

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Clerk:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 11(7) they are hereby read and received:

Of citizens of the province praying that the Assembly urge the government to change the regulations requiring the replacement of underground storage tanks.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to be able to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly three visitors from the Saskatchewan Abilities Council that are located behind the bar on the main floor.

I'm doing this for the member from Regina Dewdney and I know he regrets that he's not able to make a visit with them, and I'd be delighted to meet with them and answer any questions and have a good visit and drinks with them in room 218 around 11 o'clock.

So I ask all members to join with me in a warm welcome for the members from the Saskatchewan Abilities Council.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Hamilton:** — In my enthusiasm, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention and forgot to mention that they are with their teacher, Ms. Lynn Demeulle, and Mr. Darren Olson is the chaperon as well as Ms. Tricia Lolacher. And I also welcome them here today.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Teichrob:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all the members of the Assembly on behalf of my colleague, the member from Biggar, a group of students in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, from Swanson Christian School in Delisle. They're visiting the legislature this morning with their teacher, Mr. Ginther, and some parents and chaperons.

And I'll be able to meet with them following their visit to the Chamber at about 10:30 in room 218 to answer any questions that they might have about this morning's proceedings, which I hope you will join me in welcoming them to, and that they enjoy their visit this morning.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning I have the great pleasure of introducing to you and to the members of the

Assembly some very important and dedicated people who work to serve the people of Regina and Saskatoon. In the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, are representatives from the Regina and Saskatoon Public Library board. And they are attending the Saskatchewan Library Trustees' Association and the Saskatchewan Library Association conference here in Regina this weekend.

I would like to introduce to you Bonace Korchinski, who is the chair of the Saskatoon Public Library board. He is a retired teacher and has six years on the board. Jim Biss, who is vice-chair. Jim is a lawyer in Saskatoon and has been on the Saskatoon board for four years. Lynne Agnew is Saskatoon's newest board member, and she has a nursing background.

For Regina, we have Merrilee Rasmussen, chair. She has a law degree and of course she is no stranger to this Assembly. Gloria Mehlmann is deputy chair of the Regina board and represents . . . she is a director of the Indian and Metis education unit for Sask Ed. She has served the board for six years.

Ken Jensen is chief librarian and secretary of the board of the Regina Public Library. And we also have Sandra Anderson as chief librarian and secretary of the board for Saskatoon, and Maureen Woods who works for our department, is the Provincial Librarian.

These people represent for Saskatchewan some significant achievements, because in the *Places Rated Almanac* that was released this year, Saskatoon is the number one and Regina is number four in reading communities in North America. And this achievement was recognized on the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) radio programs of *Morningside* and *As it Happens* and *The Afternoon Edition*, as well as an article in the *Globe and Mail*. And it's through the work and dedication of people who serve on the public library boards in Regina and Saskatoon that this achievement has been noted.

And I would like to congratulate them on behalf of the people of Saskatoon and Regina and the province, and ask all members of this Assembly to give them a warm welcome.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Bergman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly, on behalf of my colleague from Shaunavon, 22 grade 12 students from Eastend School. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Zandbergen, and Ms. Dahl and Mrs Koester.

And I will be meeting with them after question period to receive their impressions of their experiences here today. And I'd ask all of you to join me in welcoming them here today.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cline:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the members from Saskatoon, I want to join with the member from Melfort in welcoming our librarian from Saskatoon and the members of the library board from Saskatoon. I hope they have a very pleasant stay in the city of Regina.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

##### Earth Day

**Mr. Wormsbecker:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The earth is our one and only home. As we speak there are over 4 billion people roaming its oceans, cities, islands, mountains, and fields. As citizens of this fragile planet, each one of us holds a great responsibility to take care of the earth for future generations to enjoy.

We must learn to respect our planet and all forms of life within its atmosphere. This is why I am pleased to announce to the Assembly that today, April 22, has been declared Earth Day. From its beginnings 24 years ago, Earth Day has appealed to the masses. In 1990, the 20th anniversary of Earth Day, an estimated 200 million people participated in Earth Day. This became the single largest peacetime demonstration in history.

People of all races, colours, and religions from over 141 nations will join together for this special day to celebrate the earth. People from all over the world will participate in tree plantings, educational seminars, community clean-ups, awareness projects, ecology fairs, and other projects.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that our government is working on initiatives which will ensure that Saskatchewan will continue to be among the cleanest places in the world. We all can have a positive difference in our world, and I ask that everybody in this province make a commitment on Earth Day '94 and take an active part in securing the future of Saskatchewan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, today is Earth Day and it is indeed significant to Saskatchewan.

This province has evolved from the land, the water, and the sun, and our province is dependent upon those precious resources. We are dependent on agriculture and oil as our number one exports, products to keep our economy rolling. We depend on coal, oil, sun, wind, and water to generate our electricity and, hopefully, nuclear in the near future, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people depend on the earth for our very survival. We cannot take our resources for granted. Instead, we must do our part to

ensure that Saskatchewan and the rest of Canada is kept clean, that our resources are protected and cherished.

Earth Day is a day to celebrate the people of Saskatchewan and to remind all of us how precious our world is. After all, the steps we take today we are taking for our grandchildren and our great grandchildren. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

##### Peace Hills Trust

**Ms. Murray:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to announce an important financial development in the town of Fort Qu'Appelle, which is in my constituency.

Peace Hills Trust, a corporation owned by the Samson Indian Band of Alberta, is opening its second Saskatchewan branch in Fort Qu'Appelle. For its location, Peace Hills Trust is leasing the handsome old post office building from the Star Blanket Reserve, which is located near Balcarres. Star Blanket has already begun renovations and Peace Hills will do more before they begin operations in the fall.

Members will remember that Fort Qu'Appelle and the Star Blanket Band recently negotiated an arrangement that allowed the band to convert its town property to reserve status with due compensation to the town. This announcement is evidence that the agreement is a good one for all involved.

We have here, Mr. Speaker, economic expansion for the town of Fort Qu'Appelle, a financial institution that will offer a full range of services to all clients. We have an example of the vibrant and growing aboriginal business community in Canada as shown by the acumen of both the Samson and Star Blanket bands. As Harold Smith of Star Blanket said, this is a sign the Indian community is moving into the '90s. We have an excellent example of cooperation and understanding between all the interested parties. I congratulate them. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

##### Rose Valley Rural Diversification Show

**Mr. Kluz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to announce to the Assembly that the Rose Valley rural diversification show is being held on April 22 and 23 in the Rose Valley arena. Being that it's both Volunteer Week and Earth Day, I would like to take this time and congratulate the Rose Valley rural diversification committee and all the other volunteers and school children of Rose Valley for their volunteer work related to the show.

This year's show was organized and run by a strong team of local volunteers. Specific recognition is deserved to the members of the Rose Valley rural diversification committee who are as follows: Grace Rachkewich, Shannon Lindsay, Donnell Hanson,

Sharlene Hanson, and Cheryl Vilness. Their hard work and dedication is admired by all who are involved in the show. I would like to also notice the people of Rose Valley who have volunteered their time and talents to help out with various aspects of the show.

Since today is also Earth Day, it is also interesting to know that the school children are doing special Earth Day posters to initiate environmental awareness. This kind of involvement by our children is very encouraging and important news that the children of Saskatchewan are concerned enough about our environment to become involved in its cause. It should be an example we all should follow.

Congratulations and recognition goes out to all the fine volunteers of Rose Valley for their great efforts. I am also encouraging everyone to come to the Rose Valley rural diversification show this weekend. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **National Tae Kwon Do Championships**

**Ms. Bradley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to congratulate all the participants in this year's CTFI (Canadian Tae Kwon Do Federation International) National Tae Kwon Do Championships held in Regina.

I'm also proud to say that Saskatchewan fared extremely well at this year's event. Saskatchewan ranked a strong second overall in the entire tournament. And in fact two Saskatchewan gold medal winners, Quinten Palmer and Sid Talukar, will go on to represent our country in the junior world games slated for November 1994 in Spain.

I want to congratulate all Saskatchewan medal winners, but in particular a group from my area of the province. Quinten Palmer, who I just mentioned, a grade 11 student, not only won the black belt gold medal, but is the instructor of a tae kwon do club in Riceton. Many of his students also were medal winners including Andre Boutine-Maldney, Matthew Schmeling, Amber Zolc, Laura Zolc, Colin Zolc, and, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to report, my son, Jesse Bradley.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Bradley:** — It was an excellent showing for a small rural club at a national event. Over a thousand competitors from across Canada came to Regina's Fieldhouse to take part in this championship. Over 300 of the athletes were from Saskatchewan. Many people came out to see the tournament. The events included sparring, patterns, board breaking, and team events.

Tae kwon do is a very ancient and cherished discipline. "Tae" stands for the technique of the legs; "kwon" for the technique of the hands; while "do" means the philosophy or way of life. Many argue that

tae kwon do is not so much a sport as it is a way of life. A large aspect of tae kwon do's philosophy . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. The member's time has elapsed.

#### **Midget "B" Hockey Tournament**

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today it's my pleasure to report to the Legislative Assembly about the best Midget "B" hockey tournament of 1994.

Last weekend the western Canada midget B championship tournament was held here in Regina. The Saskatchewan provincial champion team from Notre Dame, coached by Terry O'Malley and assistant coach Mr. Shiebel, won the tournament. The team from Airdrie, Alberta, placed second. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to report to you that a team from the north end of Regina, the Regina Hawks, the host team, placed third in this prestigious tournament.

Players, coaches, parents, scouts, and spectators were all impressed by the outstanding quality of the tournament. My congratulations to Candace Ross, the chairperson of the tournament, and the close to 100 volunteers that worked so hard to make this championship tournament the success that it was.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **SaskPower Employees Conference Attendance**

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions this morning are for the minister responsible for SaskPower or his designate.

Mr. Minister, can you tell this House how much it cost to send 32 SaskPower employees to the Canadian Electrical Association's four-day conference at the Harbour Castle Westin Hotel in Toronto last month?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I'll take notice of that question, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, your government approved spending thousands of dollars to send 32 SaskPower employees to this conference in Toronto, and we wonder whether your government even knew about it. Or does Jack Messer even consult with you on these kinds of decisions, or does he just waste this kind of taxpayers' money entirely on his own?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I had taken notice of the earlier question which certainly would have covered that accusation.

I want to make a statement in this House about the personal slandering of public servants. Members here have a forum in which to make the accusations; public servants have no similar forum in which to respond. And I would have hoped that the member from Kindersley would have measured his words a

little more carefully before he makes such comments in here.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, we understand registration for this event was between \$375 to \$400 per person. Hotel rooms in Toronto are going to cost you probably in the neighbourhood of \$100 a night for four nights. And flights to Toronto cost several hundred dollars. So this conference in Toronto must have been at least \$1,500 a touch per person, not counting salaries for the days. Multiply that by the 32 people and you have about a \$50,000 bill for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. I guess SaskPower didn't want to be outdone by Sask Crop Insurance.

Mr. Minister, was it really necessary to spend that much taxpayers' money and send 32 people from SaskPower to this conference in Toronto?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — As I indicated to the member earlier, we will get the details of this of which we have none at the moment.

Let me say though generally with respect to conferences, they do have a place. SaskPower is part of a national power system. And there is a place for these conferences and there is a place for people to attend. And the suggestion that anything spent on these conferences is a waste is really I think beside the point.

And I will give the member one undertaking: we will not be so uncharitable as to pull out the expense accounts of the PCs (Progressive Conservative) when they were in office. We won't be that uncharitable.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, just days before you hiked power rates in Saskatchewan, SaskPower drops 50 grand or so of taxpayers' money on a conference in Toronto. And you say conferences are important. Well indeed, they are.

We checked with the office of the minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro, as a comparison. And they informed us that Manitoba Hydro sent four people to this conference — four, Mr. Minister. That seems like a more reasonable number.

But here in the land of Jack Messer, we've got to do things in a big way. Big power rate increases, big money to be spent on conferences in Toronto. Manitoba sends four people; we send 32 people. Why do we do that, Mr. Minister? Could you please provide us with a list of the 32 SaskPower employees who went to this exposition and their positions within SaskPower?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I expect that the minister will do so with relish, because generally the accusations made by the member of Kindersley have little to do with the facts. And I suspect when the facts are

available and the minister's here, he'll respond with relish.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, what was so important about this conference in Toronto that you had to send 32 people? We'd be interested also in the details of what the conference was about, Mr. Minister. We wonder whether there was a symposium on how to justify power rate increases four times the rate of inflation. Or was there a workshop on nepotism and its role in awarding government contracts?

Mr. Minister, isn't there a more cost-effective way of getting this information to SaskPower workers? Did you really have to send 32 people to Toronto at a cost of over \$50,000 to the Saskatchewan taxpayers?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — That is not a new question. It is not a question at all. In fact it is an accusation. We will take that accusation and the others and respond. And as I say, I feel relatively confident that the facts will be very different than you assume for the basis of these accusations.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Canada-United States Trade Dispute

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask a question of the Minister of Agriculture. As you are aware, Mr. Minister, and as are many farmers in this country, in this province, and as are many of the farming organizations, aware of the fact that today is the deadline set — the arbitrary deadline — set by the Americans for a resolution to our agricultural trade dispute. There's one bright spot on the horizon, Mr. Speaker; I understand that the silos have been closed once more.

