

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Engel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege today to introduce some 27 grade 4 students from Assiniboia to you, and their teacher, Mrs. Mona Karst. Mona has brought students in for many years already, as long as I've been an MLA, I think. It's great to have you back with your students. And I'm looking forward to meeting with you and the bus driver, Dale Adams. And I wish you, along with the rest of the members, would extend a warm welcome to these students.

And while I'm on my feet I will also ask you to extend a warm welcome to a group of students from my colleague, Dwain Lingenfelter's riding. They're from Ferland, Saskatchewan. And their teacher is Dolores Brisebois, and their chaperon is Helen Massé. And I wish you would extend a warm welcome to these young people as well. And I'm looking forward to meeting with them on behalf of my colleague, Dwain Lingenfelter. So extend a warm welcome to both these groups, please.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Free Trade Negotiations

Hon Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier, and it deals with Saskatchewan's role in the free trade negotiations now under way between Canada and the United States. Last year the Prime Minister and the provinces agreed that there would be, in the words of the communiqué, "full participation, full provincial participation" in these negotiations.

Since then, Ottawa and the provinces have seemingly been unable to agree on how to implement a full provincial participation. And now I understand that a first minister's meeting has been set for next week in Ottawa to attempt to iron out these differences.

My question, sir, is this: how does your government define "full provincial participation" in these negotiations, and will it be your position that such participation should include a place at the bargaining table for Saskatchewan and other provinces?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we will be meeting — that is the first ministers will be meeting next week to discuss exactly how we can put the package together. In Halifax we discussed the possibilities and came to an agreement, or a consensus, with the Prime Minister that the first ministers could act as a board of directors, if you will, in terms of the whole Canadian negotiating team, and that while you have one person sitting at the table as you do speaking for the Canadians — whether the provinces or the federal government — that the backdrop from which you make those negotiations and carry them on are taking place as a result of the board of directors meeting and saying this is the strategy we will

use; this is what we're doing. And then he negotiates and he comes back, and you meet with the premiers, the Prime Minister from time to time.

You certainly have your people like Art Wakabayashi intimately involved in all the detailed discussions and knowing exactly what is going on — can report to me on an ongoing basis.

So what we're doing next week is to say how precisely that will work so that the first ministers can feel comfortable with the process, knowing that the federal government is going to be speaking to the federal government in the United States. You won't be negotiating with 52 states. They won't be negotiating with province by province, but you'll have negotiating teams on either side, and obviously you're going to have congress and the senate watching it very close. You're going to have the provincial legislatures watching it very close.

So it's design a mechanism for these historic discussions which, obviously, as we've seen in the last few days, are going to be extremely important because it's imperative that we stop the United States in terms of the kinds of protectionist measures that they have in mind now, whether it's on hogs or whether it's on softwood lumber or shakes or shingles or whatever it is, if they carry this on . . . I mean, it's extremely dangerous for our potash industry and our beef industry and many other industries. So, design a mechanism, and we'll certainly be prepared to talk more about it when we meet with the Prime Minister.

With respect to my own negotiations, I expect our people to be fully informed. The federal government last Friday laid out to me, as the Minister of Agriculture and as the Premier, and he laid out to other provinces a whole list of research material and the impact of the farm Bill on Canadian agriculture; the impact of various trade negotiations on sector by sector, region by region — the kinds of things that we could protect; the kinds of new markets and new jobs that we could look it. Certainly Art Wakabayashi has all that information, and my intergovernmental affairs has that information. We're going over it, making our own analysis and interpretation, so that when we go back in discussions that we will be as fully informed as possible.

So it's to stay close, to communicate as much as possible, and to make sure that we, at least, at a minimum, prevent the United States from doing what it started to do now, and we said it that would do, three or four months ago — three or four years ago, as a matter of fact: protectionist pressures in the United States would start cutting off jobs in Canada. And that's what we're out to prevent; in fact, we want to create more.

Hon Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Premier, as you have said, these negotiations could have a very major impact on the future of Saskatchewan's economy and the security of jobs in Saskatchewan. And what Saskatchewan people want to know, Mr. Premier, is: who will be looking after Saskatchewan's interests at the bargaining table — not in consultation, but at the bargaining table?

So I ask you again: is it the position of your government that Saskatchewan and other provinces should have a place at the bargaining table, or are you leaving the negotiations at the bargaining table in the hands of Simon Reisman, the retired federal public servant, and in the eyes of many, I think, the quintessential federal public servant who will speak with that voice? Are we going to have anybody at the bargaining table, or are we speaking through Reisman?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I can say quite clearly that the representation at the bargaining table, and the representation for the province of Saskatchewan, will run through the Premier's office and right down through to the negotiator and others. So it will be a combination.

If in fact that I can be there in terms of carving out the strategy with the Prime Minister and the fellow premiers, and at the same time that we can have people who are going to be involved in the intimate discussions that go on now between Mr. Reisman and Art Wakabayashi and others, then your representation at the bargaining table will be through the people that you have there, plus through the Premier's office, plus through a whole range of officials and bureaucrats and others who can keep you right up to speed with respect to the negotiations.

Now the major point to remember is that as the negotiations are going on and they bring positions back, they'll say, all right, should this strategy continue, or should it vary, or should we go from A to B to C. And that's where you can have your board of directors involved on a regular basis providing that kind of guidance.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If anything is clear, it is that the arrangements are far from precise. And I think it's clear, Mr. Premier, that it's important that we have some pretty clear guide-lines because the U.S. are playing for keeps in these negotiations. They already have a carefully planned strategy to put pressure on Canada by moving forward with a series of protectionist measures like the 35 per cent tariff on Canadian shakes and shingles, the filing of a petition calling for 27 per cent duty on Canadian softwood, and the passage in the House of Representatives of a Bill threatening a series of trade penalties against Canadian goods.

The Americans, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Premier, have a game plan, and they're obviously playing hard ball. We can't, apparently, even decide what our starting line-up is. And I ask you this, Mr. Premier: why are we, and particularly why are you, as the Premier of Saskatchewan, going into such crucial international negotiations without a clear plan and without any apparent strategy to counter the kind of pressure which the U.S. government is very obviously mounting upon Canada in these last several weeks?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the major problem with respect to trade negotiations between Canada and the United States is not that Canadians are not well-informed, or Canadians don't have their homework done, or the research isn't there. We know the kinds of markets and the kinds of things that we want to

get from America. The major problem is, is one of a political problem where you've got the opposition, or the NDP, or people like them, that say that they don't want to get into trade negotiations with the United States. That's the major problem.

We have been saying for the last three western premiers' meetings, in western Canada, we have said we must negotiate with the United States and stop that protectionism, or they're going to start cutting off our hog exports, or our oil exports, or potash exports, or softwood lumber, or many other things. The NDP keep saying, no, we shouldn't be discussing it with the United States.

What the Americans have done right now is just look across the border and just smile every time an NDP opens his mouth because they're saying, oh, my gosh, I've got them split now because the opposition and the NDP doesn't want to talk negotiations, so they hammer on another tariff; they put on some more protection; and there's no solidarity on this side of the border saying we are going to protect Canadian jobs and we're going to get more jobs. And you can stand there today, Mr. Speaker, like the Leader of the Opposition said, he is worried that softwood lumber might be protected. Well I've been saying that for three years, that if they cut off potash and cut off hogs, we have thousands of people that will be unemployed. If they stop bacon exports into the United States, 1,000 people at Intercontinental Packers could go right out of work.

We have been trying for years and years to protect those jobs and create more. And the opposition is coming back saying, well I don't think we should have trade negotiations with United States. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll just say this: we are better prepared than the Americans. The Americans have one voice speaking down there, and, Mr. Speaker, what they are doing is just building on the opposition in Canada . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. I'm going to ask the members on both sides of the House to have short questions and short answers. We're going exceeding long.

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Premier. Mr. Premier, are you aware that one of the serious threats facing Saskatchewan from the U.S. today is the attempt by the U.S. lumber industry to get a 27 per cent duty slapped on all Canadian softwood lumber imports? This move threatens about \$16 million worth of Saskatchewan sales to the U.S. on an annual basis, and hundreds of Saskatchewan jobs. Can the Premier give the Saskatchewan taxpayers a status report in respect to where this case is at? And when the U.S. commerce department be holding public hearings, and will Saskatchewan be intervening at the hearings to protect Saskatchewan interests?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I want to make this point very clear. For the last two or three years my office and my activities in this government has been in the United States, in Washington, in Nebraska, in California, across the United States trying to stop this protectionist measure that's there. Because if they do the same thing, if they do the same thing in the potash industry . . . Mr.

Speaker, they don't want to hear this; here they go again. They can't stand the answers, so they're talking and hollering from . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the member from Quill Lakes should know something about the potash industry. If the United States decides to put tariff walls and protectionist measures against the potash industry, thousands of families that are working in mines and working in potash industries across this province will go down. And do you know what the NDP does? The NDP says, well, we shouldn't discuss trade with the United States. And then when they put on a tariff that's going to stop softwood lumber, then they stand up and sound like, oh, well isn't this terrible.

Well who do you think's being working for some time to protect those jobs and those families at Intercontinental Packers, and the potash industry, and the timber industry, and the beef industry, and in the pork industry? Well it wasn't the NDP. It was conservative people and Progressive Conservative governments in Saskatchewan and Alberta and British Columbia that are trying to do it. In fact, even your counterpart in Manitoba was down into South Dakota trying to get them to take the ban off hogs moving in there.

Mr. Speaker, this is all the more reason we have to be in serious negotiations to protect these jobs, not just standing up on one hand saying, we can't have trade, and the other hand, what are you going to do about the fact that they have protectionism. They have protectionism because they don't appreciate the Canadians and the opportunities we have together. Mr. Speaker, it's time that we, on this side of the border, spoke with one voice and quit splitting it like the NDP is trying to do.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Allow me, Mr. Speaker, to ask the same question, because the Premier did not, indeed, address the question whatsoever.

I want to ask you, Mr. Premier: are you aware that one of the serious threats facing Saskatchewan from the U.S. today is the attempt by the U.S. lumber industry to get 27 per cent duty slapped onto the Canadian softwood lumber imports. I ask you — this is a serious threat to the people of Canada and Saskatchewan — and what I ask you, Mr. Premier: can the Premier give the Saskatchewan taxpayer a status report as to where it's at? And when will the U.S. department in fact be holding hearings, if indeed they are; and will you have representations to the committee in the United States as against imposing such action?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, of course I'm aware of it, and of course we have been lobbying, and we will have the representation there.

