

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
April 24, 1995

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed with a great deal of pleasure that I present petitions on behalf of the people from the southern part of Saskatchewan. I'll read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to allocate adequate funding dedicated towards the double-laning of Highway No 1; and further, that the Government of Saskatchewan direct any monies available from the federal infrastructure program towards double-laning Highway No. 1, rather than allocating these funds towards capital construction projections in the province.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

I'm happy to present these on behalf of people from Shaunavon, Medicine Hat, Maple Creek, and Gull Lake and Tompkins area. And I'll table these for you today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have petitions to present today. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to unequivocally oppose changes to present legislation regarding firearm ownership, and instead urge the federal government to deal with the criminal use of firearms by imposing stiffer penalties on abusers, recognizing that gun control and crime control are not synonymous, and allowing the provinces to deal with gun control legislation on a provincial basis.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These petitions come from the Shell Lake, Spiritwood, Leoville, Prince Albert, Spruce Home, Domremy, Black Lake, and Stony Rapids area of the province, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present these today.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order, the following petitions have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 12(7) they are hereby read and received:

Of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to oppose changes to federal legislation regarding firearm ownership.

And of citizens of the province petitioning the

Assembly to allocate funding toward the double-laning of Highway No. 1.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mrs. Bergman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day 58 ask the government the following question:

Regarding the Saskatchewan Power Corporation: (1) what was the cost of sending Barry McLellan, Neil Thompson, and Larry Wilson to the effective executive program at Waskesiu in 1992; (2) what was the cost of sending Guy Bruce, Lyle Doell, and Rick Patrick to the effective executive program at Waskesiu in 1992; (3) what are the names of all SaskPower employees who participated in the effective executive program at Waskesiu in 1994; (4) what are all costs associated with these employees attending this seminar; (5) what are the names of all employees who have enrolled in this seminar for the current year?

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Snowbirds 25th Anniversary

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, the 25th anniversary season of Canada's world famous Snowbirds officially began five minutes ago at 15 Wing Moose Jaw. The acceptance show is being performed as we speak, in order to gain approval to take this year's version of the Snowbirds aeronautical ballet on the road.

The Snowbirds are dedicating their 1995 show in memory of the late Colonel O.B. Philp, the founder of the Snowbirds, who passed away just a week ago.

Led by Commanding Officer Major Steve Hill, their first of 80 public shows will be this Thursday at Hay River, Northwest Territories, and their final public show will be on October 8 at Page at Lake Powell, Arizona.

In between, the highlight of the season for many in this province is the Saskatchewan Air Show, Saturday and Sunday, July 8 and 9, at 15 Wing Moose Jaw.

The 1995 Saskatchewan Air Show promises to be one of the biggest and best ever, Mr. Speaker, as the Snowbirds commemorate not only their own 25th anniversary, but also Saskatchewan's 90th anniversary and the 50th anniversary of the training school at 15 Wing.

Mr. Speaker, it is a magic moment when the crowd spots those nine bullets of light just above the southern horizon, the sun reflecting off the noses of the approaching Tutor jets to mark the beginning of the Snowbirds show.

I ask all members to join in wishing the Snowbirds 80 safe and memorable performances in this, their silver anniversary season. We're proud they call Saskatchewan home.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Local Volunteers Recognized

Mr. Langford: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a number of volunteers in my riding who were honoured at a banquet which I attended this past weekend in Prince Albert.

The North Central Regional Recreation Association chose eight volunteers to receive this special recognition.

They include Ellen Becker of Prince Albert for arts and culture; Margaret Hay of Christopher Lake for special services; Iris Morris of Christopher Lake for recreation; Jodi Pocha of MacDowall received a youth award; Hilda Reding of MacDowall for special services; Nick Trofimuk of Paddockwood for recreation; Mike and Pearl Zaparaniuk of Weirdale for culture and conservation.

These volunteers have been recognized for dedication and commitment in their area of involvement. I would like to congratulate them and all of the volunteers in the Prince Albert region who have made a contribution to their community. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Professional Secretaries Week

Mr. Flavel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this week has been proclaimed Professional Secretaries Week. Wednesday is Professional Secretaries Day.

This is a week for those of us who are lucky enough to have support staff to reflect on how much they contribute to the performance of our duties and to our general well-being.

The proclamation issued by the Mayor of Regina states that professional secretaries accept vital responsibilities and perform important roles in commerce, industry, and government. And they are committed to upholding the highest ethical standards.

What the proclamation does not say is that their most valuable contributions can in no way be measured by any objective standards. When things go well, they stand aside and allow us to take the credit that is actually half theirs. And when things go badly, they do not stand aside and say, I told you so. As Abraham Lincoln said: a secretary is someone who knows all about you but likes you anyway.

As well, I think it might do us all some good if, once a year, we had someone in authority call us and demand an impossible task be performed in the next five minutes. I wonder how unflappable we would be.

Our secretaries, of course, know how dependent we are on them. They are simply too modest and too polite to say so.

On behalf of all of us, I might say that we do know, and that we

do care, and this week gives us the opportunity to say so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

National Volunteer Week

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week is National Volunteers Week, and I'm happy to report that volunteerism is well and alive in our city of Saskatoon. And I'd like to extend my congratulations and appreciation to all those who volunteer in our city.

A report was just released by Saskatoon City Council that stated that volunteer efforts in Saskatoon are worth at least \$648,000 a year to the city and its taxpayers.

There are 42 community associations in Saskatoon representing 48 neighbourhoods. And these associations have at least 1,300 volunteers involved, contributing more than 76,000 hours of support. And that means that's thirty-six and a half years' worth of volunteer work in our city. If these workers were paid \$8.50 an hour, their labour would have cost the city \$6,480.

These organizations cover a very wide variety of community activity from community outdoor rinks to supervising indoor recreational activities to managing sports leagues for tykes and teenagers. Also, Mr. Speaker, parks were developed or enhanced, drop-in facilities were managed, and nutritional food programs were supplied and staffed.

In short, in Saskatoon and all across Saskatchewan, all of our lives are enriched in every sense of the word by the work of volunteers, and we appreciate their efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated already, this week has been proclaimed National Volunteer Week in Canada. Today I would like to pay tribute to all of the many volunteers in Saskatchewan and in my riding who make our province a better place to live. Volunteers are a special people because they offer their talent and energy to the communities in which they live.

It is estimated that some 13 million Canadians do voluntary work. The average volunteer devotes about 191 hours a year to voluntary work. If you stop and think about the number of people who volunteer in Saskatchewan, it is quite remarkable.

Volunteers will play a big part when Regina hosts the Grey Cup later this year. And without them, many events in Saskatchewan would be difficult to organize. I congratulate all of the volunteers in Saskatchewan for having the desire and the motivation to help others and for caring for generations, which is the theme for Volunteer Week. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Firearms Legislation

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice. Mr. Minister, Saskatchewan people want you to do more than just talk about the federal gun laws. Hundreds of Saskatchewan residents who have sent us — this is only a small sample of the stack — have sent us these coupons saying they want more than talk and they support the right to own personal property.

Mr. Minister, why do you continue to oppose this option? Saskatchewan gun owners are telling us they want action. Why won't you take action instead of just talking?

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this is essentially the same question that the member asked several weeks ago, and my answer is essentially the same. We are taking every action that we possibly can under the realities of the situation. We have been, on a national level, practically leading the fight as far as governments are concerned across this country, and we continue to do that.

Later today I will share with the member a draft of a statement that we . . . a paper that we propose to file, a submission we propose to file with the standing committee. And we are pressing on every front; we continue to do whatever we can to oppose this thing.

The problem with the ideas put forward by the opposition in the form of the Bills that have been tabled in this House is that they won't do any good, Mr. Speaker. They won't contribute anything at all to the position of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan gun owners in this debate. It is just foolish to think that these provisions would add anything at all to the position of the province and accordingly we see no point in going along with them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I have a legal opinion from the legislative Law Clerk that says this action would indeed be constitutional. Why not do something in Saskatchewan to make the feds challenge us, rather than waiting until the federal government has completed their piece of legislation?

Mr. Minister, hundreds of Saskatchewan people have written to us supporting our proposals. Hundreds more have signed petitions supporting our legislation including, Mr. Minister, one of your own members, the member from Indian Head-Wolseley — Mr. Minister, this member, who has been heavily involved with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation and is an avid sportsman. So I think that you would be wise to defer to his judgement on this issue.

Mr. Minister, the member from Indian Head-Wolseley has signed a petition specifically in favour, in favour of our Bill 31,

our private members' Bill which recognizes property rights. Will you follow his recommendation and support this Bill, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I am very fond of the member from Indian Head-Wolseley and I have a great deal of respect for his opinion. However, to the extent that he has expressed an opinion in signing this petition, I must disagree with him.

The question is not whether or not this legislature could pass that law. The question is whether that law would do any good. And the plain fact is that it would not. The federal government either have the constitutional ability to pass this law, or it does not. It claims to have that power by virtue of its exclusive power over the making of the criminal law.

I have said over and over again that we challenge that and we want to take a look at the Bill that parliament finally passes and it may well be that we decide to take them on it and to suggest that what they've done is unconstitutional.

My point is simply this, Mr. Speaker: passing the law proposed by the opposition would not improve our position one whit so far as the constitutional argument is concerned — not one whit.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Mr. Minister, if we were to do something in this House, it would show the people in Ottawa that we are prepared to stand up and do something rather than just talk about it.

Mr. Minister, we support the idea of making an all-party presentation in Ottawa, but quite frankly we don't think the federal Liberals are going to listen. If they were going to listen, they would have heard the message by now; they would have heard all the rallies and protests, the letters, the phone calls from Saskatchewan people, urging them to drop this useless piece of legislation. But they're not listening, and that's why Saskatchewan Liberal MPs (Member of Parliament) voted in favour of that legislation.

Mr. Minister, we need to go to Ottawa with some ammunition to show Saskatchewan is serious about fighting the gun registry. We need to do that through legislation in this Assembly. Mr. Minister, why won't you support our legislation, like hundreds of other Saskatchewan people are doing? And if you won't listen to it, why won't you offer some legislative alternatives of your own?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I have said over and over again at countless public meetings that Saskatchewan would not pass such a law; we oppose such a law. And I couldn't imagine that we in this legislature would pass a gun

registration law or a law requiring possession certificates. I don't think we'd get a vote here for such a law.

So what are we going to do? The proposal put forward by the opposition simply is totally ineffective. It would add absolutely nothing to this.

Now I'm in favour of doing everything we can, and I've invited the hon. member and others in the opposition, any number of times, to talk about what it is that we could do. One thing we did do in this House, in a show of cooperation all the way around, was support a unanimous resolution on this point. And we are resolved to go together to the standing committee and express our views on behalf of Saskatchewan people. Those are good things.

We are prepared today to pass further resolutions in this regard. For example, we may want to pass a resolution asking the federal government to exempt Saskatchewan, to exempt Saskatchewan from the application of this law. We might propose that they impose this law upon provinces that think it would do some good. And the rest of us could treat it as sort of a pilot project and determine whether or not it was effective. Anything like that is worth doing.

I'm afraid though, that the legislation put forward by the opposition is ineffective and would have no effect, and Ottawa would simply laugh at us if we went to them with that and said, there now, see how we feel about this in Saskatchewan. They'd just laugh at us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Mr. Minister, I don't think you listen much better than the federal Liberals listen because they certainly haven't listened, and they haven't listened to Saskatchewan on the Crow rate.

Mr. Minister, we support the all-party committee, but I think you're being naïve and a little foolish if you think you're going to go to Ottawa and get Allan Rock to listen and seriously do anything about our presentation. You have to show that you're willing to back up your presentation with some action, and so far you haven't done that. Mr. Minister, Allan Rock isn't going to listen to you unless you show that you're willing to do something, you're willing to act.

Mr. Minister, if you don't support our legislation, when can we expect you to introduce legislation of your own to fight this useless gun registry? Make the federal government challenge us, challenge Saskatchewan legislation.

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm really at a loss to know what words I can use to convey to the member the reality of the situation. The federal government is purporting to act under its criminal law powers under section 91 of the constitution. They either have that power or they don't. If they have it, they can pass the law. If they don't have the power, then we will take them on in the courts and attempt to get a court

order that invalidates this legislation.

Now that is a legal constitutional question which has to be fought out in the courts. There is no piece of legislation that we can pass here that will pre-empt the federal power over criminal law. That's the long and the short of it. It's no more complicated than that. They either have the power or they don't.

