

EVENING SITTING

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 2

Ms. Smart: — After a few remarks, I want to move a motion of return asking the government to give us a list of all the reports, the studies, the investigations, or the projects awarded to external consultants by each government department, agency, and Crown corporation. And I'll be speaking a little bit about the details that we want. But it's obvious that when we ask for reports of external consultants that we're very interested in getting more information about the work that is contracted out by this government to outside people, and we want to know exactly what is being done in this regard and who is doing it.

We want the name and the purpose of the report because these reports are funded by government money, by the taxpayers' money, and they have a right to know what's being done, and the names and the purposes of these reports, studies, investigations, or projects.

Obviously we also want to know the total cost of them because, again, it's taxpayers' money and we need to know how much is being spent. We want to know the method by which the work was awarded because we want to know whether it was tendered or whether it was just a little invitation under the table to do some work for the PC Party. We would hope that it would have been awarded properly, but if you bring forth the information, we can decide that ourselves and the public can decide it as well.

We need the name of the external consultants who performed the work, and finally, the recommendations or the analysis provided to the government. This is also extremely important in terms of information. It gives us information not only in what the government is doing and who they're contracting with, but also what information they've gathered in the process of funding these external consultants' reports and studies and investigations and projects.

We believe that there's quite a lot of work involved here through external consultants and that the taxpayers have a right to know about that work since they're paying for it. And so we're asking the government to bring forward the details of these projects. And the resolution that I'm moving asks for us to do this from the period of September of '87 to the date of the return that this was ordered.

We really need to be able to be up front with the taxpayers in this province, because they are spending a lot of money supporting this government and the work that the government's doing, and I think they deserve to know who is doing the work as external consultants with the government and just exactly what information or what recommendations or what analysis was brought forward as a result of the external reports.

I hope that the Deputy Premier will take my request seriously. Because the freedom of information in a

democracy has got to be one of the corner-stones of what we're working on in this government here in Saskatchewan. And it's certainly an issue that we pushed you hard on in many different ways, from bringing in the public accounts to all sorts of information about the deals that you have been making with selling off our Crown corporations and giving away the resources of the province of Saskatchewan. In terms of the information that we want regarding SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation) and other projects, this may seem like small potatoes, but external consultants can take a lot of money and the reports can be very important.

And so I would like to move the following motion of return, seconded by the member from Regina Lakeview. I am moving that an order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 2 showing:

For the period September 8, 1987 to the date this return was ordered, list of all the reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded to external consultants by each government department, agency, and Crown corporation, including in each case: (1) the name and purpose of the report, study, investigation, or project; (2) the total cost; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the name of the external consultants who performed the work; and (5) the recommendations or analysis provided to the government.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to propose an amendment which will bring this question into line with the way that it's been asked in previous years. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to bring it into line with the way it was asked last year. And I'm going to give you an example, Mr. Speaker — and I'm going back to 1979, when I had a motion on the order paper for a return showing:

... any consultants (since March 1, 1979) or consulting firms (that) have been awarded a contract with the Department of Health ... (and) the nature of the contract or contracts, the name and address of each consultant or consulting firm, the value of the contract, and the purpose of the contract; (b) in each instance, whether the contract was advertised, or awarded without advertising.

The amendment that was offered at that time, Mr. Speaker, was offered by the then attorney general, now Leader of the Opposition, and seconded by Mr. Cowley. And he said.

... I'm going to propose an amendment which will bring this question into line with the way it's been asked in previous years. In 1976 and 1977 and other years, when this form of question has taken place in the legislature, we produced amendments which gave the names of all reports and studies commissioned by the department, (in this case the Department of Health) of external consultants during the period of March 1, 1979 to March 25, 1980 — the names of these consultants

and the final costs. This is information which has been tendered in the past (Mr. Speaker) and that's been the wording the House has adopted. Therefore (he says), I move, seconded by (Mr. Cowley) the Provincial Secretary that all the words after "showing" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

(1) The names of all reports and studies commissioned by the Department of Health to external consultants during . . . (this period and) the names of the consultants and the final costs.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to do that as well, and for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I propose the following amendment, seconded by the Minister of Justice:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words after the word "ordered" and substituting therefor the words (and this is considerably broader than the amendments offered by previous governments):

The names of all reports, studies, investigations, or projects awarded to external consultants by each government department, agency, or Crown corporation, the name of the consultant and the final cost.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Just for the record, Mr. Speaker, I want to record what the minister has indeed left out here, which is unfortunate.

In his amendment he will only provide the name of the consultant and the cost. What the motion was asking for was the name and the purpose of the report, the study, or the investigation, or the project. Surely it is not out of line or unusual for the government to provide to the public the purpose of a report which a so-called consultant may have been hired to do.

I don't know what it is that the government would think that's something that's not in the public interest. I just want to put that on the record because it's another example of trying to conceal some information.

If all that the opposition gets is the name of the consultant and the cost, and no one ever knows what the consultant was hired to do, what's the purpose of it all? So I . . . It really is beyond me to understand why the government is afraid to provide that information.

And finally, the other thing that is being left out here is the recommendation or analysis provided to the government. When the public pays, for example, 500-and-some-40-thousand dollars to the Local Government Finance Commission — which is not quite in line with this, but it is to some degree — over half a million dollars of public money, the public ought to be able to know what they paid for. And so there are some recommendations.

It is my submission to you, sir, that that's information that should be normally provided to the legislature and to the

public. We're going to oppose the amendment because we think that the minister's amendment restricts this request, this order for return, in a very severe way, unnecessarily. There can be no possible justification for it.

He may talk about the past. Well I'm not interested in the past. I'm talking about today. And that's fine. If the government wants to conceal this information, that's their business. But the public business is to know that they concealed that information, and it is my job and the job of my colleagues to make sure that the public knows, and I can assure you they will.

Amendment agreed to.

Ms. Smart: — I just want to register my disappointment of the fact that this resolution is being cut back by the government opposite. The way the main motion stands asks us for the details. And it's wrong to say that the amendment would have cut it back to what it was asked last year because I recall the motions last year asking for these kinds of details.

The taxpayer has a right to know and we need to know the purpose and the reasons for the reports and studies that you've done. The main motion should stand.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 4

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Speaker, after a few comments — very brief comments, I want to assure the people that I will be moving the motion. Simply, Mr. Speaker, in this particular motion we want to assure the public that the airplanes, which are bought at public expense, are used for the purpose which they were intended, that is for government business and not for personal members of the family or for personal businesses or for flights outside the province for, again, personal affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I will with those few words, move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

For the period September 15, 1987, to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of the flights taken by the Government of Saskatchewan's executive aircraft, including in each instance: (1) the purpose of the flight and the minister who authorized it; (2) the date of the flight; (3) all destination points of the flight; (4) to which department, agency, or corporation the cost of the flight was charged, and the amount of that charge; (5) the name of each MLA on the flight; (6) the name of each government employee on the flight; (7) the number of family members of MLAs on each flight; and (8) the total number of persons on each flight.

Mr. Speaker, I so move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

(1915)

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Thank you . . . (inaudible)

interjection) . . . Okay, Mr. Speaker, I confess again to making a mistake last time and offering an amendment to this particular type of return in the last session that made it very, very difficult for the property management corporation to provide the information in the way that we asked for it. So I want to offer an amendment that will allow property management corporation to provide the information that's consistent with the way that they keep the records, Mr. Speaker.

And I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "instance" and by substituting therefor the words:

(1) the date of the flight and flight number; (2) the destination of the flight; (3) who authorized the flight; (4) senior official on board the flight; and (5) the number of passengers on the flight.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to take so much time in these orders for return, but as we proceed through the agenda here, it becomes so blatantly obvious what the government opposite is up to.

The orders for return as drafted for this year, Mr. Speaker, by this side of the House, were deliberately done in the same way as they were ordered by the House last year, as amended by the government. We did that quite deliberately, Mr. Speaker, so that we could deal with these questions expeditiously and get them ordered and get the answers.

Now the minister stands up, and even though he had amended it in a certain way last year as we are proposing them this year, now brings in further amendments and uses, I might say, arguments that are dead wrong. He says that the questions as ordered last year, the returns as ordered last year, have made it very difficult for the departments to find the answers. That's not true. It's absolutely not true. Because, Mr. Speaker, in the Public Accounts Committee in February at least two departments — one of them which I believe was the property management corporation — was in fact asked to provide this exact same information in this form, and in less than three weeks had the information to all of the members of the Public Accounts Committee. So for the minister to stand up and say that it's difficult to answer these questions, is simply, Mr. Speaker, misleading, and inaccurate, and untrue.

And it seems to me, because the questions we're asking here happen to involve some information which may be embarrassing to some of the members opposite who are less careful with the way they spend the public's money than others, they now have discovered that in providing those answers in the orders for return which they have yet to table — which you ordered last year — there may be some embarrassment, and now in the new orders for return they're trying to cover it up. That's unfortunate. The government's got a majority. They're going to vote for their amendment and they're going to have their way. I recognize that. I don't like it; I don't think the public like it; and the people in Eastview and Elphinstone said that they didn't like it.

