

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to point out a guest who's behind the bar and joined us for this morning's deliberations — the leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party from 1981 to 1988, Member of Parliament for Assiniboia from 1974 to 1979, and MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg from 1986 to 1988. Would all the members of the Assembly warmly welcome Ralph Goodale.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We drew straws in our caucus and I won. I have the distinct pleasure today to introduce guests in the east and west galleries to you, Mr. Speaker, and through you to all members of the legislature.

What we have are the CAA (Canadian Automobile Association) Saskatchewan school safety patrol . . . individuals in for the school safety patrol jamboree. They are ages 11 to 14, with the exception of the 20 chaperons who are headed by Louise Holdsworth. I will not list other names but simply want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to meeting with this group at 11 a.m.

I want us to welcome them very warmly, and also it's a way of acknowledging the very important work these school patrollers do in seeing that our sons and daughters and neighbours and friends get to and from school safely each and every day throughout Saskatchewan. I ask all members to join me in welcoming them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I too would like to extend my congratulations to the students as minister in charge of SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) in regards to the tremendous educational work and knowledge on the interchange of information in regards to safety.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also introduce to the members of the legislature and to yourself, we have 12 students, grade 11 students from across the province of Saskatchewan in the Speaker's gallery here, Mr. Speaker, and they are also with two teachers, Mr. Jack Kindrachuk and Mr. Paul Hildebrand.

Mr. Speaker, they are part of the Interchange of Canadian Studies group and they'll be travelling to Toronto for a conference. The theme of this conference, Mr. Speaker, will be on peace keeping. And we wish them the best on their trip next week to Toronto, and I'll be meeting with them right after question period. So let's extend them a welcome in

this legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Free Vote on Bill 38

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question this morning will be to the Premier or whoever he should designate to answer this question. Yesterday, as Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, I called for a free vote on Bill 38. Mr. Speaker, the members of the opposition caucus will have an opportunity to consider this legislation and vote on it based on their own consciences and based on the views of their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I was extremely disappointed to hear that a Justice minister immediately dismissed this alternative with absolutely no consideration. So I would say to the Premier of Saskatchewan, I think it's time that there is some leadership showed on this issue. Mr. Premier, will you allow your MLAs to vote their conscience and the wishes of their constituents on Bill 38?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his question and I want to say to the House that the legislation, which is the amendments to the human rights Act, is a matter of government policy. We are prepared to say that it is the right policy. Anyone who heard the speech by the Minister of Justice yesterday would have recognized the importance of this issue and the importance of eliminating discrimination in our society wherever and however we can.

And we are proud of the policy position that we have taken with regard to eliminating such discrimination, Mr. Speaker. We are also disappointed that the members opposite do not share that view and I think that that is their choice, but they're going to have to answer to the society in which we live why they chose to take that position.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question will be to the Deputy Premier. Mr. Deputy Premier, I think the people of Saskatchewan are very disappointed to hear your answer. Most MLAs in this legislature have received tremendous volumes of mail from concerned Saskatchewan people, not because they wish to discriminate against anyone, simply because, Mr. Minister, they don't think the government has been as forthcoming on the issue as they would like.

And I refer you to a document put out by the New Democratic Party in January 1991, and I'll quote from that, Mr. Deputy Premier. It's called "Enhancing the role of private members" in the legislature of

Saskatchewan.

The Legislative Assembly today provides too few opportunities for Private Members to speak . . . on behalf of their constituents (and commitments). The role of Private Members needs to be enhanced in order to restore public confidence in the role of the peoples' representatives and improve the ability of all MLA's to act directly on their constituents' concerns.

Mr. Deputy Premier, this would be a perfect opportunity to make good on the commitment of your party. Would you allow, Mr. Deputy Premier, a free vote on Bill 38?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I find it of some interest that the Leader of the Opposition would raise this question, as if he was interested in this kind of a reform.

I simply want to say to him that he should carefully consider the fact that it was he and it was members of his caucus who last year quashed the reforms to this legislature, which were in place and which were being practised and utilized, and were working quite effectively, Mr. Speaker, to give private members of all sides of the House and all political parties roles which they have never had before.

And the only reason that those rules are not in place, Mr. Speaker, is because it's members of the Progressive Conservative Party, led by the member from Thunder Creek, who said that those rules would not be able to put into place, and I think that they stand judged by that kind of a decision.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be to the Deputy Premier. Well, Mr. Deputy Premier, once again what you say and what you do are two different things. This from a Deputy Premier of a party which has used closure more often in this legislature in 16 months than all the history of our province.

In spite of all this talk of reform from you people, you do everything in the power that the front benches have to muzzle your members. You've muzzled them on the health Bill, Mr. Deputy Premier. You're saying now to the people of Saskatchewan that individual MLAs should not have the right to vote as their constituents wish on Bill 38.

I guess you're following the example set by your federal leader who has fired her Finance critic for speaking his mind about Bob Rae. I think she got a chance . . . she did that before he had a chance to say what he thinks of your government, Mr. Deputy Premier.

Are you afraid of giving your members the opportunity

to speak and vote freely in this legislature? Be open and accountable, Mr. Deputy Premier. Don't muzzle your members. Give members of this legislature an opportunity to stand in their place and have a free vote on this Bill. Will you do that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I say to the member opposite that members of this legislature have the right to speak. They speak freely. And members on the government side of the House I might add, Mr. Speaker, contribute considerably to the debates here in spite of the efforts by the members of the Conservative Party opposite to try to limit that speaking opportunity by the incessant delays and obstructionism which they have imposed on this legislature both in the last session and in the present session.

I don't know where they have been for the last two years, but if they would spend some time talking to their constituents they would know that those constituents are saying that they elect the members of this Assembly to represent them and to get on with the affairs of the province of Saskatchewan and things that are important to them.

They no longer will tolerate the kind of obstructionism that they have imposed on this legislature. And that's why from time to time we have had to bring in time allocation, because the public demands it, because the public deserves fair value for the dollar that they spend on the operations of this legislature.

And it is the opinion and the commitment of this government to make sure that they are going to get fair value for that dollar that they're spending and that they will get policies which are of interest and good to all of the people of Saskatchewan, rather than some narrow interest groups from time to time which the members opposite try to represent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be to the Deputy Premier. Mr. Speaker, what the Deputy Premier is saying to this House today is that this document, this document which on page 17 talks about reform and about allowing members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to participate more freely on behalf of their constituents, was simply another electoral sham, sir, an electoral sham brought forward on the people of Saskatchewan in 1991 so that you could achieve political power. It means nothing. It means not the paper that it's printed on, Mr. Deputy Premier.

If you honestly believe what you say in this document, then you would know the tremendous amount of concern and volume of mail which I know several of your members of this legislature have had on Bill 38. If you would allow them the opportunity, the opportunity . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. Would the

Deputy House Leader please come to order.

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Deputy Premier, what do you say to your own members to justify the fact that you will not allow them the opportunity in this legislature to stand and vote and voice the concerns of their constituents which have been in overwhelming numbers on this particular issue. Mr. Deputy Premier, subscribe to the views that you wrote in '91 and say to those members, you will have the opportunity to vote freely in this legislature. Do that, sir.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, the member may try to sound as sanctimonious as he might, but he is not being very credible. Let me explain why in response to his question.

Last year in this legislature, with the cooperation of the whole legislature, the rules were proposed to be amended and in fact were used for a while as a trial run. Here is what the changes were. We had provisions for private members to make statements daily in the House. We had provision for private members in the private members' debate to have a question-and-answer period. We had a provision where a member of the House would not need a seconder to the motion; the member from Greystone was interested in that. We had provisions for change of hours of sitting so to better utilize the time of this House, and once again to give private members a bigger role to play. We had extended use of committees so that private members could be more involved in the work of many of the things that this legislature is responsible for.

Everybody in this House thought it was a good idea and it was working well except the members opposite who, in a huff over a debate on another piece of legislation, for no good reason refused to let those rules be implemented and put into place, Mr. Speaker. And I say to the member from Thunder Creek, shame on them. And their arguments here today hold no credibility because their actions prove otherwise.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Is the member from Rosthern on the same topic?

Mr. Neudorf: — The member from Rosthern has a question, yes.

The Speaker: — Is the member from Rosthern on the same topic as the Leader of the Opposition?

An Hon. Member: — No.

Lab Services

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, have you instructed health boards in Regina and Saskatoon to move work from

the private labs to public labs?

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, the decision with respect to labs was announced here in the House. The decision was, was to maximize the public sector wherever possible, but there would be two systems existing side by side. The funding with respect to lab services will be transferred to the health boards, and they will determine exactly how they are going to allocate this funding in conjunction with the general guidelines to maximize the public sector as much as possible because of the facilities that are already there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Madam Minister, can you then assure the people of Saskatchewan that public labs are equipped to handle the necessary requirements and that there will not be any new expenditures on new equipment . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'll repeat my question then, Madam Minister.

Madam Minister, can you then assure the people of Saskatchewan that public labs are equipped to handle the necessary requirements and that there will not be any new expenditures on new equipment?