And us fiddling with the Human Rights Code or fiddling with some other provincial Act is not going to add one whit to the strength of our position on the constitutional question. And that, Mr. Speaker, is as simple as it is.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Minister of Highways' Travel

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Government House Leader. Mr. Minister, would you please supply this Assembly with the Minister of Highways' itinerary over the past three weeks, including the dates, places, and events he has been attending during this time frame. Would you be able to supply us with a summary of his schedule, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — The Minister of Highways would be more than able to speak to himself when his estimates come up. And that's the kind of question which one can and should ask in estimates.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Minister, the Minister of Highways, Minister, is a minister of the Crown and is allowed extra salary, unlimited travel expenses, and a company of political staff to assist him. What he does with these taxpayers' funds is of significant relevance to this Assembly and to the people of the province.

It has come to our attention that the minister has been spending most of his time in his constituency. And while normally this would be a laudable use of his time, it is not just coincidence that the minister is in a tightly contested nomination fight with the member from Nipawin for that seat.

The highways in central and north-east Saskatchewan are under a foot of water and the Minister of Highways is in hot water. He's too busy protecting his job instead of protecting the interests of the people of Saskatchewan whom he is supposed to be serving.

Mr. Minister, very simply, will you confirm that the Minister of Highways has spent the majority of the last three weeks campaigning for the NDP (New Democratic Party) nomination in that riding?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Well there is a nominating convention in progress which the member is a candidate for, so certainly he has been involved in that.

Again I think if the member wants detail about what the member's been doing over the last little while, the appropriate place to ask it is in estimates. The estimates will come before the House. The Appropriation Bill won't be passed until you approve them. I invite the member to get the detail of this from the minister during his estimates.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Minister, the fact of the matter is that the people from out in that riding are telling us is that that's where the Minister of Highways is these days. And we have received information that he is using taxpayers' dollars to campaign for his nomination, including time, travel expenses, and political staff.

Now you talk as though it's only important to talk to the minister about estimates. We have a crisis on in this province. The people from all across the south of this province are demanding that we tell the Minister of Highways how important it is to build Highway No. 1 and double-lane it. He's not here sometimes to hear that. So that's important to the people to know that someone is listening. So we suggest you appoint an interim minister at least so that their concerns can be heard.

Now if you were to provide a detailed account of the minister's itinerary, perhaps we could alleviate some of the concerns of the situation, and the people of this province would know that the minister is listening, and they'd know where to call him at so that they could express their concerns themselves, even though we in this Assembly can't get through to him any longer.

So would you provide us with that itinerary so that we know where he is and can get a hold of him, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Knowing the member as we all do, I would be very surprised if he were using taxpayers' money in the process of campaigning for a nomination which is open, which he's got to do.

It is part of every minister's life indeed, that you're also an elected member, you're also responsible to a constituency, and it's part of every minister's life that you also have to attend to the duties in your constituency. And this is one of those. It's part of the parliamentary system. We are not just ministers, we are also elected members.

I repeat, I know none of the details, but I would be very surprised if the member were using taxpayers' dollars for campaigning.

Health Services Advertising

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We've all been greeted in our mailboxes recently by an NDP health care brochure, which was raised last week in the House. It's quite interesting that the NDP believe that they have to spend precious taxpayer dollars to inform citizens of health services in our province. Health care is not like buying a car, Mr. Speaker; it is a necessity and you don't have various models and colours from which to choose. We have just one model, and it is in need of repair.

My question, quite obviously, is for the Minister of Health: Mr. Minister, why does your government believe that it is necessary to waste taxpayer dollars in advertising, instead of focusing these funds on increasing the quality of care across the province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, to inform the people of Saskatchewan of the health services that are available to them through a publicly funded and publicly administered and universally accessible medicare plan, in my view, Mr. Speaker, is not a waste of money.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the debate that should be engaged in in this House, and will be engaged in across Canada, is a debate over that publicly funded, publicly administered and universal health care system. That's the debate that the Liberal leader wants to avoid.

Because our concern, Mr. Speaker, and concern of Canadians from coast to coast, is the future of that system under a federal Liberal government, and when the destruction of universal medicare and the launch into a two-tiered system is being led by Conservatives and Reformers across the country, that's the debate of the hour, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's what the Minister of Health and the NDP government would like to have happen. The point is, Mr. Speaker, that up to today and tomorrow and to 1997, Saskatchewan gets more money from Ottawa than any province in Canada, and he already knows it.

Mr. Speaker, Saturday's paper stated that it cost just under \$36,000, or 9 cents per brochure, to produce and distribute the propaganda to roughly 395,000 homes across the province. And of course, Mr. Speaker, it was produced by none other than the NDP's agency of record, the Phoenix Advertising Group.

My question to the minister: does this \$36,000 include all of the costs of postage, distribution, writing and design, printing, and project management?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, to provide this information,

this valuable information, to Saskatchewan households cost 9 cents a household, Mr. Speaker — 9 cents a household.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader again, continuing in the tradition of her caucus in this House, gets up and makes some astounding statements; now she talks about how Saskatchewan will receive more money than any other province in Canada. I mean it's totally astounding.

What perhaps is more accurate to the kind of debate that Canadians are engaged in and should be engaged in is the headline in *The Globe and Mail* which reads: How the Liberals are unravelling — unravelling, Mr. Speaker — the social safety net.

Mr. Speaker, somebody in the country, somebody in this country, is going to have to stand up for medicare, for one-tiered health care across Canada. And, Mr. Speaker, it will be this government and not that caucus.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — This is very, very interesting, Mr. Speaker, because these people have been protecting the province of Saskatchewan on the topic of medicare for the last 25 years, and they have been in charge of the province of Saskatchewan for the last 25. Who are they protecting medicare from, themselves?

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to go into the article from *Maclean's* magazine, but I suggest the Minister of Health read it. The NDP created district health boards, supposedly to increase the efficiency of our provincial health care system. Saskatchewan now spends more on health care than even before their ill-fated reforms were implemented. These brochures are just another example of very poor priorities. And there is a 1-800 number cited in the brochure and the Minister says the purpose of this line is, and I quote, "to refer people to their respective districts."

Mr. Minister, instead of creating greater efficiency, you've actually created a duplication of services. If providing services is the responsibility of the district boards, why isn't it also their responsibility to advertise their services?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, it is apparent that the Liberal leader has not paid attention to the discussions that have gone on in this House about the structure of health care delivery in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are working with districts — province and communities working together — to make this information available.

But, Mr. Speaker, what we are doing in Saskatchewan — and let me underline this again as I have many times in this House — what we are doing in Saskatchewan and doing it the Saskatchewan way, because this is where, Mr. Speaker, is where medicare was pioneered, Mr. Speaker, we are moving

and reshaping and restructuring to enhance and preserve medicare — publicly funded, publicly administered, and universally accessible for all of our people, not Americanizing the system as is the Liberal and the Tory and the Reform way. We are standing firmly on the principles of medicare in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting that the minister still hasn't answered if the \$36,000 includes postage, distribution, writing and design, printing, and project management. I'll be interested in his response.

We know that the Saskatoon District Health Board has its own printing services, Mr. Speaker, and that it sent out a district-wide pamphlet on services. Mr. Minister, how much of the health care budget is being spent on pieces of paper, most of which of course are now in everybody's garbage can?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons that we need to engage in this kind of informational campaign is to dispel the information that's been put out by that caucus across this province.

Mr. Speaker, I do not apologize for the need to inform Saskatchewan people of the services which are available to them. Mr. Speaker, when my own health district, the Moose Jaw/Thunder Creek Health District, did their needs assessment, number one on the list, Mr. Speaker, number one on the list was the request for information.

Mr. Speaker — again I repeat — the Liberal leader will want to talk about this subject, but what she will not want to talk about is the future of medicare in Canada; neither will the Tories and neither will the Reformers because we know what they're promoting. They're promoting the two-tiered medicine that they see south of the 49th parallel, Mr. Speaker, and we have no interest, no interest in that kind of medicine.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Millar Western Expansion

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the minister responsible for CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan). Mr. Minister, this morning the Premier announced a \$32.5 million expansion to Millar Western Pulp mill at Meadow Lake. Can you tell us how this impacts on your previous financial arrangements with Millar Western, and particularly how does it impact on the province's ability to collect a previous loan to Millar Western?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — A strict answer to the member's question would be very detailed indeed. Let me just say that the project has had a number of things going for it, one of which is an environmentally, ecologically sound, technical system. What it has suffered from is low pulp prices over a period of time. The pulp prices have now increased, and with it the economics

of this mill have increased. And indeed this mill, as is the case with other pulp mills around the world, may well become, for the first time in many years, reasonably profitable.

So what I don't have here, and indeed I think cannot be expected to provide in question period, a detailed comment on the economics of it. Suffice it to say, the increase in the pulp prices which took place some six months ago have improved the economics of this project very considerably.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, CIC has provided nearly \$200 million in loans to Millar Western since its start-up. Your Premier finds it sufficiently important to talk about the job creation, and he's scratching for jobs any place he can get them these days. So he's willing to be part of a program, Mr. Minister, that's going to obviously delay any payment back to the province. Now 157 million of that is in the form of income debentures which means that repayments are to be made out of positive cash flow when the profits start to turn in.

This hasn't happened yet, Minister, and this latest cash injection is going to set the repayment schedule back even further. Given today's announcement, when can Saskatchewan taxpayers expect to see the \$157 million loan start to be repaid?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — In a long list of troublesome megaprojects, this was not the worst sin committed by members opposite. That indeed would be a fair feat to achieve. We expect . . . and I think at the time members entered into it, we were not as critical of this arrangement as we were of some of the others.

Let me say in answer to your question that the prospects for being repaid are relatively good given the very strong pulp prices. And we believe that the repayment of these loans may well be achieved within a relatively short period of time. I don't have the precise figures with me. Again I think it's unreasonable to expect to get into a detailed discussion of economics without some notice.

Suffice it to say, we are optimistic that we are going to be able to collect all of the loans and do so within a relatively brief period of time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Mr. Minister, your political hack, Mark Stobbe, has stated that Millar Western will start making payments on the 157 million sometime after the turn of the century and may not start for 20 years beyond that. Now, Mr. Minister, you have renegotiated all of the loans surrounding Millar Western since coming to power. You have changed the original agreement. Mr. Stobbe over at CIC says, turn of the century or later or maybe 20 years beyond that.

Now, Mr. Minister, pulp prices go up and down. Can you start telling Saskatchewan taxpayers today why your Premier is so hot to be part of this announcement when there may not be any return on this investment for another 25 years? Can you tell us that, sir?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — I think the hon. member was quite wise in not identifying the timing of that comment because I think that comment was made some time ago, some very considerable time ago — long before the current pulp prices increased.

I say again to the hon. member, we expect that the formula will provide for repayment on a timely and indeed on a fairly prompt basis.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, to ask leave of the Assembly to allow me to move a number of motions to change the names of members on committees.

Leave granted.

MOTIONS

Substitution of Members on Committees

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Souris-Cannington:

That the name of Mr. Rick Swenson be substituted for that of Mr. Harold Martens on the list of members composing the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I also move, seconded by the member from Souris-Cannington:

That the name of Mr. Jack Goohsen be substituted for that of Mr. John Britton on the list of members composing the Standing Committee on Communication.

Motion agreed to.

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

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Before orders of the day, Mr. Speaker, and with leave of the Assembly, I would like to move a motion.

The Speaker: — Would the member just briefly tell us what the motion is about.

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — The thrust of the motion would be to

urge the federal government to introduce amendments to Bill C-68 to allow provinces and territories to opt out of the provisions respecting registration and licensing.

Leave granted.

MOTION UNDER RULE 46

Proposed Amendments to Bill C-68

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will move this motion.

The Assembly will know from previous debates that the federal government has, by Bill C-68, proposed a system of gun registration and possession certificates which are very onerous to lawful gun owners in Saskatchewan and which have roused a very high level of opposition among the hunters and the shooters in the province.

This opposition has taken many forms and we're all familiar with it. We have had public meetings across this country called by various groups, which have been attended in record numbers. And we have all had this experience at our own constituency meetings and at public political meetings where opposition has been expressed so vehemently.

I cannot recall in my own personal experience an issue such as this which has aroused so much heated opposition. That is not to say that everyone in Saskatchewan shares that view, but the opposition is so intense and so dedicated to fighting this thing, that it has become very much a matter that we have taken notice of and we have responded to in this Assembly.

