labour legislation that infringes on individual rights, in particular removing the right of individual workers and employers to voluntarily choose their own collective bargaining options.

It'll be dated the 11th, 1992, and I will sign it now.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that I just go over that motion again for us. I'm pleased to be able to speak to the motion and second the motion from my colleague, the member from Maple Creek:

That this Assembly urges the government to engage in genuine public consultations before introducing labour legislation that infringes on individual rights, in particular removing the right of individual workers and employers to voluntarily choose their own collective bargaining options.

Mr. Speaker, I think that motion is an absolute excellent

motion. I think it goes to the very heart of the issue surrounding labour legislation and all things associated with it.

The New Democrats, the NDP Party, Mr. Speaker, in an election campaign promised an open and honest government, a promise to consult with various interest groups before proposing new legislation. They made that promise, Mr. Speaker. And yet, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are beginning to see the other side of this government — a government, Mr. Speaker, that makes promises during election campaigns to get elected with absolutely no thought to carrying out those promises.

(1015)

Mr. Speaker, they promised to set up a review committee to review labour legislation. And they did do that. And they did do that. And to the credit of the Minister of Justice, that seems to be one thing that he's very good at, is setting up committees to come up with predetermined results, predetermined results, Mr. Speaker. That's what they did.

They set up a committee. That seems to be the only area of competence that this government has, is setting up a committee to come up with predetermined results. And that's what happened in this case as well, I believe. I believe that's the case, Mr. Speaker. And the Justice minister, he may not agree with me, but I believe that's the case.

Union-only contractors, Mr. Speaker, union-only contractors come up with the idea that union contracts should be the only thing in this province. Is that any big surprise, Mr. Speaker? Is that any big surprise to the people of Saskatchewan that union contractors would suggest that union-only contracts are the way to go? That's like saying, Mr. Speaker, to the board of governors of the National Hockey League, that we don't think that there should be another hockey league set up.

Mr. Speaker, I'm absolutely surprised, I'm surprised that anyone could say anything different, that union-only contractors would suggest that. Naturally they're going to suggest that, Mr. Justice minister, naturally they're going to suggest that. And naturally this government is going to follow those recommendations, Mr. Speaker.

This is a government that had the support of unions during the last election, and now those unions, Mr. Speaker, are looking for their pay-off. They're calling in the marker, Mr. Speaker, that's what they're doing — calling it in.

For example, Mr. Speaker, one only has to look at the marker, as I call it, just look at the electoral financial contributors to the NDP over the last election. And it's open to anyone. Anyone can get a copy of it. We have a copy of it. Anybody in the general public's allowed to have a copy of it. Just write to Elections Canada and they'll send you one. Interesting little piece of information that every person in Saskatchewan should just have the chance to peruse it a little bit. Union after union after union contributing thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars to the NDP Party, Mr. Speaker.

And not only that, I took the time as well in my constituency to ask for the list of contributors for the various parties, Mr. Speaker. And what do you find? And I suspect that my constituency is no different than any other constituency, Mr. Speaker. What you will find is not only lists of financial contributors that unions have put into the NDP Party, but you'll find lists of workers that worked on behalf of the NDP that were union people, Mr. Speaker. There were six in mine, six Ontario union workers worked the Kindersley constituency. And I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, they worked hard, they worked hard. They worked literally night and day in Kindersley to try and elect an NDP candidate, Mr. Speaker.

And I think . . . I'll just give you one short little illustration of the kind of work that they did. And whether they are aware of it at all, Mr. Speaker, it was incredible the kind of tactics that they went to to try and elect an NDP candidate, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure . . . this is relevant, Mr. Speaker, it has to do with the kind of pay-off that the labour legislation . . . the reason why we see this labour legislation being brought forward is.

Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan we have a sign corridor set up that the people of the various political parties are authorized through law to put up signs all over the place during the election campaign. The two other parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives, respected, respected the rights of the property owners in the Kindersley constituency. We only put up signs where we were asked and were given explicit instructions to put them up on the people's property.

Well, the NDP, they didn't pay any attention to that. The union organizers out of . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I want to remind the member detailed discussion of what happened in the last election on that issue of putting up signs has really nothing to do with the debate that is before us. Referring to it, fine, but detailed discussion of that is not relevant to the discussion that is before us.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it only illustrates the kind of support and the reason why this labour legislation is being brought forward. They showed no respect at that time for property owners, Mr. Speaker. And now they're showing no respect, Mr. Speaker, for non-union contractors in this province, Mr. Speaker.

The proposed labour legislation is causing a great concern with business organizations in this province, Mr. Speaker. This government promised that they would consult business organizations. They made that sweeping promise in the election campaign, that they were going to be open and accountable, going to consult people all over the province on any issue and every issue, Mr. Speaker.

And yet now we see, in the last few days, a letter from business organizations all over the province to the Premier, appealing to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, appealing to the Premier to keep his promise with respect to labour legislation in this province.

The letter dated July 28 to the Premier of the province:

The following Saskatchewan business organizations have recently met to share and discuss our serious concerns about the economic future of our province.

Mr. Speaker, they're concerned about this kind of labour legislation. They're concerned particularly about a government that does not want to consult with business organizations.

All of us share our concerns about the need for a co-ordinated vision of the economy of Saskatchewan. We need a positive climate to maintain existing jobs and help create new employment and investment.

Mr. Speaker, they are concerned. They're deeply concerned. They have business interests here. They employ thousands of people in this province. They want to stay in this province. They want to work in this province. They want to employ people in this province.

We have all been frustrated by your government's "consultation" process to date and the lack of balance in recognizing the vital role of our private wealth creating sector in a mixed economy.

Mr. Speaker, the labour legislation that is being proposed by this government has been put forward without consultation. Oh there was a small little committee of union people set up to sort of . . . I would say give the impression to some that there was consultation.

But was there genuine consultation, Mr. Speaker? I don't believe there was. And I don't believe that the people that are represented on this letter to the Minister of . . . or to the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan — I think they agree with me:

We feel that the need for a joint meeting with you at this time is extremely timely and urgent. We need to meet with you before some very sweeping new Act amendments are passed this session, before your government releases its Discussion Paper on an Economic Development Strategy, and before your full Cabinet meets in your fall long-range planning conference.

Mr. Speaker, they don't believe there was consultation. They don't believe that there was any consultation whatsoever. The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce says there was no consultation. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says there was no consultation. The Prairie Implement Manufacturers Association says there was no consultation, Mr. Speaker. The Hotels Association of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, says there was no consultation.

The Saskatchewan Home Builders', no consultation; Canadian Petroleum Association, Independent Petroleum Association, Regina Chamber of Commerce, Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce, Saskatchewan Construction Association, Saskatchewan Mining Association, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, one can only wonder who they did consult with. I'm not sure how many people that these various groups would represent, Mr. Speaker, but I'm sure it would number into the thousands, tens of thousands of workers in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Tens of thousands of people in Saskatchewan that their representatives, their representatives say never had the opportunity to consult with this government with respect to this labour legislation.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, this government says that they were going to be open and honest and consult with various interest groups all over the province. Have they done that? No, Mr. Speaker, they absolutely have not done that and have broken yet another promise to the people of Saskatchewan.

This letter finally spurred some interest in the government circles, Mr. Speaker. The Premier of the province and I think the House Leader met with the various business groups. And I'm sure the Premier, as he usually does, waxed eloquently about how he would be forthright and how he would promise to consult with them in the future. And, Mr. Speaker, these people won't forget. They have a long memory, Mr. Speaker. They won't forget the Premier's promise, his once-again promise to consult with them.

And one can only wonder how long it will be, Mr. Speaker, before there's another letter like this one to the Premier of the province, suggesting that they weren't consulted with again; that the Premier promised it again and that they were given no opportunity to put their various concerns forward.

