

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
June 16, 1983

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PETITIONS

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleagues and under the provisions of rule 11, I wish to present a petition signed by a number of concerned Saskatchewan citizens who pray that that Bill 104 be withdrawn.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a number of constituents – I know this will be of interest to the Minister of Labour – on behalf of a number of employees of what appears to be the Yorkton Union Hospital, who petitions that Bill 104 amendments are not in the best interests of the Saskatchewan people and request Bill 104 to be withdrawn. I know the Minister of Labour will want a copy of that.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a number of Saskatchewan citizens of diverse origin who join in one common theme, and that is the protesting of the stripping of their rights by Bill 104.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a number of people in Regina, quite a number of who are unemployed, but who expect some time that they may be employed and who are concerned what Bill 104 will do to them as working people.

The next petition again comes from a variety of communities – Regina, Swift Current, and P.A. – who join in protesting this unprecedented interference with the rights of working men and women.

A much larger petition, Mr. Speaker, from a number of people, some 66 in number, who protest the effect of Bill 104 and ask the government to reconsider this ill-advised move.

Yet another petition, Mr. Speaker, from a variety of people in Moose Jaw, North Battleford and Yorkton. The people from North Battleford are listed as fire-fighters, who understand as they hope the government will, what a gross interference with their democratic rights Bill 104 is.

Again, Mr. Speaker, another petition from a number of different communities and a number of difference people, who join in unison in asking this government to reconsider this gross violation of their rights.

This one, the next petition, Mr. Speaker, comes from a number of farmers who are not directly affected, but who do understand that if you take away the rights of any of the citizens in a democratic society you take away the rights of all.

A number of people, this time from the city of Saskatoon, who join with the others we heard yesterday, in protesting Bill 104 and asking that it be withdrawn.

Again, Mr. Speaker, the next petition will be of particular interest to the Minister of Labour. They are all from Yorkton and the Yorkton district, who join in asking that their MLA in this government withdraw this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I have another petition, signed by some 40 signators, who join in asking that Bill 104 be withdrawn.

Another petition in some 30 names of people who join in petitioning to this Assembly that Bill 104 be withdrawn as a violation of the charter of rights and the international treaties to which Canada is a signator.

Yet another one, Mr. Speaker, which will be of particular interest to the member from Yorkton – signators to a petition who pray that Bill 104 be withdrawn.

Another petition this time from the community of Prince Albert, praying that Bill 104 be withdrawn and that their democratic rights as free men and women be restored.

Again, Mr. Speaker, yet another petition from a number of people who join in one common theme, and that is protesting what Bill 104 is doing to their democratic rights.

Another petition that will be of particular interest to the Minister of Labour . . . There are still, Mr. Minister, enough people in Yorkton with enough faith in your sense of compassion to petition you to petition you to withdraw the bill.

The final petition, Mr. Speaker, is also from Yorkton, from a number of people with different occupations, who ask that Bill 104 be withdrawn.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

THE CLERK – According to order, I wish to advise the Assembly that I received yesterday 123 petitions, presented by Messrs. Engel, Koskie, Lingenfelter, Lusney, Shillington, Thompson and Yew. The petitions have been examined, and under rule 11(7) found to be in order, the prayer of the petition to be:

Of certain citizens of the province of Saskatchewan praying that the Legislative Assembly may be pleased to withdraw Bill No. 104.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Non-controversial Bills

Bill No. 98 – An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Northern Municipalities Act

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the standing committee on non-controversial bills, I wish to present the third report of the committee.

As chairman of the non-controversial bills committee, I wish to report Bill No. 98, An Act respecting Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Northern Municipalities Act, as being controversial.

MR. SPEAKER: -- When shall this bill be read a second time?

MR. ANDREW: -- Next sitting.

Bill No. 101 – An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Vehicles Act, 1983

MR. SHILLINGTON: – As chairman of the non-controversial bills committee, I wish to report Bill No. 101, An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Vehicles Act, 1983, as being controversial.

MR. SPEAKER: -- When shall this bill be read a second time?

MR. ANDREW: -- Next sitting, Mr. Speaker

Bill No. 102 – An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Public Trustee Act and to repeal The Administration of Estates of Mentally Disordered Persons Act

MR. SHILLINGTON: – As chairman of the non-controversial bills committee, I wish to report Bill NO. 102, An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Public Trustee Act and to repeal The Administration of Estates of Mentally Disordered Persons Act, as being non-controversial.

MR. SPEAKER: -- When shall this bill be read a second time?

MR. ANDREW: -- Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading and consideration in the committee of the whole on the said bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

MR. ANDREW: -- Mr. Speaker, I move that the said bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and bill read a third time.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. DIRKS: – Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to all members of the Assembly this afternoon a group of 26 very fine students from one of Regina's oldest schools, Benson School, which is located in my constituency. These students are seated in the east gallery, and they are here today with their principal, Mrs. Henderson, and their vice-principal, Mr. Harrop. I shall have the pleasure of meeting with them at 3 o'clock for pictures at the rotunda area and then for some refreshments afterward. I would like all members to join with me in welcoming them to the Assembly this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. DIRKS: – Those are grade 8 students.

I'd also like to introduce to you this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and to all of us in the Assembly, on behalf of the member from Regina Lakeview, a group of 18 grade 4 and 5 students who are seated behind me, who attend the French immersion program at the Lakeview School here in Regina. They are here today with their teachers and

chaperons. Would you all join with me in welcoming them? I shall be meeting with them in two or three minutes in the rotunda area as well.

HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with my colleague in welcoming the students from Lakeview School who are behind me. I want to do this because these students are of particular interest to myself. Many of them, indeed in fact most of them, live in my riding. They began their French immersion program at Connaught School, which is about a block and a half from where I live, and they completed the first four years at Connaught, and then have to go to Lakeview to complete the balance of the French immersion program.

I am particularly interested in them because my son and daughter are now enrolled in the French immersion program at Connaught, and in two years and four years, respectively, will be joining these students at Lakeview School.

I want, Mr. Speaker, to say a special welcome to one of the students whose name is Christopher.

HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. RYBCHUK: – Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and to this Assembly, 35 grade 8 students and their teacher chaperon, Rick Ast, that are seated in the Speaker's gallery. They come from the Arcola School that is situated in the constituency of Regina Victoria, which is my constituency. I want to wish them a pleasant and educational stay here this afternoon. I want to inform them that I will be meeting with them at approximately 2:45, 2:50 for pictures and refreshments, and I want to ask all the members of the Assembly to give them a warm welcome.

HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Bill 104

MR. SHILLINGTON: – A question to the Minister of Labour. Mr. Minister, yesterday you told the House – and I quote from page 3118 of *Hansard*.

I have told (and this is a quotation) a number of people on radio shows that I have thousands of names in my office.

I remember expressing yesterday some doubts about that, Mr. Minister, you refused to table any of those names in this Assembly – names that you say support amendments to The Trade Union Act. Mr. Minister, are those thousands of names affixed to petitions which read:

I believe workers must have the right to join unions but not be forced to join unions. I want the Government of Saskatchewan to change labour legislation so that workers will not be forced to join unions against their wishes.

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I've told the members opposite that I did have

a number of names in my office. I also said yesterday that I am not going to table it for public scrutiny name by name, but I do have numbers of names in my office that have said that they want changes, and this is the working people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: – New question. The minister may evade the question if he prefers, but it's also our right to repeat it. Mr. Minister, I didn't ask you whether you were going to table them. I asked you if those names were attached to the petition which I just read – the "right to work" petition.

HON. MR. McLAREN: – I haven't seen, Mr. Minister, the letter attached to it. All I know is that I have a number of names. There are many, many names in my office I'm not looking at whatever is attached to the package. I know there is a package of names in my office calling that.

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Supplementary. Do you have such a petition in your office with thousands of names attached to it?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I have many, many names, letter, memos, phone calls of people that were expressing their concern about The Trade Union Act. They're there; that's the reason that we have gone with the amendments. We are wanting to expand and protect the rights of the workers which they were asking us to do, and that's what we're zeroing in on. And basically it's the chance or the opportunity to express themselves in secret ballot votes, and if you people across the way are deciding that that isn't the democratic process, then I'm sure I'm going to disagree with you all day if we want to stand here and debate.

MR. SHILLINGTON: – We don't want to debate, Mr. Minister. I just ask you to answer the question Have you got such a petition in your office? And please don't recount for me the entire gamut of your activities over the last year. Just tell me, have you got such a petition in the office with thousands of names attached to it?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I've just finished saying that we've got petitions from many, many areas. I can't tell you who some of them were that brought them into my office. They were given to my EAs and we have them in our office. And as to what type of letter is attached to the package, I have no idea.

MR. KOSKIE: – Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Labour. I'd like to ask the minister whether ... Is the minister aware of petitions organized and circulated by the Saskatchewan Freedom of Choice committee, a committee led by Mr. Prosper Fernando, former press secretary of the former discredited Tory leader, Mr. Collver? I ask you whether or not you are aware of such petitions, and I ask you in fact are you in receipt of the petition which was orchestrated by the former Tory press secretary, Prosper Fernando?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I met Mr. Fernando once, the same as I met with a number of other groups and organizations that came to my office. He never did come to me personally and hand me a petition with a group of names on it. There's petitions in my office, and that's the ones that are there, and I'm not going to be tabling them to the public because I've accepted them in confidence.

MR. KOSKIE: – Supplemental, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the minister: was the minister

specifically asked by Mr. Fernando not to make the petitions public? Because within the letter which he circulated, he indicates to those who are to sign. "They will not be made public or exposed to the media." Is that the representation under which you received these petitions from this right-wing Fernando?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I've accepted letters and briefs and phone calls from anyone in this province, whether they're considered right-wing or left-wing of the middle-of-the-road; I've taken them all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: – A new question, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask you: specifically, since you have assumed office, can you outline what actions have been taken by organized labour in this province which has necessitated your bringing in such drastic changes and undermining the rights of those workers? What actions have labour taken which necessitates this drastic action?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, the decision that I made in the middle of the summer was instigated by the construction strike because people were coming to me saying that they wanted the opportunity to go into a polling booth and express themselves in a secret manner so that nobody else knew how they were voting. We've had lots of and lots and lots of that kind of request. That's the reason that we're going ahead with the amendments – to give the workers and the employees of this province a chance to express themselves in their own private way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: – Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Minister of Labour. If one looks at the statistics, Mr. Minister, the worker-days lost in strikes and lock-outs per non-agricultural paid worker, I want to say, in the last seven years that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: -- Order, please. Order! The member is on his feet and it's question period. I would ask you to get directly to the question. You are not allowed comments or speeches at this time.

MR. KOSKIE: – Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will keep my remarks accordingly. What I want to indicate to the minister, that if one looks at the record of loss of days in Saskatchewan during the past year, Saskatchewan had the best record in Canada. What I'm asking you is: Why are you now, with these dastardly acts of anti-labour amendments, why are you destroying the area of Canada which had the best labour relations in Canada? Why are you attacking labour when we had the best during the past seven years?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, if we had 3,000 worker-days a month lost, or 2,000, or 700, it would still be too much as far as I'm concerned. Canada is still the bottom of . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It's still a part of it. The industrial sector of the world – Canada is at the bottom of the scale. We are still into marketing in the international market. We are becoming non-competitive, and there's no doubt about that. I intend to help the employees of this province to work, produce, so that we can create the jobs, and if we're on strike we are not productive. They still have that right to strike, but all we're doing is making sure that the people of the various companies have the right to express themselves in a secret manner.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: – New question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Mr. Minister, your legislation, in my view, is heading in the direction that has been adopted by other right-wing governments in Canada. What I'm asking you, in view of the fact that their labour records and loss of time due to strikes was the best in Saskatchewan, how can guarantee to this legislature that my implementing further right-wing anti legislation, you're going to improve on it, when in fact we were better than previously? How are you going to improve when in fact they've tried the right-wing legislation in other provinces and it hasn't worked?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I don't agree with the member opposite. He has his view and I have my view. And 416,000 worker-days lost last year – are you telling me that that is an excellent performance? And over the last 10 years there's a hundred . . .