One of the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, says that the polls indicate this kind of opposition too, and that has been our experience.

One of the arguments that I have made is that before we have any further gun legislation in this country, the federal government ought to stop and take a look at the effectiveness of the laws that are now in place. There is a lot of gun law in Canada, Mr. Speaker; more than almost any other country on earth. And yet the federal government has never at any point paused and asked itself the simple question of whether or not that law produces any effective results, any results that are worthwhile.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, there has never been an attempt to find out whether in Canada we are on the right track with respect to our gun control legislation. There are simple questions that should be asked and should be answered before we go any further. Does this kind of law help in any way to prevent crime? Does this law make us any safer in our homes or any more secure in our communities than would be the case without this law?

There are many countries in this world, Mr. Speaker, who have less gun law and yet are more law-abiding, where the incidence

of suicides is lower, where the incidence of domestic violence is lower.

There are countries with stricter gun laws who none the less continue to have a large criminal problem, and large problems respecting suicide and domestic violence and the use of weapons during the commission of crimes.

So if you look internationally, it is not readily apparent that this kind of law does any good. My point is simply that the federal government has never tried to do a scientific evaluation to determine whether or not we're on the right track.

We in Saskatchewan have seen waves of gun control legislation come at us in the past, and we have not always been comfortable with those proposals. I think, for example, in 1991 where the Mulroney government, the minister, Kim Campbell, the Minister of Justice, proposed the gun law that was passed by parliament in 1991.

That was the law that was supposed to solve all the problems in this area. We were told at the time that if we went along with this law, that would have an impact on our society. The crime rate would be reduced. We would be safer in our homes and in our communities. Our fear about the use of guns in the commission of crimes and on the streets of Canada would be significantly reduced. All we had to do was go along with those provisions.

Mr. Speaker, those were pretty radical provisions at the time. They made it very . . . or let me put it this way. They increased significantly the difficulty to obtain a firearm acquisition certificate. You had to go through a lot more hoops, provide a lot more information, and that system was made much more complex.

(1415)

In addition to that, regulations were provided for and passed in due course respecting the safe storage of firearms. And we were told that that was important, so we went along with it. We didn't like it because in Saskatchewan we didn't see we were any part of the problem. We didn't know why the federal government would be looking to us to make all these improvements when we weren't part of the problem.

The problem, Mr. Speaker, occurs in the large crime centres in Canada, which are the large urban centres, and in those centres people are afraid; they harbour a lot of fear. They see on television, especially Detroit television, the Buffalo television, the use of firearms every day, particularly handguns. And they also know that in the large urban centres, handguns are being used every day in the commission of crimes.

Mr. Speaker, those handguns have been regulated under Canadian law for at least 60 years, at least 60 years. We've had a registration system in this country respecting handguns for decades. And yet that remains the problem that the big-city people see, and that's what they're afraid of.

Now here we have . . . or at least in 1991 we had a Justice minister who was saying, well look, agree to these changes and then that will make everybody safe and everybody will feel secure. Well of course that isn't the case, Mr. Speaker, because the criminals aren't safely storing their guns. The criminals are still using handguns and using them illegally, even though it has been illegal for a long, long time.

And now here we have another Justice minister coming along saying, well look now, we just need to . . . we need to introduce some more gun law in this country. And if we do that then a lot of things are going to change — our homes are going to be safer, you're going to be more secure living in your communities; you'll be able to walk down the street without fear of somebody shooting at you. All you've got to do is go along with this, with this law that is included in Bill C-68.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the reaction that we have got, all of us in this House have gotten from across Saskatchewan, is that enough is enough. Enough is enough. Your last round of gun control, where we had to comply with a whole new set of requirements, didn't make any difference at all to the crime rate in this country, didn't make anybody safer in their home or more secure in their community. It just didn't work.

And now you're coming back to us again through this Bill C-68 proposed by the Justice minister, Allan Rock, and you're saying to us, just accept this additional amount of gun control and then that'll be all and it'll be all safe. And Canada will become a much better country in which to live because the crime rate will go down and people will feel more secure.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan says, nonsense. Saskatchewan says, enough already. If you're going to do something about crime, if you're going to do something about the use of illegal guns in the city, then look to the cities and look to the criminals and look to the illegal guns. Don't come once more to the homes of lawful gun owners, of hunters in Saskatchewan, and load an additional level of gun control legislation upon those people, pretending thereby to do something about the problems in the city. There is no connection between the two.

And so, Mr. Speaker, again and again we have been asked to come up with some way in which Saskatchewan could be exempted from this law. And there have been various manifestations of that, and I referred to some of them during question period.

One of the ideas that was seriously propounded by some of the groups in Saskatchewan who have an interest in this issue was that the federal government proceed in those provinces who think that this kind of law actually does some good. And they can implement it in places like Ontario and Quebec and some of the Maritime provinces, and in British Columbia if they're supporting this legislation. Try it in those provinces, Mr. Speaker. And if it does some good, if they can demonstrate that there's some point to this, then we in the other provinces can take another look at it. We can take another look at it.

So in effect it would be a pilot project basis. Well I proposed that to Mr. Rock, and he said no. He didn't even consider it, Mr. Speaker; he just said no.

Now Bill C-68 is before parliament. The standing committee is beginning consideration of the Bill today. And the resolution which I'm going to move and will read in a moment, Mr. Speaker, asks that the Bill be amended to allow provinces and territories to opt out of these provisions — to opt out of these provisions.

And I think that we as the elected government, as the Assembly here representing all the people of Saskatchewan, ought to be able to make that judgement. The federal government is passing a law to respond to the fears of people in the large metropolitan areas of Saskatchewan. This law is not intended for our benefit. We all know that we will not benefit from it, so we ought to have the opportunity to opt out of that law.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Indian Head-Wolseley, as follows:

Be it resolved that this Assembly urge the federal government to introduce amendments to Bill C-68, An Act respecting Firearms and Other Weapons, to allow provinces and territories to opt out of the provisions respecting registration and licensing.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Scott: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is certainly my pleasure to rise and speak in support of this motion. And as seconder, I would like to reaffirm the minister's position that the provinces should have the option to opt out of this legislation until we see if the legislation will do anything. And going back further, we need an evaluation on the current gun legislation that we do have.

It is interesting to note that Kim Campbell's gun legislation has not even been fully implemented in the country yet, so we certainly do not know if the legislation is working. So therefore we need to have an evaluation and at least let the current legislation be enforced and put into place in the country before we have a new set of legislation.

The people in Saskatchewan have clearly said from throughout the province that they are strongly opposed to the gun registration concept of this Bill. They support the crime control which deals with smuggling of guns into the country and also stiffer penalties for offenders, people who commit crime.

So, Mr. Speaker, those components we can live with, but the registration component is vehemently opposed. Unfortunately our Liberal MPs do not see fit to represent the Saskatchewan voice in parliament. So we will be going to Ottawa to certainly carry the Saskatchewan message.

One of the issues surrounding the registration is the cost. And the supporters of gun control say the cost would be minimal, perhaps 5 or \$10. Well in actual fact it costs about \$104 to register a handgun currently in the country, so roughly \$100 per gun. With 21 million guns, we're looking at over \$2 billion, which amounts to more than the federal pay-out on the Crow benefits, which is absolutely absurd.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are big problems with this, and the haste and speed with which Mr. Rock is moving on this is a clear indication that there is something to hide, some hidden agenda. People are saying the real issue is crime control. And Mr. Rock and his colleagues are putting up a smokescreen, letting people believe that once guns are registered, there'll be no more crime. This is totally ridiculous.

We've had registration of handguns in this country for 60 years and by far the majority of handguns used in crime are not registered; they are illegal weapons. And to infringe on the rights of law-abiding citizens working and paying taxes in this country and abiding by the law, using weapons for hunting, trapping, for use on their farms, and resulting in a cost of perhaps as high as a hundred dollars a gun, not to mention the infringement on the people's lives, is totally unacceptable.

And this is what the people of Saskatchewan are saying and this what this government will be carrying the message to Ottawa on. So, Mr. Speaker, it is certainly my pleasure to support this motion. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to enter this debate this afternoon if nothing more than to be able to point out a few of the concerns that I have with the objective of the motion, which was obviously a quickly done thing in response to pressure that the opposition was bringing upon the Minister of Justice.

I want to point out initially, Mr. Speaker, that I don't agree with anything that the member from Indian Head-Woleseley said. I agree completely. We have no problem with that. So I don't disagree with that.

I essentially do not disagree with what the minister said. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to make some things very, very adamant and crystal clear, that the biggest problem that we're facing in Saskatchewan with making our voice heard as clearly as possible is that the heart of most of the members opposite is not in this issue — their heart is not in this issue. It's a political response to a political problem. That's the fundamental premiss, Mr. Speaker, that I . . . that the conclusion to which I have come. That is the only reason.

There is no doubt but that the legislation that we are proposing would be legitimate, it would lawful, and it could put an end to Mr. Rock's attack upon the citizens of this province. But I want to make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that when we start talking about property rights in this province, it goes back many years,

it goes back many years when the NDP's ideological bent was forced upon the people of this province so that it was not included in the Human Rights Code.

What we're facing here is a basic, fundamental premiss — that the NDP cannot bring themselves about to accept the fact that citizens of this province do have fundamental property rights. And we can include the right of gun ownership in that fundamental right.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to say now that what we're witnessing this afternoon is just a bunch of smoke and mirrors; with due respect, Mr. Minister, a bunch of smoke and mirrors — as if an hallucination like this is going to appease the gun owners.

I'll tell you something, Mr. Minister. I was in Osler on Friday evening. There was the Valley Trails Wildlife banquet was being held, and there were 200 people out there. And the petition that we have been presenting in this House, I had three copies of it along — I didn't expect that many people. But it didn't take 10 minutes, when those sheets of paper went around the tables, that the front and the back and the sides of them were signed by people who were anxious to say: right on; that will send a message; that will send a message to Ottawa.

Now I know that you are going to take your happy little group and you're going to go to Ottawa, and you're going to talk to Mr. Rock and you're going to say: please, Mr. Rock, would you please. And that's what your motion does here today. It says, we're going to go to Ottawa and you're going to ask Ottawa, would you please put in some amendments that will allow provinces and territories to opt out of the provisions. Now what kind of a response are you going to get?

Now the Liberal leader is going to go along. Right? The Liberal leader is going to go along because she supports our position. I think she supports our position.

I have an article here from May 17 where it says, Haverstock backs tougher gun laws — she backs tougher gun laws. Hunting rights can be balanced with society's interests, Liberal leader says. And then underneath a picture of her, and it says, Linda Haverstock applauds federal efforts — applauds federal efforts.

(1430)

Now since then, of course, we've put a finger up like this. We've found out which way the political winds are blowing and say: whoops, well sorry about that; I guess maybe we're now opposed to this tougher gun legislation after all. That is hypocrisy and it does not fly in my area. And of those 200 people, there were 198 of them that came up and told me that — that that is not flying.

Now she can get up and say she's been misquoted or misinterpreted or whatever. But these lately come, late kind of conversions to the cause are not something that makes people

very happy. And what does not make me very happy, Mr. Speaker, is that I agree with the consensus here that gun control is not synonymous with crime control. I agree with all of that; we have no contention. And when we voted, Mr. Minister, all of us in the House together to support that motion, we are still behind that.

But what we object to is the fact that we have the legislative Law Clerk, our Law Clerk, a lawyer of this Legislative Assembly, and he's telling us in a written statement saying, your laws makes sense; it will have impact.

And what we object to is, why won't you do that, Mr. Minister? Allow this thing to be passed. It may wind up that it's not constitutional; it may wind up that you're right. But for goodness' sakes, let's not be on the defensive; let's go on the offensive.

Let's make the feds come back in here and say, you're wrong and we're taking you to court and we're going to prove it. That's all you have to do, Mr. Minister. That's what the people of this province want you to do. They want you to pour some cement into your backbone; get up and fight for the people of Saskatchewan.

Now we'll probably go along with you to Ottawa. We don't expect that there will be anything coming out of that, but it's an effort. And we will probably vote in support . . . I can't speak for my colleagues, but I probably would stand up and support you on this particular motion because that's the least that we're getting out of you. But I would strongly, strongly encourage you to put away those other political and ideological objections that you have to our Bills and admit that, well maybe there's something to that and that at least we'll try.

And if you don't want to do ours . . . I know that we've already passed one private members' Bill in this House from our side, on the food Bill. And you don't want too many of those getting passed just before an election. And I can appreciate that.