Hon. Ms. Simard: — What has to be done, I want to say to the member from Greystone, is that the health boards are going to have to take a look at what facilities are there, the funding that's allocated, and they will make the best decision in the context of their communities — the funding that's available, the facilities that are available. I am not going to get into telling them whether they should buy this equipment or not buy this equipment, and so on. The point is, is that we have established a general policy guideline. The policy guideline is to maximize the investment that has been made and to . . . but they have the responsibility of delivering lab services in the area of their district with the funding that we've allocated.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Madam Minister, your changes to health care have subjected people who work in the health care system to a great deal of uncertainty. In order to take over the workload of private labs, can you confirm whether hospitals in Regina and Saskatoon are in need of \$10 million computer lab systems which already exist in the private lab system? And if so, how do you rationalize this expense?

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I will have to get information on the computer situation that you're referring to, because the jurisdiction of the health boards looking after the labs and administering lab services in their area is there.

As I said earlier, the government has allotted funding to the health boards to provide lab services. They will have the obligation to make the best decisions for their district in the context of that funding.

Now if there's something about a specific decision

that has been made, that the member opposite has concerns about, we can check it out. I do not have all the details of their decision.

Because what we have done with our district board legislation is to decentralize much of this decision-making power. The government sets the policies and guidelines; we set the general direction; we provide the funding. And we expect the local community health boards to make decisions in the context of that that are responsible and that will improve health care for the people of Saskatchewan and their districts.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Madam Minister, it is precisely because of the directions in fact that your government has given that there will be a closing of 14 out of 22 patient-testing locations throughout the city today. Seventeen staff members will also lose their jobs.

Madam Minister, surely you looked at this situation. Will you table in this House copies of all recent studies that outline the specific costs and savings associated with moving laboratory testing to the public sector. Specifically, I think it's necessary and incumbent upon you to show the taxpayers what evaluation has been done to determine if adequate equipment, such as the lab computer system, exists in the public lab system and that this equipment was factored in to the overall health care expenditures.

Hon. Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, we've had a number of studies done on this, and the member opposite is aware of them or at least should be. They were made public. They were discussed by the private labs. They were discussed by the public labs. They were discussed by all of the stakeholders involved in the area, and we had a great deal of press surrounding that.

The fact of the situation is, the matter has been reviewed in some detail. The government has taken the position that we will de-insure lab services. In other words, we're getting rid of fee for service.

There is a large sum of money being taken out of the lab system in the vein of attempting to keep costs under control because I know the member opposite I'm sure hears from people throughout her constituency that lab costs have got out of control, have escalated, and that there's a lot that can be done to make it more rational and to save money for taxpayers and still provide a high-quality lab service. So the job loss that may be occurring is as a result of rationalizing lab services and reducing the cost to taxpayers in the province. That is not inconsistent with . . .

The Speaker: — Next question.

Ms. Haverstock: — Madam Minister, you just indicated that what is being proposed is going to save the cost to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. I will ask again, will you please table in this House, copies of all

of the recent studies done by your department that outline the specific costs and savings associated with moving laboratory testing to the public sector?

Hon. Ms. Simard: — We can certainly table the reports; there are a number of them. And I want to indicate also that there are a proliferation of patient-testing locations throughout our cities, and it is felt by people in the lab sector and people who have studied the area, that we do have a proliferation of these testing stations that are unnecessary. They can be located in fewer places at a substantial cost saving to the taxpayer and still provide very high-quality health care services.

Cottage Taxes in Provincial Parks

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, although I feel it's my duty to inform the House that I am on a different topic, and I would ask the Minister of Natural Resources a question.

Mr. Minister, our office has received a call from a woman who lives in La Ronge but has a cottage in Lac La Ronge, and she along with others are expressing anger over your government's recent tax bill that they are getting. Mr. Minister, this woman has called her local MLA from Cumberland who has refused to personally answer that call.

So, Mr. Minister, on behalf of the member from Cumberland, on behalf of his constituents, I ask you this question: why has the government increased taxes for this provincial park by almost 200 per cent?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the member from Cumberland would happily respond to his constituent, as would our office. But the question with respect to increases in charges has to do with equalizing the charges within parks and externally to parks and in order to provide a fair basis for the funding for the park services that all of us value as recreation spots.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Minister, for that answer. Now I understand that you are trying to equalize taxes for provincial parks. This woman was told by a park official in Prince Albert that this tax increase was for services provided in that provincial park. Mr. Minister, Lac La Ronge has no roads, has no power, has no gas; they build their own docks. How can you justify this increase?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — People within parks live and pay fees on the property they occupy, and people externally to parks also pay the fees but have to pay taxes to other municipalities. In order to equalize the costs to people living internally within parks and outside of parks, these increases were made within parks so there is some fairness.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — That's exactly the question that this woman is posing to us, where's the fairness in this? That's all she's simply asking, Mr. Minister.

I have a quote from another correspondence from another cottage owner, who simply says this: pretty soon it can be only NDP cabinet ministers that can afford to have cottages.

Mr. Minister, will you please provide for me a breakdown of services that Lac La Ronge receives in comparison to a park such as Greenwater Park for example. And I want you to please include also the amount of taxes that that cottage owner would then pay. Would you do that for me, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, I think that information can be provided. But on the earlier question that the member asked with respect to affordability, in spite of the increases that have been made at this point it is still more costly for members to live outside of parks than internally within them. And I think in fairness to all of us who pay our expenses for our recreation, it's reasonable to assume that there shouldn't be special privilege for people who live within parks.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Crop Insurance Firing

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for Crop Insurance. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to this Assembly an issue which is of great concern to many of my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I received many calls and letters regarding the hiring and firing practices of the NDP government. Politics and patronage are the underlying theme in nearly every instance.

But in this case, Mr. Speaker, there seems to be no rhyme or reason. Joanne Bredy was fired after 12 years of dedicated service to the province as the Kindersley customer services office manager of the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation. One letter from a constituent points out that the termination can't be related to financial cut-backs because the cost of her severance package and retraining considerations would more than outweigh any savings after a replacement was hired.

Mr. Minister, on behalf of this constituent and many other constituents, I ask the minister responsible for Saskatchewan Crop Insurance, why was Joanne Bredy fired; and also, who replaced Joanne Bredy as the area officer manager?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I do not know the individual that the member refers to. There has been a major restructuring in Crop Insurance in the

past two years. I think we have made some major savings by reorganization. We've made major improvements to this corporation. I'm proud of the fact that the improvements that have been to this corporation . . .

And one thing, Mr. Speaker, that I demand of civil servants is a professional civil service. And I think in return to them, I think it's incumbent upon me to act in a professional manner. And a professional manner, I believe, does not involve a minister of the Crown in public making comments about individuals' work records or their employment.

So if there are questions about specific individuals and who has replaced them, then I think those are properly addressed in estimates and can be done there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the people who wrote to me and called me specifically asked that I raise the question in question period and address the situation of the firing of Joanne Bredy. She was very well respected, Mr. Minister. Worked 12 years, hired originally by an NDP administration, so it can't be political.

What is the reason why she was fired? She was extremely well thought of by the community and her clientele.

I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, if you might have made a mistake, if you would consider looking at this once again. Would you consider reviewing the reasons and the rationale behind the firing, and report your findings to the legislature?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, we would certainly review any case that the member brings forward.

Again I'm glad that he has admitted that it's not political and it has to do with restructuring and reorganization and efficiency of the corporation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 57 — An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year ending on March 31, 1994

Hon. Mr. Penner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that The Appropriation Act (No. 2) be now introduced and read the first time.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 39 — An Act to amend The Education Act

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, the purpose of Bill No. 39 is to put in place a francophone component for Saskatchewan's kindergarten to grade 12 school system. It will enable Saskatchewan francophones to manage and control their own schools, something they're entitled to under section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Members will recall that this Bill was introduced in August of last year but not passed due to a heavy legislative agenda at that time. Bill No. 39 is unchanged from Bill 92 that was before the Assembly last August. For this reason I do not propose to speak to Bill No. 39 in great detail. There will be ample opportunity for further discussion, both here during debate and in committee review.

I believe it would be sufficient for now to simply summarize the key features of the Bill. Briefly, these are as follows. Section 23 of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms gives linguistic minorities in any province the right to have their children educated in either of Canada's official languages. One of the key words here is "either". The intent of section 23 is to protect the rights of both French- and English-speaking Canadians. It is not a special privilege available only to French-speaking Canadians.

Along with the right to minority-language education, section 23 confers the right to have that education provided in publicly funded schools. This is to be done under the management and control of the linguistic minority where there is a large enough minority population to justify it.

In Saskatchewan section 23 gives francophone parents the right to have their children educated in French. It also confers the right to francophone schools under the jurisdiction of a francophone education authority. These rights have been affirmed by the courts. I know members are familiar with the 1988 Wimmer decision and its implications for Saskatchewan.

Again I don't want to review all of the details leading up to this Bill. Suffice it to say that the Wimmer decision set in motion an extensive process of public consultation on francophone governance. The Bill now before the Assembly is the end result of this process.