And one would have hoped that the lesson had been learned, but instead of the lesson being learned, they're going quicker than ever the other way. Be it at their own peril — their own political peril — the public will be the ultimate judge, Mr. Speaker.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 5

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, from time to time members of the government have been known to take planes, airplane rides, not only on the government aircraft, but also on aircrafts that have been chartered. And these flights are most often used for purposes of getting from Regina to place A or B in rather quick order. But occasionally from time to time we have found that a minister has taken along his or her family or has taken an excessive number of trips or perhaps has taken trips to perhaps a family wedding or something like that. And we rather think that there should be public disclosure of these items.

I think that the former minister of Highways, Jim Garner, will attest that, that there should be disclosure. I think the present Minister of Justice will likely attest to that as well.

So it is for that reason, Mr. Speaker, that I move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Eastview, that on order of the Assembly do issue for return showing that:

For the period September 15, 1987 to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of the aircraft chartered by each department, agency, or Crown corporation of the Government of Saskatchewan, including in each instance: (1) the purpose of the charter and the minister who authorized it; (2) the name of the individual or company who provided the charter service; (3) the total cost of the charter and the name of the department, agency, or Crown corporation to which it was charged; (4) the date of the flight; (5) all destinations on the flight; (6) the name of each MLA or government employee on the flight; (7) the number of family members of MLAs on each flight; and (8) the total number of passengers on each flight.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, the same or at least similar argument applies to this one. So I simply move, seconded by the Minister of Health:

That the motion be amended by deleting the word "detailed", further by deleting all words after the word "instance," and by substituting therefor the words:

(1) the date of the flight; (2) the charter company; (3) the number of passengers on the flight; (4) the destination of the flight; (5) the minister who authorized the flight.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 7

Mr. Mitchell: — This is one of those short motions that I'm sure that the Government House Leader or Deputy Premier will agree with — setting a record for agreeing with motions twice in one night. It just simply asks for names, titles and remuneration of all staff employed in the offices of ministers, or assigned to ministers, apart from the clerical staff. And I think that's plain enough.

So I would move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Westmount, that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 7 showing:

The names, titles, and remuneration of all non-clerical staff employed in or assigned to the ministers of the Government of Saskatchewan for the period September 15, 1987 to the date this return was ordered.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, this is the way it was ordered last time as well and I, once again, want to make it a little easier to answer the questions more quickly.

The difficulty I have here is "assigned to." The assigned to . . . Let me give you an example, Mr. Speaker. From time to time the Minister of Justice may have a lawyer assigned to him for a specific project or a specific issue that might only be a matter of a couple of days. In my case, at this very moment, I have a person assigned to me from CMB (Crown Management Board of Saskatchewan) that will have been there about a week in his . . . he goes back to his regular position at CMB after his current task is completed. And that happens in various ministers' offices at various times for various reasons.

So rather than give you the lengthy, lengthy list that would accommodate the order as it is written, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health:

That the motion be amended by removing the words, "or assigned to," and substituting therefor the words, "the offices of."

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, what is happening here once again. What this really allows for the government to do now is that they can now hire their political staffs within the department proper, pay them in the department proper, then assign those political staff to the minister and never have to divulge that information. That happens in the government all the time. The minister is really setting it up, Mr. Speaker, to be able to do this without ever having to get the information public.

This question was asked in the last session. This question will be answered hopefully some time soon because of the order that was made in the last session. There is no reason why it can't be done again in this order. The only reason is that the government obviously wants to hide the concealing of political staff in departments and agencies so that the public never has to know, and then simply assign him to the minister, and under this amendment, they don't ever have to tell anybody.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 8

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my brief remarks, I will move item 15, which is an order of the Assembly, return no. 8, showing out-of-province trips by ministers, and destination, purpose and costs, and other details.

This information should be routinely available, Mr. Speaker, and I expect the Deputy Premier will almost have this information at hand and be prepared to submit it.

I might say, while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, that the timeliness of information is of some consequence to us as legislators and to the people of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers. If information is requested and ordered, it should be provided in a timely fashion because the delay of providing information to members of the Assembly and, consequently, to the public of Saskatchewan, destroys the effectiveness of the information which is proffered.

So therefore I would urge upon the minister the importance of providing this information as soon as possible, being fully aware of the fact that there was information requested by returns that were ordered last October and still have not been provided to this House.

(1930)

And I can only say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that the information, as I recall, has been made available to members of the Assembly in the past and we shall see no reasons why it shouldn't be now.

Therefore I move that an order of the Assembly to issue for a return no. 8 showing:

For the period September 8, 1987, to the date this return was ordered: (1) the total number of out-of-province trips made by each minister of the government; (2) in each case, the destination and purpose of the trip; (3) in each case, the names and positions of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (4) in each case, the amount charged on behalf of each person travelling at government expense; (5) in each case, the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for: (a) air fares, (b) hotels, (c) ground transportation, (d) meals, (e) entertainment expenses.

This is seconded by the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, in order to accommodate the member in his desire for timely returns, and before the information outlives its usefulness, I will offer the following amendment so that the information can be provided based on the accounting forms that exist within the various departments. I therefore move, Mr.

Speaker:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "government" in clause 1, and substituting therefor the words:

(2) the destination of the trip; and (3) the total cost of the air fare.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Briefly, once again, Mr. Speaker, I think that this is an unfortunate amendment by the House Leader for the government side. It's an attempt to conceal information — obviously the lesson that they should have learned with the member from Kindersley, the Minister of Justice, last year, who got into difficulty because of misuse of government aircraft in his little junket to Calgary to go to a family wedding, which is not an appropriate use of taxpayers' money.

Once again, here's what has been deleted. I want this to be on the record, Mr. Speaker. It's been deleted that in each case this information will be provided: in each case the names and positions of those who accompany the minister at government expense; in each case the amount charged on behalf of each person travelling at government expense.

What the minister is saying to this House is that in this period of time, between September 8, 1987 until the day of the ordering of this return, which is today, there are really quite likely some possibilities in which there were more of those kinds of trips, which the government does not want to own up to. That's for the record, Mr. Speaker. That's what the public knows. And there is no other conceivable reason why the member opposite would make this amendment unless they're trying cover up some more embarrassment and don't want the public to know.

Now that's once again, the majority will carry the day, but, Mr. Speaker, those viewers who may be watching this legislature tonight should know that day after day after day, motion after motion after motion, the government refuses to give information which it ought to give, and here is just another example. We're going to oppose this amendment; it's a wrong amendment; it's an amendment made by a secret government ashamed of its own actions to the extent that it won't even admit to some of the things that it's doing.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 9

Mr. Koenker: — Mr. Speaker, this particular order for a return is very important to the public inasmuch as they are entitled to know what this government is spending in terms of public funds on political polling. The public will know that this government has polled to prop itself up into office to an unprecedented extent.

This is really a government that lives by the polls and dies by the polls, as we've seen most recently in Eastview and Elphinstone. And in spite of that final poll, which is most

important, namely that done by the electorate itself, this government persists in unprecedented polling to prop itself up into office. This has an opportunity for patronage, contracting; it's done at public expense; it's for very narrow political benefit. And if it isn't done for narrow political benefit, then this order for return would also demonstrate that, and demonstrate how the government might, in fact, have acted in the public interest.

And, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Prince Albert, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 9 showing:

For the period September 8, 1987, to the date this return was ordered, the number of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed, or commissioned by or for each government department, agency, and Crown corporation, including in each case: (1) the purpose of the poll or the project; (2) the total cost of the poll or project; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the names of the individuals or organizations who performed the work; (5) the results and analysis provided to the government.

Mr. Speaker, I think this motion for return would serve the government's purposes if they are legitimate. If they aren't legitimate, it would give a full public accounting.

Mr. Speaker: — Does the member have a seconder? I may have missed it.

Mr. Koenker: — Yes, I said, seconded by the member for Regina North West.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, in order to be consistent with past practices and the form of the questions that have been adopted by this House back in 1979 and previously, I would move, seconded by the member for Weyburn, Mr. Speaker:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words after the figure "(1)" and substituting therefor the words:

a brief description of the purpose of the poll or project; the total cost of the poll or project; the name of the individual or company conducting the poll or the project.

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take exception to that amendment. I think that it shows that the government is hiding behind the skirts of secrecy and that this is just totally out of order when it comes to the public business. I think the public is entitled to know the information originally requested in this motion for return.

I said if the poll conducted was legitimate government business and it can stand the test of the light of day, so be it. If it can't then the government ought to be censured for conducting such private political business and public expense.

I think the public is entitled to know that and I speak against the amendment.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, I just rise on a point of order. I want to hear the amendment read, please.

Mr. Speaker: — I'll read you the amendment.

That the motion be amended by deleting all words after the figure "(1)" and substituting therefor the words:

a brief description of the purpose of the poll or project;
(2) the total cost of the poll or project; and (3) the name of the individual or company conducting the poll or project.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, I take objection to the amendment as well. This government has said many times that there's not enough money to go around, that there's places in this government where they have to cut back.