MR. SPEAKER: -- Order, please. Order, please! When you ask a question, I would ask you to give the member an opportunity to answer. He couldn't be heard. If the question was significant enough to be worth asking, then the member should be given an opportunity to answer.

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I said that I didn't agree with the member opposite; he has his views and I have my views. When you look at 416,000 man-days lost last year, three hundred-and-some thousand in 1979, three hundred-and-something thousand in 1974, it averages up to 170,000 in 10 years. And to me, that's non-productive time, and we're driving our whole province into the ground; we're not competitive any more and being not competitive means no jobs for union workers, non-union workers or people of the whole population of the province. And if you want to argue against that, then let's argue all day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: – New question, Mr. Speaker. Let me remind you, by way of background, Mr. Minister, when the NDP were in office, the seven-year average was 0.5 man-hours lost. Last year that almost trebled to 1.31. Mr. Minister, my question to you is: will you not admit that the record for lost time due to strikes when the NDP were in office was one that you would do well to imitate?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, in January, February, March, last year, when the NDP were in office . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- April too. April

HON. MR. McLAREN: – I haven't got the April figures yet. January, February, March – 36,000 man-days lost under the NDP; in January this year – 700 man-days lost; in February I believe it was around 400 man-days lost; in March we only had 200 days. So where's the comparison?

MR. KOSKIE: – I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour. I'd like the minister, in this case, to acknowledge that the chamber of commerce have clearly indicated that they elected your Tory government and that they could defeat you, and that you had better move. Are you prepared to agree that the major pressure in the

changes is coming from the chamber of commerce who have elicited this statement?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I think I told the Assembly yesterday that I had one meeting with the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, once brief – the same as I had with every other group that came in and presented a brief. I've had more flack from them for not going far enough than I've had from you people across the way who are trying to go against the amendments.

MR. SHILLINGTON: – New question to the Minister of Labour. I wonder if the minister would be candid with this Assembly for a moment. Will the minister not admit that some of the amendments contained in Bill 104, now before this House, are there in fact because of your personal sorry labour-management-relations record at Morris Rod-Weeder Company in Yorkton during the '70s? Is that not the source of some of these amendments?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker I'm not even going to attempt to answer a question like that. I have no intention of getting into answering or rebutting or defending myself before this Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: -- Order please, order. I'd just like to advise the members that the regulations for question period do not allow questions on matters that have occurred back in history, but rather they're to be asked on current issues, and I would ask the members to stay with that.

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Well, I would ask, Mr. Speaker, for some clarification of that. I'll be candid. We were commenting on the inspiration for these amendments which are now before the House. That struck me as being current. The motivation may have occurred some time ago, but we were talking about the motivation for bringing these amendments forward.

MR. SPEAKER: -- The member was specifically addressing items that occurred back in the '70s and that is not allowed in question period. Question period is to deal with current issues, and I would ask the member to stay with current issues.

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Mr. Minister, the petition . . . By way of background, Mr. Minister, I asked you if you were aware of the petition, the right-to-work petition. You indicated you weren't. I find that surprising because I raised it in the Assembly last year, and I recall you commenting on it then and saying you were considering right-to-work legislation. So I find your confusion and ignorance now surprising. But let me ask you, Mr. Minister, as I asked you last year: are you still considering further amendments to The Trade Union Act which will be take us further down the road towards right-to-work legislation?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, what I said last year that I was going into looking at the briefs in an open mind, and I was getting briefs all the way from the fact that there wasn't enough teeth in The Trade Union Act, and all across the gamut to right-to-work. And I've had those meetings with all these various groups. And as you can see by the amendments, we've taken a moderate middle-of-the-road approach, to cover and protect and expand the rights of workers, and I'm going to stay on that until we are finished passing this bill, because that's what's intended in the amendments that we've come down with.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Once again . . . New question. Once again, Mr. Minister, you are evading the question. It requires nothing other than a yes or no. Are you still considering further amendments to this act which will take us further down the road towards right-to-work?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, how can I answer that? I haven't a clue. I'd like to think that this is what we've needed with these amendments here, and by the year 2000 this is what we're going to be living by.

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Will you give this House assurance that you will not do to workers in this province what has happened to workers in Alberta and is currently in process in B.C., outlawing the right to strike in the public sector? Will you give this House this assurance that you will not introduce that in this House?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the members opposite when they were in government made changes to acts and amendments and that. How can I stand here today and say that there won't be any? I don't know. I'm very hopeful that there won't be. And I like to see that this is what is carrying on for years and years and years.

MR. KOSKIE: – I want to direct a question to the Minister of Labour. Mr. Minister, you have indicated that what you were attempting to do was to establish a balance, but I ask you: you will indicate what aspects of the legislation, as it existed, created an imbalance? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I ask you: in your review of the existing legislation, what was the areas of the imbalance, and in what ways are you creating to provide the balance?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I'll address that question when we're in the committee of the whole.

MR. KOSKIE: – I want to ask the minister whether or not he has in fact ever considered drawing together a conference of labour, business, government, in order, in these very difficult economic times, to attempt to strategize an economic approach rather than a confrontation and an attack on one individual group. Why didn't you take that alternative?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, the Premier has a committee put in place already to cover a lot of the economic developments, and there are union people in that committee along with management and government. I'd just like to add that we are meeting with the unions, and I've had some excellent meetings just lately – four hours the other night with the construction trades. They're coming in; they're sitting around tables; they're talking — that's the way it should be. There's a lot of common sense and a lot of co-operation starting to build, and I'm convinced that what we are coming with is going to develop all around the province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: – Mr. Speaker, a further question to the minister. I'd like the minister, whether or not he can indicate before proceeding in its reactionary way, whether or not he looked at labour models used in other countries of the world, such as West Germany or Sweden, in order that it might in fact lead to a co-operative effort among workers,

business, and government, rather than the emasculation of the rights, as you have taken in your reactionary philosophy.

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I have not travelled around the country. I've been to East Germany just a couple of week ago, and we talked to the people there. It seems that they are having problems just the same as we're having problems here. I think our amendments would be well accepted over there.

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Mr. Minister . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. SPEAKER: -- Order, please. Give the member an opportunity to ask his question.

MR. SHILLINGTON: – Mr. Minister, I refer you to an article in the newspaper in which a number of lawyers were asked for their interpretation of sections. None could agree. The *Leader-Post* quoted on D.K. MacPherson, one Don Ching, and one Gwen Gray. None could agree. It is common ground, Mr. Minister, that this bill is very poorly drafted. It is also obvious it was put together in great haste. Will you not, Mr. Minister, allow this bill to stand over the summer, so that you may clean up the drafting and so that those who wish to comment on it may do so?

HON. MR. McLAREN: – Mr. Speaker, I don't know if I heard the total question, but as I said yesterday I have no intention of leaving the bill tabled over the summer months. I told you that yesterday. We're prepared to stay and go through it and discuss it. And I mentioned also yesterday that there are a few House amendments coming which I will table later on to cover possibly some of the questions that the lawyers brought up.

MR. SHILLINGTON: – New question. Well, I'm delighted the minister is prepared to stay, deny adjournment, and ram this thing through. That wasn't my question, Mr. Minister. My question was: it is apparent from the drafting that after 10 months you had the greatest difficulty making up your mind. Will you not give . . .

MR. SPEAKER: -- Order, please. Under section 359 from *Beauchesne's* and point (8), it says: "A question that has a previously been answered ought not to be asked again." This question was asked at least three or four times yesterday, and I believe it out of order.

Dismissals of DNS Employees

MR. YEW: – Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a question regarding labour, but I'll direct this one to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. Seeing as how we can't get any answers from the Minister of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: -- Order. The member is not allowed comments. If he has a question, would you get directly to the question.

MR. YEW: – My apologies, Mr. Speaker.

To the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan: this concerns his government's unjust dismissal of a DNS employee by the name of Joe Jeerakathil and a settlement of more than 53,000 provided to him for lost salary, benefits, and legal fees. This settlement followed a rule by your own Public Service Commission in March that your order to dismiss Mr. Jeerakathil was deplorable and totally unjustified. My question is this considering that the Public Service Commission also said and endorsed those

statements, why didn't you also find a position for this man that you had treated so unfairly?

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, I believe the issue that the hon. member is raising has been ruled upon. There's been a settlement. I don't think it would merit any comment further than this. There has been a settlement as he has said, and it's been reported. As far as I'm concerned, as Minister of Northern Saskatchewan where he once worked, the issue is closed.

MR. YEW: — Well, Mr. Minister, supplementary. There were also five other employees that were dismissed. My question is: what action have you taken with respect to the five other DNS staff fired the same day and for the same unjust reasons?

HON. MR. McLEOD: — I'm not sure of the number, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member referred to. But regardless of the number, there are settlements being arrived at and so on. As I've said before in this House — a number of months ago now because that issue is quite old now — there are settlements being arrived at. The Public Service Commission and various legal firms are working on it, and as far as I'm concerned, that issue is closed as it relates to the employees that the hon. member refers to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McLaren that Bill NO. 104 — **An Act to amend the Trade Union Act** be now read a second time.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was in the process yesterday of making some comments when the Lieutenant-Governor graced us with his visit. I regret to say that I was not able to be present last night — and I'm not sure this is in order — but I regret to say I was not able to be present last night when the members took the opportunity to say goodbye to the Lieutenant-Governor. I'd like to join those who wished him well.

I was talking yesterday, Mr. Speaker, about the open for business pitch, I did some checking into that pitch as it has been formulated by the American state of Georgia. I quoted for the benefit of members opposite a quotation from a pamphlet. I suggested the Minister of Labour might well have got his inspiration from that pamphlet. I quote from some material which was used by Ross Thatcher with the former Liberal government. I suggested to the Minister of Labour he might well have got his material directly out of that; the wording is almost the same.

I want to warn Conservative members of the fate of the Liberal administration. I urge them to read the history of the '80s. Ross Thatcher came to power promising to create 80,000 new jobs in four years. He said the only way to do that was to encourage private enterprise to come to our province and to use regressive labour laws as one of the encouragements.

Well, Mr. Minister, the welcome mat was not worn out. Between 1965 and 1971, unemployment in Saskatchewan increased by 63 per cent. Real investment in agriculture declined by 36 per cent. Real investment in primary industry declined by 49 per cent. Total real investment declined by 30 per cent. That sounds very much like a description of the period of time since you took office. History repeats itself, and so much for open for business.

During the '70s, Mr. Minister, the NDP approach to economic development, which does not attempt to entice new investment with cheap labour and lax environmental production laws, brought a new boom. Mr. Speaker, the boom of the '70s took place under the very Trade Union Act which you now intend to butcher, and which you claim was somehow an obstacle to economic growth and investor confidence. What absolute trash, Mr. Minister.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's small wonder that this government wants to talk about investor confidence given that on page 34 of the March budget speech, the Minister of Finance reports that under this administration, for the first time since the early '70s, there was a decline in real investment in our province, a decline of 15 per cent. No wonder the Conservative administration want to talk about investment in our province, a decline of 15 per cent. No wonder the Conservative administration want to talk about investment confidence, because that is all it can do, is talk. It can claim that regressive labour laws will somehow entice worthwhile investors to our province who will have the best interests of our province at heart. But the facts, Mr. Speaker, speak much louder than the Minister of Labour's empty slogans.

Equally unbelievable is the minister's claim that Bill 104 will increase labour peace and productivity. In every speech this minister has given, whether on Bill 104 or some other aspect of labour-management relations, one central theme comes through – because he feels this way about his own bitter industrial relations experience. And if he doesn't, then this minister's actions are even more dangerous, even more reprehensible, even more worthy of condemnation than we first thought.