Mr. Speaker, what I am trying to find out is whether the member from Quill has some sort of perverse delight in seeing tariffs in the United States so he can talk about the lumber industry losing jobs. Or is he saying, Mr. Speaker

. . . are you for free trade with the United States now? Is that what you're saying, you want more trade? Have you made up your mind yet? Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you what — they haven't — they haven't made up their minds.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Order, please. Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, we have been making significant representation on behalf of the paper industry, the potash industry, the uranium industry, Ipsco, Intercontinental Packers — everybody that works in an industry that exports into the United States — and we will continue to be there.

The biggest thing that hurts Canadians today are people like you that stand up and say we shouldn't be trading with the United States; we shouldn't be negotiating. Well I'll tell you, if you keep it up, they will be slapping on more protection and more protection day after day after day, because they think they've got Canadians over a barrel.

Well I'll tell you, I'm not going to give up on Canadians, and I'm not going to give up fighting for markets in the United States. And you can talk out of both sides of your mouth all you like; but I'll tell you one thing, people see through what you're doing. When we try to protect jobs about build more jobs, they appreciate it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Protectionism Regarding High Technology

Mr. Koskie: — A new question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, as you may be aware, one of the controversial sections of a Bill just passed by the U.S. House of Representatives threatened straight penalties against Canada unless we open the Canadian market to U.S. telecommunication industry. Can the Premier tell us what specific products the Americans have in mind, and are they in fact threatening jobs in our high technology sector here in Saskatchewan? And if so, what has Saskatchewan done to lobby against this trade threat in Washington?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure the hon. member should know, that we market high-tech equipment all over the United States. And one of the biggest things, the biggest concerns we have is they would put up protectionist measures against satellite equipment, SED Systems, fibre optics, or many of the things that we export into the U.S. That is why we've been down there for three years trying to get them to reduce their tariffs and talk about more trade and more opportunities between the two of us, rather than them picking us off one at a time. Of course we're aware of those things.

All of a sudden, Mr. Speaker, the opposition has woke up and said, my gosh, they might cut off sales of potash or fibre optics or some other resource product like beef or hogs or timber or bacon into the United States. We've been saying that for three years. You were asleep at the switch six years ago; you were asleep in '82; and now you

finally woke up and said, well my gosh, we trade with the United States.

Most of our jobs in Canada, on the export market, are into the United States — \$170 billion in trade. And you're telling me, on the one hand, we shouldn't be discussing it, and then when somebody does something, you wake up and say, well what are you going to do about it? Well, Mr. Speaker, it would be a last or a sorry day on Sunday when we'd turn this outfit over to that bunch.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Unequal Trade Arrangements with Central Canada

Mr. Hampton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier also and dealing with trade, Mr. Premier. I believe that the people of the province of Saskatchewan would be, and are just as interested to know, when we may expect honest, sincere negotiations with central Canada to get free trade with them; that we're not paying freight going both ways; and that we reduce our input costs in agriculture out here which deals with central Canada, not so much the United States.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well I'm glad you raised that question. We have faced inequities in transportation with central Canada for decades. And part of the reason is that Ontario and Quebec have carved out really good trading relationships with the United States, and we were not involved. The good old NDP'er, Bob White, who represents the auto makers' union in Ontario, has himself a free trade arrangement with Ontario and the United States for cars to go back and forth all the time, and Canadians in Ontario benefited, and the United States benefited.

And then Bob White will come out here to western Canada and say that we shouldn't discuss trade with the United States. It's all right to prevent our lumber from going down there and our hogs from going down there; Intercontinental Packers can get hurt, potash and all the rest of it. And we've got to pay the freight both ways on his automobiles, or goods and services, and it's a typical NDP reaction. They're going to protect Ontario.

We know who controls the NDP in this country, and the Ontario NDP control the whole nation. Well I'll tell you, they're not going to control Saskatchewan. We're going to get a better deal for freight rates, and we're going to get a better deal for western Canada because we're going to be at the bargaining table when it comes to the United States. We initiated this, and we have now got negotiations that are going to help Saskatchewan and not just Ontario.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Young Offenders' Centre in Saskatoon

Mr. Engel: — I have a question to the Minister of Social Services, and it deals with your department's attempt to sneak in a young offenders' centre in the middle of a Saskatoon residential neighbourhood without prior consultation with the local residents . . . And your

colleagues seem to think it's a joke.

But Wednesday evening in Saskatoon 100 people from the community there, from the Nutana constituency, didn't think it was a joke. They attended a public meeting and overwhelmingly voted against the idea of such a centre in their neighbourhood. They were also very critical of the fact that you attempted to hide this proposed development from them until after you had purchased property in their neighbourhood.

Will the minister now admit that it was a serious mistake to try and proceed with the centre without having consulted with the local residents before he attempted to proceed. And in light of the views expressed by the neighbourhood at this public meeting, will you this time assure this Assembly that when you attempt to develop a centre like that that you will involve the local neighbourhood in your attempt?

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Mr. Speaker, the issue of exactly where the particular kinds of facilities for young people should be located in the province is, from any perspective, a sensitive issue and one that we should all be concerned about. Whether it's a group home for young offenders, or a group home for young people that are emotionally disturbed, it really doesn't make any difference. It's been my experience in the three years that I have been in this particular responsibility that regardless of what kind of group home for young people is going into what particular area, there is always going to be some degree of concern and dissatisfaction with regards to that particular facility.

With regards to the young offenders' facility that the member has referred to, I would hasten to inform him that we are talking about young offenders here that the judge has determined would not be a threat to society.

Nevertheless, in this particular instance, community members in that particular part of Saskatoon were concerned. The MLA from Saskatoon Nutana brought their concerns to my attention. Community meetings were held, I believe, on two occasions, and as a consequence of those particular meetings, because of the degree of concern that was expressed, I made the determination that we would not be proceeding with the facility at that particular site.

It's important to state, Mr. Speaker, that we do need to find a facility in Saskatoon for the young offenders in that particular community. There are facilities in other urban areas of the province. I happen to have one right in my riding, and one adjoining my constituency as well. And it's important that the young people in Saskatoon be provided with the same services as others in other parts of the province.

Nevertheless, we do respect the concerns of communities as they are brought to us, and I can give the member the assurance that we will be consulting with organizations and with groups in Saskatoon to find the most appropriate location.

Mr. Engel: — You claim that your government is interested in consultation. Yet you attempted to hide the

purchase of property in this residential neighbourhood from the local residents. Further, you refused to attend the public meetings, and not one — not one — of your 10 PC MLAs in Saskatoon attended the public meeting on Wednesday night, including the MLA for Saskatoon Nutana, where the centre was to be located.

How do you describe that as willingness to consult, number one; and number two, can you give us a list, can you provide us with a list of how many more centres like this you intend to build, and what type of consultation you plan on having as to where these centres are going to go?

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Well I'm not sure I understand the member. Is he suggesting in his question that, in fact, facilities for young people who require to be housed in urban areas that somehow they should be discriminated against, and they should not be housed in urban areas; that they should not have access to their families; that they should not have access to their schools; that they should not have access to their local neighbourhoods and communities.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the member from Saskatoon Nutana, as I understand it, was intending to be at the meeting, but because of the severe windstorm was not able to be there. All right?

The second point, Mr. Speaker, is that members from my department, in fact, were in consultation at that particular meeting and explaining the particular matters of that facility and the nature of the program involved. There were some people that were supportive; there were substantially larger numbers that were opposed. And because of that particular sensitivity expressed by the community, the decision was made to not proceed at that particular site.

Mr. Engel: — No, to the questions that you asked me, Mr. Minister. And would you be so kind to answer the question that I asked you without giving us a long story about something else, and excuses for not attending a meeting.

The question was simply put: how many of these centres do you intend to build, and will you have consultation with the people that you're building them at? And it's no question of where I intend to build them, because when we built them in the past, we had consultation, and we did talk with the people as to where they're going to go. And the only storm that was there, Mr. Minister, is the storm that the constituents turned up against you people because you don't consult. Now would you answer . . . I answer the questions carefully that are asked me, Mr. Speaker; will he answer the two questions I put to him?

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — I would just correct the member opposite since when they were in power the Young Offenders Act was in fact not in place. There never was a Young Offenders Act. It would have been pretty difficult for you to consult with anybody about the Young Offenders Act.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Mr. Speaker, the Salvation Army here in Regina has been involved with the people that have had problems with the criminal system here, and they are going to be working with us to locate a particular facility here in the city of Regina. We're very encouraged that we have such a reputable organization that is working with this government to provide services for young offenders to ensure that those young people that we are all very much concerned about will be provided with appropriate housing and would be able to maintain contact with families and with schooling and so on.

We have also been consulting with groups in the Prince Albert area for some time in an attempt to find a particular location there. And I have myself personally met with representatives from the Prince Albert area in an attempt to find the best possible location to provide the kinds of services — and I want to stress — the kinds of services that these young people very much need and deserve. And that's a very important point to make. And there are concerns on the part of communities, and rightly so. One would not depreciate those.

On the same hand there are concerns that we must all have about the young people. And somehow we need to wed those two together to ensure that we are appropriately meeting the concerns of the community and at the same time meeting the concerns of the young people. And that is my objective, Mr. Speaker.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Resignation of Member for Regina South

Mr. Rousseau: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day and with leave of the Assembly, I have an announcement that I would like to make, as well as a few remarks.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in this legislature today for my final time to make a few remarks and perhaps share a few memories. At the end of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will be announcing my resignation as the MLA for Regina South to assume new duties as the agent-general for Saskatchewan in London, England.

Mr. Speaker, it has been eight years since I first entered this hallowed Chamber on my second attempt at seeking public office. During my business career I had achieved many successes. However, in 1975 I felt it was time to contribute some time and energy to the community and to the citizens of Saskatchewan who had made my life in the business world reasonably successful.

Mr. Speaker, as my friend, the member from Rosthern, has said previously in this legislature, it was indeed an awesome experience for a new member in his first appearance in the legislature. In 1978 it may not have been as awesome for us as it was for those first elected in 1975. And this, Mr. Speaker, can be directly attributed to the help and support that they provided to me when I arrived here.

Mr. Speaker, I remember the first few times I rose in question period to address a question to a cabinet minister. I remember well the lessons I learned: to know

your facts; to know the kind of response you were likely to get from an experienced member; to know the answer before you asked a question; and to know how to react to them without putting your foot in your mouth.