This meeting, very much a rush meeting, may have quieted the groups for a little while, Mr. Speaker. But I say it will only be a little while. Because this government has an agenda that has to be met. It has an agenda that has to be met. The union contractors and the unions of this province are demanding, absolutely demanding labour legislation that is sweeping and extremely strong, Mr. Speaker.

The contractors and various groups that were outlined in this letter to the Premier, they expect to see an economic plan put forward in Saskatchewan by this government. The government promised it. Why shouldn't the people of Saskatchewan expect it?

Mr. Speaker, but there is no economic plan. There is no economic plan with respect to anything in this promise. What happened to the AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.) agreement? What happened to the upgrader in Lloydminster? What happened to Promavia? What's happened to Piper? What's happening at Saska Pasta in Swift Current? Impact Packaging?

I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that even their union friends would like to see these projects go forward. Jobs for them, Mr. Speaker, that's what it would be. The AECL agreement alone would promise thousands and thousands of jobs and millions of dollars in investment in this province. But yet no, Mr. Speaker, they have an agenda to go forward. They have an agenda that suggests that these projects can't go forward because they have the Tory touch on

them, Mr. Speaker.

The review commission, all-union contractors recommended union government contracts. Well, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't surprise me that they're getting their pay-off now with all of the support and work that they did throughout the election.

Some of the unions' proposals sent in were shocking, to say the least, Mr. Speaker. And we realize, as I said earlier, that we understand that they have a huge favour to pay back. Mr. Speaker, they are suggesting that the amount of co-operation . . . the contractors of this province, that they have been consulted with, is absolutely frightening. There hasn't been any consultation and yet the government claims there has.

One only has to wonder who is right in all of this, Mr. Speaker. When they take the time to sit down and have at least 12 representatives of various groups in this province sign a letter to the Premier of the province, one can only suggest that they are the ones that are telling the truth, and not the government.

(1030)

Mr. Speaker, part of this labour legislation, part of this labour legislation suggests that anti-scab legislation should be put in place which makes it illegal to hire replacement workers, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give you an example of what these folks in the unions claim is anti-scab type legislation, what they think of replacement workers, Mr. Speaker. This is the kind of thing that I will read into the record here in a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, as an example of what people think in the union organizations around this country — people that we don't need in Saskatchewan, the kinds of things that Saskatchewan people don't need.

They don't need this kind of attitude. They don't need this kind of attitude that permeates the various union hierarchy through the country. Mr. Speaker, this was reported in *Maclean's* magazine last fall.

On October 10 Daryl Bean, president of the 170,000 strong Public Service Alliance of Canada, wrote this letter to three women, all grandmothers, in which he called them scabs (Mr. Speaker).

And this legislation speaks to that kind of thing — replacement workers.

The three women are all public servants who chose to exercise their freedom to earn a living during the recent nation-wide strike by the Public Service Alliance Commission.

Beans's letter quoted this passage, Mr. Speaker. And I think it's important that the people of Saskatchewan know what the union organizers of this country think of replacement workers. And here's what he said, Mr. Speaker:

After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad, and the vampire, he had some awful stuff left with

which he made a scab.

Do we need that kind of thing in this province, Mr. Speaker? That's what this labour legislation is suggesting.

A scab is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a waterlogged brain, and a . . . backbone of jelly and glue. Where others have hearts, he (simply) carries a tumour of rotten principles . . . No man has a right to scab as long as there is a pool of water to drown his carcass in, or a rope long enough to hang his body with.

Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of thing that the union people, the union hierarchy — some of them at least — suggest replacement workers are, Mr. Speaker. And I suggest that that is wrong. That is not the kind of thing that the people in Saskatchewan think about replacement workers, Mr. Speaker. They don't believe that kind of stuff. They don't believe that the government should be putting forward legislation of that kind, Mr. Speaker. They don't agree with that kind of thing.

And that's the kind of people, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that are advising this government on labour legislation. People that will suggest those kinds of things to three people, three women, three grandmothers in this country, Mr. Speaker. That's what he wrote. That's what he wrote them in his letter. I didn't write that. Mr. Bean himself wrote that.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan expect the government to carry out their promises, they expect the government to carry out their labour legislation, but they expect it to be done in a fair, open, and consultative way, Mr. Speaker. And the people represented on the letter to the Premier of Saskatchewan don't agree that that has taken place, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there was even a presentation by the Grain Services Union that they wanted all domestic and farm labour to be unionized. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure how many of them ever get the opportunity on the government side to get out into the rural areas of this province, but I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, in the rural areas of this province there's thousands of farmers that employ part-time help, full-time help, with their farming operations.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think they're treated very well, those workers. I think generally the farmers of this province are very responsible employers, very responsible employers. And I don't think they're being treated badly. But, Mr. Speaker, they want the freedom, the farmers of Saskatchewan, they want the freedom to be able to pick and choose the workers that are going to be carrying out the work on their farm.

They don't want the interference of union organizers like the likes of Mr. Bean suggesting how they should be running their business, Mr. Speaker. We in the official opposition will be doing everything we can to point out the kinds of things that are in this labour legislation, and anti replacement workers is just one of those things.

In Ontario today, Mr. Speaker, we're seeing all kinds of

this same, similar legislation coming forward. And the business groups and people in general are voicing their concerns against it, Mr. Speaker.

The Bill, Mr. Speaker, will ban double-breasting — the practice of union contractors setting up non-union spin-off companies to avoid paying uncompetitive union wage rates. In fact the Bill will retroactively force non-union construction companies which represent the vast majority of contractors in the province to become union shops. It will also impose collective agreements upon those employees, whether they like it or not.

Mr. Speaker, once again we see the heavy hand of this government touching another sector of our society. Mr. Speaker, they again . . . and it suggests:

It will also cause some contractors to go out of business, inflate the cost of construction projects, and stand the relatively peaceful construction industry on its head.

Mr. Speaker, that's what the people of Saskatchewan are telling this government. That's what the representatives of business told the government in Saskatoon a few short days ago, Mr. Speaker. That's what they told them.

Now we will wait, and they will be waiting as well, to see the results of their consultation that they finally got with the Premier of this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, today only 20 per cent of the industry is unionized in this province. Strikes, for the most part, on large construction sites are a thing of the past, unlike the 1970s and early '80s. Construction costs have come down, not because skilled trades are getting less money but because non-union contractors can use more unskilled labour at lower wage rates than unionized contractors can, Mr. Speaker.

The election of the NDP though, the unions saw their chance to regain control of the construction sites of this province. Hence the Bill was put together by the Labour minister of this province.

Not content with that, the unions have set their sights on making every government-financed construction site a union site, something the Labour minister is going to do for them.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says a policy of tendering projects totalling non-union firms is fair tendering to all, but a self-serving call for unionized labour market monopoly.

Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what it is. They're asking for a union monopoly in this province with this type of legislation, Mr. Speaker. And this is again part of the pay-off to the unions, part of the marker that's being called in on behalf of the unions to the NDP Party.

Mr. Speaker, many, many groups have sought consultation with this government, and yet none of them have had the opportunity to do that, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan business is overwhelmed and frustrated by

the government's legislative agenda and says there's no apparent plan for economic renewal.

Mr. Speaker, this is an article in the *Star-Phoenix*, August 6:

In a letter to Premier Roy Romanow calling for an "urgent" meeting to the business people he said: "We have all been frustrated by your government's "consultation" process to date and the lack of balance in recognizing the vital role of our private wealth-creating sector . . ."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it goes on:

"Clearly, we're not happy with the consultative approach because it doesn't exist . . ." (The chamber of commerce is saying.)

"The budget document was entitled deficit control and restoring confidence in the provincial economy and that doesn't sound like an agenda to me.

"Certainly, a lot of this looks like a payback agenda" to labor with no specific direction in mind.

