

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

July 5, 1982

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### NOTICE OF MOTION

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on Wednesday next move first reading of a bill, An Act to amend The Public Service Superannuation Act.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the House, two young men who are on a cycling tour across Canada, guests from Great Britain and Kenya. They are in the Speaker's gallery. They are James Norton and Thomas Thornton. I am certain these young men will be of particular interest to the House. James Norton is the grandson of a former member of this House, the member for Biggar from 1944 to 1971, and the premier of this province from 1961 to 1964, Woodrow Lloyd. James Norton is Woodrow's grandson.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Premier's Birthday

**HON. MR. BERNTSON:** — This isn't in the ordinary way of the introduction of guests because most people in this House, I am sure all people in this House, already know this particular individual. It happens that today he is 38 years young and is perhaps the youngest premier of any province in Canada. Of course that gives him lots of room to expand his career. I think likely he will be probably 78 when he retires, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### QUESTIONS

#### First Ministers' Conference

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Premier. The question concerns the first ministers' conference which was concluded recently in Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, I wish to express some interest in the conference and to ask the Premier whether or not the Government of Saskatchewan entered into any undertakings, firm or tentative, to limit the amounts paid by the Government of Saskatchewan to its employees in line with the suggestions made by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance of Canada when the budget was presented last Monday.

**HON. MR. DEVINE:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't think its appropriate to comment on the details of the conversations that took place between the other nine provinces and the Prime Minister, but I will comment on the general tenor of the meetings.

Like most Canadians, the province of Saskatchewan and, indeed, the Premier of Saskatchewan, rejected the budget and were virtually shocked at the \$20 billion deficit. The budget was seen to be unacceptable because it did not address some very serious economic problems in the nation and there were no long-run solutions or planned attack, if you will, to pull us out of that recession. The Prime Minister had failed and he had to admit that the deficit was extremely serious.

The Government of Saskatchewan remains unconvinced that wage restraints, used in isolation without increases in productivity or jobs or investor confidence, can solve the problem. We certainly do not believe that it is fair to see the burden of inflation fall on the low-income people, whether it is in other provinces in this country or indeed the province of Saskatchewan.

In brief, Mr. Speaker, we proposed that the federal government pick up on our solutions to move to lower the cost of living, as we have done in Saskatchewan by removing the tax on gasoline, giving us the lowest priced gasoline in all of Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. DEVINE:** — And certainly for the immediate time period we have the lowest increase (if any increase at all) in the CPI. We also encouraged the federal government to make a move on both energy and agriculture, because we saw those as the two components that would act as the engine, if you will, to pull us out of this economic recession. So we encouraged the federal government to lower the tax on farm fuel; we encouraged the federal government to put some more money in its interest programs, particularly with respect to housing, and follow our suit of 13.25 per cent for all home-owners without discrimination, which provides not only a fight against prices on one side but encourages productivity on the other.

With respect to shut-in oil, Mr. Speaker, we encouraged the Prime Minister to not import any more oil into Canada until every last drop of our available oil is being used here in Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. DEVINE:** — These figures may not be totally accurate, but something in the neighbourhood of over 200,000 barrels a day in Alberta and Saskatchewan are shut in during the month of July. If we were to use that oil, the federal government could probably save itself in excess of \$3 billion, which would be considerably more than it's doing in terms of wage constraints, and create some economic activity here in western Canada and, indeed, in all of Canada, plus provide revenue and jobs.

So, Mr. Speaker, in terms of our dealing with the problem by making suggestions to the Prime Minister, we simply said that we are dealing with the problem of inflation here in the province of Saskatchewan with respect to administered prices. There are no increases in Sask Power rates or Sask Tel rates. We remain to be convinced that just looking at wages in isolation is a solution, particularly when we ought to look at the entire problem of creating economic activity to pull ourselves out of a recession.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, to my question of whether or not agreements

were made with respect to wage restraint, I take it the answer is no. May I then ask a supplementary question? Were commitments entered into with respect to the budgetary policy of the Government of Saskatchewan? In particular, were any commitments entered into indicating that the Government of Saskatchewan would not run deficits of the kind which have caused such great difficulty when the Government of Canada runs a deficit, and which the Premier very rightly criticized it for so doing?

**HON. MR. DEVINE:** — Mr. Speaker, what the province of Saskatchewan said it would do, and what I shared with the other premiers and indeed the Prime Minister, is that Saskatchewan would certainly do as well if not better than most other provinces in terms of inflation, and in terms of watching the big general price index rise here in this province. It would do as much or more as any other province in terms of creating jobs and economic activity. We looked at the two together and suggested, as I pointed out, that the federal government start to make corresponding moves that would dovetail with ours, in terms of the energy business and the agriculture business, to make sure that we move ahead. In terms of our general economic position, it is our forecast that we will have as tight a ship here as any province in the country. We'll make sure over the period of our tenure, for the next 2, 3, 4, 5 or 15 years, that we have a sound economy.

### Hospital Bed Cutbacks

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I take it again, with respect to the question of whether commitments were made with respect to a deficit, that the answer is no. May I direct a question to the Minister of Health? In a recent issue of the *Leader-Post* Mr. Harvey Fox, the executive director of the South Saskatchewan Hospital Centre, is quoted as saying that two Regina hospitals will be closing, with 68 beds closed for the summer months. He goes on to say:

This is the first summer the hospitals have planned to shut down beds, though some beds were closed last summer on a less formal basis.

Would the Minister of Health be good enough to advise whether or not this news report is accurate? Are two Regina hospitals closing 68 beds for the summer months?

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Speaker, if I heard the question right, I think in the preamble the Leader of the Opposition said that the hospitals were closing. Definitely they are not closing. There are some reductions in beds. I think the Leader of the Opposition knows well that the base hospitals are funded by the patient-days that they will deliver in a year. Hospitals have the priority of upping that quota in the winter months and cutting back in the summer to facilitate vacations for staff. I don't think this is anything new. I believe the Leader of the Opposition, will realize that this has happened before in the city of Regina. It is nothing new, and that is the reason for it.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. As the report indicates, ordinarily nurses resign in large numbers during the summer months, and this is not now happening. Since nurses are available, will the minister make available funds so that these beds can continue operation with the nurses who are prepared to work, so that the waiting lists will not increase as is indicated they will in the statements by the hospital administrators?

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the supplementary question, I think the Leader of the Opposition well knows that the base hospitals in Saskatchewan are operating on a budget that was established not by this government, but by the

government opposite. Most certainly, the government on this side of the House, the present government of the province of Saskatchewan, has ongoing consultations with the hospitals regarding their needs for funding, and we will be looking at these areas.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — New question to the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, I deal with the matter of the closing of beds in Regina, and particularly the fact that, according to the hospital administrators, waiting lists for elective surgery will naturally increase since the number of operations performed will be reduced; the comment of Dr. Ernie Baergen, the executive director of the Saskatchewan Medical Association, indicates that the greater problem will be waiting time for certain types of operations; the fact is that members opposite promised not to operate on the basis of our budget, but to do much better making Saskatchewan number one.

My question once again is this: will the minister make available funds so that employment can be offered to nurses who are now available, so that these 68 beds can be opened, and so that the waiting lists can be worked down during the summer as we have not had an opportunity to do in the past?

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Speaker, most certainly the government on this side of the House and I, as the Minister of Health, will be looking at the whole situation of elective surgery in his province. It is our guarantee that over the next four years we will improve this situation to a better situation than the one we inherited one month ago.

I want to indicate to the Leader of the Opposition that it is not my priority to be dabbling into the internal operations of those hospitals. If they come and discuss with us, we will be looking at this situation. I want to remind you that the budget that was approved, the budget that supposedly is causing the closure of beds, was the budget established by the now-defeated government on the other side of the House.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In past summers it has been relatively difficult to keep hospitals open because a great number of nurses took holidays. We are finding that is not the case now, because of the serious economic conditions which prevail in this province, and because of the large increase in unemployment since members opposite have taken their seats on the treasury bench. What I want to know is: are we going to use this opportunity — this opportunity we have not had before — to use nurses who are now prepared to work in the summer? Are we going to use that opportunity to work down the waiting lists so that when we move into fall, after harvest, the high surgery season, we will have much smaller waiting lists than we now have, Mr. Minister?

