

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Thursday, December 8, 1983

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.
Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS
WELCOME TO STUDENTS

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take this special opportunity to introduce to you, and to all members of the Assembly this afternoon, a very large group of 62 students who are sitting in the Speaker's gallery, visiting us today with their teachers from McLurg School, that is in my constituency. They are accompanied by Mr. Larry Howlett, Cam Clark, and Cathy Leugner.

I think we should welcome them all here today and commend them for the fine interest that McLurg School and the teachers and students there have demonstrated in the legislative process by attending here this afternoon. I'll be visiting with them for pictures and refreshments shortly after question period. So would you join with me in welcoming them this afternoon?

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST

MR. THOMPSON: — I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce through you, and to the House, the member of parliament for Meadow Lake-The Battlefords, Mr. Doug Anguish, who is seated behind the rail. He's in Regina today doing press releases on the throne speech that came down in Ottawa yesterday, and I would like all members to welcome him here today.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Reverse Decisions on Third World Aid and Selling South African Wines

MR. KOSKIE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture, I would like to direct the question to the Deputy Premier. And it has to do with the 35th anniversary of the proclamation of the universal declaration of human rights by the United Nations, which this legislature will mark later this day.

As you will be aware, Mr. Minister, the Wynyard ministerial association has launched a 28-day fast to protest world poverty and to emphasize their opposition to two decisions of your government, namely, your decision to cut the aid to church groups working in Third World, and also your decision to allow the government liquor stores to sell South African wines. I ask you: will your government mark on this important day by reversing the decision of these rather unfortunate decisions, cutting international aid, and allowing the sale of alcoholic beverages from South Africa.

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Premier and in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture, the minister responsible for the program that . . . at least one of the programs that the hon. member has alluded to, I will turn the question over to my learned colleague, the Attorney General.

HON. MR. LANE: — I'd like to respond to the hon. member and indicate, firstly, that the government has made it quite clear to those involved in the matching grants programs that we were prepared to consider full funding, providing the funding goes to direct aid to third-world

countries. We made it quite clear that we do not see the need, as the previous administration, for \$500,000 or 25 per cent of the total funding coming back into the province of Saskatchewan for Saskatchewan people. And that can be argued as to whether it was to be politically funding or taking a message or whatever. Our view was that the funds should go to direct aid to the third-world countries.

Secondly, we made it quite clear that our view of direct aid were matters of health, agriculture, food production. That offer was made some considerable time ago by this government. So far, what has happened is that those involved in the matching grants program decided to take the funding that was there, divert it, contrary to our requests, here to the local – in the province of Saskatchewan. The offer still stands. We have a different view than the previous administration. We do not believe in funding, political activities. We want it to go to food production, health, and things of that nature.

MR. KOSKIE: — I'd like to direct a supplemental, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Justice, in the absence of the Premier and the absence of the Minister of Agriculture and the reluctance of the Deputy Premier to answer.

Mr. Minister of Justice, you have outlined so-called your acceptable criteria. But even in view of going with your acceptable criteria, can you advise this legislature why, then, you found it necessary to cut back the funds from \$2.085 million in 1982-83 to \$1 million in '83-84?

HON. MR. LANE: — We've debated this on numerous occasions, and the member might as well have been absent for the amount of attention he was paying to the debate. But, in fact, if you look at the funding, if you eliminate from that \$2 million approximately \$500,000 which was directed to . . . (inaudible) . . . here in the province of Saskatchewan, and another . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . well, between the two, \$500,000, if you would listen. Well, you should pay attention.

There was approximately \$500,000 that went here within the province of Saskatchewan. Now you obviously are not aware of the program, or you wouldn't make a statement like that, but approximately \$500,000 came back into the province of Saskatchewan. We will freely admit that there has been a reduction to third-world countries of approximately \$500,000. We have indicated how we would encourage these organizations to direct their funding, and it is to immediate problems – direct aid, as we call it – in terms of health, health promotion, food production, shelter – direct benefits. It is not up to us, as a government, to encourage people to impose their political solution on other countries.

And I may respond to the question of South African wines. It is interesting that the members opposite choose one country that allegedly breaches the human rights covenants. In fact, many, many countries have been charged with breaching the human rights covenants of the United Nations. We trade with them. We trade with Russia. We trade with some of these other countries that have been challenged on the breaches of the human rights covenants. The difficult question of course is: do we stop them all, or do we continue to separate, as a government, the question of a moral position from a trade position? If you are equating that they can't be divided, then you are in, in fact, telling the farmers of Saskatchewan to no longer trade with Russia, to no longer sell wheat grains to Russia; because that is a direct correlation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Cutback of Government Funding to Church Groups

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Minister of Justice. I have here an open letter to the Saskatchewan Premier, and this was directed from the Wynyard Ministerial Association, and that encompasses the Catholic Church, the Ukrainian Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, and the Anglican Church. And part of what they say in this open letter to the

Premier is, and I'll read as follows:

We are, in fact, giving support to the efforts of Christian leaders who have already petitioned your government to stop cutting back needed church and non-government aid for poor by 50 per cent reductions to the SCIC matching grants, and who have condemned the support given to the apartheid society, through the sale of South African wine.

I want to say that I direct a question to the Minister of Justice. In view of the fact that here are leading members of the church group who have indeed gone on fast to protest, I want to ask you what justification have you in cutting back by a million dollars the funding to the church groups to assist the poor of the world?

HON. MR. LANE: — This government — and I reiterate — this government has made it clear that we are prepared . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I intend to send it out. You won't have to. Let me assure you I'm prepared to send this out.

We are prepared to commit to the funding; and we have indicated to those groups responsible that we are prepared to reconsider total the amount of funding, provided we begin to get the assurance that the funds are not used to establish a form of political rule in countries of which it's bluntly none of our business. We may not support the type of government, but surely that should be the choice of the people in there, not being imposed by the Government of Saskatchewan or the Government of Canada. We have made that commitment. We're prepared to do it.

There is a difference, obviously. You would prefer the funds to go for political involvement. We suggest to you that we are prepared to consider the funding again, providing it goes to direct aid, and that is health, shelter, food production. And those are the direction that we would prefer it to go. It's that simple. We have not yet had a response. We did not see any great value in terms of direct aid to the third countries, when nearly half a million dollars is being spent within the province of Saskatchewan. So why are we spending moneys for starving peoples in the province of Saskatchewan under our matching grants program?

I think it's a question that the hon. member hasn't addressed. The offer still stands. I'm prepared to make the offer to the groups that have written to you, and we're prepared to make it to the church groups and affected groups in the province, that that's our position on it. We made it clear before. So far we haven't had the response.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister of Justice whether or not he considers education and training programs for the Third World, put forward by church groups in Saskatchewan, as subversively political, so that he cannot see his way clear to support them.

HON. MR. LANE: — No. We went through the debate, and we listed a year ago some of the activities that were embarked upon that were questionable, in our view. And there is little doubt that Canadians in some foreign countries have been more concerned about overthrowing the existing political structure than they have been about solving, and feeding starving peoples. And I'm suggesting to you that with the criteria that we have established, we are comfortable; and I believe the people of Saskatchewan are comfortable with the criteria that we have suggested.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister of Justice saying that his government declines to fund technical training in third-world countries where this is suggested by church groups, on the grounds that this may somehow overthrow the government?

HON. MR. LANE: — When we went through the list of the programs a year ago, technical training was included, and we indicated support for that.

Extra Billing by Specialists

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, I took notice a few days ago of a question by the member who is squawking, the member from Shaunavon, and he asked the following. It was regarding to extra billing by specialists. He said:

How many of those people, how many percentage points of those people direct or extra bill?

Mr. Speaker, I have the information I would like to share with the member today; and the information is that 4.3 per cent of the specialists in Saskatchewan direct bill.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I would like the minister, in light of the fact that he said 4.3 of specialists, to define what he means by specialists, in the context of that answer.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I would think, although it may be unbeknown to the member opposite, that most people in Saskatchewan realize that a medical specialist is someone that has taken advanced training in a specialty, and is practising in that. That, to me, would seem to be the answer.

However, seeing the member is so interested, Mr. Speaker, I would like to give a little history of the billing by specialists, because it seems to be quite a concern. And with your agreement, I would like to just review the extra-billing record from 1983 to 1979.

In 1983, Mr. Speaker, 4.3 per cent. In 1982, 5.9. In 1981, 5.1. In 1980, 6 per cent. And in 1979, 7.3 per cent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Report of the Consumers' Association of Canada

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Consumer Affairs. It has to do with the report of the Consumers' Association of Canada. And the minister would be aware that the consumers' association takes a monthly survey of food prices in Regina, Saskatoon, and Weyburn. And their latest survey finds that food prices at the retail stores, the average food prices, have gone up some 17 per cent higher in Regina than they are in Saskatoon.

My question to the minister is: have you instructed your officials to check and find out why the retail food prices in Regina would be that much higher than they are in Moose Jaw?

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Speaker, in response to the member's question, I would first like to thank, on behalf of all consumers in the province, the efforts of the CAC (Consumers' Association of Canada), Saskatchewan branch, in conducting these food basket surveys.

Perhaps the member is not aware that in Saskatoon the situation is much different than that of Regina. We have what appears to be a price war — a rather large grocery store trying to establish a market in Saskatoon. Therefore, the price comparison between the products bought at that store as to another store in either Saskatoon or Regina really cannot be compared.

But that is the main difference. There appears to be a price war going on with this major chain in Saskatoon.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — New question, Mr. Speaker. What the minister is saying is that there is more competition in Saskatoon than there is in Regina. Could the minister inform this House what percentage of the retail food market in Regina is controlled by Canada Safeway?

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — I think it's about 46 per cent. I would bring the answer back to the member, but that's the figure that runs in my head — in the area of about 46 per cent.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Supplementary. Does the minister not believe that the fact that one chain controls virtually half of the food market, does the minister not believe that that may be a very significant factor in the lack of competition in the Regina food market?

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — No, it isn't. Because I might advise the member that in compiling the figures, the CAC did not include, in the Regina price area, the Regina food basket chain which is . . . or the Safeway Food Barn. They didn't shop at that particular store.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — With respect to the prices charged by Safeway in Saskatoon and Regina, I'm sure the minister has examined that list and noted that . . . I will read the Regina and the Saskatoon figures — the Regina figure first, and Saskatoon second: bananas, 86 to 71; apples 150 to 93; grapefruit, 99 to 52; potatoes, 229 to 157; carrots, 69 to 53; cucumbers, 47 to 38. Now this is the same chain in the same province — very significantly lower prices in Saskatoon than in Regina. Has the minister examined into this, and can she give any indication of the results of the examination by her staff?