Mr. Speaker, this particular piece of legislation is long overdue. Its passage will mean we are fulfilling our legal obligations under section 23. Its passage will mean we are also fulfilling our broader constitutional obligations. Moreover, passage of the Bill will give the Government of Saskatchewan access to federal funding for implementation of francophone governance. These are funds that would not otherwise be available to us.

As I said at the outset, Bill no. 39 is unchanged from Bill 92 of last year. The key features of the Bill remain the same. The legislation allows establishment of francophone education areas roughly equivalent to school divisions. Each area will contain a francophone school under the management and control of an elected francophone board of education, a conseil scolaire. I expect that over time there might eventually be eight to ten such boards in Saskatchewan.

Along with the local boards there will be a provincial coordinating body known as the conseil général. The council will be made up of representatives from the local boards. It will review all proposals for establishment of boards and determine if in fact they are warranted. The council will also arrange for specialized services on a shared basis. Lastly it will coordinate services for francophone students in areas where a board has not yet been established and areas where establishment is simply not practical.

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that, like its predecessor, Bill 39 is enabling legislation. It allows individual communities to take the initiative, decide if they are interested in establishing a board, and then follow a clearly defined path towards implementation. If there is no significant interest among members of the community, the existing arrangements simply remain in place. Nothing changes until people at the local level indicate a desire for change.

I'd like now to speak briefly to the financial implications. Implementation of francophone schools will not mean an additional drain on the provincial treasury. This is the case because the start-up costs will be fully borne by the federal government. The 1988 Canada-Saskatchewan agreement promises \$13.4 million over five years for implementation of francophone schools. This will be used to meet the school's initial operating and capital costs.

The provincial government will fund the local boards through the foundation-grant formula already in place. This is already being done. However, the francophone boards will not have the authority to levy taxes. Instead, their needs will be met through federal funds.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the key features of Bill 39 are as follows. It allows Saskatchewan francophones to manage and control their own schools. It defines a clear path to follow should residents of a given area choose to proceed with implementation. It formally recognizes that the power of choice resides at the local level. The Bill is there to help people who want to use it where there is consensus at the local level that this should be done. It brings Saskatchewan into line with the requirements of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It brings to fruition several years of consultation with major education stakeholders on how this matter could best be resolved. It enables Saskatchewan to meet its legal and constitutional obligations without impact in terms of cost.

Mr. Speaker, these are six good reasons why I hope all members might lend their support to this Bill. I am therefore pleased, Mr. Speaker, to move that Bill No. 39, An Act to amend The Education Act, be now read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've been listening with interest to the comments made by the Minister of Education in proposing the Bill. And as I was listening and certainly following the debate that has taken place in the province over the last period of years, specifically probably the last four or five years regarding French school governance, you're aware and I see the Assembly is aware, many of the residents of the province are aware of the ongoing debate and the discussion that has followed, and the fact that I guess one of the major impacts that this may have on the province, one of the areas that most people are worried about and as the minister has indicated, certainly at the present time, the federal government will be significantly involved by putting up the funds to implement French school boards across this province and carrying the cost of that.

But when it comes to French school governance and the opportunity of the francophone community to have or to implement their own school boards, Mr. Speaker, certainly the opposition is not opposed to that fact, realizing the requirements of the charter and our constitutional rights and freedoms.

One of the major concerns though that does arise, and even though the financial implications won't be directly attributed to the province, although certainly third-party funding will be involved and the province is going to have to fund the different schools and the educational process, it's a fact that in a time of financial difficulty, and we have been told over the past little while of . . . raised the significance of the provincial debt has . . . continues to be raised, and I'm aware of . . . just on one of my recent papers, one of the local school boards had to look at significant reductions to services at their own level.

And I'm just going to bring out a couple points of the type of reductions that many of the school boards across this province are looking at — provincial funding for the Moosomin school division will be reduced by 216,000 this year, and will be reduced by a further 400,000 in 1994. That reduction is the equivalent of 10.5 mills at the local taxation level if they were to try and maintain the curriculum, the positions, the jobs in their school.

In fact the article goes on to indicate that there will be 6.3 positions reduced in the school, and support staff will be reduced by 2.5, which is a total of 8.8 positions — working positions — in the Moosomin school division. And at the same time they're going to be reducing courses to high school students. And as was indicated, a lot of the reductions are coming strictly from downloading that is being put on local school boards by the provincial government. And as the

director said . . . or not the director, the chairman of the board said, we had to decide whether we pass on the downloading to the taxpayers or whether we adjust programs.

And a lot of school boards across this province are facing some difficult times because of the funding. And for the minister to indicate that in the long term there isn't going to be a major impact on the province and on our educational program in this province by adding a third school board, I don't believe is exactly true. Because in the not-too-distant future . . . the federal funding right now bridges, I believe, a five-year period of the implementation of the program. One has to ask themselves: in difficult times is it the appropriate time to move ahead with the funding and the allowance for third school boards to spring up across the province of Saskatchewan?

I guess an area of discussion that we'll get into in estimates and some of my other colleagues will be raising, certainly the area that we'll be looking at is: what will the long-term impacts be? How many third school boards will be funded across the province of Saskatchewan? And I'm not sure if the province is aware of it.

I know when we were discussing it, there are probably half a dozen key areas in the province of Saskatchewan where individuals feel quite strongly that they would like to have the option of implementing a third school board. But time will tell exactly how many of these boards . . . how many of these communities will actually opt for the third school board recognition.

And I think when we look at a lot of our school districts right now and look at what school districts are facing in the costs and in trying to provide adequate education to the students that are involved, it would seem to me that now may not have been the appropriate time to move ahead with third school board funding. Although I can appreciate where the minister is coming from and where the government is coming from because I believe the federal government as well has indicated that they would like to see the province moving on it and possibly their funding is contingent upon the province moving sooner rather than later.

(1045)

I just want to add that in my area, and I have significant French-speaking populous base or sector right just north of where I live, and in talking to individuals in that French-speaking community, they have felt over the years that they have been treated more than adequately. In fact they are not all that concerned about forming a third . . . or being part of the French school governance or this third school district.

Now of course, as the minister indicated, that's their choice. And I think it's appropriate that at the end of the day that we give communities, we give school districts, the opportunity or the ability to decide whether they want to become involved in this third

school program.

And those are some of the areas, Mr. Speaker, that we would like to address, we'd like to bring to the attention of the minister and of the government. And I think as we get into further discussion, there are other areas that may be raised. And certainly I'm aware of the fact that there will be people out in the rural and urban Saskatchewan who want to have us speak and get some more answers to maybe some of their questions. And to allow for that debate to take place, Mr. Speaker, I move that adjournment take place on this Bill at the time.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 1

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Mitchell that **Bill No. 1 — An Act respecting the Conduct of Members of the Legislative Assembly and Members of the Executive Council, respecting Conflicts of Interest and to enact Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of this Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the opposition, we have taken a fairly close look at this Bill, Mr. Speaker. And I know it's of some significance as far as the public is concerned and certainly as members of this Legislative Assembly are concerned as well.

And there is no doubt about it that there are far-reaching implications and that there are many technicalities in the Bill, Mr. Speaker, that quite frankly we are not quite sure of in terms of what the implications are and the intricacies of those.

And it is with cooperation from the minister himself that we have arranged for what might be termed a technical briefing with the minister's officials sitting down with our caucus so that we can see a little bit more clearly the implications of the Bill.

And it is because of that, Mr. Speaker, that I would ask that further debate on this Bill now be adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 46

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cunningham that **Bill No. 46 — An Act to amend and repeal The Farm Purchase Program Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Bill does not give us any particular problems and I think to expedite matters we'll simply let this Bill go to committee.

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

Bill No. 47

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cunningham that **Bill No. 47 — An Act to amend The Farm Financial Stability Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I went through a number of the observations that were made by the minister, and some of the items have been raised through meetings that the Department of Agriculture had in the various feeder associations across the province, and I am significantly interested in that discussion and am going to allow this to go to committee, knowing that I'm going to ask some very serious questions about the accountability and the various areas that the minister addressed. And I believe that there's 11 specific areas that he addressed, and I'm going to be asking him questions to enlarge on those items, and therefore I'm just going to allow this to go to committee.

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

Bill No. 50

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cunningham that **Bill No. 50 — An Act to amend The Provincial Lands Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. Martens: — Again on this Bill, Mr. Speaker, I am going to be asking technical questions as it relates to some of the items in this Bill, and I therefore am going to allow it to go to committee as well. And the minister has raised some interesting observations about the way The Provincial Lands Act is going to be used, and I'm going to be asking questions in relation to that.

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

Bill No. 27

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Teichrob that **Bill No. 27 — An Act to amend The Association of School Business Officials of Saskatchewan Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have no problems with this Bill. We're looking forward to getting it into the committee stage, and then we will have some specific questions for the minister. But at this time I would just move that we go into committee.

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

sitting.

Bill No. 48

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Mitchell that **Bill No. 48 — An Act to amend The Police Act, 1990** be now read a second time.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And for the same reasons as I cited before, we'll allow Bill 48, The Police Amendment Act, to go to committee.

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

Bill No. 49

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Mitchell that **Bill No. 49 — An Act respecting Correctional Services** be now read a second time.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the member from Souris-Cannington, raised a number of concerns and issues the other day regarding the Bill, a number of areas that I think we want to review a little further.