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — A supplementary. I think the situation is not just whether there are nurses available or not. That isn't the total situation, Mr. Speaker. I think the total situation is also the budget of the hospitals. As I've told the member opposite, we are concerned about reducing the waiting lists for elective surgery. I have assurance from the hospitals that all urgent and emergency surgery will be attended to. And I think I would like to draw to the member's attention the fact that the number of patients admitted to the Plains and Pasqua hospitals this year is greater than the number admitted last year.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — In light of the previous questions which were asked concerning the 68-bed shut-down in Regina, I wonder if the minister could give an indication of how many hospitals in Saskatchewan will be closing down beds this summer as a result of lack of funding, which I am sure is a direct result of the decrease in oil royalties that the oil companies will be paying over the coming year?

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — A supplementary answer to the question of the member. I will take notice of your question about how many may be closing down. I don't think you can expect me to tell you how many beds will be closed down across the province of Saskatchewan. I will take notice of it; I think it's a good question for estimates. But I would like to say that I don't think the number of beds closing down has anything to do with the oil royalties. As I said earlier, the budgets that the hospitals of this province are operating on are budgets that were established by the government that was tossed out one month ago.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister answers the question by saying that he's not sure how many hospital beds will be shut down in rural Saskatchewan. I would like to ask him, in light of the fact that he's saying some will be or admitting to the fact that some will be, whether or not the government is considering the introduction of utilization fees in order to pay for hospital care in the province of Saskatchewan?

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to just inform the member on the other side of the House, who may have a bit of a hearing problem — I'm not sure, but if he has he should come and see the Minister of Health because we have a hearing aid plan — that I did not say there would be beds closed down in rural Saskatchewan. I said I would take notice of your question. And I want to inform you and this House and the people of Saskatchewan that this government has no intention of introducing any type of utilization or deterrent fee.

#### **Reclassification of Debden and Zenon Park Schools**

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Education. As the minister may be aware, there are a number of schools that have been set up to accommodate Francophone students, in that instruction is primarily done in French. There are a number of schools — the College Mathieu, Gravelbourg, and Prince Albert. It is my understanding that these schools have been classified as type-A schools. Other schools such as Debden and Zenon Park are classified as type-B schools, but have made application to the department to be reclassified as type A in order that the amount of instruction and the basis of instruction can reach the standard of type A. I want to ask the minister: has he in fact received applications from Debden and Zenon Park and could the minister indicate if a decision in fact has been made to approve their applications?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Speaker, in reply to the question from the hon. member, yes, we have received applications from both Debden and Zenon Park. In the case of Debden, we have decided to go with the type-A designated program. In the case of Zenon Park, after consulting with the people in the community and working through a program, because of the fact that there was a considerable split as to whether they wanted the type-A designated program or the type-B designated program, it has been decided to introduce an experimental program with the hope of working something out that would make it possible for the people to be best accommodated as far as French and the study of French are concerned.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In respect to the Zenon Park School, you indicated that you are not going ahead with the approval of the type-A designation. I would like to ask the minister: did the community of Zenon Park, in making its application, meet the criteria that were requested of it in order to get the full consideration of being reclassified from B to A?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I guess, technically speaking, that would be so, they would have met the criteria to have had a type-A designation for their school.

The real difficulty which presented itself in this particular community was the implication it would have had upon the remainder of the students in running their programs effectively and efficiently. After considerable discussion with both those who supported the type-A program and those who supported the type-B program, it was thought that a special kind of arrangement would work much better, keeping everyone's interests in mind.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary. The minister may be aware of the ACFC (Association Culturelle Franco-Canadienne).

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Very good.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Not as good as Randy Nelson.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Or Paul Rousseau. This association, as the minister will know, has been working on behalf of the upgrading from type B to type A. It has, from my information, requested a meeting with the minister. I would like to ask: has the minister had the meeting with the association and, if not, when will he be having one?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Speaker, first, I would have to admit that my French is equally as bad as the hon. member's. In reply to the question: yes, the association has asked for a meeting with the minister. A reply has been sent back that we would be most anxious to meet with them to take into consideration what their wishes would be. Unfortunately, having met with many, many groups and with time being as short as it was before the session started, we just haven't been able to work that meeting in as yet. But we hope to meet with them sometime during this summer.

### **Saskatchewan Mortgage Interest Reduction Plan**

**MR. HAMMERSMITH:** — A question to the minister responsible for housing. Given the comments this morning by Mike Young of the Canada Mortgage and Housing

Corporation (CMHC) that it has not yet heard from the Government of Saskatchewan regarding the possibility of dovetailing the \$3,000 federal grant with the Saskatchewan Mortgage Interest Reduction Plan, can the minister inform the House whether it is still the intention of the Government of Saskatchewan to deduct the federal benefit from the benefits provided under the Saskatchewan Mortgage Interest Reduction Plan?

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Mr. Speaker, in response to the question of the hon. member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake, I can advise the Assembly that the mortgage program introduced in the MacEachen budget last week wherein \$3,000 would be made available by way of grants to first-time home-owners — that's either to buy a new home or an existing home — will be to assist in the reduction of the mortgage loan. Interpreting it that way, it would piggyback our 13.25 per cent mortgage; that is, both of them would be available to the prospective new-home buyers, so he would qualify both for the federal and for the provincial programs. There would be, as we understand, no tax implications to it. The new federal program is a grant to reduce the loan and, therefore, would not be bothered by section 4 of the 13.25 per cent mortgage program.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HAMMERSMITH:** — A supplementary to the minister responsible for housing. Am I to understand then that you are saying that the regulations under the mortgage interest reduction plan will exempt this kind of program from that provision of reduction of the subsidy on the basis of grants from any other government?

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Perhaps we should make it clear, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member. Number one, under the federal budget announced last Monday, there were two programs. The first would be a \$3,000 grant for first-time home-owners or people buying their first home. That \$3,000 would simply reduce the cost of that house. That program is not in conflict with the 13.25 per cent mortgage program. The new-home buyer could qualify both for the federal program and for the 13.25 per cent Saskatchewan program and have no problems.

### **Fibre Optics Cable**

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister in charge of Sask Tel. Could the minister inform this House as to whether or not he will be continuing the burying of fibre optics cable in many of the communities of Saskatchewan, as has been the case with the previous administration?

**HON. MR. LANE:** — We have to maintain the gopher population. Seriously, we will continue the capital project as proposed for this year.

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister then saying that the burying of cable between Saskatoon and Prince Albert is going to be going ahead this year?

**HON. MR. LANE:** — If that is in the capital project as proposed for this year, yes.

### **Environmental Effects of Nipawin Hydro-electric Project**

**MR. YEW:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of the Environment. In view of the fact that rivers, lakes and wildlife habitat will be affected by fluctuating waters as a result of the Nipawin hydro-electric project, particularly in areas such as Cumberland House and Sturgeon Landing, will the Minister of Labour, minister in charge of SPC (Saskatchewan Power Corporation), and his colleagues give assurance that the environmental effects will be monitored closely with the communities affected? Will he give assurance to this Assembly that whatever ongoing environmental safety and protection measures are taken they will involve people living downstream in places like Cumberland House and Sturgeon Landing?

**HON. MR. HARDY:** — Mr. Speaker, yes.

### **Rural Gas Program**

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a brief question for the minister in charge of Saskatchewan Power Corporation. This has to do with the rural gas program. My earlier questions in this Chamber elicited from him the fact that the rural gas program would be proceeded with this year and that one meeting had been held. I wonder if the minister can give a brief update on where the rural gas program stands now. My particular questions are: will the program proceed this year with respect to some urban centres and will the program proceed this year with respect to a significant number of farmers?