Mr. Speaker, I think that is what is concerning everyone in this province. That's what exactly is concerning everyone in this province, is this government simply putting this legislation forward in an effort to keep their union people on side. And I think, Mr. Speaker, there's beginning to be resounding and very clear evidence that that is the case.

Mr. Speaker, it's no wonder that the business community fears this legislation. It's no wonder that they fear it. If you aren't a union contractor in this province, Mr. Speaker, in the next short time — next few months or a year — you may not have a business left in this province, Mr. Speaker. If you're not a unionized contractor, where are you going to be in this province when a government suggests that unions should have the majority of work in this province. Where will you be?

You'll be sitting on the outside looking in. You will not have an opportunity to participate in the work in this province. And the employees that you have under your employment right now, they will also be sitting on the outside looking in.

When, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is this government going to come forward with their economic plan? The people of Saskatchewan are waiting, Mr. Speaker. We're waiting to hear what's happening with all of those companies I mentioned earlier — AECL, Promavia, Piper, the upgrader in Lloydminster, Saska Pasta, Impact Packaging. Everyone's waiting. Everyone's waiting for the Economic Development minister, the Associate Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Finance himself to stand up in the legislature and suggest, here's our plan for the future, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And yet we haven't seen it.

Well we're wondering, Mr. Finance Minister. We're wondering when you're going to say that kind of thing. When are you going to put forward your plan for

Saskatchewan? The people of Saskatchewan are waiting; the business sector is waiting; the unionized people . . . contractors and unionized workers of this province are waiting. They would like those jobs, I'm sure.

But let's, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let's in Saskatchewan hold this government to its promise of consultation, to its promise of an economic plan, to its promise of jobs, to its promise of lower taxes, to its promise of everything for everyone, Mr. Speaker. That's what they promised during the election campaign. They promised the farmers; they promised union-organized people; they promised the unions themselves; they promised business groups; they promised seniors. They promised everyone and yet we see very little, Mr. Speaker, very little of a plan that sets forward the agenda for this province.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's incumbent upon this government to set forward that plan. They promised it and now the people of Saskatchewan want to see it. They don't want to see the kind of labour legislation that's going to unilaterally do away with non-unionized companies in this province.

What the building trade unions and the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour are saying is that all major government contracts should be tendered only to union companies — tendered only to union companies. That's what the unions of this province want, Mr. Speaker.

(1045)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that fair and open, fair and open and honest tendering? Is that fair and open tendering when only one sector of society is allowed to compete for jobs in this province? Unionized contractors and unions only, is that fair and open tendering? Well I don't believe it is, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But a national poll conducted by Angus Reid for the Canadian Federation of Independent Business last year found that the highest level of job satisfaction was in small, non-union businesses. It also found that 56 per cent of employees in businesses of 50-299 employees did not want to be in a union (Mr. Speaker).

But they will be forced to with this kind of legislation, Mr. Speaker. They will be forced to join a union or not work in this province. That's the alternative, Mr. Speaker — join a union or don't work in this province. That's the type of thing that this legislation has put forward and that's what's concerning business groups in this province.

The point here is that there is no social justice when organized labour expands its argument against double-breasting to demand that people who work for non-union companies be excluded from government tendering.

If the provincial government was to adopt that kind of policy, it would be aggressively discriminating against the vast majority of working people in the private sector who do not belong to a union.

It would discriminate against them. It discriminates against non-union people in this province, Mr. Speaker — again, something that this government said it would never do.

It said it would consult with them. It would put forward an agenda that was open and honest tendering, allowing people, union or non-union, to compete. And yet they're being advised by their union friends on their review committee to do this kind of thing.

To exclude the majority of working people because they don't carry union cards will be amoral, to say nothing of being against the public good, Mr. Speaker.

There's no question in my mind, Mr. Speaker, that business interests don't believe there's been consultation. There hasn't been to date. They were promised it, Mr. Speaker. They've received a short briefing with the Premier, Mr. Speaker, and now they want to see action from this government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, labour legislation is extremely important in this province. We all recognize that. Unions are important in this province — we all recognize that — and so are non-unionized companies in this province, Mr. Speaker. What the people in the business interests, and I think all fair-minded people, believe is exactly what this motion suggests that my colleague from Maple Creek has put forward:

That this Assembly urges the government to engage in genuine public consultations before introducing labour legislation that infringes upon individual rights, in particular removing the right of individual workers and employers to voluntarily choose their own collective bargaining options.

Mr. Speaker, I support that motion on behalf of my colleague and on behalf of the official opposition. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my pleasure to rise to my feet to enter into debate on this important private members' resolution here today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that over the past hour and three-quarters I've had an experience unique to everyone in the province of Saskatchewan. Because, Mr. Speaker, as different from virtually everyone who has tuned in to the Legislative Assembly proceedings on television and in fact virtually all of the members of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I have listened to what the two previous members have said in this debate.

I thought it was kind of telling as well, Mr. Speaker, and I am pleased to see the mover of the motion in his seat here today. And I know that we're not entitled to refer to the presence or absence of the members of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, but so let me simply say that I noted with great interest that during the deliberations brought to this Assembly by the member of Kindersley, as I glanced in the direction of the desk by the member from Maple

Creek, I had a very clear view of the door behind him, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, not even, not even . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order. Whatever can of worms the member has gotten into, he's not getting out of it very successfully, and I remind him that he's not to refer to the presence or absence of members in the House.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I can understand why the members would be sensitive, and I respect your ruling. It is truly a wonderful thing, Mr. Speaker, to observe and to behold. Because there would be, quite frankly in the minds of many people here and around the province of Saskatchewan, a great deal of difficulty differentiating whether members are present in their seats or absent, Mr. Speaker.

But let me get to the point. Let me get to the point at hand. You know, I thought, Mr. Speaker, back on October 21, regarding the way that this province conducted its affairs and its government on behalf of the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, a very significant decision was made.

And I was disappointed as I listened to the content of the members who spoke to this resolution earlier this morning, to see that in the Tory caucus in the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, things have not changed. As a matter of fact, there was a loud and clear message given last October 21 and the message was this: is that when it comes to conducting the affairs of the government of the province of Saskatchewan, those who see it to their political advantage to drive a wedge between the people of this province are headed by the way of the dodo bird, Mr. Speaker.

And there were a large number of the former PC (Progressive Conservative) caucus who went the way of the dodo bird on October 21. What I'm saddened to see, Mr. Speaker, is that of the new members of the PC caucus who we've heard from here today, they have not learned the lesson of history. They have not learned that the people of Saskatchewan are sick and tired of politicians who see it to their political advantage to drive wedges between the people who sent them here to the Legislative Assembly.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I listened carefully to one and three-quarter long, weary hours of words coming from the opposite side, I heard wedge after wedge after wedge being driven politically, by the new members of the PC caucus. And I say, shame on you.

Gentlemen, you still have time, you still have time to learn your lesson to be part of having a chance of rebuilding that PC caucus. And you still have some time to teach some lessons to the old fellows, to the old boys on those benches over there, to teach them the new ways of politics in Saskatchewan — the politics of co-operation.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I want to give notice at the conclusion of my remarks I'm going to be moving an amendment to this resolution so that this resolution before us will read that this Assembly:

recognizes the need for the government to engage in genuine public consultations before introducing labour legislation to bring Saskatchewan in line with other provinces; and that this Assembly commends the government for building bridges between workers and farmers, management and labour, and the rural and urban people of this province.

And it is with pride, Mr. Speaker, as a private member of this Assembly, that I will move that resolution.

Now let me just refer to some of the comments made by the members, by the hon. member for Maple Creek and the hon. member for Kindersley in their debate here, Mr. Speaker. Both of them said that what they saw in labour legislation being considered to come before this Assembly — which I point out, Mr. Speaker, is not here — both of them said and went to great pains to say that what they saw was legislation that they called pay-back to the unions.