But, Mr. Minister, many Saskatchewan farmers are worried about seeing these important markets being cut off. And they are counting on you, and they are counting on our federal Minister of Agriculture to help them out and to protect their interest. Mr. Minister, can you give us a status report on these negotiations, and what is being done to ensure that the United States does in fact not impose those quotas that they are threatening?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to answer that question on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture and on behalf of the government. I want to tell the hon. member opposite that we very much are concerned with the American actions and the American statements since from all of the information we have, none of the proposed decisions which they are going to be making and taking conform to the facts.

In 1990 for example, the United States International Trade Commission found that transportation subsidies — something which the Americans have got in very much a bee in their bonnets about — are not a factor

about competitiveness. Last month a bilateral U.S. (United States)-Canada panel found that out of 105 durum wheat contracts, 102 of them were in full compliance with all of the trade agreements 1989 and 1992. Consumption of durum, production in durum, in the United States has increased . . . consumption has, but the production has decreased. And we're filling the vacuum, the natural vacuum.

And I might add, one of the other things which is disturbing is that they return back to us, once they get our durum, much more processed foods and pasta and the like, all of which to which Canada has not complained.

This is not a justifiable complaint by the Americans. It is not justifiable by their studies, by joint studies. The federal government has taken a very strong position saying that they oppose this action. We support the federal government.

And I guess the one message I'd like to leave as I take my place, Mr. Speaker, to the Americans if they're listening, is that this is an action which is condemned widely by Canadians everywhere of all political stripes. And as far as this government is concerned, in fact this legislature is concerned, by virtue of the fact of our resolution a few weeks ago, we say to the Americans: you can act in conformity with the facts, cease and desist. And so far as I know, the negotiations are still in that position where the Canadian government takes that posture, and we support our Canadian Prime Minister.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Premier for that answer. I think your response was actually quite good and I concur with a lot of what you said when it comes to the countervailing measures that the Americans are taking on many of our so-called subsidies which we know better; they don't.

And I think it underscores the significance of the FTA (Free Trade Agreement) where under the Free Trade we now do in fact have a trilateral dispute-settlement mechanism that is standing the pork industry in good stead time after time after time. So we do have to talk sense to the Americans, and from that perspective, Mr. Premier, I agree with you.

### Grain Car Shortage

**Mr. Neudorf:** — I want to go to another issue, and the Premier is welcome to answer instead of the Minister of Agriculture, if he so chooses — but I want to talk a little bit more about the trucking program recently established by the Canadian Wheat Board, which I might add to you, Mr. Minister, is just a knee-jerk reaction to the problem of railcar shortages.

The Wheat Board is forcing producers to truck their grain to two centres in the province — AgPro centres in Saskatoon and in Moose Jaw — and that is substantially increasing the trucking cost for the

producers who live a fair distance away from those two terminals. I want to know, Mr. Minister, do you support this Canadian Wheat Board policy? And if not, what discussions have you had with the federal minister to explain to him the additional increased costs that the Saskatchewan producers are facing as a result of his policy?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, again the member raises an important point. However, I'd want the member to keep in mind that one of the key arguments of the Americans is the question of our WGTA (Western Grain Transportation Act) and the subsidization by rail transportation. They also peripherally and, I argue, unfairly, challenge the concept of the Canadian Wheat Board into all of this.

Therefore, into this mix — although the 1990 International Trade Commission found that there was no justification for their concern — has got to be taken into account a variety of factors for transportation to clearly disprove to the Americans that transport is somehow being unfairly a matter of benefit to the Canadians to the disadvantage of the American producers.

The American producers, as the hon. member knows as well as I do, have had their exports subsidized by the export enhancement program, EEP, and they have in effect cut out us from international markets, creating a demand domestically. And so when our farmers fill their domestic demand under supposed free, but I would think fair — although it's questionable whether it's fair — trading arrangements, they don't want to allow that either.

Well the Americans can't have it both ways. They can't preach free trade and practise protectionism. They simply cannot do that. And in our position the Government of Canada, the Canadian Wheat Board — you may disagree on some of the elements that are being part of the mix — are making the proper responses to demonstrate factually and politically and internationally that Canadians cannot and will not tolerate this kind of trade embargo.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now it's my turn to be confused. I was asking a question about railcar shortages. And I thought that the Premier would take the opportunity to address the federal Liberal knee-jerk reaction rather than continuing on the American bashing, which in this case I again do not disagree with. But that was irrelevant to the question that I asked.

So I'm talking about railcar shortages, knee-jerk reaction by the federal Liberal government in handling a very significant, important issue. I asked you, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, do you support that action of having the Canadian Wheat Board assigning the inland terminals of the AgPro, the Wheat Pool AgPro terminals, two of them, Saskatoon and Regina? That's what I'm asking you, if you support that.

And why were those two terminals singled out, Mr. Minister? What about the Weyburn inland terminal? What about the Rosetown terminal? What about the elevators that are sitting in Davidson? What about the north-east terminal? These are the questions that I want you to answer, Mr. Minister.

Or do you support the position of the Western Canadian Wheat Growers that other elevators should be allowed to handle this grain — elevators that are capable of having 50 cars? What's so magic about a hundred cars?

Mr. Minister, will you express your position on this issue; and if you do not agree with the Canadian Wheat Board on it, say so, and what are you prepared to do?

**Hon. Mr. Cunningham:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for that question. It certainly opens up a whole area of concern.

We have a very serious backlog of grain moving to port. We have something like 40 ships sitting out in Vancouver, on which we are paying demurrage. I was at Saskatoon this week where the Vancouver port association, or Vancouver Port Corporation held a meeting in Saskatoon at which they invited all the stakeholders. There are some people who blame it on the railroads, people who say there's a car shortage. Railroads say there is no car shortage; it's because of what the elevators are doing. And management blames it on labour and labour blames it on management.

Our message to all the parties and all the people involved in this is to sit down and work this out. We've got to get our Saskatchewan grain moved as quickly as possible.

The Wheat Board is doing, I assume, what they think is best and cheapest to move as many cars out there and get as much grain through the system as they can. And they've decided that 100-car spots at certain terminals are the best way to move that grain out there. I'm not a good judge of which is the best system. All I've been saying to all the players involved is let's move as much of that grain as quickly as we can and keep the system moving, because it is costing Saskatchewan farmers money when there's hold-ups in the system.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Local Housing Authorities

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the minister responsible for Sask Housing. Many communities in Saskatchewan have local housing authorities to administer their senior housing projects.

Madam Minister, can you explain who chooses the members of the local housing authority, and how it is done to ensure support of the community?

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to

thank the member for that question. The Saskatchewan housing authorities have been in existence since about the 1950s. And there has been a policy that there is a local nominating committee made up of the mayor, a representative of the federal government, and a representative of the provincial government, who will select people who are interested in serving on that board of directors in support of their local community.

So we try wherever possible to make sure that there is equal representation and that the people they choose are people who are dedicated to serving public housing in the community.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, the citizens of Radisson feel that there has been considerable interference in the process of choosing their local authority.

A clear majority on the selection committee agreed on their choices for the housing authority, and the brand-new provincial representative overruled them and submitted three entirely different names, and your department approved those choices.

Is it the policy of your department to ignore a majority decision by the local selection committee?

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Mr. Speaker, Sask Housing operates the local housing, public housing programs in Saskatchewan. And wherever and whenever possible we strive for consensus when we look for nominations to the board of directors. But in the end, as has been the policy since the 1970s — and certainly it was exercised in the 1980s to a high degree — the provincial representative who represents a provincial government has the power to finally select those people when there is no consensus between the other two representatives.

So by virtue of the fact that, one, the housing authorities represent the extension of management and operations under the Department of Municipal Government housing division, we want people who serve on the board who are dedicated to serving the interest of the community as well as cooperating with the provincial government.

And the provincial rep is an extension of our department and they have a fair influence on deciding who finally sits on the local housing authority. This is nothing new; it's been a policy that has been in practice for the last 20 years. And there are very few occurrences where there is any dispute.

Occasionally some dispute does arise. I can tell you that when I was mayor of Melfort and I . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order. Next question.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I do find this very curious, Madam Minister, because what you're saying is, the local mayor and

the federal representative who achieved a majority and they decided on three names jointly that they were completely satisfied with, as many people they had consulted; but when the brand-new provincial rep disagreed, she got to choose three entirely different names and you decided to approve them.

This community, as you've said, has gone for far more than 20 years being totally happy with their process. No problems at all with any form of government interference in the past.

Madam Minister, all they want is something very simple. Will you agree to let the local members in Radisson choose their own board based on majority vote?

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Mr. Speaker, again I want to say that we strive for consensus and in most cases where there is good will, consensus can be achieved. The provincial representative brought forward one name that was not approved by the other two. The other two names that was brought by the provincial representative was changed in respect to the opinion of the other two members who sit on the nominating committee.

So there was a consensus. There was an attempt by the provincial representative to find a way of solving this dispute. She did change two of those three names. There was one name that couldn't be agreed to, and by virtue of the fact that this person represents a provincial government and has, in the final authority, the power of veto, that one name was approved.

And it is unfortunate that the member opposite wants to make this a political issue. It is not a political issue. The people who serve on this board are dedicated, all of them, and they can do a good job as long as politics stay out of it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Mr. Speaker. You've just placed yourself in a very difficult position, Madam Minister, because there's only one person, one government, that's made this a political issue. It's never been a political issue for these people. And it's a far more serious, it's a far worse situation than what you're allowing this Assembly to understand. As a result of your interference in the local selection process, the manager of the seniors' villa complex has been relieved of his duties as of last Monday.

The seniors who live there are very distressed, distressed to the point where they're saying they want to move out. They have petitioned you to honour their choices, Madam Minister, and you have chosen to ignore them.

Now can they have your assurance that you will let them choose their own housing authority and that you and their local MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) will stop meddling in their affairs?

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Well once again, Mr. Speaker,

the member opposite has her facts quite confused and she's distorting the truth quite dramatically. And this is where politics come into it. The local people are working to solve the solution. All those people who serve on the board, including the one that was nominated by the provincial rep, are good, solid citizens of the town of Radisson.

And it's not the provincial government and it's not this minister that is interfering. There is a process by policy and through legislation that has been in place for 20 years. The provincial representative has, in the final analysis, the authority to make the final nominations. And this is something that has been here for many years, including when the last Liberal government was in power.

And what you are doing, Madam Member from the third party, is interfering politically in something that can be solved at the community level. That's where the political interference is.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Trade Union Vote Procedures

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question this morning is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I have a very basic and fundamental question for you this morning, and I hope that you will answer it fairly and without political rhetoric or commentary.

Mr. Premier, do you and your government fully support the principles of democracy, particularly the principle that in any vote the majority should rule and that voters should enjoy anonymity?

Could you give us your comments on that, Mr. Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, does the member expect me to get up and say that no, I do not believe in the principles of democracy and I do not believe in anonymity and I do not believe in any of the rules in general terms?

I know you're trying to get at The Trade Union Act or Labour Standards Act, which is an entirely different situation, but as a . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well it is and it was — it is and it was when you managed The Trade Union Act, the same provisions there; when the Liberals managed, the same provisions there. Absolutely explainable.

But I think I'm as good a democrat as you are, sir. In fact you are such a democrat and you exhibit such independence, I note the number of times you've continued to vote against your caucus on their positions. And I commend you for that independence that you display there.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, I want to congratulate you for the answers

that you gave earlier today, and you are following right in that mode and I appreciate that.

Mr. Premier, certainly the principles of democracy are supported worldwide. They are a fundamental guide to the way that we govern ourselves and should be applied to every situation. Unfortunately this is not the case in Saskatchewan. When it comes to the unions, they get special status. The rules of democracy are replaced by the rules of survival, because under strict democracy the unions couldn't survive.

Specifically, Mr. Premier, why have you not extended the principles of the secret ballot in the certification votes held by unions? You have fundamentally and unilaterally shifted significant power to the unions in this province. And with that power you have given them a blank cheque.

Mr. Premier, very simply, why shouldn't democracy apply to unions as it does to everyone else?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member — I say this delicately and I say it generously of the hon. member — I think he needs a little bit of a primer on the functioning of trade unions. Because the allegation that is made by him that the trade unions are not democratic organizations, the premiss of his question — he said that in his question — is absolutely wrong.

They elect their officers; they manage their affairs according to constitutional provisions.

**An Hon. Member:** — Not by secret ballot.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — That's right. They do it in a variety of ways, which is as democratic as any organization on the employer side that may take place.

And the notion that somehow this is an undemocratic operation, I think either belies a large degree of ignorance on the part of the trade unions and how they operate by the member opposite, or in the alternative, is again an attempt to do some sort of union bashing on the, I think, misplaced belief that this is a popular thing to do.

Look, The Trade Union Act is a special Act which seeks to limit areas of conflict between employers and employees. Ever since the Wagner Act in the United States upon which The Trade Union Act of Saskatchewan is based, that has been the theory behind it.

Every amendments which are introduced periodically, unless you come at it from a right-wing approach, is intended to minimize the conflict; it is intended to maximize cooperation. This is not a court of law; this is a court of tribunal which seeks to harmonize and to make relations between trade unions and employers work efficiently so we have a better and healthier economy.

That's what these amendments are all about. And

once we get into the actual clause by clause of the Bill, you'll see the explanations.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

(1045)

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure this morning to introduce a group of 60 grades 4 and 5 students. They are from the town and school in Langham and — which is in the south-west corner of my constituency — and these students are in your east gallery, accompanied by the teachers Debby Dear, Arleen McKone, Heather Dack, and Evelyn Kasahoff.