I know some hon. members will say that I did a good job of that on more than one occasion. And, Mr. Speaker, I did it with sincerity, with the interests of my constituents at heart, and with the best intentions of making our system of government work to benefit all the citizens of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I remember well our being elected in 1982 with a massive mandate and formed the government. I remember with immense pride at being asked by the Premier to serve in cabinet. I remember the intense debates in the House during committee of the whole discussion of legislation, during committee of finance discussion of estimates, and during Crown Corporations Committee discussions, as the minister responsible for SGI, for Sedco, and for the Crown investments corporation. I remember, too, the parry and thrust of question period from my experiences on both sides of the House.

But above all this, I remember the camaraderie of all members of the House, regardless of political philosophy, and a sincere desire of all members to work for the betterment of Saskatchewan. There have been many, many instances which I have witnessed in the House: the compassion that transcends party lines; the sincerity of members that lifts them above the traditional political philosophy; and the intense desire to serve all citizens of Saskatchewan, not just their own constituents. And on these occasions, Mr. Speaker, and on many others, I have indeed been proud to be referred to as a politician and a member of the legislature. Politics is an honourable profession, and one of which we can be proud.

However, Mr. Speaker, there have been many more occasions when the decorum in the House has been less than good, when the orderly business of the House has been shunted aside because members have not acted in a courteous and respectful manner for the institution of government. It is at these times that I have been reluctant to respond to the electorate, to guests of the House, and particularly school children who do not have the opportunity to watch us day in and day out.

I say this not to point fingers at members opposite, for I have been a member of the opposition, or at members on the government side who may have been less than candid in some of their answers. I say this because I have the utmost respect for our democratic form of government. There are many people in the world who have been willing to sacrifice their lives to defend or to attempt to gain our form of government.

Mr. Speaker, we should ever be mindful of the impressions we leave on the public who are oft-times sceptical of politicians and who see us as less than credible in our actions in the House. This does not help us attract good candidates to run for elected office or for encouraging the younger generation to seek a career in politics. Mr. Speaker, there are times for partisan politics, but there is always time for decorum.

As I leave this Assembly to become our province's agent-general in London, I leave with mixed emotions. I look back on the good times and our successes. I look back on some aspects of this legislative process which could be improved, and we should always be looking for ways to improve the system. We cannot always rely on the traditional ways or on precedent. We should not use precedent as an excuse for not looking for a better way to conduct the business of the legislature.

And as an example of this, I would refer you to the way the Crown Corporations Committee functions. The Crown corporation under review may have been audited by a private audit firm. It is then reviewed by the Provincial Auditor and subject to an intensive review by the Crown Corporations Committee.

In my tenure as a member of the opposition, or as a cabinet minister, I cannot recall anything of any serious consequence being discovered in the Crown Corporations Committee which had not been identified by the auditor. On the other hand, I cannot recall the Crown Corporations Committee ever taking a serious look at the coming year, a review of proposed rates, or the potential profits of that Crown. Rather than dwelling on history after at least one, and sometimes two, professional audits, we should be looking at ways to improve our review of the coming year for the Crown corporations.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you. I want to thank all members and the staff of the Legislative Assembly for all your help in the past. It has been a most rewarding and enjoyable experience. And I would not like to leave here without saying a thank you to the media for their courtesies extended to me during the past eight years.

All of us, I think, do not fully appreciate the contribution to good government which is made by civil servants, especially by the senior officials in the public service. These officials — and particularly those who have managed the departments, the agencies, and the Crown corporations for which I have been responsible — are dedicated, conscientious and hard-working. We, and the general public, too often criticize the bureaucracy without realizing their importance to good government. I was particularly fortunate in having officials in my department who are recognized throughout the public service as some of the best in government.

I might add that had they chosen a career in business rather than in government, they would today probably be successful leaders in the business community. To them I say a sincere and heartfelt thank you for a job well done.

In this respect, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make one more comment on the actions of some members who, in this legislature, attack private citizens and civil servants. These attacks are an abuse of the legislative immunity granted to members, because the individuals being attacked have no chance to defend themselves. They are an abuse of the immunity because the members do not have the integrity to make the same comments outside of the Chamber.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as I conclude my remarks, I truly hope

that I have made a contribution to good government, to my constituents, and to the citizens of Saskatchewan. I will be leaving the Assembly with a lot of fond memories and a good feeling that I know that I tried my best.

I want to thank my constituents, the people of Regina South, for their support over the years. And I want to assure them, and my colleague and friend, new candidate for Regina South, the member for Regina North, who will be their new member after the next election, will represent them well.

I look forward to continuing my service to the province in my new post in London. I hope that the next five years will be as fruitful and as rewarding as the last eight. Thank you for the opportunity to have been part of this truly fine process. Best wishes and good luck to you all, and God bless.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 45 — An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1984

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my remarks I shall be moving second reading of Bill 45 — An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Act.

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, is designed to restore fairness and equity in the taxation of church properties. Mr. Speaker, for a long time religious organizations in this province have enjoyed municipal and school tax exemption on their places of worship and two acres of land used in connection with those places. This provision was considered adequate when this province was largely rural in nature, with small municipalities and equally smaller churches.

Today, Mr. Speaker, many of those small churches have developed into very large churches, some of them with seating capacity for 2,000 people. Times indeed have changed. As a result, the current two-acre exemption for church land is no longer adequate to meet the needs of today's larger churches for space, especially space for adequate parking.

Mr. Speaker, the present legislation has become unfair because it penalizes some churches for growing larger. As a result it imposes a disproportionate tax on large churches as compared to small churches.

Last fall, Mr. Speaker, a number of the churches in the city of Saskatoon, affected by the current two-acre limitation requested that the province amend the urban Act to increase the amount of church land that could be exempted from municipal and school taxation. They also invited the city of Saskatoon to support their request. The churches and the city of Saskatoon reached a mutually

agreed upon formula, and as a consequence we have the amendment that is before us today.

And before proceeding further, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should simply read into the record the various church congregations that are affected by this particular amendment. In Prince Albert there is the Victory Baptist church; in Moose Jaw, there is the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and the Hillcrest Apostolic Church; in Regina, there is the 7th Avenue and Pasqua Street Church of Christ, and the Apostolic church of Pentecost of Canada. And then in Saskatoon, we have eight larger churches: the Apostolic Church of Pentecost of Canada, the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witness, the Westside Pentecostal Church, the Forest Grove Mennonite Community Church, the Episcopal Corporation of Saskatchewan — the Emmanuel Baptist Church, the Circle Drive Alliance Church, and the Elim Pentecostal Tabernacle Church.

(1445)

Mr. Speaker, given the commitment of this government to local government reform and fairness in equity and taxation, we propose to act now to address this particular problem. This amendment will replace the current arbitrary two-acre limit on exempt church land with a formula that is tied to the occupied floor space of the place used for worship. This should allow churches to expand parking and other ground facilities to meet the needs of growing congregations. Church facilities not used for worship will not be considered in the calculation of the exempt land. Churches with places of worship too small to take advantage of the new formula will continue to enjoy the two-acre exemption on land used in connection with the place of worship.

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that this amendment will result in minimal reduction in revenues to municipalities and school boards. The greatest impact will be in Saskatoon, and even in that city only \$25,000 per year is involved in this form of property tax exemption. However, as the city has, since 1975, abated taxes owed by the churches in respect of land in excess of two acres, in practice there will be no revenue loss in that city.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this Bill, and I would urge all members to support this piece of legislation.

Mr. Katzman: — Mr. Speaker, I thank you — the courtesy of the member from Regina North West who allowed me to speak. I will not adjourn it . . . North East, sorry. My comments, Mr. Speaker, are after working with the church groups and those involved in the Saskatoon area for the last year and a half on this piece of legislation, and the idea which they wished to have in some of the larger churches because of the amount of square footage in the church, and because of the laws re parking lots, have forced them into the situation that they have asked for this type of legislation. The only other way to do it, Mr. Speaker, would be to bring zero Bills in, or private member's Bills, for each of these churches, as has been the practice in some times in the past. I think this is a more efficient way, and the way that the people involved in the

religious groups wish it to be done, and therefore I support it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to first of all indicate that we are aware of the circumstances that have led to the introduction of this legislation. I do not have any initial concerns, as I see it, in the Bill. I would like therefore, Mr. Speaker, to consider the description and the outline which the minister has now provided to us, and then I will have something more to say. And for now I would beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 46 — An Act to amend The Court of Appeal Act

Hon. Mr. Dutchak: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to move second reading of The Court of Appeal Act, 1986. The essence of the amendments contained in this Bill is to prevent the use of the court to unnecessarily delay proceedings. In many instances, Mr. Speaker, litigants will try to appeal to the Court of Appeal matters of a non-final nature simply to delay proceedings. To discharge this practice, the Court of Appeal has ruled in the past that permission of the court is required in advance before it will hear these matters. The amendment contained in section 4 of the Bill will clarify the authority for the existing practice in the court.

Similarly, many litigants will appeal minor decisions of a Court of appeal judge on non-final interlocutory matters to the full court. To prevent abuse of this right of appeal, the amendment to section 15 will permit rules of court to be made prescribing the circumstances in which these matters will be permitted to be appealed. To provide time for preparation of, and consideration of, the new rules of court, these amendments will come into force at a later date.

All of the other amendments contained in this Bill relate to the new definition of the word "decision." Throughout the existing Act many different terms are used to describe the matters that are being appealed to the Court of Appeal. A new definition of "decision," and amendments throughout the Act to utilize the new definition, will eliminate confusion. Mr. Speaker, these amendments have the support of the judges of the Court of Appeal.

I move second reading of An Act to amend The Court of Appeal Act.

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few comments, and then I'll be asking to adjourn the matter for further consideration.

The minister has detailed the purpose of the Act is to prevent appeals going to the Court of Appeal for the sole purpose of delay. I think to some extent that that makes some assumptions, as against the legal profession for instance, that they want to, and are instructing their clients, to take proceedings to the Court of appeal merely for the purpose of delay. And I wished the minister would at least have indicated whether he has conferred with the law society, whether it's a recommendation of the law society. At least, if he has done that, I think it's incumbent upon him to indicate to this Assembly what is the source of consultation that has taken place.

Certainly one other method of controlling — as he indicated, it's an abuse of the process — is the awarding of costs in the discretion of the court. And if you bring a matter before the court and — unnecessarily or unfounded by the court — costs can of course be transmitted as against the party that brought it, in the opinion of the court, without justification.

I want to take a look at it, and I want to talk to some of the people that are concerned. I certainly wish the minister would have had the courtesy of standing up here and indicate the extent of the consultation, because certainly he is in a position to be indicating to the House what consultation purposes have taken place — whether it has been with the law society; whether it has been with the law reform commission, if they took a look at it; whether it was in consultation with the justices, and certainly whether or not he looked at any other alternatives. Whether . . . you know, in putting forward this, whether he has looked at the number or the projected number of abuses as he is alleging requires the necessity of changing the Bill.