The interesting point is, Mr. Speaker, that this government has a misplaced sense of priorities when it comes to cutting back. If there's one area in this government where cut-backs can be practised, it's in the area of taking polls and doing research projects under various names, which really turn out to be political in nature and to support the government politically.

Here is an area where the government can save all kinds of taxpayers' dollars, running into the millions of dollars every year. What this amendment has done is to follow the government's policy of restricting access to information, which is totally contrary to the promises this government made when it was in opposition about being open — running an open government for the people of Saskatchewan. This is secrecy, consistency with secrecy, as in other motions that were before us this evening.

If the government has nothing to fear, it shouldn't be offering amendments like this, because millions of dollars of taxpayers' money can be saved if in fact these motions are carried in the manner in which they're put forward so that we have full access to all the information. The government has not done that.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 10

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this motion for return is consistent with those that have gone before it. It's a request for the government to table information pertinent to some of its private and secret dealings.

In this particular instance, with respect to information pertaining to D-Mail Services Incorporated, this D-Mail Services Incorporated is run by one Dave Tkachuk, who just so happens to be a former principal secretary to none other than the Premier, someone who had the right hand of the Premier and extensive personal access to the privileges that pertain to that, now is running D-Mail Services and is securing contracts from the provincial

government for information services.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that the public of Saskatchewan will well remember that it was immediately prior to the 1986 provincial election that it was precisely this D-Mail Services that were providing the government with a blanketing of Saskatchewan, with propaganda pertaining to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. And I think the people of Saskatchewan are entitled to know how their money was used to finance the Conservative election campaign prior to 1986, and how that is being perpetrated through D-Mail Services to the present time and therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 10 showing:

With respect to D-Mail Services Inc., the contracts that this company received from September 15, 1987 to the date this return was ordered, from any departments, Crown corporations, boards, agencies, or commissions or the Government of Saskatchewan, including in each instance: (1) the amount of the original contract; (2) the amount of any contract cost overruns; (3) the purpose of the contract; (4) the work performed by the company; (5) whether or not the work in question was awarded by public tender.

Again, Mr. Speaker, very briefly, this is information that the public is entitled to know. It has to do with patronage work, patronage work coming from the Premier's office itself.

And this motion is seconded by the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

(1945)

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to offer an amendment here that will simply make this consistent with similar orders of last session. I move, seconded by the member for Weyburn:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "Inc.," (incorporated) and substituting therefor the words:

all amounts paid to them by any department, Crown corporation, board, agency, or commission of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 11

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, after my remarks I will move, seconded by the member from Regina Lakeview, that:

For the period September 15, 1987 to the date this return was ordered, a list of the executive motor vehicles purchased by the central vehicle agency, including in each instance: (1) the make, model, and cost of the vehicle; (2) the name and location of the dealership from which the vehicle was

purchased; and (3) the name and position of the individual to whom each vehicle was assigned.

Mr. Speaker, we think it's important that the members have access to this kind of information. The public is interested in knowing what kind of vehicles the Executive Council of members opposite are riding around in, in this province, at public expense I would suggest.

And it would seem to me that we have the Minister of Public Participation, the member from Indian Head-Wolseley, I suspect, running around in one of these executive motor vehicles. And since he's interested in privatization, perhaps he would turn in his executive vehicle and start driving his own car.

So I would move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 11 showing.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that I've never been moved by a more compelling argument in my entire life, and I want to recommend to all members that they vote in favour of this return.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 12

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I will be moving a motion to issue a return and I certainly hope the Deputy Premier will be as co-operative with this as he was with the last motion.

Mr. Speaker, it's painfully obvious to people in Saskatchewan, all over this province, that this is a government very concerned about public relations. We heard in this House today that only this past weekend this government spent something in the order of \$200,000 to turn the sod at the Shand project in the Premier's constituency — \$200,000 to sponsor one event.

It's painfully obvious also, Mr. Speaker, that government advertising has grown and grown and grown under this government. We look in the print media and we know there must have been a very heavy demand on blue ink in the past months and years. Painfully obvious to the people of Saskatchewan that this government spends a lot of money on government advertising; at the same time, raising taxes; at the same time, cutting services.

And so this motion for return, Mr. Speaker, asks for some very specific information about the expenditures of public money on government ads. And so therefore I move an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

For the period September 15, 1987 to the date this return was ordered: (1) the amounts paid to the firm of Roberts and Poole advertising corporation by each department, board, commission, Crown corporation, and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) in each case, the nature of the work performed.

And this motion is seconded by the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 13

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my remarks, I would move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 13 showing:

For the period September 15, 1987 to the date this return was ordered: (1) the amounts paid to the firms of Dome Advertising Limited and Dome Media Buying Services Limited by each department, board, commission, Crown corporation, and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) in each case, the nature of the work performed.

Mr. Speaker, what we have in this government opposite is an uncaring government. We have a government that is riddled with mismanagement and incompetence, and they use advertising agencies such as Dome Advertising to try and prop them up in circumstances that they have nothing to fall back on.

We have seen this government being propped up by Dome Advertising — which, by the way, one of the principal owners is the former badly defeated candidate in the federal election who ran in the Regina West federal constituency, Mr. Spence Bozak. And ever since that defeat he has been on the take from the government through Dome Advertising: they have been getting millions and millions of dollars every year from this Conservative government. And in my view, Mr. Speaker, that is a decision that the people of this province will make, in terms of how they view that wild expenditure and a totally unaccountable way to spend taxpayers' money.

Dome Advertising, as we know, is an ad agency which has never bid on a contract with the government. They have always been appointed by the Conservatives opposite to undertake extravagant, and in many cases, advertising campaigns that they were handsomely paid for, and indeed, the taxpayers of this province receive nothing in return for that, except in some cases some smoke and mirrors.

But I'd like to ask all members of this Assembly to support this motion, Mr. Speaker, in particular when we're looking at this government's spending about 22 or \$24 million a year on advertising. They set that as a priority because they get significant contributions from this firm and individuals within the firm.

And as well, Mr. Speaker, it's important that the people of Saskatchewan get an understanding of how this government could save money, perhaps. They have saved, in their own rhetoric — they're telling the people of Saskatchewan — \$500,000 annually by gutting the dental program. They've laid off 411 dental therapists, and thousands of children around this province will be suffering as a result of that mistake, that real serious mistake on the part of the government with respect to gutting the dental program.

Yet they continue to spend somewhere in the vicinity of 20 to \$24 million a year. All they had to do to save the dental program, Mr. Speaker, was to stop advertising for one or two weeks out of the 52 weeks of the year.

And Mr. Speaker, I think that we have to expose the government for what it really is. They spent all of these millions of taxpayers' dollars to tell the people of Saskatchewan what a wonderful job they're doing — what a wonderful job they're doing in terms of running up our deficit to \$3.7 billion on operating deficit; running up our Crown corporation deficit from \$2 billion to \$7.7 billion; what a wonderful job they're doing with respect to our health care program; what a wonderful job they're doing advertising the prescription drug plan that they've created, that has been gutted and privatized in this province, Mr. Speaker.

So I would move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by my colleague, the member from Prince Albert, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 13 showing:

For the period September 15, 1987, to the date this return was ordered: (1) the amounts paid to the firms of Dome Advertising Limited and Dome Media Buying Services Limited by each department, board, commission, Crown corporation, and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) in each case, the nature of the work performed.

Motion agreed to on division.

Return No. 14

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, in all likelihood I'm going to be ruled out of order, but I am prepared to move the remaining one, two, three, four without amendment, if we can possibly do that without the member in his seat. I don't know if we can.

Mr. Speaker: — Since these are private members' motions, the problem with the hon. member's suggestion is that some of them are not here and therefore we can only deal with the motions of those members who are present.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — In order to assist the process then, Mr. Speaker, I would like to stand 21, 22, and 24, and we'll deal with 23.

Mr. Speaker: — Okay, those motions will be deemed to have been stood.

Return No. 23

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise because I want to move this order for return regarding the cost of printing the 1987 SaskTel annual report. We have had some debate in this House this afternoon and again this evening on the wasteful expenditures of the government, a lot of which they don't want to make public or make known. When this report of SaskTel was tabled, it struck me that I have never, in my memory, seen a more glossy and more expensive report in this Assembly in the times that I can remember.

Now I want to tell you, Mr. Chairman, that there are more pictures, in this book of an expensive nature than there is information. Clearly somebody's ego — and I don't know whether it's the minister's ego or somebody in senior management — got a little carried away, and there are more pictures, pictures of ministers and senior management people here, than there is information.

I submit to you, sir, that that money would have been far better spent providing services to senior citizens who were promised free telephones in 1982 in the election promise by the members opposite — a promise which has been broken. So in order to be able to accommodate their high flying, high living ways, they say to senior citizens, we're not going to keep our promises; we're going to spend our money in frivolous ways like extremely expensive annual reports.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think that we should know and the public should know how much this annual report cost.

And so I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 23 showing, which states:

The total cost of preparing and printing the 1987 SaskTel annual report.

Motion agreed to.