So I would suggest to you, Mr. Minister, bring forward your own version of it, then. Bring forward your own version and we will support that and then you take that with you when you go to Ottawa on the 10th or whenever it is. And then you will have a sound impact in fighting — actually fighting to protect the people of Saskatchewan and our way of life. The people of the province of Saskatchewan expect no less, Mr. Minister, from you, and they want no less and they deserve no less.

So will you do that, Mr. Minister? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate being able to speak to this motion this afternoon. And I must say that it was with some surprise that I listened to some of the comments of the member from Indian Head-Wolseley — some surprise — because he indeed knows that not all Saskatchewan Liberal MPs are in support of the federal legislation; in fact not all of the federal NDP MPs are opposed to it. And of course it really wouldn't matter what the

Tory MPs in Ottawa think because I think that if two of them got the flu at the same time there would be no members present.

Having said all of that, I do know as well and I think that everyone in the province acknowledges that this particular provincial government would like nothing more than to make this a pivotal issue in the upcoming provincial election.

I think that one of the things that we should note, Mr. Speaker, is that as Canadians we can differentiate more than they perhaps realize today between federal and provincial issues. And I might add that everywhere I've gone in the province, when I pointed out that there should be responsibility where responsibility lies, credit given where credit is due, that when I point out that in fact there are some things that have been done across the nation, for example with fisheries, people are excited by that. And I say, give credit where credit's due, and we applaud and we do.

And when the grainhandlers were legislated back to work, it was in fact the federal New Democrat MPs who were opposing that action being taken. But we didn't stand in the House as the official opposition did and say that the provincial New Democratic Party should accept responsibility — full, front-row, centre — for the things that their colleagues were doing in Ottawa. Because we say of course, that credit or responsibility should be given where it is due and where it should lie.

And we believe that in fact in that case with the grainhandlers situation, that we as people in Saskatchewan were quite pleased with the action that the federal government took. When it comes to this particular Bill, C-68, we happen to think that there are parts of this legislation that most people in Saskatchewan would support.

However, we are fundamentally opposed with firearm registration for the people of this province for one reason and one reason only — there has been absolutely no evidence brought forward that can support unequivocally that that part of that legislation will ever achieve the objective as it has been presented to the people of this country.

If they were able to bring forward that evidence, if in fact research has been done where they could prove their point that in fact it will reduce crime, that it will prevent crime, then few people in our country would object to it.

And I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that indeed I've had numbers of people . . . my constituents call me and they are in favour of this legislation. And I say it's because they don't understand that in fact what they're being sold is the idea that somehow they will have greater safety in their streets, when in fact this is not what firearms registration will do.

I also want to point out that in fact the kind of misinformation that's promoted about cost and so forth to individuals, I don't think is useful to this particular discussion. I think what is useful is talking about the fact that there's going to be more

bureaucracy created for the taxpayers to pay for that in fact may not be necessary at all.

Why indeed should we have greater bureaucracy — an entire part of the civil service whose primary role is doing nothing but checking up on law-abiding citizens or keeping track of registration of firearms that could cost monies that at this point can't even be predicted. That's another reason why indeed we object to this.

Having said all of that, Mr. Speaker, the question is, when this has been fast-tracked and that's why some Saskatchewan Reform members of Parliament and some Saskatchewan members of the Legislative Assembly were unable to be present for that vote, the fast-tracking of this I think tells us one thing — that we should also be talking about what our bottom line is for the people of Saskatchewan.

What is the bottom line that we are willing to accept? And there are some things that are completely and totally unacceptable, one of which is that the citizens of this province — the law-abiding citizens of this province — if indeed they were going to not register their firearms, will they indeed be charged with a criminal offence? That would be completely and totally unacceptable to the Liberals of this province.

Secondly, those who are collectors in our province of Saskatchewan, those who have heirlooms, should they in fact have the chance to ensure that, intact, all their collections would be able to be passed on or whatever, without any kind of penalty. That too is something that we should ensure that we fight for.

Aboriginal people's rights as far as their hunting and fishing and so forth are concerned, and just the very nature of how their way of life has been different, and has been set by the way in which they have fended for themselves throughout time.

Livestock owners — what are they going to do? Be required as far as safety is concerned, to keep their firearms in a vault when they have to go out and protect their livestock against predators?

There are many, many things that we want to ensure are discussed in open debate and actually heard. And we should determine before we go to Ottawa what are the absolute bottom lines that are acceptable.

Now having said all of that, Mr. Speaker, I want to just point out something that I think is not in the best interests of Saskatchewan people or the people of this country. And it is when people try to push emotional buttons, based on fabrication, that do nothing except promote extremism, and that kind of extremism we've seen in Oklahoma City this past week. And in part some of the people, who — I understand — are being held with regards to those crimes, are people who were pushed to where they are today by extremism, by the way in which people have made them feel extremely negative about their government.

And I would suggest that probably most of us here . . . and I've always found this debate in this House rather interesting because I know some people on the side opposite in government who probably, if it were up to them, would ban forks — that I find it most curious that they're involved in this discussion at all.

Having said that, I think most of us want nothing more and nothing less than a safe and secure society. And surely to goodness we can all work together for that kind of end. That's what I'm hoping will happen with all members of this House, that we will be working in the best interests of people.

I do not apologize. For four days after that comment in the paper, I had been able to look at everything from information in the Criminal Code of Canada and people being very willing to share information with me. I'm willing to change my position with added evidence. I'm hoping that with added evidence the federal government will understand that firearms registration will not bring to the people of this country what they purport it will do.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I of course would be supporting this motion. Thank you.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, and members, what we have before us today again is another attempt at speaking to the issue without actually doing anything about the issue.

When we talk . . . when this motion is being brought up by the minister and being debated in the House, what is he asking to actually do? He's asking the federal government to do something about one of their own pieces of legislation that's moving through the Assembly.

He's not talking about doing something here. He's not talking about the Saskatchewan legislature actually doing something. He's talking about sending a memo, basically, to Ottawa, saying, will you please exempt us from your legislation?

Well, Mr. Speaker, it would be nice indeed, it would be nice indeed if Ottawa would exempt us. But it isn't going to happen, Mr. Speaker. The people in Ottawa who are putting this through, Mr. Allan Rock and the Liberal government, with the wholehearted support of the Prime Minister, Jean Chrétien, have absolutely no intention, Mr. Speaker, of breaking this piece of legislation up and saying it applies in Ontario or it applies in Montreal or it applies in Vancouver, but we don't have to worry about it in Saskatchewan or we don't have to worry about it in Alberta or the Northwest Territories.

No, Mr. Speaker, they have absolutely no intention of breaking this piece of legislation up into little parts. It's going to apply to everyone in this province; it's going to apply to everyone in this nation. And they will not split it up, Mr. Speaker, for all our good intentions in Saskatchewan in requesting that they do so.

The only way, Mr. Speaker, the only way that Saskatchewan

can opt out of this particular piece of legislation is to do something in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, why are we at the point that we're at in the gun control debate? Well, Mr. Speaker, it all has to do with politics and nothing to do with crime control. It's politically advantageous to Mr. Rock, whose constituency is in downtown Toronto, to bring forward a piece of legislation that looks — that looks, Mr. Speaker — like he's actually trying to do something.

The minister talked earlier about the need to do a review of the previous gun control legislation that we have in place, to see if it is effective. But Mr. Rock isn't interested in doing that, because if he did it, he might find out that further gun control would not solve the problems that he is directing this at.

(1445)

And if you don't ask the question, Mr. Speaker, and you don't hear the answer, you can say whatever you want. And that's what Mr. Rock is doing. He's saying his Bill C-68 is going to solve the problem of crime in the streets of our major cities; it's going to prevent abusive situations in families; it's going to stop suicide, Mr. Speaker.

Because he hasn't got any evidence, because he's never done a study, it's very difficult for anybody else to dispute those statements. So he just throws them out like leaflets into the wind because nobody can question them, Mr. Speaker, because there is no statistical evidence on this new legislation to determine whether or not it will be effective.

The previous administration . . . the previous legislation was studied by the Auditor General. And the Auditor General said that the studies which were done on the 1979 legislation were inconclusive because the methods of the study were wrong, because the results could have been achieved equally by natural progression rather than the implementation of the law.

There's no evidence, Mr. Speaker, to say that any of the firearms legislation from 1979 onwards, which included 1992 under Kim Campbell, have had any effect — any effect, Mr. Speaker. It's only politically motivated, politically motivated by the Liberals in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker.

Politically motivated — the stance by our provincial Liberals. The Liberal leader, when she came back from the national convention, was all in favour of it, until she got home and found out what the political situation in Saskatchewan was. So now they have taken a stand based on politics of the issue.

The government members — a good number of the government members, Mr. Speaker, believe fundamentally that the proposals by the Liberal government in Ottawa are wrong as they come to deal with firearms legislation. But I'm not convinced that the minister believes that the legislation is wrong. He believes in the politics of it, Mr. Speaker. And the politics of it in Saskatchewan says, you will be opposed to the

federal government and the federal government's initiatives on firearm legislation. Again, Mr. Speaker, it's a political response to a political problem.

And that's why, Mr. Speaker, that the government is unwilling to make any significant moves legislatively to protect the rights of Saskatchewan firearms owners. The government is ideologically bound not to allow property rights, Mr. Speaker. Had they not been ideologically bound against property rights, it could have been put into the constitution in 1982. But it was Allan Blakeney, the member from Riversdale when he was the attorney general, and Jean Chrétien as the representative of the federal government, that prevented property rights from being put into the constitution at that time. It was discussed, it was wanted by a number of jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker, but the NDP governments of the day prevented it from being attained.

That, Mr. Speaker, would have provided the protection to the individuals who own firearms or any other property in this country had that been implemented today.

Jean Chrétien talks about registering automobiles. He says, well we register automobiles, why not register firearms?

Well, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the registration of automobiles, who does it? It's not the federal government that registers automobiles, Mr. Speaker. It's the provinces because they're property and they're under provincial jurisdiction. That's who registers, that's who administers, and that's who charges fees for those registrations, Mr. Speaker. Not the federal government.

And if I own an automobile, Mr. Speaker, and I don't want to register it, it's perfectly legal. I do not have to register an automobile simply because I own one. I register an automobile because I want to drive it on the public thoroughfares — not because I own it, Mr. Speaker.

But with the new firearms legislation being presented by Allan Rock, it says, if you own a firearm in Canada, you will register it regardless of the fact that you want to use it for hunting or you're a collector or you're a target shooter. No matter the reason, we the federal government demand that you register it and that you pay our fees.

Now the Liberal leader seemed to think that fees were not an issue. Well, Mr. Speaker, they're not an issue perhaps for her if she doesn't own any firearms, but every firearm owner, that is an issue. Because currently, it costs approximately between 40 and \$105, depending on the provincial jurisdiction you live in, to register a handgun today.

The federal government has said that this registration system will be a cost-recovery one. Well, Mr. Speaker, that means you're going to pay between 40 and \$105, and the federal government is looking at the Quebec system of registration, which is the highest cost one.

So let's say a hundred dollars, which is certainly the numbers

that are being used by most of the firearms owners. The federal government wants to talk about \$10 for a first-time registration, but only if you register them in the year about the Bill becomes law. Sort of a little incentive to get you to buy into the program — they'll give it to you cheap. But if you don't buy in then, Mr. Speaker, you're going to pay the full cost, and that could well be a hundred dollars or more.

That is a significant amount of money, Mr. Speaker, a significant amount of money if you take into consideration that the federal government believes there are 7 million firearms in this country. At a hundred dollars apiece, that's \$700 million.

But the wildlife associations and the firearm industry believes that there is 20-plus million firearms in this province, Mr. Speaker. At that cost, at \$100, you're talking \$2 billion, Mr. Speaker — \$2 billion taken out of the economy across Canada to feed the bureaucracy. Just to feed the bureaucracy. Because that's the only people that are going to benefit from this.

And perhaps this is one of the Liberals' make-work projects, because you should be able to hire a significant number of bureaucrats for \$2 billion. You look at the situation now where they have given notice that they're going to lay off 45,000 civil servants over the next year, year and a half. Well, Mr. Speaker, if you bring in this gun registry you could employ half of those at the cost of \$2 billion, Mr. Speaker. So the factor of cost is going to be very, very significant.