Mr. Speaker, I think these teachers are to be commended for the effort that they put into it on a yearly basis. They are here presenting their students to the Assembly so that they can learn a little bit more about our democratic process, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to meeting them later on this morning and I would ask all members now to help me welcome these students and teachers from the Langham School.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trew:** — Mr. Speaker, with leave, to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

**Mr. Trew:** — I thank you and I thank my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you 32 students from M.J. Coldwell School seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker.

This is a working crew. They actually did the first part of their work on March 16, when they went through the waste-baskets of the Department of Energy and Renewable . . . Department of Environment. And they did the second part this morning when they went through and audited individual waste-baskets, and in the turnaround of fair play, they left report cards.

I ask all members to join me in welcoming these students from M.J. Coldwell as well as their principal, Charlotte Henryk, and teacher Phyllis Mulvenna.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

## SECOND READINGS



**Bill No. 41**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Calvert that **Bill No. 41 — An Act to amend The Registered Psychologists Act** be now read a second time.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we would like to thank the House for allowing us time to examine this Bill more closely, and that's been given. This is a very short Bill and we will try to keep our remarks on it similarly brief.

As we understand it, this Bill makes no significant changes to the current legislation. The term psychologist is already rightfully used by master's-prepared psychologists throughout the province. The main rationale for this Bill, as we see it, is to remove the possibility for conflict in the use of the title that might come from the devolution of powers and responsibilities for the provincial government to the district health boards.

We have stated in the past our objections to the government's implementation of the district health boards and the devolution of parliamentary responsibility, and I will not go into length about these objections at this time. However, we agree that at the very least no professional should suffer from any inadvertent oversights the government may have made in formulating this policy. We encourage the government to be diligent in attempting to further difficulties . . . to any further difficulties that its health policy may incur.

The second thing this Bill does, as I understand it, is to extend the professional title to master's-prepared psychologists employed at the University of Regina. Since the existing legislation already covers psychologists at the University of Saskatchewan, this is simply a matter of academic equity. Obviously we have no objection to this move, and we congratulate the government for attending to this oversight in the wording of the original legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we have very few questions and very brief questions on this Bill and we'll raise those in the Committee of the Whole. But at this time, we are satisfied to allow this Bill to pass second reading and move into Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Bill No. 42**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Calvert that **Bill No. 42 — An Act to amend The Physical Therapists Act, 1984** be now read a second time.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again we have no objections to this Bill. It has been

done, as we understand, in consultation with the physical therapists and physicians and we congratulate the government and the minister for that. And it is in line with the practices in other provinces, as we understand it.

It could represent significant savings to the government by eliminating an unnecessary step in receiving care. It will also, as we understand it, benefit the people needing physical therapy by allowing them more direct access to the care needed and removing potentially harmful delays. Physical therapists have more than adequate professional training in ethics to be able to assess the needs for services on their own without the intervention of a physician. In the event that patients either need or desire further consultation or services of a physician in addition to a therapist, that option still is open, as we understand it.

On the whole, Mr. Speaker, we believe this is a progressive Bill that eliminates waste and duplication and provides better service to the patients that they have.

Mr. Speaker, again we have a just a few brief questions that we'd be planning on raising in committee. So we have no problem with this Bill moving to the committee stage and passing second reading.

**The Speaker:** — Could I ask members . . . I have a very difficult time to know who wants to speak with so many members standing at their desks.

**Mr. Cline:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to speak; I wasn't just standing at my desk.

But this is kind of a frightening situation for me, Mr. Speaker, because I find myself in complete agreement with everything that the member from Kindersley said. And it frightens him even more. But I want to say a few words about this Bill and this concept, because I had the opportunity for several years to work fairly closely with the College of Physical Therapists, and this happens to be an issue that as a member of the legislature I have done some work on.

As the member from Kindersley said, physical therapists are well trained. They're all university graduates from programs accredited by the Canadian Physiotherapy Association.

And direct access to physical therapy is not some radical concept. I think it's long overdue. We've had direct access to other health care professions such as massage therapy, athletic therapists, dieticians, speech and language pathologists, dentists, psychologists, occupational therapists, and chiropractors. So why not physical therapists?

This is a position that has been advocated since 1978 by the Canadian Physiotherapy Association. It is the position in many other Canadian provinces. I think soon other provinces will be joining. And in the United States I believe it's the position in 24 of the United States, some of them going back to 1957. So in

that sense we're 30-some years behind.

I believe that direct access to physical therapy is important because it is part of what I would term a multi-disciplinary approach to health care. In other words, that we have to recognize that the health care system is not driven by one health care profession in particular; it is driven by a team of health care professionals which includes physical therapists.

I believe that this change will mean earlier treatment of people requiring physical therapy, a greater freedom of choice for the health care consumer, reduced costs because it will not be necessary to go to a physician to be referred to a physical therapist, and I think better preventive health education.

This concept was endorsed in June 1991 by the Saskatchewan Health-Care Association. It is also consistent with what the Murray Commission said. The Murray Commission said that freedom, and I'm quoting here, Mr. Speaker:

Freedom of choice means that within appropriate limits a consumer has the right to seek out health care in a way that does not limit him or her to a prescribed place or kind of treatment.

Today, accessibility means that each citizen is able to achieve quality care appropriate to his or her legitimate needs with a minimum of inconvenience.

And of course in a province like Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, which is sparsely populated in some areas, it's very important to have direct access because you don't always have both a physician and a physical therapist on the scene. It will improve accessibility in all parts of the province if we have direct access.

And it's very consistent with the wellness concept, which both embraces a multi-disciplinary approach and the preventive aspect of health care, and also consistent with the idea that when you convert some of the former hospital facilities into wellness centres, we will be able to have travelling health professionals go to those centres, whether podiatrists, chiropractors, physical therapists, occupational therapists; services that people in rural Saskatchewan need.

And I think as we see this system come into place, we will see better access to physical therapy and other services. The ultimate goal of physical therapy, of course, is to achieve the highest possible level of activity for people, and I think that this is very progressive legislation.

I note, Mr. Speaker, that it has been endorsed by the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association, the Saskatchewan Medical Association, and several user groups, such as the multiple sclerosis society, the head injury association, the cerebral palsy association, not to mention the member from Kindersley. And the member from Idylwyld, Mr.

Speaker.

But in closing, I just want to say that I believe in the wellness concept and I believe in what the government and the health districts are trying to do in terms of changing our health care system to a preventive system, a multi-disciplinary approach, and having a better look at rehabilitative services. I think that part of this is involvement of the expertise of physical therapists as primary care-givers.

I am very, very pleased that the Associate Minister of Health has taken this approach and introduced this legislation. I think it will mean good things for the health of our public, especially in rural Saskatchewan. So I will certainly be very pleased to support this legislation. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

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

### Bill No. 43

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Calvert that **Bill No. 43 — An Act respecting the Licensing and Operation of Medical Laboratories** be now read a second time.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again we have no substantial objections to this Bill. In spite of what the title may suggest, this Bill does not affect in any way the issue of private versus public laboratories except that it contains the implicit acceptance of the idea that private laboratories can be licensed. Obviously a public lab wouldn't need to be licensed. The government doesn't need to license itself to do something, I understand.

Although the changes are quite significant they amount to technical changes to the licensing procedure. The licensing procedure has been simplified from a slow and cumbersome board approvals type of system to a licensing office within the Department of Health.

(1100)

The more extensive elements of licensing, regarding the assurance of standards, will be taken over by an accreditation committee to be operated by the College of Physicians and Surgeons. This will make the licensing procedure less bureaucratic and more directly controlled by the people who use the laboratories, namely the doctors.

There is some concern that the licensing office will be within the Department of Health, will have very extensive investigative powers

in order to enforce quality control. This could be reflective of the government's general trend to enhance the intrusive police-style powers of the bureaucracy.

However on the other hand the investigative powers of the department will not be substantially different than those previously held by the licensing board as we understand it. Furthermore, given that public interest is served by having very strict quality control of health facilities, these provisions are probably quite justifiable.

Also the legislation is quite careful to exclude private residences and activities by private individuals from the investigative powers of the department.

A further area of concern on the topic of investigative powers is that, unlike with the previous licensing board members, there are no provisions in the legislation to define the qualifications of the department's director of licensing, or in other words, there is nothing to say that he or she needs to be a doctor, a medical technologist, or any kind of health care professional whatsoever.

This may be set out in regulations and I assume it will be. In any case this should be kept in mind in the Committee of the Whole. It should be mentioned in second reading that the legislation could have gone further to include participation of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the selection and job description of the department's director of licensing. And we would ask the minister to consider that in the future.

There will be a number of technical areas where we will want clarifications in the Committee of the Whole, but again, Mr. Speaker, we see no reason to oppose this legislation in second reading and we'll ask any questions that we may have in Committee of the Whole and we would agree to moving it to that committee now.

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

#### **Bill No. 44**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Calvert that **Bill No. 44 — An Act respecting Chiropractors** be now read a second time.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed an unusual day in the legislature here today. We again have no general objections to this Bill either. The four Bills that have been placed before us today have all been Bills that we could agree with, and this is just another example of that.

Although we do have some concerns about the clarity and a possible amendment for Committee of the Whole. The legislation empowers the government to appoint two members to a five-person board. It is our understanding of chiropractors that one of these two was a lay person rather than a government official. However the legislation is not clear on this, and we will want some clarification on that point.

The Act brings the legislation surrounding the

chiropractic profession up to date. Previously the disciplinary committee had very little leeway for dealing with members. If the member was found guilty of misconduct, the committee had only the options of either taking away the person's licence or levying a relatively inconsequential fine.

Since the committee was understandably reluctant to revoke licences over small offences, offenders often came off virtually scot-free. By providing for fines of up to \$15,000, the legislation allows for more meaningful, effective, and enforceable discipline actions.

The legislation also makes both the association's board and the disciplinary committee more directly accountable to the public. A member of the public will sit on the permanent board. A member of the public will also sit on the disciplinary committee. As well, the complainant in a disciplinary case is now able to sit in on any disciplinary hearings affecting his case, and we think that's important.

Accountability for the profession is also enhanced by requiring the association to submit an annual public report, and again that's important, Mr. Speaker.

The province's chiropractors were closely consulted in the drafting of this legislation and are, as we understand it . . . and have letters in support of the legislation.

There are, however, a large number of chiropractors, as compared to other health care professions, who are faced with disciplinary action. For this reason there will be some who will be opposed even to the most apparently non-controversial elements of the legislation. These chiropractors' rights however are protected by provisions allowing disciplinary actions to be appealed to the Court of Queen's Bench.

As earlier noted, we'll want to raise a number of detailed questions later in the Committee of the Whole, especially regarding the details of the regulations surrounding this Bill. However, Mr. Speaker, we see no particular reason for holding it up in second reading and would be asking any further questions we'd have in Committee of the Whole.

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

#### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

##### **Bill No. 32 — An Act to amend The Labour Standards Act**

##### **Clause 1**

**Mr. Martens:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yesterday as we were discussing this at the close of the afternoon, I was raising some questions about the additional cost as it relates to the employer and the employee in dealing with the benefits. I want to continue in that vein, Mr. Minister, and ask a couple of

questions about that.

From the information that I have been able to get from individual agencies, independent insurance agents and brokers, there are some very significant points that need to be raised in our discussion. And we have to deal with this in two fronts, I believe, Mr. Minister. One is the area of the cost to the individual who is an employee and the cost to the individual who is the employer.

In my reviewing this, the premiums, in a general sense, will have to go up because premiums are based on risk and the volume of risk and it's reflective in the premiums that it's going to cost.

Now who is it going to cost? Is it going to cost the employer or the employee — or both — in the cases where these benefits have to be provided to the individuals who are part-time employees?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — It will depend upon the arrangements which are in place with respect to full-time workers and will vary from case to case.

**Mr. Martens:** — Okay. Where it will be a part of the employee's responsibility to provide that, it will be a reduction in take-home pay for that individual when that individual may not, in fact, want to have it.

I'll give you an example. If that individual on part-time is earning 5.50 an hour, if it costs him 50 cents an hour to do that, that's 50 cents less per hour that that individual will have in take-home pay at very little significant benefit to him, if it's considered on a prorated basis as to a full-time employee. A full-time employee is considered to have a 40-hour week and a part-time employee with 17 hours will have the risk curve increase in light of that. And it may even go up to 75 cents or a dollar in order for him to cover that cost.

Now in the normal circumstances, that individual will only be getting somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$4.50 take-home pay. So he's going to have another 75 cents taken off in order to get benefits that he is not necessarily going to be wanting.

Top that off with, Mr. Minister, an employee who is a high school student working at a McDonald's or a fast food outlet, that individual will probably . . . if that individual is in his parent's home, will likely have an opportunity to have coverage in all of those areas in his benefits package that accrue to the family that he is a part of; and that, Mr. Minister, is going to cost him 75 cents in order to do that. When is the break-even point in this individual's work going to come, when he's going to say, it doesn't pay for me to work. There are more people living off of me than I am able to earn . . . the money that I am able to earn.

And that, Mr. Minister, is a concern that we have on this side of the House because I believe those premiums are going to go up beyond the capacity of the individual to meet the requirement.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Well the information we have is to the contrary, and that is that the cost will simply be proportional.

I would also point out that all of the problems the member raised with respect to benefits for part-time workers arise when benefits are given to full-time workers, and the same solutions will be put in place to resolve them.