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — I might reiterate. The CAC conducts the food basket price-gathering survey. Now, we have no way of knowing whether those particular grapefruits you are talking about that were purchased in Saskatoon at 52 cents, whether they were purchased at the one major store which is trying to come into the market-place, and at which store it was purchased in Regina. As I indicated earlier, the Safeway Food Barn that is here in Regina was not included as one of the stores where things were purchased. And I think it's a little difficult to make a clear comparison.

But, I must say, I think that it's very important that the CAC continue with these type of food basket surveys, because when a consumer advocacy group such as this publishes those type of figures, I think that has probably more impact on the direction of consumers than anything else. It makes consumers extremely aware of the importance of shopping around and buying where they can save the most money. And I think that's probably the positive part of publishing of *Food Basket* for the province.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The figures I was giving were Safeway in each case, according to the CAC. My question to the minister is this: will she inquire into these startling differences in Safeway prices in Saskatoon and Regina, and have her staff report to her, and she report to the House on what the explanation is for these startling differences?

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — It's difficult, because also, Mr. Speaker, we don't know whether that particular product was specialed in that store, as opposed to being specialed in store B. And it's very difficult for us to make that type of investigation.

Canada Safety Contribution to Sask Conservative Party

MR. SHILLINGTON: — New question. The minister is going out of her way to avoid any inquiry into the practices of Canada Safeway. Does that have anything to do with the \$12,000 which Canada Safeway contributed to the Saskatchewan Conservative Party in the last election?

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — The member might not be aware, but the purchase of Dominion Stores by Safeway had nothing to do with this government. That comes under the federal department. I believe that there was some very stringent, some very stringent conditions put on the sale, from what I understand, and I can't divulge those. They are confidential. But the decision to allow Safeway to buy Dominion Stores was made at the federal level and not the provincial level.

Unemployment in Northern Saskatchewan

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan.

Can the minister confirm that the final nail in the coffin for DNS will come this December 31st, and can he tell this House how many jobs in northern Saskatchewan have been lost as a result of the realignment?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Well, I certainly don't . . . The events that will be happening very soon, Mr. Speaker, should come as no surprise to any member in this House or as no surprise to any citizen in this province, when we announced, I think it was almost a year and a half ago now, that the Department of Northern Saskatchewan that people had been used to, that method of administering government services in northern Saskatchewan would no longer exist under our government. Yes, that's true. The Department of Northern Saskatchewan is being phased out, but it's not really new news, Mr. Speaker. It's been announced, I think, a year and a half ago.

MR. YEW: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister should know that the latest figures show that unemployment in northern Saskatchewan has jumped 43 per cent in the past 12 months. So I wonder if the minister can substantiate that the dismantling of DNS, the realignment of DNS, has been beneficial for people living in northern Saskatchewan.

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the realignment of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, there is no question in my mind that it's been beneficial to the people of northern Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. There's no question that that move by this government, in terms of the way in which the government programs will be administered to that northern half of the province, is beneficial to this province. There's no question about that in my mind.

As far as the unemployment statistics and the contribution of the realignment of northern Saskatchewan to unemployment, yes, Mr. Speaker, there are some people who once worked for northern Saskatchewan who no longer work for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, who no longer work for the Government of Saskatchewan. It may well be the case that there are some people who now work for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan won't work for the Government of Saskatchewan once realignment is completed. That may well be the case.

But certainly it's a benefit. This move is a benefit to the people of the province, and we make no apology for it, Mr. Speaker.

Decline of Services in Northern Saskatchewan

MR. YEW: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question. And for the record, for the minister's information: since the realignment process started, we have had unemployment skyrocketing in northern Saskatchewan from the 43 per cent that I have mentioned up to 95 per cent. Welfare reliance has increased 20 per cent. The minister will know, as well, that services in the northern administration district have declined. Programs have been cut. How can you substantiate your position that this is a beneficial move on the part of northern Saskatchewan when, in fact, it isn't?

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, this appears to be quite obviously a point of some debate. But I would say to the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, the unemployment statistics . . . Unemployment in northern Saskatchewan . . . Unemployment is in fact, Mr. Member of the legislature, is a serious problem in northern Canada; in northern Canada — northern Saskatchewan, Labrador, northern Ontario.

The problem is a training gap between the jobs available and the training of the people there. This government has addressed the problem of training. We've addressed it through my

colleague, the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. We have committed a great deal of money to training of people in this province, including people in northern Saskatchewan. That is their long-term solution to unemployment in northern Saskatchewan as it is in all parts of this country, but certainly in all parts of northern Canada.

As it relates to services in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that member says that services have declined. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that services have not declined in the northern part of the province, as they have not declined in any part of this province. Health services, social services – all of those services provided by this government to people in Saskatchewan – continue, and in fact they're being provided in a better way now that duplication is out of the way in northern Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 22 – An Act to provide for the Postponement of the Tabling of Certain documents

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill to provide for the postponement of the tabling of certain documents.

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

Bill No. 23 – An Act to amend The Vehicles Act, 1983

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, my seat-mate, I move first reading of a bill to amend The Vehicles Act, 1983.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 35th Anniversary

HON. MR. LANE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Saturday is the 35th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Thirty-five years ago, in 1948, this declaration was passed as a resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations. It is an internationally recognized statement of the fundamental principles necessary for world peace and for the protection of individual freedoms.

Celebrations are taking place across Canada this week to commemorate this anniversary. In Saskatchewan, December 4 to 10 was proclaimed Human Rights Week, and December 10 in particular has been proclaimed Human Rights Day.

Throughout this week, a variety of activities has occurred in commemoration of the anniversary. Our Saskatchewan Human Rights commission has publicized the event by distributing information materials to the schools, the media, and the general public. A number of public panels and forums have been sponsored by public and private groups in Regina and Saskatoon to discuss current domestic and international rights issues.

All of this, Mr. Speaker, is evidence of the great concern which the people of Saskatchewan have for human rights. The government shares this concern and I, as minister responsible for human rights in the province, take great pleasure in introducing this resolution for the approval of the Assembly.

I'm sure that members of this Assembly are very much aware of the domestic legal structures which have been developed by Canadians to protect basic human rights. Provinces have developed human rights legislation reflecting their original jurisdiction in this area under the constitution.

Saskatchewan was one of the first provincial administrations to develop rights legislation. Our present human rights code is, in many respects, a model for other jurisdictions. The Canadian Bill of Rights was a major step in the direction of a national standard of basic human rights for all Canadians. More recently, constitutional reform has given us the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The resolution before us, however, deals with international human rights documents. Members may not be as aware of these standards as they are of our domestic rights. These standards are incorporated in international treaties which Canada has signed as part of an international effort to assure all citizens of the world their basic human rights.

In many instances, the provisions of these treaties overlap considerably with the rights protection provided by domestic legal instruments. For example, the International covenant on civil and Political Rights, which implements in part the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, contains many passages which provide protection for rights similar to our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and our provincial human rights code. I am thinking here of provisions regarding legal rights, fundamental freedoms, and rights to be free from discrimination.

The importance of international rights documents rests on two fundamental grounds. The first is that all peoples of all races and of all nationalities, are part of a common humanity and, in consequence, are entitled to a common set of basic human rights.

The second basis for international human rights documents is that there is a close connection between the conduct of nation states towards the human rights of their own citizens and their conduct towards the citizens of other nations. In other words, there is a direct connection between the observance of human rights domestically and peace internationally.

Mr. Speaker, the government realizes the significance of Canada's international rights commitments. We are not constitutionally bound to observe these treaties, nor are there mechanisms for their enforcement other than the censure of public and world opinion. Nevertheless, the government accepts its obligation in international law to attempt to ensure that Saskatchewan keeps its part of Canada's international commitments.

For this reason, I have undertaken a number of actions to reinforce the influence of these commitments on the formulation of Saskatchewan legislation and policy. My officials in the Department of Justice will be reviewing Saskatchewan laws for their compatibility with international rights documents. This review will mirror and build on results of the review of legislation for its compatibility with our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As was indicated in the throne speech, I will be proposing legislation to ensure that the statutes of the province comply with the new provisions of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In particular, I have directed my officials to focus on the provisions of the international convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and of the convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. I have also approved special procedures to ensure that, in the future, proposed laws will be monitored for the incompatibility with international rights instruments, as well as domestic rights legislation such as the charter and the provincial code.

Procedures have already been set in place for monitoring with respect to domestic rights instruments, and similar mechanisms will be implemented to monitor with respect to international rights documents.

Legislative Counsel's office will receive instruction in international rights documents, and will consult with the constitutional branch of the Department of Justice if questions arise. Officials in the constitutional branch will be responsible for informing the Legislative Counsel's office of changing interpretations to these documents.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, the government is putting in place a comprehensive monitoring system which will allow us to ensure that Saskatchewan is fulfilling its human rights obligations, whether provincial, national, or international.

And, Mr. Speaker, I may say that this system will be as advanced and as effective as any in any other country. This careful, systematic, and comprehensive approach is characteristic of the government's general approach to the human rights issues. I think this approach is also evident in the proposal to create a women's secretariat. My department will, of course, be working very closely with the secretariat to ensure a co-ordinated approach to women's rights issues.

I wish to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by acknowledging that internal governmental monitoring mechanisms do not negate the need or the importance of external checks and balances. I think all members would agree that the work of our Human Rights Commission, the courts, and various non-governmental organizations remain valid and necessary parts of the structures our society has developed to safeguard human rights.

I believe we must include in that the importance of external checks and balances – the work of the loyal opposition. The government supports these structures as part of its general commitment to human rights. Human rights is an issue which crosses party lines and ideological differences. I would urge all members to vindicate that statement by voting in support of this resolution. Let us all stand up for human rights by standing up for this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Meadow Lake:

That this Assembly, on the day of the 35th anniversary of the proclaiming by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recognizes and affirms this declaration together with its implementing covenants to which Canada is a party – the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on civil and Political rights – as common standards of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of the society of the province, keeping these documents constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms, and by progressive measures to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance in Saskatchewan.

I so move.

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased indeed today to be able to second this motion. The universal declaration to which we refer in the motion emerged in response to the horrors of the Second World War. It was a tremendous achievement at the time. Its authors sought to guide a war-weary world to a new era where peace and freedom would prevail. Our celebration of this achievement must recognize, sadly I suppose, the great gap which still exists between the ideals of the declaration and the human rights practices of many of the world's nations.

For our part, this government joins with the many people in our province and across the country in affirming today the need to narrow the gap between those ideals and their practices. The Minister of Justice has rightly described this government as committed to the protection and advancement of human rights. Very often we in Canada, and in Saskatchewan, take for granted

the level of material prosperity and the political freedoms which we enjoy.