(2000)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 6 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Regional Colleges Act and The Institute Act

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, earlier this House passed two Bills which will lead to significant advances, have led to significant advances in the delivery of post-secondary education in Saskatchewan. Those Bills, Mr. Speaker, became An Act respecting The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology and The Regional Colleges Act. To accommodate the enactment of these two historic Bills, some housekeeping amendments are required to other established Acts.

By and large, the seven changes involve the substitution of the words "Regional Colleges Act," in the place of "The Community College Act," and includes references to the new institute where it is applicable.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 6, An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Regional Colleges Act and The Institute Act.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, I will provide additional information to what the minister has talked about with respect to the provisions in this Bill. This Bill has one part in it that is objectionable to members on this side of the

House, Mr. Speaker.

In most cases, when you're dealing with a consequential Bill, there is usually not any controversy associated with it. In this particular case, this consequential Bill actually does have consequences; it is not an inconsequential consequential Bill.

The provision that I want to talk about — and I want to spend a little time dealing with the original Bills because this Bill does exactly, in this one particular part, what the original Bills did, and that is, it takes power away from some people that could be involved in education at the local area, and it gives power to the minister. And in this case it gives the minister power in one particular instance where the power should properly be vested in the employees.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate a couple of the objections that we had to the Bill in the first place, to the original Bill — that is Bill 46, which was passed in this House last year during the last session. I mentioned that the Bill 46 had given the minister extraordinary powers and extraordinary provisions and that this Bill adds to that.

I would like to put some of the things on record that that particular Bill did. When it amalgamated the four institutes with the technical institutes — that is the technical institutes with the community colleges in the four cities in Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, and Moose Jaw — it gave the minister some powers, some of which I want to bring to light now.

One of the powers is that the institute shall comply with any directions or requirements given or made by the minister within any period that the minister may require. Now the minister set up a board to oversee this particular college, this particular institute, the new Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology; he set up a board. And that board has to report to the minister, and while he set up the board, the minister himself took more powers than he gave the board. He has given the board overriding powers, and he does the same thing, Mr. Minister, in this consequential Act — gives himself an overriding power over the employees, in one instance.

The minister gives himself the power to . . . gave himself the power in the original Bill, Bill 46, to review the budget submitted by the board of SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) and to revise all or any part of the budget in any manner that he considered appropriate. It was the minister that gave himself power to appoint the board of directors in the first place. So the entire board really is at the beck and call of the minister. It becomes very much a puppet board.

There are a couple of other provisions that happened here in that particular Bill, Mr. Speaker, and that was, the minister gave himself powers to establish policies in consultation with the institute and to give directions for post-secondary education and training. So there again the board is powerless.

In another place in the Act, the minister gave himself power to give directions to the institute on programs, on

courses, on functions, and activities, to be provided or undertaken or to be continued in the institute. So really what happens is a board which appears to be at arm's length only becomes half at arm's length.

Now at the same time, while the minister gave himself those powers that I've mentioned and others, he took away powers or rights that the employees had by forcing them to take a vote as to what type of an association they wanted.

An Hon. Member: — Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: — What is the member's point of order?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is very specific and is a Bill that is consequential to two other pieces of legislation.

The hon. member is raising issues that have nothing to do with this Bill, nor make any reference to the remarks I made in second reading on this Bill, Mr. Speaker. He is, in fact, as I heard him talking, talking about votes that were held, powers of the board or powers of the minister. I see absolutely no reference in the Bill anywhere to any of that, Mr. Speaker, nor do I see its relevance in this debate based on remarks I made in second reading, Mr. Speaker. So I would ask that you rule the member out of order based on those considerations, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Speaking to the point of order, Mr. Speaker. On the contrary to what the minister says, what the member is saying has got absolute relevance to the Bill that is before us. Because if you listen carefully, Mr. Speaker, as I know you have, you will note that the powers which these so-called consequential amendments are giving the minister. And all the member is doing is indicating that he is doing once again what he did in previous legislation to which this Bill is consequential.

So he is making the analogy and making the references, and therefore, Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that he is in order.

Mr. Speaker: — I have listened to the hon. member's point of order and I have considered his objections, and as long as the hon. member who is from Prince Albert makes his remarks relevant to the issue under discussion, the debate may proceed.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will continue to keep my remarks relevant to this particular Bill.

I'm indicating to the minister the reason for our objection to this particular Bill based on the fact that he's asking for more powers. This Bill makes provision for more powers to be given to the minister, just the same way as the Bill 46 of last year did.

And I was bringing in some analogies, Mr. Minister . . . or Mr. Speaker, just before the minister interrupted me, I was about to say that the minister in the previous Bill forced the employees to go through a vote, to choose as to whether they were going to belong or be represented by a

faculty association or by SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union).

Now they already had the power to make that decision for themselves if at any time that they wanted to choose. And now we find that the minister, we find that the minister, who may be smarting because as a result of his forced order — he found that they decided to go back with SGEU — now asks in this Bill that he have the right to determine or to choose according to his opinion who it is that should represent the employees for one particular appointment.

Now I think that that's blatantly wrong. I feel that if there is going to be a representative chosen to represent the employees, that it's the employee association that should make that choice, and it's the employee association that should make that representation. And it shouldn't matter a darn . . . shouldn't matter at all what the opinion of the minister is.

I don't want to go any further on that in this regard tonight, Mr. Speaker. I want to let this pass into committee where we will be proposing an amendment to this particular Bill.

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

Bill No. 12 — An Act to amend The Medical Profession Act, 1981

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to explain these amendments to The Medical Profession Act, 1981, which deal with the manner in which physicians are able to lodge an appeal against disciplinary action by the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Under the existing Act, Mr. Speaker, appeals are heard as a trial *de novo*, or new trial, by a three-member appeal tribunal. These tribunals consist of a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench, as chairman; one member appointed by the University of Saskatchewan, usually but not necessarily a physician, I add; and a lay person appointed by the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, the trial *de novo* appeal before these tribunals is not an appropriate or effective way for such matters to be handled. It runs counter to the basic principle of our health profession's legislation, namely that the people best able to assess matters of professional competence and conduct are the members of the profession itself.

By the time a physician's licence has been revoked or suspended, his competence or conduct have been reviewed thoroughly by 15 or more of his professional peers. It is not appropriate for this entire process to be repeated by a tribunal which includes only one physician and two individuals with no medical expertise.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the present process contributes to lengthy delays in having appeals heard. Time is needed to obtain names for the three members and then to arrange a hearing date suitable for all the individuals involved. The result is that appeals tend to be

heard a long time after the actions which initially prompted the disciplinary action.

The proposed amendments, Mr. Speaker, will replace the current appeal process with the right of appeal directly to the Court of Queen's Bench. Either party may also request leave for a further appeal to the Court of Appeal on a point of law.

Let me emphasize a number of points, Mr. Speaker.

First, the College of Physicians and Surgeons has been fully consulted about these amendments and believes that they effectively address the concerns it had raised about the existing provisions, and that's a long-time process that's been going on for about a year now.

Second, Mr. Speaker, there is no other province in this country in which medical legislation provides for appeals such as those now in place here in Saskatchewan.

And third, apart from four other health professions which are based on the medical model, no other professional group in Saskatchewan has this kind of appeal. And I might add that those other four will be dealt with in just a few moments in four other Bills.

So in other words, Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments are neither unusual nor radical but are, in fact, fully in keeping with the most common way of handling appeals by professionals.

Mr. Speaker, public awareness and expectations with respect to quality medical care have been steadily rising. The College of Physicians and Surgeons is attempting to effectively fulfil its responsibility to protect the public by enforcing high standards of competence and professional conduct. The proposed amendments will assist the college in this respect while still giving physicians the same kind of protection, through appeal, as is available to other professions in our province and across this country.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to move second reading of Bill No. 12, An Act to amend The Medical Profession Act, 1981.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 12 does eliminate the trial *de novo*, or the second trial, in the disciplinary process undergone by doctors who have been charged by the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

This provision, I should point out, was in The Medical Profession Act many, many years ago in a somewhat different form. It was then repealed, I believe, during the Thatcher years, and a trial *de novo* was reinstituted some time in the '70s in a form which made the trial *de novo* mandatory.

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It is alleged that the trial *de novo* has caused unnecessary delays and is unnecessarily expensive because it involves the second hearing. And I'm familiar with some of the delays which are caused in the disciplinary process before the College of Physicians and Surgeons. But I also believe that there are many things that cause these delays,

not just the trial *de novo*, Mr. Speaker.

Concern has been expressed to us by some members of the medical profession that the amendment removes a protection that is there now for doctors and which doctors have experience for some years now. And that when we are removing someone from their occupation, or preventing them from practising their occupation, it's a very serious matter, and therefore they should be given the full benefit of the justice system.

The amendments then purport to remove rights that the doctors have been enjoying over a period of a number of years, and there is concern expressed to us by some members of the medical profession in that regard.

So we have a situation here, Mr. Speaker, where we have to balance the concern of these doctors for a fair and complete process in front of the governing body of the medical profession, and so on. And we have to balance that concern with the need to streamline the process and make the procedure more efficient from the point of view of those who are charged with the responsibility of monitoring the medical profession.