**HON. MR. McLAREN:** — Mr. Speaker, we have held subsequent meetings and we have a proposal now before CIC (crown investments corporation). I'll be able to answer you much better in a couple of days.

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

#### **Bill No. 25 — An Act to amend The Power Corporation Act**

**HON. MR. McLAREN:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move first reading of a bill to amend The Power Corporation Act.

Motion agreed to and the bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

### **STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER**

#### **Appointments to Board of Internal Economy**

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I have a message from His Honour, the Administrator.

The letter reads:

Dear Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to section 68.7 of The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I hereby inform the Assembly of the appointment of the following members to the board of internal economy, effective June 29, 1982: the Hon. Herbert Swan, chairman; the Hon. Robert Andrew; the Hon. Graham Taylor; Mr. Ralph Katzman, MLA; Mr. Jack Klein, MLA; Mr. Allan Engel, MLA; Mr. Norm Lusney, MLA. (Signed) His Honour, the Administrator.

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Berntson that Bill No. 2 — **An Act to amend The Income Tax Act by eliminating the Mortgage Interest Tax Credit as a consequence of the establishment of the Mortgage Interest Reduction Plan** be now read a second time.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to address a few words to the House on Bill No. 2. I found this bill curious, particularly the title — An Act to amend The Income Tax Act by eliminating the Mortgage Interest Tax Credit (that's clear enough) as a consequence of the establishment of the Mortgage Interest Reduction Plan. It is in no sense a consequence, except as a matter of policy. It is not required, in any sense, by any legal requirements that one ordinarily expects when one sees a consequential amendment. There is nothing consequential about this except that the government has decided that because it is going to offer some very significant mortgage interest reduction benefits to certain classes in society, it is going to withdraw other benefits from another group of people entirely. Not only that, it is deciding that because it is going to introduce a plan which is timed in its duration, which is a three-year plan at most and wherein the largest number of people will get benefits of perhaps 18 months duration or less, it is going to repeal the tax benefit in perpetuity for a very much larger group of the citizens.

It strikes me as particularly remarkable when one says, "Because we are going to offer mortgage interest reduction benefits to one group in society (and a significant group, admittedly), we are going, for a period of up to three years (on the average, perhaps 18 months), to remove a tax benefit which people have enjoyed in this province for a couple or three years and we're going to remove it on a permanent basis. We are not going to amend the mortgage interest tax credit to make it non-applicable to people who get the mortgage interest reduction plan; no, we're not going to do that. We are not going to make it non-applicable even for everybody for the period of the duration of the mortgage interest reduction plan; no, we're not going to do that. We're going to remove, on a permanent basis, this tax benefit and we're going to call it "consequential." It is not consequential. It is consequential only as a matter of policy.

Now the proposal for a mortgage interest tax credit was adopted by this House and was thought to be a good idea. It was particularly promoted by the Progressive Conservative Party on a federal basis. Many of you will remember Mr. Clark and his colleagues advocating and advocating strongly that we ought in Canada to have a program of mortgage interest tax credits.

Our government, provincially, introduced such a plan, a modified plan, but a plan offering mortgage interest tax credits to lower- and middle-income people who were having difficulty meeting their mortgage payments. To put it mildly, I am surprised to have a Progressive Conservative administration advocating the repeal of this mortgage interest tax credit, the only one which exists in Canada, notwithstanding the vigorous support of such a program put forward by the federal Conservative Party.

It strikes me, Mr. Speaker, that this bill is ill-conceived. I do not object to the government opposite suggesting that those who receive the benefits of the mortgage

interest reduction program should not receive the benefits of the mortgage interest tax credit. I don't object to that, or, conversely to saying that mortgage interest tax credits should be deducted from the benefits they would get under the mortgage interest reduction program.

It is perfectly reasonable for a government to suggest that it does not want to stack these programs but to integrate them. What is not reasonable is for it to suggest that because some people, perhaps as few as one-third, but perhaps one-half of the people who have mortgages, will get a benefit under one program, it is going to take away the tax credit from all the people who have mortgages whether the interest rate be 12 per cent, or 6 per cent or whatever the interest rate may be. Whether it be a farm credit corporation mortgage at 12 per cent or 13 per cent, this will now be taken away because some other people will be getting a mortgage interest reduction plan benefit. This is simply not reasonable. Presumably some argument will be put up saying that the federal government feels that it does not wish to give a tax benefit under the mortgage interest reduction program while the mortgage interest tax credit is outstanding. That has no merit. The mortgage interest tax credit is a purely provincial program. The tax credit is a credit from provincial income tax payable, and the federal government has nothing to say about how the provincial government levies its income taxes or what benefits it gives.

It is true that the federal government does administer the provincial income tax program. But they have heretofore not suggested that any tax credit calculated following the calculation of taxable income would be in any way a difficulty for them. I am unconvinced that our tax collection arrangement with the federal government would be in any way affected if we continued to have the mortgage interest tax credit and the mortgage interest reduction program operating simultaneously. Accordingly, I have heard no arguments put forward for this bill — none whatever. I think it is clearly unjust to say to the people who do not get the benefit of the mortgage interest reduction plan, "Yes, you've had difficulty with your mortgage before, and we had a mortgage interest tax credit to give you a little bit of assistance, but now we are going to take that away." That is simply without logic. It is true that the mortgage interest tax credit was not a substantial benefit, but it did provide \$200, \$300, \$400 to some people, and there was legislation.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — One hundred dollars.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — No, \$100 was the minimum. Please look at the act and you will see that people could get a very significant amount more than \$100. It simply provided that the \$100 was a minimum payment under the act. It was income related, but significant amounts more than \$100 could be received under that act.

Our position, Mr. Speaker, is this: while we agree with members opposite that it is not unreasonable for them to take the position that no citizen should get the benefit of both programs — the mortgage interest tax credit and the mortgage interest reduction plan — and while we have no objection to their structuring the act so that no one gets the double benefit, we say the mere fact that some citizens get the mortgage interest reduction plan benefit is no reason you should take away from other citizens a tax benefit they have enjoyed for several years. It was put there to give them some assistance with their mortgages, and that is needed now as much as, or indeed more than, it was in previous years.

Our position, then, Mr. Speaker, will be that we will oppose this bill. We will take the

position that if the bill is to be proceeded with, which we will oppose, it ought to be restricted only to people who get the mortgage interest reduction plan. And, furthermore, it ought to be restricted only to the time-frame in which they get the mortgage interest reduction program. We ought not do either of what this bill will do and it will do both. We ought not to take benefits away from citizens who will not get anything under the reduction plan. And we ought not to remove a tax benefit permanently by reason of the fact that the government opposite is introducing a temporary program. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, our position will be that we will oppose this bill, and we will seek changes in committee.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Mr. Speaker, a few comments in response to the comments of the Leader of the Opposition. I can advise this Assembly that this government fought an election campaign, and won that election campaign, basically on a commitment that we were going to help the home-owners of this province. The people of this province bought that proposal, and this government acted as quickly as possible in bringing in a 13.25 per cent interest rate.

That program, Mr. Speaker, is not only the best in Canada, it is clearly the best mortgage assistance program in the entire North American continent. The one thing about our programs that sets them apart from the previous government's programs is that our programs are real; their programs were simply make-believe and symbolic.

The Leader of the Opposition talks about the former prime minister, Mr. Clark, campaigning on a mortgage deductibility program. The campaign of that administration, of that party, was real. The members opposite simply sought to copy parts of it in a symbolic way, to say, "Hey, look what we're doing for the people." Well, on April 26, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan, the 50,000 of them that have mortgages, looked at the two programs. They looked at the programs of the members opposite and they weighed them. They looked at the programs of the Progressive Conservative Party and they weighed them.