A little less than a month ago, Mr. Speaker, on November 11th, we all remembered the great sacrifices made by man in previous wars in order that peace and freedom could be restored to the peoples of the world. Mr. Speaker, that sacrifice should never be forgotten, and should never be betrayed. The universal declaration represents the embodiment of the value for which so many have died. It is in this spirit of remembrance and appreciation that I urge the Assembly to support the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too am pleased to rise today in support of the motion before us, the motion which provides to us all an opportunity to reaffirm Saskatchewan's commitment to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on its 35th anniversary.

It is a time for us all to reflect on our good fortune as free men and women living in a great and free nation, which genuinely claims among its ideals the principles embodied in a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is a time for us to reflect on those ideals, to take pride in our human rights achievements, and to acknowledge with due humility just how far we have yet to go before we have fully realized our ideals.

While we in Saskatchewan have a long and proud tradition of human rights and human rights achievements, it was not always thus. Our record is not without blemishes, for at one time, not much more than 50 years ago, the forces of intolerance and bigotry were abroad in our province. And the fear and the hatred of the Ku Klux Klan was evident in our province. And, today, I say to this Assembly, that there are other forces of the extreme right, as exercised by the Fraser Institute located in British Columbia, a subsidiary to the Fraser Institute in the United States, which I believe will challenge the inroads and the gains that we have made in respect to human rights.

But as we all know, Mr. Speaker, there were other influences at work in Saskatchewan 50 years ago. It was the progressive men and women who espoused the social gospel with its powerful message of justice, dignity, equity, and liberty; the progressive men and women who built our co-operatives, helped the wheat pool to thrive and flourish. These co-operators not only recognized and respected the fundamental principles of human rights, they lived their lives according to those principles, for they knew that only through co-operation, only by caring and co-operating together could they advance the cause of human rights and human betterment throughout their community. And it is in this tradition, established and nurtured and defended by these progressive men and women of Saskatchewan — by these working people, these co-operators, these farmers — it is this tradition, Mr. Speaker, that has achieved so much in the human rights field in Saskatchewan.

Let us just review, as the Minister of Justice did in part, some of the highlights that distinguished the record, for the moment, here in Saskatchewan. We have the Saskatchewan Bill of Rights in 1947, brought in by the first CCF government of Tommy Douglas. That was the first in Canada, passed in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, a year before the United Nations adopted the universal declaration in 1948. We have the establishment of the human rights commission in 1972, and we have the passage of a comprehensive human rights code in 1979 — a broad and significant statute unanimously passed by this Assembly.

These have been among the major milestones along the road of progress, courageously chartered over the years by our broad progressive forces in Saskatchewan. And I want to say that more recently, however, we have seen in Canada alarming forces of darkness and reaction rear their ugly head. And some of the forces of darkness which I refer to, Mr. Speaker, seek to undermine human rights. And all members will be familiar with the attack on the human rights recently launched in British Columbia by the present government. And certainly what I want to

say, Mr. Speaker, while we have made considerable gains here in Saskatchewan, and indeed in Canada, I think that those gains can rapidly be eroded, and each of us have a duty to strengthen and indeed build, upon the framework and the structure which we have put in place.

We in Canada are a very fortunate group, but it has been said that to those who have received much, much is expected. And when we look at a troubled world, and we see the death squads in Guatemala, and the death squads in El Salvador, and we see the apartheid policy in South Africa, the oppression in Poland, I think that our task is a very formidable one. But I think it is a task which mankind has to face so that all men and women might, as we, enjoy the human rights and the protection that have been built in by our democratic institution.

I want to say that we can help, I think, by working on building on our province's tradition of providing generous support to people in the Third World and helping them in their plight through the fine work of the Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation. And I think that on the basis of the great structure that we have in Saskatchewan, that much can be done.

Before I conclude my remarks on this motion, I should like to inform all members of this Assembly of some of the measures undertaken by some very dedicated citizens, to call attention to the threats of human rights and, indeed, attention to the poverty of the world.

I raise this because it's within my constituency. And I speak of several clergy men from my constituency, Mr. Speaker, of various faiths and churches, who have undertaken a lengthy fast, a fast to coincide with the Advent season – a fast to protest the hunger, the curbed freedoms, the economic plight, of the Third World. More specifically, these fasters are urging the provincial government to restore the funding it has cut from the SCIC, and also to stop the selling of South African wines in the government liquor stores.

I sincerely hope that all members will join with me and with the thousands of Saskatchewan people who today are joining in full support for these clergy men in their fast.

And as we consider this motion before us today, let us reaffirm in our hearts our full complete dedication to the principles of universal declaration of human rights. Let us rededicate ourselves today to these ideals. Let us never forget in our communities, province, our nation, and the world: human rights for isolated individuals cannot exist, not unless these rights are common to all, enjoyed and protected by all together. For freedom, like peace, is indivisible. We must each protect our neighbours' rights in order to protect our own. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to add a few words to this debate. I would like to make a few points which will, I think, be accepted by all hon. members and which are worth stating none the less, since it is sometimes easy to forget that which, if we think about it, is reasonably obvious. The protection of human rights is a journey on which we are embarked, and not a destination at which we have arrived. Human rights is not something which we have achieved, even in Canada, but something which we are working more fully to achieve in Canada. And certainly we are called upon by the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights to work to achieve an acceptable level of human rights throughout the whole world.

My colleague, the member for Quill Lakes, and the Minister of Justice, have alluded to the proud record of Saskatchewan on the journey for better human rights – the first bill of rights in Canada, very early enacted in the 1940s and '50s. The Fair Employment Practices Act, and The Fair Accommodation Practices Act.

Then in 1970s, a new human rights commission. And later on in the 70s, a human rights code,

amalgamating the provisions of the bill of rights, The Fair Accommodation Practices Act, The Fair Employment Practices Act, the blind persons' act, and the human rights commission into a human rights code – an extensive human rights code which the Minister of Justice has rightly characterized as something of a model for other jurisdictions.

The thing that characterizes the 1970s' thrusts, compared with the 1940s' and '50s' thrusts, is an accent on enforcement – a recognition that it's not good enough simply to state that people have rights, but one must also put in to place the means by which they can enforce those rights.

The first Saskatchewan bill of rights and The Fair Employment Practices Act and The Fair Accommodation Practices Act assumed that, by stating very clearly in the law what the rights of persons were who might be suffering discrimination, they could use the courts in order to redress the wrongs from which they had suffered.

I think an analysis of the operation of those acts in the 1960s indicated that very few took advantage of the laws which were on the books. This did not reflect, I fear, that there were no violations of human rights in Saskatchewan, but rather that there were no gross violations which called for action in the courts or, alternatively, that the violations which were committed – gross or otherwise – were committed with respect to people who were unable to enforce their rights.

So in the 1970s, we adopted the approach of having a system which relied, not only on the courts, but also on a human rights commission which could investigate allegations of violations of human rights on behalf of the citizen, and could pursue the matter on behalf of the citizen, the citizen who was discriminated against, the citizen who very frequently was not able to assist himself. And I think we have made material progress. But as I have said, Mr. Speaker, I am not complacent about our progress, and I think we will need to continue to press on to defend human rights and to expand the ambit of human rights.

I am disturbed by what I see happening in British Columbia where there is an attempt to turn back the clock, in my judgement, to a day when every citizen must have recourse only to the courts, effective recourse only to the courts to enforce his human rights; to a day when there will no longer be an organization such as a human rights commission which will affirmatively examine into alleged violations of human rights, and will assist citizens who might otherwise have no one to assist them; assist those citizens to enforce their rights.

So I think that, even here in Canada, it is necessary that we be vigilant. In this area, certainly, eternal vigilance is the price of the continuation of an acceptable level of human rights.

Turning now to the world beyond our borders, and particularly to third-world countries, countries where there is, by our standards, much poverty, I think we will look at the world and reach the conclusion that there is a very, very high correlation between poverty and the denial of human rights, a very, very high correlation between ignorance and the denial of human rights. When I say ignorance, I mean lack of education, not any lack of innate intelligence.

And if we are to defend human rights in those areas of the world, we must attack both of those problems of poverty, and lack of education. I think none of us will deny that. In the words of Martin Luther King, injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere; and in the same sense, a denial of human rights anywhere is a threat to human rights everywhere.

And accordingly it is our duty, as citizens of a wealthy country where our citizens are well educated, to do what we can to see that other parts of the world share with us, both our wealth, and our access to education. We need, shortly put, to feed not only the bodies, but the minds of people in the Third World. There is very little hope of attaining effective, democratic government where there is not a reasonably well-educated electorate. They don't have to be schooled in a formal sense, but they have to be well-educated, able to

communicate, able to organize, able to understand issues, able to have access to the media, to read and otherwise understand the issues which confront them, and which govern their lives.

So I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to all members of this House, that it is our duty to support programs which provide food and other necessities of life to people in the Third World, and among those necessities must be basic education; among those necessities must be access to training; among those necessities must be access to that education which is necessary in order to provide the foundation for some free form of government, some form of democracy, which is the greatest, and perhaps the only lasting defence of human rights in our world. I think it is timely, and I congratulate the Minister of Justice for bringing forward this resolution. I think it is useful that we, in our affluence, particularly perhaps at this time of year – but it would be almost equally appropriate at any time of year – it is appropriate that we focus our mind on what we need to do to assist others who inhabit this planet with us to enjoy some measure of the human rights which we take for granted. I believe this resolution will play its part in permitting us to focus our mind in that way. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in supporting the resolution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LANE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the opposition members for their support of the resolution, and their remarks in support of the intent of the resolution, and their support of what the resolution exemplifies.

I do raise some questions, and I raise it in terms of promoting the issue and to in any partisan way. But I ask the question of the matter raised by the member from the Quill Lakes about the question of South African wines, for example. Is the argument one that because we trade with a country that we perhaps disagree with their political institutions or their political philosophy, is that now deemed to be an approbation of their political philosophy or political views? I don't subscribe to that position.

I would hope that, as the Leader of the Opposition indicates, those wealthier countries that have to give that trade to the third world countries or the countries living in poverty, recognize that when they do trade they are not approving necessary contravention's of human rights, that they are not approving totalitarian regimes of the left or the right. I've always had difficulty, Mr. Speaker, why it's all right for Saskatchewan to trade with a communist country that takes away rights, but a country of another political philosophy that takes away rights, it's not proper to do.

Surely if we are trying to deal with this human rights problem realistically, we should better be tracking the position that one, our trade is for the benefit of our citizens, but in no way can that trade be taken as an approbation of totalitarian governments – which I think all hon. members in this Assembly abhor – no matter the philosophy of that totalitarian government.

I've had difficulty with the thought that we single out one or the other. Is it a question that we will have some impact, that our refusal to trade will have an impact? I think that's been found wanting. As a matter of fact, I think there's been examples in the past where this country has refused to trade. In fact, it's been more to the country's detriment than the other – the totalitarian country's detriment.