These are some of the areas that I think that any informed Minister of Justice would have given the courtesy to the House, of addressing them. We can read the Bill and see what it says, that you have to have leave from the Court of Appeal. What we'd like to know is, in proposing the legislation, the process that has been followed.

And accordingly what I'd ask, Mr. Speaker, at this time, is to adjourn debate in order to have further consideration of the matter.

Debate adjourned.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 40 — An Act respecting the Establishment, Maintenance and Use of Park Land and Park Land Reserve

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Seated to my right is John Law, Deputy Minister; seated immediately behind Mr. Law is Judith Falle, solicitor from the Department of Justice; beside Ms. Falle is Doug Cressman, the assistant Deputy Minister; to my left is Alan Appleby, director of parks branch. There are two other officials at the back, Cal Kirby, manager of park planning and Barry Tether, director of southern field services.

Clause 1

Mr. Koskie: — There are just a few specific areas that I want to touch on, Mr. Minister, in respect to the Bill. I take it the new legislation — and correct me if I interpret it wrong — but the existing Act, section 5, I am told, of the existing Act permits the Lieutenant Governor in Council to add to a provincial park or protected area, the boundaries of which are established in schedules of the Act. Regulations made pursuant to this power have done more than add to, on occasion, and to that extent are invalid. As well, all such regulations made prior to February 26, '79 have been superseded by the revision and are, accordingly, from our review of it, also invalid.

The specific question, Mr. Minister, that I'm asking is: is it correct that the new legislation re-describes the boundaries of all parks and protected areas and does not permit the Lieutenant Governor in Council to alter the boundaries set out in the Act?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is correct. Any changes would be done by amendment in the Assembly.

Mr. Koskie: — Okay. And again my understanding is that the existing Act permits provincial parks to be classified by regulations. Is it correct that within the new Act it sets out the specific classifications and the specific parks within each classification. Is that the general detail that is provided within the purview of the legislation?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is correct. The classification of park by type and designation is set out within the Act.

Mr. Koskie: — Further, the new Act, it seems to me, permits the Lieutenant Governor in Council to create park land reserve, but only to maintain the status quo vis-a-vis the land while it is decided whether it should be established as a park or a protected area.

I'm advised that an amendment to the Act would be needed to include land in, or designated as, a park or protected area. These regulations expire after five years but of course could be re-enacted. The point of designating land as a park land is to control its use and disposition, and I think that's set out in section 14 of the Act.

I think it's correct, is it not, that no person shall grant or transfer any park land. In other words, I take it that's the extent of section 14, and that section 15 provides or permits the minister to make certain dispositions subject to the Act and regulations in that regard, and permits the minister to add his own terms and conditions.

(1500)

So is it correct then, generally, that there shall be no grant or transfer of any park land, subject only to section 15 which provides some exceptions there by the minister? Is that generally correct?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — The hon. member touched on three different sections, Mr. Chairman. With your reference to section 5, you are correct in your assumption there about the park land reserve and having a five-year period of time for public input, research investigation, to see indeed if such land should be declared a park.

Section 14: the intent is simply to say that park land cannot be sold. Section 15 deals with disposition of park land. It deals precisely with entering into agreements to lease park land or to grant easements and other such things on park lands.

Mr. Koskie: — Well, come specifically to 15, I may have a few questions there, and maybe we can start that way. But I want just to get one other matter clear here, and that is in respect to a specific section again — if you don't mind,

Mr. Minister, dealing with it this way — and that is section 22. What is the purpose of section 22? What is it purporting to do?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — This section is included to accommodate any dispositions that may have been made prior to the resources transfer Act of 1931 for lands which have now become park lands.

Mr. Koskie: — Can you tell me what that means in layman's language? Would you go through that again?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — It's merely repairing a provision that's already with The Provincial Lands Act, and we're aware of only a few dispositions that may have been done prior to 1931, at which time transfer of land was made from federal to provincial jurisdiction.

Mr. Koskie: — I don't know if that helps or not. I'll come back to it as we go through the sections.

Also I want a general comment. Section 26 permits the minister to determine the boundaries of various zones within a park, and The Regulations Act is expressed not to apply to the order describing the boundaries. It is perhaps not necessary for such orders to be filed with the registrar of regulations, but the other result is that they will not have to be published anywhere, as 26 has so set forth.

And I'm wondering whether it might not in fact be desirable to direct that it be published, say in part 1 of the Gazette, so that the public will have a knowledge of it.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that this is a management tool, park management tool, as opposed to a form of regulatory activity which, indeed, will be contained within park management strategies which, of course, are available and will be made available to the public.

Mr. Koskie: — Is it published anywhere? What I'm asking is whether or not it's going to be published in the Gazette.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — There was no intent to publish it in the Gazette, but it would be made available to the public.

Mr. Koskie: — In what form?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — In the form of park managing strategies which already exist and which we make available to the public interested in any particular park.

Mr. Koskie: — What are the ways that you use at the present time in informing the public? You said you used the ordinary methods of informing them. What are those methods that the public will be so advised?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, when any change has been made in zoning, there has been a press release accompanying it, explaining what the intent is, plus stating that copies of the departmental strategy are available to members and interested public.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 26 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 27

Mr. Chairman: — I believe there is an amendment to clause 27. Clause 27 is to read:

Amend section 27 of the printed Bill by striking out "and" after clause (n).

Clause 27 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 28 to 31 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 32

Mr. Chairman: — Clause 32, there's an amendment. Section 32 of the printed Bill.

Amend section 32(2) of the printed Bill by striking out "the" in the second last line and substituting "and".

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, just in respect to clause 32, I take it that it limits the power of arrest without warrant, only to a situation in which a person who is ordered out of the park refuses to go. How does that section compare with the existing section 24 of the existing Act? Is it narrowed down or is it broadened or is it the same?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — I found a provision under the old Act for the hon. member. Under the previous Act, if someone were to be barred from the park or asked to leave the park and came back in within the 48-hour period, the enforcement officer would have no power of arrest. In this case this is the only instance where enforcement officers may arrest park users, and that substantially is a change from the old Act to this particular provision.

Mr. Koskie: — Okay, this is a departure from what was there before. What evidence have you to require that expansion of powers to the enforcement officer? Were you having a series of problems where people were being ordered out of the park and were refusing? What necessitated the sweeping powers handed over to the enforcing officer?

(1515)

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I found some information for the member. "Failure to comply with a directive of an officer" accounted for almost 13 per cent of the number of offences under The Parks Act; and "unlawfully failed to comply with an order of an officer to leave a park" accounted for about 21.5 per cent. In those instances the RCMP were called to enforce those particular provisions. The RCMP were supportive of the change which is being proposed within this Bill to allow the enforcement officer power of arrest under that circumstance, but only under that circumstance whereby the offender has refused to leave the park, or indeed forces his or her way back into the park.

Mr. Koskie: — The enforcement officers — what type of training have they in order to transfer this power over to them?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, the training of the officers is a two-year Renewable Resources course offered through the technical institutes. A part of the course does relate to enforcement which is taught in Regina at the RCMP barracks by their own instructors.

I'd like to point out to the hon. member that this particular provision doesn't mean that we expect our officers to be somehow quasi-policemen. The intent is not to make them RCMP officers or police officers. It's to give them the authority, when rowdiness or some such instance breaks out in the park, to ban from the park for a period of 48 hours a particular offender. If the offender chooses not to leave, or comes back in within a 48-hour period, they have the authority to arrest.

I hasten to point out that should the officers be placed at any physical risk whatsoever, or even the hint of physical risk, they are to call the RCMP. I don't expect officers to use force.

Clause 32 as amended agreed to.

Clause 33 agreed to.

Clause 34

Mr. Koskie: — In respect to section 34, I take it it allows the convicting judge to order restitution for damage to property and also to order a person to stay out of all or any parks for a specified period of a maximum duration of one year, if I'm correct in reading that. I guess the question is, is that what it purports to do? And secondly, is this a new provision, or was it a similar provision in the previous Act?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, the first part is correct. The hon. member is correct. Under the second part, previously restitution could only be ordered where a charge for wilful damage under the provisions of the Criminal Code had been laid by a police officer. Now, if wilful damage is proven in court and it came to court under the jurisdiction of one of our officers, restitution can be ordered by the magistrate.

Clause 34 agreed to.

Clause 35

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you.

An Hon. Member: — You need a light.

Mr. Koskie: — Well you're not lit up, I'll tell you that. And I'm referring to the chirping of the member of Moosomin, the member that no longer is going to run. There may be reasons why he's not running. His contribution to this House is very limited. I wonder, Mr. Chairman, do I have the floor or does the member . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order, order. Can we please have some relative calm and quiet in the House so that the member from Quill Lakes can carry on with his question.

Mr. Koskie: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We were going along very well until the rude interruptions of the member of Moosomin.

And I want to ask, Mr. Minister, in respect to section 35 here. The section reads that:

The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations respecting any matter or thing necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

Now that is about the broadest provision that I have ever seen in the history of any legislation in the 10 years that I've been in the legislature. And what I'm wondering . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the Deputy Premier is chirping, too. So they're hurting very badly because the minister . . . I am pointing out some of the weaknesses of his legislation and the care that should be taken.

But I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, certainly I think that very, very broad provisions for providing the right to make regulations is certainly not welcomes in any form of legislation, and primarily because it can lead to abuses. And I'm not alleging that there would be abuses. But generally speaking, let's face it, when the power to make regulations, it's certainly not in a general provision similar to 35.

You should have set down some of the areas in which . . . and normally that's all listed as to the areas that you can make regulations. I draw that to your attention, and I ask you for a justification for such a wild and woolly departure from the norm.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — I'm not sure it's a wild and woolly departure. I'm advised that this, in fact, is fairly general in drafting. I yield to the superior experience of the member for Quill Lakes. He has been around the Assembly a considerably longer period of time than I have, but I'd like to point out to him that this section is intended as a catch-all, only if something has been missed in the drafting.

But — but I hasten to point out to the hon. member, if we cast back to section 27, that is a regulatory-making section of the Bill, and this particular section, 35, does not supersede section 27. So section 35 is meant to pick up something which may arise in the course of implementation during the coming years that we may have missed, so that we have the authority to address a problem that may not have been contemplated in the drafting.

Mr. Koskie: — I'm not going to debate it with the member, only to say that I happen to be the chairman of the regulations committee, and one of the areas that we're constantly looking at is whether or not there is specific powers for the particular regulations.