On April 26, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan made up their minds. And when I look around this institution, I think the people of Saskatchewan maybe had more sympathy for the views of the people over here than they had for the views of the people over there.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Finally, Mr. Speaker, the 13.25 per cent mortgage program was brought in by this government. We were concerned, Mr. Speaker, that the federal government might use its power (obviously Revenue Canada interprets the Income Tax Act) to impose a tax on the 13.25 per cent mortgage assistance being advanced. And if they in fact did — and there are differing views and thoughts within the accounting and the taxation communities — the leakage or the money that would otherwise simply go to our citizens would now, perhaps 40 per cent and 50 per cent of it, being going to the national coffers. We thought that was wrong. It was a \$100 million program. That means Ottawa would take \$25 million of it. We can't afford it, in our programs, to be giving that money to the national government.

As a result, we undertook, when we initially took office, to investigate the taxability

question with the national government. And the national government indicated to us a couple of provisions, saying that if we did not have these in our mortgage program, it would not be taxable.

One of those provisos was that any other programs would be deductible from income tax. And if they tied together the two of them, it could create a taxability of the entire program; and once they made a decision on that, we were concerned that in fact they would tax the entire program. That was a lot of money, Mr. Speaker. And that was one of the reasons why we've now asked this legislature to eliminate the mortgage program of the former government. That was one reason, Mr. Speaker. The second reason is that we campaigned on delivering 13.25 per cent mortgage money to the people out there who are hurting. It's not the person with the 6 per cent mortgage who is hurting out there, Mr. Speaker. It's the person with a 20, 19 or 18 per cent mortgage who can't make the payments.

The record of the government opposite is clear for all to see. They brought in a symbolic bill, perhaps two years ago, the one we're doing away with today. Most people would receive \$100 from it, Mr. Speaker — \$100. That's symbolic, but hardly of any value to the person out there who is faced with a difficult mortgage situation. Then, come last fall, they brought in their — what was the mortgage program? They were somehow going to stop all the programs. Again, it was symbolic, Mr. Speaker. The one thing they failed to do and failed to do repeatedly, when they were on this side of the House, was put up something real, put their money where their mouth was, instead of doing some nice, symbolic moves to show, "Hey, we're out there to help the home-owner."

The government came in and delivered 13.25 per cent mortgages. We are now the envy of this entire country; we are the envy of North America.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Mr. Speaker, this mortgage program, as brought in by the members opposite, is not needed now. With our 13.25 per cent mortgage money, it is now going to go by the wayside, just as the members opposite went by the wayside.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ENGEL:** — Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the Minister of Finance speaking about Bill 1. I didn't hear him talking that much about Bill 2, which is before us. He threw around numbers, like, people who are paying 40 or 50 per cent income tax, Mr. Speaker. You are aware of people in that bracket, I'm sure, because I know the kind of farm you have. Those are the people that he's worried are going to lose some income tax benefits with this mortgage assistance plan. Who is benefiting from Bill 2 — those benefits he's cutting out? I think there's more that needs to be studied on how many are, so, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Berntson that Bill No. 4 — **An Act to amend the Statute Law** be now read a second time.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I will have a difficult time making a long speech on the amendments to the statute law. We are in agreement with them and, therefore, will be supporting them.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Berntson that Bill No. 6 — **An Act to amend The Provincial Court Act** be now read a second time.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments in respect to An Act to amend The Provincial Court Act. I want to say, first of all, that there is general agreement with the basic concept within the act. I am concerned with the timing of the introduction of this bill. We are in a time of restraint throughout Canada and in the province. At this moment, this bill proposed to set up an associate chief justice of the provincial court. It is obviously an increase in expenditure of a substantial nature. I am surprised that the Attorney General would come forward with this bill to expand the provincial court and to set up an associate chief justice at a time when the highest court in our province, the court of appeal, recently made a designated appointment of two members to the court of appeal. It is my understanding that, at that time, the Attorney General felt, presumably, the cost would be far too high or inopportune. I think the two principles run contrary to each other.

I also look at the concept of the appointing of the chief justice and the associate chief justice. I look at it and I wonder why, in fact, we are not looking at a better method, or at least exploring a better procedure, not only for appointment but also in respect to termination. If the federal justices are to be removed once they are appointed, there has to be a basic cause and not the whim of the Lieutenant-Governor. I think that we started with the first chief justice, and I think he has done great service to the position but I don't think we should necessarily jump forward in expanding the positions (including the chief justice and associate chief judges) without taking an opportunity to look at whether or not there is a better procedure for appointment and dismissal. In the federal jurisdiction, I understand that there has to be cause before a federal judge is removed. Recently, Mr. Justice Berger was taken before a committee for a review of his conduct. There is an appeal procedure. I think what we are looking at here is the provincial framework of the justice system. Surely, we must also look at separating it from political interference or even possible political interference in the judicial system.

At this stage, I would urge the Attorney General to reconsider this in view of the comments I have made, and to take a look at other proposals with regard to the appointment and dismissal framework set out in The Provincial Court Act. I don't think there is a great urgency to proceed with it at this time. I would like to hear the comments of the Attorney General, and would like to hear some comparisons of precedents and methods adopted by other jurisdictions, other provinces, with respect to appointments and dismissals. As well, I would like to substantiate whether other provinces have expanded, say Manitoba, to include associate judges.

As I said, with respect to the general principle of the bill, I am not opposed to what the bill is purporting to do. Certainly, I think there is an excellent opportunity to explore those avenues which I have suggested.

**HON. MR. LANE:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to reply to the hon. member. I was, to say the least, somewhat surprised when he discussed and wanted changes in the manner of appointment of provincial court judges. There are 42 judges of the provincial court, Mr. Speaker, all of them appointed by the members of the former government opposite

and at no time was there any call or consideration for a change in the manner of appointment. I don't know what suddenly caused this desire for a more independent appointment other than perhaps a change in government on April 26, or maybe he has concerns about some of the appointments made by my predecessor, a member of the former government. And if that is the case I would hope that he would extend to me those concerns about some of the appointments. I don't share his concern; however, since I'm somewhat new on the job perhaps he has some inside information that I don't have. I know that the hon. member will give me that information in the strictest confidence.

I am interested as well in the request for an expansion of the provisions for termination of provincial court judges — a highly dangerous proposal. If the judges are to be terminated by order in council, which is the logical extension, then obviously the independence of the judiciary principles is gone. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we have had some very serious concerns raised about the federal manner of appointment and some of the criteria established by the Government of Canada, and it would be highly dangerous to broaden the scope for termination of provincial court justices. I say that that proposal by the hon. member would, in fact, mean the end of the independence of the judiciary.

I was also a little surprised when the hon. member criticized the Attorney General for the freezing of the positions on the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal. What he is, in fact, saying is that he endorses the manner of selection of federal court judges, a manner that has not obtained a great deal of satisfaction among the bar and those associated with the administration of justice in Saskatchewan. I was surprised that he came out in favour of the existing proposals because they haven't met with a great deal of support. As a matter of fact I suggest to the hon. member that the manner has, in fact, raised a great deal of concern with members of the bar and those involved in the administration of justice.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, the provincial court judges have a tremendously high workload and that workload will be increasing, particularly on criminal matters and particularly with the implementation of the new charter of rights. It will place significant demands on the provincial court system. I hope I have the support of the hon. member as we will have to increase, perhaps significantly, the number of provincial court judges to deal with what we believe to be a significant increase in their workload. So I hope that at least in that latter regard I have the support of the hon. member because, notwithstanding that it's a time of restraint, there will have to be increases in the number. I suggest that we may be forced, as well, to increase salaries to make sure that the most competent people are attracted to what can sometimes be a very onerous position.

I'm disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member wants to extend the powers of dismissal of provincial court judges. I think that threatens the independence of the judiciary. I'm disappointed that he supports the existing process of appointment of the superior court judges. It's interesting that the Leader of the Opposition, when he was a member of the treasury bench, and the former attorney general both took the position that on superior court judicial appointments there should be consultation with provincial governments. We insist on that consultation. We want that consultation. The Leader of the Opposition wanted that consultation. So I was surprised, as I say, to hear the remarks of the hon. member here this afternoon.