Certainly we want to commend the government for the fact that they're bringing forward this Bill to make some corrections in view of the fact that it hasn't been looked at since 1973, and we believe that's appropriate.

We're also quite well aware of the fact that we should take the time to review the total process of correction and correctional facilities, how we utilize them, how we treat offenders — young offenders, inmates, especially for minor crimes — not only within our province but maybe we need to take a broad look right across the dominion.

It's been a feeling of mine over a period of years that it's not fair to incarcerate every individual that ends up in the courts and is sentenced to some time. In a lot of cases maybe it's four months, five months, maybe it's a year or two years. A lot of these offences, Mr. Speaker, become very minor offences where people are sent to or incarcerated behind bars or correctional facilities for very minor offences.

And I don't believe it really enhances that person's ability to observe the mistakes that they've made and make corrections in their life, especially if they are put into situations where they are involved in part of a greater school of individuals incarcerated who are put into correctional or prison facilities for much major crimes.

And at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, I think what we do is we send a young person specifically into a very strenuous and difficult situation where they're put together with long-time offenders, hardened offenders, hardened

offenders, hardened criminals, who have been through the system. And after a while it seems to be a process that just enables a person who was just a minor offence that they were incarcerated for, gives them the opportunity to just learn, if you will, greater tricks of the trade, and when they come out they really haven't been rehabilitated.

And it would appear to me, Mr. Speaker, that we should look at a greater emphasis on giving people an opportunity to really acknowledge their responsibility for their actions. And as we give them, or place the responsibility on individuals of repayment to the community at large, in a lot of instances, Mr. Speaker, it may just be community services. It may be an opportunity to be involved in the community, work off their penalty through community services, or work off repayment of the loss incurred by the victim by providing a service to the community or to business or through business opportunities.

And so it certainly in the long term is appropriate that we take a serious look at the correctional services across our province and look at ways in which we can enhance the livelihood and well-being of individuals who through no fault of their own — maybe it's just their upbringing, or it could be the community they're living in or it could be the circumstances of low income, family relationships, or just not an opportunity to really develop in their lives or to get a chance to find that job; or just the group of people they've associated with — that they may have been involved in a crime or criminal offence which, because there's no other way of addressing it, puts them behind bars rather than gives them the ability to work off their time and probably enhance their lives, looking at the fact that in the future if we have given proper education, proper training, and proper opportunities, rather than ending up back in the court system, they would become progressive citizens of our province.

And so with that in mind, Mr. Speaker, we certainly have a number of areas that we want to commend the government on, but we also feel that we should take a bit more time to review the Bill. Therefore I move adjournment of debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 40

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Penner that **Bill No. 40 — An Act to amend The Municipal Employees' Superannuation Act** be now read a second time.

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

(1100)

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 6 — An Act to amend The Prairie and Forest Fires Act, 1982

Clause 1

The Chair: — I'll ask the Minister of Environment and Resource Management to introduce his official.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to introduce Bob Blackwell, who is the assistant deputy minister of the Department of Environment and Resource Management, who's with me on my right.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I say good morning to the minister. And I also say good morning to Bob Blackwell. Our paths have crossed before, Mr. Chairman. When I was minister of Social Services, Bob was doing a good job for me in that department, so welcome here as well.

Mr. Minister, the Act as I see it, reads An Act to amend The Prairie and Forest Fires Act. And I'm just . . . I have a few technical questions I guess that I'd like to have some answers for, so I can understand more fully what we're talking about.

Your main concern, I assume, on this Act would be the forest fires Act, but I notice that it also says, The Prairie and Forest Fires Act. I'm just wondering what role your department would be engaged in, in so far as the prairie fire control is concerned. Do you . . . what's the relationship between the prairie aspect of it and the forest aspect of it, in terms of perhaps cost, in terms of personnel, in terms of your concern, I guess. Could you perhaps explain that situation for me?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, thank you for the question. Our major concern is in the forest fire area and the prairie area in an area four and one-half kilometres around the forest, unless otherwise designated for a very special purpose.

Mr. Neudorf: — Yes, Mr. Chairman . . .

The Chair: — Just a moment, hon. member. Another official has joined us, and I'll ask the minister to introduce him to the members of the committee before we proceed.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes, Mr. Chairman. The other official that's joined me is David Beckwermert. He's the director of legislative services within the new Department of Environment and Resource Management. Thank you very much for that opportunity. Welcome, David.

Mr. Neudorf: — I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I welcome your other official. Does this mean now I can ask twice as many questions, or make them twice as hard?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Both.

Mr. Neudorf: — Both. Okay, thank you very much. Yes, the four and one-half kilometres, I think I understand that. My question simply was this: does this Act pertain to any Crown land other than that range within the forest and 4.5 kilometres beyond?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the opportunity again to clarify that question. What the Act enables is that normally that burning-permit area is the area within that four and a half kilometre range, but that it would enable in a special circumstance for the minister to require a burning permit in other areas of the province where a specific hazard was anticipated.

Mr. Neudorf: — Well thank you for that answer. Actually my question had larger parameters than that. In my constituency, in fact in my home RM (rural municipality) of 403 of Rosthern, the South Saskatchewan River travels along that for 10, 15 miles and there's a lot of Crown land . . . because it's marginal land, there's a lot of Crown land in that area. And I'm just wondering, fires that originate on that Crown land, what is the relationship between this Act, your department, and let's say the RM of Rosthern who would be doing normal forest fighting, fire fighting in that area? What is that relationship?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Thank you again. It's the judgement of my officials that that would remain a responsibility with the municipalities and no specific responsibility within our department, other than again the permitting in the event of a hazard existing.

Mr. Neudorf: — So what is the criterion or criteria that will determine that it will be the province of Saskatchewan's paid forest fighters . . . or fire-fighters that go to a scene of a fire on Crown land? Like okay, let's project that beyond my constituency and go closer to Prince Albert where we have a lot of Crown land. And I'm assuming it's the province of Saskatchewan that foots the bill for fighting those fires, but yet you're telling me that if a fire breaks out on Crown land outside of a . . . outside of what zone, I mean what are the criteria that determine who pays for what under those circumstances?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the officials who are here are not familiar with the technical detail. Those people are resident in Prince Albert and they will give you a written response on that question.

Mr. Neudorf: — Okay. I guess I'm surprised that . . . It's a question that's been on my mind a lot of times and for a long period of time, particularly since I was a fire-fighter in my own area and we did have to go out there and fight brush fires and these kinds of things, that I thought this would be an opportunity for me to get that straightened away in my own mind. But I'll look forward to the answer, if that's your commitment, Mr. Minister. Thank you.

Since we're talking about mainly forest fires now then, as opposed to prairie . . . But maybe I'll give you an opportunity to answer that then. Why is this Act then called The Prairie and Forest Fires Act if there doesn't seem to be any kind of restrictions other than when you get into the forest belt and four and a half kilometres away from that? Could you expound on that?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the best advice of

my officials is that the Bill is principally directed at forest fire fighting. But because the prairie is intermingled with the forest in the northern half of our province, that it's important to have the facility to control burning in prairie areas as well as the forest in the circumstance where a high fire risk exists.

Mr. Neudorf: — So, Mr. Minister, the last few years have been fairly good because we've had a fair amount of moisture, but I understand that you've taken a lot of extra money out of appropriation at this time to foot the potential forest fighting that's up in the north area. So I'm assuming from that, and maybe we can get to that in a future question, but I'm assuming you're expecting a dry year. That's why you need more money to fight the potential, higher potential risk for forest fighters.

How does that relate then — what you just answered — how does that relate to an area where I'd spend a lot of time in fall and go hunting in zones 9 and 10, which is The Great Sand Hills area? Now I understand that part of that . . . well all of that area is under provincial jurisdiction; it's not a federal park, so it's under provincial jurisdiction. And there exists there potential for forest fires as well.

Now what is the role of the provincial government in that Great Sand Hills area west of Swift Current and close to where you are in terms of the provincial government's responsibility in preventing prairie fires. And once they start, what's your role if a fire should break out, of any magnitude?

(1115)

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce two more officials while they are discussing the question that's being put. Immediately behind me is Gordon Burrows, the assistant manager of the regional fisheries; and Erica Fletcher, on his right, the assistant legislation officer. Welcome.

Mr. Chairman, we again commit to . . . (inaudible) . . . for the detail at another time, but I think the answer which hopefully gets the broad perspective, is that we would be fighting fires within provincial parks. We would provide assistance to municipalities in terms of advice and management in areas adjacent to provincial parks if there was an adjacent fire.

And with respect to national parks, that's a federal responsibility that we would only take over when it burned out of a national park into our area. So that in general terms, our fire-fighting responsibility for which we take direct responsibility is within the provincial parks, but our control areas can extend beyond the forested areas in order to allow for prevention.

Mr. Neudorf: — All right, Mr. Minister, I'll accept that answer for now, and I'll be looking forward to a fleshed-out, written response at some future date then. Thank you.