Well that reflects, Mr. Speaker, that reflects the old style of politics that got the Tory caucus where it is now, the old style of politics that got the Tory caucus where they are now — a little irrelevant rump in the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan; a bit of a scar on the political history of the province that got them where they are now.

You see, Mr. Speaker, what these fellows have not yet learned, and I'm afraid have adopted from their old style colleagues, ones who survived the siege on October 21, Mr. Speaker, is that politics is some form of balancing act of paying those who have the vested interest — paying the piper. Politics is paying the piper. That's the old style politics, paying the piper. You pay the piper; that's your job.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a job much more honourable than that, that is the intention of the new Government of Saskatchewan. That job is to serve the interests of all the people of Saskatchewan — those who voted for the government and those who didn't. Because when you're democratically elected, you come here to serve the interests of the province and all the people of the province of Saskatchewan. And that's what's going on today.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — It's called democracy. It's called democracy and it means you come here to serve all that sent you, including those who didn't vote for you. It's called democracy.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make some reference to labour legislation and what's happening by way of consultation in the interest of democracy, in the interest of our economy, and the interest of employers and working people in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Because the truth of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, there is consultation going on in Saskatchewan today in regards to labour legislation that has never gone on before — never. Not even by the previous New Democratic Party government of the '70s. Consultation, Mr. Speaker, that

would make your head spin. In fact, as I listen to the utterings opposite, I think it is making their heads spin, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, now I could understand the criticism if the members opposite were saying, we're getting sick and tired of this new government consulting on labour legislation; all you ever do is consult. You seem to be asking everybody what they think. Why don't you get on with bringing in legislation to bring about changes for a new era of fairness in the province of Saskatchewan?

There would be some valid criticism in that, Mr. Speaker. Because since the government changed on November 1 with the appointment of the Minister of Labour, this government has been engaged in consultation like you've never seen before. And I could understand if they were saying, will you quit consulting; everybody's having their say; make up your mind and get on with it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there is some making up of minds and some getting on. But the consultation that's going on, Mr. Speaker, I think represents very accurately the new priorities and the new style of the new government of the New Democratic Party in the province of Saskatchewan.

And let me describe that, Mr. Speaker. Now as I listened carefully to the words of the members opposite, the hon. member from Maple Creek . . . By the way, when I look past his desk, I have another clear view of the door.

Mr. Speaker, when I listened to the words of the member from Maple Creek and the member for Kindersley, you know, I listened to their words and they say, well we believe in people's . . . workers' rights to organize themselves, just as long as they don't have any rights. That's what they say. That's the reality.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have legislation. Why do you have legislation in a province? You have legislation in a province to empower those who are less powerful to provide an equal balance. In fact a measure of good legislation is that it provides equity and equitable balance of rights in the work place between the employer and the employee. That's what it's all about. That's why you have legislation. If you didn't have legislation — the members opposite know that; they're hidebound to this ideology — if you had no legislation at all, what you have, all the power rests in the employer in unfettered free enterprise. That's what it's all about.

Small business that they seem to say is a friend of theirs, Mr. Speaker, in unfettered free enterprise, small business disappears. Because all you have is a growing, cumulative, corporate interest. That's what happens in unfettered free enterprise. And I can understand why the members opposite are attracted to that notion, because it reflects their priorities.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the priorities of the new government, of the new style, of new co-operation, a New Democratic Party government are to bring together a balance of interests in the interest of our economy, and stability of employment for employers and employees together.

And let me describe how that's been going on, Mr.

Speaker. It may take a bit of time, and I'll try and be as brief as I can. But it's going on on so many fronts, it's going to take more than a minute or two to describe it, Mr. Speaker.

Let's start with their favourite subject, The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act. What is one of the first things that the minister did, Mr. Speaker? He appointed a committee. To do what? To review and consult. And it has.

(1100)

Now who was on the committee? Let's just stop and think for a moment. What's this legislation about? There is in Canada today one province and one province only that does not have legislation which lays out the mechanisms for cross-trade bargaining throughout the province. One province only, in all of the nation, Mr. Speaker. You know what it is; it's Saskatchewan.

Why do we have the unique status of being the only province without this kind of legislation? It's because the forerunners, the old style, old PCs back in 1984, removed that legislation from the books of Saskatchewan. They said never mind fairness; we've got to pay the piper. We're old style politicians; we believe in the piper being paid. And it was the large corporations what sent us, and so we've got to kneel and bow to what they tell us what to do.

And so out went the legislation; out with the stroke of a pen went the rights of thousands of construction workers, qualified tradespeople, Mr. Speaker, a large number of whom have since left the province to go to other provinces — any of the other nine provinces who do have that kind of legislation, I point out, Mr. Speaker: Alberta; Manitoba; Maritimes — every province in the Maritimes; even B.C. (British Columbia) where their So-Cred cousins were; even Quebec, Mr. Speaker, throughout the country.

So what did the minister bring together to consider and to consult? A group of people who are affected by the legislation. This is not an odd notion, Mr. Speaker, not an odd notion. Brought together representatives of trade unions and unionized construction firms, asked them to consider laying out the mechanism by which they deal with each other on a province-wide basis.

So this strikes me as being a tad sound, Mr. Speaker, and strangely different from the old style previous PC government. And, Mr. Speaker, they filed their report, they did their deliberations, they did their consultations, they filed their report. And then what did the Minister of Labour do? He took that report, he asked the Department of Justice to translate that report into a piece of legislation, what it would look like if it was to become law. And what did he do? Did he hide it in his drawer? No, Mr. Speaker. He took the thing and he sent it out for more consultation.

In fact the member from Maple Creek I remember about a month ago coming to this Assembly and accusing the Minister of Labour of introducing this sneaky legislation somehow without bringing it before the Legislative Assembly, and at the same time accusing him of not

consulting. How did they get the copies? Because the Minister of Labour sent it out. It's called consultation.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, tomorrow the Minister of Labour will be personally meeting with the representative of the construction association, who they say, who they say is so highly offended by this legislation and has not been consulted. They're meeting with the Minister of Labour tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

Well my colleagues say, can you believe anything they say, Mr. Speaker? What I say to you is this. They're trying — sometimes they're very trying, Mr. Speaker — but they're trying; they're doing their best. They're doing their best. I think they're doing the best they can. They truly are.

Well, Mr. Speaker, so we've got The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act, consultation in the development of a proposal, translated into legislation, sent back out, consult some more, meeting with the affected parties. Mr. Speaker, you know, it's just sometimes that I shake my head when I listen to the members opposite and their explanation of how the world unfolds.

I have in front of me, Mr. Speaker, a copy of an article in the *Leader-Post*, July 25, 1992. "Trade unionists rally for change," it says. Now, Mr. Speaker, it refers to an incident some couple of weeks ago when about a thousand skilled tradesmen in the province of Saskatchewan came to the Legislative Assembly to express their point of view to their government.

And they were welcomed. They were welcomed here, Mr. Speaker, the same way that when on the opening day of the Legislative Assembly a couple of hundred farmers came here and said that they had a concern about proposed legislation. And they were welcomed. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the government invited them in for coffee and sandwiches. That's the new style of new, open, consultative government, New Democratic government in the province of Saskatchewan today. That's the way it works.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this article refers . . . it covers the events when the skilled tradespersons of Saskatchewan, a thousand of them, came to the Legislative Assembly. And the Minister of Labour went out to meet them and to tell them what his thoughts were about the legislation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if it is as the members opposite say, that he who pays the piper calls the tune, I guess the Minister of Labour should have been out there picking up campaign contributions. Well, Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, the minister wasn't out there doing anything of the sort. Many of my colleagues, when a thousand people came to the Legislative Assembly, many of my colleagues were out there meeting with these skilled tradespeople from Saskatchewan. Not one member of the Tory caucus could be seen — not one.