I still have not, unfortunately, determined whether the members opposite are going to

support the bill. We believe, Mr. Speaker, with the increased workload, that this bill is necessary. It's necessary now and it's our wish to pass this bill now at this session of the legislature so that the increasing workload can be handled to the best of our ability.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

### YEAS — 50

Muller	Hampton	Dirks
Birkbeck	Weiman	Hepworth
Taylor	Bacon	Folk
Andrew	Tusa	Morin
Bernston	Hodgins	Myers
Lane	Sauder	Zazelenchuk
Rousseau	Schmidt	Johnson
Pickering	Parker	Baker
Sandberg	Smith (Moose Jaw South)	Blakeney
Hardy	Hopfner	Thompson
McLeod	Klein	Koskie
Katzman	Rybchuk	Engel
Martens	Caswell	Lingenfelter
Schoenhals	Domotor	Lusney
Smith (Swift Current)	Maxwell	Yew
Boutin	Embury	

### NAYS — 0

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Berntson that Bill No. 9 — **An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act** be now read a second time.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether I understand the full import of this bill, but if I understand the full import of this bill I most assuredly will oppose it.

Legislative secretaries were introduced a good number of years ago by the Hon. Mr. Thatcher's government. The idea then was that a few members of the legislature would have an opportunity to assist with the work of cabinet members. Cabinets were smaller then. The legislative secretary would be able to perform two, or three, or four different kinds of functions. He or she would be able to answer on occasion in the legislature for the minister. That did not happen very much in the 15 or so years that this institution has continued. The legislative secretary would be able to take certain public commitments for the minister — official openings and the like. The legislative secretary would be able to introduce and deal with some legislation in the House.

With respect to legislation in the House, it was found on analysis that it was not possible

for a legislative secretary to introduce legislation if it involved any spending of money. On an occasion, Mr. Wes Robbins, when he was legislative secretary to the minister of finance, was called to order on that account. So that is not open to us under the rules of this House.

The idea, I think, also was that a premier might be able to see a person perform in the role of legislative secretary, and get some idea of whether or not that person might perform creditably as a member of the Executive Council.

At any rate the institution has continued, and continued without any abuse. The number was strictly limited, and the number would only need to be strictly limited in order to perform the functions which I have outlined. Only a few ministers have the heavy commitments with respect to official openings. Only a few ministers have heavy commitments with respect to legislation. At any one time a Premier will only be considering a small number of members as possible appointees to the Executive Council. There is, therefore, no need to have a large number of legislative secretaries. Our government, notwithstanding the fact that the limit was six, I believe never exceeded the number four and, for the most part, we confined ourselves to three. Mr. Thatcher's government may have reached the number of six, but did not exceed it. I think on a good number of occasions it had less than six legislative secretaries and I think it's important the number not be high, because it is clearly open to a major abuse.

I will wish to put forward the idea that the total number of members of the Executive Council, together with legislative secretaries, ought not to exceed, say, 26 or 27 people. I would think that under the previous administration the number at no time exceeded 24 and, for the most part, would have been less than that, and sometimes quite a bit less than that.

It is my belief that the current Premier will probably add to the number of his cabinet. One starts out with the view that the number in cabinet should be small, and there are clear benefits to that. But the number of public commitments continues to mount and, accordingly, the merit of having other people to share the load of the public commitments impresses itself upon members of the Executive Council, and the pressures for adding to the cabinet mount. And I suggest that the cabinet which now serves this province will be larger in a year or two. I'm not suggesting 25 or anything like that, or any larger number such as they have in some provinces like Alberta, but a cabinet in the 20 range. In that I may be in error, but I suspect that that will be the case.

Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that the legislation was subject to possible substantial abuse. It could be abused in this way: it is possible for a government to appoint government backbenchers to positions which carry an additional emolument. And, if a large number are so appointed, clearly we have what amounts to two standards of members of the legislature: those who get the emolument provided for in The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, and those who get that emolument plus an additional amount, because they have, as it is alleged, extra duties.

This happens in some provinces where members of the legislature can serve as, let's say, members of the board of Ontario Hydro (I believe that's an accurate example in Ontario, but I use it as an example), and thereby get an additional emolument. There is no objection, I think, to having an additional sum flow to a person who is serving as a legislative secretary who has substantial duties and, accordingly, substantial extra time is involved. It is not, I think, possible for 10 or 15 people to be performing substantial

extra duties on behalf of cabinet ministers if the cabinet ministers are, in any way, performing their functions, because I think, fairly, there are only a few portfolios where the pressures on the cabinet ministers' time are approaching the level of being excessive.

I am greatly concerned that the legislation simply proposes to remove the ceiling — not to increase it from 6 to 8, not to increase it from 6 to 10, but to remove it so that the number could be 20 or 25. That would be an abuse of the process and one for which no case has been made.

I particularly feel, at this time, that the Premier has behind him a very large number of backbenchers (an impressive number, I may say) and will, therefore, have some difficulty keeping them all gainfully occupied. I am casting no aspersions on anyone. I am just saying that, while I did not have the problem (if that is the word) of the current Premier, we did have a caucus of 45. That was a large caucus when we started out — 10 cabinet ministers and 35 backbenchers. The temptation to deal with that problem by appointing people as legislative secretaries is clearly there. It is a temptation which must be resisted, since it would, indeed, be an abuse of the system. I have not heard any argument which would suggest to me that six is an inadequate number of legislative secretaries. If an argument is put forward that six is an inappropriate number and that eight or nine would be a better number, we could clearly deal with that sort of an argument. But a change of legislation which permits a first minister to have 20 cabinet ministers (which he clearly can have, and more, under the existing legislation) and 20 legislative secretaries is just bad legislation and ought not to be permitted, as it sets up the wrong relationship between the Executive Council and the Chamber.

Because I feel strongly that those views are the right ones, and because no case has been offered for an increase in number, and because the proposal put forward is not to increase the number from six to eight, or from six to nine, but to remove the limitation entirely, I think the legislation is ill-conceived. I, for my part, will be opposing it and I will be asking all members of the Assembly to oppose it. I will be particularly asking the minister if he feels that I have, in essence, misconceived the nature of the legislation. In closing the debate on second reading, I will ask him to indicate, in committee, whether he will be moving an amendment to introduce a limitation (it may well be higher than six) which will meet the points I raised, and which would remove the possibility of any government feeling tempted to use the legislation in a way which was never intended when it was first introduced by Mr. Thatcher, and in which it has never been used since the institution has been operating these more than 15 years.

For the reasons indicated, Mr. Speaker, I will be opposing the bill and I will ask our hon. members to consider carefully whether or not they should support the bill in its current form.

**HON. MR. LANE:** — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a few comments on both the legislation and the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. If one were to follow the logic of the Leader of the Opposition, he then should have proposed legislation to restrict the size of cabinet, because his justification for not supporting the bill is that it is open for abuse. We don't have a limit on the number than can be appointed to cabinet; we do have a restraint and that restraint is public acceptance. I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that exactly the same restraint will apply in this case. When the Leader of the Opposition says that there is "potential" for abuse, because of the extra emolument, I think he knows probably better than any in this Assembly that that very fact is a restraint. The pressures that normally operate in a situation where there is no

limit to the number of legislative secretaries are certainly both public and internal. It is obviously impossible, and I agree with the Leader of the Opposition it is certainly not desirable, to make every member of the Legislative Assembly a legislative secretary. There are natural constraints because of the process and, as I say, the Leader of the Opposition knows those natural constraints far better than anyone else.