Yesterday during the Appropriation Bill for interim supply, it was brought to the minister's attention that Environment and Resource Management is not only getting funded to the tune of two-twelfths, which is what the Appropriation Bill is asking for, but rather \$3.366 million extra.

And the indication to us at that time was that this was largely due to an anticipated higher risk in the forest area. And I understand also though that it's very difficult. I can appreciate trying to determine what the risk is at any one given time, but is it . . . would you say that this is something that is traditionally done all the time? Because I know we had three, four, five inches of snow even last week — even this week — in that area which would have dampened the need for it.

So on what basis so you make that determination?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the fire rate in the spring was extremely high based on an internationally accepted fire moisture code called the Duff code. I know from an earlier discussion that where that rating might normally be 50 coming out of a winter at this time, this year it was in excess of 300. It was an all-time high, never so high in Saskatchewan as it was this year. Thankfully that code has been reduced, or the risk has been reduced somewhat by the precipitation of last week, but it is still in an extreme position.

Mr. Neudorf: — Yes, thank you, Mr. Minister. Don't get me wrong, I'm not criticizing you for that because I know it's a difficult thing to try to determine. And I know also that over the past number of years I think the situation has been on the verge of being critical. All we have to do is take a look at our lake levels and so on, and we find out that precipitation has not been normal. So I can appreciate that.

Would you give me some statistics now in terms of fire-fighters. How many fire-fighters does the department have, perhaps I could say that are full time? How many part time? We'll get into the conscription aspect of it later, but just for now.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, and for the member from Rosthern, there are 180 full-time conservation officers and 60 part time, and about 300 seasonal that are provided for an average season. That can be responded to additionally if there are special circumstances.

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, the 100 full-time conservation officers, are they officers that do the normal responsibility of conservation officers, and with no particular expertise in forest fighting? Are they called up? Are they considered part of the crew? What is their role in this?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — The conservation officers are the key managers of the four strategies, the fighting strategies. The 300 seasonal workers are also trained teams of people who have worked there before and are central and critical to the confidence we have in the fire-fighting exercise. Those are the people who have

been trained and have worked in other seasons and work in small teams to address specific fire sites as they're identified. So there's expertise in each of those areas.

Mr. Neudorf: — Well that's a good answer, Mr. Minister, because I want to talk about the training of these . . . particularly the 300 seasonal. Are they indigenous peoples to the North, these 300?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — My officials indicate that about 85 per cent of them are, and we attempt to work with the northern communities in identifying and training these people.

Mr. Neudorf: — Yes. I have a little knowledge of that, Mr. Minister, because . . . and I know your official, Mr. Blackwell, does as well, being involved in some of the training programs through Sask Works, through New Careers, and so on, that we had with many of the communities that I'm familiar with — La Loche, Ile-a-la-Crosse, and areas like this.

How are these currently — since I'm out of date a couple of years by now — how are these indigenous people then trained? On what basis do they get training? Who trains them? And . . . well answer those first, then I'll have some more.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the training program has a couple of major components. One is training where fire-fighters are brought into Prince Albert, where specific work with tools and equipment is provided and fire simulations are done. And then there's also a community-based training program which is taken into the northern communities to actually provide training on site within communities, which is normally more a summer-based program.

Mr. Neudorf: — Which department is specifically responsible for that training, or is it in conjunction with other departments as well?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the forest protection branch engages in the . . . or is responsible for the training programs.

Mr. Neudorf: — Does New Careers or does the modern-day version of Sask Works have anything to do with it?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the officials inform me that there is a northern works program which is a joint program of the department and New Careers and the northern communities that is involved in the training of these people.

Mr. Neudorf: — Yes, that's what I was getting at. I was hoping that we would get to that point where we would acknowledge that that is taking place. And what I want to do at this point, Mr. Minister, is encourage you to keep that up. I think that is a very, very good program; I think it's an integral part of keeping our forests up north safe and as abundant as they are.

But also the impact that those kinds of programs have for the communities themselves and the citizens of the North where they do have a meaningful job; they have meaningful training. And that translates to other areas of their lives. And I have seen the evidence of that in some of those northern communities. It's not just a simple matter of forest fighting, but rather what it does to the self-worth of the individual and the community spirit that is evident in some of those communities.

So those are some of the offshoots or the by-products of that program as well, and I think that should be recognized. So I would encourage you, Mr. Minister, to keep that up.

I have a few questions here that relate to some statistics and the logistics of your department in forest fire fighting. How many airplanes? What type of airplanes do you have for forest fighting? Where are they stationed? How many of them are owned by the provincial government? And in a normal year, and I can see where this might vary, how many helicopters and how many planes would be on a leased basis? And could you also provide information in terms of how do you go about determining that we're going to get this helicopter coming in from Alberta and B.C. (British Columbia), this helicopter company, and these are the planes that we're going to be leasing, your tendering process for that as well.

And I don't expect you, Mr. Minister, to have that information necessarily here. I would seek a commitment from you that you can provide that to me at a near date in the future.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Thank you very much. I will make that commitment. And in response to your earlier comments with respect to the nature of the involvement of the people in the community and the establishment of some sound economic activity, in the short time I've had the responsibility for this department I have been impressed with the quality of the leadership shown by northern communities in energy and economic development, in looking for partnerships with others and in trying to work cooperatively with governments, both provincial and federal.

And I'm excited by the opportunities there and I think we all need to challenge ourselves to commit ourselves to cooperation with that spirit that's there for us on development of a northern community that is more soundly based than it is now in some communities.

(1130)

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I certainly would concur with your comments on that.

I guess what I want to turn to now is one of the major intentions, I would assume, of the Bill, and that is the deletion or the changing or the amending of some of the aspects of it.

I notice for example in one section — I know we're not going clause by clause right now — but it does say that "Every person who is employed or directed to assist in fire fighting . . ." What is your interpretation of the intent of the word "directed" to assist in forest fighting? What was the department's interpretation of that? Section 7, if it'll help you.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the officials inform me that this is essentially a move from a conscription to a voluntary conscription interpreted not as being able to direct anybody to work against their will, but in fact to direct people who have already identified that they are ready to work, to go to work in the task of fighting forest fires.

So because it has not been the practice to absolutely conscript for probably 30 years, the Act now reflects the practice which is to identify when a task needs to be done, to pull those people who are volunteers into the action.

Mr. Neudorf: — It says an officer may require any able-bodied adult to assist in fire fighting. And I know that that has been a kind of a joke with many people who head north for the spring fishing season and all that, that I couldn't come to work on Monday because I was fighting forest fires up there.

So what you're telling me, Mr. Minister, is that that in fact has not been the practice over the last number of years, that there has been nobody forcibly conscripted to that. And I would assume then that also, that is part of the reason that you're doing that, is that there could be legal challenges even with the statute as it sits, simply because it's not within the charter of rights?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes. I would suggest that anybody, including MLAs, that have used that for the reason for not coming to work will have to find a new reason.

Mr. Neudorf: — Well yes, I can appreciate that, so we'll work on that.

Mr. Chairman, other than that, I think the minister and his officials have been very helpful in answering some of the questions. And the questions that they were not able to answer at this time, I will be looking forward to your response. And I just wish you well in the upcoming year.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, I would also like to thank the members opposite for their understanding of our inability to ask a few specific questions. We make the commitment to do that. We appreciate the quality of your questions and the cooperation. And I also want to thank our officials for their cooperation. Thank you very much.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 10 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 22 — An Act respecting the Manufacture, Sale, Use, Consumption, Collection, Storage, Recycling and Disposal of Ozone-depleting Substances and Products

The Chair: — It is the same minister, and there are some new officials who have joined the minister, and I will ask the minister to introduce the officials who have joined the committee.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the invitation. I want to welcome two new officials: Mr. Larry Lechner, on the right seat behind me, the director of air and land protection branch; and directly behind me, Earl Craig, the manager of the air quality section in our department. Thank you.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the minister would mind explaining just the purpose of this Bill and who he consulted with in designing this legislation.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, just want to respond to the overall purpose. The overall purpose is to control substances which are threatening to our ozone layer. The Bill this year however is simply cleaning up a bit of a technicality that did not allow us to control as many substances as are needed in order to provide that protection.

So the consultations that were done on this Bill were done last year and they were done with a wide range of organizations, including SaskEnergy; the city of Regina; SaskTel; Association of International Automobile Manufacturers of Canada; national association of fire equipment distributors; University of Saskatchewan; Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Contractors of Saskatchewan; Saskatchewan Environmental Society; Society of the Plastics Industry of Canada; Saskatchewan dehydrators association; SaskPower; Sears; Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation; and the Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. We appreciate this Bill and what it is trying to do. But we also see a number of areas where there are some concerns that need to be brought forward, such as the use of Halons in fire-fighting equipment. What kind of provisions do you foresee coming forward to replace Halons, particularly in the item of aircraft fire-fighting equipment?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, there are a couple of exemptions under this Act, and Halons for fire-fighting purposes are exempted under the Act.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I'm sure that there's a good number of pilots out there that will appreciate that fact.