No, because they've still got their minds locked into the old style politics — he who pays the piper calls the tune. And they don't believe that a single tradesperson voted for them in the last election, therefore there's no reason to

go out and meet these people when they come to speak to their government, they say.

Well the Minister of Labour went out. And, Mr. Speaker, let me report to the Assembly with not my words, not the words of the Minister of Labour, what did the *Leader-Post* have to say? Their labour reporter, Anne Kyle, in her article . . . Let me read the second and third paragraphs of the article, Mr. Speaker, and I quote:

Mitchell told the 600 . . . (I think she was a tad low in her estimates) . . . Mitchell told the 600 unionized construction workers, who rallied on the steps of the Legislative Building Friday, he intends to put an end to the creation of spinoff non-unionized construction companies by unionized contractors.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, he was saying he intends to bring to this province legislation that exists in nine of the ten provinces — in the other nine provinces — legislation that says when you're a unionized company, if you've got unionized workers, it's against the law to start another little company over here, get a contract there, don't honour your collective agreement. This is not an odd notion in a democratic nation, Mr. Speaker. Not an odd notion at all.

And then what was said, Mr. Speaker, is this:

However before the Construction Industry Labor Relations Act is introduced in the legislature, he said . . .

This is the Minister of Labour talking to those thousand tradespeople, those who are supposed to be those who paid the piper; they're here to call the tune. What did he say when it would have been easy to say exactly everything that they wanted him to say? What did the Minister of Labour say on the steps of the Legislative Assembly to the people of Saskatchewan? He said:

...there must be further consultation with all the interested parties affected by the proposed labor law."

There it is. So even when these so-called . . . You know and I point out, Mr. Speaker, not a single one of those thousand skilled tradespeople from the province of Saskatchewan had horns or tails with forks — not one of them — contrary to the view of the members opposite who hid in the back rooms of their caucus, afraid, afraid that they might catch something if they went out and talked to some of the skilled tradespeople in the province of Saskatchewan.

Well there it is. The Minister of Labour meets at the Legislative Assembly and what does he say to them? He intends to proceed with good legislation to bring Saskatchewan in line with the rest of the nation, but even then says that there must be consultation because it is the wish of this government, if it is at all possible in a province which has been besieged by political wedges driven between people by their PC government for a decade, if it's possible to bring together the interests of the people of Saskatchewan, that will be done.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it applies not only, not only to The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act. The Trade Union Act, what's happening to The Trade Union Act? Another piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour has appointed yet another committee of review, to do what? To consult. To consult, to receive input from those with vested interests who want to see good legislation which is fair and equitable and balanced in the province of Saskatchewan.

On the minimum wage, what has the minister done, the Minister of Labour done, Mr. Speaker? The Minister of Labour has appointed a minimum wage committee to do what? To review the issue and to consult and to bring, and to bring recommendations for dealing with the minimum wage now, but more importantly, Mr. Speaker, in the long run, a solid, sound, equitable way of addressing the minimum wage in an ongoing basis in a way that meets the needs for those who are working at the lowest of wages in our province, the minimum wage, but at the same time, to meet the needs of those who are paying the minimum wage — employers. And to take the politics out of the minimum wage.

Because under the old style PC government where you paid the piper, that was the way you ran the province. When did minimum wage change? Mr. Speaker, it changed only twice in 10 years. And when did it change? It changed the year before the election. The minimum wage in this province was dealt with pure politics by the government of the day kowtowing to what they saw as paying the piper.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in the election even the piper deserted these guys. Because the piper came to be the view that what's best for the province of Saskatchewan is a stable economy. Even the piper deserted them.

Well the old style members are having a hard time understanding this. And I understand that, Mr. Speaker. You can't be a novice member coming in from Maple Creek or Kindersley or Souris-Cannington and you sit down with seven dinosaurs around a table. Mr. Speaker . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — You'll turn into one.

**Mr. Hagel:** — That's right. If it walks like a dinosaur and it talks like a dinosaur and it looks like a dinosaur, Mr. Speaker, it might be a dinosaur.

Now you can have any kind of an animal come in, sit down with seven dinosaurs and eventually, Mr. Speaker, if it lives with a dinosaur and it breathes with the dinosaurs and it eats with the dinosaurs, it too, eventually, Mr. Speaker, begins to walk and talk and look and think like a dinosaur.

So now we've got seven big dinosaurs and three little dinosaurs — three little dinosaurs, Mr. Speaker, but there is still hope. There is still hope. They can stand . . . they can take anti-dinosaur kind of stance, Mr. Speaker. They can take an anti-dinosaur kind of stance and say, no more of that dinosaur stuff for the PC caucus. We'd like to be around come the next election. We don't want the people

of Saskatchewan to completely finish the job of extinction that got started in 1991.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the new members . . . the member from Souris-Cannington, he's a fine fellow; he's a fine fellow. Now I can understand he's been influenced by seven dinosaurs for a period of time. He's been locked up with them every day here for a long time. And when the session is over he'll go back and he'll meet some real people, Mr. Speaker. Yes. And his ability to resist the dinosaur mode, Mr. Speaker, that urge to think and walk and talk like a dinosaur, his ability to resist that, Mr. Speaker, will be enhanced considerably when he gets home and has a chance to spend some time with his constituents.

Mr. Speaker, occupational health and safety — what's happened here? The Minister of Labour, what's he done? He's appointed yet another review committee to do what? To consult. And they have.

In fact from that consultation there's been a report made. Mr. Speaker, from that report there has been draft legislation which has been written up. What's happened to the draft legislation, Mr. Speaker? It's been sent out.

In fact you know, Mr. Speaker, I was talking to the Minister of Labour just this very morning and he tells me that he's gotten a complaint. He's gotten a complaint from a business organization which has said to him, you're sending out so doggone many drafts of the draft legislation, would you hold back here? We're getting confused with all of this consultation. Just hang on and go a little easy on the consultation. We like what you're doing, but maybe you're over-consulting.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we may very well see that legislation introduced in this session. I hope we will. And I think we will. Probably introduced, Mr. Speaker, with a chance to consult yet even further before passage in the legislature.

And while, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, workers' compensation. Mr. Speaker, prior to the election there was the appointment by the previous government of a Workers' Compensation Review Committee.

And when the new government was elected on October 21, did it do away with this committee simply because it was created by the Tory government? Not on your life, Mr. Speaker, not on your life. That Workers' Compensation Review Committee was retained and was told to finish the job, and they have. And they have since filed an interim report and will very shortly, Mr. Speaker, be filing their final report after having deliberated, and, Mr. Speaker, dare I say it yet one more time, after having been consulting for the last several months.

(1115)

And so, Mr. Speaker, if there is a criticism of this government, surely it is not, except for those who are dinosaur-like in their political views, Mr. Speaker, surely it is not that we failed to consult, Mr. Speaker. If the Minister of Labour can be accused of anything, I don't share this criticism. But I could understand criticism which said, please don't consult so much. Please get on

with the legislative changes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to support the approach of the Minister of Labour because I think he's chosen the wiser course. He has chosen to consult, to allow input from the vested interests of the people of the province. And I think in the long run, Mr. Speaker, that will serve us all well. There will be some who would like to see the legislation through the Assembly and passed already, and I understand that and I sympathize.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is my view that if you truly believe in functioning democratically in the best interests of all the people what sent you — not just those who voted for you but all the people, because that's who sent you — then you owe it to them to deliver on the kind of politics and operations of government that have become the trademark of this New Democrat Government of Saskatchewan today, a new government with a new attitude and a new approach to consultation by their New Democrat government.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Minister of Labour on taking that approach, on being part of a government that has made as its objective to remove wedges where wedges exist and to replace wedges with bridges, Mr. Speaker — to replace wedges with bridges.