Certainly for the foreseeable future the government is going to be faced with not a problem but an opportunity, an opportunity to allow MLAs to become familiar with the operations of government and to allow the MLAs from the government side to participate and to make a contribution. It is the firm commitment of the Premier that the ministers of the crown will, in fact, maintain a close connection with the people of Saskatchewan. It is our belief, and it has been admitted by at least one of the members on the opposition benches, that the former government got out of touch with the people of Saskatchewan. I happen to think that that was the case. One way to ensure that the ministers of the crown stay in touch and that this government stays in touch with the people is to try to take some of the workload from the ministers of the crown.

As I say, I don't share the concerns of the Leader of the Opposition. I believe that there are internal restraints on numbers, and there is a public restraint on numbers.

I notice that the Leader of the Opposition very carefully didn't give a specific number himself and, of course, that leads to the need for the amendment. I share the concerns of the Leader of the Opposition that there are significant advantages to not letting the cabinet get too big, but to keep cabinet ministers in touch with the people, we must have other members who can help share that workload.

Now is that number 7, or is it 5, or is it 8, or is it 4, or is it 11, or is it 2? Only the public will decide. So, as I say, I don't share the concerns of the Leader of the Opposition. And I also think it far more practical to take the ceiling off so that the leader of the government can, in fact, make reasonable decisions, knowing full well that he is responsible to the people of Saskatchewan and this Assembly. He must be prepared to justify the decisions in that regard. I urge all members to support the bill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HAMMERSMITH:** — Mr. Speaker, before we vote on second reading, I think that there are a number of issues here. I'm pleased with the rather high plane on which the Attorney General appears to consider the motives for the introduction of this bill.

I think that more time is required. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it is a hurried manner in which to deal with a problem faced by the Premier, a problem that many people would envy him for having, and that is a great number of members that he doesn't know what to do with. And one of the quick answers and quick solutions it would appear, from this bill, is to dip again into the resources of the taxpayer of Saskatchewan and keep some of the troops, some of the backbenchers — I don't know how many because they refuse to spell that out — content with an additional indemnity each year. And it is interesting to look at the economic difficulties Saskatchewan faces in the 1980s and at the approach of the government opposite to some of those difficulties. It appears to be no problem to find substantial additional payments for government back-bench MLAs, but it is impossible or somehow not in the public interest of the people of Saskatchewan to find an additional two bits an hour for those people who find themselves on minimum wage.

We feel, Mr. Speaker, that this bill needs a great deal more consideration and more thought, and I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Currie that Bill No. 10 — **An Act to amend The Education Act** be now read a second time.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few comments in respect to this particular act. I did not have the opportunity, because I was away from the House, to hear the Minister of Education. I had the opportunity read the comments of the now Minister of Health when he in this House opposed proceeding with the bill by the former minister of education.

I am rather surprised to see the Minister of Education after less than two months in office, coming forward here to repeal the ward system as it applies in the cities of Saskatoon and Regina, the education divisions.

I say I am surprised because a tremendous amount of work was done preceding the introduction of the bill by the previous minister. I want to say that throughout the province he set up advertising, inviting briefs. Letters inviting briefs were sent to various organizations throughout the province, and a pretty comprehensive study was done by Dr. de Vlieger in reviewing the whole aspect of the question of establishment of the ward system.

I am surprised at this Minister of Education who suddenly comes to the conclusion that it should be repealed. I did not hear his comments, Mr. Speaker, with respect to whom his consultation was with. I presume it was primarily with the trustees' association. I wonder whether he went to the public as Dr. de Vlieger did. Accordingly, I say this is an act by this government paying its dues to a particular group in society. Also it seems to indicate a fear on the part of those opposite, a fear that greater democracy might be brought into the system of representation of people on the education boards.

We had the right wing — Liberals, Tories, call them what you want — when the ward system was introduced into the cities in municipal elections. They showed great fears, and they put up the same argument — that there wouldn't be proper representation — that they put up with respect to this. I want to say that the ward systems in Saskatoon and Regina have worked well. I want to say that the whole concept of our local government, indeed of our provincial government, is established on the premise of setting up constituencies. At the municipal level it is exactly the same — there are divisions. If you go to the major cities, there are ward systems. But still they hang on and try to indicate that somehow having local representation will decrease the democracy and the effectiveness of the organization.

I want to say that in Dr. de Vlieger's discussion of the matter there was no unanimity with respect to the introduction of the ward system. I want to say that in the two largest cities the opposition to the ward system was certainly not unanimous. In Regina, the trustees of the Roman Catholic School Division did not reach a consensus on the issue and declined to send a brief. In Saskatoon, two members of the school board voted against the board's rejection of the concept. The city councils of the two major cities did not take a position on it. The voluntary organizations which presented briefs

were evenly balanced pro and con.

Of the 19 briefs which were submitted by private individuals (and a significant group of them), 14 out of 19, favoured the introduction of the ward system.

I want to say that the presentation of the ward system by the former minister of education was a thorough study and a thorough contact with the people that it would affect. And I want to say that all of the groundwork had in fact been done. The legislation was in place. Suddenly the present minister, spurred on by some of the school trustees, I suppose, reacted to the pressure. But I doubt very much if, in his short time as minister, he has made a thorough examination of the wishes of the people in Saskatoon and, indeed, Regina.

You know, you hear a lot of technical objections to the ward system, objections on principle. This is the key one. Partisan politics is a likely consequence, and it is likely objectionable to have trustees who are linked with political parties. Well, isn't that too bad? Isn't that a great objection? And this is the primary one that is put forward by those who oppose it.

I am saying that the ward system is being adopted across Canada in the major cities and it is working. I am saying that in Saskatoon the ward system has worked at the municipal level. And I am saying that you would get better representation in education. If you want to take a look at the municipal elections in Regina — some years ago before they had ward systems — I recall that a great number of the council members for the city of Regina came from south of College Avenue. Oh yes, the well-to-do, the well-educated, do have a capacity for coming out and taking their place in office.

But I am saying that we should have a different situation; if you have an area of working class people presumably they might want, in fact, to be represented by one of their own.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — The ward system allows them to do this. I think, at the root of it, the Tory position is, in fact, that they are afraid of this democratic process. They object to the small man, representing a working class area, coming forward and being elected. Rather, they would have it at large. In fact, in municipal elections, the turnouts have been absolutely terrible. But if you could see the turnout once they have established the ward system, you would see a substantial increase in the electorate's interest.

I just want to say that the ward system, as proposed, applied to the two major cities. Obviously, that is where you have the largest difficulty because of the size of the population.

I just want to indicate a few of the advantages and strengths of the ward system which came out of the briefs and the representations of the public to the de Vlieger commission. I'll talk, first of all, about the apparent strengths of the ward system. Because geographically-based elections are customary for other elections such as the school board. Secondly, voters will have a real and not a phony choice between candidates. Board trustees, collectively, will have a much better knowledge of the whole city. The trustee would be the communication channel between the administration and ordinary citizens. Trustees would be more accountable.

These are the basic reasons why we have done it on the provincial level and the rural municipality level. These are the same reasons why we went into the cities and established the ward system; to get better representation. Of course, I am convinced that you get better representation with the introduction of the ward system as was introduced by the former, outstanding minister of education.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Where is he now?

**MR. KOSKIE:** — He'll be here.

Not very often do I agree with the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* or the *Leader-Post*, but here's a little article in "Viewpoints." I want the Minister of Education to listen to this because he's making a horrible mistake here. He's getting off on the wrong foot. He has probably been advised by the Deputy Premier. I can understand that that advice will get him into problems. Let me just quote from the *Leader-Post*, June 19, 1982:

The most disappointing proposal revealed in yesterday's speech is the government's decision to repeal, even before it is tested, the ward system of school elections in Regina and Saskatoon, passed just a year ago and scheduled to go into effect when the school board elections are held in October.

Even the *Leader-Post* can see the glaring errors of the members opposite. Even the *Leader-Post* is trying to help out that new minister who is getting the wrong advice from some of his senior cabinet colleagues.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I have, as I said, observed the results of elections when there are elections at large. We have seen that you get some 30 or 35 individuals on a ballot, and if you do an analysis of it, you will find that those at the beginning of the alphabet (because they are listed in alphabetical order) are in large measure automatically elected, just from the point of view that they appear first on the ballot.