Regardless, that central theme is wrong. And the central theme is this, Mr. Speaker: that the problems of decreased productivity are the fault of the workers alone, and that productivity depends on labour peace, as the minister calls it, defined by him as an absence of strikes. Productivity does depend on working people, upon their skills, their creativity, their energy, and their ability to use modern technology to produce. This province has made great strides over the years in terms of increased worker productivity, but the worker, Mr. Minister, is only one part of the productivity equation. Increasing energy costs, inefficient plants, incorrect management decisions and the wrong investment decisions, increasing transportation costs – all these things too must be added to the productivity equation if Saskatchewan is to improve its productivity versus its major competitors.

For a minister of labour to somehow or other suggest that if we could just ban strikes and force those workers to put their noses to the grindstone the productivity puzzle would be solved displays a 19th century approach to our economy.

Another point, Mr. Speaker: the least productive workers in the world are slaves, while the most productive workers in the world are free men and women, secure in the health, safety, and future of the workplace – free men and women able to choose to band together in any way they see fit to better their working conditions. Those people are the most productive workers in the world and we have a good number of rights here in this

province, Mr. Speaker. To the extent that Bill 104 undermines the freedom, the security and the rights that Saskatchewan working people now enjoy, it will hurt, not help, productivity.

Mr. Minister, obviously views the overt work stoppage, the strike or lock-out, as the only disturbance of labour peace. That is a totally incorrect view. The most serious threats to worker productivity and labour peace, properly understood, are the little things – the things that distract the worker, make them feel threatened or insecure, provide anger or frustration, reduce morale. Questions about job security are a prime example of something in the workplace that can simmer under the surface for months, even years, reducing productivity long before job security is ever mentioned as an issue in a strike situation.

So the minister's definition of labour peace as the absence of strikes or lock-outs, I say is a false definition. And I say that the minister's figures on strikes and lock-outs are designed to mislead the people of this province. Ninety per cent of Saskatchewan's collective agreements are settled without any work stoppage of any kind, year in and year out, and there are more than 400 such agreements negotiated in any average year.

Over the seven years from 1975 to '82, Saskatchewan lost an average of five person-days for non-agricultural workers per year. The national average for the same period was 0.95 days — nearly doubled. Last year, Mr. Minister, you'll be proud to know that your record was 1.31 — well above the national average, where it will undoubtedly stay so long as you and your administration insist upon trampling on the democratic rights of working people.

Mr. Minister, you have mentioned the construction strike of 1982. Well, first let me say, that strike, particularly in its length, was a tragedy. But whose fault was that? Not the NDP government's fault; the Conservatives had just come to power when the strike began. Not the fault of The Trade Union Act, which this government is now trying to rip asunder, because the construction industry bargains under a totally different law – The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act. The only one to blame is the incompetent, ineffective, distrusted Minister of Labour in charge at the time – the same minister who now uses that strike as a crutch to sell this regressive piece of legislation.

Let's put the work stoppage in some perspective. In 1982, the worst year for strikes in some time, Saskatchewan lost 400,000 days to work stoppages. In 1982, Saskatchewan lost 655,000 days to workplace injuries which were compensatable under the workmen's compensation board; 50 per cent more days were lost to workplace injuries than to all those strikes. The minister doesn't mention that figure, even though it's right in the 1982 report of the workers' compensation board, published and filed under your name.

Another point to remember, in 1982, Saskatchewan lost more than 6 million days to unemployment, and that was record unheard of before either.

So keep those strikes and keep those totals in perspective, Mr. Speaker. A government truly interested in increasing productivity for the Saskatchewan economy would not be looking at strike figures first, and would not be seeking to make a scapegoat out of trade unions.

Mr. Speaker, I've saved the most incredible of the minister's so-called selling points for

the last: the claim that Bill 104 increases the rights of individual workers. If he really wants people to believe that, he should stand up in this Assembly and explain clearly and concisely on the record how the rights of individual workers are protected by an amendment which will permit an employer to interfere with a worker's decision whether or not to form a union. How are individual worker's rights protected by an amendment which denies a worker the right to form a union or to have it established until at least six months after the previous certification attempt? In what way are workers' rights advanced by an amendment which permits an employer to threaten employees who exercise their legal rights with loss of seniority-related benefits and other rights? What is it about an amendment which permits the employer to supervise strike votes, or conduct ratification votes, which advances workers' rights?

Tell us, Mr. Minister, how are these amendments increasing the rights and protections available to individual workers? The Conservative members opposite like to suggest that somehow or other workers acting collectively to form a union create an institution which does not represent their interests. As I said earlier, the workers are the union, Mr. Speaker. A union doesn't exist unless the majority of its members support its goals and its objectives. I thought it would be instructive to hear, for the government members to hear, a little bit about how unions conduct themselves.

The constitution of the Canadian Labour Congress and the code of ethical practices in that constitution state that the individual unions are self-governing, have the right to govern themselves. There is an appeal provided against any action which is thought to infringe on that, and there's an ombudsman provided as well.

A final point about individual rights of workers, Mr. Speaker. You say that individual rights applaud your move. We've presented petitions to this Assembly which suggest otherwise. We have been receiving letters from individual workers which suggest otherwise. I suggest to this minister the only names that you have received in any larger quantity are on the right-to-work petition.

This Conservative government talks a lot about individual rights. Let's listen for a while. Let them listen to workers from the city of Estevan, the Premier's own constituency, where bitter memories of Black Tuesday in 1931 still live in the minds of many individual workers, still encourage them to fight to preserve their right to band together in unions of working people. I urge the Premier and the Minister of Labour to go to Estevan, go to Bienfait, and talk to some of the survivors and the children of some of the survivors of that terrible day. Talk to some of the workers who have written to me, and let them tell the minister how Bill 104 increased their rights.

I'm going to read to you one or two letters, Mr. Minister. Bab Toomby – he says”

Am opposed to Bill 104 because it is clearly intended to weaken my union and give more power to my boss.

I suspect Ms. Toomby and the minister agree upon that at least. The letter goes on:

I don't need or want your legislation to protect me from my union, as bill 104 pretends to do. We make our decisions by democratic votes at our union meetings, and I don't think our government should interfere or permit the employer to interfere in my decision. I respectfully request you to withdraw Bill 104.

Another letter, Mr. Minister, which I want you to hear, from Barry Bod:

I am opposed to Bill 104 because it goes against worker rights that we've had since the 1940s. We operate our union in a democratic fashion. I see no reason why you people can't. I don't see why you should have so much to say in union business. We seem to have none in yours. It should be thought out more before the hammer goes down.

I want to read another one, Mr. Minister, also from Estevan:

As a member of a union here in Estevan, I am deeply concerned about the future of labour in Saskatchewan with the new Bill 104 being introduced. WE now conduct our union business in a democratic manner, and we're pleased with the results. Having read the amendments being introduced in the legislature. I cannot help thinking of the conditions which existed in this community in the early '30s. I've always thought that the loss of life was for the purpose of forever having proper representation for working people towards a better and more fulfilling future in this community. I am hoping another occurrence like Black Power will never again have to be enacted.

One Robert Lang, also from Estevan, writes:

As a miner belonging to a union, I have to be entirely opposed to your Bill 104, as it takes away the rights of unions to conduct their business without interference from non-union people. This will make it hard for unions to operate; therefore, I urge your government to withdraw this anti-work legislation.

Another, Bev Pickett, writes:

Just a short note to let you know that I'm very displeased. (I should add that all of these letters were addressed to Premier Grant Devine, not to ourselves. We have carbon copies; but these letters were all addressed to Premier Grant Devine.)

Hon. Grant Devine: Just a short note to let you know that I'm very displeased with your proposed Bill 104. In our union, and I am sure in most other unions, the union is run by the members, and not the other way around. I assure you we do not need your protection of your government's interference in our union or our collective bargaining. There is already too much government interference in our private lives. It would seem that your bill would ensure that strikes would last at least 30 days. Also, by this bill it would seem you're trying to legislate what union a person can or cannot belong to. There are many more proposed changes here that I am sure we will find unworkable and detrimental to the worker.

We have had progressive labour laws for 40 years. Let's not destroy this in four years or less.

A Lorne Wagner writes:

Mr. Devine: I am opposed to Bill 104 as it does not improve workers' rights, and in fact it may take away many of our freedoms which we've enjoyed since

the 1940s. Your government is doing nothing but bending to the whims of the chamber of commerce, which we all know is made up of employers. This bill is only intended to weaken unions and give my employer more clout.

Your government has already shown that they are willing to sell Saskatchewan down the tube with your open for business – or as I like to call it, “Sell Saskatchewan.” You're now trying to put Saskatchewan in the history books by creating another Poland. (Funny how often we've heard that word used.)

I as an individual will do everything I can to stop Bill 104, and I hope your government comes to its sense and stops this idiotic move to try to recreate slavery in this province.

Mr. Minister, Robert Schmidt writes, from Estevan, to:

Mr. Devine: I am a person in your riding, and when you ran for office, you promised changes if you were elected, and for sure you did. I very much regret that I helped you, and I know that I will not make the same mistake twice.

This story reminds me of a story once told about a person looking for professional help at a professional house. The man knocked on the door and requested to be seduced. The person on the inside said, “That will cost you \$20.” So the man reached in to his pocket and gave the person \$20. The other man closed the little window, and the person seeking help outside waited and waited. Finally, he knocked again, and the same person answered again, replying, “Yes, what can I do for you?” The person outside replied, “I'd like to get seduced.” (I won't read the last line of that paragraph.)

It's not the kind of help I need, and will not return; and I consider Bill 104 in the same house, and I don't need it either.

A letter, Mr. Minister, from R. Leslie, this time to yourself:

Dear Mr. McLaren: I think that your amendments to the labour act in Bill 104 are of no benefit to the unionized people of Saskatchewan. What we need is for your government to strengthen the labour act, to help the labour movement, not to hinder our unions. We don't need any of your interfering with the workings and the internal business of labour unions in this province.

I object to all of your changes to the labour act which are proposed in Bill 104.

Mr. Minister, you have there the response of individual workers who, I think, very aptly have summarized and have responded to your prescription.

Mr. Minister, I have said before, it is with reservations and misgivings that I introduce a personal element to this debate. But I now turn to a few brief comments on the industrial relations experience of this minister – the bitter experiences, which as all members know are a matter of public record, the bitter experience of the Minister of Labour in an unjust government, which has brought in this unjust bill.

Before doing so, I think it's worth stressing in this debate that all of using this Assembly, members of both sides of the House, are proud of the fact that most employers are genuinely interested in good industrial relations; most acknowledge and respect the dignity, the worth, and the rights of individuals; most practise what they preach, and most practise some pretty sound industrial relations – most, but not all. There are some exceptions.

There are employers who do not respect the rights of workers, employers who do not respect the collective rights of workers together in their own democratic trade unions, even employers who would not hesitate to break the law, repeatedly commit illegal acts, repeatedly and unlawfully interfere in the right so their own employee. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the evidence on the public record demonstrates all too closely just what kind of an employer was the present Minister of Labour. More unfortunately still, it is this sort of an employer, a man with such a record and with such bitter memories, who has transparently incorporated into those amendments his feeble attempt at revenging old sores. Mr. Minister may feel he still has some justification for his act, some explanation for his past behaviour, which is so relevant to the provisions of this bill. I, therefore, invite him to explain here in this Assembly why his behaviour in late 1972, at a time when his employees were exercising their rights to form their own union, led to a written decision of the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board finding this employer guilty of having denied an employee his statutory rights under The Trade Union Act.

I am confident he will wish to explain to this Assembly, and to working men and women of Saskatchewan, why only a few weeks later, on January 10, 1973, the employer was once again found guilty of illegal acts for having illegally interfered with the statutory rights of individual worker, for having interfered with the formation of a union, and for having interfered with the employees' selection of a union. Perhaps this is where the minister will expand upon his famous theory, the theory of free speech – the theory that says an employer should have the same rights to interfere with his employee, the right to tell them whether or not they need a union. This is simply bizarre, Mr. Minister. I know that the minister has strong and bitter views on whether his employees needed a union, and I know that one of the most offensive provisions in this bill is on that very point. Mr. Speaker, this minister and the entire Conservative government can't understand that the employee's rights to choose their own union, if they wish, as they wish, has absolutely nothing to do with anyone's opinions about whether or not they need a union. It's their right to decide for themselves, free from employer interference at least it was, until you introduced this bill.