And I know my good friend and colleague, the member from Prince Albert Northcote, Mr. Speaker, who will second this amendment that I will introduce in just a moment, will want to expand on that, on that very theme, Mr. Speaker, because he's been around for an entire term. He saw the last five long, lean, devastating years of Tory government in which wedges were driven with sledge-hammers between people in the province of Saskatchewan.

And I know that the member from Prince Albert Northcote is taking just as much interest as I have in seeing the benefits, the pay-off, sometimes the frustrations. But in the long run, the long-term best interests of the people of Saskatchewan will be served by a government which is dedicated to consulting and to bring together to find that balance of interest in good equitable legislation in the province of Saskatchewan.

So therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to move, seconded by the member for Prince Albert Northcote:

That all the words following "Assembly" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

recognizes the need for the government to engage in genuine public consultations before introducing labour legislation to bring Saskatchewan in line with other provinces; and that this Assembly commends the government for building bridges between workers and farmers, management and labour, and the rural and urban people of this province.

I thank you for the opportunity to enter into debate, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — I want to say in the outset of my remarks that I am today going to be very brief. And the reason I will be brief is very simple — because this government wants to get on with the running of this province. We want to get on with the debate of some very important legislation which members of the opposition today, by the way, Mr. Deputy Speaker, refuse to agree to debate.

And I'm talking about the GRIP Bill, Mr. Speaker. And when I talk about the actions of the opposition and their refusal to allow this government to function, I find it very interesting that we're debating here a resolution and an amendment to the resolution that talks about government consultation.

Mr. Speaker, we've sat in here week after week and we've watched and listened to the monotonous droning of the members opposite. We've listened to the member from Wilkie rant and rave and display bitterness and anger and upset over the defeat of his premier, the former premier of this province, the member from Estevan, never admitting that they were part and parcel of their own demise — never admitting that.

And then they have, Mr. Speaker, the audacity to walk into this legislature and lead the new members of this Assembly in their caucus into speaking to this kind of a resolution.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague the member from Moose Jaw Palliser talked about the little dinosaurs and the big dinosaurs. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, many members on this side of the House watched over a period of years as the old dinosaurs destroyed this province, the economy of this province. And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that what they've displayed since they've sat in opposition doesn't give us any kind of an indication that they're willing to change.

And I say to the members on the opposition side of the House, to the old dinosaurs, forget about your massive electoral defeat and understand that this government is consulting and understand that there is a new direction for politics. Understand that the reason the people rejected you, members in the opposition, the old dinosaurs, is partly because you refused to consult and partly because of your incompetence.

I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that members on this side of the House want to get on with running government. The people of this province want a new direction and yes, they want consultation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And as my colleague, the member from Moose Jaw Palliser so eloquently described, there is consultation ongoing. And I say to the member from Wilkie, forget your old ways and lead these new members in a new direction so that your party isn't totally destroyed as it appears it may be.

To the new members, I say, where were you when these members were leading this province in a direction of demise, and when they were destroying the collective bargaining process? And when they were destroying families, who at that time, in the early 1980s, had the ability to generate a reasonable standard of living for their families? Where were you? I say to the member from Maple Creek and to the member from Kindersley, why weren't you assisting the old dinosaurs in changing their course and their direction so that the number of members that you lost in the last election may not have happened?

I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no difference between a new dinosaur and an old dinosaur. They're painted with the same ideological brush and they're not willing to move on to a new kind of politics . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . the member from Souris-Cannington says, blue ones. And he may be right; it may be blue. And I tell you, there is a blue shadow around this province. People are blue and they're disgusted with what you've done to the economy, and they are looking for consultation and a new direction. And I say to you, Mr. Member from Souris-Cannington, that's the kind of direction they're going to get from this government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . or Mr. Speaker, this government is looking for a working relationship between business people and between labour and between rural and urban people. The days of division and splitting a wedge, putting a wedge between different sectors of our society are gone.

And I say to the members opposite and I say to the member from Wilkie, that he's been around this House long enough that he should understand quite clearly that there are new things happening and that there are consultations going on with business people and with working people in this province.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Moose Jaw Palliser indicated that we're trying to build bridges, not wedges. And I want to say that that's exactly where this government is headed.

And I feel sad when I hear new members of this legislature talk about an Act that will restore some sanity to collective bargaining in this province as being a pay-back to unions. I say to those members that when I look around my riding, which is home to a lot of construction people — people who worked in the construction industry — and who in the 1970s and the early '80s were making in the neighbourhood of 16, some of them 15, some of them \$18 an hour; and when I see those people, how they've been shifted to unemployment insurance and some of them then to welfare, and now those that can find work, working on construction on 6- and 7- and \$8-an-hour jobs, many of them forced to move to Alberta and other jurisdictions, it makes me sad that you haven't changed your attitude and that you haven't had a look at the possibility of a new way of doing things, and that you haven't got the understanding that the PC government of the 1980s didn't work, and that the divisiveness can't work, and, Mr. Speaker, that it won't be allowed to work in this province. Because we're going to bring the people

of this province together to work as a unit for the betterment of all of us.

And I say to the new members, before you sign your name to these kinds of motions, try to understand what's happening in this province. And try to understand that there is a new way of doing things and that you don't have to follow the member from Wilkie and the member from Estevan on the same path that they were embarked on in the 1980s.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke about the working of this government and the bitterness that the members of the opposition have displayed — the member from Estevan and the member from Wilkie — and the need for us to get on with legislation, the need for us to scrutinize the estimates, the need for a budget in this province that we haven't had for almost two years, Mr. Speaker.

And the member from Wilkie can chirp. And he's, I'm assuming, telling one of the young dinosaurs not to listen because we're right and I'm right and we were right in the 1980s. Well, Mr. Speaker, I say that they weren't right in 1980s and the direction of the 1990s isn't correct either.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the consultation and the co-operation of the people of this province, we would hope would be reflected by the members of the opposition. But what do we see? Monotonous droning. This morning I listened to an hour and three-quarters of speeches on this resolution in this House when we could have been debating GRIP legislation . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I see, Mr. Speaker, the member from Wilkie says, we'll be there. Well why weren't you there today? Why weren't you willing to debate the GRIP legislation today?

Mr. Speaker, people are asking for consultation, but as well what they're asking for is this government to get on with the business of government and they're sick and tired of the Tory antics and the Tory games. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that it will be soon that we'll be able to get out of this legislature and back to our ridings so that we can as individual members consult with the people of our areas.

But I know why they don't want to go back and I know why they're filibustering and keeping themselves in here. Because they don't want to go back to their ridings.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I say to you, that members on this side of the House want to go back to their ridings and consult so that we can reflect their ideas and their concerns in the budget, in the upcoming budget this spring.

Mr. Speaker, they talk in this resolution about the government infringing on individual rights. Well I say, Mr. Speaker, nothing could be farther from the truth because this party and this government believes in individual rights.

But we also believe in the collective right of the people of this province to have a decent government, to have a fair government, a government that will govern for all and not just a select few.

Mr. Speaker, I ask them to forget the pain of their massive

electoral defeat. Allow this government to continue with its agenda, the agenda that the people of Saskatchewan asked them to embark on in the election. And we'll do that with consultation, Mr. Speaker.

(1130)

We're attempting to put the economic house of this province in order, something that hasn't been even attempted in the last 10 years in the province. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, we're going to do that. We're going to do that by consulting with the different interest groups in this province.

And I say to the member from Wilkie, just watch, just watch as the people support the new direction of this government in this province. I say to you, it started in the election and it's going to continue through this term of government. I say to the member from Wilkie and to the rest of the old . . . (inaudible) . . . of dinosaurs — the member from Thunder Creek and from Arm River and Estevan and from Moosomin — people want a new direction. And this government will help them to achieve a new direction.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the process in this legislature sometimes seems slow and sometimes it seems cumbersome. And it even seems that way when the members of the opposition and members of the government are working in a spirit of co-operation to move the House business through. But I say, Mr. Speaker, that the actions of this opposition have enhanced the feeling of the people in Saskatchewan that they don't want the old style, the Tory style. They want an end to the patronage and the corruption of the 1980s. They want fairness. And yes, they want consultation.