**Mr. Martens:** — But, Mr. Minister, the people will have to go to be included. Okay, this McDonald's has 40 employees — some part-time, some full-time. The full-time employees get benefits at a certain rate. What will those employees have to pay in addition in order to have that whole fast food outlet become involved in a benefits package for those employees? They will all then have to perhaps pay more. Is that right? Or only those individuals who the benefits are going to accrue to?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — It is our information that where benefits are extended to part-time workers on a prorated basis, the increase in the cost of premiums will simply be proportional to the increased risk and no more.

**Mr. Martens:** — Right. And that is part of the problem, Mr. Minister. Any person who has a part-time employee is going to have to pay more because the risk is higher, proportionate to the amount of dollars he takes in and the time he spends. And that's what we're trying to tell you.

Can the employee afford that increased risk cost? Have you done any analysis to understand that the increased cost in these benefits is going to give him the benefit without destroying the capability of him to earn a living, or her to earn a living, from the money that they receive on a part-time basis? Or are they going to say to themselves, what's the use; I'm paying more to have these benefits than I think they're worth. Has any analysis been done to show that that isn't going to happen?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Yes, I've told the member this several times; the member isn't normally this obtuse. And I'm not sure whether this is a way to fill in time or whether we're engaged in really a legitimate conversation.

I've said this several times. We have contacted insurance companies and we've contacted brokers, and the information we have received is that in large part these benefits can be provided at a cost which is no more than proportional to the increased risk.

(1115)

**Mr. Martens:** — Well, Mr. Minister, the problem is that you haven't told me how much that cost is going to be. That's the problem. You haven't told me what that cost is going to be. And that's the part that I'm trying to tell you. You can't push these people to do it. And what you are by this legislation, you are driving these people to force them to do what they don't want

to do. That's the part of the problem.

Other areas of concern that are just as important as that one, they deal with the small businesses that have part-time employees. Fathers and mothers and children who have a small business and then have to have part-time employees work in that small business. If you have five or less employees in this business and those employees have to have the benefits accruing to the full-time employees, every one of those individuals will have to get a medical. That's a part of the rules.

Now, Mr. Minister, you can't avoid those rules. Are you going to put it into your regulations that they cannot be required to go get a medical as well to have that insurance policy? And that's a rule, Mr. Minister. I didn't make it. The insurance companies in order to protect their liabilities have to have that in place. And you are saying to me that it doesn't matter. Just pay according to risk. Well, Mr. Minister, the cost in risk is what I'm talking about.

Now I haven't even mentioned the fact — I've been dealing with the employee side — the costs to the agreements that you have on the employers' side, when you change that so that that individual who is earning 5.50 an hour and you add 75 cents cost to that individual for employer, is that going to make a significant difference? And say to the employer, I can't afford this any longer and I'm not going to have it. And I am going to refuse to have those people increase the cost of me doing business.

And then, Mr. Minister, you go back to what I said yesterday, you have 82,000 people on welfare today, 12,000 less jobs in this province — real jobs in this province — than you had two years ago, and you're going to say that with this coming in, that there is not going to be a change? And I say, Mr. Minister, it's going to go up. Welfare is going to go up and job opportunities are going to go down. And that is very, very serious. And that's what we want to try and protect in this Assembly and in the province.

That's my job, to hold you accountable for that. And don't say that I'm obtuse or whatever. I can tell you I can say a lot about you that wouldn't be parliamentary in this place too, and that is a fact. However I'm not going to do that. What I'm going to ask you is you have to be held accountable some place in this Assembly, some place in the province for the things that you're doing and the impact you're having on business and employees in this province. And I don't think you have even begun to assess or analyse any of this in relation to the kinds of things that you're proposing here today.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I have said on other occasions, I think I've said here, but in any case, I shall repeat the comment about thresholds which I've made, and that is that, with respect, we anticipate putting into the legislation . . . into the regulations, rather, a number of thresholds. We anticipate that an employee is not an employee, for the purpose of this discussion, unless they have worked 10 hours a week.

If they don't work 10 hours a week, they're outside the system; we don't worry about it. It's also anticipated that before an employee is an employee for these purposes, they must work 120 days or four months or they're outside the system.

With respect to benefits, we also intend to put in the regulations, subject to whatever is said by the commission that we intend to set up of management and labour, it is our intention, however, that there would be a threshold of 20 employees so that a firm doesn't have to worry about prorating benefits unless they have 20 or more employees.

And with respect to the other clause, which makes the additional hours which are available, available to employees on a seniority basis, it is our intention to recommend to Executive Council that there be a threshold of 50 in this. So if you have 50 fewer employees, you don't need to worry about it. So there are all these thresholds.

I point this out because the member, I think genuinely, the member commented if you had five people in a firm, it might be very awkward. That firm would be below the threshold for which you'd have to worry about benefits.

**Mr. Martens:** — Well now we're getting to the nub of the problem. The problem, Mr. Minister, is this: that you haven't given us in this Assembly an opportunity to see what those thresholds should be. You haven't told us what we're supposed to be doing and what we're supposed to be looking at. And if you would bring those forward then we probably would be able to move along in a very expeditious kind of a way. But you haven't done that.

And people are asking us over and over and over again. We have piles of letters. In fact I haven't had an issue come forward that has had as much intensity as this one has. And that, Mr. Minister, is significant. And if you would come clean with all of the information, then we may be able to deal with it.

I'm going to go back to this item dealing with the benefits part because I think that's very significant.

I know that there are some agencies and they are probably the ones that handle the most . . . and I don't know whether I should name the different independent companies in this province that would handle it but there are some that handle more of this than any others — and those companies will have a great deal of difficulty dealing with anything less than 20 hours. A great deal of difficulty, Mr. Minister.

In fact there are very few that go down as low as 17. The majority of them will not go below 24. They will not go below 24. Do you have a threshold in . . . you said 10. Is that the limit on the threshold? And if that's the limit, then you won't have anybody in Saskatchewan that is going to do that. And I have a list here of at least 15 companies that will not go below 17; in fact will only go down to 24. And that is the significant problem that we have to talk about.

And we need to have some comfort and so do these employers. The employer is asking the question. How many times do I have to ask you that question on that threshold before you give me an answer? Because they cannot provide that. They don't have an agency to provide that to them, and that's the significant problem that we face.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I think two comments are germane here. One is that they've never had a market before for part-time employees of this sort. The markets have never been there; there's been no real demand for it. Our conversations we have had with insurance companies is that given now the increased market, they can design a product which will meet that market.

I'd also point out to the member one of the reasons why this whole matter was left for regulations rather than being put in the Act is because we will need a good deal of flexibility. And we anticipate there may be benefits which cannot be prorated, and there will be policies in some areas where companies simply won't prorate them. And we anticipate that might be the case.

Other alternatives are open to the parties. They may pay a lump sum equivalent; they may pay a monetary equivalent; they may make other arrangements. I pointed out some of those the other day. So we anticipate that not all may be prorated, but other arrangements may be put in place.

**Mr. Martens:** — The other difficulty, Mr. Minister, is this: that many of the people who supply the insurance for the benefits do not supply all of those benefits. I'll give you an example of that. You could have Blue Cross supplying the benefits as it relates to medical, you could have Sun Life provide the life insurance, you could have Zürich supply the dental benefits, or you could have a cross-section of this coming from all of them.

Now in order to have that happen, you have to have some consistency. Now you have many employers with different kinds of circumstances; you have many employees who have also different sets of circumstances. Put that into place with the employer who has people with disabilities and you have high-risk problems that those individuals are going to have to face.

And I am trying to understand from you that the people who are going to insure are going to understand what the risk is because they will want to know absolutely and they will then curve that risk to the kinds of medical problems that there are, or dental problem, or any of the others.

And that, Mr. Minister, is where the problem comes in. And individuals are going to have to know, because the employer has certain criteria that have to be met, the employee has certain criteria that are going to have to be met as relates to threshold, and so will the people who are going to provide the benefits.

Now in that three-ring circus, you're going to have to have a lot of flexibility. And I say we need to know on this side of the House where you're coming from and the people in the province need to know because if they're going to pay, they're going to want to know what the benefits are.

And that is where we come to the place and say, if it's too high then it's going to cost more than I can afford and therefore it will be no more. And that's the problem we face. And so we need the thresholds on the employer side, we need the threshold on the employee side, and the threshold on the insurance side. And we need to be provided that so that these people can understand that.

And I think you need to bring those regulations forward so that we can see it, so that the public can see it. And I don't believe I'm asking for anything out of order or out of line. And that is why we need to discuss this clearly and completely, and that's why we want to have you give us the answers as to why you can't provide those regulations for us.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I feel somewhat awkward about this because I can recognize the legitimacy of the member's demand. In a sense, you're being asked to buy a pig in a poke here, so I'm sensitive to the conundrum the member feels.

The other side of the equation though is that the parties with whom we spoke did not want to have their hands tied by regulations which were tabled in the Assembly, and their concern was, once they're tabled in the Assembly they're a *fait accompli*. So I recognize the conundrum the member has in that. I can tell you what I think the regulations are going to be, but that may not be how they are.

On the other side though, as I say, those with whom we spoke about this — some preferred that legislation not go at all, some were quite enthusiastic about it — but both sides of the question preferred the regulations not be tabled and that they be given the maximum freedom to deal with them when they get them. So I offer that as a reason, and I also offer to the member my sympathy.

With respect to the benefits for part-time workers, it has always been anticipated that some things may not be possible to be prorated. We think that is much overdone and that the majority of them will. Because the majority of cases, it's extra business for the insurance company if they can so arrange their affairs. Our understanding is most of them think they can arrange their affairs if there's a market.

But if they can't be prorated, there are other options open to them. Employers could work out arrangements where employees get compensation in lieu thereof, I suppose. They could also work out arrangements whereby employees . . . Some actually, at least one major retailer in the province now has this system whereby part-time workers can take one of a number of benefits available to full-time workers. Depending on the hours they put in, they can pick one

off the shelf and that's theirs.

So those are two options in dealing with this problem of benefits which can't be prorated, which we've always recognized. So we think when people of goodwill get together, which we hope happens both at the committee stage and later in the workplace, to resolve these issues, we think they will be able to resolve them in all cases.

**Mr. Martens:** — Will the employee be able to refuse a benefits package in his workplace if there is one offered?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I think most employers do not allow that. That would be up to the employer. We certainly wouldn't prohibit an employee from refusing.

I think most employers, however, would prohibit . . . It's my understanding most of these plans — I've never been in one — but it's my understanding most of these plans require all employees to participate. And that is factored into the cost of them.

So I think that's a decision to be made in the local workplace, not a decision which we'd make. Certainly we have no objection if somebody doesn't want to join. They'd have to work that out with the employer and with the insurer. My understanding is that's not how most of them work.

(1130)

**Mr. Martens:** — That's correct.

Now take that part-time employee who works three hours . . . no, 10 hours a week in McDonald's. He goes down to the service station and works 15 hours a week and then he goes to another service station and works another 15 hours a week. That's a 40-hour week he's got covered, and he's working at 5.50 an hour. One employer says you get benefits, the other says you get these benefits, and another employer gets those benefits. And this is what's happening, Mr. Minister. I know it is, because I know individuals who are doing that.

So you have different employers dealing with those three different areas that I talked to, with three different insurance companies, with three different employee relationships and then there is supposed to be some prorated basis to deal with this. And I think you have very significant problems that are going to accrue.

And that's why I go back to the premium costs in relation to this. Because the higher the risk that that individual is, and the demand that the employer makes on the individual to cover that cost, if the employer is not going to cover that cost, the employee is going to be hurt. Because his volume of take-home pay, with the increased risk cost, is going to substantially decrease his take-home pay. And he is living, probably, as part-timers work, he's living on the edge already and you're going to take some more

out of it on benefits that he cannot afford. Or that he's, perhaps, willing to defer — put it that way. He's willing to defer it to another time.

And that is what the problem is. If you go with life insurance in each one of these cases, how can you prorate life insurance in dealing with a company or an individual that has three different places he works at and is prorated on the basis of the insurance that he has, that he has to take, if the other employees are going to take that?

And you have to give us some assurance that this isn't going to negatively impact on this employee dealing with the employer's work and the fact that the employer is going to have to say — this is way too massive, the premium is too high, I can't afford to have this guy working here so I'm going to have to make all these people permanent employees and I disregard all the rest.

The part-timers will have to go. I will only take those who will work full time. And that, Mr. Minister, is going to cause some of the problems, as I suggested to you earlier. And I don't want to stand in the way of people earning a living when that is a part of the problem.

I think you need to give us some assurance that there would be an opportunity for these people to not participate; that they have the freedom not to participate in this kind of program. And I believe you're right that the insurance companies will not allow it. So if you have an employee base that is 40 per cent part time and 60 per cent full time, these part-timers are going to slide into the full-time . . . on completely full time. So you go to a 70/30 relationship and the 30 is gone. Because the other 10 per cent takes that full-time employment space up, and that 30 per cent is gone. Where do they go look for jobs? That's part of the problem, Mr. Minister, and that takes those people who can least afford it — least afford it — and puts them into a no-win situation.

And I can see it happen, because I know that those insurance companies will not provide that. They won't. And you tie that in with individuals who have medical problems to start with — asthma, heart conditions, any one of the others — and you will not get medical coverage for those individuals.

So the best thing to do for these part-timers would be to plead that you have a medical problem so you wouldn't have to get insurance. And that is, in my view, not the correct way of doing it. And I think we need to have some very legitimate discussion about these kinds of problems or we're not going to come to any kind of a conclusion on this matter.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I think I'd have more concern, I think I would be more likely to share the member's concern, if it weren't for the fact that enlightened employers are doing it now. There are enlightened employers which have a lot of part-time workers which pay benefits to them.