I look at some of the positive examples, and I'll use it in South Africa, because that was the example raised by the member from Quill Lakes. I look at the positive example where the private sector has done much to change attitudes in South Africa, and I look at IBM and its position of hiring blacks in South Africa, that it is, in fact, training blacks to move up the corporate ladder so that they're skilled. There is a role for us as a province and a country to use the talents that we have, and the wealth that we have, for the betterment of all citizens. If we take a realistic approach to dealing with the very problems that the Leader of the Opposition says consist of poverty, and a lack of education, and a lack of training skills; if we take that as our fundamental objective, then we, as a province, can perhaps at least make some small inroads in dealing with

this world problem. But secondly, with that attitude we can give approval and support to the resolution. I appreciate all hon. members' support for this resolution, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 21 – An Act to provide Financial Assistance to Encourage and Promote the Development and Expansion of the Agricultural Industry and to establish the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise today on behalf of Saskatchewan farmers, for Saskatchewan farmers are the most dedicated and determined in Canada. Give them the tools to do a job, and they will, in fact, do a magnificent job. This has been proven time and time again. They are innovative and energetic. They have initiative and enthusiasm. Saskatchewan farmers are, in every sense of the word, a credit to this province, and to this nation. This is a fact, Mr. Speaker, that goes back to the days of our trusty pioneer families and is retained right up to this very hour. Our pioneer families came to this region of Canada and carved out a solid agricultural foundation for us, from virtually nothing – virtually nothing, that is, except unlimited opportunity. And the unlimited opportunity came from the land itself. It came from the vision and the muscle of the pioneers themselves. And it came from the very fact that, while there was little government around to help a person, there was also little government around to hinder him. If a man or a woman had a dream, and were prepared to work tremendously hard under conditions we today have never known, then that man or woman had a good chance of fulfilling that dream.

The dedication and the foresight of our pioneers is the main reason that Saskatchewan is Canada's foremost agricultural province, and contributes more agriculturally to this nation than any other single province. And the children and great-grandchildren of our pioneer farm families are just as courageous as our pioneering families. Many of them have a vision, and a dream, and they too are determined to work hard to turn their dreams into reality. This has been proven by the response to the farm purchase program, alone. In less than one year, since our government established this program, around 1,800 young, starting-out farmers have been accepted into the program and are having their mortgage rates rebated down to 8 per cent.

The total amount of mortgages held by these 1,800 young men and women of vision and determination is in excess of \$200 million, Mr. Speaker. And every week, more and more young, starting-out farmers come into the program. And as members of this Assembly will well remember, Mr. Speaker, that program was put into place in this province less than one year ago, and in that short time we have already got 1,800 young men and women well on their way to farm ownership. All of these young farmers have decided that they would rather own the land they farm than be tenants on that land. They have decided to build something for themselves, just as their grandparents and great-grandparents did decades ago. The farm purchase program is the vehicle they are using.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — The farm purchase program is in no way a free ride, and I don't think Saskatchewan farmers want a free ride. In a way, it is a short-term, helping hand; in another way, an incentive program. In some ways, in the 1980s, it is more difficult to establish a farming operation than it the 1880s. True, physically we now have machines that do much of the back-breaking work of yester-year. Just as true today, you need large amounts of money, or the ability to borrow large amounts of money, to obtain farm land and to work that land. This wasn't the case decades ago – a farm was labour-intensive, rather than equipment-intensive. So the farm purchase program was established to give our farmers the first toe-hold to a successful farming operation.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are farmers in our province who deserve a similar helping hand. These are farmers who already have land, and often successful operations, but who want to expand or intensify their operations – farmers, in fact, who may want to start with some kind of intensive agricultural operation. Our government believes that these farmers are, too, worthy of short-term assistance. There has been for some time in our province a lending program under the Saskatchewan FarmStart Corporation. To be blunt, Mr. Speaker, the corporation has not been an outstanding success.

For a start, its name is a misnomer. If you want to start a farm, you would not go to FarmStart. You can go to FarmStart only after you have a farm. The purpose of FarmStart was to loan money to farmers already established who wanted to expand or enhance their operations. Newspaper headline after newspaper headline document a failure of FarmStart. Not every FarmStart loan was bad, but far too many were, Mr. Speaker. Even a quick assessment of FarmStart, from the totally wrong inference its name suggests, to the many unwise loans it has made, to its eligibility criteria, shows that FarmStart has not been performing as it should for Saskatchewan farmers.

And that's sad, Mr. Speaker, because Saskatchewan farmers in fact deserve better. They deserve a good credit vehicle to help them expand, enhance, and intensify their operations. Saskatchewan farmers deserve a helping hand away from high and uncertain interest rates. This province's farmers deserve to have a lending organization that has (if I could put it in this way) a little more heart than the commercial banks which have to answer to shareholders and which are – let's face it, Mr. Speaker, in the business solely to make profits.

Our experience with the farm purchase program convinced us that a complementary program to the farm purchase program should be established. Farmers needed a lending agency with sensible eligibility rules, more akin, Mr. Speaker, with the realities of farming today, and that took in broader aspects of agricultural endeavour.

We looked at the Saskatchewan FarmStart Corporation and, after consultation with various farmers and groups throughout this province, decided a revamped FarmStart program could be that vehicle. To get ideas for what a revamped FarmStart program should be, we talked to farmers down on the farms, we met with representatives of specific segments of the Saskatchewan agricultural industry, we spoke with members of umbrella organizations, and we looked at what is available in other provinces.

One message was made clear to us, Mr. Speaker, time and time again, and it was this: credit should be used to exploit success, not to reinforce failure. Mr. Speaker, those are very powerful words; it's a very powerful sentence. One thinks about it. Credit should be used to exploit success, not to reinforce failure.

And all too often in the past, FarmStart has provided taxpayers' funds to farmers who have been struggling with unsuccessful and unliveable operations, and that's why FarmStart got bad newspaper headlines, bad radio spots, and bad television coverage. It wasn't doing the job it was supposed to be doing, and all too often it was loaning funds to persons who really didn't deserve such loans, leaving out in the cold farmers, in fact, who did deserve short-term assistance.

So by way of various amendments and changes to regulations, I am pleased to say that we now intend to give Saskatchewan farmers the kind of lending institution they deserve. The eligibility rules of FarmStart will be broadened, the lending powers increased, the interest rates will be extremely favourable, restrictions on non-farm income will be eased, and many agricultural endeavours not now acceptable within FarmStart criteria will be taken in by the new institution.

It will, I am sure, be as successful and as acclaimed as the farm purchase program, and I'm sure Mr. Speaker, that's a very scary thought for those members in opposition – to have two glamour boys in the stable.

Right from the start we are scrapping the name Saskatchewan FarmStart Corporation. FarmStart is a sloganeer's dream; it's a farmer's nightmare. The new name will be the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan. Now true, Mr. Speaker, some might argue that it's not as catchy or as snazzy as FarmStart, but the farmers of Saskatchewan aren't interested in snazziness; they're interested in a professional organization – a professional corporation – and that's what the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan will be. We want to help the Saskatchewan farm family, Mr. Speaker, not the flim-flam boys of Madison Avenue.

The Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan tells the farmer straight off what that corporation is, and what it does. Amongst the proposals under the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan, and the act, will include the definition of eligible species for assistance is being expanded. In this regard, in fact, horses will be added to the corporation's list of eligible species for assistance.

The income aspects of the corporation's eligibility criteria are being changed. The corporation's previous eligibility criteria involving income will change from that of net income to non-farm income. The definition of lender has been expanded, and this amendment will permit the definition of lender to include any lending agency.

The definition pertaining to livestock production has been changed, and this change will enable the corporation to lend for both the purposes of purchasing livestock for breeding, and to raise livestock within the context of a feedlot operation.

The lending purposes within the act have been expanded to incorporate credit provisions which were previously stated in regulations. In this regard, the authority to lend for irrigation operations will be provided within the act – accountability to the legislature, Mr. Speaker.

Amendments which will change the corporation's provision regarding refinancing: in this regard changes to the corporation's refinancing authority will be changed to allow for a greater degree of flexibility in refinancing loans from other sources to establish or expand livestock and irrigation operations.

The corporation will be expanding its loan purposes. Provisions have been added to the act which will enable the corporation to finance land for intensified farming operations. One amendment to the act will expand the corporation's ability to deal with clients facing dire circumstances. Numerous changes have been made regarding provisions for guaranteed operating loans, and through these amendments the corporation will be able to adjust its guarantee levels.

Amendment to the act – and this is a very significant one, Mr. Speaker – will increase the corporation's maximum outstanding aggregate principal amount. This amendment will increase, Mr. Speaker, the borrowing limit of the corporation from 225 million to 500 million; and I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that is commitment.

Amendment to the act will delete the advisory council and the requirements for the services of an advisory council.

I think the scope and intent of these amendments speak for themselves, Mr. Speaker, and they will speak well for the Saskatchewan farmer and for the Saskatchewan agricultural community in general. They will promote vigorous expansion of common-sense credit available to farmers of foresight and endeavour. The amendments will be a vehicle for building success upon success, not for propping up failure with taxpayers' hard-earned money.

I'd like to spend a little more time, Mr. Speaker, talking about our new eligibility criterion and our new interest rates and our new terms, and what some of the programs will look like.

The corporation's interest rates will be changed from the current levels of 10 and 12 and 14 per cent to what have become known as landmarks out in the farming community —the famous 8 per cent for the first five years, and 12 per cent for the next five years, and 13 per cent for the last five years of the loan.

If it sounds reminiscent of some of the interest rates in the farm purchase program, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you it's not accidental. We've had tremendous success, and the farmers have just in fact loved those kind of interest rates, given the scenario we've gone through over the past several years with high interest rates.

But we've decided to put those kinds of interest rates and make them available to those farmers who want to go into the intensive side of agriculture. The three-tiered interest rate would be altered in accordance with the net worth level of 200,000, and a sliding scale in fact would be in effect between \$200,000 and \$350,000. The corporation's eligibility criterion will be revised upwards.

The revisions will increase the net worth maximum from 185,000 to 300,000, and change the income maximum at \$18,000 to a level of off-farm income not exceeding \$35,000. The corporation's loan maximum of 200,000 will be increased to \$350,000.

Well, if they do sound familiar, Mr. Speaker, as I said before, they are not unlike the farm purchase program. It is another glamour boy in the stable. And I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the headlines we'll be reading in the ensuing months about the new corporation will not be unlike the headlines that we've read in the papers the past few months about the farm purchase program, because the criterion and the application of the act will be so similar. And of course some of those kinds of headlines, Mr. Speaker, have been, over the past few months, things like, "Farm Purchase Plan Boosts Land Sales." And some of the copy reads:

Saskatchewan was the only province where more land was sold during the first half of this year. Except for the province of Saskatchewan, the volume of land transactions is down significantly, with some reporting almost no land sales on which to establish current land values. (A report from the federal farm loan agency said.) Saskatchewan's farm purchase program has made it the exception.