Mr. Speaker, there is a new direction. I'm asking this morning, Mr. Speaker, that members of the opposition turn their minds to allowing this government to move out into the province and speak with the different sectors that are expecting so much in the 1990s.

I'm asking for a spirit of co-operation and an end to the old ways. Because, Mr. Speaker, the consultation that I've had with members of my riding, or with constituents of mine, and in other areas, are that they want to see some co-operation from the opposition. They want to see us build a working relationship, Mr. Speaker. But I'm afraid the old dinosaurs who are leading the new dinosaurs on that side of the House are not willing to let that happen.

Mr. Speaker, people want an end to the old style of Tory politics. And I want to refer to a headline in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* on August 10, 1992. And the headline . . . just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the headline says: "Many in Tory hierarchy corrupt to the rotten core". Well, Mr. Speaker, those are the dinosaurs that I refer to. Those are the ones, those are the members of this caucus who aren't willing to stand up and admit for their past mistakes. Those are the ones, Mr. Speaker, that are referred to in this headline as being rotten to the core. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that's what the people of this province feel about the members of the opposition.

So I say to them, allow this government to work, allow this

government to consult, allow the estimates to go on, allow us to pass legislation that will help us turn the economy of this province around.

Look to the future, I say to the dinosaurs opposite, to the Tory hierarchy that sit in the opposition benches. People have read you; people have seen through you; they understand what you're about. They understand that you're bitter, but they're asking you to understand that you were rejected. And they're asking you to understand why you're sitting on that side of the House. And I tell you, my consultations with people around this province tell me that they're asking you to say you're sorry for what you've done.

And my consultations, Mr. Speaker, tell me that they're asking the new members of that caucus not to follow the old hierarchy that are referred to in this column as being corrupt to the rotten core.

Mr. Speaker, those are harsh words that the writer of this column put in this paper — those are harsh words. But I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that I believe this journalist was consulting with the people of the province because that's exactly what I'm hearing when I'm consulting.

And I say, the audacity, in a resolution, to speak of individual rights, to speak of individual rights from the hierarchy of the Tory Party sitting in the other side of this House — Mr. Speaker, enough is enough.

We could go on and we could speak about the make-up of the opposition at length. That would be easy because there's so much to speak of. We could speak of the contract — Mr. Hill, a half a million dollar contract and the severance — but we're not going to do that because our consultations, Mr. Speaker, tell us that people want us to get on with the working of the government.

And so I ask them to co-operate and I ask them to look to the future and I ask them to work with this government. Enough of the dinosaurism from the old members and enough of the following of that path by the new members.

I say, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to second this amendment, because I believe it's more reflective of what the people of this province want.

And I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, and quoting from this article from the *Star-Phoenix* of yesterday. The people are asking for a change. And I say to the member from Wilkie that this is why . . . and from Arm River. And I quote, what consultations by government members are reflecting and what people are saying in this province. And I just conclude:

But to conclude, Grant Devine himself is one of the most honest men in Canadian politics (to quote).

And Mr. Speaker:

Sadly, he was surrounded by some of the most dishonest men and women who ever wore a party button or unfurled a political banner.

Let's hope they will finally be brought to justice.

Mr. Speaker, that's what consultation tells us. And I'm asking the new members to stop this filibuster. And I'm asking them to stop their foolishness and embark on a new direction, and to consult and to rebuild their party, because following their old dinosaurs will surely mean electoral defeat even for them in the next election.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Britton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to hear the chorus. I always like to sing with the chorus.

And I also would like to congratulate the last speaker, the member from Prince Albert Northcote, I think in supporting exactly what we've been saying all day, and that is that you will be consulting.

As I look at the letter that was written to the Premier, the business people were saying that they're frustrated with the lack of consultation. And so I take it from the remarks made by the member, that he is in agreeance with those people that there should be consultation. If you look at the amendment, it says here:

recognizes the need for the government to engage in genuine public consultations before introducing labour legislation that brings Saskatchewan in line with other provinces;

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is exactly what we've been saying in terms of talking to the motion, that the business sector are concerned with. So I certainly thank the member for agreeing with us, and I certainly welcome his presentation rather than the previous where we heard a whole bunch of noise and not much in the way of constructive criticism or ideas. So in that respect I think it's more in line with what we are trying to do here.

In respect, Mr. Speaker, to the absence or not absence of members here, Mr. Speaker, I am quite pleased and proud to be part of a group. And I think if you look at the percentage of attendance on this side of the House and compare it to the percentage of attendance on the other side, you'll find that we compare very, very favourably.

I think in terms of attendance, there's about a third of them missing all the time. Probably at this time if you look around it's probably 50 per cent. So I have no problem with that, Mr. Speaker. I think that if you look at some of the comments made by some of the learned reporting, they have said that the opposition has done a credible job.

Mr. Speaker, it is our job I believe, and it's our duty to bring to the attention of this Assembly the concerns of people. And this letter that was written to the Premier, who in all fairness hastily organized a meeting with these people . . . And he also said he would listen to their concerns and indeed maybe pull some of the offensive legislation that's before this House, which is exactly what we've been asking for many, many days.

We are saying, listen before you do it; consult with people and get some kind of a consensus. And that's what we've been saying. And I see that some of the members over there agree with us. And that's reassuring, that maybe there will be a change in attitude over there and we will get on to the business of the House.

Speaking of the business of the House, Mr. Speaker, as to why we didn't talk about GRIP today. Mr. Speaker, we will be talking about GRIP. But I want to just try and show you that the labour Bill is in itself as important as GRIP.

Now GRIP has got a certain predominance of attention in the last little while because of the time frame and because of the urgency of getting some kind of a . . . of some concessions from those people opposite, trying to explain to them in the most reasonable and in some cases the most dramatic ways that we know that there's something wrong with that Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you, sir, there's something wrong with this Bill. The business community have suggested . . . and, Mr. Speaker, this is not what we are saying; this is what the business community is saying. And in the GRIP Bill it's not what we're saying; it's what the people are saying. And so there is a connection.

And I would like to say to the members opposite, the fact that we didn't want to take private members' day away from the opposition and talk about GRIP is because we fully intend to develop GRIP in its entirety. Now this Bill, we have a chance to talk about it today because it's private members' day. And we felt in our wisdom — now you don't have to agree with that — but we felt that today is the day we should bring this up and let the folks over on the other side of the House understand that there are people that don't agree totally with this Bill.

I would like to say to you, this Bill, this labour Bill, is becoming I think increasingly important for the same reason that the GRIP Bill is important in that contractors are uneasy. They don't know how to bid a contract because they don't know what the rules are going to be. Labour must be getting very uneasy because there's no work for their workers. How can you bid a job when you don't know what the rules are going to be? So this is why this Bill is just as important as other Bills.

The headlines . . . and the member quoted headlines. And I don't know what the relationship that he quoted about some of the bureaucrats has to do with myself as a member in the report that he read, but I can talk about headlines. It says: Tougher measures included. And this is a special from the *Star-Phoenix*. This was on August 11, '92. Another headline: Relations more pro-union.

(1145)

Mr. Speaker, I think there's a feeling — and I don't think it's right — out among the union people, that free enterprisers by definition are against labour. That is, in my opinion, a myth that has been long overdue for a correction. Free enterprisers, who are the wealth creators of the province, the job creators, are not anti-union. They may to a certain degree be anti-union leaders who in my

opinion, sir, are not looking for the fairness that's needed in labour relations, but are looking for more power for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I can relate that to some of the members opposite who have got new-found power and they're abusing that power.