Perhaps the minister will explain to us why in the fall of 1974, and again in the fall of 1976, the labour relations board in its written decisions found the same employer, Morris Rod-Weeder, guilty of further illegal acts – guilty of once again having violated the collective rights of his employees. Perhaps you will explain again, Mr. Minister, why the labour relations board once again found this employer guilty of illegally interfering with employee rights, illegally interfering with the administration of the employees' own union in written decisions of July 5, 1977, and October 3, 1977.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the minister would like to explain to this Assembly why he feels this bitter memory and these bitter experiences were ... (inaudible) ... record of having illegally interfered in workers' right and made him so determined to ram through this Assembly this most offensive and destructive of all bills.

I want to turn for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to one of the minister's general contentions about this bill. He has repeatedly argued, as have his Tory colleagues, Bill 104 is consistent with his reactionary governments overall policy towards working people, a consistent piece of this government's labour policies. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, that's the one correct statement he's made. That is becoming painfully obvious to Saskatchewan workers. Bill 104 is indeed consistent with this government's approach, consistent with this government's disregard for the democratic rights, consistent with this government's narrow and negative and backward determination to set back by 50 years industrial relations in Saskatchewan. As has so often been said by working men and women, yes, Mr. Minister, this bill is consistent with your policies – consistently reactionary.

Let all members be reminded that this government's first anti-labour move last summer was to cancel a planned and anticipated and announced increase in the minimum wage – an early attack, a mindless attack, a despicable attack on the poorest paid and the most vulnerable working people in our province.

Other such anti-worker policies soon followed on its heels. There was yet a further cancellation of a minimum wage increase, and then a full two-year freeze on the wages of 60,000 of the lowest men and women, so that they might contemplate not minimum wages but maximum wages. Vicious cut-backs in occupational health and safety at a time when the workers of Saskatchewan lost more than 650,000 days due to workplace injuries – hazards in the workplace, Mr. Speaker, that kill and maim and damage workers in mind and spirit – but this anti-labour minister cut back on occupational health and safety.

This government scrapped the women's division with its programs for working women; this government cut pension branch in half; and, most seriously of all, pursues a deliberate and systematic open for business policy which may make oil men into millionaires, but has resulted in unprecedented unemployment for 60,000 workers.

A bizarre set of policies which first attacked the disorganized, then attacked all workers through unemployment, and now levels its most vicious attack of all on organized workers and their democratic trade unions – a consistent policy approach by the Minister of Labour, to be sure. It is indeed, Mr. Minister, consistently wretched. This government's record will go down in Saskatchewan history of the blackest of a bad lot.

I've been tempted, Mr. Speaker, to take a few moments this afternoon and make some brief comments on every one of the single 18 negative provisions of this bill just as the minister. I might add, took a few moments on each one of his own sections, and gave us his distorted, confused, and convoluted contribution of each one. I've been tempted to do so, Mr. Minister, and I have been much encouraged to do so by my constituents. And if the members opposite, and the members on my right, continue in their usual bleating and braying, or ranting and their raving from their seats instead of their feet, which has been all so typical, I may well yield to that temptation.

But I would, Mr. Speaker, like the minister to tell this Assembly which of his personal staff was responsible for the grotesque misinformation contained in the documents released some days ago called "Background Notes." This was, I believe, released as part of the press package to all members of the media on the day the bill was introduced. I cannot, for the life of me, figure out, Mr. Speaker, why the minister assigned this project to one of his assistants who obviously had not a scintilla of knowledge, no background whatsoever in industrial relations, and certainly no knowledge of the amendments.

Only the ungenerous, Mr. Speaker, would suggest this perverse collection of misinformation was an act of deliberate sabotage by the minister's own personal staff. I am willing, to be fair, to dismiss it as merely a product of ignorance and incompetence on the part of the minister's personal staff. Given the level of their salaries is little excuse for incompetence, but I would be kind to the minister and dismiss it in that fashion – the same personal staff, by the way, who recently were rewarded with a \$3,000 increase.

Turning from these most unhelpful notes to the bill itself, let me comment for a moment on only three of the provisions which you yourself addressed. Even to the people who never belonged to a union, these three provisions are obviously arbitrary and unfair to working people. One of these allows the labour relations board to appoint someone to scrutinize and supervise a strike vote among union members, including an employer. It just leaves members of this side gasping that this government would introduce such a bill and would be so ignorant and so surprised at the storm of protest . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right, the employer could be in charge of counting ballots for a union strike vote. His ministers claim this has been a drafting error, that he'd introduce an amendment. We'll see. If we say that there's some reason to believe that, because this bill is a mass of drafting errors.

Another of these provisions removes the amendment that you have to be a member of a union to vote at a union meeting. You can just imagine the potential which that change holds for employers. Just try this one on for size! A union is about to hold a strike vote. There are 50 union members involved. The employer doesn't want to strike, so the day before the strike vote he hires 50 new employees and tells them to go to the union meeting and vote against the strike. They do. There's no strike. The next day the same new employees could be let go – and all of that is legal and proper under Bill 104.

Finally, one of these provisions makes it legal for an employer to threaten an employee. And let me explain, Mr. Minister. Under the current legislation it is legal for an employer to threaten an employee just for trying to organize a union, or for trying to exercise his or her rights under The Trade Union Act in some other way. And this bill removes that provision. Now an employee who is trying to organize a union, for example, can be threatened by the employer with loss of seniority or vacation time, among other things. And that would be perfectly legal under bill 104. Does that sound like legislation designed to protect the rights of individual workers? Of course it does not.

This Conservative legislation is not designed to protect the rights of individual workers. This Conservative legislation is not designed to protect the rights of individual workers; it is designed to appease the chamber of commerce and other employer organizations who demanded their pound of flesh, who got their pound of flesh, who worked to get this government elected and are now calling in their tricks.

Mr. Minister, I would ask you to spend some time rethinking this legislation and reminding yourself of the background and the purpose for your department. Mr. Minister, I do not have many more comments to make on this bill. I said initially that it was not possible for us to prevent this bill from going through. I reminded you of an earlier incident some 16 years ago which another right-wing government thought it bought itself some politics by trampling on the rights of workers. I remind you of what happened to that government.

I want to just, Mr. Minister, remind you of some of the support you're getting. I see in this newspaper, *Leader-Post*, June 7, '83, John Gugulyn. I understand a member of his

family may work for your department, but that's neither here nor there. He states, while echoing other business reaction to Bill 104, he stated this is:

... a major step in the right direction. Additional steps are critical, and serious issues have yet to be addressed.

We sought, Mr. Minister, in question period to elicit from you what some of those future directions might be. You didn't give those to us.

Gugulyn, industrial relations manager for International Minerals and Chemical Corporation, said the changes are the culmination of five years of "arduous lobbying" by the chamber with the two provincial governments and numerous labour minister and deputy ministers.

I want to repeat that, Mr. Minister. Mr. Gugulyn said that:

... the changes are the culmination of five years of 'arduous lobbying' by the chamber with two provincial governments and numerous labour ministers ...

With that, Mr. Minister, we agree. That's exactly what these amendments are the product of: arduous lobbying by the chamber of commerce.

Mr. Speaker, I think the member from Morse wants to introduce some students. If that's accurate, I yield the floor if I may have it back.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. MARTENS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to the Legislative Assembly, and to you, Mr. Speaker, 34 students from the town of Waldeck. They are grade 5 and 6, and Waldeck is only a few miles away from where I live, so it's with a good deal of pleasure that I introduce them to you today. I know that their tour has been at least somewhat informative, and I trust that they will have an enjoyable day here. Will you join me in welcoming them please?

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill 104 – An Act to amend The Trade Union Act (continued)

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will quote just one other source of inspiration for the minister. I note, as well, the contractors are applauding the direction of the labour bill, even though it has precious little effect on them. It does indeed have some effect on them, but it is not as direct as is with other unions. Again, it's the *Leader-Post*, June 7, '83:

Saskatchewan's unionized contractors have given qualified support to amendments to The Trade Union Act introduced by the provincial government in the legislature last week. "Most of the things they have done

we've advocated, so we're generally pleased," Jim Chase, president of the Saskatchewan Construction Labor Relations Council, said Monday.

Should well be pleased; however, apparently not. The article goes on:

The contractors are also "disappointed" the government has acted on recommendations to change the Construction Industry Labor Relations Act, which were presented to the government last fall.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, and I invite you to respond to these inquiries. Is this a way station on the road to the Georgian right-to-work legislation battled? Are these contractors to be rewarded or are they to be disappointed, Mr. Minister? You might well attempt to answer that.

Mr. Minister, I want to end as I began, talking about freedom. Conservatives talk a lot about freedom. But when they do, I get kind of worried, Mr. Speaker, because when Conservatives talk about freedom, it always seems they consider it to be a thing of the past and that we're constantly losing our freedoms. According to this point of view, at some glorious time in the past, each man must have been perfectly free. He did what he liked. He had absolutely not control over his life. He might have been cold and hungry and miserable but boy, he had his freedom. This attitude views governments, of all things, as the principal enemy of freedom. By implication, the law of the jungle is believed to embody more wisdom than all of our nation's laws. At times this Conservative attitude towards freedom even seems to regret or deny the achievements of thousands of year of civilization which are, of course, the product of human co-operation and organization as they are of solitary endeavour.

But for us, Mr. Speaker, freedom is something very different. Freedom is related to equality. Humanity is still not free from want and famine, and these are causes as old as man himself. We admit that victories in the battle for freedom involve some costs and some battles with those who hold wealth and power in the world. But to watch the social democrat and to listen to the social democrat, the search for harmony between individuals and society's rights is an endless struggle. That's why we believe that the causes of freedom, equality and democracy are inseparable. I commend to this government and to Conservative members opposite, the following quotation from a famous speech that President Franklin Roosevelt – same president, I might say, who introduced the beginnings of North American labour law to the U.S. – President Franklin Roosevelt, who had this to say about the nature and spirit of democracy. Speech given on January 6, 1941, the nature and spirit and democracy:

There is nothing mysterious about the foundations of a healthy and strong democracy. The basic things expected by our people of their political and economic systems are simple. They are: equality of opportunity for youth and others; jobs for those who can work; security for those who need it; the ending of a special privilege for the few; the preservation of civil liberties for all; the enjoyment of the fruits of scientific progress; and a wider and constantly rising standard of living.

These are the simple and basic things that must never be lost sight of in the turmoil and the unbelievable complexity of our modern world. The inner and aiding strength of our economic and political systems is dependent on the degree to which they fulfil those expectations.

Mr. Minister, it is my view and the view of my colleagues that Bill 104, the chamber of commerce bill, betrays that spirit and thereby threatens those freedoms. It is also our view that the way in which this Conservative government is using its large majority in this House to ram through this very bad piece of legislation against the wishes of individual working people, threatened freedom. As I said last night, you may win the day, but with the passing of time, Mr. Minister, we will win the struggle.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. THOMPSON: – Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak in opposition to Bill 104, the chamber of commerce bill, as it has often been referred to by my colleagues. I rise to oppose this legislation because I know that it will trample on the rights and freedoms of individual working people throughout this province.

This large majority Conservative government is prepared to trample on those rights. In fact, it seems almost eager to do it. At the same time, this large majority government seems prepared to totally ignore the protests which have been tabled in this Assembly by myself and my colleagues – protests from working people all over this province in the form of petitions. I ask the government members to think about these petitions, Mr. Speaker. We made petition forms available to people about one week ago. In just one week, before many people have even had the chance to hear the news about how bad this bill is, more than 7,000 people knew enough about it to sign their names in protest. More names are coming into our office every day from all over the province: from Key Lake to Estevan, from Yorkton to North Battleford. But the Conservative members don't want to listen to the protests of individual Saskatchewan residents, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Yesterday, as the petitions were being tabled in this Assembly, government members laughed and joked and read newspapers, as if to say that the opinions of these 7,000 people didn't matter. These are people who took the time and trouble to study the issues involved with Bill 104; who decided that this bill is a bad bill; and who exercised their right to protest it by petitioning this Chamber. But the Conservatives with their large majority ignore them. This government has no time to review and consider the protests of more than 7,000 people. That's a sad situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker – a very, very sad situation.