I am very familiar with the serious responsibilities that the college has in monitoring the medical profession and their desire to fulfil these responsibilities as best possible. However the fact of the matter is, is that the amendments do remove a right the doctors have been enjoying over the years, and they have expressed concern to us about this, or at least some members of the medical profession have expressed concern.

Therefore it's important for me to review the minister's comments and weigh them in view of these competing concerns. Therefore I would like to adjourn debate on this Bill in order to comment further on it at a later date.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 11 — An Act to amend The Ophthalmic Dispenser Act

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 11, this Bill is largely consequential to the amendments to the appeal provisions of The Medical Profession Act, 1981, which we have just dealt with. The appeal provisions for ophthalmic dispensers were modelled directly on those for physicians, and they include cost references to The Medical Profession Act, 1981.

There's one additional amendment, Mr. Speaker, which involves the board of examiners required to be established under the Act. The Act states that this board must include an ophthalmologist and a non-dispensing optometrist. However there are few, if any, optometrists in the province who do not dispense as part of their practice and some difficulty has arisen in finding a qualified individual to serve on the board.

The proposal is to remove the statutory reference to the composition of the board and to have the composition defined instead by by-law under the Act. This move will provide greater flexibility and eliminate the potential for the registration process to be stalled because of inability

to establish a valid board of examiners.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm please to move second reading of Bill No. 11, An Act to amend The Ophthalmic Dispensers Act.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out at this time that I have consulted with the Saskatchewan Ophthalmic Dispensers Association, Mr. Minister, and I am advised that they were not aware these particular amendments were coming forward at this point in time.

I think that in light of that, and in light of the fact that we've adjourned debate on The Medical Profession Act, and because these amendments follow upon the amendments to The Medical Profession Act, we should also adjourn the debate on second reading on these proposed amendments as well. And in the interim I hope that the minister, if he hasn't already done so today, will consult further with the ophthalmic dispensers association, because it's today I spoke to them.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 13 — An Act to amend The Denturists Act

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, this Bill No. 13 is simply consequential to the amendments of The Medical Profession Act, 1981, which we have been dealing with. The appeal provisions for denturists were modelled directly on those for physicians, and they include cross-references to The Medical Profession Act, 1981. The amendments are intended to maintain this consistency of approach and to keep the cross-references accurate.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 13, An Act to amend The Denturists Act.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because these amendments follow upon the amendments to The Medical Profession Act, I would like to adjourn the debate and pick up my comments later on this.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 14 — An Act to amend The Dental Profession Act, 1978

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is also consequential to the amendments of The Medical Profession Act, 1981. The appeal provisions for dentists were modelled directly on those for physicians, and they include cross-references to The Medical Profession Act, 1981. The amendments are intended to maintain this consistency of approach and keep the cross-references accurate.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 14, An Act to amend The Dental Profession Act, 1978.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, because these amendments to The Dental Profession Act follow upon the amendments to The Medical Profession Act, I would like to adjourn the debate on second reading

for further comment.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 15 — An Act to amend The Optometry Act, 1985

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, this Bill is also largely consequential to the amendments to the appeal provision of The Medical Profession Act, 1981. The appeal provisions for optometrists were modelled directly on those for physicians, and they included cross-references to The Medical Profession Act, 1981.

The additional amendments in this Act, Mr. Speaker, are intended to allow the association flexibility in filling vacancies on their council and in determining the forms that are to be used for registering members.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those very few short remarks, I move second reading of Bill No. 15, An Act to amend The Optometry Act.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact these amendments are consequential upon amendments to The Medical Profession Act, I would beg leave to adjourn debate on this matter for further comment.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 17 — An Act respecting the Inspection of Gas Installations and Gas Equipment for Consumers

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. member, the Department of Environment and Public Safety currently administers gas licensing and the inspection of natural and propane gas installations under The Gas Inspection and Licensing Act. Our government proposes to repeal this Act and replace it with a gas licensing Act and a gas inspection Act. This division of activity will allow us to move the inspection to SaskPower corporation where they can be integrated with the corporation's own field service activities and with their own computerized accounting and control system.

This Bill I'm speaking about at this time is The Gas Licensing Act, which will be administered and enforced by the Department of Environment and Public Safety. The Gas Licensing Act provides for the licensing of gas installations, contractors, propane distributors who store and retail propane gas, and supply houses with wholesale gas equipment. This new Bill complements The Gas Inspection Act in that definitions, issuance of orders, appeal procedures, penalties, and the coming into force are very similar. Propane distributors have been defined as well as clarifying licence classifications and the requirements for in-province and out-of-province propane distributors. Search and seizure provisions have been included to meld with provisions of the charter of rights. Refusals to issue a licence have been extended to include the case where the licence is already under suspension.

A procedure to allow a person to be heard before his licence is suspended has been added. The reverse onus procedure has been removed so that it is no longer

incumbent upon a licence holder to prove he is a licence holder, this can now be certified by the director. Appeal procedures for a person aggrieved by a decision have been included. Penalties have been increased to reflect current values. Limitations for prosecution has been lowered from six years to three years.

This Bill is a progressive step in removing some of the repressive clauses that existed in the old Act, and along with its companion document, The Gas Inspection Act, paved the way for improved and more efficient methods of inspection and licensing of the gas industry.

I move second reading of Bill No. 17, An Act respecting the Inspection of Gas Installations and Gas Equipment for Consumers. Thank you.

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few remarks in response to Bill 17. I listened carefully as the Deputy Premier spoke on behalf of the Minister of Environment and Public Safety tonight. I heard him say one of the two essential elements of this Bill in terms of changes being made to the process of the inspection of gas installations in our province. He pointed out correctly that this Bill moves that responsibility for the appointment of inspectors from the Department of the Environment and Public Safety over to SaskPower. But what he did not indicate clearly in his remarks, and what I believe the public of Saskatchewan and the consumers of Saskatchewan need to be fully aware of in this change, is that this Bill proposes, at least opens the possibility, to the privatization of the inspection of gas installations.

Mr. Speaker, if passed, this Bill will permit private contractors to inspect the work of other private contractors. That's what this Bill, in essence, will do.

That's contrary, Mr. Speaker, to the current practice of inspections being conducted by inspectors who are in the employ of the province of Saskatchewan; inspectors who are therefore totally independent of the contracting industry, which guarantees as much as it's possible to guarantee an objectivity and a fairness in those inspections.

Public inspectors in the employ of the province have only one interest, Mr. Speaker, just one interest and that's public safety. And it's just as important, I think, that in the public perception these inspectors have only one interest, and that's public safety. They are perceived today by the people of Saskatchewan, by the consumers of Saskatchewan, as being fair and objective, and they enjoy the confidence of Saskatchewan people.

Now what this Bill proposes to do is to privatize the inspection process; that is, to enable private contractors to inspect the work of other private contractors. And I guess, Mr. Speaker, I feel that Saskatchewan people need to be asked if they feel that the same kind of objectivity can be guaranteed in this new system of one private contractor inspecting the work of another private contractor. I guess I feel Saskatchewan people need to be consulted to see if they feel they will enjoy the same level of confidence in the kind of inspection procedures that will go on under this new privatized system.

(2030)

Consumers in Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan public need to be asked if they're willing to entrust their safety — indeed in some cases their lives and the lives of their families — if they're willing to entrust their safety to this new kind of privatized inspection.

Mr. Speaker, in my judgement this Bill opens the possibility — not the certainty, Mr. Speaker, but the possibility — of certain favouritism, of certain deal making going on between contractors. It opens the possibility of a decline in the quality of gas inspection.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I believe it opens as well the possibility of patronage in the naming of which contractor will serve as an inspector. We've seen some evidence with this government that patronage is not an unheard-of commodity with them. This Bill opens that possibility.

And I think to be frank, Mr. Speaker, and to be fair, this Bill opens the possibility of sort of tainting the whole inspection process.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that Saskatchewan consumers and the Saskatchewan public should have opportunity to consider the implications of the privatization of inspections in our province and to enable that kind of discussion and thought and consideration to go on. I would move that debate on Bill 17 now be adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 18 — An Act respecting the Inspection of Electrical Equipment, Installation and Material

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — On behalf of the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, members will be aware that the Department of Environment and Public Safety is currently administering electrical licensing and inspection of electrical installations under The Electrical Inspection and Licensing Act.

Our government proposes to repeal this Act and replace it with two separate Acts: The Electrical Licensing Act, and The Electrical Inspection Act. This separation will allow the government to move the inspection to SaskPower Corporation where they can be integrated with the corporation's own field activities and their own computerized accounting and control systems.

The Bill I'm speaking to is The Electrical Licensing Act which will be administered and enforced by the Department of Environment and Public Safety. This Act provides for the licensing of electrical installations, contractors, distributors, and supply houses who wholesale electrical equipment. This new Bill complements The Electrical Inspection Act and the definition, issuance of orders, appeal procedures, penalties, and coming into force are very similar.

The provisions of this Bill with respect to appeals, licensing of contractors and tradesmen, search and seizure, the reverse onus clauses, its penalties and limitations for prosecution, are very similar to The Gas

Licensing Act.