And one of the things that has been brought to our attention in that committee is, in fact, that the general powers to make regulations should be spelled out, and this is very convenient if in case we miss something. Now isn't that nice for the public to know, that anything that you deem you want to make regulations towards, you have that power.

Well I'll tell you that the public is not very, very happy with broad, sweeping powers just for the convenience of the minister. I would think that you should think of the convenience of the public and, therefore, spell out what areas that you have the power to make regulations, rather than this wide and broad sweeping powers for your convenience, just in case you have missed something. That's what you've said. You're not concerned with the public; you're concerned with your own convenience, and that's the concern that we have with it.

And I'll tell you, in the regulations committee, the solicitor that we have for the regulations committee constantly is indicating that there should not be such a broad and sweeping provision. I want to draw that to your attention. And I would think that you should take that under advisement and to put in an amendment. In fact, you should repeal that whole section because it could lead to an abuse. I'm not alleging it would, but certainly the potential is there because it says that you can make regulations for . . . Well I'll read it so the public will be aware of the viciousness of the extent of the potential this here Act, section 35, and it reads:

The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations respecting any matter or thing necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

So absolutely anything . . . And as you said, it's solely for the convenience of you, just in case you missed something. And I suppose, just in case you have missed something, I think that's what we should consider. Time should be spent on the legislation to make it as complete as possible, and then if you need some further powers, you bring it back as an amendment to add to those powers, but then there is some legislative control. But if you put in . . . You can make regulations to cover anything that you wish for the purpose of this Act, then that's a broad brush that you give yourself, and a very difficult, very poor type of legislation because it's not protective of the public as you would lead us to believe.

So I raise that. I'd ask the minister to consider getting rid of this . . . repealing that vicious, wide-sweeping power of regulations that you have in this section.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I would like to respond to the hon. member's remarks. I can see where, taken in isolation, this clause may pose a problem, but the clause cannot be taken in isolation because it's tied in to the rest of the Bill.

First of all, it is not there for my particular convenience; it is there for protection of the public. Because if we do miss something which arises later, we need a regulation to cover that particular happenstance.

Secondly, this is common to many, many pieces of legislation whereby it's written in that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations respecting any matter or thing necessary to carry out the provisions of the Act. And it is a necessary clause, and it's not there for any spurious or devious reasons, and I can give every assurance to the hon. member it would not have been included had it not been deemed necessary and, indeed,

common practice in drafting legislation.

Clause 35 agreed to.

Clauses 36 to 38 inclusive agreed to.

Schedule agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill as amended.

(1530)

Bill No. 44 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Parks Act

Clause 1

Mr. Koskie: — In respect to this particular Bill, Bill 44, this is The Parks Consequential Amendment Act, and I take it each and every provision here is as a result of the previous Bill, and what are consequential of the previous Bill that we just dealt with. I just want to ask the minister, if that is indeed accurate, as that's my understanding of it, and is there any particular substantive change to any of the Acts in this here Bill, The Parks Consequential Amendment Act?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — I am advised that there are no changes which were not consequential to the provisions of this Act and to the safe passage and administration of this piece of legislation.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 9 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 43 — An Act to amend The Wildlife Act

Clause 1

Mr. Koskie: — There is a chirper in the House. He's interfering with the proceedings — the member from Meadow Lake. I thought I had the chair, Mr. Chairman, or the floor rather. I would therefore ask you to keep a little order in the House, because that large, huge members of the government side tend to try to be obstructive.

And I'd ask the member from Meadow Lake to enter the debate or else allow me to have the floor. Because his chirping goes on. And it's the same with the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake — is constantly chattering. He thinks it's very funny.

In respect to the amendment to The Wildlife Act, looking at section 18 being amended, I take it, Mr. Minister, the present section 18 provides for a one-year disqualification period after conviction for any contravention of the Act or regulations — one-year disqualification, if you keep that in mind — for any conviction or contravention of the Act or regulations, except section 37, hunting with lights, in which case the disqualification period is three years.

The situation re section 37 remains the same, I take it. But in addition, the disqualification period, after conviction for contravention of section 41, traffic in wildlife, is now five years; and for contravention of clause 28(1)(a), hunting in contravention of prescribed time, place, or manner; or section 31, possession of illegally taken wildlife, is one year or two years or three years, in the discretion of the convicting judge.

It seems to me that it provides here that this discretion is also given to the convicting judge re the contravention of any provisions of the regulations that is prescribed in the regulations; and further, that a contravention of any other unspecified provision of the Act or regulation still results in a disqualification period of one year.

That is the legal summary of the section 18. I just ask if that represents a fair and accurate representation of what is set out here in comparison to what we had before?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is quite correct.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 4

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, in respect to the amendments to section 57, subsection (1.1) I take it is added here to . . . basically is it to single out contraventions of clause 28(1)(a), section 31, and those provisions of the regulations that are prescribed in the regulations to deal with them more harshly by providing for the imposition of a higher maximum fine?

It seems to me it is still, by this provision, it is still up to the convicting judge to assess the amount of the fine, but he can, if he wishes now, impose a significantly greater fine — \$5,000 rather than the \$1,000.

Again, is that reasonably accurate of what is being set out there in the section 57, clause (1.1)?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — That's correct, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member is right. We're giving more leeway and more discretionary power to the presiding judge.

Mr. Koskie: — In respect to subsection (3) there, it says:

Any person who violates section 41 is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine of not less than \$1,000 and not more than \$25,000 or to imprisonment for a period of not more than two years less a day, or both.

I take it that this is a new provision, and it's a very substantial one. I was wondering whether you have any precedents for such a wide range of fine . . . I'm not being critical of it being there; I'm just asking whether you have done any research into having such a wide range. It's a fine of not less than 1,000 and not more than 25,000. Can you think of the circumstances of particular offence that leaves such a wide variation there of fine, from 1,000 all the way to 25,000? You may have a precedent from other

legislation, or you may have a particular reason for it, but I'd like to hear it.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, there are reasons for it. By way of background, I'll point out that in Alberta — not yet proclaimed; a provincial election intervened — they're moving to a maximum fine of \$100,000 for this particular offence, which is trafficking in wildlife.

Canada, under a new parks Act, also not yet proclaimed but which is in the works, they are moving to a maximum of \$150,000 for the same offence, and also providing for a jail term. I have the penalties for various other provinces in Canada. They are all substantially higher than ours are at the present. Trafficking is the illegal sale of wildlife parts taken from Saskatchewan primarily to markets in the southern United States.

The reason for such a high fine is to act as a deterrent. The previous fine of \$1,000, Mr. Chairman, could be deemed as just a built-in operating business expense for certain trafficking rings. We have evidence, and we have cases currently before the courts, of individuals who have taken substantial amounts of Saskatchewan wildlife out of this province and made huge profits.

We know of one particular individual who in a three-four-day span last year took approximately \$60,000 worth of wildlife parts — black market \$60,000 value — to the United States. He had been convicted of offences in the States and made enough money in Saskatchewan in a three-day period to go back and pay all his fines and buy his vehicles and guns back.

So we have had a significant trafficking problem in the last few years, and we hope, by raising the fines and by giving the judge the discretion also to impose a jail sentence, that we will somehow manage to deter would-be traffickers from coming in and raping and pillaging the wildlife of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you for that particular information. What I was wondering . . . You say that other provinces and other jurisdictions have, in fact, or are addressing this; and indeed Alberta, but superseded by an election — an election by the way which I may say was very gratifying to us.

I want to ask you whether there was any attempt made, at least with western Canada, to come to some uniformity in respect to the imposition of fines. It seems to me that where there's an opportunity, that one might in fact look at that. You have seen the variations as you have indicated. I was wondering whether there was any mechanism, or whether you pursued the possibility of getting some continuity of the legislation from province to province.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — That's a good suggestion the hon. member has made. In fact, ministers who have wildlife responsibilities in Canada have discussed this particular item. The one difficulty I point out to the hon. member is that we do have different species across western Canada. So bighorn sheep, for instance, in Alberta, which would be one of their serious problems, really isn't a problem for

us. Ours is white-tail deer, and to a lesser extent now, bear. We've got a population of 40,000 bear in Saskatchewan, and certain people in the United States are just starting to discover that, and they're moving up here and illegally taking bear.

So although the suggestion is a good one, it has been discussed. The crime has a different type of severity, depending on the species of wildlife indigenous to the different provinces.

Mr. Lusney: — Mr. Minister, on clause 4, when you talk about wildlife parts, and I would imagine you're talking about horns, and some of that has been happening by going across the border — how are you going to make people aware that this is an offence? I know there are some that maybe have a licence to do a little bit of hunting and they maybe get an animal that has a fair rack on him. They may have use for it; they may not. How do you tell them that this is an offence? If they have those horns that they cannot dispose of them, what do they do with them? Could they sell them to someone? Do they have to apply for the permit? Is there a way that they can deal with those horns?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — We will be advertising this in a game synopsis of which there will be some 200,000 copies available to the public. We also have certain provisions that are in the hunting guide that comes out every year. I'd like to point out to the hon. member, there is a legal mechanism by which a hunter who has legally taken a white-tail deer, a moose, whatever, can dispose of the horns, the antlers, the rack, by getting a permit, free of charge, from a conservation officer. We'd just like to know what the disposition is of the rack, and that way we can keep some kind of track. We know where it's going.

Mr. Lusney: — You're saying that they could sell that rack, or just give it away — which? Could they do either?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, they can sell that track. It's their possession; they took it legally; it belongs to them; they can sell it legally.

One point I should make for the hon. member. This legislation is by no means aimed at the honest sportsman or sportswoman out there in hunting season with a licence pursuing their hobby. By no means. This is there to protect both them and the future of wildlife, so that we will always have a abundant supply of game. Frankly, sir, this is aimed at crooks, and only crooks have something to fear.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5

Mr. Koskie: — In respect to the new section 58, I take it that the new provision is really the one permitting the judge to order that a vehicle used in connection with the commission of the offence against section 41 be forfeited to the Crown. I take it that's the essence of the new provision in that section 58. Is that correct? Was it in the previous section? Was there power permitting the judge to order that a vehicle used in connection with the commission of offence against section 44 be forfeited?

Was that present previously?

(1545)

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — An offence for night hunting, at the judge's discretion, he could — she could — impound a vehicle for 60 days. This particular clause would give a magistrate, the judge, discretion to impound a vehicle or to declare that the vehicle is forfeited. That did not exist before and, under that section, that is for trafficking.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clauses 6 and 7 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 38 — An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act

Mr. Chairman: — Would the minister please introduce his official.