And so forth, Mr. Speaker. And one has only to look at the kinds of individuals that are coming in under that program with these kinds of eligibility criteria. We've got 50 to 60 per cent of the people under that program first-time farmers, or in fact, 50 to 60 per cent are part of the family tree, father handing it down to the son. That's what these kinds of eligibility criterion, if applied, I believe, Mr. Speaker, to an act that enhances the intensive side of agriculture, will do for farming as well.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan had 32 per cent of the national total in loans through Farm Credit Corporation in their last report. And members will well know, Mr. Speaker, that to the end of March when this report came out, the farm purchase program had only been in gear for three months at that point in time. We were just hardly rolling. I hate to think, and I'm sure the members opposite do, hate to think what the next annual report will look like.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan — and these are other statistics taken from the Farm Credit Corporation's 1983 statistics report — Saskatchewan is the only province to show an increase under section 33 lending. This is the section that allows the phase-in farming. It was the only province because we acknowledge the fact, Mr. Speaker, that off-farm income is a fact of life out there today, and that there are farmers who rely on that and use that money while they are phasing into farming. Saskatchewan is the only province to show an increase in section 33 lending.

Saskatchewan has, Mr. Speaker, as well, a record number of interviews — there's been that kind

of interest out there – 23,460 interviews for farm credit in Saskatchewan for that period in this report compared with, for example, Manitoba which had 7,579 interviews.

Another fact, Mr. Speaker, that's worthy of note as it relates to agricultural credit in Saskatchewan: the arrears rate in Saskatchewan in the statistics report was 8.3 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and that was up 1.37 from 1982. I think that compares very favourably with other provincial averages, Mr. Speaker. For example, in Manitoba the arrears rate was 10.1 per cent, and it was up not 1.37 per cent, Mr. Speaker, but up a whopping 3.2 per cent. So I think Saskatchewan farmers are happy to have that kind of program, and the things that have made that program successful, Mr. Speaker, are going to make the agricultural credit corporation of Saskatchewan really hum and do a job for Saskatchewan farmers.

So as you can see, Mr. Speaker, this is a very major piece of legislation. It is a visionary piece of legislation. It is a renaissance, if you like, of a very necessary vehicle for credit for intensive agriculture for the farmers of Saskatchewan. And, more importantly, Mr. Speaker, it is in tune with the 1980s, and it will aggressively promote the intensification of agriculture in our province. And I would suggest that no other province in Canada has legislation as positive as this for its farmers.

And we have led in other areas with other programs, and I think of once again the farm purchase program. We started here, Mr. Speaker, the province of Ontario, the Minister of Agriculture and Food there, has followed. And I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that others will follow us here, too, with this landmark legislation. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, we don't mind if other jurisdictions copy us, because as has often been said: imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

And we were leaders with the mortgage interest rebate program. We were leaders with the farm purchase program. And I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, we will lead the way once again with this new agricultural credit corporation of Saskatchewan. Alongside the farm purchase program, the agricultural credit corporation of Saskatchewan will be seen for years to come as being among the best agricultural initiatives any government has ever undertaken in Saskatchewan. So it is with pleasure and pride, Mr. Speaker, that I move second reading of bill No. 21, An Act to provide Financial Assistance to Encourage and Promote the Development and Expansion of the Agricultural Industry and to establish the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, it was with a great deal of interest that I sat and listened to the Minister of Agriculture talk about his new bill, the Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan. As I looked at the bill when it was handed out yesterday, and read the press releases that the minister sent out this morning, the only new thing about the bill is the cover. They changed the name. They changed the name of it.

Inside the bill there are a few things that farmers are going to want to find some answers from this minister. The minister says that he wants to shore up successful farmers rather than hang a millstone around unsuccessful farm operations.

He tried to build a case in this House today, Mr. Speaker, on a new bill that he was introducing that was replacing a bad, bad old bill. He was saying they were replacing this awful bill that was called FarmStart and was hurting so many people, this bill that had such a terrible record.

He had a tremendous opportunity and a chance to build on a base and a foundation that has been set in Saskatchewan. In my constituency, I have successful hog producers, I have successful feedlots. I have successful irrigation projects, and intensified feeding operations. But no, he wouldn't build on that. He would throw a little bit of a red flag up and wave this red flag as though he's some matador in a ring. His costume: with a little more colour, he could fit into a ring

in Mexico. You know, the necktie and all – if you had a red jacket instead of a grey one, you'd look like this matador waving this red flag in front of the farmers that are already in FarmStart.

He never told this House how many people have qualified and applied for and have gotten FarmStart loans, and are actually farmers that started farming. He never told us how many there are. He never told us how many there are. There's very few, according to him. It's a bad program. "The program has had bad press," he said. "There's been bad press." The only bad press we've had is since these boys are in charge of agriculture. I haven't seen any bad press on FarmStart prior to April of '82. But since they're in there, they've gotten a little bad press for some reason.

There's been a 1 per cent increase, he tells me, in arrears. We met with some people in the financial institutions, and we asked them, "What is the position of the average farmer borrowing money in Saskatchewan?" We talked to them. We said to the credit unions in different months, "How many people are rewriting their loans, and how many are in arrears?" The numbers they're using . . . The Royal Bank, their good friends . . . The Royal Bank are telling me, too, that there are about 25 per cent of the farm loans in arrears – 25 per cent.

FarmStart set some people in farming, Mr. Minister, that couldn't get a bank loan. They couldn't get a credit union loan. They didn't qualify. They didn't qualify, so they came to FarmStart and they got a loan to build a \$200,000 hog barn.

I know somebody like that. He built a \$200,000 hog barn . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The minister says he built one himself. I don't know if you got a FarmStart loan or not. If you did, you were fortunate.

But he built this hog barn. With his sons as partners, they got more than \$30,000 in grants. Grants – a hand-out from the government – where they got a grant which is a bad word maybe, but they put it back in the bill. They took it out last year. They put the grant back in their bill – when they go the interest reduced, not by 4 per cent or 3 per cent or 2 per cent like this bill does. If this bill applies to farmers that are successful, you're not going to shore up the poor farmer. You're not going to shore up the fellow that hasn't got a chance. You're going to shore up the big fellow and the guy that's already making it. "We're going to shore up success," is the words the minister said. "We're going to shore up the successful ones."

What is going to happen to the 40,000 or 50,000 farmers in Saskatchewan that have some sons that want to get farming, that are right now teetering on a situation where they're having a little trouble, Mr. Minister? These people are looking for a program that's going to apply to them.

I like what you've put in this act where you said you will help farmers that are in distress. I hope you accept that and do that little thing, that you'll help farm operations that are in distress. I'm not sure if it's going to do that.

But FarmStart – this bad piece of bill he's building on; the bill that he's put a new jacket onto – FarmStart's helped 5,000 successful farmers when we left office. Five thousand were in it and you're bragging that you're one of them. These were beginning and small farmers, and they were into farming operations that couldn't have been there if it wouldn't have been for FarmStart.

Less than 7 per cent of these 5,000 loans are into arrears. They're not serious arrears, but here's less than 7 per cent. Obviously these loans are a higher and bigger risk than what they could have done with a financial institution.

And I think today I can stand up in this House and proudly say that Saskatchewan's agriculture is better because we had a FarmStart program. I'd like to stand up and go on record and say that this province is much better rurally, and more farmers out there, because we had a FarmStart

program.

The minister stands up and says, "We had to tear up the FarmStart bill and come out with our new bill" in false pretence, as though this is a new bill. I didn't believe I was hearing him right when he talked about the new bill. Compare it. Compare it, Mr. Speaker, with the old FarmStart act. It is very interesting how close to the same regulations and everything else will be in there. And it's interesting to see; it's very interesting to see what they're going to say about it.

The minister had a chance to build on a good program that had a good record but, no, he couldn't do that. He had to tell these 5,000 farmers that still owe the government some money through FarmStart, he had to wave a little red flag and say, "Look boys, you'd better toe the line or we're going to get rough with you." And they will think, "What did he do with the people that had land bank land when they introduced their new program? And how's he treating them? And how did he woo them to try and quit releasing their land and selling it?" He made the statement, said that there's 1,800 have been accepted in his new \$200 million program, and he used the word "all" – "all" decided to own rather than be tenants. Well, I've got news for you, Mr. Minister. I've got news for you. There's some of those 1,800 wish they could have rented. They wish they could have rented. They're writing you letters. They hissed at you and they called you the worst minister in agriculture at a meeting downtown the other day. They didn't give you a very good headline.

If you want to read press, Mr. Speaker, look at the press that that little minister got when he went over to the convention downtown. And the press he got was a lot worse than any press a FarmStart farmer got, let me tell you that, Mr. Minister.

If you want to get some good press, you come out and stand up and tell us where there's some good legislation and build on a foundation that's solid, a foundation that worked for 5,000 farmers, and build on that program, and say, "We're improving FarmStart." Why doesn't he come up and tell the truth and say, "We're improving the FarmStart bill." No, he won't do that. He says, "We had to rip it up because it had some bad press." Well, I've got news for you. If your program's going to be as good as the FarmStart was, the farmers will like it and they won't hiss you at the next farmers' union meeting. They won't hiss at you and boo at you and give you the kind of press they did.

He said, and I quote, "FarmStart had been shown to be inadequate for the role and this could be seen both by the performance record . . ." and mainly negative stories in the news media concerning loans, too, and unviable farm operations.

Mr. Speaker, this minister's news release said, "Credit should be used to exploit success, not to reinforce failure." If you're saying . . . And I see the Tory Whip clapping and trying to get his people into line.

I want to tell you those 5,000 farmers that are on FarmStart are successful. They are successful. They're not reinforced as failures in my book. They're not reinforced as failures in my book. And if you want to make the rest of the province think that somebody that's got a half-section under irrigation, that's growing forage and feeding it to a couple of hundred head of cattle, and he isn't successful – I want to tell you his neighbours disagree with you, and so does everybody else around there.

The fellow that's got the hog barn and is employing two of his sons that are university graduates and are doing a good job and running their own hog barn, they're successful, Mr. Minister. That is not a story of failure. And that's not supporting failure.

Those 5,000 farmers that have less than 7 per cent in arrears and have taken on loans that were marginal and were loans that wouldn't be accepted by the credit union or the banks and are still making a go of it – that was a successful program.

Mr. Speaker, the answer is very clear. He doesn't deem that these 5,000 deserved assistance. He thinks the ones that should get assistance are farmers that are already successful, that already have a big operation.