Mr. Speaker, you look at registration. The government argues that they have to register firearms so that they can track them, so that it'll prevent smuggling, so that owners of firearms today will store them properly. Well, Mr. Speaker, the law is already on the books — already on the books — that says you have to store your firearms safely. They have a prescribed method of doing so. And there's a penalty, a jail sentence, if you fail to do so, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm not exactly sure how registration is supposed to solve that problem, but that is what the Liberals believe is going to be the solution. By registering firearms you're also going to stop smuggling. So I guess the guy before he wants to go down in Toronto, downtown Toronto, to rob the 7 Eleven, is going to make sure that his firearm is registered or that his crossbow is registered.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if you look at Saskatchewan as an example of homicides, 7 out of 31 in 1993 were committed with firearms — 7 out of 31. The other 24 used some other implement; and a knife, Mr. Speaker, is the most favoured. So when we're looking at the registration of firearms, Mr. Speaker, to control smuggling — we haven't controlled cigarettes, we haven't controlled alcohol, we certainly haven't controlled illegal drugs — the question has to be asked: how will the new firearms legislation, how will registration, deal with the illegal smuggling of firearms?

If the people aren't prepared to register them, the criminals certainly aren't prepared to register, Mr. Speaker. How is

registration going to control this? It isn't, Mr. Speaker, it isn't going to control it.

So what happens at the end of the day? Registration has not prevented smuggling; registration has not prevented crime in the streets. The 7 Eleven is still being held up by whatever means and whatever tool is used. And domestic violence, Mr. Speaker, people who are involved in domestic violence, it's generally an emotional response at a particular point in time, not premeditated. They grab whatever weapon, whatever implement, is available.

And I use the word weapon very advisedly, Mr. Speaker. If you look at the Criminal Code, they give you a definition of a weapon. And it doesn't say gun and it doesn't say firearm. It says any implement used with intent to harm another. That's what a weapon is. This piece of paper is a weapon if I intend to hurt someone with it.

So, Mr. Speaker, when you talk about weapons and domestic violence, the firearm is irrelevant. It's just whatever happens to be available. So registration, Mr. Speaker, is not going to diminish that.

So at the end of the day, when the government hasn't been able to control smuggling, they haven't been able to control crime in the streets, and they haven't been able to make any impact on family violence, abusive situations, what is the next step necessary for a government who believes that this is the answer to their political problems?

Well, Mr. Speaker, if registering firearms has not solved the problem for them, then they're going to have to look some place else. And where is that going to be?

Well if registering firearms didn't solve the problem, then we've got to take the firearms away. Now I know that the eastern media thinks that this is a bunch of rubbish, that it's fearmongering — that confiscation is the end result of registration. Well there are approximately 1.2 million handguns registered in Canada today — 1.2 million. Under the proposals of the current Bill C-68, 533,000 of those will be confiscated — almost half, almost half.

Now in 1934 or 1979 or 1992, no one talked about confiscation by registering those handguns — no one. But today if Bill C-68 passes, confiscation will be the end result for 533,000 of those handguns because the government has deemed them inappropriate for Canadians to own. So, Mr. Speaker, when registration fails in the goals that the Liberal government has set for itself, confiscation will be the only solution.

So what can we do? What can we do? Well, Mr. Speaker, appeals to Ottawa have fallen on deaf ears. Allan Rock has no intention, absolutely no intention, of listening to anyone outside of his electorate area, which are the major cities of Ontario and Quebec. He has no intention.

I attended a meeting with him up in Saskatoon, back last

summer. It was supposed to be a few people get together to consult with Allan Rock and give him our opinions on his firearm legislation. Well when it all shook down there was about 50 people there. We had an hour to discuss with Allan Rock.

So what did the moderator of that particular meeting do, who was my own MP — the Liberal MP for Souris-Moose Mountain, Bernie Collins? He asked everyone in the room to identify themselves and what group they were with. Well, Mr. Speaker, that took almost half an hour of the hour that had been allocated to us.

They had no intentions of listening. They were simply there on a public relations effort, to say yes, we went out to western Canada and we met with certain gun proponents. With no intentions, Mr. Speaker, of listening.

Consultation means you listen to what people have to say and you take into account what their opinions are and you reflect that in your project — in this particular case, Bill C-68. None of that happened, Mr. Speaker, none of that at all.

So we have to do something in Saskatchewan. Now the minister's motion — if the federal government would exempt us — would be very nice. But they could exempt us today and stick us back under it tomorrow. Because there's nothing there that says we are exempted. And I firmly believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they will not listen to this. They will have absolutely no intention of honouring any form of agreement along that line.

So we have to do something in Saskatchewan. Now the minister is arguing that if the Bill is passed, that he can challenge it constitutionally. Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe he can. And I would hope that he would. But we need to put something in place prior to that point, Mr. Speaker, that says we are going to stand up for the rights of Saskatchewan people. This is where we have drawn the line. This is what it's all about in Saskatchewan.

(1500)

In Saskatchewan, you have the right to retain your firearms. And if it comes to a registration system, then it is up to the provincial government to do it. It's up to the provincial government to levy any fees and set any standards, not the federal government. The provincial government, Mr. Speaker, is a lot closer to the people than the federal government is, and a lot more aware of their needs and desires.

At the meeting we had in Saskatoon with Allan Rock, there were members of the native associations that attended this meeting, from La Ronge. And the gentleman said, can you expect Joe to come in, 60 miles off the trap line, simply to register his firearm or to write the test? In all likelihood he can't even understand English, let alone write the test, Mr. Speaker, so what do you do with Joe when he comes in off the trap line? You say, sorry Joe; you've handled a firearm for 70 years, but

you're no longer qualified because you can't write the test.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it simply won't happen. It won't happen for Joe on the trap line. It won't happen for the rancher south of Maple Creek, and it won't happen in my own constituency. There are a large number of people who have absolutely no intention, Mr. Speaker, of abiding by this law if it does indeed pass as it is outlined today.

So we need to allow Saskatchewan people the opportunity to have their own law in Saskatchewan. And the way that I see that we can do that, Mr. Speaker, is by providing property rights in Saskatchewan legislation, either through the Human Rights Code, which is under Saskatchewan jurisdiction, or under the notwithstanding clause dealing with the Canadian constitution, and put property rights into the Canadian constitution as it applies in Saskatchewan. And it's perfectly permitted because you put it into the clause . . . into section 7 of the Canadian constitution which is one of those areas that allows for the notwithstanding clause to be used. Section 7 to 15 allow that to happen, Mr. Speaker. And we can put property into the constitution as it affects Saskatchewan people.

So when the federal government comes to say, you will register your firearms, the province can say, whoa boys; you're now dealing in Saskatchewan, and we have jurisdiction in that area. Our people have the right to own that property, and we have the right to set the rules and regulations.

But why doesn't it happen? Because the minister and his government are ideologically opposed to the idea of property rights. That's why it doesn't happen in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a new issue. Gun control is not a new issue in Canada. In 1975, Warren Allmand and Pierre Trudeau started this latest round. It's been 20 years, 20 years that we've been involved in this, Mr. Speaker. They backed off on some of it.

Most of these changes, most of these recommendations in this Bill, were in place in 1975, and the federal Liberal government of the day backed away from those, backed away from it because of the opposition of the people. But it kept coming up over and over and over again, Mr. Speaker. My colleague from Thunder Creek mentioned about Ralph Goodale, who ran in a by-election in 1979 and was defeated, was defeated, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan on the gun control issue. Because he was in favour of his government doing exactly that, Mr. Speaker.

The member from Saskatoon Greystone spoke about the federal government having this on the fast track. Well they certainly seem to have that, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's only one track — one track going full speed, headlong into this piece of legislation. And that was why certain MPs from this province couldn't vote for or against it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, a number of the Liberal MPs of this province did indeed vote. They voted in favour of this

legislation. And as the government members opposite keep trying to remind us, second reading passage means that the Bill is approved in principle, that you can change the i's and the crosses on the t's, but that's all, Mr. Speaker. You have approved it in principle.

Well my own MP, Mr. Bernie Collins, for some reason found it more expedient to be away from Ottawa when this vote came down, than to be in Ottawa and express his opinion. Because we certainly have seen what the Liberal caucus whip is prepared to do to those members who do not support this particular piece of legislation as brought in by the federal government. They will be disciplined, and disciplined severely.

So it would be very interesting to see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether or not any of the MPs will indeed vote against it at further stages, or whether they will simply have some other reason why they can't be in the House, Mr. Speaker.

If the federal government was indeed interested in listening to what is being said by the public, in particular western Canada, they would split off from this Bill, the parts that deal with the Criminal Code, with the penalties for those who use weapons, whatever weapon it might be, Mr. Speaker, and allow for much stronger sentences. And even more important, more important than mandatory sentencing, is mandatory charges, Mr. Speaker, because that is where the plea bargaining happens.

It doesn't happen to say whether you get one year or two years, it happens when you say, are you going to get charged with robbery, or are you going to get charged with armed robbery with a firearm? That's where the plea bargaining happens, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's where it needs to stop.

There isn't a single responsible firearm owner in Saskatchewan who is opposed to the idea of someone who uses a firearm with criminal intent paying a penalty, and paying a harsh penalty. They all support it, Mr. Speaker, and every one of them would vote for that particular piece of legislation that was solely that. But when it comes to putting criminals . . . making criminals out of the honest, responsible firearms owners, that's where the line is drawn, Mr. Speaker, and that's where the general public is having a great deal of difficulty with the federal legislation.

And that's where they have a great deal of difficulty with the government's inaction, the government's inaction on this firearm legislation. They have talked and talked and talked and talked, and I see the Justice minister shaking his head because that's all he's done, is talked on the issue, Mr. Speaker. It's getting down, Mr. Speaker, to where you either have to fish or cut bait. It's getting down to where this legislation is about to pass and it's going to become law, Mr. Speaker.

And we have to do something in Saskatchewan to prevent it and the minister is not prepared to do that. And we would certainly encourage him and we would support it if he provided some real legislation to this House that would do something in Saskatchewan.

One of the things that the people across this province at all the gun rallies have been calling for is made-in-Saskatchewan gun laws. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe that says it all — made-in-Saskatchewan gun laws. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on the motion that has been moved by the member from Saskatoon Fairview and seconded by the member from Indian Head-Wolseley. And the motion reads:

Be it resolved that this Assembly urge the federal government to introduce amendments to Bill C-68, An Act respecting Firearms and Other Weapons to allow provinces and territories to opt out of the provisions respecting registration and licensing.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to state very clearly right from the outstart that I am personally in strong opposition to Bill C-68 brought out by the federal Liberal government.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also very, very surprised — but maybe not — by Liberal MPs in the province of Saskatchewan who go against their constituents, whether from northern Saskatchewan or from the South, in regards to this Bill and simply support, you know, their party in power.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at the opting-out clause; this opting-out clause provides a real alternative to the situation rather than that as proposed by the Tories.

Before I get into that, I want to say a few words about my own background in getting on into this debate. Being born and raised in northern Saskatchewan and having been involved in trapping, fishing, hunting, and tourism, I know how strongly people feel in regards to the opposition in regards to this Bill.

I know that when I look at the situation, Mr. Speaker, I'm speaking on behalf of my constituents, whether they're aboriginal or non-aboriginal — they're strongly united against Bill C-68.

When I look at the presentations that have been made by letter by my constituents, to me and to Ottawa, I know that they come by it basically because their means of survival is in those areas that I have spoken about. It means that they are directly affected, you know, by this Bill in regards to carrying out their livelihood.

And many of the people also have rights in regards to treaty. Many of the Indian people in northern Saskatchewan have treaty rights. This Liberal government in Ottawa talks about honouring and respecting treaties. But absolutely they do not regard absolutely anything about these rights when it comes down to hunting. Basically because they have not put in anything that is really meaningful to deal with this issue on a serious basis.

Mr. Speaker, I also am very aware that when you look at the situation, the issue that has been presented as a reason for

bringing in the registration and also the issue of storage and also the issue of testing, was to sort of somehow magically prevent crime. Well there's been a lot of evidence that has been talked about that shows that this is not so. I'll give you my own point of view in regards to how and why registration in and of itself will not prevent crime activity.

As a former minister of SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), I looked at this issue in regards to car registration. Car registration in and of itself will never prevent a drunken driver or a driver going out on dangerous driving. It still happens even if we have registration. And there is a tremendous amount, you know, of evidence that shows that on a daily basis for a lot of people.