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — I'm pleased to introduce to the Assembly, Mr. Rick Kilarsky, municipal finance branch of Urban Affairs.

Clause 1

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, the amendment here is straightforward, so I don't think I have many questions on the nature of the amendment from the legal point of view.

I do want to, once again, make the comment which I have made before. I simply want to state that the problem with this amendment is that it highlights a situation which I think municipalities are concerned about, rightfully so, and that is that they have no longer any way of knowing from year to year what kind of funding they're going to be able to expect from their provincial government.

And if you are a minister, as you are, in charge of a department, and if you don't know what your budget or what your financing is going to be in order that you can look ahead, it would provide you with some difficulties. In the same way, and in fact in a greater way, municipalities, because your government has now adopted the tin-cup approach, and the municipalities have to come every year and say: here's what our problems are, how much are you going to give us; and then wait for a budget which then announces it, and then wait for the budget debate to be finished and whatever processes that come with that, to get their money. I think it makes their life a lot more difficult. so we object in principle to the fact that revenue sharing, as municipalities once knew it, no longer exists.

We also are concerned about the nature of the increase that's provided in the budget and again in this amendment, which is 3 per cent — 3 per cent, particularly in light of the fact that last year there was no increase at all, that the revenue sharing from municipalities was frozen. When you consider that inflation, if it was 4 per cent in 1984 and 4 per cent in 1985 . . . or let me move up a couple years — 4 per cent in

1985 and 5 per cent in 1986, which I think is where it is heading, that's 9 per cent inflation over a two-year period, but the increase in revenue sharing is only 3 per cent.

That's one of the reasons why taxes have been going up on property. I will want to talk to the Minister of Education, whenever we get into estimates, about what's happened to property taxes for education. And when you add all of those up, there has been a lot of money that's been taken out of property owners' pockets, families who are trying to raise children, which has gone to pay for municipal services and education services because the government's proportion has actually been decreasing.

In light of this concern which I have outlined, Mr. Minister, I think it's important that municipalities get some idea about when they will have an escalator formula in revenue sharing, and then again a distribution formula, because this amendment refers to the fact in your explanatory notes that there is no escalator index because you claim it cannot be calculated. I have indicated before that I would argue with you on that, but the fact that there is no escalator creates a problem.

And you indicated in your estimates, Mr. Minister, that you were consulting with Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association on providing an escalator formula. Are you in a position to indicate what progress has been made so that maybe hopefully in the next year, in the next budget, there can be a different amendment to this Act which would put more certainty in it? Has there been any progress in the negotiations for the escalator formula?

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Mr. Chairman, I can't give the member the specific detail. I can say that this very day I met with SUMA — and my officials were meeting — this morning. I believe they are meeting this afternoon, and they are in fact dealing with this particular issue of revenue sharing. For the future, things such as the escalator formula and distribution matters and so on, are presently being discussed.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I am glad to hear that, and I hope that those negotiations go better than the one previous. Because I know that there were meetings prior to this budget and this Bill and this amendment, in which it was said, we're negotiating with SUMA and municipalities and we'll have a formula. But it hasn't happened. I can only hope that it will this time happen.

Can you tell me this: do you have a mechanism, a consulting mechanism in place, where you know you're starting at point A? Like, you've had some meetings today and they're continuing today. Is there a mechanism in place where it will at a certain point in time result in a conclusion? Or are you just playing it in an ad hoc way with these negotiations?

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Well we continue to meet with SUMA. These are not ad hoc negotiations. They are very important and serious and appropriate kinds of discussions and consultations. We naturally expect that this discussion process will ensue, at some point in time in the future, in some particular kind of a formula which

will be satisfactory to everybody. Naturally one is not able at this point this afternoon to project a particular date at which time that particular formula would be made public. But naturally we expect that that will come in due course.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I can accept that you can't say, we're having negotiations and it's going to conclude on July 31st of 1986. But I think the public and the municipalities and the opposition, even your members, have a right to know whether or not it is the intention of the government to have a formula in place prior to the next budget. That's really what I'm trying to get at, because I think that is important.

Is that the intention of the government, to have both an escalator formula and a distribution formula in place prior to the next budget? And then we can debate whether it's an adequate formula or not. But at least people out there who are relying on some form of provincial funding would know what to expect. Can you give me that commitment on behalf of the government?

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — That is my hope, that indeed that formula will be in place. Is that clear enough? I was responding to your question. It's my hope that that will be in place before the next budget cycle.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Well I suppose maybe the election might have something to do with that, but we don't want to get into a discussion on that one right now.

A lot of hopes, Mr. Minister, a lot of hopes come crashing down. I know you say it's your personal hope. Is that the intention of the government — you, as a member of the cabinet — is that the intention of the government that it in fact be in place? If it is, and if you can tell me that, then I will be satisfied.

I'm not happy with what's happened; I'm not happy with the 3 per cent; I'm not happy with the fact that it's being applied to everybody. Because there should have been, in my view, some provision in the escalator where it recognized particular difficulties that some municipalities face. You have chosen not to do that. I simply want to put on the record that in the view of the opposition, that's unacceptable. We could debate that, but we have had that debate. I really think it's unacceptable; I think it's unfair. There could have been a better method developed.

But I simply ask again my question: is that the intention of your government, Mr. Minister, that there be a formula in place and that is the intention of your negotiations prior to the next budget?

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Yes, it is our intention to have that kind of a formula in place prior to the next budget.

I'm not surprised, of course, to hear the opposition say that they are not pleased or not supportive. Rarely these days does one hear an opposition anywhere saying that they are supportive or encouraged or pleased with any particular initiative taken by any government. So that is not surprising in and of itself.

But I would simply remind the members of the Assembly here this afternoon, and to the public, that over the last few years since this government has been in power that there were revenue-sharing increases in the order of 11.5 per cent and 7 per cent and 5 per cent and this year, 3 per cent — a significant sum in terms of increases in dollars for urban municipalities here in the province.

I know that the members opposite would like to see more. I naturally would like to see more if that were possible. I'm sure everybody in the province would like to see more money being made available to them for various kinds of purposes, whether they be organizational purposes or personal purposes.

Nevertheless, I think that we have been able to provide a reasonable and a fair amount of assistance to urban municipalities, and I'm pleased that we have the amendment to The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act today which does provide our urban municipalities in the province of Saskatchewan with the 3 per cent increase.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Yes, I acknowledged that there has been an 11.5 per cent increase. I think that was provided in the last budget that the New Democratic party was the government in 1982, and I acknowledge that there was a 7 per cent increase and a 5 per cent, but you forgot to refer to the last year in which there was a zero per cent increase, Mr. Minister, and this year it's now at 3 per cent.

And it's not a question of somebody would just want more. The fact is that people who are affected by the policy decisions of any government have an interest in those policy decisions, and your decisions in your financial management and in policy has caused property taxes to increase very significantly, not only on the mill rate which has got property taxes that people actually have to pay go up significantly, but also in the fact that you removed the property improvement grant which was a very substantial increase in the property tax. And every day I have people tell me, when I'm around my constituency, that with them that's one of the biggest issues that they face — the removal of property tax relief.

Now the member from Weyburn laughs. Well maybe with his income as a veterinarian he probably was very successful, and his income as a cabinet minister, the property . . . Mr. Chairman, now that I have the attention of the House and the member from Weyburn is quiet again, I will continue.

Now the member from Weyburn with his cabinet minister salary may not be concerned about a \$230 property tax rebate, but I can tell you that the average home owner in Saskatchewan, Mr. Chairman, found that to be a very significant relief in property taxes. And I agree with them, and so does the New Democratic Party and our caucus agree with them. That's why it is our commitment as a party, when there is an election, and if the people decided that there should be a New Democratic government, one of the things that they can be assured of is that they will have once again property tax relief, because it is our view that the burden of property taxes has got to be just too great.

(1600)

There is nothing completely fair about the idea of property taxes because, Mr. Chairman, if you owned a home, at your income as an MLA, and your neighbour who may also own a home, who may be earning \$10,000 a year less, there is no provision in the property taxes that says you're going to have to pay more property taxes and that family will have to pay less. In some ways it is a regressive tax. It's necessary, it's true, because it's one source of revenues for municipalities and for school boards. But one of the things that also is necessary is having some relief to property owners. That's gone.

And if the New Democratic Party forms a government it will be reinstituted, and even you, Mr. Chairman, will qualify. And so you should, because people should not be discriminated on the basis of who they are or whether they're wealthy or whether they're not wealthy. And that's the point I want to make. A 3 per cent increase in revenue sharing, when you consider the fact that it was zero per cent last year, is really an insignificant increase. It does not even meet the cost of inflation.

That's all I have to say on that. I'm prepared to let the Bill go by. The minister has given me the one commitment which I really wanted to get today. And that is the commitment that this government, if by some chance it happens to be the government after the election . . . There are an awful lot of people who are doubting that these days, but if by chance that happens, that there will be before the next budget — I have a commitment from the minister on behalf of the government — both an escalator and a distribution formula. And I will be waiting for the day to see when it is announced.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

The committee reported progress.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 40 — An Act respecting the Establishment, Maintenance and Use of Park Land and Park Land Reserve

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Speaker, I move first and second reading of the amendments.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Speaker, I move the Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 44 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Parks Act

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Speaker, I move the Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 43 — An Act to amend The Wildlife Act

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Speaker, I move the Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 38 — An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act

Hon. Mr. Dirks: — Mr. Speaker, I move this Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lane that Bill No. 41 — **An Act respecting Stock Savings Plan Tax Credits** be now read a second time.

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In respect to Bill 41, I want to add a few comments in respect to it. Certainly it's a type of legislation, which the minister alluded to, of providing some tax exemptions where people invest in stocks on the stock exchange. And I think the question which we have to ask is: to what extent is this meaningful to the people of Saskatchewan? How many people in Saskatchewan are actively buying stocks on the stock exchange? And I think, if you look at it, you will find that it doesn't stretch across a very significant number of the population.

So what we're saying here is that again what we have is not a very meaningful type of legislation in that it does not include or allow for the full participation of people in society. What this is directed to again is to those with money and those few that have some expertise to deal in the stock exchange.

Certainly . . . The member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake laughs. But we are concerned in that what you have done with respect to Saskoil, in the selling off of Saskoil and privatizing a portion of it, it again was restricted to those who have the money to lose, risk in the stock in a very risky business in the stock exchange, and it also is a relatively few people who will participate. And we would have thought that you have to start asking yourself: how is this party opposite running this province?