This is the type of democracy they propose. Here is the Premier who stood up and said he would allow more participation by people in government. The first step he took was to take his Minister of Education aside and say, "I want you to take away some of the freedom that those NDPers were going to give to those people up in Saskatoon." I want to say, clearly and unequivocally, that there is no doubt that this progressive piece of legislation that was proposed by the brilliant former minister of education will indeed come to pass. I think that the people of Saskatoon and Regina will see that the intent of the repeal of this legislation is really to attempt to curtail real representation within the individual wards.

I can see that this group that sits across the way is inclined to promote the elite group in society. I know that they would obviously agree that the school board should be picked from the group from south of College Avenue. But I don't agree with that. I think that the workers in Regina North West, Regina North and Regina North East should indeed have an opportunity to be represented.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KOSKIE:** — I don't think that it's possible for a person elected at large to know in detail the concerns of a given area. I think what is necessary is to have people

representing both a given area and a given group of people, but who are also able to make a contribution by looking at the broader scene. There is no problem with that, because obviously when you're elected to the legislature, you're elected to a ward or a constituency. Surely you can't argue that that is going to restrict you in looking at the overall picture of the province . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, no, and you know it's no use going back and arguing about what the legislation did not propose.

The legislation really applied only to the two major cities, with populations of over 100,000. Let's start with the basic principles. I'll go over all of the reasons why we should have the ward system in a moment. But the legislation that is being repealed applied only to the two major cities. So we might as well start with that premise. I can take the concept and lead you back and say, "Sure, we should maybe have it in cities smaller than that." But we had the concept of looking at two of the largest cities in this province, and what we offered was a ward system in which we would have representation representing different areas of the city, representing different economic classes . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Well, it's no use going back to that. On your principle, you want to wipe it out no matter where it exists. If you want to carry the principle forward, then you wouldn't be destroying a start on the principles. So there's no use going back to the complete principle, if you're not even prepared to look at it where it is most applicable.

I want to say that I must agree with the *Leader-Post* in saying that this is a very disappointing start for the new Minister of Education. There was no consultation; he was taken aside by some of his senior colleagues and told what to do. Helplessly he stands here, Mr. Speaker, in this House, unable to say that he had a consultation. I ask: has he contacted the STF (Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation)? Has he contacted individual ratepayers? No, of course not.

I think that really what should occur here — and I say this in all sincerity, Mr. Minister — is that this bill should be pulled and an opportunity for the ward system to be tried should be allowed. And I'll tell you that once it is in place, you wouldn't have the problem of having to repeal it. I don't know what the fear of allowing a ward system to be established is . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That is not true; I've got to run through those with you.

All I'm going to tell you is that out of the 19 briefs that were submitted by private individuals, 14 — 14, that's right — voluntary organizations, equally balanced. The two largest city councils indicated their wish not to go on record as either opposing or favouring. I think that is accurate. This is great consultation with the public. Here is a consensus built on the method of contacting the public. And here we have a disappointing start, not only by the minister but by a government that was given such a mandate to represent in a very open fashion, and to provide the mechanisms for greater and greater participation in the democratic process.

I have, Mr. Speaker, not much confidence in the members opposite, but I want to say that I think I have confidence in the new Minister of Education. I am urging him to take this back, reconsider it, withdraw the bill (do the wise thing), allow the ward system to operate. And if in fact there is a failure in the functioning of the ward system — give it a chance to operate — I'll guarantee you the support on this side of the House in its withdrawal in the future, in the introduction of a bill to withdraw it. Surely the idea has a right, after having been totally surveyed, to be given an opportunity, for the public to have a greater say in the educational system, to make it a more democratic system, just as we have at the municipal level, or at the provincial level, or in the larger school units.

It is exactly the same.

In my view there is a bit of a sinister view being held by ministers opposite. Some of them have sort of the sheeting of the divine right to rule and represent — no input from the public. And here was an opportunity where ordinary citizens might get a chance to represent an area. But what happened? They weren't even given a chance. And here, as Dr. de Vlieger has indicated, the overwhelming reasons for supporting the introduction of the ward system. There is no doubt, the evidence is overwhelming, that the ward system would be more effective. Maybe the body out there called the SSTA (Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association) wouldn't have as much control because maybe it doesn't talk as much with the ordinary citizens from the working class. Maybe they want just the elitist group to represent them on school boards. Obviously they wanted that with the city councils, because precisely the same arguments were used when we introduced the ward system in the cities — that you would be better off being represented south of College Avenue.

I'm going to close my remarks, but I want to say . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Just a moment now. I'm going to close my remarks, but I want to ask for an adjournment, because this is a highly important principle that is being looked at, and I am not prepared to stand in this legislature and allow it to go by without being challenged. So I ask the House, Mr. Speaker, to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Berntson that Bill No. 19 — **An Act to amend The Wildlife Act** be now read a second time.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the member for Athabasca, who would like to partake in this debate, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I must inform the member for Shaunavon that when this bill was read a second time he adjourned that particular debate, and it's not permissible for a member to adjourn debate twice on the same bill.

**MR. ENGEL:** — Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the member for Athabasca, is very interested in speaking on this bill, and I beg leave to adjourn debate on his behalf.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — The member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg has asked leave to adjourn debate. Is leave granted?

Debate adjourned.

## SECOND READINGS

### Bill No. 5 — An Act to amend The Legal Profession Act

**HON. MR. LANE:** — Mr. Speaker, during the last session of this legislature, a bill identical to the one before the House at this time was introduced and given first reading. During the 1980-81 session of this legislature, amendments were made to The Legal Profession Act on a number of matters including new discipline procedures. All of the amendments contained in this bill, with the exception of section 8, make amendments arising out of those amendments.

Sections 3 and 9 correct errors made in the 1980-81 bill because only 17 benchers are elected, not 18, as the act now states. Section 3 amends section 12 of the act. The eighteenth member is the Dean of Law at the University of Saskatchewan.

Section 9 of this bill corrects a form to the act to reflect the fact that the number of benchers from Saskatoon has been increased from three to five.

Sections 4 and 7 of the bill clarify that the first or second vice-chairman has the same powers as the chairman of the discipline committee in sections 56 and 75. This is consistent with other provisions of the act.

Section 5 of the bill gives the right to cross-examine and re-examine a witness testifying before a committee of the benchers of the law society which is primarily involved with disciplinary matters.

Under 70(2) of the act, the benchers of the law society may reinstate a lawyer who has been struck from the roll if they are satisfied that his subsequent conduct or other facts warrant the reinstatement.

The amendment contained in section 6 permits the benchers to have an investigation conducted before ordering reinstatement.

The hon. members opposite may well know that some lawyers are, in fact, applying for reinstatement to the courts to get an order directing the law society to reinstate them. In fact, what this requires is that the law society will have an opportunity to review the matter and have a second investigation prior to reinstatement to make sure that it is in the public interest.

Section 8 of the bill amends the boundaries of the Saskatoon district and Battleford electoral divisions to include Unity in the Saskatoon district division rather than Battleford. Lawyers of Unity are members of the Kerrobert Bar Association and have a closer relationship with the Saskatoon district electoral division. This was requested by the benchers, as were the other provisions.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to amend The Legal Profession Act.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — I would like to make a couple of comments, Mr. Speaker. I want to say that this act is identical to the act to amend The Legal Profession Act that was proposed during the last session by the Attorney General's predecessor, that brilliant attorney general, Roy Romanow. I want to say, in view of the fact that it was prepared by the past government, and because it is identical to what was prepared by the former attorney general, we will be in a position to support this bill, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

### **Bill No. 7 — An Act to amend The Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act.**

**HON. MR. LANE:** — Mr. Speaker, this bill is identical to a bill which died on the order paper at the last session of the last legislature. When the district court and the Court of

Queen's Bench were merged by legislation, many consequential amendments were required to other statutes. Unfortunately, a consequential amendment to The Deserted Wives' and Children's Maintenance Act, read in conjunction with the existing Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, has resulted in a situation which was not intended by the merger legislation. In fact, because of the merger, some judges are saying that enforcement proceedings must be done in the provincial court. This was not intended. This proposed amendment ensures that enforcement will only be through the Queen's bench and the unified family court.