**An Hon. Member:** — They don't pay it under 17 hours; I know that.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Well the member says he knows that as a fact. You may know it as a fact. We discussed it with insurance companies and with brokers who felt that arrangements were possible, given the presence of a market. So I just say to the member opposite that we think the problem of prorating benefits is overrated.

Let us take the example of insurance. In almost all cases, group life is based on salary. And you contribute a percentage of your salary and you're insured for that amount. And in most cases, it's our understanding, the insurance companies are prepared to extend that to part-time workers, given certain conditions that are I think readily available.

So I think the problem . . . it is our view that the problem of prorating benefits is much overrated, given the fact that most of them are provided by the private sector; given the fact that if it can be made to work there's a new field going to open up here for . . . new market going to open up. It has been our impression that most of the companies are anxious to service the market. They're not anxious to straight-arm them.

We've got exactly the opposite impression. We've got a good deal of interest from the companies which provide these benefits, and they're interested in meeting the market because they think it's a growing market.

Let us suppose . . . let us assume, which is an assumption I share, that there will be some benefit you can't prorate. As I've pointed out, there are other alternatives.

**Mr. Martens:** — Well can I get some indication from you, Mr. Minister, that there would be some thresholds that could be met on the basis of . . . You gave me the 10 hours per week and then there's the threshold of the volume of employees. Is there a threshold on the part of the employee that he does not have to take it if he does not want to? Is that going to be given to him as an opportunity, or will he have to go look for an employer who isn't going to provide that and then have to quit his job and go look some place else for that job?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I don't think I can extend that to the hon. member because that would be an arrangement to be worked out between the employee, the employer, and the insurance company. We're not part of the circle. So I don't think I can give you that. We just don't get to make that decision.

**Mr. Martens:** — One other area I want to touch and that is the time that you have to provide, and the lead time that you have to provide for part-time employees to change a schedule. That is extremely onerous, extremely onerous.

And I'll give you an example in the tourism industry.

In the tourism industry alone, in dealing with this . . . And I see this. Next to my office we have a big Bonanza Restaurant. Tour buses come in there; they stop and they have their meal.

Now how is that Bonanza Restaurant supposed to operate if he has to give a one week's schedule notice to his employees when he finds out yesterday that they're coming in today? And how does he do that in substantially dealing with the problem that you think that he can? And I'd like to know from you how is he going to handle that on a regular basis, because that happens all the time.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — One of the House amendments . . . It's quite possible the member has not had an opportunity to review the House amendments which we intend to move and which we've filed.

One of the House amendments does cure that, which I think may have been a bit of a problem in the existing legislation. We'd always anticipated that where there were unforeseen circumstances, the notice requirement would be waived.

In one of our tours, a restaurateur, a hotelier really, from Saskatoon gave me an example of a situation where I gather one of my colleagues had booked a banquet. He said it was me. He said, it was you, but it wasn't me; it was someone else. But I gather it was one of my colleagues in Saskatoon booked a banquet; called him up Saturday morning and said, how many tickets did I say, how many people did I say? He said 200. And the person on the other end of the line said, oh, he sold 275. That's not a problem is it, George? He says, no, it's not a problem if I ever want to see you again, but I've got to get some people in right away.

So we'd always anticipated that where unforeseen circumstances arose, the notice would be waived. Now I admit the legislation doesn't exactly say that. It says that notice needn't be given where there's an emergency, which isn't quite the same thing. If you get a restaurant and they're overrun with business, that's not emergency — it's exactly why they were on the side of the road — but it's unforeseen.

And so we're amending by House amendment, we're amending the exemption from notice from an emergency circumstance to an unforeseen circumstances. I think most business people I've talked to agree that that does cover the problem.

**Mr. Martens:** — You gave me one example of what would be unforeseen. Do you have . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . a million of them, Mr. Minister, and you'd have a pretty long set of regulations. We'd have to probably take the forest in the North to make the paper to put that together.

But the real concern that I have is the threshold that you perceive to bring forward so that employers know what that threshold is in relation to those kinds of issues, and they are very important to these people. Because what may be perceived on the one hand to be



unforeseen, may not be in the Department of Labour nor in the part of the employee. And so therefore it has to have some threshold in dealing with that in the area of the employer and the employee as well. And I'd like to know from you what they are.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Well there are some industries more than others are plagued by this problem of the inability to predict peak loads. Restaurants have that problem; the tour bus. You gave an example. The example was given to me last Friday when I met with the restaurateurs in Saskatchewan is the Grey Cup game. And you get a bus, a whole big bus with 60 people stops in front of a restaurant which seats 100. You have a little bit of a problem.

There's any number of such examples, mostly in the retail trade, but I think not exclusively, not necessarily exclusively in the retail trade. The service industry may also have unexpected spikes in their load, and the amendment simply says where an unforeseen circumstance arose, the notice will be waived.

We wouldn't attempt to define all those unforeseen circumstances. The language speaks for itself. While it's true in the first instance it may be officials in the department which interpret it, ultimately the interpretation is placed on it by a Queen's Bench judge so that I think our interpretation has to be reasonable. But I think we've got that covered off, although I would admit to the member it's not covered off in Bill 32.

**Mr. Martens:** — On the restaurant business, are you going to categorize the different kinds of businesses that there are, in the construction side, or in the food business, or in different areas like that? Are you going to put them into a category and then say, these in a broad sense cover the unforeseen?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — In sort of a way. I say to the member from Morse, we are, in a distant sort of a way. What we're going to do is . . . I think I spoke yesterday of the sectorial committees for the regulations. We're going to have . . . and perhaps not everybody who is glued to their television sets this morning watching this riveting discussion may have heard yesterday's, so let me just very briefly revisit that.

It is our intention to set out regulations in the broad, the broad stroke. And then we intend to take the regulations and give them to a series of committees, more or less one for each industry, composed of lay people, two management, two from worker side, chaired by an official in the department.

We used this model successfully with the occupational health and safety regulations. And so the regulations will be fine-tuned by that industry. And each industry has its special needs and its special problems.

I don't think they would set out the exceptions. I would expect they would just leave the exemption, the unforeseen circumstance, alone. But it may need a special twist.

One can imagine in the construction industry, for instance, it may need a different twist where work is often weather-related — what they can do depends upon the weather. And so they may need to put a special twist on that for construction. Those sectorial committees give them the option to put the twist that they need on there, on the regulations. So we're going to fine-tune these industry by industry, so in a sense that opportunity will arise.

**Mr. Martens:** — That area that you raise was one of those that I was going to raise. Because it's not only weather-related, but it is also availability of other agencies to be a part of the construction process. So you have the general contractor, you have subtrades, and each one of them is dependent on another in order to provide that, and they may not have the ability to pull those people in in a time line that you've suggested. And that is very serious.

And I don't want to have people lose jobs in order to just meet some criteria that's maybe going to benefit 60 per cent, or 30 per cent, or 20 per cent. And that's my problem in dealing with that.

(1145)

I would hope that when you talk about this that you go and think about it long enough that you deal with that.

And the other thing that I would suggest is that when you come close to that decision . . . I know the regulations are put together by the agencies, whoever you're going to do that, and then they're put through cabinet. And is there a possibility that before they go to cabinet that you would give us an opportunity to look at them and even discuss with you in a private kind of a way, an opportunity for us to take a hold of it and see where you perhaps have overlooked something or where we could add something to that? Would you be prepared to do that?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Actually I'm not sure what the vehicle for that would be, but it would be very useful. It would actually be very useful if that could be done. A vehicle just doesn't spring to mind. The Regulations Committee I guess could be called intersessionally, perhaps by telephone.

But I think that might be useful if the . . . I think that actually might be useful if a legislative committee had a review of some sort, had a review of those regulations, to have a look at them. I think it would be useful. It doesn't spring to mind, the vehicle.

But I tabled the other day, in response to a question of the member from Maple Creek, the Code of Regulatory Conduct. It does provide the warning, the lead time which I indicated to the member.

Certainly I'll undertake, as soon as we have the first pass at it, to share the regulations with the members opposite so that you can have a look at them and convene whatever is needed to convene to complete a review process by elected members.

There may be some merit in your suggestion.

**Mr. Martens:** — Mr. Minister, I'd be particularly interested in the side that deals with the benefits and the costs and the risk, in those kinds of regulations dealing with that. I'd be particularly interested in it, knowing that there is a great deal of concern on the part of those three groups that I mentioned — the employee, the employer, and the insurers — on this issue.

And I have no problem with people getting access to a business opportunity in relation to the insurance side. I have none. But I find it very difficult to believe that there is going to be an opportunity there that won't be able not to be met.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Let's just agree then — and I give the member my undertaking in this Assembly — that as soon as these regulations are in a form in which we can discuss them in the public, we'll circulate them to the members and invite your comments. And you may then have some suggestions as to what, if any, follow-up should take place. But I'll give that undertaking to the member.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, you just alluded to the paper that you sent across to me, and I want to thank you for that. It is enlightening, and I am happy to see that there is some modest coverage of the problem in what you say.

Unfortunately what I found when I read this was that there isn't any specific timing at all. It could be two minutes, two days, two weeks, or two hours. What the business community has said to you is that they want 60 to 90 days. Now we're talking two to three months. We're not talking two days or two minutes. We're talking a fairly substantial length of time here that they want to have to consider these regulations before they go into effect.

Because, quite frankly when you pick up this document, it's a pretty hefty Bill that you're dealing with here and there's an awful lot of stuff in it. And I think what they're saying to you is that the regulations are going to be very significant and that there's going to be a lot of them; that they will have a tremendous impact and that it's going to take more than just a few minutes to be able to go through this all to assess the impact on themselves as business people, and of course for others in the community to assess what the impact will be to the province.

So, Minister, how do you square using this document in place of a commitment to 60 to 90 days?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — They were going to be actually be using both. We're going to have the commission, the labour-management commission, which I expect to be appointed as soon as the Bill is passed. Fairly shortly after this Bill receives third reading, I expect the commission — the joint labour-management commission — to be appointed.

I would not finalize this but I would anticipate they

would complete their work in the early fall. I would anticipate the sectorial committees would be given a further length of time — perhaps late fall, mid or late fall — to complete their work on the regulations. And then the Code of Regulatory Conduct which, my memory is, provides a 60-day period in which to react, follows that. So they've got all of these stacked up and I think they'll have a very lengthy period of time to react.

It's also my understanding that in discussions with the business community and the trade union community, they're interested in having ministerial meetings ongoing during the spring and summer around the province. They want to hold a series of regional meetings. I have encouraged the staff who are involved in that to cooperate with that process and facilitate it. And if they want to hold regional meetings around the province with business people, I would be delighted to attend.

And so I think these periods are all stacked up and so they've got all of these periods to react. I think that they've got enough time to react. I mean they're concerned about what they are going to have to react to, but I think they've got enough time to react.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well, Minister, once again what you think and what they think seems to be somewhat different. They think the fact that you won't commit in a very meaningful and standing-up-in-your-place way, the fact that you won't commit to absolutely for sure giving them a specific amount of time, they believe that when you don't make that kind of commitment, that what you're doing is hedging and that you are in fact saying without words that you probably won't allow that.

So why don't you simply stand up in your place today and say, we absolutely guarantee you that we'll give you two to three months to consider the regulations before we make them law, and that you will have some meaningful and genuine input into those regulations and a real opportunity to bring their concerns to you and to the department with some meaningful input into changes where they can demonstrate to you a realistic hurt to the job base or to the community.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Well I can certainly give the member the undertaking that the sectorial committees will be given draft . . . I can give the member the following undertakings. Sectorial committees will be set up as soon as can be done after this session is completed. I expect they'll be rolling . . . I'd like to think it be the end of May but maybe it'll be June. Those committees will then be given draft regulations with which to begin their work. They can be circulated immediately throughout the . . . and I'm sure they will be circulated throughout the business community and the labour community.

And at the same time the commission, the single joint provincial commission will begin its work hopefully earlier. I'd like to think that might be going by early May. And they'll have the draft of the regulations, I

would expect; that is at least what we have in mind. And that will then be circulated.

And I certainly assure the member that that won't be completed before September 1. So they'll have all that period of time in which to react to it.

I've asked Mr. Parr, who is with us, to go make a telephone call. It is my memory that once regulations are ready to be gazetted, you then have to give 60 days notice. This Code of Regulatory Conduct requires 60 days notice. Now I admit this document doesn't say that, so I've asked Mr. Parr to go and check on that. But I think once the committees are finished, the commission is finished, it's my understanding they've got 60 days then before the regulations come into effect. They've got 60 days to react before they're gazetted. So I can give you those assurances.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Minister. I'm sure that people in the business community who are watching today will be as quick to be checking out what you say as your runner is going to be quick to go and find out exactly where we're at.

Now you've alluded in your discussion to sectorial committees. How many of these committees would you envision that we will have and how many people will be on those committees?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — We are still fine-tuning that. The deputy minister and I have had some discussions about that. It looks like it's in the 15 range — 12, 15 range. It may be higher, but that's the range.

We want to try to strike a balance here. We would like one for each industry, but if you've got too many committees you've got an unmanageable process. So we're balancing: a smaller number of committees, which makes the thing easier to manage; a larger number of committees, which makes the process more sensitive. And we're balancing that. But let's call it 12, in round numbers, say. I think if it varies from that, it will be more rather than fewer.