You know, the Conservative members last summer, during the first session of this legislature, used to take great delight in riding members on this side of the House. They took great joy in telling us over and over and over again that the NDP had lost touch with the people. They told that we had forgotten how to listen. Then they told us that the Conservative government was going to be much different, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They told us that the Conservative government was going to respect the opinions of individuals. They told us that the Conservative government was never going to lose touch with the people.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess that this is just one more example of broken Conservative promises. Within months of making these kinds of self-righteous speeches in this Chamber, the Conservative members yesterday sat in their places and hooted and hollered and heckled as more than 7,000 Saskatchewan people gave their opinion of Bill 104.

And when debate on this bill resumed yesterday afternoon, they ignored those opinions Mr. Deputy Speaker. They made it clear that this government with its large

majority still plans to ram this legislation through over the next few days, and they made it clear that they don't want to listen to the opinions of others, that the government has already made up its mind, and that's the way it's going to be.

How did they make that clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker? By abandoning this Chamber. At one point in second reading debate on this bill yesterday afternoon there were six Conservative members sitting in this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, sitting in their seats. Six members sitting in this House, and I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, does that show any interest in this institution? That shows the type of interest that this Conservative government has for the working men and women of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, where were the other 50 members? Where were the other 50 members? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It seems like I've touched a sore spot. It seems like I've touched a sore spot here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I see the member of culture and youth is talking from his seat again. I think if he wants to get into this debate he should stand up in his chair and speak on this debate. Like I say to all the other members, if you want to speak in this debate, stand up. That's what you've been doing all this time; you've been sitting in your seats and you've been heckling.

I think it's time to stand up and make yourself counted. Stand up and speak on the bill . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I have the floor, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I intend to continue with my speech. But when I sit down I invite the Conservative members to stand up and take their place and be counted; defend this bill. I think that's what your constituents would want you to do. I'm sure your constituents are not happy with you sitting in your seats and chirping from your seats. You were elected to stand up in this Chamber and defend the legislation that your government is putting forth. I invite you to do that.

Behind this proves that this Conservative government isn't listening, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This Conservative government simply plans to use its big majority to ram this bad bill through no matter what anyone says, because it has its marching orders from the chamber of commerce.

I have a message for my friends in the Conservative caucus, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is this: you will pay, in the long run, for ignoring the opinions of these people. You claim that the NDP had lost touch and we just weren't listening the people. After 11 years in government that may have happened, but nothing like this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In just 14 months your government has lost touch with more people than the NDP did in 11 years. In summary, you should be ashamed of the way in which you have presented this bill to the legislature so late in the session, and ashamed of the way in which you are now ramming it through.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me say this to the individual working people of this province: I understand how you feel, coming from where I do, the North. I understand very well the feeling of bitterness and frustration which you must feel now towards this Conservative government, a government that just won't listen to the people and just doesn't seem to care about people. We in the North felt that bitterness and frustration very early in this Conservative government's term. Within a few months of taking office, and after mere mention of its plans during last year's election campaign, the Conservative government decided to dismantle DNS – no consultation of the people of the North, nothing; it was a decision made in Regina.

And it has been a disaster for the people in the North. The Conservatives have no economic development plan for the North, and the people of the North have suffered the consequences: rising unemployment, rising welfare rolls, and increasing social problems – all because this Conservative government just didn't listen to the people of the North.

Now the Conservatives are doing the same thing to Saskatchewan's working people, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Without any meaningful consultation they are taking away the rights of individuals working people, turning back the clock. They refuse to listen to the opinions of those same working people, as they have presented to this legislature by myself and my colleagues.

The people of the North and the working people of this province have been victimized, victimized by the Conservative government's private enterprise at any cost philosophy, a philosophy which attempts to pattern Saskatchewan after the southern United States. The Conservatives want Saskatchewan to look like Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas. I say that these people have no lessons to teach us. I say that Saskatchewan doesn't happen to pattern itself after any other part of the world. We have the resources and the people and the skills to lead the way here. The southern American states have nothing to show us except things to avoid, Mr. Deputy Speaker. These states have right-to-work laws, and they use these anti-workers laws to try to entice new investors, but it hasn't worked. I remind the Conservative members that the southern United States remains one of the poorest regions of that country with some of the poorest, most inefficient public service sectors in that country, and some of the poorest educational systems. So those people have nothing to show us. Saskatchewan has always been the leader when it comes to new ideas, new approaches. Let's not abandon that now and become followers trying to model ourselves after places like Georgia.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose this bill as strongly as I possibly can, because it will destroy many of the rights and protections which individual workers have in this province. And I rise as a Northerner to tell the individuals working people of this province that I understand how they feel, how they feel in the face of this big, majority government, unwilling to listen to their views, unable to understand their concerns.

But I tell those working people that there is hope. The hope lies in what my colleague from Regina Centre said in this debate the other night. The conservative government with its big majority may win this day, but over the long term a coalition is building which will win the struggle. Today that coalition consists of residents of the North and working people elsewhere in the province. It consists of those on minimum wage who have had their wages frozen by this government – frozen for two years, and after two years probably another year or two after that. It consists of the needy who have seen assistance from this Conservative government cut back drastically. And it consists of nearly 60,000 people in this province who are out looking for work. That's not a bad coalition after just 14 months, and it's growing every day,. Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I can say to the working people that if we join together there is a reason for hope. The government may win this day with its big majority, but we will win the struggle.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with that I will take my seat, and as I said before, I ask the other members in this House to stand up in this Assembly, and if they're in favour of this legislation, let your constituents know what you're saying. That's what this forum is for. We are elected as representatives of our constituents, and our constituents want us to get up and speak, either in favour or in opposition of legislation that goes through this Assembly. And I'm taking my seat now, and I ask you to consider that, and to get into this

debate. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: – Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take great privilege to take pride in debate on Bill 104 and discuss some of the issues that I see, from a farmer's point of view, as far as The Trade Union Act is concerned.

The Trade Union Act and the establishment of unions provides a formalized means for workers and employees to make arrangements and to get together and to have a system in place that larger firms can exercise their clout. And when you have a large firm that has a lot of clout, their workers can band together and use their trade union to support them. I think you need to give both sides some power and ability to be able to conduct business fruitfully and profitably here in Saskatchewan. If business is conducted on a profitable basis the workers will benefit as well. And as we see, during these times of recession, the workers in general in Saskatchewan have supported much lower settlements than they were asking for just little more than a year before.

Without unions though . . . If there's no union around, the employer has virtually all the power, and that is particularly bad if we're talking about multinational employers – people that represent companies that do business and have budgets larger than the budget of this province. The employee then is subject to the whims and wishes of somebody that's sitting in a boardroom, possibly down east, more likely in Europe or in United States. And the only power the employee has is to quit and walk out in the street. Now that's not an awful lot of power when you have to buy groceries and meet your power bills and payments at the end of the month.

AN HON. MEMBER: -- And they're rising so much under this . . . (inaudible) . . .

MR. ENGEL: – That's right. As my colleague says, when you have a government that is allowing power rates to go up by leaps and bounds, and telephone rates, and everything else – these employees are hard-pressed to meet these commitments, to meet these commitments. Trade unionism is not a big part in the daily life of people in rural Saskatchewan. Trade unionism doesn't centre around every dinner conversation and isn't the mainstay of a rural way of life. But let me tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I think it is accepted as a norm for Saskatchewan and as a fundamental underlying foundation that our workers have. I think the farmers in general accept this fact that here is a tool for organizations, be they teachers or doctors, or dentists, or lawyers, or blue-collared workers. They have, because of The Trade Union Act, the ability to organize themselves and conduct their affairs and their negotiations with the people they're working for.

We don't hear about a lot of negotiations which are settled without difficulty. The average person doesn't know of the hundreds and hundreds of deals that are made between union negotiators and their employers, so consequently we don't realize that it's happening. The thousands and thousands of miles that are flown safely by aircraft are really never accounted for, but when one comes down everybody's talking about it and it makes the news. The same thing applies with a strike. If a strike is called, that's big news. And as a Saskatchewan farmer, if that happens to be a strike that affects the handling of grain, or the loading of cars, or the longshoremen, or elevator agents, or whoever, then it's really big news, and it affects all the farmers and they become very perturbed.

But I think the thing that most sane farmers realize and most people talk about, when they stop to think about it – work stoppages usually take two parties and there's always two parties. I don't like a strike any more than anyone else does or any other farmer does or any other worker does. I'd like to see them settled. I'd like to see negotiations and discussion take place. This is why I sent a telegram to Ottawa urging them, both the employers and the union people, to get back at the table and discuss the issue.

But, like I said earlier, it take two to tango. And I know that when a strike is called it's usually after negotiations have broken down. Sometimes, sometimes, the employer will force a strike and will intentionally make it difficult to settle and keep people from settling so that he can have a strike. And he'll do that when there's an oversupply. We see this in the mining industry very often. You see this in production. When production grows and the shelves are full and it's time for a settlement they'll deal tougher and try and encourage the unions to walk out, so they can have a cheap way of getting down in their production. And the adverse is true. Oftentimes when workers know that a company's doing reasonably well they try and get a larger slice of the pie, and they will walk about and it'll sometimes be a one-sided affair. But usually, usually it takes two, and there's two sides to it.

I also know from personal experience that clamping down and using a heavy hand with the employees will not work. You cannot get extra work by using a larger whip. I know that from experience. I was in construction and employed 40 people in peak summer periods, and these people worked when they had a heart for work and a desire to work. And that desire can be generated if you have an employee-employer relationship that operates as a team and where there's some mutual understanding and some concern.

The Minister of Labour's record is quite different than that. He has shown, and demonstrated, by press accounts, and clippings, and stories, and acts of history, that he believes that the opposite is true. He believes that there are a class of people out in the country wearing blue collars; if you whip them hard enough and you tighten the belt enough, they'll go to work, they have to work and they'll produce or there will be somebody else taking their job. And with that one in mind, he believes that he can build a cheaper machine with less money spent for labour, and still get the machine built. Well, let me tell you, Mr. Minister, that's when your machines will fall apart out in the field, and that's when your service costs will be way, way up there, because you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink. It can't be done.

In my own experience working with employees, I never asked anybody to do anything that I wouldn't do myself. I joked about it the other days, and said that when I was watching there were usually 30, 40 guys watching, and so you sometimes like to reverse that role, but someone needs to supervise. But, there's a difference between supervising and using a whip, and what this government is demonstrating to the people of Saskatchewan, that they believe the whip works. They believe that they can get out there, and they can create a right-to-work type of situation where the union's strength, and the union's power, and the union's organizational ability is broken down, where they'll be speaking on behalf of the members of the union. And then they got the freedom to open up Saskatchewan for business, and then we'll be able to advertise like they do in Georgia, say, "Come into Saskatchewan; you can hire anybody you want for any wage you want to pay."

Well let me tell you, I've had a very interesting past three weeks, very interesting couple

of weeks, and I think a book that I would like to recommend to our Minister of Labour to read in his spare time would be *The Grapes of Wrath*. Now I don't know if he read that book or not or is familiar with it, but as a family we were very interested in it because my wife went to school and grew up with the situation that led to the writing of that book about the grape pickers and the people from Oklahoma that would go to California to pick grapes and the vicious way those people were treated to go to work. And this is the kind of atmosphere that this labour minister is trying to create in Saskatchewan.