The amendments contained in section 3 and section 4(2) of the bill simply clarify the right of appeal in reciprocal enforcement matters. This is required as a result of the repeal of The District Court Act upon a merger of the courts.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this bill.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

### **Bill No. 13 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Act**

**HON. MR. HARDY:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity today to speak on second reading of the amendment to The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Act, raising the corporation's borrowing from \$300 million to \$500 million. This bill was introduced last session and died on the order paper, and it is being introduced again.

This amendment is another indication of this government's commitment to increase the supply of housing here in the province of Saskatchewan. The construction of single-family housing units in Saskatchewan had virtually come to a halt under the previous administration. With the new 13.25 per cent mortgage interest program, our government plans to get family housing units under construction, not only to create new housing, but to create new jobs for the people of Saskatchewan.

As a further extension of our efforts to create jobs we intend to stress the use of Saskatchewan products, particularly from the crown corporations such as Sask Forest Products. Utilization of these materials has never been emphasized in our housing construction as far as Sask Housing is concerned. Mr. Speaker, use of Saskatchewan products means more jobs and more internal income for the people of this province. We have the necessary products here in Saskatchewan. As well, we have the qualified people, so it is this government's intention to use them

Mr. Speaker, this is what Saskatchewan is all about: working people who deserve the right to earn their living, and a government which cares about them to help them initiate these programs. Our policy is to provide housing for the people who need housing, and those are the low income people of Saskatchewan.

The borrowing limit of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has been extended to its limit within the act, with the result being a huge accumulation of land sitting unused and the government subsidizing rental units whose occupants are high-income earners. Our government plans not only to improve the liquidity of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation and to put the funds to use where they will do the most good. Low-income families, native families and senior citizens — these will be the ones to benefit from our programs, as well as the construction industry and related industries.

Following the election of April 26, we undertook a general review of the programs of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation in order to make a preliminary assessment as to whether these programs were meeting the real housing needs of the people of Saskatchewan. While we may wish to look at some of the corporation's programs very carefully over the next few months, we are well aware that any extensive delay in permitting the corporation to proceed with planned projects could have a significant and adverse impact on the housing industry, already badly hit by high interest rates. Therefore, I have authorized the corporation to proceed with the planning and construction of close to 700 rental housing units under the public housing and non-profit rental housing programs.

The corporation has just provided me with a list of a further 756 units which the corporation hopes to tender later this year. These projects would be more than sufficient to commit the full federal housing budget for Saskatchewan in 1982 and provide additional units to meet any potential increase in the federal budget.

I have already noticed that we expect to announce details of a new provincial home-ownership program to assist those families who cannot qualify for mortgages on new housing under our new 13.25 per cent mortgage interest program. This program can be expected to cause a further increase in housing starts.

These approvals are in addition to the 1,900 housing units currently under construction in various Saskatchewan Housing Corporation programs already. These under construction right now are 535 home-ownership units being built under the corporation's various home-ownership programs; 700 low-rental housing units primarily for senior citizens, under the public housing program; 665 moderate-income rental units, under the non-profit rental program. The total number of units under construction or to be tendered for 1982, thus far, is 3,356 units.

Mr. Speaker, last week approval was granted to construct a 50-unit senior citizen project by the Knights of Columbus in Prince Albert with 20 per cent of the cost being funded by the provincial government. In addition, Mr. Speaker, we have approved senior citizen homes in Churchbridge, 12; Delisle, 10; Esterhazy, 8; Hafford, 10; Kipling, 24; Lake Lenore, 10; Parkside, 10. In addition to the other one, Mr. Speaker, in Prince Albert, we have also approved two additional senior citizens' homes, one of 50 units and one of 36 units. These projects will be tendered later this year.

Mr. Speaker, this is hardly an indication that the government has brought housing construction to a halt, as some of the members opposite have claimed. The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation is proceeding as rapidly as possible to plan and tender housing projects and to implement its new home-ownership program, and that is creating jobs and homes for the people of Saskatchewan. Of course, Mr. Speaker, we have already announced introduction, effective July 1, of the 13.25 per cent mortgage program, which will have a major impact on construction across the province.

Financing the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation projects that are currently under construction, as well as the projects that have been recently approved, requires an increase in the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation's borrowing limit.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the objections of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation are in accordance with the main objectives of this government, which are to provide help to the people who need it most. Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of a bill to amend The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Act.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HAMMERSMITH:** — Mr. Speaker, as the minister points out, the bill essentially calls for action that was called for by the former minister responsible for Sask Housing. However, the record needs to be set straight in that the minister, in outlining what he now calls his programs, plays a little game with the fact of the situation. The fact of the situation, particularly with regard to new housing construction, is that two of the programs which had been announced — the program to construct 1,000 new houses, and the accompanying arrangement with that program, to guarantee not only a 10 year lock-in at 16 per cent on mortgages, but to guarantee a subsidy to write down the interest rate of the mortgages so that the cost of housing would not exceed 30 per cent of the income for any family — would have provided for an effective interest rate, Mr. Speaker, of less than 12 per cent for those people. That program has been cancelled. However, the minister now indicates that he is studying it. I am sure that with the assistance of the member for Regina North West the study will be a successful one, Mr. Speaker.

There was also included the proposal to construct 500 apartment units, mainly in the major cities of Saskatchewan. That program has been cancelled. Together, those two programs, taking an average (and it is a legitimate average) of one and one-half person-years of employment for each unit of housing construction, have eliminated for the time being, at least, 2,250 jobs in the construction industry. Now, he outlines, in detail, projects that will proceed and result in the construction of 2,650 housing units. Those are all units under long-standing programs that were all approved prior to March 1982 and would have gone ahead in any event. It is recognized that the housing corporation, under the provision of the bill, does require additional borrowing powers. We will, therefore, be supporting the bill, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say that this minister, unlike many of the ministers in the government opposite, has taken up our suggestion that, while he is studying and reviewing proposed new programs of the previous government, he is, at the same time, going ahead with a number of the projects and programs that had been proposed, so that the industry doesn't come to a dead stop. I would advise that he attempt to convince some of his colleagues in cabinet that that is a sound approach, and an approach for which the government need not apologize. They do require time to get their act together and to get input from some of the new and vigorously creative members whom they have on that side. But while they are doing that, it is commendable that they go ahead with a number of the projects that people have been waiting for. We will, therefore, be supporting this bill in second reading.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and by leave of the Assembly referred to a committee of the whole later this day.

**HON. MR. BERNTSON:** — While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, in addition, I would like to ask leave of the House to consider Bill No. 5, Bill No. 7, Bill No. 4 and Bill No. 6 in committee later this day.

**Bill No. 14 — An Act to establish the Department of Energy and Mines and to repeal The Department of Mineral Resources Act**

**HON. MR. THATCHER:** — Mr. Speaker, this act is not a particularly complex one. There's one thing about it: the members opposite will understand it without a great deal of

difficulty. Even though it's relatively simple, we still added an even simpler addendum to it so that the gentlemen opposite can probably, after a couple of days of intensive study, have some insight as to what the intent of it is.

Mr. Speaker, it was my intention to be very brief on this matter, but in the interests of simplicity and the education of members opposite, I suppose we could lengthen it out.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this act is to change the name from the Department of Mineral Resources to the Department of Energy and Mines. We believe that this is consistent with the high profile and priority that this government places upon energy. This name change indicates the government's intention to place a high priority on the development of Saskatchewan's vast energy reserves. In other words, very simply stated, I guess we're going to glamorize energy a little bit.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.