There are people who will, in crimes of passion, whether they're in a vehicle or outside a vehicle, continue to commit crime. And these types have to be dealt with in regards to the way that we did it on that Bill in SGI. But I think that there has to be, you know, consideration or more targeted approaches to the law in this case.

So when I look at the idea of it preventing criminal activity and some people making comparisons with car registration, let me make it clear again: car registration in and of itself does not prevent crime. There's still dangerous drivers out there who need better education, better programing, better laws and tougher laws to deal with their situation. That's the way to deal with it effectively.

I've also heard many times that for many years there has already been registration by guns. We've had to register these handguns for decades. We've already had to deal with the issue of storage. But again it shows very clearly from the historic evidence and experience of people that indeed the registration does not prevent the hold-ups that we see. It did not prevent this and that, you know, from occurring. It still occurred.

(1515)

Therefore there is no way that this law by the Liberals will do what they said it would do. And also too when you look at criminals, and even when I see that in the area of vehicles . . . but you could see it more easily in the area of guns. People who did commit crime with guns have done this, where they have filed away, they have rubbed out the serial number or the ID (identification) number so that they could not be traced. So a person with a criminal mind will utilize ways and means to prevent getting caught in the situation. And most of the situations, you know, are like this. And even when they leave on the registration, we know that they may have stolen it or they may have taken it out from a different source.

So we know that it does not catch these people; they continually, and will continually, you know, be able to do this.

I want to comment as well on the provincial Liberal position. Although they did indeed support the all-party resolution that we sent out before in opposition to this, let me be very clear

that they have flip-flopped on this issue many times before they did make, you know, that consideration.

We have seen them flip-flop on issues on economic matters. We've seen them flip-flop on gaming. We've seen them flip-flop all over the place. And again, they've flip-flopped on this. When they saw the polls rising and when they saw people starting in greater opposition to the gun control, then they came onside. And that has become very clear.

The other point that I saw the Liberal leader make today, and I found it not so surprising — it's very typical of the Liberal Party basically because they think only in terms of a big-shot approach in many ways — she made a comment wherein she said that the money matter was not the issue. People have been talking about registration, whether it's \$60 per person per gun. People have been talking about the fact that it would create the \$100 million bureaucracy, and the member from across said it was as high as 2 billion.

When I look at these figures, somebody says, well the figures are not the issue. Well it's not an issue if you're making a lot of money and bringing in enough money — as the Liberal leader and her 37 per cent increase in salary. Of course it's not an issue.

But when a poor person, whether in southern Saskatchewan or in northern Saskatchewan, has to pay a registration fee, then it has a tremendous effect on them.

When you look at the situation of poverty, this is what the Liberal leader forgot to look at in regards to her comment. She has absolutely no regard, you know, for the people who are trying hard to make a living in northern Saskatchewan, whether from fishing, trapping, and hunting. Mr. Speaker, I found that again not too surprising from the flip-flop artist from the province of Saskatchewan here.

And I really feel that she did not do justice and pay due respect to the people in this province who are again, poor, who try hard and feel strong enough, who oppose this federal Liberal legislation as the Liberal member herself does. But she should not dismiss this idea away. I know why she's trying to dismiss it. When they were running last fall in the election — the federal Liberals — they talked about the fact that they would be not contributing to the federal debt and federal bureaucracy. And they made strong statements about it.

Because one thing about the Liberals is this. They say one thing when they're out of office and another thing when they get into office. They said they would not increase the costs of the bureaucracy, but indeed this is an increase on the cost of the bureaucracy, whether it's 100 million or 2 billion, you know, as the other member has mentioned. This is an increase in bureaucratic cost and bureaucratic procedures that get in the way of law enforcement and many other things. And I think that this is a point that she should have made sure that she had connected it onto.

Mr. Speaker, the other debate that has been mentioned by the Tories is this. They bring in this notion that although they support us full blast in regards to the opposition to the Bill at the federal level, they say we should do something on property rights. And I want to make it clear that during the constitutional talks in 1982 and during the constitutional process in Charlottetown, there were some groups in Canada that did present this argument.

But it became very clear that under the consensus by Liberal and Tory governments across Canada, they did not finally accept property rights. And it was indeed excluded in the Charlottetown accord. And that was done by Conservative governments in power across Canada.

So they themselves did not strongly and superbly believe in property rights to make sure that it had to be in the constitution. Because when it come down to the crunch during the constitutional debates, they backed off and they allowed the Charlottetown accord to go ahead without the property rights. And that has become, you know, very clear in history. And that is what Conservative members forgot to mention.

But one of the most important points politically, is that the Conservatives at this time felt that it is better . . . possibly they figure that an election is going to be called. It's better to focus the debate, not on the federal Liberals any more — they're going to run away from the federal Liberals — now they would focus in the debate on the provincial government in regards to property rights.

And of course we know that's their political tactic. They make great speeches about this and that, but we know that is their political ploy. They may completely disregard that which exists in regards to constitutional legal history in Canada.

There's a concept called the principle of paramouncy or the law of paramouncy. Basically all it does is that if two laws conflict, the provincial law conflicts with the federal law, the federal law has paramouncy. That means that the law, federal law, can trump the provincial law. In other words, if any law in the province was raised which contradicted the federal gun law, the federal law will have paramouncy.

It has been stated very clearly by the Attorney General of this province, and by many people, and by many constitutional experts all across Canada, that this law of paramouncy would prevail.

And I think that the members, the Conservative members, are raising indeed a false issue. I mean they're already running away from dealing with the politics of having to face the Liberals and now trying to aim their guns over to the side of the provincial government. And it's again a simple political tactic in that regard.

So when you look at this, Mr. Speaker, the opting-out clause does provide a new alternative. It does another thing. It does focus the action where it needs to be focused — on the law at

the federal level.

The root cause of the problem is the Liberal government law at the federal level. When you see the root cause of the problem, that's where you design your strategy and attack. You do not run away from that tactic. But what the Tories are doing is running away from that tactic and trying to blame a provincial law or trying to re-create a new provincial law through property rights which would be in effect trumped by the law at the federal level in the last regard.

Mr. Speaker, I am therefore in this debate and in this view strongly, you know, supporting our position. It is the strong position. It is a reasonable position. It is the one that is targeted where the strategy should be targeted at, and that's at the federal law, at the federal level.

But I think this motion will send another message to the federal level, and it will bring an impetus and a new form of debate at the federal level and say yes, Saskatchewan government is again making a strong stand in this regard and taking the leadership over all governments all across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also say a few words in my own language, with due respect to all languages of our country, and explain the situation in Cree and talk about it in regards to how this impacts a lot of the people.

One of the members, a Conservative member across, said that an Indian person from across northern Saskatchewan was in a Saskatoon meeting and was discussing the idea of testing. And in many cases, because a lot of them are Cree and Dene speakers, that indeed the bureaucracy and the paperwork . . . although they were highly expert in dealing with guns all their lives, that indeed, you know this test would provide just a bureaucratic barrier, you know, for them over the long run.

So I would like, in that type of regard, say a few words in Cree because, Mr. Speaker, as well there's always my constituents who come to the hospitals either in Saskatoon who are watching the TV. And a lot of the people from the North Battleford and Qu'Appelle areas, you know, as well as Cypress areas who like to listen and have it explained in our own language, so it becomes a lot more clear in regards to what the federal strategy is all about.

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.)

(1530)

In conclusion, I would like to say again that I'm strongly opposed to the gun Bill. All the people, both aboriginal and nonaboriginal people in northern Saskatchewan, strongly oppose this Bill.

I think that it does disrespect to the way of life of northern Saskatchewan. Many people live by hunting, fishing, and trapping. It's their way of life, Mr. Speaker, and this Bill presents . . . when a lot of them are trying hard to make a living

and a lot of them are in poverty, that registration, \$60 or \$100 million or \$2 billion, is a costly thing for them.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of the government should be coming out with preventative programs; helping out hunting, fishing, and trapping at the federal level. But, Mr. Speaker, they don't do that. They say there should be . . . a lot of people say they should have prevention programs on crime. Mr. Speaker, this Bill does not do that. Mr. Speaker, they say they should have prevention programs on abuse, etc. This Bill does not do that.

All of these things have been false arguments by the federal Liberal government. And I was very, very strongly opposed to the federal Liberal MPs who supported this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I know of one person who was from northern Saskatchewan, when in a pre-election strategy he said he would honour and respect the treaties. He said that he would respect the people from the North on their livelihood. When it come down to the fact of the matter, Kirkby was looking at the situation that he supported the Liberal budget. MP Gordon Kirkby from Prince Albert-Churchill is supporting the Liberal government position. And he should be taking back his words of respect and honour in northern Saskatchewan because he does not see the interconnection between the high costs of bureaucracy that this Bill will introduce, and on the other side, not helping the people out in northern Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, when you look at all these angles I think that indeed the member from Saskatoon Fairview and the member from Indian Head-Wolseley have introduced a strong position and a strong position of opting out, you know, in regards to Bill C-68 for the province of Saskatchewan. And that is a strong position that the province can take rather than taking away and focusing on other strategy. This is indeed our strong position, Mr. Speaker, and I support the option.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the motion moved by the member from Saskatoon Fairview and seconded by the member from Indian Head-Wolseley, which would give individual provinces and territories the option to opt out of the provisions of Bill C-68.

I realize that there are other speakers that want to get on to speak about the issue, so I'll keep my comments brief and to the point. I'll attempt to present the point of view of my constituents as their views were expressed to me in various vocations and over various situations.

Since last summer and since Bill C-68 had been introduced in the House of Commons, I have had many, many personal contacts with firearm owners, whether they be farmers, hunters, trappers, collectors, target shooters, or gun owners in general, on the proposed gun legislation.

I've received numerous letters, answered countless phone calls, attended rallies, and listened to members of the Saskatchewan

Wildlife Federation who continue to express their doubt about the benefits of Bill C-68.

Mr. Speaker, there is no proof that Bill C-68 will reduce or prevent crime — none at all. The present laws that are in place now are sufficient enough to reduce crime. All that has to happen is for these laws to be enforced more widely and that the penalties for the crimes committed be increased accordingly.

If the increase in bureaucracy that this Bill would create would be redirected into an enhanced police force instead, then maybe, maybe we would get somewhere in reducing crime.

Mr. Speaker, there are enough smuggled guns in Canada now to keep crime going for longer than I care to mention. A gun registry will not reduce those weapons. Registration will not solve the problem.

In conclusion, constituents tell me that if Bill C-68 is passed, it will not be readily accepted. And that is scary, Mr. Speaker, and that ought to be a serious consideration of Mr. Allan Rock before forcing his Bill through the House of Commons.

Mr. Speaker, the constituents I have been in contact with say, don't give up the fight against Allan Rock and Bill C-68; help us change the view of the federal Liberals on this issue. The purpose of this motion would do exactly that and it would allow Saskatchewan residents to maintain something that is a part of their heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion that reads:

Be it resolved that this Assembly urge the federal government to introduce amendments to Bill C-68, An Act respecting Firearms and Other Weapons, to allow provinces and territories to opt out of the provisions respecting registration and licensing.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I haven't had the opportunity over the course of this session when this particular subject's been discussed to speak at some length on it. And today the Minister of Justice, I think, has given us an ideal opportunity to discuss this question as it should be.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I'm disappointed in what I see coming forward from the Minister of Justice because it is just one more in a long line of very carefully politically couched phrases that this government has thrown out to the people of this province to try and deflect from what is the real issue before us. And the real issue is a 20-year-old agenda by the federal Liberals, a 20-year-old agenda to force gun control on the people of this country.

I remember well, Mr. Speaker, going back to the 1979 election

when Ralph Goodale was running in the old Assiniboia seat. He'd been the MP for five years; he was the chairman of the committee that was responsible to bring forward legislation. That legislation, Mr. Speaker, is no different than what Allan Rock has brought before this country in 1995 — the same kind of heinous work that the federal Liberals perpetuate on rural Saskatchewan and rural Canada time after time.

And, Mr. Speaker, we should not expect any less from Allan Rock as he goes through this process, because at the end of the day those 99 seats in Ontario and those seats in Montreal and those seats in urban Canada mean more to them, because they don't have the backbone and the gall and the gumption to do something about violent crime in this country. So they'll pass it off on the rest of us to be responsible for their inactivity.

And it is no different, Mr. Speaker, than it was in the years under Pierre Elliott Trudeau, when he pandered to certain segments of this country rather than do something about what needed to be done.