We find here a total massive deficit of \$2 billion. And at the same time what they're doing here is to offer further concessions of income to the treasury. And who are they offering the concessions to? It's to those who can afford to take a risk and lose money on the stock exchange. That's what they are encouraging here as an income tax benefit.

I want to say that certainly provisions which would be broader based, which would indeed give to those in lower income an opportunity too . . . There seems to be an assumption that only if you have a significant amount of money, a certain sophistication to deal with the stock exchange, do you get the benefit.

I think that it's time that the government came to grips with the dilemma that they have created here in the province, and that is the magnitude of . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well their basic economic policy has been floundering and flopping, and it has brought Saskatchewan into a position which few could believe would have happened four years ago. And they continue with these types of proposals, Mr. Speaker, of giving income tax concessions to a very few restricted numbers in society who are likely to participate in the investment in the stocks.

What we are doing here is communicating with the business community. I know, in talking to many of the business community in my area, one of the things that they're saying is: let business proceed where it's economic to do it. When we start putting in government grants to various businesses, they're saying that it skews the operation. And in fact they would rather see if an enterprise is going to go — that you don't have to have built-in government incentives. That's what many of the small-business men are saying. We are analysing with the business community the impact of some of the measures of this government as to the basic effect and whether they indeed welcome it.

The minister comes forward with a figure of, I believe, something like 75 to \$100 million being generated through this method. Well certainly we do not criticize the minister for attempting to get some economic development going, because certainly Saskatchewan needs economic development. But all I can say is that they have floundered around. And by this time the people of Saskatchewan, after watching the dismal fiscal management and the economic development of this province, many people are not convinced that they know where they are going or that their particular methods of getting there are of advantage to the general economy.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, we want to communicate with the business community on this essential Bill. What I'm going to ask, in light of the fact that we are carrying this out — it's an important piece of legislation. And certainly if the business community feel that it's conducive to the further development of Saskatchewan, and will be of benefit to new companies being formulated, and a new source of revenue, then of course we would not be opposing that legislation.

But we are in the process, as I say, of discussing this with the business community. And as . . .

An Hon. Member: — With Larry Brown.

Mr. Koskie: — The member from Duck Lake is throwing snide remarks again. When I say we're discussing with the business community, he snidely says, oh it's with Larry Brown. I don't know why the minister from Duck Lake can't sit and get into the debate rather than throwing

snide remarks. But anyway, Mr. Speaker, we are, as a caucus, discussing this matter seriously with the business community, for the information of the minister of Duck Lake, P.A. - Duck Lake.

Accordingly, we want further time to review this matter, to discuss it, and accordingly I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

(1615)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morin that Bill No. 28 — **An Act to amend The Education and Health Tax Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to be able to get into this debate on what I think is an important Bill with some rather important implications, as was indicated by the member from Elphinstone, not only from what is in it, but also from the point of view of what is not in it.

The Bill that we have before us today amends the same Education and Health Tax Act, the legislation which has provisions in it to charge the sales tax for used cars — or used vehicles, not just cars, because the range is very broad — and I think that that is significant. And we're talking here about taxation, and no matter what form of taxation it is, Mr. Speaker, taxpayers have to pay.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this government's tough tax on old cars, the resale of old cars, is what I think, in my view and in the view of a lot of people, a major betrayal of the Tories' promise to the people of Saskatchewan. This amendment that we see before us is an attempt — although it does provide some benefit, and I would not argue with that, and that's why I can agree with the amendment.

But this amendment, Mr. Speaker, the objectionable thing about it is the motives of this government in bringing it in. And the history and the record of the actions of this government from the point of view of taxation only could lead to the conclusion in the minds of the general public that it cares very little about their interests when it comes to the amount of taxes that they have to pay and the kind of value they get for the dollar of the tax that they pay. And so the purpose of this amendment is simply to try to recoup some of the political loss that this government has suffered by the introduction of the sales tax on used cars.

Now it's not unimportant, Mr. Speaker, it is not unimportant that this government, this Conservative government and every Conservative candidate campaigned in the last election on the promise of tax cuts. And specifically they promised — every single Tory candidate promised — that they would eliminate the provincial sales tax in their first term of office.

Well now we see here a situation where this government is beyond their first term of office. They now find themselves in the fifth year of their government. They have expended and extended their mandate to govern,

and yet they hang on in the hope that, by bringing certain little measures there, they can convince enough of the disillusioned electorate who have forsaken them to come back and re-elect them for one more term.

Now the member from Lloydminster-Cut Knife the other day, Mr. Speaker — and I don't think you were in the Chair at that time — but he stood up in defence of this Bill and he made a long speech on a lot of subjects. And one of the things that the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster tried to do was he tried to disassociate himself from the Conservative Party and its commitments. It was kind of humorous, and it could have been humorous and it could have been funny except for the fact that an awful lot of people have been hurt by the actions that we have seen happen in Saskatchewan for almost five years now.

The member from Cut Knife-Lloyd stood in the House and he argued that he had absolutely nothing to do with the promise to eliminate the sales tax. Well I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that my colleague, the member from Quill Lakes, when he spoke, very eloquently and very clearly showed that indeed every candidate who ran for the Conservative Party did indeed make the promise to eliminate the sales tax.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if you run as a Conservative, then you stand for the things that the Conservative Party stands for. If you run as a New Democrat, you stand for the things that the New Democratic Party stands for.

Now the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite tried to dissociate himself from that promise. Well once, and I forget how it is, somebody made a comment that I remember hearing very clearly, and it sort of reminds me about it every once in a while when I hear members like that, who talk the way they do. And it was a comment went something like this: if you walk like a duck and you talk like a duck and you look like a duck, you're a duck.

Well I simply say, Mr. Speaker, if you talk like a conservative and you run as a conservative candidate, you're a conservative. So for the member to dissociate himself now, when he knows that the electorate of Saskatchewan have decided that they can't trust these people any more for another term of government . . . They try to say, oh but we weren't part of that.

Well I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, they were. Now many of them no doubt were sincere about it, because they were new and they did not know the process. And the members who were in the House for several years gave them information which they took at face value, which turned out to be inaccurate information. But that was the policy.

And so I say to the House, Mr. Speaker, the facts cannot be denied. Conservatives promised to eliminate provincial sales tax in their first term of office. But have they reduced it? I say to you, no. Have they kept their promise? I say to you, no.

There's a provision here to take away the sales tax on

clothing, and that's good. But it doesn't come close to what the commitment was. They have not honoured their commitment to eliminate the sales tax at all. As a matter of fact, for a while they increased and extended that sales tax as it applied to used cars.

Well I want to say, Mr. Speaker, for the record, that in 1982 it was a New Democratic Party government — and these people have tried to take credit for — but it was a New Democratic Party government, prior to the election of 1982, which eliminated the sales tax on children's clothing. So I say, Mr. Speaker, that that action was taken.

Now I have heard members opposite go around making arguments that the Conservative government eliminated the tax on children's clothing. Well I have here a copy of the budget speech, Mr. Speaker, March 18, 1982. My name happens to be on it, and let me read to you what that budget speech said, Mr. Speaker. It says on page 42 of that budget speech, as I announced earlier:

We will provide assistance to families with small children by eliminating the education and health tax on children's clothing and footwear. The exemption will cover children aged 14 and under and will save Saskatchewan families over \$3 million in 1982.

That referred to the sales tax which is part of this legislation which we are amending here today, Mr. Speaker — or we're talking about amending here today. And it is really not hard to understand why the general public is concerned about what this government says, because they know, too many times what they say is not the honest truth. This example of trying to take credit for the removal of the sales tax on children's clothing is a very good example. But that's four years ago, Mr. Speaker, and that's in the past.

So while a New Democratic Party government was moving to eliminate the tax on children's clothing, what did this Conservative government do? This Conservative government in 1985 put a tax on used cars, which people had to pay. And so therefore this was an unfair increase in the sales tax. They preached tax reform, and I have read budget speeches since 1982 by the former minister of Finance who talks about tax reform, but then nothing is done after that.

Who can be not in favour of tax reform? I think if you ask anyone except the extremely wealthy and those who are now taking advantage of the tax system, they will agree that tax reform is something that we all should be interested in. We all should be interested in a simpler tax system. We should all be interested in a more fair tax system. There's no denying that.

But what this Conservative government has done when they talked about tax reform is that they simply have actually meant it to be a tax increase, and the one on used cars was, I think, a prime example. It did not make the tax any simpler. It did not make the tax system any simpler. It did not make the tax system any more fair. It was a betrayal of a promise made to the people of Saskatchewan, a betrayal of a commitment to cut taxes, and it demonstrates how hollow is their pious support for

what they only give words to, and that is tax reform. When the Devine PC government says tax reform, as has been said by many before me, they really mean a tax increase, Mr. Speaker.

Now I know that after the by-election in November in Regina North East, and I remember it very well because I happened to have been involved in that, but after the by-election this government finally admitted that the sales tax on used cars was wrong, and I accepted that. Sometimes this kind of therapy makes people reconsider. It was cancelled in December, but it's not incorporated in this Bill. It was in place for a period of about six months, and 60,000 vehicles in Saskatchewan, used vehicles, were sold. The people who purchased those 60,000 vehicles paid that sales tax on used cars for that period of time. The government turned around and said, well the tax is wrong, we have learned a lesson, but they insist on punishing these people who paid that tax on this unfair tax, which the government opposite even has admitted is an unfair tax. Those people by this government are being punished because they got caught by the ... (inaudible interjection) ... Mr. Speaker, do I have the floor or does the member from Saskatoon Centre, who's shouting from his seat, have the floor? And when I have the attention of the House, I will continue.

Mr. Speaker, I can't accept and neither can my colleagues accept the fact that people, who were caught in the political gamesmanship of this Conservative government and paid the sales tax on used cars, should be punished for this government's mistake. And that's why it is the position of the New Democratic Party and this caucus that people who paid that tax on used vehicles should have it reimbursed. And under this government, Mr. Speaker, under our government after the next election, they will have that sales tax reimbursed as they should.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — And so the fact that there is no provision in this Bill, there is no provision in this Bill to eliminate legally the collection of the sales tax on used vehicles, I think should be of great concern to us all. Indeed it is to me and it is to my colleagues. And I know that it is of concern to a lot of the public, a vast majority of the public, because they're asking, why does the government not do away with the legal provision to collect the sales tax on used vehicles?

Now here we have a piece of legislation, an amendment to The Education and Health Tax Act, in which it would have been quite simple and quite normal to incorporate an amendment which would take away that sales tax on used vehicles, but it's not here. One has to ask, who's playing the game and what kind of a game is being played? And people can then only reach one conclusion, and I think it's a fair conclusion: that if the opportunity politically presents itself, this Conservative government intends to reintroduce the sales tax on used cars.