In part of the Bill it says that it's illegal to sell ozone-depleting substances and yet in another part of the Act it says it's permissible to have them in your possession. There seems to be a bit of a contradiction

here, Mr. Minister. I wonder if you'd mind explaining that.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, what will be illegal to sell will be new product after the deadline. However, reclaimed product — and this is a major purpose again in this Bill, to assure that we do not lose CFCs (chlorofluorocarbon) to the atmosphere — reclaimed product will continue to be able to be sold, although no new product can be manufactured or sold after that date.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. What controls are you putting in place to prevent the importation of new product, new CFCs? Cross-border shopping, shopping from Manitoba or Alberta or any importation, what kind of measures are in place there?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, there are a couple of matters on which there is international agreement because they are of such universal consequence. And this is one of those matters with respect to which there is an international treaty, both in terms of the manner in which other countries are establishing their own controls, but then also in order to ensure that there is no difficulty for individual nations than the border controls that are put in place. And that is a responsibility of the federal government who are the signatories to an agreement with the United States.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Minister, Mr. Chairman, will this legislation be moving in lock step with the jurisdictions around us, with Manitoba, Alberta, and the U.S. (United States) and across Canada?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, thankfully on environmental themes we have probably the best level of cooperation that we have in any intergovernmental relations both within Canada and internationally. So there is a working group within Canada whereby all the provinces are moving together at the same pace to achieve the same objectives.

With respect to the harmonization with the United States, their target dates for ceasing manufacture and sale are also in harmony with ours.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So the Manitoba legislation and the Alberta legislation across western Canada in particular, will be in place at approximately the same time as what this legislation will be.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Right. And the coordination happens through the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Minister, you're setting up a certification program for the use of CFCs for the people who do refrigeration and air-conditioning. What kind of criteria are going to be in place for those kind of certifications?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the training that is in place is already in place. There are 3,000 individuals who have already received the training.

And that training is continuing through the department until about June, at which point SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) will be taking over that responsibility and offering an ongoing training program.

The training focuses on recovery and recycling of the product in order to prevent its loss to the atmosphere, is the central core thesis in the training.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. When this product is reclaimed, what process do we have in place in Saskatchewan to recycle the CFCs?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the process of recovery and reuse is one that most individual stations where they have certificated operators, will have the equipment to do. It's equipment that collects and stores and allows the product to be recycled internally.

If it were contaminated, there is provision for them to send it back to manufacturers for remanufacturing to clean it up in order that it can be reused. So there is provision for the recycling of the product so that we do not lose it from use, and that can be done on site in most cases. But if there's contamination, it could be sent away for cleaning up.

(1145)

Mr. D'Autremont: — Do we have any locations in Saskatchewan to do that clean-up service that's a potential benefit that Saskatchewan could gain from the economic side of this? If we're losing some possible economic sides from this Bill, I think we should . . . it's incumbent on us to try and pick up those where we can.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, there are a few companies — three or four, I'm told — in the province that are in a position to do that. But they're not only doing that, they're also engaged in their own business of actually recovering from equipment which is being abandoned like refrigerators and cooling units of those sorts, and cars, products.

So they are providing an additional service which is economic to them in terms of reclaiming a product which will not be manufactured any more, but also providing a service to all of us in terms of not allowing that product to eventually escape to the atmosphere. And they are in a position, these three or four companies in the province, where they can clean it up for reuse.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I'm glad to know that there is somebody in Saskatchewan that could perform those duties.

And you led into my next question. What methods are used to recover CFCs from equipment which is being abandoned such as automobile air-conditioners, refrigerators, etc.?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, there's a special

piece of equipment that particularly auto salvaging companies are using and required to have in order to reclaim the product. So there are several of these in the province. And this equipment then draws the CFCs from the cooling units in vehicles but also other domestic appliances.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. When they draw the CFCs from the system, if you are developing a total vacuum within that system, I think it's very difficult to get all of the CFCs out. Do they replace the CFCs with some other agent?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, both for purposes of repair and recovery in the event of abandonment of equipment, this equipment is able to withdraw from the system without allowing any other substance into the system . . . all of the CFCs within the system.

And so the contractor or the business person who is repairing the air conditioning unit on your car will withdraw all of the CFCs from the unit, will repair your unit, and then replace the CFCs that they have recovered back into your system. So there is a full recovery. The equipment that's available now allows for full recovery, full evacuation of the CFCs from the cooling units.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. How much CFCs are present in Saskatchewan today? Do we have any idea?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the federal government is presently engaged in establishing an inventory of product both in equipment and in storage so that we can have that detailed information as we approach the production deadline and so we can very carefully control the use of the product.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Do you have any idea how much CFC product is recycled and reclaimed in a year in Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, while we don't have specific information on how much is being done, in the last year since people have become certified and have begun to purchase equipment, they are quite aggressive in recovering material. And as soon as we have good information, hopefully we can again discuss it and identify those quantities. But the industry is responding positively as they have become certified and bought the equipment to do it.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. It talks in the Bill about maintaining records. I'm just wondering what kind of records you're talking about. How extensive are you envisioning this record-keeping being? Does an owner of a vehicle or a fridge have to maintain his records as to whether or not there was any leak in the system, whether he had it repaired? Or what kind of records are you discussing here?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the responsibility lies with the service industry for keeping the records, not with the individual consumer. But in the process

of again your vehicle or your fridge being serviced, the industry would supply you with a bill identifying the product they've used and the quantity of the product. And that becomes a record that the . . . it becomes the responsibility of the service industry to maintain those records for provincial purposes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — What kinds of information, Mr. Minister, do you envision being kept on these records — name, phone number, etc., social security? Just how much information are you looking for?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, there is no special requirement with respect to identifying information for the consumer. The service industry is required to list their own certification and the nature of the repair done in the transaction and the quantity of product used. But that's it. It's a service. The information that needs to be transmitted is transmitted — recorded and transmitted from the service industry, and there is no information that is particular to the person for whom they provided a service.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well am I to understand then, Mr. Minister, that the service industry will provide the government with a record of how much product they have used or recycled or whatever they have done with it, but that you will not be receiving information on individual consumers?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes, that's right.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister, because a lot of people have a concern about Big Brother government watching them and seeing what's happening and how many fridges they own, etc.

One of the other sections of the Bill deals with the individual use and control orders. In what sense is the minister bringing this forward? What do you mean by control orders, and how will they be implemented?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the control orders are provided for in order that if someone is working in the service industry without the proper equipment, so that there is the risk of the product being lost to the atmosphere, that then an order could be sent requiring that person to stop working until they were properly equipped, certified, or changed their practices to meet the requirements.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So these control orders would not be directed at your basic consumer of a fridge, but rather at industry or at the service industry who would be utilizing CFCs on a daily basis?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes, that's correct. They're directed at making sure that the people certified and owning the equipment and being involved in the industry are dealing with this product with the sensitivity that it requires for all of our safety.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. In the Bill it gives the Lieutenant Governor in Council the ability to identify ozone-depleting substances and to make regulations to determine whether or not a

substance is ozone depleting. I'm just wondering what scientific proofs are you going to be using to make those determinations?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — The basis for determining, Mr. Chairman, the basis for determining substances that will be identified under regulation that would be subject to this control would be based on national and international regulation. The reason it is in regulation rather than in the Act is that when we find new substances we don't want to be restricted by time frames often necessary in revisiting an Act which can take up to two years.

So that there's just a need to be able to respond according to changing knowledge and that it will be based on the security of knowing that it's national and international regulations, not someone's whim.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Minister, you will be taking national standards or national determinations that a substance is actually ozone depleting? You'll be accepting their scientific proofs. Is that the case?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes, that's the case. Both national and international work in that regard.

Mr. D'Autremont: — And what organization or association makes that determination?

(1200)

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the standards which have been set were begun by a meeting organized through the United Nations' sustainable environment group that met in Montreal in 1988 and established the Montreal Protocol. That group of nations has been meeting annually since. They've just recently met in Vancouver to upgrade their information and their understandings. And it is this process that is establishing the basis for decisions within Canada and within that group of countries that are participating.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Minister, the federal government recognizes this organization and accept their determinations for Canada, do they?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you. The Bill also describes the collection and storage and storage facilities needed to hold CFCs. When this matter is collected, who pays for that storage, the new storage facilities and collections which will be implemented?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — This is a condition we place on the way in which these products are handled, and they become the responsibility of the people engaging in the service industry to purchase and reflect in their cost structures.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Mr. Minister, if you look around this province there are a number of locations where there are abandoned automobiles. There are, you see, fridges, air-conditioners left in garbage

disposals. What happens with those substances? Who collects it, and who pays for it?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, once these regulations are in place, it will be mandatory that those cooling systems be evacuated before the appliance or the vehicle is abandoned.