And we're sensitive to people who say, we need a special committee for our industry because we're different than anyone else. Now sometimes that's the case; even though they're not very big, they are different. Let's call it 12 committees or so.

Then we will . . . on each committee we envision four people plus the chairperson. The chairperson will be a member, an official from the department in all cases, or most cases. And we'll have two from management, two from labour — so a balance. So that's the make-up of the committees and that's how we see them being organized.

We don't see them — to clear up any more confusion that may arise — we don't see the committees holding public hearings at all. These are working committees which work on the regulations and which fine-tune the regulations for their industry. It's not a committee which goes around the province and holds hearings; these are working committees.

And I'm pretty much describing how the occupational health and safety system worked, except that they had more committees. They had around 20 committees. And nobody's hung up on this, but I think the feeling of the people involved was if they erred, they erred on the side of having too many committees rather than too few. And perhaps a smaller number of committees might have been a more effective system.

So that's my comment on that.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well, Minister, you've got a whole host of really scary problems coming into this as you outline this process. Two members from labour, two members from management, and one member from the government that has an absolute, definitive affiliation to the labour unions. By the very definition of your political party — and I'm not going to be partisan; I'm just going to give you history — the NDP (New Democratic Party) was a coalition, as I read in some documents the other day, a coalition of the old CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) and the labour movement.

That coalition, having formed a new party called the NDP which your government is, then absolutely assures that the government chairman will be pro-union. So you will have two union members, a pro-union government member, and two people from management, which means of course that the two people from management will always be outvoted on every issue, on every regulatory thing that's considered. So it's absolutely out of balance and it's absolutely and totally unfair.

And the fact that this commission won't be going around the province tells me that they won't have the input then from the community that you're trying to imply will be there when you suggest that you're going to have committees going around the province.

So who is the committee that's going to go around the province? Is that just yourself that's going to go on this tour that you're talking about? Or how will the input from the community get to this regulatory body that will in fact, the sectorial committees, that will in fact be making the rules? How will that information get to them of what the community thinks?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I don't want the member to read too much into the hearings around the province. This is a very new idea; I just heard about it myself this morning. I gather there were some people in the business community expressed some interest in some regional meetings at which I would attend and answer questions on this whole process.

I simply encourage them to proceed and do that, subject to my schedule, and I told them I'd be delighted to participate in such a process. And that's about all the detail there is actually. It was a short conversation this morning.

(1200)

You asked how the community would have input. The community would have input because they would have representatives, in a sense, on the committees, which would work. In the various groups which I have met — and it's just an endless number of them — I have always made the comment to them that the most important decision you're going to make is who you have on this committee, and I want you to think very carefully about who you're going to put on the committee.

My impression has been most of the groups with whom I have met have given that very careful consideration. And I see them talking and huddling as I leave the room. And I think that's one of the things that they're talking about, is who they should put on these committees.

You mentioned the question of the impartiality of the chairpeople from the department. While I admit the perception which the member relates, I'd point out to you that the public servants who will be on this are long-time public servants who have been with the department, most of them, for a lengthy period of time, were there when the former government was in office and were thought to be sufficiently impartial that they retained them in their position.

So I just want to point out to the member that whatever the biases you ascribe to the government in office, they're generally not shared by these long-term public servants who have a different view and a longer view of the world.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Are you saying, Minister, then that the chairmen of these different 12 committees, or 15, will in fact be those bureaucrats that are now in your service?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Yes, that's correct. These will be career public servants. I don't anticipate . . . and I say here, as I've said in any number of times, that I recognize in the past there have been occasions when the name of this department were treated as if it were the department for labour. I've pointed out to any number of groups that if that was the case in the past, it's not now. It's the Department of Labour. The preposition "for" or "of" makes all the difference. This is the Department of Labour. It is equally there to serve management and the workers.

And we have sought, I think with some success, we have sought to introduce some professionalism into this department, which it has at times lacked — under various governments, I think. But we have sought to introduce a professionalism into this department and even-handedness and a balanced approach, and I think we're having some success.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Could you supply us with a list of the names of the bureaucrats that are currently working in your department that would be available to be placed into the chairmanships?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Yes, we haven't . . . They'll be the people in the labour standards branch. We

haven't exactly fingered these poor people. This is not an assignment which they rush forward to clutch readily to their bosom. This is not an easy job.

We haven't exactly fingered the people who will be doing it. They will be the people in labour standards. I'll give you that as soon as it's available, certainly. We haven't exactly fine-tuned that yet; finalizing that awaits the passage of the Bill actually.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well you've kind of confused me here, Minister. A few minutes ago you said to the community at large and you were talking to the community at large that you have no fears. The chairmans of these boards are from the bureaucratic service of long-time standing who are not partisan and cannot be connected in any way with any partisan positions.

They will definitely be doing an impartial job is what you said, and they will be the people that are going to be chairmans and there won't be any imbalances there whatsoever. Don't worry, everything's fine. Trust me, we've got it all under control. We're okay here. That's what you said.

Now you say to me that you can't give me the names of those people who are so comforting to everybody. This doesn't wash, Minister. You're pulling my leg, quite frankly. You're pulling it so hard that it's starting to hurt. You're ripping us off here really. Come on now.

In all fairness, I thought we had a reasonable discussion going on here with some honesty starting to show up in how we were going to do this. And now you're telling the people: write us another blank cheque; trust us; after the legislation is in, we'll tell you who the bureaucrats are.

If you've got them, then tell us who they are. And then let the business community assess those people for their impartiality. If you're so sure that everybody's at this high comfort level, let's see it.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — We haven't fine-tuned the number of committees; we can hardly have fine-tuned who's going to chair which, so I can't actually give you the chairpeople.

What I stated was . . . First of all, a general observation about the department — that most of the people in the branch are long-time public servants who have worked under governments of different stripes and performed more than adequately.

It was also really a statement of government policy, that the type of people we're looking for are people who are . . . the type of public servants we're going to be asking to do this are going to be those who have . . . those whose reputation is beyond question. But we don't actually have the names.

Really what I stated was an observation about the branch and a comment about what our policy is going to be in finalizing our choices.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Minister, you really are trying to string me along here today. All I asked you for is a list of the names of the bureaucrats who are available to you to be picked from. I didn't ask you which bureaucrat is going to be the head of which specific chairman's position on which particular management board or sectorial committee.

I want to know the list of the names that you have available to choose from. You might have 40, you might have 50.

**An Hon. Member:** — Sit down.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — And the member at the back wants me to sit down, and I will in due course.

But I want to read to you, Minister, exactly why we have a problem here. Because I know the member from the lucky department wants to know why we are so concerned here. Here, Minister:

Another battle appears to be looming between the NDP government and the business community over — you guessed it — labour legislation. There are rumblings that the province's major business groups under the banner of the business coalition are preparing to go to war over the government's new Labour Standards Act.

And the reason they're willing to go to war with you, sir, is because you keep telling us one thing and manipulating it around without actually answering the question. So give us that list.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I will give you my undertaking I'll provide you the list as soon as it can be gathered together, which should be within a couple of days. I didn't understand the member's question. I thought you wanted a list of chairpersons. If you want the list of people who are available, we can give you the roster from which you'll be choosing them.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — There is some benefit to this process, I know there is. And we will anxiously await that list so that the business community and the workers of this province can assess exactly who their fate will be in the hands of. Because whoever these chairman are, they will absolutely control the regulations and the way that they're going to be put into place.

There is no question in mind whatsoever now that we have turned this entire piece of legislation over to the hands of some bureaucrats who will be given the powers of judges and final arbitrators with no recourse and no appeal and no access to a court-like process within our province. We have a dictatorship now being set up with bureaucrats who are going to run the province, who are going to run labour legislation, and who are going to dictate what labour legislation will do.

So we now have established at least who the dictators are going to be. We will of course have that list of

names to determine which ones of them might be available for what jobs, and we'll probably be doing some guessing at that.

But what we do know is that you have put the power of controlling our province into a certain few hands now and we will at least have some idea of which hands that dictatorship is going to be in. It is very, very obvious now why the business coalition was formed and very, very obvious to me why they are prepared to go to war with you, because this is an absolute travesty of democracy in the fullest, fullest way.

Now Minister, as I grow more and more agitated with the process that you are invoking, we do need, I think, to ponder it more carefully to find out if there is some semblance of sanity left in this whole government or province, so that we can in fact perhaps have some basis to build this province on rather than just simply have it exited by everyone, except the union leaders, and close the doors behind as we all leave.

The ministerial meetings that you're going to perhaps conduct now — earlier today we were absolutely going out on a road tour and we were going to have a lot of input. Now we're not so sure if we're going to have it or not because you hedged on that once again as you pulled my other leg.

Minister, these meetings that you're planning, how do you propose that you will get the information that you gather from yourself to these new-found dictators in the Public Service Commission that you're going to pick to be the heads of these sectorial committees?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Frankly, I did get the comment about the new-found dictators, which I think perhaps ranks with your description of the member from Rosemont as being a left-wing communist dinosaur. I may say he was forever relieved you didn't call him a right-wing communist. That would have been the ultimate insult and I think it ranks with your description of myself as a TV evangelist. I really thought that was the cruellest cut of all. That really was the lowest blow.

I'm not sure whether the public servants will be understanding when you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right, Jimmy Swaggart Shillington. I'm not entirely sure the public servants are going to understand when you call them new-found dictators. They're often frustrated that they don't have enough influence.

Anyway, all that being said, we will be ensuring that they understand, and I think they will. But we'll be ensuring they understand that the success of this process will depend upon everybody being comfortable with it. We want the process to work for obvious reasons and everybody else wants the process to work as well. It's only going to work if it's even-handed. If it's not balanced and even-handed the process simply won't work.

So I think we have every incentive, as do the public servants, as do the new-found dictators, to make the

whole process work.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well, Minister, a few minutes ago you talked about the labour-management commission and then of course you alluded to the sectorial committees. Could you tell me the difference and what the labour-management commission consists of in your mind and who is going to comprise that commission?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — We're still fine-tuning the composition of the commission. I foresee it being . . . it's a provincial commission. I foresee it being — don't misunderstand this term — something of a blue ribbon commission in the sense that I foresee the people being on it having standing in their community such that they can speak for their community. So I see it being something of a blue ribbon committee, both on the working side and on the management side.

The function of the commission, the provincial commission, is to consider the provisions with respect to part time so far as they relate to benefits and the most available hours clause. Undoubtedly, it will make whatever recommendation it wants on any other aspect of the Bill, but its mandate will be specifically to consider those two items.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Let's pursue just a little further this labour-management commission. Now you're talking about blue ribbon people. Are we talking about people like Garf Stevenson perhaps getting another political plum?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I don't know if you've noticed, but he's already engaged.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well he was already engaged on two or three other boards before you put him on this last wheel of fortune where he hit the jackpot at 500 bucks a day at the expense of the taxpayers to deliver a message that is pre-concluded, which has to be that he says no to health board elections. And if he doesn't answer the skill-testing question right, he'll probably get fired and won't get his jackpot. So there's only one answer he can come up with and that's the right answer — the answer that you've provided. He has to say what you want him to say at \$200,000 expense to the taxpayer.

So that didn't stop you the last time you gave him a political plum, so I'm suggesting to you that you better tell us what you consider a blue ribbon person in each community to be, or they're all going to presume it's going to be Garf Stevenson and a host of those kinds of people who you owe debts to from the last election.

(1215)

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Not because he isn't thoroughly able, but if the member's making a serious comment — it's sometimes hard to tell — if that's a serious question, Garf Stevenson is not being considered for the position. Well I don't want to . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Who is?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — The member from Kindersley asked what is really a valid question: who is? I do not want to get into a public discussion of that until I have discussed it with the members involved, and that's kind of the . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Have you got a short list?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — The member from Kindersley asks another decent question. Do we have a short list? Actually we do. We are down to the point where we have a short list . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, it's longer than one. I would hope that we are . . . we have an unordinarily suspicious opposition this morning. I'm not sure what's feeding such cynicism.

But we do have a short list. If everything goes as planned, and nothing seems to go as planned, but if everything went as planned I would hope the commission would be up and running by the time the session's over in early to mid-May. So I see the commission being operated that quickly. As soon as this Bill is passed I would like the commission to get started without waiting for the session to end.

So I would hope it would be a subject of a ministerial statement in here within a relatively brief period of time after the Bill gets third reading.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well, Minister, how about if we ask you for the short list. Will you give us that?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — No, I think I really would have to demur on that. The process of finding people for these commissions is delicate and the comments that are made to us are delicate. I don't think they would want nor would I want it public knowledge that we had approached them. So I think I'll have to decline on that simply as a matter of . . . simply out of respect for the privacy of the individuals involved.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well we would naturally have to assume then that they've got to be on the thousand dollar membership list, probably no less than that?

Because quite frankly, Minister, here now, I do want to get serious for a minute. You've got a labour-management commission that you by your own definition now, have said will be dealing with part-time benefits and the available hours problems that we see under the jurisdiction of labour legislation.

You have refused to give us the criteria under which people would be picked other than political partisanship. You've called them blue ribbon people. We have no idea what it takes to be a blue ribbon person in your opinion. I do suspect that it has to be someone high up in your party ranks. You can correct that; I'm going to allow you that opportunity.

These people again appear to be somewhat placed into the role of being dictatorial in that they will have the authority of judges to make decisions where there will be no recourse for those who are affected, either the workers or the business people; no recourse either

by recourse to a court system or recourse to some kind of tribunal perhaps, or some kind of other entity to hear complaints.