Read it in *Hansard*. He said it today – those that are like the minister in charge of hailstones and already have a big operation. And they want to get into farming operations. He stood in this House – and I'd like you to stand up and talk on this bill because I heard you in this House, and you were sitting right there – say that the only reason you were here is because you were a failure in the hog industry. That's what you told us. And you shook your finger at Jack Messer and said, "You brought me here." And I want you to stand up and tell this House how bad that FarmStart program was.

There were some members that maybe weren't successful, and they stood up in this House and told us so. But there are other members, like the Minister of Agriculture who, himself, was successful with the FarmStart program.

You said in this bill that you're putting the grants back in. Show us how you're going to do it. Show us if you've got a plan to put those grants in so that everybody qualifies for those grants rather than just a few of your friends.

Is the minister that used to be in charge of northern Saskatchewan and wants to take over the South and weed out those that are Tories and help them – is that what this program's all about? I'm not sure. I'm not sure. We're going to sit back and very carefully watch the developments in this bill.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to further examine the minister's statements on it and I therefore beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 20 –An Act to amend The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Act

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — That's a good feeling, Mr. Speaker. I haven't been applauded like that for a long time in this house – two weeks.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You haven't been here for a long time. How could we applaud . . . (inaudible) . . .

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — That's why I wasn't applauded, I expect, because I thought that probably the minute I returned, Mr. Speaker, that there would be some interest by members opposite relative to my trip, and it was an excellent trip. Vienna is beautiful at this time of year.

In any case, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. member, I am pleased to move second reading of a bill to amend The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Act.

The primary purpose of the proposed amendments are to clearly give PCS the power to enter into currently common but non-traditional financing arrangements, such as the sale and lease-back of assets, and to give the power to the province of Saskatchewan to guarantee the financial performance by PCS of liability that might arise as a result of financing arrangements, such as the sale and lease-back assets entered into by PCS or one of its wholly-owned subsidiaries . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would love to react to that, but it borders on lunacy and I don't want to be associated with it.

The use of this sale and lease-back technique will be financially advantageous to the corporation. In general terms, the corporation would sell property that it owns, on condition that concurrently the same property would be leased back to the corporation. This corporation would gain the funds from the sale but still have the use of the property. This procedure would be used when the cost to the corporation of the lease is less than the cost of borrowing. This circumstance is usually a result of tax savings to the lessor being passed on to the corporation, which would in turn be passed on to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. The most favourable lease rates can be negotiated if the government of the province of Saskatchewan guarantees to a purchaser, a lessor, directly or indirectly, the performance and payment obligations of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan or one of its subsidiaries under lease. The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Act presently provides the authority for the corporation to acquire and dispose of property and describes how this may be done. The act details the circumstances under which the corporation may approach the Government of Saskatchewan for a guarantee of certain obligations. The act also gives a clear direction with respect to who may negotiate on behalf of the corporation to acquire funds. But the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan can only exercise those powers specifically given to it in the act, including requests from the Lieutenant Governor in Council when requested to do so. If the corporation acts outside the powers given to it, such as the sale and lease back of assets, the transaction entered into would be unenforceable since the corporation had no authority to enter into it in the first place.

To ensure that financing of the nature proposed is within the corporate powers of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and to ensure that the province is able to guarantee subsidiary performance, these amendments are needed and will, in turn, clarify the powers of the corporation the amendments will permit appropriate officials of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to negotiate loans, etc., for, and on behalf of, the corporation, as well as allowing the board of directors of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to determine the actual form of the bonds and other securities necessary to the transaction. It must be noted, Mr. Speaker, for the member for Quill Lakes, that this isn't an original idea. In 1979, the minister of mineral resources at that time, the hon. John Messer, amended section 10 subsection (1) of The Power Corporation Act to allow the corporation to sell and lease back property which it considered necessary for its own purposes. SPC is now using this method of financing.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that there is some small degree of . . . I was going to say hypocrisy but that's unparliamentary, so I won't say that, but if I could find another word that meant that, right off the tip of my tongue, I would use it. But you all know what I mean coming from the other side of the House.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to amend The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Act.

MR. KOSKIE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had an opportunity to take a brief look at this legislation that has been introduced. In my view, it's clear that the underlying reason for the introduction of these sections of this bill is to put into place what they have made an announcement, and that is the disposition of some of the assets of the potash corporation to their friends from communist China.

There is no doubt about it. You can laugh away. They need this power and this bill in order to implement the deal that they are negotiating. What they want to do is to send off an agent, not the Minister of Finance to make the arrangements, but some agent like Boyd Robertson of the Royal Bank who carries around hand in hand with the Deputy Premier and meets often with the Premier in order to tell him the direction that he should be going.

And precisely what is happening here . . . because in the former bill it indicated that there be no disposition of property, or it could be a disposition of property when it was considered to be no longer necessary for its purposes. But now they have changed it, that there can be disposition when it's appropriate – appropriate. And I want to say these great friends of crown corporations are going to decide what is appropriate.

They have undermined it, Mr. Speaker, every crown corporation in this province. SGI is on the verge of a sale of the SGI to the private sector, a dismantling of it. And here they are setting forward the basis of the dismantling of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

And do you know what they want to do? They want to set up a little agent of theirs. They don't want us to be able to come into this House on a daily basis and to ask the Minister of Finance what financing arrangements he has made. You can't do it. He says he's going to set up the agent within the corporation to do it. You know what? We'll get the same reply if we ask the question as to what this agent is doing, as what the Premier gave us the other day when we asked the simple question of what kind of a life benefit salary did he give to Derek Bedson when he sent him off to Austria. Do you know what he said? He said, "You can wait until the crown corporations are in session," and that we have to wait one year. What they want to do is to amend the legislation in order that they can dispose of assets of the people of this province in the potash corporation. They want to set up an agent in order that we can't examine him in this House, and I want to indicate to you that this side will be opposing your underhanded method of dismantling the potash corporation which the people of Saskatchewan have been proud to be a part of, and certainly we will be opposing this legislation. We will, in fact, be opposing this and I want to also indicate to the Deputy Premier that we're going to be telling the people of Saskatchewan that you're about to go forward with an agent – not a representative of this government, but some agent – to go and dispose of the assets of this province. We will be opposing this legislation.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to add a few words in support of those from my colleague, the member for Quill Lakes. I happened to be reading a clipping from the newspaper, and I was about to welcome the Deputy Premier back to Saskatchewan. But I see that, perhaps with prescience, this particular clipping has done it already. It's got a picture of the Deputy Premier and it says under it, "Berntson at home."

I take it it's news when the member for Souris-Cannington drops into the province and graces this legislature with his presence. Perhaps your constituents, who perhaps wonder whether or not you are still in good health, are concerned about your presence, and this is why you have arranged to have your picture in the paper with the cutline, "Berntson at home." I join with the, I think it's the *Star-Phoenix*, in welcoming you home, although I'm not sure that was the purpose of the clipping.

With respect to the bill before us, Mr. Speaker, I share the concerns expressed by the member for Quill Lakes, because the bill really has two main provisions. It makes it easier to sell property. And the previous rule was that property could be sold when it was no longer necessary for the purposes of the corporation. Now, clearly, that was not good enough.

Clearly, they wish to have power to sell, presumably when the property was necessary for the purposes of the corporation, because they wish to change it to read, not "when the property is no longer necessary for the purpose of the corporation," but "whenever the corporation

considers it appropriate to do so," however necessary it may be for the operations of the corporation.

Now, I don't think it takes an overly suspicious mind to feel that they may well be wishing to sell assets which even they would not claim were not necessary for the purposes of the corporation but, rather, they could only claim that they felt it appropriate to do so. Now, clearly, no one can argue whether or not a sale is appropriate. That is a value judgement, a judgement call.

Whether or not something is necessary for a corporation is a little more factual. And what the government is doing is saying they don't care to argue whether or not their proposed sales are of property necessary for the purposes of the corporation. That might simply be too difficult. They now wish to have the power to sell whenever they consider it appropriate, which clearly is not capable of a very sharp debate.

The second provision in this bill is one which deals with their right to borrow money. They now have the right to borrow money on the basis of bonds, debentures, other securities, loans, indebtedness, or evidence of indebtedness, temporary or otherwise.

Now, you wouldn't have thought there was much left – pretty well covers the waterfront. But we are now having to add to that. There they have found a chink of the waterfront, which is apparently not covered, with respect to the particular transaction which they are contemplating.

And so they now want to cover, not only indebtedness, but liability for the payment of money incurred by the corporation and that clearly means a liability. The only kind of liability that is not an indebtedness is some sort of an undertaking which you assume when you haven't got any money for it. If you undertake to pay money which you borrowed, that's obviously an indebtedness. If you undertake to pay money which you haven't borrowed, but perhaps someone else has borrowed, that may indeed be an indebtedness or a liability for the payment of money incurred by the corporation.

Now, the Deputy Premier has not outlined, in a manner which I fully understand at least, the manner in which the corporation proposes to assume indebtednesses which don't come under the heading of bonds or debentures or securities or loans or indebtednesses or evidences of indebtednesses, temporary or otherwise. But he wishes it. He wishes this additional power. And I think it is all too possible that he wishes this power in order to deal with some manner of joint venture, which he is negotiating in the manner outlined in the press, involving a sale of a substantial part of the public domain in order to get some money for a government which, as we all know, is strapped for money.

And it is clear that they are seeking some additional power. It is clear that they are talking with other interests with respect to the sale of potash mines or portions thereof. It is clear that they are seeking additional power to sell property and no longer wish to be confined to the power to sell property when it's no longer necessary for the corporation.

This coming together of circumstances, this wish for additional power to sell property which may be useful to the corporation, this wish to guarantee claims and indebtednesses which do not result from borrowing money, and this acknowledged negotiations with persons who apparently wish to buy some or all of the assets of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan lead us to believe, in the absence of a clear denial on the part of the Deputy Premier when he closes this debate, that there are possibilities in this legislation of which we do not approve and, accordingly, we propose to oppose the bill.

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, just in brief in closing brief, I'm not going to answer the questions raised by the Leader of the Opposition except to say that since he's opposing, or his caucus is opposing, the bill in any case, I will just respond briefly in a general way. And as it relates to the specifics you can, in committee, question the minister who is truly responsible for the bill, the Minister of Finance.

The only thing that puzzles me, Mr. Speaker, is in 1979 for Sask Power this was a good idea under John Messer and company, and nobody's peddling potash. And nobody is peddling the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. And it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, slightly hypocritical on the one hand to say that it's fine for this corporation at this time, but it's not fine for this corporation at this time.

He says, "What would this government consider appropriate?" I think that this government would consider it very appropriate to sell a small percentage of a potash-producing potash mine to secure a very significant market – offshore market – for the potash from all of our mines. That seems to me to make eminent good sense. It's called business.