The question I think you're asking as well is the question of what happens with all the collection of sins before this. And I think the understanding I have from the officials is that because the CFCs are worth money and as we approach the non-manufacturing date they will become worth more money, that it is actually a business opportunity to go out and evacuate abandoned vehicles and appliances, and that it's expected that those CFCs that are contained in those systems will be collected because it makes sense for somebody to do it.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Mr. Minister, I hope that is indeed the case and somebody will go out there and do that. But what happens in the case where it doesn't happen? Who has the responsibilities and who looks after the situation?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, as you're probably aware from your own vehicles and appliances, because this is a very volatile product for pieces of equipment that have been abandoned for some period of time, the loss has in all likelihood occurred for many of them, and the damage to the atmosphere has already occurred. But if there were an identified problem and opportunity for collection that was there in order to save further damage to the atmosphere, certainly our department would take responsibility to examine that, on advice from people knowing that it was there.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Mr. Minister, are you saying then that the department would go out and collect the substances at the government's cost?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — No. I'm simply saying that if there were an identified problem not being addressed through the . . . what we expect the market-place will do, that then the department would examine a strategy to ensure that it was addressed. The expectation is that that will not be necessary.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well perhaps it's your expectation, Mr. Minister, but what will you do in the circumstances where that does not occur? Where the substances are there, nobody is volunteering to go out and pick it up, what happens?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — We will, as we have committed ourselves to do in every other area with respect to environmental management, resource management, establish a . . . work within a cooperative arrangement with municipalities and businesses who make us aware.

Environmental management is not something that is accomplished by government establishing regulations. Environmental management is occurring

and moving forward today at a very fast pace because society believes that they want a safer environment for their children and a more sustainable future with respect to our air and our water and our land, so that the food we eat is sound and safe; so that the air we breathe is sound and safe; so the water we drink is sound and safe. And it is really this collective effort of society that has brought us this far.

And in fact when they ask us to deal with issues like air management, air quality management, as we're doing in this case, and it is in that same fashion that the identification of the problem that you're predicting and the solution to it would be addressed.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. It seems to be very difficult though to get you to say that the government would provide the solution for this problem. We went through the committee hearings of the environmental rights and responsibilities. One of the recommendations of that all-party committee — the major grouping on that committee is your own government back-benchers — the recommendation that came down was that society, the taxpayer, has to bear some responsibilities in some situations. Will the government accept the responsibility of those orphan situations where no one is responsible — there's somebody responsible but we're not able to identify who that person is — will the government accept the responsibility and the costs to solve the ... to provide the solution in that case?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, I think we're making a question ... a large debate about a principle on a matter about which we do not likely disagree, but on the fact of your anticipation that there is a problem, in my official's conclusion, that there is a virtual certainty that there is not a problem with respect to this particular product.

There are many products with respect to past contamination, past practices we have had, which we now as a society have to deal with, when we engaged in practices that we did not know would be in the long term harmful to our environment. This happens not to be one of the ones that the officials expect is one. And when these do exist, they really are again ... while there are government strategies in place, as you know, with respect to contaminated sites on a larger scale, we've engaged in a strategy as a government to identify them and work with people who are owners or who are presently being affected by these contaminated sites, to work cooperatively to solutions. We as a government cannot and have not ever taken on the financial responsibility to do those things.

One of the big themes in environmental management today is the question of environmental liability and how one brings the resources together to in effect share in the unfairness of paying for past sins. That's a major theme in Saskatchewan and in Canada. And there are no simple solutions. It is only through the cooperative efforts of all of us, where we can identify a problem and work together towards solving it, that we in fact are able to deal with those past concerns and

assure today, through proper cooperative regulation and through convictions about practice, that we don't create any of those similar kinds of sins for our children to clean up.

Now when you refer to the public response to the charter, you're right — the public did say a number of things about responsibility. But one of the things they clearly said as well was that they were unhappy both at the business level and at the environmentalist and the consumer level with such abrupt action that would require a conflict — that almost puts people into a conflict position — about resolving environmental concerns, where the concern with the environmental charter was that in fact immediately when someone identified a problem, they were going to be beating on each other in court.

The public contention, I think the contention and the spirit that surrounds the environmental sense that people have, is that it isn't that kind of an issue. Environmental management is the kind of an issue where I as a person want to work with you as another person in society — whether you're the businessman and I'm the consumer, whatever the relationship is — to first identify problems and secondly resolve them cooperatively.

And I think ... Sorry for going on so long about this, but that's essentially the spirit around which management of these kinds of problems would occur. My officials are saying it's not likely to be a problem; if it were to be a problem, it would be addressed from that public consciousness of (a) identifying to us that possibly we would have to be facilitators in addressing it and then identifying the kinds of actions necessary. The officials at this moment are anticipating that that's not going to be necessary with respect to residual CFCs in equipment.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. I'm glad to know that it's not likely going to be a problem. But the potential is nevertheless still there.

And while society agrees that there has to be a shared responsibility for the recovery of contaminants, in the case that I am trying to bring forward to you though, you are dealing with an orphan site to which it is difficult if not impossible to identify the owner, the person who would be liable. Under those circumstances you can develop a cooperative effort if you wish, but there's going to be costs in the recovery.

If it's not economical for the private sector to recover that service, that product, who would be responsible for the recovery of that? You are skirting around the issue of trying to abstain from saying yes, the government would be responsible and would recover the product. But somebody has to do it.

Now as the government I suppose you could point the finger at somebody and say: you will do it and you'll pay for it and clean it up. But that person may or may not have been involved in any way, sense, or form with that product and that site. So somebody has to bear the responsibility for it eventually. Is

government, as the representative of society as the whole, prepared to accept that responsibility?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — If I thought a brief yes would end the discussion, I would simply say yes. And I don't know why you're insisting I make these long explanatory speeches, because in prioritizing a product like this, if it had the scale of problem that, for example, used oil creates for us as consumers or the scale of a problem that used tires create for us as consumers or the kinds of problems that sulphurous and nitrous oxides create for us in emissions from stacks — you know the list goes on of things that negatively affect us — or the seepage from landfills into aquifers or the seepage from leaking underground storage tanks into water pipes.

I mean, if it were at the top of that list, I assure you the government would immediately address it. The officials are simply saying that they don't think it's likely to be there real quick. And in a society where we're trying to address things in a prioritized fashion, it is . . . I've established a special committee to work with my department in identifying priorities so that we in fact spend our scarce resources, our tax and our business resources, on those issues creating the biggest risk to our environment. And if this product were to be at the top of the list, I assure you the government would give it full address in whatever fashion necessary.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Mr. Minister, you managed to duck the yes again. Since I don't seem to be able to get that three-letter word out of you, I will move on to something else. Perhaps I can get it some place else.

You talk of prescribing fees and requiring payments in the respect of CFCs in the regulations. What do you foresee these fees being for, and what amount and what will the fees be utilized for, the fee monies collected?

(1215)

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the officials inform me that that is there as a just-in-case in the event that all of the things I just said were not true, that it would allow you to engage in a strategy by which funds could be collected in order to deal with that situation should this question in fact end up at the top of the priority list in terms of the best use of public resources for environmental management.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Would the minister and the government be prepared to use any fees collected dealing with ozone-depleting substances for the recovery of those substances in the case of orphan sites?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, if that circumstance that I described were to be identified, that would be the purpose for which that would be collected and then it would be the purpose for which they would be used, yes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. I finally got a yes there. I'm wondering, these fees that may be collected, what relationship will they have with the use of CFCs? Will it be on volumes? What kind of fee schedules are you contemplating?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — The opinion of our officials is that the market-place will deal with these products so none are presently contemplated. And if it were decided that a new strategy was needed, then it would be determined in cooperation with industry and consumers to identify the proper level of fee that would address the problem.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Is the minister prepared to make a commitment that those kind of consultations will take place with industry and the consumers prior to the implementation of such fees?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Absolutely.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. One of the portions of the Bill I think has some serious implications on industry throughout this province, and that's the imposition of a fine of not more than a million dollars. I think this is a very large amount of money. Now ozone-depleting substances and our ozone are a very serious matter, and yet this fine is much larger than in a lot of cases that we foresee, that we see operating in the public currently. I'm just wondering why such a large fee. In what kind of a circumstance would you foresee this kind of a fine being utilized?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, this again is part of the joint guidance that our officials have engaged in nationally.

And these numbers are not dissimilar from international numbers either and I think contemplate a circumstance where a manufacturer may be delinquent, careless in their procedures, so that there are circumstances where this is contemplated. And it is clearly designated as a maximum and clearly would not be applied in anywhere near that maximum for the average circumstance.

But it could be that if an industry were to develop in Saskatchewan that that kind of number might be appropriate for a certain large enterprise. Certainly would not be contemplated for the scale of enterprise we have here now.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Mr. Minister, I believe it was in Nova Scotia where a fish plant allowed . . . or it happened at a fish plant anyways that a number of tonnes of CFCs were released to the atmosphere. In that particular case it was under federal jurisdiction, I believe, and the fine was \$50,000. In what kind of a circumstance in Saskatchewan could you see a million dollar fine being imposed?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, as I was saying, this is part of the national cooperative structure that has been established in setting the standards and setting the penalties, and it would be in the case of

obviously a very serious offence, a very serious disregard for the public good nationally and internationally. Because when we do damage to the ozone layer, it's not just to you and I living here where we exercise carelessness, if we do, but to people far distant from us.