This is not going to be acceptable in the community. And I can see as we go into this why at first it seemed as though amendments to The Labour Standards Act were so welcomed by the press and the media, and the folks quite generally in the province. And then as they looked at it more carefully, they begin to see that there was a sinister side to this particular piece of legislation and that in fact it was so sinister as to be totally different and exactly opposite to what people thought.

And in the first days, as you will recall, Minister — and I will refresh your memory — when you brought forth this Labour Standards Act, people were almost praising your government for finally making some decent changes to labour standards in our province. Everyone was sort of applauding a bit, saying yes, we've got some updating to do, we've got some . . . I even stood up and kind of said the same thing, that yes, it's good that we're taking care of some of these problems that have arisen as a result of our changing times. And then all of a sudden we found the business community saying, whoa, wait a minute here, something doesn't look good. We smell something rotten in Denmark, I guess is the old statement.

And then all of a sudden somebody said, well, it's not something rotten in Denmark, there's something rotten in this legislation. It's going far, far beyond the simple process of trying to help workers in our province. We now have a communist style take-over in the labour movement. We have state control, state ownership philosophy forging its ugly head forward in such a way that I've never seen except in the Regina Manifesto.

So, Minister, can you honestly say that when you have a short list of people who might have those kind of arbitrary powers, can you honestly say that the business community should not be concerned, that they should trust you to put these people into those kind of positions after the legislation is passed? Why would they stand in their place in this society and not demand to know who the people are that are going to dictatorial control their businesses and their lives. This is not reasonable, sir.

And so I say to you again, will you reconsider and give the business community and the workers of this province the list of people's names who will be, as you call them, the blue ribbon people that will determine the destiny of this province.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — We will give you that list as soon as it's . . . we'll give you the people as soon as it's available. And as I say, I hope it would be available shortly after this Bill gets third reading. The commission should be up and functioning as soon as it can be.

I know that the members opposite will take this comment with some cynicism — probably enormous

cynicism — but we really want this whole process to work. We want this legislation to work; we want this process to work. If the commission is going to work, the people on the commission must be seen as legitimate representatives of their community.

In that context, party affiliation has played no part in the discussion as to who should be on it. I know that members opposite will never believe that, but that has been the case. Party affiliation has played no part in their appointment. And I think when you see the committee, I think you'll agree that party affiliation didn't play a part in their appointment. The people who are being considered are not people about whom I would want to venture a guess as to what their politics is, actually.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well, Minister, I would be willing to stick my neck out and venture a guess to what their political affiliation will be. It certainly won't be anything other than an affiliation to the trade union movement.

Now, Minister, you've said that you're going to give us that list, and I'm glad to hear that. And you say that you will give it to us in due course. You've also said that by June 1 or July 1, you expect that these boards, the sectorial committee, at least that's what you were referring to, that you would have those into place. I think you're suggesting that you would have this labour-management commission in place by that time as well. Could we say maybe that by June 1 you would have this board in place?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Is the member referring to the commission? Yes, I would hope it'd be functioning before then, but then perhaps I'm being a little overly optimistic. But I would hope it'd be functioning before June. I'd like to see it meeting right away.

One of the things that we asked the people who we're appointing to it is what are your time commitments over the next few months, because this is going to be intensive and you'll need to be able to set some time aside over the next few months. That's one of the questions we have asked them actually. Anyone who is not available immediately for a reasonable period of time is not available for the committee.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well, Minister, I suggest to you that you might as well give us that list now then, because unless you're prepared to use closure on this Act, we intend on staying here until June 1 until you give us that list, or July 1, if that's what it takes.

And we can talk about this for weeks and months, whatever it takes. Because quite frankly, when the left-wing component of your party is about to show us how to take over our province and make it into a state controlled entity within the middle of North America, we're quite prepared to stay here for as long as it takes, and we will talk about this issue for as many months as it takes for you to get your list out. So we're prepared to stay here.

I want to know, Minister, if you will be prepared to

give us a draft of the regulations that you talked about a few minutes ago. You alluded to those regulations and the fact that you have draft regulations in place that you're going to be giving to the sectorial committee to study and to research and to use as a guideline. Could you give us a copy of those drafts?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Well I can simply repeat my comments, that the wish was expressed that we not do that. I can simply repeat those comments of the people with whom I spoke.

I can describe them for you. However, when we table them in the House, they assume a certain permanency which I would just as soon they didn't have. I'd just as soon the committees had more freedom with which to work. And that thought has been expressed, and that is not a thought which originated with me; it originated actually with the business community. But I kind of share it. What is tabled in here assumes a certain authority that I would rather these draft regulations didn't have.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Would you be prepared to commit yourself to giving those drafts to the business community immediately, even though you don't table them here in the Assembly? And perhaps you could allow us to have a copy of those drafts in a non-committed way outside of the House, perhaps on my desk in my office?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Yes, I have no problem with that at all. Indeed I can tell the hon. member that my ideal would be to have this joint commission have its first meeting on May 1. And that obviously depends on a lot of things, including the progress of this Bill.

I would foresee the commission at its first meeting having a draft of the regulations. And I'd certainly make them available to members opposite, indeed all members of the Assembly.

I'm just a little reluctant to table them in here. But I see the regulations being available to the commission at their first meeting. My ideal is to do it May 1. And as soon as that . . . certainly I would make them available to all members of the House. And I have no problem in making them available on a private basis to you; let you know what we're thinking.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Now I'm wondering, Minister, in that spirit of cooperation, why we would have to wait till May 1. I find myself with a few days next week where I could spend some time reading these materials over. What would be wrong with having them next week?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Well part of the thinking here is that they haven't been entirely finalized. We have the broad brush, but I have found out with respect to wording, you need to review the wording of these things with extreme care to ensure that the wording expresses what you mean. And this legislation is nothing if it isn't a lesson in being careful with use of the English language.

So that while we know what we want to do, we are still in the process of ensuring that the draft regulations express what we want to do. So they're not entirely finalized, although our thinking is fairly complete on them.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Minister, I don't think I have to explain to you that once again my leg is starting to feel pretty long and pretty pulled. Drafts are drafts. That means that they aren't fine-tuned. That's why you would give them to me and to other people, is so that we read them over and find out what's wrong with it so that we can point that out to you.

I mean if you were going to have it perfect, why would you call it a draft? Why wouldn't you just throw it on the table and say, here's your regulations; like it or lump it, that's it.

These are drafts. That means that a draft is something you work on. You improve it; you correct it. So why not share that with us and we'll attempt to in all honesty make it work, as you put the term. And we'll all sit down and we'll try to make it better. And of course you still have the final say so you shouldn't have any fear of that.

So how about if you show us the drafts and we'll help you fine-tune it?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Because nobody will treat it as that. The relationship in this whole area is so layered with conflict that nobody will do that. This area is so . . . the atmosphere here is so poisoned, nobody will do that. There is very little trust and very little goodwill. And each side will ascribe the vilest objectives and the vilest ends to anything we do.

We simply can't do that. We simply can't put out something and say, what do you think? Because they're going to say: aha, I knew all along, I knew all along; I knew all along there's a communist in office here, I knew all along; and in fact I wish the member from Maple Creek would ask the Premier if he believes in democracy. That will be the way the conversation will go.

**An Hon. Member:** — And rightfully so.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Well you say rightly so. Okay. But then you're making the argument against me sharing the penultimate draft of the regulations with you.

(1230)

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well I take a little offence, Minister, at your suggestion that you can't trust me, when you've this morning said to us that we should trust you. You want me and the business community and the workers of this province to trust you with a blank cheque. You want us to trust you with the ability to set up boards with judicial powers — a dictatorship in labour matters. You want us to trust you with the entire future of this province, the entire ability of this province to ever create a job base.



And yet you won't trust us to see a draft of your regulations that would by the very word, draft, mean that they would be changed and that we would have to try to improve them, or at least we should. Because if it isn't that way then it's not a draft; it is the regulations. And if they are, in your words, so poisonous that you fear that kind of a reaction, then I say all the more reason why we would have to stand in our place and fight this legislation for as long as it takes.

You have shown no comfort whatsoever; in fact you have thrown gasoline into the fire of scepticism on your labour legislation. In fact you now have a prairie fire burning out of control in this province because of the way that you're handling this.

Either you are extremely naïve or else this legislation is going to be, without a question, the most devastating thing that has ever happened to the province of Saskatchewan. The fire you have poured into this controversy, the fuel that you have put on, the gasoline that you're throwing into this fire shows us that it is going to be an absolute wreck out here when these regulations come forward.

If that's not the case and if you are being genuine about this being legislation that's simply going to help, then you have an obligation to put that forward and to correct this situation immediately. Because what you're doing is you're causing the entire business community to mount their forces in a very costly way. The whole-page ads that we saw in the paper must have cost somebody thousands of dollars. You can't buy newspaper space, full-page ads, for pennies.

And you're saying to the business community this morning and to the workers of this province, you're telling them we've got absolutely poisonous regulations that are going to be coming out because we're afraid to show them to the opposition, even outside of the legislature. We're afraid to show the business community because it's so absolutely destructive that it will cause such an uproar that we just can't take a chance on that.

What you're saying to the business community is that you'd better get out and start spending more thousands of dollars campaigning against this. Is that really what you want? Is that how you're going to create employment in this province — is by agitating one side against the other so that they mount massive ad campaigns against you and against one another and come out in public meetings and that sort of stuff? Is that what you really want?

I can't really believe that that's the kind of confrontation that you want in this province. And yet, that's what you're saying to people.

So I'll give you another opportunity, Minister. Start with the very simple, basic thing. Commit to giving us these draft regulations — not regulations — draft regulations; a suggested proposal of where we might be going in this province outside of the House with no

commitment whatsoever that they will be the regulation. Give us those and give us the short list of the names of the people that will be in control of the labour-management commission. Will you commit to that, Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — The member should understand that the commission is advisory only. They have no power to make any decision, only to advise government. The member should understand that, that this is not a dictatorial commission. They can't dictate anything. This is simply an advisory committee.

I've already made my comments with respect to giving you the list of people whom we're considering. I think that's not a feasible suggestion.

With respect to the regulations, I've also made my comment about that, that I would like to see the commission up and running immediately, and we will be sharing the regulations with you at that time. They're not finalized right at the moment.

And when I say there is a poisonous atmosphere here, in which what we say tends to be misinterpreted, and you say that I referred to poisonous regulations, frankly, you give me little comfort in your good faith. I mean you cannot have believed I actually said that. You are too intelligent a person to make that mistake. That has to be an intentional twisting to what I said.

I said the atmosphere is poisoned; I did not say the regulations were poisoned. And I really suggest the member elevate the debate to where it was a few moments ago.

**Mr. Devine:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, you are no doubt aware that the introduction of this Bill and Bill 54, An Act to amend The Trade Union Act, in conjunction with combinations of legislation that have passed recently — last year on The Workers' Compensation Act and The Occupational Health and Safety Act — put together as a package, as you have described, are moving the pendulum in terms of the relationship between business and labour.

And if you put them all together as my colleague says — and I'm sure as you've heard — it frightens people about the objectives and sort of the overall purpose of your administration. And I'm going to certainly be raising these questions with the Premier.

But one of the comments I've heard, and I'm going to raise it, is that it appears — and I don't think it's favourable, and I'll say it at the outset, and it's not to be partisan — but it appears as if the NDP administration in Saskatchewan is trying to keep up with, or now move ahead of, the Bob Rae administration, the NDP administration in Ontario. Sort of like it's: well I'll show you really how to do this. Okay? We'll be on the forefront. We'll be on the frontier of labour legislation and we'll really show you, you know, what it all means.

Now the reason I raise that, Mr. Minister, is that when the NDP in Ontario tried to do this and got through some of it and so forth, they had an awful time. And in this province we've had people out front of the legislature on various Bills. And in Ontario they had the business community, who don't organize well together; are not sort of the big cooperative movement because they tend to be more independent and entrepreneurial. They came out — I believe it's fair to say — in hundreds if not the thousands and picketed in front of the Bob Rae administration and the NDP government. And they said, this is nonsense because we're trying to create work and jobs. And we're going to just kick them into the United States. And we can be on the forefront if we like, but frankly it will frighten people who invest, who create economic activity.

And I'm sure, as you've said and the Premier said and others, the private sector should generate most of the jobs because government can't afford to do that. Your colleague, the Minister of Energy, has said the whole energy strategy here from the government point of view — if I can take him at his word — is that independent businesses will create the jobs in Saskatchewan in the energy sector. That's what he said. So if that's true, and I believe that you would say that most of the jobs . . . small business, which I'm sure you endorse, co-ops and others, said it comes from the small business and the private sector to create this work.

When this kind of legislation was passed in other jurisdictions, all those people who we all acknowledge in a non-partisan way who create the jobs, when they come out and say, this flies in the face of doing that. I'm going to move my office to North Dakota, or I'm going to get it out of Ontario; I'm going to move it some place else. And you've seen it and you've heard it.

Now if that's the case, then what the business community asks me, and will ask others, is why in the world are you doing this? Is it a claim to fame, you know, an NDP administration supported by labour has got to do this so that we have the courage, you know, to do it?

Fair enough; I'd understand that. But the question that comes back time and time again: what are the consequences of you doing this, and if you really know the consequences, why are you doing it?

And believe me, Mr. Minister, we'll have pages and volumes of legitimate, honest concerns and fears about a combination of pieces of legislation like you have here in Bill 32 before us. And they're serious questions.