In labour relations I can say to you, sir, that I have been in . . . not involved but certainly in contact with labour relations that are not unionized, but they are organized. And they're called associations. An association is another name for an organized union, but they don't go into the confrontation process.

They go into a negotiation process where they sit down and talk to the employers and they may take many, many meetings, and it may take several months to do so. But instead of the process that seems to be accepted now in labour relations, where the union leaders will put their highest expectations on the table and the employer will put his lowest expectations on the table, and they somehow hope to achieve somewhere in the middle.

Mr. Speaker, to me, I've always felt that was a little bit ridiculous. It takes away what I would say is the trust, the trust in each other. If in fact we laid our expectations and our wishes and indeed our needs from the labour side on the table, if the employer would lay on the table exactly where they stood, and said, all right, we'll share. And the reason I say that, I used to do that, Mr. Speaker. I used to do that.

I run a small business, five to seven people, which is, you know, not very big. And we would sit down and what I said to them was, you can share, you can share with whatever extra earnings that we get here. And I'll be fair. I said, I expect a little bigger piece of the pie than you get because I am responsible to make sure that there's money in the bank at the end of the month or on the 15th, for you. But we will share.

And that's what I say about organization rather than unionization. And I'm sure the day is not here for a name change, but certainly an attitude change I think is here. And I understand from the letter that I think has been read into the record — I'm not sure it has. And this is to the Hon. R.J. Romanow, Premier. It says:

The following Saskatchewan business organizations have recently met to share and discuss our serious concerns about the economic future of our province. All of us share concerns about the need for a co-ordinated vision of the economy of Saskatchewan. We need a positive climate to maintain existing jobs and help create new employment and investment. We have all been frustrated by your government's 'consultation' . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I know the member wasn't in the House but that letter has been read twice in the same debate already. Okay? Order. . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I'm not criticizing the member. I'm just simply drawing it to your attention that it's been read twice this morning and I'm just making the member aware of it.

That's all.

**Mr. Britton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I accept your ruling and I think you'll notice I said I wasn't sure. I do want to refer, with your permission, to the letter, if I may, once more.

And in this letter it says we are:

... increasingly overwhelmed and frustrated by your government's legislative agenda and we must discuss this (and this is the part) privately and immediately.

And this is going back to the point, Mr. Speaker, I said that we have to get away from this kind of thing.

And the proposed legislation, the proposed legislation is causing labour a concern. And it's a concern to the majority of the people in Saskatchewan. And the concern in this is the lack of consultation. And this is why the amendment, Mr. Speaker, addresses that very concern, and why I'm prepared to stand in my place and congratulate the member from Moose Jaw Northcote in supporting us in bringing this concern to the House, to the floor of the Assembly. We in no way at all, Mr. Speaker, are trying to suggest that it's our opposition totally to the legislation. It's the concern of others.

Mr. Speaker, as I said to you, I've mentioned the fact that it's tough for a contractor to bid with confidence when he doesn't know what the rules are going to finally be. And that's why I'm suggesting to you and to the House that this Bill does have some degree of urgency. And while we may have passed up a chance, as the members opposite suggested, to talk about GRIP, I say again, we are prepared. If the members . . . if the government are not prepared to take some of our suggestions as to how to alleviate that problem by giving the Supreme Court a chance to look at it, we are prepared to talk about it, and we are prepared to talk about it at length.

But this Bill, this Bill — and I'm going to ask your indulgence for a second, sir — and in fairness to the people opposite it says "draft" on the top, but it is a Bill that concerns the construction . . . One of the things that I noticed in this Bill that I think also has the construction and all these people concerned, is board, under the heading "board" — powers of the board. And I don't know, Mr. Speaker, if this has been read into record. If it has, you can stop me.

And it says in here: in addition to any other order that it may make pursuant to this Act, the board may make orders determining whether an organization is an employer's organization, that's up to them to decide; determining whether an employer is a unionized employer, that's up to them to decide; determining whether an employer is a unionized employee, that's up to the board; determining whether this Act is being or has been contravened — they are the judge, the jury, and the whole thing — requiring compliance with this Act, the regulations or any decision of the board with respect to a matter before the board.

These kind of things, Mr. Speaker . . . and you may and

they may say to us, but we will never use that power. Then that begs the question: then why is it in there? Now you may come back or somebody may come back and say, because of a circumstance may arise. Well my reply would be then, let us wait and see whether a circumstance does arise because we could go on for 20 years with harmony without that in there. And it would be, to me, it would take an irritant out of the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to comment a little bit on a couple of other things. And first of all, I would like to suggest to the members opposite, those at least that were here in the last . . . before the last election, they have a bit of a short memory. As my colleague says, it's good, but short. And I think the reason it's good is because they never use it. It's brand-new.

Mr. Speaker, I remind the members of the year 1987, when they talk about obstruction and delaying tactics and the frustration that the government had trying to get their legislation through this House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not one of those who are committed to revenge. I am prepared, Mr. Speaker, and I mentioned to one of the members on the other side just a day or so ago when they mentioned — and I'll say this in fairness, not in a mean manner but in a bit of a chiding manner — about the long hours that they seem to blame us for. My response, Mr. Speaker, at the time was that I am not against long hours. I've always had long hours. I've worked long hours all my life. And there's nothing here to keep me in Regina. My home is not in Regina. It's not our fault. We didn't do this.

Mr. Speaker, what we're saying is, particularly in the Bill before the House, or the motion before the House, Mr. Speaker, all we're saying, all we're saying is, be fair. Be fair to all, not only to the unions. I don't like to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that all the union members feel the same as the leadership of the unions.

The unions themselves have a self-perpetuating motive behind some of their demands. Mr. Speaker, whether the socialists on the other side like it or not, the wealth creators have to be recognized and treated fairly. Mr. Speaker, I know, I know that when you say the word wealth it makes the socialists cringe. It's much like the P-word — profit, progress, and prosperity — they hate that. Anyone that wants to create prosperity or . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . There you go. There you go. There's a sore spot. There's a sore spot. I hit a nerve. I hit a nerve.

What you won't understand — most of you over there — that someone, someone has to create something before you can give it away. Russia found out that you can't keep on giving wealth away; it broke a country. That's right. That's right.

But what you didn't find out, sir, was that there was no wealth created. Once our farm economy went, there was nothing built by you people. Nothing built by you people.

**The Speaker:** — Order. I know we just have a few minutes left but I would ask the members not to interrupt to the extent that they are right now. The member has the floor.

Let him have his time at this time.

**Mr. Britton:** — Mr. Speaker, we understand, on this side of the House, the way the process works. The union leadership, I think more so than the members, had expectations because of the support that was given to the members opposite. Now, Mr. Speaker, we expect that. But what we're saying is: remember, remember the other people, and be fair.

I don't think, Mr. Speaker, the time is now to disrupt business and labour. In the business community, Mr. Speaker, they're suffering the same as the farm community. We have to survive this recession. And I suggest to you, sir, and others, we're in the survival mode and we have been for the last six, seven years.

And why we are criticized for some of the money that we put out to try and alleviate some of the problems out there . . . I don't think . . . I think that in time even those on the other side will realize that it had to be done.

We are trying to work our way through, and I believe that in all fairness the working people are willing to help. They're willing to do that. But it must be seen to be fair. Mr. Speaker, we've already lost 18,000 jobs.

And let me say to you and to those that are interested, of a little incident that I happened to be involved in a small way where this person was saying: wow, goody-goody, they're going to raise the minimum wage. The employer said, that won't help you. And the worker said, oh yes, you'll have to give me the extra money. And the employer said, but you won't have a job; I can't afford to keep you if the minimum wage goes to 7 or \$8.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is what we're saying. Labour has . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. It now being 12 o'clock, this House stands recessed until 2 p.m. this afternoon.

The Assembly recessed until 2 p.m.