And so it is contemplated as a . . . it's been an agreed-to penalty that would obviously only be applied in an extreme situation.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Minister, in quickly looking through the Bill, I was looking for a particular date as to which the total effects of this Bill would be implemented. Do you foresee that the total of this Bill would be implemented or would come into force on the day of assent, or is there some time period in which these procedures are going to be brought forward?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes. Mr. Chairman, the expectation should be that when this Bill is passed, it's ready to come into force and the industry's ready for it. Many of these provisions the industry has been aware of for a year and the only limitation to the Bill as it was was the list of substances, and so industry has been working and in fact complying with this Act for a year already.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Are there any other substances that you are currently contemplating adding to the list of banned substances?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — As the member for Souris-Cannington is aware, I think this Act actually adds seven or eight substances in itself, but there are none others contemplated at the moment even though there is work going on nationally and internationally in continuing to monitor substances, and then those would have the capacity to be added to the list by regulation at that time.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. One of the items in public use that have contained CFCs in the past when most have been eliminated, but aerosol cans. What provisions will be in place for the recovery of CFCs from aerosol cans?

One of the items that is being used currently are inhalers or nebulizers for medical purposes. Are there any methods to recover the CFCs in those?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the CFCs have not been used in household applications probably for 10 or 15 years now, but they may be used in medical applications. And in those cases they're exempt and they can be used, and that's accepted loss to the atmosphere.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Is the government prepared to become involved in any programs or processes which would replace the CFCs in nebulizers or inhalers for medical purposes? That's an area in which we could perhaps develop some value to the economy if we were prepared to get involved in that.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, industry has already responded to the opportunity to be more environmentally sensitive and they have already looked at alternatives. And there are alternatives in some products where even the squeeze aspirators are used as opposed to a propellant at all. So there are good things going on at the moment with respect to seeking alternatives that are consistent with our hope for the future.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Is the government involved in encouraging any research into new methods into refrigeration, new methods for the use of aerosols in inhalers, or new research into fire-fighting equipment?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, the public involvement in that at the moment is through the national working groups, where areas of research are identified that either industry will undertake from their participation in the kind of cooperative exercise of managing our environment or through which possibly funding to an institution like a university or a science council might happen through the National Research Council or some other agency as basic research.

But our involvement as a government is at this point only through the working groups that are working nationally and would be identifying areas for research such as the ones you're suggesting that could advance our environmental sensitivity in the way we use these substances.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I would encourage the government to encourage research in Saskatchewan to develop some of these facilities. Thank you.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 17 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister and his officials for coming in today and for answering all our questions. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, I would also like to express my appreciation to the member from Souris-Cannington and his colleagues for the breadth of their interest, for the work they've put into this issue. I know they are as concerned with this issue as they have been cooperative on other environmental issues. We need that kind of spirit of working together to address these issues and I thank you for that in the general term and specifically with respect to your cooperation on this Bill. Thank you very much.

(1230)

Bill No. 28 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation Act

The Chair: — I would ask the minister to please introduce the officials who are with him here today.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to introduce Brian Kaukinen, the president of . . . or, I'm sorry, Brian Woodcock, the president of Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. I'm in the wrong corporation today, so I'll correct that. But I'd like to introduce Mr. Woodcock.

Clause 1

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister might take the time to just review the Bill for us and outline the reasons for bringing it forward.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Yes I would. With respect to the Bill, basically what it is doing is correcting an oversight in the existing Act. The Act enables SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) to provide the facilities and services which are defined under the regulations. And because there are no regulations we would want to make the amendments so that we could do the business of the corporation without defining in regulation all of the duties of the Property Management Corporation.

As you will know, the number of issues and things that the corporation deals with are varied and many, and by making these amendments, that would basically refer it to the common law definition of services and facilities that would prevail in interpreting the Act.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Chairman, what I'd like to know of the minister, what will the specific role of Property Management then be once this Bill comes into force? Does this take away a significant role or responsibility of the corporation?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — No, it really doesn't change at all the operation of the corporation. The duties and the things that it will do will remain the same.

Mr. Toth: — Well I understand the Property Management oversees facilities and services for the government, like manages and operates buildings. I believe all the buildings that the government's involved in, it operates. Does it operate the lease of vehicles, Mr. Minister? And in light of that I realize this is a very short, short Bill just basically bringing in an amendment. But I just want to reiterate the fact that was it necessary to really bring a Bill forward, and its impact on the relationship of property management.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Yes, actually it was necessary to bring forth the amendments. And I would be a little more specific in terms of why we've brought these amendments forth.

Because of the fact that there were no regulations, the Canadian Association of Fire Bomber Pilots in a submission to the Canadian Labour Relations Board argued that SPMC has no authority to operate the northern air service which is the water bomber

operation that we use during forest fire suppression season. The action was discontinued after Northern Air's transfer to Parks and Renewable Resources. But it did bring to our attention the need to change these, and to make these amendments.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Minister, I didn't quite catch what you're saying. What was the specific reason that the fire bombers were . . . or the pilots were talking of regarding this legislation, that would have drawn your attention to the lack of proper, I guess, regulations in the legislation.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Well I want to point out that there are no regulations. If we did not bring forth these amendments, we would have to itemize, in regulation, every particular duty and every specific duty that Property Management Corporation does as part of its mandate.

Rather than to go through the red tape and the drafting of all of these regulations, it was felt that these amendments would be in order and would allow the corporation to function and do the duties that it does without drafting all of the specific regulations that would be required.

And as you will be aware, the legislation is complicated in some cases and becomes more and more complicated, and the attempt here is to try and simplify the Act rather than drafting all of the regulations. It does nothing at all in terms of the mandate of the corporation. It does nothing in terms of allowing expanded powers. It just allows the corporation to do its duty, do its job without articulating in regulation all of the different aspects of the role of the corporation.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you. It all sounds very well and reasonable to me, Mr. Minister, and we thank your official for coming in today.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Chairman, I would just like to thank the members of the opposition for their questions and I'd like to thank my official for his assistance.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 6 — An Act to amend The Prairie and Forest Fires Act, 1982

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

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

Bill No. 22 — An Act respecting the Manufacture, Sale, Use, Consumption, Collection, Storage,

Recycling and Disposal of Ozone-depleting Substances and Products

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

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

Bill No. 28 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation Act

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I move that item no. 5, Bill No. 28, be read a third time and passed under its title.

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

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

**General Revenue Fund
Environment and Resource Management
Vote 26**

The Chair: — I would ask the minister at this time to please introduce his staff.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, thank you for that opportunity. I'm accompanied by Les Cooke, on my right, who is the associate deputy minister of the Department of Environment and Resource Management. Directly behind Les is Mr. Bill Marr, the director of finance and administration. And directly behind me is Bob Blackwell, the assistant deputy minister of Environment and Resource Management.

Item 1

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the minister would please give us a list of the staff in his office and what their purposes are.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Just to clarify the question, are you asking for a written response sometime in the future, now?

Mr. D'Autremont: — If the minister has it available, he can give now, or he can give us the commitment to supply us with the names, what their positions are, and what their salary status is.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I clearly know who they are. But just so that you get it right and get all the right titles and all those things, I'll provide it in writing.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister, we would hope that you would get your staff right at least.

I'm just wondering, Mr. Minister, if you would mind giving us the information as to who your deputy ministers are and associate deputy ministers, and what their functions are. Are they with the Environment? Are they with Natural Resource? That type of thing.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Chairman, as you're aware, our department has recently undergone a very major reorganization to create within government a focus for sustainable development when we integrated the Department of Environment and Public Safety, passing off some of the public safety functions to Labour, and the Department of Natural Resources at the time of the budget.

In that transition the structure of the two departments were integrated and so there is a virtually completely new structure through which the new Department of Environment and Resource Management functions.

(1245)

The deputy minister of our new department is Michael Shaw. The associate deputy minister in charge of policy and program development is Les Cooke, the former deputy of the Department of Environment. Bob Blackwell, who I just introduced, is the assistant deputy minister in charge of management services. Ross MacLennan is the assistant deputy minister in charge of operations. And Randy Sentis is the assistant deputy minister in charge of environmental protection. So those are the four senior positions reporting to the deputy minister.

And in terms of function, those are the specific functions they are responsible for. But clearly, as a department, the purpose of the restructuring was in fact to remove some of the artificial separations between our resource development and management functions so that we do them in an integrated fashion, in a sustainable fashion, where the concerns of the environment and the concerns of the economy around those resources are integrated into one planning structure.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I wonder if the minister would mind sending us a list with that breakdown on it.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Yes, I'd be pleased to send you that, plus the rest of the organizational structure.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Minister, because with the reorganization it's important that we also know where everybody fits into the picture. Has the minister hired any contract employees with his staff within the last . . . or with this estimates that we're providing for? Are there any contract staff?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — It's my understanding from speaking to the officials that there are neither any new ones nor are there any old people within the reorganized department who are on contract, on a contractual arrangement.

Mr. D'Autremont: — You say there's no new ones. Were there ones that were there before? There are no contract employees with the department at all, either Parks or Environment?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — That's correct, yes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay, thank you, Mr. Minister. You've come out with a new program of contaminated sites. I'm just wondering, what kind of research have you done? What kind of studies have you done dealing with that particular issue?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:50 p.m.