I would suggest to those of you who are private members and back-benchers in this government, I would suggest to you to read a book like *The Grapes of Wrath*. That's the most revealing thing that I've picked up. I read it back in the early '50s when it was first written. I read it in the early '50s but when I re-read that book in the last month, it drew to my attention loud and clear what's happening and what this minister is trying to do with labour laws. And there's quite an analogy there.

I come from a rural constituency as all of you know. The majority of my constituents aren't involved in trade unions. But nevertheless when I go to executive meetings or to co-op meetings or wheat board meetings or to any group meeting at all, a significant number of people are asking, "What really are they going to do with The Trade Union Act? What is happening here in Saskatchewan?"

Here we had a province that was number one when it dealt with labour. And I can't see for the life of me why the people opposite would want the majority of Saskatchewan people to be unhappy with a situation with work because so many are working. In my riding I have unionized people working in the railway. I have unionized people in nursing homes, retail establishments, crown corporations. And in . . . The majority of them are in Coronach working at the power plant. Most of these people, Mr. Deputy Speaker, most of these people have a farm background. Very, very many of them still have their links to a rural area in Saskatchewan. They know where their heritage is. And they know what their background's all about. They also know who their rural neighbours and friends are.

And the rural people, I would suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, know the workers. They know who their SPOC employee is and they know who to phone and what time of the night to phone him if the power goes off. They know who their hospital workers are and they know who their nursing home workers are. They understand each other's problems. And they don't want to hurt each other. They want a smooth running community situation and they want to hold each other up and respect each other. They respect each other's rights and each other's needs.

And they also know one thing else, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They know that neither of them, neither the farmer or the rural person, or the rural shopkeeper or the rural store owner, and the people that work in the co-ops, and the pools, and so on – they know that they won't win. They know that they won't win if they are pitted against the person wearing the blue collar, or the person that's unionized, or the person that's employed. They know that they have common interests. They know they have common interests. They have both had the experience of knowing the value of working together – both the trade union people as well as the rural residents.

The farmers and rural people run their wheat pools, they run their co-ops, and they're involved in their community activities. Union members run their union, but they also run their co-ops, and they run their community activities. They're doing it together.

I could go down to Coronach, and I could go to a council meeting I can go to a recreation board meeting; or I can go to a church meeting. I'll see people that are sitting side by side and around the table. Some of them are union members, some of them are farmers. You don't even know which is which. You don't know which is which. Some of the farmers are working for SPC and are unionized and are both.

They also know one more thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in our society today, and especially coming out of Regina, there is a certain group of people that are attempting to encourage a rift between them. They're encouraging them to drive a wedge between and say, "Oh, those awful unions." I wonder why that is. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it may work for you for a while. You and your government may prosper. You'll get this bill through, and you'll be successful. There'll be a day when you can hold the banner up for a little while. But I want to assure you that it's only going to be for a little while. Eventually it will catch up with you, and those who would love to divide and rule, will go down the tubes.

Farm and labour people have a long, long history of working together. Our party's roots go back to that time when they were working together and established. We built Saskatchewan, built Saskatchewan's co-ops and credit unions and wheat pools by working together with labour, with farmers, with organized labour as well. They know that they have common interests – the farmers and the union people have common interests – that they can work together, they have worked together, and that both are better off if they do so.

I want to tell the Minister of Labour and his government that this strategy of yours to divide by joining the chamber of commerce and splitting up and saying, "here's this vicious union. This Trade Union Act is only going to apply to those union leaders. It's just for a small select few. It doesn't apply to all of you." "The majority of the labour people are writing into me," he says, "and are telling me they support this legislation." Well, I want to tell the minister it might work for a little while, but it's not going to work for very long, because farm and labour people know how to work together. And they know how to communicate and how to talk to each other and they know what's happening. There are hundreds of employers in this province who respect the rights of their employees and who do want to treat them right – hundreds and hundreds of them. That is not the majority of the people. Most of them do not have the record that the Minister of Labour and his company had, that he was associated with. Every member of this Assembly has a responsibility to look closely at the field of industrial relations and to understand the true nature of employer-employee relations.

Legislation in this field has gone through a number of cycles. The Trade Union Act as we now know it was passed in the fall of 1944 by the new CCF government made up mostly of farm members. It replaced the primitive structure in place prior to that time. The act served the province well for 20 years. There were industrial disputes but they were settled in a reasonable way and workers knew that their rights were recognized and respected.

Then along came 1964, and everybody knows what happened. The Thatcher Liberal government tried to turn the clock back. First they made some changes in the labour legislation, but then in 1966 they passed their infamous Bill 2, which used the iron fist to trample the rights of thousands of Saskatchewan people. I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, did it improve the industrial relations? Did that change help the average worker in Saskatchewan? Certainly not – it made it far worse. And don't forget that

from 1966 to 1971, we went through some pretty tough times when demands for improvements in union contracts were not as great.

And then in 1971, the very first time I was in this House, I was sitting in the second-last seat, the second from the end over on that side there, and we passed . . . The very first act we did was to repeal Bill 2. And you know, it was just like you'd lift a curtain. The stage was set for a new and improved industrial relations. We set the stage for a working relationship between the worker and the industry. Our record in Saskatchewan is much better than that of Canada as a whole. Even with the fact that many people can strike in Saskatchewan who do not have that right in other provinces, we still have a remarkably good record.

To illustrate, from 1975 to 1981 work days in strikes and lock-outs for non-agricultural paid workers, for Canada, for a total for seven-year average, was 0.95 days lost per week. What was Saskatchewan's average? — 0.5 — just about half, just about half as many days as that of the rest of Canada. Now the Tory government is turning the clock back. They are making the Thatcher government look like pikers. This most vicious assault against trade unions rights that are already in place, that's ever been launched in Canada — ever been launched in Canada . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It won't work. It won't work for you. You're right. It, and I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, it's going to become a millstone around the neck of this Tory government that they will be very sorry they passed.

The Tory government is paying off a handful of their business friends who know nothing but hate and greed, in contrast to tying the hands of all the people that are involved in the work-force. The only answer to this handful of their business friends is to challenge their . . . If there's a challenge to their authority you dominate the working people by using an iron fist. You'll set the province back. Instead of being open for business, you are closing it for business. Closed for progress in the trade union field.

The record of this Tory government is a dismal one. In 1982 you lost 416,000 work-days through strikes. Compare that to 1980 to 1981 when only 62,000 days were lost. In fact, Mr. Speaker, 1982 was the worst record for strikes in Saskatchewan's history — 416,000 work-days lost.

I think, and as I mentioned earlier in my remarks, sometimes a strike is just left there and nothing is done to settle it, to help out a certain situation. And the government took office. They saw all these contracts that were in place for construction of buildings all over the province; constructions of roads and all kinds of construction was there, and they just didn't have the heart those first days to shut those projects off and put them in the cooler. So they decide we'll let this strike carry on so we don't have to go ahead with this construction. A very neat and tidy deal. But you have on your mark as a government the worst record of industrial relationship in Saskatchewan's history, and, as I said, it was largely due to an industrial construction strike.

Any government that has a desire to settle could have settled that strike. Instead, your inept handling by the Minister of Labour . . . could only sit and wring his hands, and maybe . . . Maybe he was happy to see the strike go on, as I said earlier. He deliberately sat back and let it continue. Maybe he saw some political advantage for him in the future by letting it drag on and on and not using his best efforts to settle it so that he could have an excuse to introduce this kind of legislation.

The amendments to The Trade Union Act are only one part of an assault by this

government on the rights of working people, and in many instances on the rights of the lower income people. First of all, you held down the minimum wage for more than two years. Second your occupational and health safety program was cut back. You fired an outstanding director that was recognized internationally. You cut and chopped the program. Time lost to workplaces in injuries in 1982 was double the level of several years ago. And then what did the minister do? Shifted out the women's divisions, and eliminated . . . The pension branch is reduced. Now he is using his meat axe on The Trade Union Act and starting to carve it up.

For all reasons, Mr. Speaker, that I've outlined, I will be opposing Bill 104. As a farmer, I am proud to stand in my place beside the working people of Saskatchewan and fight for their rights, just as they've stood beside the farmers in the past, and fought for fair prices and for retention of the Crow rate. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: – Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I, like many other working people through the province of Saskatchewan, am deeply concerned as I rise today to participate in this debate on Bill 104, and join in the war against this very controversial bill – deeply concerned, Mr. Speaker, because what this bill does to democratic rights throughout Saskatchewan. I am deeply concerned because this unjust bill is being introduced by an unjust government which will not listen to the outraged voice, the concerns, and the thousands and thousand of Saskatchewan working people who have courageously signed their names to petitions to this Assembly – an anti-worker government that doesn't care, Mr. Speaker, an anti-workers government that does not listen.

My comments on this bill, this chamber of commerce bill, as my colleague from Regina Centre has called it, will be brief this afternoon, not because there are not as many criticisms which should be made of each of the bill's provisions, but because this is a government which obviously will not listen. It has not listened to the voices of Saskatchewan working people over the past 14 months as they have expressed their anger and their frustration at a government which is responsible for the huge increases in unemployment. It has not listened over the past months as it was urged repeatedly by working men and women not to take away their individual and collective rights. And now, Mr. Speaker, it is not listening to the more than 7,500 Saskatchewan working people who have petitioned this Assembly urging that Bill 104 be stopped.

Before commenting briefly on the dangerous anti-worker themes of this bill, Mr. Speaker. I should first like to note the increasingly close relationship which has developed in recent years between certain very progressive and far-sighted Saskatchewan unions, and the working people of native ancestry in my constituency. As all members will know, two of the most serious problems in the North are unemployment and the lack of training and education. It is these problems, which have in recent years have been addressed jointly together by certain Saskatchewan trade unions and by northern native people. Of course, no one can pretend, Mr. Speaker, that these serious problems of unemployment and training have been fully addressed here or nearly resolved. Unfortunately, this is not the case, but I certainly can assure all members that the commitment of Saskatchewan trade unionists to full employment and rapid skill development by northern native people is widely known and widely respected in northern Saskatchewan.

I should like to turn for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to one of the most fundamental issues

which has been raised by the minister in this bill and his comments on it: the issue of collective rights, the rights of a group of free men and women to act together to pursue their own lawful interests. Mr. Speaker, the minister keeps trying to pretend that workers are separate from, are somehow apart from, their own organizations which they themselves have established and maintained. To me, Mr. Speaker, that is as foolish as trying to argue, as perhaps the minister will, that an Indian band is different from, is opposed to, the individuals who compose that band. And yet that is the dangerous and sinister nonsense that the minister uses to try and justify his attacks on this bill on the rights of working people – their rights to collective actions; their rights to social solidarity; their democratic rights to the full enjoyment of freedom of association.

It seems to me that the minister's second theme, as I understand it in this bill, Mr. Speaker, or at least in his poor justification for it, is the strange theme of investor confidence. We will build more investor confidence, he claims, if we can simply convince the bankers in Montreal and in New York that the Government of Saskatchewan has taken away the democratic rights of Saskatchewan working people. It's a strange theory and a typical, twisted one, Mr. Speaker, a typical negative example of this government's open for business and anti-worker approach.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I should just like to invite the Minister of Labour and the Premier as well, if he will dare to enter this debate, to explain to this Assembly why they continue to ignore the outraged voices of more than 7,000 individual Saskatchewan workers who have petitioned this Assembly to withdraw this bill; why they refuse to listen to that common voice, that common message, from the working people whose rights are being taken away by this bill.

It is because of these issues, Mr. Speaker, and because of every unjust provision of this unjust bill that I shall most certainly be opposing the bill. With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you and turn it over to my colleagues. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: – Mr. Speaker, I want to join the debate on Bill 104. I taken the position that Bill 104 is a bad bill and ought not to be proceeded with. I take the position that it will not do things which the minister indicated in his opening remarks that it would do, and I take the position that it will bring about deleterious rather than favourable results for the people of Saskatchewan.

My colleague, the member for Regina Centre, has set out some of the history of the trade union movement and its place in our society. I want to touch for a few minutes on some history of the trade union movement in Canada, and I want to make a few comments on what trade unionism is in the spectrum of human rights, and then I want to deal rather more fully with some of the propositions put forward by the Minister of Labour when he introduced this bill.