And somehow the Minister of Justice has bought into this. The same kind of political gamesmanship we saw in this Assembly back in 1982 when the now Premier, the then attorney general, marched off to Ottawa, on the instructions of Allan Blakeney and others, and went along with Jean Chrétien and McMurtry and allowed the constitution of this country to be brought home, Mr. Speaker — brought home without property rights being enshrined in it.

And if that had happened, if property rights had been there, this would be a mute point today, Mr. Speaker. We wouldn't be standing in this Assembly having to worry about the rights of citizens in this province.

But in order to get that constitution brought home, Pierre Elliott Trudeau needed certain things. And one of the things he needed was the compliance of the premier of Saskatchewan, the most pre-eminent New Democrat in the country at that time, the man that he had dealt with on the national energy program and a man that he had to have compliance from, if he were to enshrine that constitution without Quebec being signatory.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we know what that history was. We had seen the Government of Saskatchewan very proactive in business. We saw the expropriation of mines. We saw an NDP government that were very active in getting into areas where property rights would be a significant, a significant detriment, Mr. Speaker, to their political course of action.

So it was not unreasonable that the member from Riversdale, the then attorney general, joined with McMurtry and Chrétien to make sure that Trudeau's document could be brought home and that property rights were not enshrined in the constitution of this country.

And we, Mr. Speaker, have paid the price, particularly in western Canada, ever since that day. That was a dark, dark day, and the people of this province spoke very loudly in 1982 about

their opposition to that — very, very loudly.

So what do we have now, Mr. Speaker, brought before this Assembly again? Another political motion from the Minister of Justice — the law partner and friend of the member from Riversdale, probably an adviser back in 1982 when these issues were discussed — that simply allows, that simply allows this Assembly to use weasel words once more that'll lead the members of this Assembly off to Ottawa to a hearing, like sheep to a slaughter.

Because I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that Allan Rock is as hard today as Ralph Goodale and others were back in 1979. And the good folks from Saskatchewan will line themselves up, and they'll appear before the federal Liberal hearing, and they'll smile and they'll nod and they'll send us home packing with our tails between our legs. And the Minister of Justice knows full well, full well, that that will be the case; that this is just simply part of the show for the folks in Toronto and Montreal and Halifax and Vancouver. This is part of the show that the Minister of Justice is going to be leading us to.

So what's the answer? What's the answer, Mr. Speaker? We know how the Liberals are. The Liberal leader in this province, one day she is for gun control; one day she's against it. It all depends how close her Senate seat is, Mr. Speaker. That determines the Liberal attitude in this province, as it does from all of the rest of them that represent the MP slots here today.

An Hon. Member: — Judges.

Mr. Swenson: — Some of them are going to be judges, my colleague says. Some of them are going to get other appointments when they go down in the next federal election, as assuredly they will, because the people of this province do not want them interfering in their private lives like they are proposing.

My colleague from Souris-Cannington has outlined all of the provisions around current gun ownership, gun storage. The member from Cumberland talks about the rich and natural heritage of people in this province because we do hunt and fish, we do protect our livestock, and we have a rich heritage that says that firearms, responsible use of firearms, are part and parcel of our society and our fabric.

(1545)

And it isn't the responsible firearm owner in this province, Mr. Speaker, that is the problem. Now if the Minister of Justice had brought in a motion saying that we are going to bring in legislation that deals with people that use firearms in violent crime, the members of this Assembly would applaud him.

And I'm prepared to go to Ottawa, and I'm prepared to talk to Mr. Rock and say that these are the provisions that should be enacted so that citizens can be protected from those that prey upon others. But does he do that? No, he doesn't.

If he brought a motion into this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that said we should do something with illegal immigrants who are bringing guns into this country, he'd be applauded. Does he do that? No. When the police chief in Toronto says that there's 10,000 illegal immigrants in the city of Toronto walking around packing guns, we should all listen. Does Mr. Rock do anything about that? No.

He says to the farmers and the ranchers and the native people of this province, you should register your guns, and I'll set up a big bureaucracy and I'll charge you hundreds and thousands of dollars to do it; and I'll set in place a whole bunch of bureaucrats who have the power to walk into your home, Mr. Speaker, and seize your property. Police officers don't want it.

But do we hear anybody from the government side in this Assembly speak out on behalf of those people? I see lawyers all over the place over there. For goodness' sakes, amongst the collective wit and wisdom of all the lawyers I see in the NDP benches, surely they could come up with some type of a plan that would protect people in this province.

But do they? No, what they bring forward is another one of these weak-kneed motions by the Minister of Justice who says that I am willing to be part of Allan Rock's parade. For goodness' sakes, Mr. Speaker, these are the same people that say no when an optometrist wants to get out of registration and licensing in this province. And yet here they expect to go before the federal government and say, because it's guns and it's our political problem — instead of medicare — we think that Saskatchewan, that the Territories, should be separate from federal law.

Well, Mr. Speaker, on one hand, because it's medicare and it's Tommy Douglas's legacy, people can't opt out of registration and licensing. But on this side of the equation, because they know how vulnerable they are on the issue of gun control because of the inactivity of the minister, he says that we should have the right to opt out of national registry and licensing.

Mr. Speaker, those kinds of contradictions are why people in this province do not believe the Minister of Justice. That's why thousands of them are signing petitions and letters and forms, and they're saying, for goodness' sakes, do something about it.

It's why the member from Indian Head-Wolseley — and I give him credit — has the gall and the gumption to stand up and say, I'll put my name on a piece of paper. I won't be subjected to Mr. Rock and this charade that he is perpetrating upon Canadian people. I'll put my name where it counts, and I'm not afraid of the consequences.

You know what? He's right, Mr. Speaker. Because that member understands his constituents, and he's doing what his constituents sent him to do -- represent them in the Legislative Assembly. And he isn't afraid. He isn't afraid.

So it's obvious, Mr. Speaker, that this Assembly had best come up with the best solution possible. And that means that if we

truly are going to take those federal Liberals on, there's only one way to do it. And I say that is get them in court, and we fight, and we drag this thing out. And we get them down to the next federal election, Mr. Speaker, so that a lot of them have to pay the price — pay the price that Ralph Goodale did in Assiniboia in 1979, and that is face the responsible gun owners of this country on the campaign trail, and then we'll see how courageous they are.

It's very easy now, Mr. Speaker, at mid-term to do your dirty work, and that's what Allan Rock is doing. Allan Rock is being touted at the next leader of the federal Liberal Party, the next prime minister of Canada whenever Jean Chrétien decides to step down. And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to be part of the process of feathering Allan Rock's political nest. And neither should any member of this political . . . of this Assembly be part of feathering Allan Rock's political nest.

And that's what the Minister of Justice and the NDP are doing. And I do not for the life of me, Mr. Speaker, understand why a political party that had the gumption to expropriate potash mines, that had the gumption to expropriate uranium mines, that had the gumption to go into court for years and years and years and say, this is our course of action, right or wrong, we'll do it . . . we'll use this Legislative Assembly to break contracts. We'll do whatever we need in a legal sense — we'll go to the Supreme Court, because this is our course of action.

And now, Mr. Speaker, when the ideal opportunity presents itself for this NDP government to show as much gumption and as much get-up-and-go to go to the Supreme Court of Canada, as they did when they broke the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) contracts or they broke the judges' contract or when they broke anybody else's contract or when they expropriated a mine, now all of a sudden the minister says, no, follow me off to Ottawa and we'll have our little say and we'll parade before the committee, and then we'll go home with our tail between our legs and we'll accept whatever Mr. Rock foists upon us.

Mr. Speaker, we may lose, we may lose in that court; but I'll tell you what — we'll win in the court of public opinion. And that's where the battle is today. It is in the court of public opinion, and if you lead the way and show the way, even if we ultimately lose that court battle, Mr. Speaker, at least we will have tried, we will have tried instead of being meekly led down the path.

There are a lot of taxpayers in this province, Mr. Speaker, that would see that court challenge and that court fight as a legitimate use of the taxpayers' money, a lot more legitimate than the plane trip to Ottawa that the minister's going to lead us on, and the absolute rejection, in my view, Mr. Speaker, of our point of view because it will not be backed up — it will not be backed up with good, solid legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore feel it's an appropriate time to move an amendment to the motion put forward by the Minister of Justice. And I move, seconded by the member for Moosomin:

That all the words following "Assembly" be deleted and the following substituted:

"pass legislation currently on the order paper of this province which would allow Saskatchewan to opt out of provisions respecting registration and licensing within Bill C-68, An Act respecting Firearms and Other Weapons."

I so move.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1600)

The Speaker: — I thank the members for their indulgence. We wanted to make certain that we were right on the interpretation of this amendment because it could have far-reaching interpretation on other matters on the order paper. So we have decided that it is within the scope of the motion and that the amendment is in order, and the debate will continue concurrently.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that most people across the province will understand the full intent of the amendment. And the intent of the amendment we brought before the Assembly today is just to reinforce, in a stronger fashion, our support of the motion that has been introduced by the Minister of Justice.

What we're basically saying, and what people have been asking us for the last year and a half or so since this debate basically began to unfold and since the federal government and Mr. Rock has revealed his intentions to impose strict gun registration on Canada and on the citizens of Canada, is the fact that this province, while we've stood up, while the Minister of Justice has stood up on many occasions and at many gun rallies to speak out against Mr. Rock's legislation on Bill C-68, we have yet, Mr. Speaker, and even as the Minister of Justice indicated today, we have yet to do anything within this province and within this Legislative Assembly and this body that would reaffirm and basically make it even, I guess, if you will, Mr. Speaker, make it even that much more significant for this Legislative Assembly to pass not just a motion, but to bring forward legislation that would endeavour to remind the federal minister that the provinces also have jurisdiction; that there are areas of responsibility and the provinces have jurisdiction under the constitution within the rights and the freedoms and maintaining those rights and freedoms within their jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues have pointed out, and as we have pointed out in the opposition caucus for the past number of weeks, the fact that we continue to receive petitions from people across this province voicing their concern and voicing their opposition to Bill C-68 is an indication that it is not an issue that is just confined to a few certain areas in this province, whether it's down in the south-east or an area that I represent, or whether it's in the south-west or the North.

And the member from Cumberland just spoke to us about the aboriginal community and the fact that the use of guns in their lifestyle is a way of providing for their families, not only in providing a means of revenue through the pelts that they would get from animals and sell, Mr. Speaker, but also in providing food for their families. And also many other hunters and avid sportsmen across the province of Saskatchewan certainly enjoy the sportsmanship of hunting, and they certainly enjoy the feasting on the bounties of their hunting, Mr. Speaker.

Basically what we have is individuals who feel very strongly that while it is important that we look at ways of managing and controlling crime in this country, not only in Saskatchewan but in Canada in general, it's also important that we recognize that the criminal activity across this country — I think if you did a survey — is implemented and undertaken by such a small minority of Canadians or even individuals within Saskatchewan.

I believe one RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) officer indicated to us, or indicated in a letter to the editor, that of the last 13 murder investigations that he had been involved in before he retired only three of them involved the use of a firearm. The other 10 involved different . . . either beatings or knifings or different circumstances, Mr. Speaker.

So I guess it's very important for us to really take the time to look at the broad perspective of what it means to implement Bill C-68.

And let me say again, Mr. Speaker, no one on this side of the House is opposed to bringing forward legislation that really puts responsibility back into our . . . into, I guess, the . . . into crime and to criminality and that we place responsibility upon people for their actions.

And certainly, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice and I have discussed some of these changes and some of the areas where I feel we need to place responsibility. In the area of the young offenders, Mr. Speaker, we've talked about the fact that maybe parents need to be more responsible as well. And when you see young people as young as 10 and 12 years old committing vicious crimes, Mr. Speaker, it's important that those . . . that parents or individuals who are supposed to be responsible for young offenders also accept some of the responsibility.

But what Mr. Rock is doing, he's trying to tell us that if we just implement this legislation . . . and as you can see and as you've noted over the past number of weeks the number of petitions we've brought forward, people do not believe that just by passing a piece of legislation or passing a Bill in the federal House that we will indeed reduce criminal activity or reduce vicious and hideous criminal crimes, or crimes of murder or assault upon the people of Canada, or indeed upon the people of Saskatchewan or any jurisdiction across . . . in this great nation of ours.

And that's why we feel on this side of the Assembly, in our caucus, that it's imperative that we take the time in this

Assembly to do more than just pass motions, but also to address some of the fundamental issues like the opting-out clause or property rights.