This Bill is part of a package we've put together to improve efficiency in the inspection of electrical installations. Moreover it provides for the improvement of licensing procedures and removes some of the more repressive clauses of the old Act.

I therefore, Mr. Speaker, move second reading of Bill No. 18, An Act respecting the Inspection of Electrical Equipment, Installation and Material. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again with Bill 18 we see a similar move on the part of this government, first of all to move the process, this time of electrical inspections, away from the Department of the Environment and Public Safety and over to SaskPower.

And again in this Bill — and again the Deputy Premier did not mention this — the Bill opens the possibility to the privatization, this time, of electrical inspections, Mr. Speaker, the concerns that I have with the privatization of gas inspections again apply to the privatization of electrical inspections, with one private contractor inspecting the work of another private contractor.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I believe this Act, this Bill, opens the possibilities — not the certainty, but the possibility — of favouritism and deal making, the possibility of patronage in the appointments, and the possibility that the confidence Saskatchewan people have today in their inspectors will be somehow tainted.

Again I think, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan consumers, Saskatchewan people, ought to have time to consider the implications of this change in public safety and in the inspection, in this case, of electrical installations. And so I would again move that debate adjourn on Bill 18.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 21 — An Act to amend The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Mr. Speaker, The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act requires lenders and seller to disclose credit charges in writing.

The Act covers provincially-regulated lenders such as credit unions and trust and loan companies. It also covers sellers such as department stores of farm implement dealers who finance purchases. These are sometimes referred to as line lenders.

Broadly speaking, the proposed amendment, Mr. Speaker, will make the law, which is technical and complex, easier to administer and to change in future.

Hon. members will appreciate that the market-place changes rapidly, especially where lending and borrowing are involved. The proposed amendments will permit regulation which is more responsive to these rapid, ongoing changes.

To enhance flexibility, the proposed amendment would allow lenders or borrowers to be exempt from all or portions of the Act. Under the existing statute only exemptions from all of the Act are possible. This makes any change to address specific problems or circumstances very difficult, very slow, and unnecessarily complicated.

Some sections of the current Act are simply unnecessary or out of date. For example, consumer demand for financial products with variable load rates is substantial; such rates expand consumer choice in financing. The Saskatchewan lending industry has also requested that we recognize this market-place reality and provide basic elements of government regulation in this area. The Act provides for fundamental elements of disclosure regarding variable rate loans. The Bill covers disclosure at the time the contract is signed, upon change in the rate, and upon request of the borrower. Additional disclosure requirements will be discussed with industry and with other governments.

Mr. Speaker, cost of credit disclosure is also an area where we are working with other jurisdictions to achieve national uniformity. It is therefore very likely that more uniformity will be gradually worked out through our consultation with other governments and implemented under the new regulatory powers of this Act.

The proposed amendments do not affect the civil rights of Saskatchewan citizens. No additional administrative or other public costs are required.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of The Cost of Credit Disclosure Amendment Act, 1988. Thank you.

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This legislation, the Act to amend The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act, purports to deal, as its name might suggest, with the disclosure of the cost of credit, and it comes from the Minister of Consumer Affairs. In reality, Mr. Speaker, I think this is legislation which does not serve the interests of Saskatchewan consumers. It is legislation that serves, more particularly, the lending institutions under provincial jurisdiction.

My objection to this legislation basically revolves around the central concern, Mr. Speaker, that it does not effect what it purports to do, namely to effect the disclosure of the cost of credit. It doesn't matter whether it's in writing or posting as this legislation suggests, the provision is still inadequate.

For the minister to suggest that it provides for fundamental disclosure simply is not true. I think the minister has a good point when he talks about the need for uniformity with respect to cost of credit disclosure and other financial legislation. But in this case, especially given the fact that the House of Commons is looking at section 201 of the federal Bank Act, and has a finance committee investigating these concerns, I think it behoves us as responsible legislators to look very carefully at this legislation and not to relegate the concerns of consumers simply to the regulations, but to ensure that the legislation itself adequately effects disclosure.

This legislation really does not do that, and I will have further comments to make on it at a later date. But I would like to move that debate be adjourned on Bill No. 21, to amend The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 22 — An Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise tonight to move second reading of a Bill, Bill No. 22, a Bill to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act.

Two amendments are proposed in this Bill. The first will limit payments required by statute to be made by the participating parties in Wakamow Valley authority for the 1987 and '88, '88-89 fiscal years to the same amount as those paid in the 1986-87 fiscal year.

This amendment implements a decision announced previously in the budget for last year whereby a measure of financial restraint would be applied to all four of the urban parks funded by Urban Affairs. The authorities will not experience a decline in their funding but will be held at the same level as was provided in the 1986-87 year.

An Hon. Member: — You're proud of that.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Sure, I'm proud of it. Should the city of Moose Jaw and the two rural municipalities participating in Wakamow wish to voluntarily contribute more financial assistance to Wakamow, as they have done in recent years, they will continue to be free to do so under this amendment.

The second amendment, Mr. Speaker, extends existing legal protection given by the Act to the authorities, participating parties, and to members, officers, or employees of the authority to also cover the authority's architect, planner, and committees appointed by the authority. Wakamow and the other urban park authorities have made extensive use of committees to carry out various responsibilities and the legislation anticipates this. This amendment will simply provide them with the same protection. Similar changes are being made for Wascana and Meewasin authorities.

I would encourage all members of this House to support the Bill, and now move second reading of Bill No. 22, An Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a few remarks about this Bill to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act.

Let me say at the very outset, Mr. Speaker, that I will and we will be opposing this Bill, but we do not wish to hold the Bill's progress up, and so we'll be willing to let it go to committee and we'll not be moving an adjournment.

I want to be clear that I and we oppose this Bill, Mr. Speaker. It essentially has two parts, the second part being an amendment to section 65 to tighten up the liability provisions to cover the boards appointed by Wakamow

and other individuals, and if the Bill was just that we'd be glad to support it. I know that has been requested by the Wakamow people, and we're happy to see that going into the Act.

But the first part of this amendment is not of the same nature at all, Mr. Speaker. In fact it flies in the face of a variety of requests that have gone to this minister and gone to this government concerning funding for Wakamow.

(2045)

Mr. Speaker, I have to admit, straight off, right at the outset, that I have some personal interest in this matter in that when I sit and eat my breakfast in the morning I look out of our kitchen window over the Wakamow Valley, or the valley being developed by the authority. Mr. Speaker, I and my family have been privileged to participate in some of the development through the president's club, and I must say we very regularly access Wakamow facilities and enjoy the programs and the activities and the beauty of the Wakamow Valley. And it's a very important development in the constituency I represent and in the city that I am privileged to be a part of, and indeed in the area surrounding Moose Jaw. It's a development that is a place of enjoyment for many, many, many Moose Jaw people, and I might say many visitors to our city, and as the development grows, indeed visitors and tourists to our province. So I have some personal interest in this and I admit that, Mr. Speaker.

What this Bill does, in essence, Mr. Speaker, is to freeze the funding to Wakamow at 1986-1987 levels for two more years, those years being '87-88 and then the year ahead of us, '88-89. We're freezing the funding. Not only are we freezing the funding in the case of Wakamow, as we're doing to the other valley authorities, but in the case of Wakamow we're freezing an inequity in funding that has been permitted to exist for some number of years now, an inequity in funding that I want to discuss tonight, Mr. Speaker, because this has been discussed with the minister. And I had hoped that in this session we might have seen that inequity dealt with, but instead we've seen that inequity frozen for yet another two funding years.

Just for your information, Mr. Speaker, and information of the members present, let me just go back a little about some of the history of the Wakamow development. When this Wakamow Valley Authority was established in 1981 under a New Democratic government, the funding level was set at a level equalling 2 city mills, sixty per cent of the funding to be provided locally, 40 per cent to come from the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that compares with the funding level at that time of 5 city mills for the other two existing authorities, being Meewasin and Wascana. Initially the funding was set at 2 city mills. But let's be clear, Mr. Speaker, that that was set as a minimum funding level. The full intention was, Mr. Speaker, that in those early developmental days the funding would be set at 2 mills, and once operational — once operational, the funding would be raised. That was the intention, Mr. Speaker.

It was widely known until 1982, and along came this

group of men and women into government. And that intention to raise the funding for the Wakamow Valley Authority somehow got forgotten or lost or, dare I say, purposely fixed. So we've never seen that increase in funding, even though Wakamow has proceeded with their development, have grown. There's been no increase in funding from 1981.

Even worse, Mr. Speaker, even worse, in 1981 this government slashed the funding — cut the funding by 20 per cent. They did it across the board to all the valley authorities existing at that time — the three of them, Wakamow, Meewasin, and Wascana. They slashed the funding another 20 per cent.

And so after 1983, now Wakamow is funded at 1.6 mills. That's the level of funding after the cut in 1983. And I don't think I need to remind you, Mr. Speaker, that in 1983 we enjoyed the highest oil prices we've ever know. It was before this government had a chance to run up its massive deficits. So those were the good years, Mr. Speaker. In the good years they slashed funding to the valley authorities by 20 per cent, which somehow indicates their commitment to our parks and valleys.