Firstly, it is sometimes forgotten just how old the tradition of trade unionism is in this country. The first unions came to Canada in the early 1800s at the very infancy of our settlement on this northern part of North America. Now if we were to trace the history of unions in Canada, the first period down to about 1859 might be described as the period of purely local craft unions and skilled workers. But one has to note that the first international union, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, A British union, set up its first Canadian branch in Montreal as early as 1853, and that there were a few unions of

unskilled workers – ship labourers, as the longshoremen called themselves then – in St. John, New Brunswick in 1849 and in Quebec in 1857. None the less, nearly all of the unions down to 1859 were purely local without any formal ties, even with other unions in the same city or town. Nearly all of them were made up of skilled craftsmen or tradesmen such as bakers, or carpenters, or cabinet-makers, or masons, or stone-cutters, or painters, or blacksmiths, or shoemakers, or sail makers, or bakers, or tailors, or as the case may be.

The next period, from 1859 to 1880, is marked by the entry of a series of international unions, both British and American, and by the setting up of the first local central organizations – the sorts of things we now know as labour councils, and the first national central organization.

The third period was from 1881 to 1902, and it's characterized by the entry of many more international unions, by the widespread organization of the unskilled – and that's key, because heretofore more of the unions had been craft unions of skilled workers – and by the effect of the spread of the movement clear across the country from coast to coast. It was characterized also by the reorganization of the old local central bodies and the creation of many new ones, by the establishment of a permanent and national central body – what has developed through several metamorphoses in to the Canadian Labour Congress – and by the existence of a single inclusive movement which took in every possible kind of genuine labour organization. There developed here a labour movement made up of local and provincial and national and international organizations — Canadian, British, American — skilled and unskilled — one occupation or many.

The fourth phase was from 1902 to 1943, about, and is a period of consolidation of the major national central body, and of splits and attempts to create rival centres and rival movements based upon various principles. And we recall this as being a time of ferment in the trade union movement in the United States with the development, following the early Knights of Labour development, of such all-encompassing trade unions as the International Workers of the World and the OBU, the One Big Union. And in this period, up to World War II in Canada, up to a period just before that in the United States, there was a great deal of ferment, a great deal of development, but also a great number of rival movements.

I speak now of Canada, and I pick 1943 as a focal date because that is the time when we began to develop in Canada a legislative structure for unions similar to that which developed in the United States seven or eight years earlier. Out of the Roosevelt New Deal, out of the ferment, which came about because of widespread unemployment, the activities of the Committee of Industrial organization under John L. Lewis and others, there developed a desire for a legislative framework which was introduced under the name of the Wagner Act. And in some sense of the word, we brought the Wagner Act to Canada at least for unions under federal jurisdiction, by the passage of an order in council during wartime that set the framework for industrial relations in Canada – the well-known PC-1003 which was passed in, I believe, 1943.

Following that, at the close of the war, it was clear that federal jurisdiction with respect to trade unions would not be as widespread since the jurisdiction was asserted under wartime legislation which would lapse in peacetime. There developed a series of provincial statutes. The Saskatchewan one was actually passed during the war in 1944; the federal government replaced its PC-1003 with a statute in approximately

1948; and a number of other provinces set up a legislative framework during this period. They were all, broadly speaking, patterned on the PC-1003, which in turn was patterned on the United States Wagner Act. And, as a result, trade unionism, in its legal sense, developed in Canada on a good deal different basis than in the United Kingdom and quite similar to that in the United States.

I pick the end of that era of 1956 as the time when the two major labour organizations were still operating in Canada: the CCL, the Canadian Congress of Labour, and the TLC, the Trades and Labour Congress. And in 1956 they amalgamated into the Canadian Labour Congress, and there came a new era in trade unionism in Canada.

A reading of the history of unions in Canada, even a century ago, makes clear that although there have been changes in the structure of unionism in Canada, a great number of things have not changed in their fundamentals. It's really surprising the number of things that have not changed. If you go back a century, you will find that the unions were often fighting for the same things they're fighting for now, and wielding the same weapons, and using the same weapons, and using the same arguments. Governments were so often acting or not acting for precisely the same reasons, or lack of reasons, that motivates them today.

Now, acknowledging the vast difference in circumstances, the similarities are more numerous, more striking, and more important. In particular, there was no golden age when unions were unnecessary because employers and economic circumstances were so benevolent. There was no golden age when such unions as there were, were so moderate and so responsible that they didn't ever think of striking. There was no golden age when the union demands were generally recognized by all as reasonable and justified. There was no golden age when employers were always rational and gentlemanly in their dealings with their employees, or when the employees and unions were always, in the eyes of the public, reasonable and rational and moderate. Those days have never existed. So when anyone suggests that we should go back to a time when there was less controversy, they'd better point out the particular decade when that existed, because it's inordinately difficult to find any historical evidence that such a decade ever existed. So when anyone suggests that we would go back to a time when there was less controversy, they'd better point out the particular decade when that existed, because it's inordinately difficult to find any historical evidence that such a decade ever existed. The world of the 19th century and the early 20th was in many respects basically the same as the world today when it comes to controversy between unions and management.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I indicated that I would touch a bit on the history of trade unionism in Canada. I don't want to embark upon any more extensive review of that. Rather, I want to turn to the bill and to the remarks made by the minister in introducing the bill, and more particularly, some of the justifications advanced by the minister as evidence that the bill would be prudent and helpful for labour relations in Saskatchewan.

The minister offered, in support of the bill, a number of general arguments and several specific ones. Among the general arguments were these: one, that the bill would improve labour-management relations in the province; two, that the bill would bring Saskatchewan into the mainstream of legislation across the country; and three, that the bill would restore industrial confidence.

May I touch on each of those, Mr. Speaker, one by one? First, let me turn to the question of improving labour-management relations in Saskatchewan. The minister wishes the public to believe that labour-management relations in Saskatchewan were bad, and

that, in particular, they were worse than in many other provinces in Canada. Now, that is not true. The minister cannot mount any evidence for that unless he is very, very careful in the years he selects. If he takes any 10-year period, he will be found to be wrong. He will be found to be wrong. If the government says that it's determined to improve labour-management relations in this province, and with that we stand in agreement. I want to review the state of labour-management relations in Saskatchewan for the seven-year period from 1975 to 1981, and I indicate that in advance that there's nothing magic about the seven-year period. I could have gone back 10 or more. I thought that was an appropriate number, and as some of my colleagues have pointed out, during that seven-year period the number of days lost because of strikes and lock-outs in this province was approximately half the Canadian average.

Now that is too many days, but it's certainly not a record of which we need to be ashamed. It is better record than that of British Columbia, or Ontario, Or Quebec, or Newfoundland. It is approximately the same as Nova Scotia. It's better than New Brunswick. It is about half the Canadian average. Now that suggests that we haven't been doing all that bad in Saskatchewan with respect to labour relations. And I want to point out that I'm talking about the non-agriculture labour force. I could have rigged the figures by adding in the agricultural labour force, where there are virtually no strikes, and provide that we had an even better record. That's not what I have done. I have taken the non-agricultural labour force and I have shown from figures from Statistics Canada and from labour Canada that we have a record which is well above the Canadian average. Our record of labour peace, of labour tranquillity, is better than most provinces in Canada.

Now let's ask ourselves whether the number of days lost in any absolute sense is a large number. Well, I suppose we would all agree that any days lost from strikes and lock-outs are regrettable, but I want to point out that the number of days lost because of strikes and lock-outs is relatively small compared with injuries in the workplace, compared with other sickness and accident, and it is absolutely miniscule compared with the number of days lost because of unemployment.

I'll pick a few years and compare them. You would have to pick the worst year, the worst year that we have had for lost time days for strikes and lock-outs of the decade up to 1981 before the number of days lost would come to as much as 65 per cent of the time lost from injuries in the workplace. And if you talk about unemployment and you choose the worst year for strikes and lock-outs, it's about 9 per cent of what we lost through unemployment. But if I take another year, a better year, admittedly — let's take 1981 — we find that the number of days lost because of injuries at the workplace was 10 times the number lost through strikes or lock-outs. The number of days we lost because of other sickness and accident was 25 times the days we lost through strikes and lock-outs, and the number of days lost through unemployment was 70 times the number of days lost — 70, 7-0 times lost because of strikes and lock-outs. Now those are pretty impressive figures.

And if the members opposite or the minister is interested in being sure that our labour force is fully productive, he might turn his attention to reducing this figure of 70 times (and I'm using the 1981 figures), 70 times the loss that we suffered through strikes and lock-outs; or he might try to reduce the figure of 25 times that we suffered because of sickness and accident of the ordinary variety; or the 10 times that we suffered because of losses in the workplace for which compensation was paid. Now those indicate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that while strikes and lock-outs are a serious matter, they are not the major cause or even one of the major causes of losses in productivity of our overall

provincial work-force.

And if the minister is to be sincere in addressing in this House and calling upon us to take steps to reduce lost time because of work stoppages. I call upon him to be equally sincere in doing what he can to reduce injuries in the workplace or doing what he can to reduce lost time because of sickness and accident, and more particularly, through unemployment. The 1982 figures are even more spectacular with respect to unemployment. But I will not pursue those because I'm not using 1982 figures in my comparisons; 1982 was under the jurisdiction of members opposite. I ask them to take responsibility for what they brought to this province. I am using the figures from 1975 to 1981.

It is clear therefore, Mr. Speaker, that compared with the record in other provinces, compared with the overall average for Canada, we do not have a bad record of days lost because of strikers and lock-outs; and compared with workplace injuries, other sickness and accident absences and unemployment, the time lost because of strikes and lock-outs is very small indeed. This is not to suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we should ignore them. This is not what I am suggesting, but I am suggesting that any government which uses the argument that we need to limit the number of strikes and lock-outs because it is seriously injuring the productive capacity of our province should, in fairness, address the issues of how they are going to reduce the drain on our productive capacity arising from injuries in the workplace, other sickness, and unemployment.

And to touch on only one point. This government is not addressing itself to injuries in the workplace. There is every evidence that it is not pursuing occupational health and safety with the same vigour as the previous government. This is clear from the fact they have cut staff. It is clear from the fact that they have dismantled some of the apparatus on which occupation health and safety efforts were based. It is clear that when we have a government which has dismantled the environmental board of Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan which was, as all members will know, a board which was an effort by union and management together to make the workplace both more pleasant and more safe, and when we see that dismantled by this government, we know that its first priority is not worker safety; and we know that any government whose first priority is not worker safety is going to see the lost-time accidents in the workplace increased rather than decreased.

There are many other evidences of that. The sorry tale of Baker Electric, which the minister will know about, is yet another example of that. When a worker was killed at a factory in Regina, and the employer was convicted of not taking proper steps to protect his employee, and that conviction was set aside on technical grounds, and the government then had to decide whether or not it was going to have the matter proceed through the courts again and have it dealt with on the merits, this government opposite said no. They will not proceed with that prosecution, notwithstanding the fact that on the merits of the company was convicted and a man lost his life. The government decided not to proceed with the prosecution. Now that sent a signal out to employers saying that occupational health and safety was not priority number one with this government.

Some hon. members are asking whether we are condoning the action of employers in instances such as the Baker Electric case. And I am saying that no other logical conclusion can be drawn from the actions taken by the government, because certainly no reason was given for not proceeding with the prosecution, and nobody suggests – nobody can suggest – that the setting aside of the first conviction had anything to do with the merits of the case.