Having decided to do that, they will not have to introduce legislation and therefore have it open to debate, not only in this House but in the public. They will simply, because it is still in the law, be able to say around a cabinet table: we are now going to collect the sales tax on used cars and

never have to put it up to public scrutiny. They will simply be able to say that, Mr. Speaker. they will set out whatever appropriate forms need to go out to the dealers who sell cars and simply say, you now have to collect it.

And that's why a number of dealers, Mr. Speaker, have spoken to me and said, what is happening here; we don't know where we stand. And so, Mr. Speaker, I am saying to you that there should have been a provision here to eliminate the sales tax on used vehicles from this Bill.

An Hon. Member: — Vote against it, are you? Vote against it.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Now the member from Moosomin says, vote against the Bill. Well I'll tell you what, Mr. Speaker, if I or one of my colleagues when we get into committee, introduces an amendment to this Bill to do away with that sales tax on used cars, I will welcome and challenge the member from Moosomin and the member from Prince Albert-duck Lake to vote against that amendment. And we will certainly want to be able to ask them why it wasn't in this Bill in the first place, unless there is something that this government wants to hide, and that wouldn't be surprising because they have a reputation of hiding an awful lot of things from the public of Saskatchewan.

(1630)

Now as I said earlier, this amendment that's before us in Bill 28 is an amendment which we can support as it stands alone. Now, but just as New Democrats, Mr. Speaker, introduced an elimination of the sales tax for children's clothing in 1982, so we can also be in support of the removal of the tax on clothing other than luxury items.

But the point that needs to be made — the point that needs to be made, Mr. Speaker, is this: that this Bill cannot be taken in isolation. No tax Bill can be taken in isolation because a tax is a tax, and it can be a sales tax, or it might be an income tax, or it might be some other form of tax, so this move in this amendment would be commendable if it was the only tax measure, but it is not.

There are other tax measures — the used car sales tax; the flat tax, which was another one; the cancellation of the property improvement grant was another one because that was in essence a tax increase on property. And so all of that has had an impact on Saskatchewan taxpayers.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that in total, Saskatchewan taxpayers have been forced to pay more and more taxes with each successive Tory budget, and this year is not an exception. And so while ordinary taxpayers pay more, the wealthiest in our society, outfits like oil corporations have paid less if you want to make a comparison between the payment of sales tax and the payment of taxes that others have to pay. In 1982, for example, oil revenues for the province of Saskatchewan were estimated at \$796 million. In 1986-87 in this budget, which we are considering, oil revenues are estimated at \$510 million.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. We aren't at this time

considering the budget, but rather we're considering one Bill that deals with one topic, and I would ask the member to come back to the Bill.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't disagree with you. We're considering a Bill that deals with the sales tax. And what I'm doing here is making a comparison with what's happened to the sales tax and the impact that this amendment will have, as compared to what's happened in other forms of taxation.

In 1986-87 oil revenues are estimated to be only . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. I just asked the member to come back to the subject of the Bill, and he's going on a very wide-ranging discussion and it doesn't fit.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — We're talking about the principle of the sales tax, and I accept your ruling, but simply that \$510 million in oil revenues this year compared to over \$700 million five years . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. This is the third time that I'm correcting the member that he is off the Bill, and I'm going to ask you to stay to the Bill and not try and slip it in like you're doing.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Well I'm coming to the Bill, because I think it's important for the comparison to be made, Mr. Speaker. I wish you had been in the Chair. I don't argue with your ruling . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. If the member has something to say on the Bill, I'll hear that, but otherwise I'll move on to the next speaker.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, let me compare the sales tax, which is what this Bill is about, to the comments I made on oil revenues. The sales tax that Saskatchewan people have to pay in 1986 is \$386 million — a very significant increase in the amount of sales tax that Saskatchewan citizens have to pay, even though that government and those ministers over there argue that sales taxes have decreased.

The fact of the matter is that more money in sales taxes is coming out of Saskatchewan people's pockets today than it was five years ago. And that's simply due to the policies of the government opposite.

The sales tax is only one form of taxes. And that's the point I was trying to make, Mr. Speaker, before you interrupted me and asked me to get in the topic as you understand it, and I'm prepared to do that. But the sales tax is only one form of taxes and charges that Saskatchewan people have to pay. It in itself has increased significantly, the amount that people have to pay.

If you take into consideration the total amount of taxes, of which sales tax is apart, Mr. Speaker, clearly there has been a very major tax increase on Saskatchewan people. True, a reduction or doing away with the sales tax of clothing will help some people and some individuals; I accept that. But that alone cannot be taken in isolation, as I said in my earlier remarks.

The fact of the matter is that people earning \$20,000 a year with a family of four in 1986, including the sales tax, are going to pay over \$760 more in taxes and charges than they did in 1982. If you take a family with an income of 30,000 people, the amount of taxes they will pay, including the sales tax which we are talking about here today, in 1986 it's going to be well over \$766 each year more than they had to pay in 1982.

So although this Bill is an attempt by the government to try to say to the Saskatchewan taxpayer that they have decreased taxation because they have eliminated a tax on clothing, the total tax bill for Saskatchewan people has increased and increased very significantly. And an increase of over \$700 a year in taxation and charges on a family earning \$20,000 a year is a big increase in taxes — a very big increase in taxes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what does this education tax, this sales tax, pay for? Well it pays for services that people in this province have long learned to enjoy and appreciate and expect to get, good quality services, whether it's education, or whether it's health, or whether it's other kinds of services. People are concerned that many of those services have deteriorated and they're not getting fair value for their tax dollar that they're spending on sales tax.

An Hon. Member: — That's not right.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Well, somebody opposite says, that's not right. Well that member obviously has not spent a lot of time in his constituency or he will know that most of his constituents don't agree with what he has to say. And they object to the fact that some of that sales tax that people are having to pay is going to pay for international trips by cabinet ministers — taxpayer-paid holidays. It's going to pay for that huge cabinet, which the Premier finally reduced to some degree in December, but all of those people who were employed and who were there are still on salary. People of Saskatchewan are saying that's not the way they want their tax dollar to be spent, and I agree with them.

What else, Mr. Speaker, is this sales tax and other kind of taxes going to pay for? It goes to pay for \$20 million of advertising that this government busy to pay off their chosen advertising firm. People of Saskatchewan are saying their sales tax dollar should not have to go to pay for that kind of political advertising. When some of the taxpayers of this province have been told, look, you cannot get a salary increase this year — teachers were among them, there were other kinds of workers, people on minimum wage . . . 1985, I'll correct that. In 1985 . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. There are times when we have a free and open, wide-ranging debate, but on second reading of Bills that is not the time. And I would ask the member to get back to the Bill.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The Bill, Mr. Speaker, as you say, involves the doing away with the sales tax on clothing. I accept that, and I'm talking about the sales tax. I'm saying that people of this province who pay the sales tax should not have to pay through that sales tax for these kinds of

items, and they should not have to pay for high-paid political staff that ministers hire. That's not what they meant their sales tax to go for. They meant their sales tax to go for services such as education, such as health care programs, and other kinds of services. That has not been happening. That has not been happening.

And all across the province, Saskatchewan people are saying they've had enough. And they're saying they can not be fooled by a simple amendment to The Education and Health Tax Act, which only meets a very small part of the promise made by this government opposite, and does away with the sales tax on clothing. They say they will not be fooled by that because they understand that taxation is far broader than that.

Mr. Speaker, several members have spoken on this debate. And I don't think that it's significant that a number of members have spoken, either . . . both on the government side and on this side of the House. They have spoken on this debate, Mr. Speaker, because they have spoken to their constituents, and their constituents are telling them that this is an issue that is of central concern with them. And that is the question of fair taxation. And so that's why it has prompted, probably more on this Bill than any other Bill that we've considered in this House before, for more members to stand up and speak. Because when you put aside a lot of the things that happen inhere, I think in essence members who sit here and represent their constituents still come back and in many ways reflect what their constituents are telling them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, sales taxes, the total amount of sales taxes collected over the last four or five years have increased significantly. Even with this amendment, Saskatchewan people will pay far more in sales taxes than they did in 1982. And doing that, they wonder why, in spite of that, there's still a \$2 billion deficit.

You would think that this great increase in the amount of money they pay in sales tax in total would have caused there not to be such a deficit. And so they're asking what kind of mismanagement do we have in this government, or the \$8.7 billion of debt — triple over 1982. All of this has happened. There will be a price to pay because all of that has to be repaid at some time in the future with generations to come.

And now in the year of an election, this government decides to introduce the elimination of the sales tax on clothing in order that they may, in their view, recoup some politics. Well people will appreciate it; we will support that change and that reduction in the tax, but I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and I can tell the members opposite, that people will not be fooled by the kind of political gamesmanship that has brought this about. It could have been just as easy to include this amendment when the sales tax on children's clothing was brought in four years ago, but the government chose not to do that.

It chose to practise a process of contradiction — say one thing and do something else. It chose to promise the elimination of the sales tax in total, but they have refused to do that and only will eliminate the tax on clothing.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people who have yet something to say on this Bill. The public is saying a lot about it because they have been watching this debate and they have been listening to this debate, and I submit to you that there are more of the people in the public who yet want to phone us and phone members opposite, yet want to talk about the broken promises and how this does not meet the promise of the Conservative party opposite, and in light of that, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that we will have a lot of questions when it comes to the committee and we will have amendments to make when it comes to the committee, and I hope that the members opposite will be prepared to support them.

(1645)

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

ROYAL ASSENT TO BILLS

At 4:46 p.m. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bills:

Bill No. 2 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act

Bill No. 34 — An Act to amend The Highways and Transportation Act

Bill No. 16 — An Act to amend The Venture Capital Tax Credit Act

Bill No. 22 — An Act to amend The Education Act

Bill No. 23 — An Act to amend The Department of Education Act, 1983

Bill No. 6 — An Act respecting the Application to Saskatchewan of the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction

Bill No. 35 — An Act to amend The Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, 1983

Bill No. 36 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act

Bill No. 38 — An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act

Bill No. 40 — An Act respecting the Establishment, Maintenance and Use of Park Land and Park Land Reserve

Bill No. 43 — An Act to amend The Wildlife Act

Bill No. 44 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Parks Act

His Honour retired from the Chamber at 4:40 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Chairman, it being near 5 o'clock, I suggest, now that we are in committee, that we recess until the regular hour of 7 and begin with the consideration of the Department of Co-ops.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.