Since then the inequity has gone on, Meewasin and Wascana being funded at four city mills, Wakamow, in Moose Jaw, being funded at a level of 1.6 city mills. Now the minister, in his remarks, indicated that the city of Moose Jaw indeed has come through and added additional support. They've maintained their 60 per cent share of the initial agreement of 2 mills, and Wakamow is grateful for that. And the city of Moose Jaw realizes the importance of Wakamow to our community.

There are other inequities, Mr. Speaker, regarding Wakamow. As opposed to Meewasin and Wascana, Wakamow in Moose Jaw lacks a third party partner, that being a university. Both Meewasin and Wascana enjoy the support of a third party in the university campus; Wakamow does not.

Again to further the inequity for Wakamow of the valley authorities existing in our province, Wakamow is the only one that must fund its landscape maintenance out of its statutory funding. So as the development has grown, understandably the funds required for maintenance and landscape maintenance have grown, until now we're devoting more and more of that money for landscape maintenance and there's less and less left for future developments.

Now since 1983, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the beginning of another like authority in our province, the Chinook Parkway in Swift Current. And I think it's noteworthy to say that the newest kid on the block gets a better funding deal than Wakamow in Moose Jaw. The Swift Current authority gets 1.8 city mills as their level of funding, and the split is not 60 per cent locally, 40 per cent from the province; it's 50-50. The province contributes matching dollar for dollar to the city of Swift Current. Moose Jaw is left with a lower level of funding. Moose Jaw is left with a lower provincial support.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the board of Wakamow has written this minister and has written other ministers and has

written this government. They've lobbied this government. People who support Wakamow in Moose Jaw have written this minister and lobbied this government, all to no avail. The inequity in the funding goes on, and tonight we have a Bill that would even fix that inequity for another two years.

I'm beginning to believe, Mr. Speaker, that the only way we're ever going to deal with this problem in terms of the Wakamow Valley in Moose Jaw is to change the government. Now lobbying, persuasion, all of that doesn't seem to work. So I guess the only opportunity we have left now is to just get rid of this government.

Now let me say, Mr. Speaker, there's one other point I think in regard to this Bill that needs to be made. When Wakamow was established, it was stated as one of Wakamow's objectives, goals, the effort would be given to involve community organizations, to involve businesses and corporate interests in a provision of non-government support. In some ways it was, and it remains, a unique concept for an urban park, a partnership between the private and the public sector. It was innovative when it was designed and it remains so today. And indeed many of the developments we've seen in Moose Jaw and the Wakamow Valley have come about because of this partnership, because of the support we've enjoyed from the community, from volunteers, from the business sector, from service clubs, from the corporate sector.

It becomes absolutely clear, Mr. Speaker, if Wakamow is to continue to enjoy that support from the community, from the business sector, from the service clubs, from the corporate sector, this government needs to begin to start showing its support. This government needs to begin to show that it, in fact, shares the objectives of this partnership, and recognize the local efforts that have gone on, and recognize the contribution made by others and match that contribution.

But I say rather than recognizing the hard work that's gone on, I think this government just sees that hard work as a way to escape its own responsibilities, and that's a shame.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this government could have come to this House, at a very minimum, with the goal of re-establishing the initial level of funding at 2 city mills — could have come and at least done that. It did not. This government could have come to the House and said, we're going to start narrowing that gap, get an equity between the Wakamow Valley Authority and other valley authorities in this province — but not this government. It could have come to the House and said, we recognize the worth and we recognize the value of the local contribution and the volunteer contribution, and showed some movement on this funding issue — but not this government. It could have come to this House and introduced an amendment that would have changed the funding to be a match with the city and the local funding from the RMs and the city, a 50-50 split. It could have come and done that — it did not.

Instead what we have, Mr. Speaker, is the minority partner in this arrangement, the minority partner in the

funding, setting all the rules, with no regard for the local concerns or inputs. We have a government here that will not listen to repeated requests. We have a Bill, in fact, that freezes the funding and freezes the inequity.

And so, on this basis, Mr. Speaker, we vote against this Bill. I will vote against it and we will vote against it.

Motion agreed to on division, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

Bill No. 23 — An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise tonight to move second reading of Bill No. 23, a Bill to amend The Wascana Centre Act.

The amendments proposed in this Bill cover four areas. Section 3 will permit Wascana Centre Authority to appoint committees to advise it or assist it in various responsibilities. These would be in addition to the architectural and engineering advisory committees which are specifically provided for in the Act. It is anticipated that this addition will permit the authority to place greater emphasis on consultation in matters such as heritage or conservation, for example.

In section 4 of the Bill, the Wascana Centre Authority is given authority to regulate or prohibit, for a temporary period, vehicular or pedestrian traffic within Wascana Centre on roads, streets, or other vehicular areas. This would not be extended to parking lots or provincial highways crossing through Wascana.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment will provide Wascana Centre with improved authority and management flexibility to ensure that uses incompatible with the intent of the centre do not continue, and to safely accommodate special events or other public gatherings.

I trust the members of the legislature recognize that this authority is being given to Wascana Centre and not just to any one of its three participating parties; in other words, the centre as a whole.

The third area covered by this Bill is financial. The amendment in section 5 will, as for Wakamow and Meewasin Valley authorities, limit payments required by statute, pursuant to section 53 of the Act, to be made by the participating parties in Wascana Centre for the 1987-88, and '88-89 fiscal years to the same amounts that were paid in 1986-87.

This amendment implements the government's budgetary decision announced last year to hold funding provided to the urban parks to the same level as in '86-87 for the time being. Extensive consultations with Wascana Centre and the other participating parties have occurred regarding this matter, and all are in agreement.

The last amendment introduced in this Bill in section 6 extends existing legal protection given by the Act to the authority's members, officers, and employees. It covers other positions and committees established by the legislation, plus the participating parties. This parallels

provisions being provided for all three urban park authorities.

Mr. Speaker, I have to add as well that, as chairman of the Wascana Centre Authority, I can tell you that many meetings and negotiations have taken place between the three parties, the government, the university, the city of Regina. All of us are in agreement as to the level of funding. There's been no particular problem with it, and as a matter of fact I'm pleased to tell you that last year, and this year as well, Wascana Centre Authority has been able to operate and have a surplus.

So that as a result, this measure of restraint that is being practised by all three participating parties is a welcome relief to the parties, and is having obviously having no effect at all on any of the long-term plans at Wascana Centre, nor is it having any effect at all on the people that enjoy Wascana Centre, its beauty, and its nature.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of Bill No. 23, a Bill to amend The Wascana Centre Act. And I would encourage, in view of my remarks, that all members of this House support this Bill.

(2100)

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We find two provisions of this Bill objectionable. I want to begin with the section which is of a less . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Three, I'm reminded by my colleagues. One is the minister who moves it.

On a more serious vein though, we have two objections to this. One is the section which provides that no member of the Authority is liable for anything done unless it was not done in good faith — whatever that might mean. I see no reason why members of the Authority should not be responsible for the consequences of their action, the same as anyone else is, and I see no reason why there should be a special case made for this Authority. Any member of the public who is injured through the negligence of some member of the Authority ought to have the normal redress. The employees do not, of course, pay it themselves; it's paid by insurance companies, and I frankly think this section simply can not be justified — nor did the minister attempt to.

He told me less in his comments than were in the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I regret that my remarks have not found instant favour with the Minister of Urban Affairs, but I see no reason why the members of the public should not be compensated for negligent actions done by the members of this Authority, the same as any other.

A far more substantial objection is the freeze on the funding. Mr. Speaker, the minister stated that the level of maintenance, the quality of the centre, had not deteriorated. Mr. Minister, all you've got to do is walk or drive through that centre in the last couple of years to see how badly the Wascana Centre has deteriorated.

An Hon. Member: — How come you let your dog run loose there?

Mr. Shillington: — I have not noted that the member from

Wascana has been running loose, and I take no responsibility for the member of Wascana slipping his leash. I take no responsibility for the member of Wascana slipping off his leash.

Mr. Speaker, all one has to do is walk through these grounds to see how they've deteriorated. The lawn is full of weeds. Last year the grounds out in front of this building were frankly an embarrassment. There's more weeds than grass out there. This year, I say to the member from Saskatoon who . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I would say, well that's strange, my remarks are not finding favour across the way. I'm heart-broken.

Mr. Speaker, I invite you, during the next noon hour or so, to take a walk around this park and have a look at the lawns. They certainly are not what they used to be.

This year — and this may have something to do with an impending drought, which the Minister of Urban Affairs may recognize, although the Minister of Environment stoutly maintains doesn't exist — the grass is dried. It has not been properly looked after. Mr. Speaker, this centre is not being maintained the way it once was; it is no longer the object of beauty that it once was.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill represents another one of the good ideas, which have been in this province for some time which we can simply consign to the dustbin of history. And I can think of a number of them, Mr. Speaker.

Since we have the Minister of Urban Affairs proudly touting this Bill, let me use, as an example, revenue sharing. We once used to have revenue sharing in this province; we don't any more. It just doesn't exist; it has been legislated away so long and so many years that the program just has ceased to exist in anything but name.