It just seems slightly hypocritical, Mr. Speaker, that they of all people can accuse us, can accuse us of getting into bed with the communists on this particular deal – of all people.

I've had a great, great, and continue to have a great relationship with the people of Bulgaria, Mr. Speaker. A communist government. We sell them cattle. We're working on other arrangements, and we're developing — through my friend, Derek Bedson, in Vienna – we're developing other markets in the eastern . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. I fail to see that this relates to the question that's before the House, and I'd ask the minister to get back to the question.

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — And as these markets in eastern bloc develop, Mr. Speaker, we will . . . And I'm trying to connect this somehow to this bill and I'm working desperately at it, but since I'm having some difficulty with that, Mr. Speaker, I'll just move second reading of the bill. I will take it from there.

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

YEAS – 36

Muller	Birkbeck	McLeod
Berntson	Taylor	Rousseau
Katzman	Pickering	Hardy
McLaren	Smith (Swift Current)	Baker
Duncan	Currie	Sandberg
Embury	Dirks	Young
Domotor	Muirhead	Petersen
Bacon	Hodgins	Parker
Myers	Rybchuk	Caswell
Hampton	Boutin	Meagher
Glauser	Sauder	Martens
Weiman	Sutor	Morin

NAYS – 7

Blakeney	Engel	Lingenfelter
Koskie	Lusney	Shillington
Yew		

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 13 – An Act respecting Planning and Development in Urban, Rural and Northern Municipalities

Clause 1 (continued)

MR. YEW: — Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I have concerns on the planning and development act as it relates to the northern administration district. And, in accordance, I want to ask the minister if the government has any intention at this point in time to accommodate one of the requests submitted by the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Local Governments, among one group, and possibly from other communities, the request that they would like to have input, involvement, and participation in setting up district planning committees. They would like to have representation on the establishment of district planning committees so that it would enable them to co-ordinate various developments in their respective regions. I wonder if you may respond to that question, Mr. Minister.

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, there have been no plans to set up those planning districts until the boundaries issue has been settled. Once that boundaries issue has been settled, we will study the matter of the planning districts.

MR. YEW: — You say that the community corporate boundaries first have to be established, which will take, I understand, submissions of community appeals. The deadline for such is January 31 and following that, the northern corporate boundaries will sit to review those appeals by the various communities in the North, and put forth their recommendation to the minister responsible for The Northern Municipalities Act. And that process will be complete – over and done with completely, I understand, by March of 1984. My question is, Mr. Minister: what assurance is there for the northern communities? What assurance has your government given to those communities that they will be a part of that process, in terms of the district planning involvement and participation of local government up North?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, I can assure the member opposite that we will certainly consider the establishment of those district planning committees or commission after the boundaries have been set.

MR. YEW: — The minister states that your government will certainly consider the establishment of district planning committees for northern Saskatchewan, but my question was: have you given them assurances and guarantees that they will have that option open to them to become not only a token type of involvement but a meaningful involvement by those elected representatives? They have a job to do. They have the responsibility to ensure that those resources developed in their respective jurisdictions are developed in a manner that will coincide with the wishes of the people that they represent. They are elected, just as you and I are elected, to represent people of this province, people first in our constituencies, and the welfare of the province. And they are elected as well by the communities that they represent, and they have a tremendous task before them.

Therefore, Mr. Minister, I go back to my question: just what type of assurances will you give those northern communities that they will be a part, that they will play a meaningful role in deciding their own future in terms of their resources?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, the act that is before the House presently gives that option to those communities, and that's why I say that those planning districts will be considered when the boundaries are established. The act contemplates that type of mechanism and they'll be addressed on a case by case basis. But the new act clearly defines that option.

MR. YEW: — Well, I go back to your initial response in the statement that you made, that you

will consider giving some consideration towards the establishment of northern district planning committees, or perhaps I should say district planning commissions. But getting into more specifics now, how many district planning committees or commissions would the minister envisage for the North at this point in time?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, the communities themselves would take the initiative to try and take that option. It is not up to the government to place these planning districts, to put them in place. It's the local initiative that will put them into place.

MR. YEW: — We have a major bill before us, the planning and development act, and certainly I have an agenda here before me of an important meeting that's coming up on the 17th by the northern local government associations throughout the North, and certainly one of the primary issues that will be discussed at this meeting will be the planning and development act, as well as the resource policies that your government at the present time have advocated and harped on for the last 19 months. With respect to this important meeting, Mr. Minister, do you envisage having your officials, or possibly yourself, meeting with this delegation to respond to specific issues related to local government development in the North?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, if you have the same agenda I have, if you flip over on page 2, you'll see I'll be there. I intend at that meeting to hear the views of the northern local government group and any other interested people that want their views known to me. I'll be up there to listen. It will be my first meeting with that group. I don't intend to make any policy statements, as is the custom of this government, to listen to their views and their concerns, and then we'll come back to Regina and we will try and accommodate their concerns as best we can in a fair and equitable manner.

MR. YEW: — Mr. Chairman, as I was saying, the planning and development act is certainly an important priority on the agenda of local government throughout the North, and I want to ask the minister a little more specific questions in terms of resource development. I understand that your government has initiated very recently some reviews, some studies into areas such as the commercial fishing industry, and that your study I must say hasn't been completed, but some of the initial recommendations are starting to crop out of the woodwork. One of the things that your fisheries advisory committee is saying is that you are asking the North to diminish their commercial fishing activity and decrease the number of fishermen that we have in northern Saskatchewan and put them into other jobs, into other training areas. But the fact is that you have not specified what training areas and what jobs. My question is: with respect to this planning and development act and co-ordination with the district planning committees that you may have to set up in the North, just what type of authority will that district planning committee have in terms of determining the type of policy that should be adopted by the people in northern Saskatchewan via their Government of Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, I think that the member may have a misunderstanding of what these planning districts will do. The planning district basically will have decisions made on land use. That is historically the purpose of district planning groups, and as it pertains to job training or job creation it would fall outside of the purview of these planning districts. The planning districts are basically there to adjudicate land use decisions.

MR. YEW: — Mr. Chairman, no, I have to dispute the fact that the minister has concluded that I may have misunderstood the function and the role that the planning and development act will play. I see that act as being a very important piece of legislation, one that will affect the entire province drastically. I say drastically because my understanding of the planning and development act is that it favours the pro-developers more than it does the people that are affected at the community levels, people at the common local level and that fact, the history for it — history speaks for itself. That has always been a fact of life, the fact that people in the North have always been oppressed by legislation, particularly by the Conservatives. It is their philosophy to have their corporate friends taken care of in a manner that leaves those big

corporations and those bank and bond dealers much better off than the people at the common level, at the community level.

I say that that planning and development act is important to us. It's an important matter. And if I had my own way, I would at this point in time probably suggest that we table the item, but seeing as how I'm in no position to overrule the proceedings of the House by myself . . . We just don't have that type of strength at this point in time; however, in time we may have that opportunity.

The point now is the bill is before us, and people in the northern administration district certainly see this bill as an important piece of legislation – one that will affect them drastically. And they want to ensure that they have a . . . I mean, they want to see that they play a meaningful role – a decision-making role – rather than just a token role of having a piece of legislation oppress them further than it has in the past. Certainly I question some of the policies that your government has. One I used as an example was the resource . . . the commercial fisheries issue, just a while ago. Now getting back to specifics about the bill itself, Mr. Minister, other issues tend to crop up that have been on the slate for a long time, such as land claims, aboriginal rights, etc. Just what authority does this planning and development act have in co-ordination with the other major issues that are in front of us that have yet been unresolved?

We have . . . I may use other examples as well. We have some major hydro projects that have cropped up, issues that have cropped up on the north-east side of the province, such as the flooding of many areas in the Sandy Bay region. This affects pelican Narrows, Southend, Brabant, Sandy Bay and Cumberland House. And people in that, whole region are presently addressing themselves to some of the serious consequences of those major hydro projects, such as . . . They are presently doing some thorough research into the environmental impact and damages, the socio-economic impact and damages.

Now with this planning and development act, just what kind of . . . How does the minister see this? Does this act impose itself on those issues?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, I'm interested to note the member's comments that this planning and development act that's before us today favours large corporations over the rights of individual land owners. I'll be interested, when he gets up again, when he gives me a specific example of the section of the act that does that.

As it concerns the issues you raise about hydroelectric projects and what have you, the present act contemplates provincial land-use studies and provincial land-use policies which, of course, the people of the North will wish to have input into those land-use policies as they're developed in the future.

As it concerns the communities themselves, what this act will give the communities is the power to zone, to pass a zoning by-law, and a plan, a planning statement, which they'd never had that power before. They have been, as you say, dictated to by the provincial government for some time. This will, in fact, give them that autonomy – give them their plan and their control over future development in their community – which they haven't had before.

And I agree with the member opposite. It is an important piece of legislation for the North, to take on that responsibility, because there is a great deal of responsibility when they use this act, when they're planning the future of their community, and the land use that will go into that future growth. So I think it's a good step forward for those communities up north. And I think, as they get to know the act and how to use it, that it will be very valuable for them.

MR. YEW: — Mr. Speaker, getting back to the district planning committees themselves. If the communities do submit recommendations to establish district planning commissions, who will

make the . . . I would like the minister to respond to this one. Who will make the final decision? Does the minister of The Northern Municipalities Act have the authority to set up these district planning committees, or will that ultimate decision rest upon you as the Minister for Urban Affairs?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Basically, Mr. Chairman, the act would anticipate that the initiative for the planning district would be made at the local level, and the authority to set it up would be made in my office.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Minister, you indicated yesterday that the bill streamlined the procedures for subdivision and made the process quicker. I wonder if the minister would be more specific. What specifically have. . . What changes have been made which streamline the procedure for subdivision? I am interested in this because it's an area that the public understand, and it impinges on them.

The rest of this bill is just as important, if not more important, but not many of the public understand that. This is one where they constantly run into. It has been a sore point for a long time, Mr. Minister. It didn't arise with your administration, and I think I said that when we were dealing in the committee of finance last year. This is not a nasty Tory plot to make the lives of the Saskatchewan citizens more difficult. There are many of those about. I say to the member from Saskatoon Centre, there are many of those about, but this is not one of them. I would like to know what you have done to streamline the system so that subdivisions would be dealt with in a fashion which is more in keeping with the citizens expectations.