People who pay payrolls, they've got 100 people on the payroll, 20 people on the payroll, they have part-times, they have full-times — they're worried. They said, it's just too expensive. It will be too frightening and I wouldn't encourage other people to come in here.

So my question to you is: do you agree that business

creates most of the jobs, number one? Number two, do you agree that when pretty, if you will, aggressive labour legislation has been introduced in other jurisdictions like Ontario, you know, it was really difficult for the business community and they organized and they, you know, they've ended up where the NDP administration there is not very popular, maybe for some other reasons too, but that was one because that's the industrial heartland. And they said, for Heaven's sakes, don't ship them into the United States. So do you agree that that's taken place?

And number three, if you do agree that business creates the jobs; and two, it's been difficult to other jurisdictions; then three, could you try one more time to explain how in the world this will design a business-labour environment that you believe in — I think you believe in, I hope you believe in — that will be conducive and induce investors to come in here, investors to come in and work in the province of Saskatchewan.

Because we're going to give you all kinds of names of companies and participants who've got money to invest and create work. And unless you can convince them, unless your minister can convince them, unless the Premier can convince them that this is a good idea, they're going to: number one, campaign against it; number two, not invest here.

And certainly the reputation of the NDP in Saskatchewan, the reputation as being middle road, reasonable, progressive 1990s New Democrats, as opposed to 1950s and '60s democrats, nationalizing and you know way off to the left, if you want to be in the middle, you're going to seriously impact that image — and I'm sure you must know that — seriously impact it.

So those three questions. It's happened before and it's been seriously . . . you must acknowledge it, I ask. And two, don't businesses create most of the jobs? And then three, if that's the case, then what other comfort can you give the business community or the image makers and the spin doctors and others that are going across the country and saying, what in the world happened to the Romanow or to the . . . pardon me, the NDP administration here? What happened to it? Did the pendulum go like this? They were kind of showing us that they were middle-of-the-road and they were reasonable and they're going to do all this stuff. And it's gone way off road. Could you address those three questions?

And I can get into specifics on the Bill. But I just want to know, I mean, where you're coming from to see if it's even worth getting into the detail. Because the detail just digs the hole deeper and deeper. And as I've looked at it, it just strengthens labour's position until people say, I don't want the hassle.

So before I get into those specifics, your overall view of how the Bill fits into the other Bills, that have either been passed or before the House, would be very helpful to the investment community.

Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Before the member entered, we had a discussion on the purposes of the Bill. I had said that the primary function of this Bill is not to create investment. This government does that in different ways. That is not the primary purpose of this Bill.

The primary purpose of this Bill is to rectify some real injustices — injustices which most fair-minded people admit exist and need to be tackled, although they may not agree upon the means we have chosen.

Having said that, there is no evidence beyond the wild assertions of certain people that this is going to destroy jobs. There is no statistical evidence to that effect; there is no anecdotal evidence to that effect; nothing beyond these cries of alarm. And neither history nor a glance around the globe suggests there's any truth to that.

Economies around the globe which are high wage, high productivity, are economies which by and large provide reasonable protection to their workers. And North America is not in the forefront. No jurisdiction in North America, including this one, is in the forefront of providing protection to workers in a world context. Nobody.

I say to the hon. member opposite, we do this because there is an injustice which needs to be rectified. There is no evidence to suggest we're going to be destroying jobs, and what evidence exists suggests that progressive labour law is an essential part of restructuring.

(1245)

The analytical basis for that is that we are not interested in producing a low wage, low productivity economy — we're not interested in that. You can do that if you want, but that's not where we're at. We are at providing, at building a high wage, high productivity economy. The two go together.

High productivity generally involves new technology. That involves the active cooperation of workers or it doesn't work. It's more likely to work if you give them a reasonable . . . if you give workers a reasonable degree of protection. If they believe they're going to share the benefits as well as the risks of the technology, they're much more likely to adapt to it and to work with it. That's the basis for our argument that progressive labour laws are an essential part of economic restructuring. That is the response to your question.

We believe that this labour legislation, which is progressive, isn't designed in Ontario. It's not a Quebec solution, it's not a B.C. (British Columbia) solution, it is a Saskatchewan solution; the product of extensive consultations in this province, the product of lamentations by workers that they're having very serious problems in this atmosphere and discussions with employers as to what they want to see the

solution to be. Make no mistake about it — most employers want the problems resolved.

Let me read for you just before I take my seat, the results of the CFIB questionnaire — Canadian Federation of Independent Business. They sent a questionnaire to their members.

The results were as follows: 86 per cent supported an 8-hour break between shifts; 61 per cent supported a meal break after 4 hours; 56 per cent supported giving qualified part-time employees with the most seniority more hours of work.

Did you hear that? I wonder if the member from Estevan heard that last comment — 56 per cent support giving qualified part-time employees with the most seniority more hours of work, and a full-time job when that becomes available; 65 per cent support the parental leave needed for unemployment insurance; 60 per cent supported sick leave for all employers.

My experience in going around the province has been that the vast majority of business people in this province are caring, compassionate people who take a pride in their relationship with their employees. They're proud of their relationship and they treat them well. The problems tend to be focused in the much, much larger businesses where there is no such relationship. So do the incident of part-time workers tend to be focused in those very large businesses where there's no personal relationship.

But when you talk about what the business community in this province want, there it is. It's not necessarily who gets ink in the media, but I think it is an accurate reflection of where people are, and this reflects my own impression as I travelled around the province.

**Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Minister, I have a great deal of respect for business managers and investors, and what they're telling me is they don't necessarily need you, with respect, or new laws and regulations or government appointed supervisors to tell them about their business. So that they're saying, of course we want to treat employees and hire as many employees as possible.

But the question that they run into is that when you start going into the provisions of the Bill and provisions of other Bills here, that you've gone way beyond that. And you selectively pick off, oh yes, businesses want to be fair and they want to do this and they want to give more time for lunch breaks, and on and on.

Mr. Minister, sure they do. More important than the lunch break, and they'll tell you and you should know — and you didn't really address this question; I'm going to get to it — is the fact that they have a job to go to and then have a lunch break. And you have admitted that this has got nothing to do with creating jobs — it's not part of the Bill.

What you haven't admitted yet, and I think that you

will, is that this will do not just nothing, it will hurt the creation of jobs. And so all those people you are trying to protect, you're actually going to end up hurting because they won't have a job to go to. And they're worried that there won't even be a lunch break; they're on welfare or they're on unemployment. And you say this is the Saskatchewan solution. Just for Saskatchewan.

Well, one, we compete against other jurisdictions and money will flow where there's economic opportunity. That's number one. Number two, let's just take a look at Saskatchewan. We're not overflowing with new investment and new companies coming in. You know we have 80,000 people on welfare, with 30,000-and-some unemployed. Big time.

And you say now is the time to correct these ills because we're creating so many jobs and there's so many opportunities; going to make sure all these people are going to be looked after. I don't see any justification for you fixing something that ain't broke here. If it ain't — you know, I'm sure you've heard — if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

There's not a clamour coming forward that's saying we've got all this investment and all these people and we've got all these dynamic situations and we'd better have new rules to protect them and give them lunch breaks and give them more power — no. Most of them are on welfare or unemployed. So your timing is at best, suspect, and particularly when you say, this is not about creating jobs. Well what is it about? It's correcting old wrongs or correcting . . . rectifying problems.

Well the biggest problem, I'm sure you admit, is jobs. Right? It's the number one problem. That's the biggest thing that you've got to deal with is jobs. And this has nothing to do with it. If this can hurt job creation, then we've got to say, why did you bother to do that? What's the point?

So, Mr. Minister, as you know, you'd like to see middle-sized companies, larger companies, that could employ 100, 200, 300, 400 people coming in here and working. Most of those are unionized; most of them are well protected. And you've gone out of your way to even strengthen those that have jobs to make it more onerous in keeping them.

So your argument that says, well we want high wages and high productivity and therefore we need these rules to make sure these low people . . . you've got some big industries here and you could have more come in that are very well protected, and you're even making it more difficult for them.

I mean you could give — I'm sure you know; you know enough about politics — you can give one barn-burner of a speech at a board meeting or some place else when you take all your legislation, put it together and say, compare this to any other jurisdiction in North America, and say, fair enough. It might be popular among labour leaders and it might be popular among the hard-core NDPers in cabinet

and some other places, but for the general public looking at creating jobs in the province of Saskatchewan, whether you're a Liberal, whether you're sort of a left-wing Liberal or a right-wing democrat or whatever it might be — let alone Conservative — they're going to say Saskatchewan is out of sync. This is not the time to put the brakes on and to come up with a bunch of new rules and regulations and powers for the minister and government and Labour Relations Board people, when we're trying to get jobs and compete and build.

I mean the minister of Economic Diversification and development has enough on his plate trying to create jobs in this competitive environment without this. He'll get blistered, I'm sure, if he goes to a business meeting or if he goes to the meetings that are held or if he's hauled out in front of here, or across Canada — can you imagine taking this legislation across Canada and say, come to Saskatchewan, it's going to be fine.

And the last thing I'd mention before I ask you to go back and comment about if it is business that creates the jobs.

You see the problem with Saskatchewan — you seem somewhat proud of it — this is a Saskatchewan solution. The NDP may have, and the CCF, some political credibility in health care historically; but it's questionable, and I think it's fair to say, whether you have a great deal of credibility when it comes to creating economic activity and jobs . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the members don't like that, but well let's look at that. Let's look at that. The member from Swift Current and the member for P.A. (Prince Albert) don't particularly agree, but it's a fact.

Your reputation is one, internationally and across the country . . . Where do they nationalize mines? Where do they nationalize mines? Where do they take over businesses? You see, that's your legacy. And people said, gosh, where was that? Where did they start to do that? Oh yes, one of the first jurisdiction that was socialist in North America was Saskatchewan — that's where they nationalize potash mines. That's where they nationalize oil companies. That's where they do some other things.

Now if that's your legacy, Mr. Minister . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well he says, *déjà vu*. I'm bringing it back because on top of your history, you're introducing these kinds of legislation. And people said, I knew it. I thought they were coming on to be middle-of-the-road. But that's the same bunch that nationalized mines, that became so unpopular, as you recall, in the way they took utilities — so unpopular because of what you did in economic activity and so unpopular what you did with Crown corporations that you lost miserably. The truth is you lost miserably.

Mr. Chairman, I think I've got their attention. We're finally getting to the quick of this, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Minister, my point is — and you know that I'm right because you're responding and your colleagues are responding — your reputation and your Premier's

reputation and the NDP's long history of what you've done, which is the foundation of this legislation, is an awful tempting story to tell by business when they find out in detail what you're up to.

And you will hurt Saskatchewan's opportunity for growth, and you know it and I know it. And your colleagues know it or they wouldn't be speaking from their seat.

I'll tell you, and it's the truth, it's the absolute truth, the way you treated Crown corporations in the late '70s and early '80s got you into the trouble. And you're right back at it again. You're milking them for all the profits you can take. It's a tax collector. Right?

Watch that. Okay? You watch that. And you watch how the public think about it. You ask the public today: are the NDP managing utilities, taxing us fairly? And they'll say, no they're not. They're using it as monopoly profits to rip off the public just like you did in the '70s and early '80s.

And they'll ask you . . . You ask the average public: what are they doing now with labour legislation on top of that? Is it the right thing to do? And you're going to find out not only here but across the country, they're going to say, they shifted way back to the left. Your so-called modern image is out the window with this legislation.

Now, Mr. Minister, I raise this because I want to know, and I'm going to ask other front-benchers when we get into this, how you square that circle, how you think that, number one, it's broken, it needs to be fixed. And two, how you're going to sell the business community in years to come, not just right now, to invest in the province. And three, what do you say to all those people that are unemployed and on welfare? What is it? — 81,000 people on welfare; 30-some thousand people unemployed. That's over 100,000 people. That's like 9 out of the 12 cities in the province of Saskatchewan are unemployed or on welfare, and you're introducing legislation to make it more difficult to create jobs.

Well, Mr. Minister, I think and I believe that the business community and all those that are unemployed need a better justification than saying this happens to be "a problem." We need to rectify some old problems.

Now I think there's more behind this. And I know you well enough and I know your colleagues well enough that there is more behind this. Because it doesn't make any economic sense, and frankly doesn't make any image sense across the country, and you've been trying to change that. So it must mean that you're under sufficient pressure politically, locally, that you've got to do this to save your hide.

Now, Mr. Minister, if that's the only reason and we get it out of you or out of your colleagues that this is the bottom line, that you've got to do this to shore up a certain group of people who said oh, you've moved too far to the right, you're looking too moderate,

you're looking too reasonable, then we have to say, is that responsible?

Is that responsible when you've got 81,000 people on welfare and 30-some thousand people unemployed in the province of Saskatchewan, you want to encourage economic development, and you're bringing in rules and regulations like this at a time when we are in desperate needs of economic activity and jobs.

Now, Mr. Minister, if all you can say is this is to rectify some past problems, it's got nothing to do with jobs, you won't find a single business in the province of Saskatchewan who will say this combination of legislation doesn't hurt job creation. So that means you're prepared to put more people out of work or keep them unemployed longer, or people on welfare longer, if you can just have this legislation passed so you can say to your key supporters, labour leaders, that you passed this piece of legislation.

Well, Mr. Minister, I think that is very poor if that's the only justification you have. And after my colleague has questioned you and you say this is to rectify some past problems. With all of the larger consequences and the history that you bring to bear on this House, the history that . . .

**The Chair:** — Order. It now being 1 o'clock, the committee will rise and report progress.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:01 p.m.