I don't want, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be led off on a question of occupational health and safety. I think it's relevant to the bill, but I want to return now to the matter of the bill itself, and to whether or not the bill will improve labour-management relations in this province. I want to ask the minister whether or not he has convinced trade unionists and individual employees that this will be the effect of the bill. And I think not, because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have received a good number of communications. It will be known that petitions with 7,000 or 8,000 names have been signed. They certainly have not been convinced of the merits of this bill. I have received a good number of communications, and I have received only one — only one communication — which indicated that the sender was in favour of the bill. And I've received a goodly number from people who said they were not in favour of the bill.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that all members of the Assembly have received some letters and some briefs. Some members opposite are pretending that individual workers are in support of this anti-democratic legislation. Most of them admit that they have not received a single call from any one of these workmen who are supposed to be supporting it. Most of them are admitting that and they're saying it from their seats now. Not at all; we are asked to believe that the minister has been inundated with complimentary messages saying that ordinary working people want this legislation and I have around me all manner of members say, "I didn't one call, one call saying that they liked the legislation." Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have received some letters and I want to advise the House on some of these. I'd like to read, Mr. Speaker, some of the letters which I have received and I will not burden the House with a large number of letters and I will just deal with the content of four or five. One reads as follows:

I'm writing to request that you speak in the legislature against Bill 104. The passage of this bill would have a severe and negative impact on all workers in Saskatchewan and on all gains working people have made through their unions. Encompassed in this proposed legislation are sections that give non-union members rights on union action and union business and has provision for employers to supervise strike votes. Two, it will allow employers to discuss directly with individual employees matters relating to collective bargaining and even the employees own intentions regarding joining a union. These provisions, among others, show bill 104 is to be clear attempt to disempower Saskatchewan unions.

That's not a happy phrase but that's the one the worker used. To reduce the power of Saskatchewan unions, I think, is what this person is trying to say.

I oppose this bill and ask you to speak against it on my behalf.

Another letter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, reads as follows, in part:

I feel that anyone who understands the purpose of trade unionism would see the reasons as obvious that you should oppose this bill. To me, it would make a mockery of the purpose of collective bargaining and the beliefs that our unions have fought to uphold. Therefore I trust that you will be the voice of the people who need and want to be heard.

A third one:

I am writing to request that you speak against Bill 104. I feel that this bill is a

travesty and tremendous assault on the trade union movement in Saskatchewan. The total dismemberment of unions as represented by Bill 104 must not be allowed to happen. Therefore I would like you to voice this protest on my behalf as a worker, a union member, and a citizen of this province.

And a fourth one:

Bill 104 is a devastating attack on the conditions of working people. If this bill is passed I fear that the elitists of our society could easily cause a regression to occur that might take us back to the early 1900s. I want no part in supporting such an attack by remaining silent. I ask that you speak out against it in the legislature on my behalf.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could read other letters, but those are a sample of what we have been receiving. There have been other communications from trade unions and I want to refer to some of those, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I have a telegram from the Saskatoon Fire Fighters, reading as follows:

Saskatoon Professional Fire Fighters Union deplores the enactment of Bill 104, which is aimed at destroying the rights of workers and their unions in Saskatchewan. (Signed by president, T. O'Grady, and secretary, Jim Wood.)

I have another one, and this one is from the Communication Workers of Canada, and it reads as follows:

Whereas the Saskatchewan Trade Union Act since 1944 has been an example of one of the most progressive pieces of legislation governing labour unions in North America; and whereas amendments are being introduced today which will reduce the Saskatchewan act to one of the most regressive acts in the country; therefore be it resolved that this convention go on record as condemning this attack on the labour movement by the Saskatchewan government.

This was passed by the Communication Workers of Canada annual convention on June 3.

I have another one from OPEIU, the Office and Professional Employees' International Union, and they have, oh, I would think, more than 1,000 members in this province. I will read what their resolution has said. I will read only part of it in order to save the time of the House:

Whereas the labour legislation of Saskatchewan has long been upheld as among the most progressive in North America; and whereas office workers are amongst those most drastically affected by reason of a proposed exclusion of large numbers of senior positions from white-collar bargaining units; and whereas this regressive labour legislation can only be considered union-busting at its worst; therefore be it resolved that this 16th triennial convention of the OPEIU go on record as condemning this reactionary legislation in the strongest possible terms, and press for its immediate withdrawal.

Now those are three that I had received. I acknowledge that these come from unions, but I point out to hon. members that I also read some letters from what appear to me to be ordinary working people who expressed their opposition to the legislation, sometimes in somewhat ungrammatical language, but none the less in language which made it perfectly clear what their intentions were, and what they wanted us to do in this legislation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the minister says that he has evidence that ordinary working people want this bill. I can only implore him to let this House have this evidence. He introduced this bill on second reading and he didn't tell us what this evidence was. When he closes this debate on second reading, I am going to ask him to put his evidence forward so we may examine it when we review this bill in committee of the whole. And if he doesn't put forward his evidence, but simply asserts that he has it and he's going to keep it close to his vest, then I think we're entitled to believe that such evidence does not exist.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: – Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am encouraged to believe that, that this evidence does not exist, because I haven't found another member other than the Minister of Labour who admits that he got any correspondence on this from any single working person who spoke either for or against the bill. They really can hardly expect us to believe that they have this flood of letters from people who support the bill, but they won't mention any of that in this House, but they have not received any letters from anybody who opposed the bill. I find that a difficult thing to be asked to believe, and it would make it far more believable if the minister would come forward and lay evidence on the table so that we might know on what he is making his judgements.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to move on to my next point. Another point made by the minister in support of this bill was that it would bring our legislation into the mainstream of labour legislation in Canada. That is what he said, and that is what he did not provide in his remarks, and he did not prove it because it isn't true. And I want to. . . In the course of proving that it isn't true, I want to take some portions of this bill and ask people: where did this one come from? Where is there a comparable provision in any labour legislation in Canada or in the mainstream, to use the minister's words? And in order that my evidence may not be thought to be too biased, I'm going to base my argument on the "Background Notes to the Proposed Trade Union Act: put out by the minister and his staff.

Now I am sure he will not say that these are in error. I would in some circumstances. They certainly are, but they are not in error with respect to their interprovincial comparisons in some areas.

The minister very considerably overstates his case when he says that all, or most, of the provisions of Bill 104 are to be found in the mainstream of labour legislation in Canada. It is simply not true. Some provisions are next to impossible to compare without having a detailed legal analysis, and we may pursue some of those in committee, but it cannot satisfactorily be done on second reading.

But I want to refer to some of the main changes and ask the minister: where is his mainstream? I won't deal with the definition of "employee," because I simply cannot do that without laying out seven or eight acts and ask people to compare them. But I ask

the minister to tell me where there is legislation dealing with his provision for what he calls, "fair representation." He will find that in British Columbia, and in no other act. Now he's calling British Columbia a mainstream, and all the other acts are backwater.

Now, he's got a provision about "natural justice," and I say that he can't find that in any other act; not any, so the mainstream in Saskatchewan, and all the others are the backwater. "Notice of union meetings" not in any other act. He is saying that, not when Saskatchewan enacts that, it will be the mainstream and all the rest will be the backwater. That is his argument.

Now look, let's move along. Let's move along and his build-up provisions. I ask: in what other legislation in Canada are those here? And I say they're not there. And whether they're good or bad, they're not part of the mainstream of labour legislation in Canada . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker, members opposite and members behind are wishing to argue now the merits of it and they don't want to argue the minister's case that they're the same labour legislation as elsewhere in Canada. And if I had their case, I wouldn't want to argue it either. Let's take this provisions that there can't be an application for certification without a six-months gap by the same union. I say that does not exist in any other province in Canada – not one. Two other provinces have 90-day provisions and no other province has any provisions. Now how does that make us the mainstream? We're the absolute extreme. We're the absolute extreme.

All right. Let's move on to the provisions which provide that vote can be requested if there are 25 per cent sign-up, the so-called trigger clause. He is removing the trigger clause and I say every other act in Canada has as trigger clause, and when we remove ourselves from the mainstream of labour legislation in Canada.

Let's move along. Let's move along to supervised strike votes, a very key part. And he has left the impression that all the other provinces in Canada have supervised strike votes. Well, and he's got a supervised strike vote on the request of one party. Where does that exist elsewhere in Canada? It exists elsewhere in Canada in Alberta. Now the other nine provinces and the federal legislation does not have it. So in this case Alberta is the mainstream and all the rest are the backwaters. See, it is simply not true that this legislation has been drafted or taken from legislation elsewhere in Canada.

I could go on, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll just refer to the provision which says that after 30 days the employer can call for a vote of people who were on strike. I ask the minister, when he closes this debate, to tell me in what other jurisdiction in Canada such a provision exists. Because I challenge him to find one. He could have found one in Saskatchewan in the days of Ross Thatcher. But that's the only one in Saskatchewan in the days of Ross Thatcher. But that's the only one. And it is gone and no other province has adopted it. And so when he says this puts us in the mainstream, what he is saying is that it makes Saskatchewan legislation different from every other province in Canada.

So that on the basis of the minister's own evidence, his argument that we are putting Saskatchewan into the mainstream of legislation is not true. And if he doubts my arguments, I invited him to say so. I invited him to say so when he closes this debate. I am not asserting that every provision that he includes is absent from other provinces. A couple of them are making us more comparable with other provinces. But of the 18, I would think 13 or 14 are not mainstream provisions – are not to be found in five or

more, or four or more laws in Canada. And so therefore he is simply not telling the truth. He is simply not telling the truth when he says that it brings the Saskatchewan act into the mainstream of legislation across the country.

Let me know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, turn to his next argument. His next argument was that this bill would restore investor confidence. That was his argument. Well, we would certainly all like to see your investor confidence restored. There's no question of that. But when we say restored. There's no question of that. But when we say restored, we mean put back to the high level of investor confidence which was there prior to the election of the government opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: -- Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: – Members opposite can laugh, members opposite can laugh, but they certainly can't argue. They certainly can't argue, because they've got not evidence. Let me give them a few figures. See if they can laugh off a few of these figures: investment in Saskatchewan in the nine years between 1973 and 1981 increased at the rate of 19 per cent per year. If you want to take it 1971 to 1981, it was about 15 per cent per year. Now, I want you to listen to that one – an increase of 15 per cent – somewhere between 14 and 15 per cent per year – of investment.

All right. We then ask what labour legislation was in place, I tell you the labour legislation which is now sought to be amended and changed drastically was in place during all those years when investment was increasing at the rate of 15 per cent per year.

We'll go back to the period from 1951 to 1964. It's a long time ago, but it was a similar piece of legislation to what is now on the books. What happened to investment during those years? It increased at the rate of 8 per cent per year. All right.

Now I want to take you to the years 1964 to 1971. The member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden will remember those years. I want to refer hon. members to those seven years – those long, lean gaunt years – when we had legislation something like is now being proposed. Do you know what happened to investment during those years? Well, it declined at the rate of 6 per cent per annum, that's what happened.

During 1951 to 1964, the labour legislation was similar to the act, which is now on the statute books, and investment went up. Between 1971 and 1981, the legislation was what is now on the statute books and investment went up, and went up sharply.

Between 1964 and 1971, the labour legislation on the statute books was what these people want to put on the statute books, and investment went down; it went down 6 per cent per annum.

Now, what I want the minister to outline is just how this labour legislation is going to improve investor confidence. We've been all through this before. We've had our open for business bit. We've had our "bash labour" during the days of Ross Thatcher and it did not increase investor confidence. It did not bring in money. It did not bring in jobs, and in fact the population of Saskatchewan went down faster than at any time in the peaceful time history of this province.

Well let us face those hard facts which can't be laughed off. Members opposite wish they could laugh these facts off, but they cannot. The decade of the 1970s were a

decade of rapid investment in Saskatchewan. No one can argue that investment money did not come to this province. It did. Members may argue that it was in spite of the labour legislation, but I wish they'd bring their evidence to support their arguments. I would wish that they would not simply assert that somehow labour legislation held back development, and they would bring in the arguments on which they base their assertions. And I challenge them to do that, and I say they can't do it because the evidence is not there – there is not a shred of evidence that this labour legislation which we not have on the books inhibited investment in this province. All the evidence, such as there is, is that the investment proceeding apace when this legislation was on the books, and it did not proceed apace when legislation such as they're now proposing was on the books.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.