Mr. Speaker, we once used to have a funding formula for the Wascana Centre, which lay at the base of making this area the great centre of beauty it once was. This government has legislated that away often enough that I don't think that basis exists any more either. I think now Wascana Centre gets whatever this government decides to give it.

The formula which we once had, Mr. Speaker, for funding the Wascana Centre, whereby in effect the Wascana Centre, after consultation with the various parties, stated its needs and the three levels of government anteed up — the first year this government unilaterally cut its level of funding. Now we see the level of funding being frozen.

I don't know whether the others agreed to it or not, but I tell you one thing, Mr. Speaker: I don't agree with it. Every time I walk through that park and look at the weeds and the dead grass, I say that this centre has deteriorated badly, as have so many other aspects of life in Saskatchewan. There are so many things which used to make this province special — and this centre was one of them — which have simply deteriorated under the auspices of this government.

Mr. Speaker, clearly there ought to be further discussion of this. Notwithstanding the minister's bull-headedness, I get the impression he's thinking better of some of his other

poppycock ideas such as the ward system. I get the impression the minister is not going to move with that. Maybe, just maybe, Mr. Speaker, the minister can be talked out of this as well. I therefore beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 26 — An Act to amend The Oil and Gas Conservation Act

Hon. Mrs. Smith: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise this evening on second reading of Bill No. 26, An Act to amend The Oil and Gas Conservation Act.

Mr. Speaker, The Oil and Gas Conservation Act was first introduced in this province in this Assembly in approximately 1952, and it has been amended on various occasions since that time, most recently in 1983.

The basic purposes of the Act, Mr. Speaker, are to first of all regulate the production of the oil and gas to ensure several things: first of all, the ultimate recovery of the resources, to prevent waste, and to protect the rights of each owner, and also to protect the environment and generally to develop the province's oil and gas resources for the benefit of the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, there are five main elements of the Bill: number one, the requirements to fully implement recent provincial natural gas deregulation initiatives; two, the introduction of an oil and gas environmental fund; three, a means to address problems which can occur in the absence of an oil and gas conservation board; number four, the need to regulate waste oil processing facilities; and last but not least, Mr. Speaker, there are several housekeeping amendments which are required to clarify and update various sections of The Oil and Gas Conservation Act.

Mr. Speaker, consistent with the national natural gas deregulation initiatives, our government announced a two-phase approach for deregulating the natural gas market in Saskatchewan last year. In accordance with the announcements of natural gas deregulation, incidental amendments to the oil and gas conservation are required.

The amendments are necessary to provide a clearer legislative authority to authorize removal of gas outside of the province and to provide for the repeal of regulated pricing provisions retroactive to January 1, 1987. Amendments are also required to ensure natural gas producers submit all of their required information necessary for monitoring the effects and developments of deregulation.

Mr. Speaker, in this year's budget address the Finance minister indicated that the province would be establishing an oil and gas environmental fund to replace the outdated well deposit system. The Bill before us makes provision for the establishment and operation of such a fund. The environmental fund will provide a cost-effective means of abandoning non-productive wells in the event of financial failure by the operator, and ensuring that the surface lease is restored to the satisfaction of the landowner. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker,

the fund will allow the government to respond to a major environmental problem if liability for the problem could not immediately be ascertained.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to make it clear that this new fund, like the current well deposit system, does not limit the ultimate responsibility of any company to properly abandon and clean up oil and gas facilities. The fund will be used as a means of last resort once all other avenues of recourse to the government have been exhausted.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill also includes amendments which will address certain problems — problems which occur in the absence of an oil and gas conservation board. A board has not been in existence in this province for more than 10 years, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, the lack of a board can present some procedural problems in executing the full intent of the Act. The Bill before us will allow pooling orders and unit operation order amendments to be executed upon the recommendation of either such a board, Mr. Speaker, or the Department of Energy and Mines.

Mr. Speaker, during the last few years facilities have been established in this province to process waste oil and related substances which can be generated through normal oilfield activity or operations. And while the Act allows the minister and department to regulate wells and facilities directly related to the production of oil and gas, that authority does not extend to waste processing facilities.

Mr. Speaker, to ensure that these facilities are operated in a safe manner, amendments to the Act have been made to provide the power to make regulations governing the construction and the operation of waste oil processing facilities. These regulations will incorporate the general operating guide-lines, which the department has attempted to enforce in recent years, without having full legislative authority to do so.

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, a number of housekeeping amendments have also been included in this Bill to clarify and update the intent of the Act. While I will not — and the member from Regina Centre will be pleased to hear that — identify all items of housekeeping nature at this time, I would like to make note of one small but important amendment to the purpose section of this Act, Mr. Speaker.

Although environmental protection has always been considered to be a purpose of the Act, it has never been expressly stated in the Act. And I am pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that this is now contained within the Bill which I presented before the Legislative Assembly. With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 26, An Act to amend The Oil and Gas Conservation Act.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Energy and Mines has spoken at great length about Bill No. 26, An Act to amend The Oil and Gas Conservation Act. She's outlined a plethora of amendments which are wide-sweeping in nature. Mr. Speaker, the opposition,

and in particular the critic for Energy and Mines, would require a considerable amount of time to review the minister's remarks and, perhaps, get back and return to the debate. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would move that we adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 27 — An Act to adopt the Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move today second reading of The International Commercial Arbitration Act. This Act is being introduced to ensure the effective functioning of arbitral proceedings for use between a Saskatchewan corporation and a corporation of another jurisdiction.

The new Act implements the model law of international commercial arbitration as adopted by the United Nations commission on international trade law, effective June 21, 1985. This is an international consensus that the model law constitutes a modern practical code of procedures and a common means of arbitrating commercial disputes. The Act is based on the United Nations Model Act and is consistent with the commitment to free trade, and it is our belief that it will be well received by the business community. Saskatchewan and Ontario, Mr. Speaker, are the only two provinces in Canada left to introduce this Bill.

The Act provides that if an action is brought before a court and the matter is subject to an arbitration agreement, the court shall, upon request of one of the parties to the agreement, refer the matter to arbitration. The proposed Act will provide grounds to refuse to recognize or to enforce the award of arbitral tribunals.

(2115)

Mr. Speaker, this is an Act that was lobbied on us by the various body of the Canadian Bar Association now involved in commercial transactions involved with arbitration. As I indicated in the text, only Saskatchewan and Ontario have not yet introduced it. I'm advised that Ontario is also about to introduce this legislation. That would mean all provinces in Canada would now have this model law with regard to arbitration.

Mr. Shillington: — I must begin, Mr. Speaker, by admitting I don't totally understand this Bill. However, I'm relieved to hear that the minister doesn't understand it at all. I think that's the conclusion to be drawn from his speech.

Mr. Speaker, it is apparent that the legislation is being introduced in concert with other provinces and the national government as part of a nation-wide effort to facilitate arbitration between corporations which work internationally. So I say, I don't understand, the minister didn't either, but I'm prepared to trust other provinces and the federal government who presumably have taken the lead on the thing.

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

Bill No. 28 — An Act to amend The Matrimonial Property Act

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — This particular Bill, Mr. Speaker, is a minor amendment to The Matrimonial Property Act, and the prime rationale of this particular amendment is as follows: that under the changes to the Canada Pension Plan the legislation put forward in parliament would equally divide up, in the event of a marriage breakdown, the pension benefits 50-50.

What this legislation would allow for, Mr. Speaker, is to accommodate agreements between separating spouses in order to deal with the pension benefits in the same manner they might deal with other property. It seems like an appropriate Bill to move a minor amendment. I would hope all parties of this Assembly would support this legislation.

Mr. Shillington: — Yes, I say to the Assembly, we don't have any objection to this Bill and will not be opposing it, Mr. Speaker.

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

Bill No. 29 — An Act respecting the Convention Between Canada and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland providing for the Reciprocal Recognition and Enforcement of Judgements in Civil and Commercial Matters

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, this Act is being introduced to insure implementation of the 1984 Canada-United Kingdom judgements convention. The new Act adopts the Canada-U.K. judgement convention which applies to the recognition and enforcement of normal, civil, and commercial money judgements. The convention has no application to matters of family law, taxation, legal status, succession law, and bankruptcy.

It states grounds for refusing to recognize a judgement, and circumstances in which the court rendering the judgement shall be regarded as having jurisdiction. The Act protects Saskatchewan residents with assets in Great Britain from having a foreign judgement enforced against their assets abroad. The Act is uniform across Canadian jurisdictions and was drafted by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada. Four other provinces have already enacted the legislation, and the convention is now operative in those provinces.

Provision of the convention reflects the principle of existing British and Canadian law in this area, which means that the Act represents consolidation of the law and not a fundamental change in the law.

With that, I move second reading.

Mr. Shillington: — This time I'll give the minister a bit of credit; I think he may have understood this one.

This, Mr. Speaker, follows the normal precepts of international law and the practice of countries in the western world. We're not going to oppose it.

Mr. Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question? Order, order. Order. The member from Regina Centre has just had an opportunity to make his remarks, and now I'd like his co-operation.

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

The Assembly adjourned at 9:20 p.m.