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, I know that the member opposite has had some dealings with the cumbersome subdivision approval process that is presently in effect today. Basically, we have introduced time limits into the acts, the time limits being, for the member opposite, that the municipality is allowed 60 days after the submission of a subdivision plan to approve that plan. If they do not approve the plan within 60 days, the proponent and a municipality can together agree to extend that time limit. But if they cannot agree to extend that time limit and the municipality has not dealt with the matter, it is deemed to have been denied after 60 days. The proponent can then appeal that subdivision to the local development board who will look at the subdivision, and beyond that they can appeal to the provincial planning appeals board. So basically, there are time limits set out so that these matters, as the member knows, instead of dragging on for two years without a proponent knowing what they can do or what they can't do, he will know that there's a time limit and then he will know where he can appeal those subdivision decisions.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I'm surprised to hear that the municipalities have been a source of the problem, which is what I gather the minister is implying, that by imposing a time limit on the municipality he is going to induce an instantaneous response from people who apply for subdivisions. My impression, Mr. Minister, has been not that the municipalities do not reply in a timely fashion. With larger municipalities, the matter is often handled by the officials. With smaller municipalities, they often are intimately familiar with the details, and were, long before a subdivision was requested. The town administrator usually acts as an advisor to citizens in these matters. I would have thought the problem was more within the bureaucracy than without. Indeed, my impression has been that that branch has been understaffed, and that they have not had the staff to do the work in a timely fashion.

Mr. Minister, I wonder if we have done anything to . . . There are steps . . . I am not intimately familiar with the steps which are taken by the division once a request for a subdivision is requested, but I understand you get a response from the Department of health, and the Department of Highways, and so on and so forth. My impression has been that that has been the source of the problem — its' been within the Government of Saskatchewan and not without. I wonder if you would comment on that and indicate whether or not any steps have been taken to speed that process up.

And I'm not suggesting that the Department of Health shouldn't comment on a subdivision. They should – so should Highways, and so should Environment, and so on, in appropriate cases. I'm not in any sense trying to suggest – as distinct from the Tory party – the officials are trying to make life difficult for Saskatchewan citizens. But the system hasn't worked very well, and, as I say, my impression has been that the problem is within the Government of Saskatchewan. The problem is not the municipalities. I wonder if you'd comment on that.

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Well, I think, first of all, Mr. Chairman, I indicated in my speech with second reading the improvement in the turnaround time that has been achieved through community planning in the last year. But I will point out to the member that in those instances where subdivision approvals have to be made by the provincial government that the same 60 days applies.

AN HON. MEMBER: — I'm sorry, I missed that.

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Where the community planning branch has to make the subdivision approval the same 60 days applies, in this act. The regulations that will go with this act will stipulate that the time limits for other government departments to comment on a subdivision request will be 40 days, so that we will be able to reply in 60 days. So the 60-day rule applies to us as well as to municipalities that have subdivision approval authority.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Can the minister tell me . . . Does the minister have any idea of how long it is now taking departments to reply? I mean, do you have any statistics on what the current turnaround time for the Department of Health, and so on and so forth, is? I gather you do, because I see the official passing you a sheet of paper.

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, I didn't . . . the question is: what is the turnaround time for other departments to comment?

A MEMBER: — And the municipalities, yeah.

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Well, I don't know if we have that information. I do have the information on what the turnaround time on the subdivision approvals are coming out of community planning.

In the last six months of '82-83, a 40 per cent of the subdivisions approved by Urban Affairs were processed within two weeks. A total of 60 per cent were processed in less than one month, and 73 per cent were approved within two months, leaving 27 per cent that took more than two months. But I don't know if my officials have the turnaround time interdepartmentally on comments that they . . .

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I'm not sure why mine always fell into the 27 per cent. I would be surprised to hear that those . . . I was actively dealing, engaged in this in the early part of 1982, and I would be surprised to hear that those statistics also held true for the first six, seven, eight months of 1982. I thought the department was a good deal further behind than that, and so did everybody else, so did the engineers and the bar. While I'm not going to pursue the matter ad nauseam (I may have already done that), I simply wish you well in solving a problem which is not new, and which has plagued people for some time.

Mr. Minister, I want to relate a . . . If it has not been related to you, that's one of my questions. I met with the Yorkton city council shortly after the act had been tabled, it would have been some time in July, not shortly, but six weeks after the act was tabled. The Yorkton city council indicated some concern that this act, and the planning process was designed for, and with a view, to meeting the needs of the larger communities and did not particularly meet the needs of the smaller cities.

The example which they gave to me was that in a city the size of Regina, the staff of the planning appeal board of the city – I wouldn't know their exact title – the officials in fact do the sort of planning and decide, and make those planning decisions and make recommendations to council, which they would say yes or no to them. But in a smaller city that isn't the role of the officials. The council do that directly and are expected to. If there is an issue as to whether or not a store should go up beside a grain elevator in Yorkton, that decision isn't take to the officials as it would be in Regina. It's taken directly to the city council who are expected to be accessible and available and answer the questions. And a conversation was reported in the Yorkton newspaper, the *Enterprise*, and I wonder if that concern was related to you or to your officials. Of so, is the concern valid and if it is, was it met by any changes in the legislation?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Chairman, in response to the question, my officials advise me that the city of Yorkton had not indicated that concern to them. But I might point out that any zoning changes, zoning amendments, whether it be from Yorkton to Regina, under the act still have to be approved by the provincial government.

Now, we have contemplated in this act, for the smaller companies, a planning statement which is a much simpler form of development plan, which should outline the future growth for the community. They then would pass a zoning by-law and would carry on from there. But I really don't catch what their concern is quite frankly.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I can't give it to you in any more articulate fashion than I just did, (a) because I may not understand it very well, and (b) because it may not be well-founded. I had the conversation with them. They related that. It was duly reported in the Yorkton *Enterprise*, and I had intended to raise it.

They felt that the new act concentrated more power in the hands of the officials and tied the hands of the elected councillors, and that that might be a good thing in a large city where there is a large and professional staff but wouldn't work in a small city where there was, frankly, a small, or no, professional staff or planners around. So I don't know if I can do much better than that.

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I still don't understand the concern, because the council has to make the decision on any zoning by-law or any amendments to the zoning by-law, the same as they do in the big city. Now, if they have a problem with staff, I presume that, you know, they can use the expertise in community planning.

But, you know, they have the same . . . (inaudible) . . . They have to. They have the same control and the same power, the Yorkton city council, as the Regina city council. They themselves have to adopt a zoning by-law or an amendment thereto. They're the decision makers and there's no difference in their responsibility, as there is to the city of Regina.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I have read the minister's speech, listened to it, and reread it, which, I may say by way of complimenting the minister, was reasonably informative and filled with less bombast than we are sometimes used to with this government.

I read the minister's speech. I've also tried to get through the act. I may say that I don't have a clear grip on the relationship between a planning statement and a development plan. And I do wish the minister would go over that in some detail and with some care, because I don't understand where a planning statement stops and a development plan starts. So I will leave to the minister to make everything clear.

HON. MR. EMBURY: — I want to thank the member for letting me make it perfectly clear. The difference is this: in the larger centres such as Regina and Saskatoon who have an extensive

planning department and . . . I presume you want to hear this.

In the city of Regina and Saskatoon that have the resources such as a planning department – a number of planners and staff that have the legal capabilities to deal in-house with the complex matters that come before them – they would have a development plan which is a fairly conclusive, very large document, much more complex than the planning statement which is a very simpler statement of where the future growth of the community is going.

So, the city of Regina would have a development plan which, if you look – and I don't know which section of the act . . . Section 55 will indicate to you in the act what is envisaged to be included in a development plan, whereas smaller cities would have a planning statement and what is envisaged there is in section 42. If you look at those two sections and what is contained there, you will note that section 42 is a much simpler, less involved type of statement than the section that deal with the development plan.

It is also envisaged in this act that for those centres that prepare a development plan – and those are the centres that would have the resources to do all their planning in-house, like Regina and Saskatoon – they may request a waiver from the minister on any further ministerial approvals on zoning that they do in those centres. But that is not available to the smaller centres that just use a planning statement. So, the one is much more complex than the other. One is designed for large cities that have in-house capabilities and the other is designed for smaller centres that do not have that in-house capability.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, do I understand that a planning statement has the same binding effect on a council and on developers who seek to develop as a development plan?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Yes.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — May I – and I think I may know the answer, but I may not – may I hear the minister's reasons for allowing larger municipalities to waive, as you put it, to dispense with the requirement of ministerial approval to any changes, which right, I gather, is not available to the smaller communities? Why the difference? Why the different treatment?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — What we're speaking of is ministerial approval of zoning by-law amendments. They can request a waiver; they're not exempted automatically. The reason for that is that those centres have the in-house capability and the legal resources to make those decisions at the local level, and it just seems to us that those communities that have that in-house capability are very capable of making their own land-use decision, where the smaller centres who do not have that expertise on staff and do not have the legal resources, do not have that expertise to make those decisions. So it pertains only to zoning by-law amendments, and they can request a waiver. They don't 'get it automatically.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — What cities now have development plans, utilize the mechanism of development plans? Is that just Regina and Saskatoon, or are there other cities as well with development plans?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — At present Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert; and Swift Current is, I understand, preparing one.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — When those cities request a waiver of ministerial approval of amendments, is the request automatically granted or is it discretionary?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — No, it's discretionary, and we would . . . The basis on which we would make that decision, we would be taking a very close look at their in-house capability, that is their planning staff, their availability of legal advice. The decision would be made on basically whether they could handle it in-house.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Sorry, I could not hear the last sentence the minister . . .

HON. MR. EMBURY: — The decision, basically, would be made on whether we felt that they could handle the procedures on their own.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Can the request be granted partially, or conditionally? May you say yes with respect to such and such, but not with respect to such and such?

HON. MR. EMBURY: — No. They either get the waiver or they don't. There's no half-way mark.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I wonder about the wisdom of that. I wonder if the province might not want to retain, might not want to say yes except where those amendments apply to . . . you might want to designate things of overriding provincial interest. I think again of, say, matters affecting the airport in Regina because it arose at a period of time, I think, when you were on city council with the former member from Last Mountain-Touchwood who refused an amendment to a by-law to permit a subdivision close to the airport because he felt that was not in the interests of the province as a whole.

So I wonder if that's wise. I wonder if there are not instances where the minister might want to retain the right to approve amendments in given areas where the province has an interest and where the matter is not strictly of local interest.

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I think you'll have to go back a step. They only get the waiver after a development plan has been adopted. Now, as I indicated to the member, the development plan is a large document and is quite specific on future growth. Before that development plan, which we approve, could be approved, areas such as the airport and any provincial interest would have to be included in that development plan. So it's at that development plan stage that you make sure that those interests are taken care of before you approve them.

Without our development plan, they're not eligible even to apply for a waiver. And again, the reasons for it is that the cities of Regina and Saskatoon have the in-house capability to do that type of work, after we're satisfied that the development plan satisfies provincial interests and we're satisfied that it covers the broad spectrum it is supposed to cover.

In the last five years, of the hundreds of amendments to zoning by-laws that have come in to the provincial government, I would think that two or three have been amended or denied altogether. So it's not a common occurrence that those zoning amendments are changed anyway.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.