And where we can go back to the debate that took place prior to 1982 and the present Premier was involved with the former prime minister, Pierre Trudeau, and the present Prime Minister, Jean Chrétien, in their implementation of bringing back a constitution to this country which didn't include all the jurisdictions or all the regions of this nation, and as a result we have an ongoing debate in this country that still has to be resolved. And because of that ongoing debate, we find one of the provinces in this country would dare to tell Canada that they really don't belong.

And so I think, Mr. Speaker, there are more pressing issues that we should be dealing with, issues within the province. Certainly there are national issues that we should be dealing with that I believe are more important, are more significant to the people of Canada, rather than just bringing forward another Bill.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think a number of MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) have already indicated that even the purposes of the past gun laws that were brought forward by the past minister of Justice, the Hon. Kim Campbell, who . . . and for all intents and purposes we know, Mr. Speaker, we know what happened to Ms. Campbell with her endeavour to change the gun laws in this country — she is no longer the Justice minister, and for that fact, no longer the prime minister of this country, and even the leader of her party.

But, Mr. Speaker, what we do have, we do have another minister who has come to power and decided that it is important to continue on, to push forward legislation that was introduced some 20 years ago and to try and finally implement . . .

And there's no doubt in my mind, Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt in my mind, that Mr. Rock will be intent on pushing this legislation forward, even though he's using a smokescreen of committee hearings in Ottawa over the next month to listen to issues and to listen to concerns. Even today on the news, Mr. Rock said that registration would not change, that they would continue to implement a registry of guns across Canada.

And one has to wonder, who will be lining up at the doors first to register their guns? Mr. Speaker, will the individuals . . .

And there are many businesses across this nation and certainly in this province and in my area that are going to be drastically hurt if Bill C-68 is implemented. I wonder if Ken and Marshall McLeod of K & M Shooting Shop in Moosomin . . . how they're feeling today as we get closer and closer to the implementation of Bill C-68, and the business that they have built up and the clientele that they have built up over the past number of years.

Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt, in talking with them, that they've seen and experienced a significant reduction in clientele or traffic through their shooting shop because of Bill C-68.

What about the Kovach boys in the Kipling area, with their gun collection? And they have worked diligently and they've worked long hours and they've worked hard to basically pick up and find old guns. And what they have designed is a gun collection where they've found guns that would have been used in wars in the past, Mr. Speaker, and built a nice gun collection for themselves.

And yes, Mr. Speaker, the minister could say, well in some form or other we may be able to accommodate individuals like these businesses or gun collectors. But at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, it's not just a matter of accommodating them today, it's the fact that they have spent hours, they have spent time, they've spent energy, they've spent money, to collect these guns, and what value do the guns have that they have collected if Bill C-68 goes through? What value do the guns that the McLeod brothers have in their shop have if Bill C-68 is implemented? And who is going to compensate them for the loss?

And I think that is one of the real, significant factors — who compensates people across this nation who have purchased guns for sportsmanship, or whether it's used in hunting or whether it's just to have a .22 around the house to get rid of rodents on the farm, as most people across this province have and have used over the years?

Mr. Speaker, it just seems to me that Mr. Rock — I'm not sure who he's talking to but no doubt he's probably listening to the people down in Toronto, listening to a number of people in Montreal, listening to people in Vancouver. And the reality is, Mr. Speaker, when Bill C-68 is implemented, basically what he does to a majority of Canadians is makes them criminals unless they take the time to walk down to their RCMP office and register all their guns.

And here again, Mr. Speaker, I reiterate what many speakers have said before me: the law-abiding citizens of this province and of this country will probably take the time, but the reality is at the end of the day I'm not sure if very many people will continue to own guns.

Because while Mr. Rock and the Prime Minister and the federal Liberals will continue to tell us that no, they are not out to take away firearms, that it's just a matter of controlling the sale and it's just a matter of knowing where the firearms are, the facts are even in this province when fees were put into regulations, regulations and fee increases take place on an annual basis in fact if not on a daily basis.

And all of those fee increases are made through order in council; they don't come before this Legislative Assembly. And most people don't realize the cost of their auto insurance or other fees that they may be facing until they go and renew that driver's licence or they go and renew their licence plates, or they're maybe hit with a minor offence like possibly speeding and parking in a no-parking zone or whatever the offence may be, Mr. Speaker. No one realizes how much these fees have increased. And in this province we have seen them increase

drastically over the last three years.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt that once Bill C-68 passes, once the fee structure is in place, once a penalty is in place for an individual if they do not register their firearms, Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt within a year or so those fees that Mr. Rock talks about as being minimal today could rise dramatically.

And what I've found in talking to gun owners across this province and people in my own constituency, individuals have basically said that at the end of the day they probably will not own any firearms because they are not going to take the time nor will they take and pour money into an object that basically they use a week or two weeks of the year when they're out hunting for big game across the province of Saskatchewan.

And so one has to ask, and that's why we suggest to the Minister of Justice, that we pass legislation in this Assembly dealing with these two issues of the opting-out clause and property rights. And that we also pass a motion or pass a Bill in this Legislative Assembly, saying to the federal minister, that you may go ahead and pass your Bill C-68 but in the province of Saskatchewan we already have a piece of legislation passed that says this province will opt out. If Quebec can opt out or choose to opt out of Canada and ask its people, then maybe it's time we asked the residents of Saskatchewan. Maybe it's time we passed legislation that said we will allow the people of Saskatchewan that voice.

And it's not really appropriate to say, well at the next federal election they'll be judged, because quite frankly, they probably will win the next federal election. They may not have anything west of Winnipeg as far as MPs, but they don't need any MPs west of Winnipeg to form government in Canada.

(1615)

So it's very imperative that in Saskatchewan we stand up for the interests of the men and women who support us. It's very important that we stand up and voice the concerns of that community out there that view the fact of having guns or owning guns as a right and a responsibility. They treat their guns responsibly, and they use their guns in a responsible fashion.

And, Mr. Speaker, no doubt even in Saskatchewan, we do have groups that would be opposed to changing the present Bill. No doubt we've got groups that would suggest that Mr. Rock is right on. But the fact is, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, if Bill C-68 passes as it is presently, in its present form, it will still not create an environment that makes it that much more healthy for individuals who are afraid of being accosted by someone with a gun at sometime in the future because there are so many guns available.

And in fact just for an example, Mr. Speaker, I believe it was just last week on the . . . it was on the news about . . . I believe it was a 14-year-old boy, designed a bomb from information he

received through the Internet. And if you think that that's possible right now . . . and we just have to look to the south of us and into the city of Oklahoma and the tragedy that occurred there when individuals decided that they were going to get even with somebody.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, there isn't a law made in this Legislative Assembly or in this country that will basically protect people from individuals who may be out to just vent their anger or their frustration against others around them, without caring about who they may inflict that harm on, as we've seen in Oklahoma and the numbers of children that were affected by that bomb blast.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's imperative, and I believe that it really is imperative, that we take the time to address this issue here in this Legislative Assembly. And by doing that, Mr. Speaker, what we do is we say to the Minister of Justice and to my colleagues and the Liberal representatives who will be going to Ottawa to address their concerns with the committee, we basically say to them: here is the support of the Legislative Assembly. Here is legislation that gives you the authority to go to Ottawa and indicate to Mr. Rock that Saskatchewan is not willing to just sit back, as the Minister of Justice has indicated, and wait until Bill C-68 is implemented, and then we'll proceed from there.

Mr. Speaker, I think that reeks with folly because by the time Bill C-68 is implemented, it will be too late to introduce any legislation that will be able to combat it.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, it's very important indeed that we take the time to bring forward legislation right now. And we do have a couple more pieces of legislation in this Assembly, on the floor of this Assembly, that will address the major concerns that we have raised in this House, that my colleagues and I have, and that people have spoken of throughout this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why the government wouldn't take a serious look at these pieces of legislation and allow them to come forward for debate, and even, Mr. Speaker, suggest possibly if there's an amendment or two needed that would make them stronger and strengthen them. Mr. Speaker, I don't know why the Minister of Justice will not take the time. And I invite him to do that before the committee heads to Ottawa. I invite the Minister of Justice to look at these pieces of legislation that we have in this Assembly and to bring them forward for debate; and in fact, Mr. Speaker, to allow them to pass through this Assembly as a means of giving him that much more authority. And this is the committee that would leave this Assembly that much more authority to go and address this issue.

After all, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . and that's right. My colleague said, while they may be passed in this Assembly, they don't necessarily have to be proclaimed at the time they're passed. But it would send a message to the federal minister that this province is serious in protecting the gun owners in this province — serious in protecting the tourism and

the outfitters, a number of them who have been drastically affected by individuals from other countries who have already cancelled trips to this province for hunting.

It would protect the hunter who would go out hunting. It also would protect revenue that the Minister of Finance is looking for. Because, Mr. Speaker, can you imagine the type of reductions in revenue that the Department of Natural Resources or Environment or Resource Management will experience this year as individuals just say, well that's the last straw. I didn't get any support; I'm not going to buy that licence; I'm not going to go out and do any hunting this year. And licences are a substantial revenue bearer to this province, to the province of Saskatchewan, as well as bringing tourism into this province.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important, and I certainly want to stand with my colleague, the member from Thunder Creek, in his amendment to the motion where we're asking the Justice minister of this province to indeed do more than just stand in the Assembly and stand at gun rallies across this province and do lip-service, but indeed to take the time to show that this Assembly has the ability to bring forward legislation that would give more strength and more resolve, and would indicate that the committee leaving this province to go and make their submissions to the federal committee that the federal minister has put forward, that this province and this Legislative Assembly is willing to work for the people that have actually voted and elected each one of us in here, that we're willing to go to Ottawa and say to Mr. Rock: Mr. Rock, we believe you're wrong. We believe all the excuses you've given for your piece of legislation are unfounded. We certainly agree with you that we must address the seriousness of crime, but we believe the way you're going about it is not appropriate and will not address the issue. In fact all you are doing is making law-abiding citizens criminals.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I stand here today in support of a common sense approach to firearms and the respect for firearms owners and a common sense approach to the way we handle criminals in this country, and indeed that we should take the two issues, separate them, and make a better Canada and a better province of Saskatchewan.

I encourage the Minister of Justice to now indeed heed the suggestion we brought forward and allow our amendment to be brought to this Assembly to be voted on, to be passed, to strengthen the resolve of this Assembly and the province of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — Mr. Speaker, I beg your forgiveness for the voice that you're going to be hearing for the next while.

I stand to say that I will not be supporting the amendment but rather the original motion. The idea of shifting to property rights in this particular issue is a convoluted one that's difficult for the opposition members to present, but I suspect in some areas of the world they'll be able to do that.

What interests me the most about this particular issue and why I stand to support what is there is that in looking at the statistics to analyse whether there is any rational reason or not for going into gun registration or firearm registration, if you look at statistics from other places in the world, you'll find that there isn't much rationale anywhere.

One of the places is Great Britain, where in 1988 they implemented some very strict regulations for gun ownership, and so they've had approximately five, six years of statistics on which you base what took place.

In that case, the legal gun ownership dropped by approximately 20 per cent, 21 or 22 per cent. But if you take a look at firearm . . . robberies where firearms were used, there was about a 100 per cent increase over that same period.

So you have in place a law that says it is far more difficult to own a gun, and you have the actual use of that gun in a specific crime doubling. You can also look at the impact of violent crime in Britain, and it shows somewhat similar ideas.

I want to point out a few things that are taking place in the province of Saskatchewan that indicate where people come from because I think — and on this issue — because I think to a large degree the rationale behind this issue is based on the income level that people have. That is to say, that if you are able to purchase some tickets for a trip to the sun in the middle of the winter and spend three weeks to a month or so down there, it is highly likely that with that level of income that you won't be a gun owner, and you won't be interested in seeing other people own firearms.

But if you are someone who earns a living in the blue-collar area, as a blue-collar worker who will not earn sufficient funds in order to make these type of major, extended holidays, you'll find that they will have a larger ownership of firearms and will use that as part of their recreation. And so you see a division that occurs.

I have here, Mr. Speaker, a letter to the editor. Actually it's a letter to the *Leader-Post* editor on the 24th of this year. It's from an individual that I know fairly well since I ran against him in an election, Neil Currie. He says:

I was raised in rural Saskatchewan, here in Turtleford, hunting prairie chickens, partridges, ducks, and shooting gophers. I now own two guns, a single-shot .22 and a single-shot 12-gauge. (And) I see no problem in registering them.

Mr. Speaker, Neil ran for the Liberals, and the thing that he doesn't say about himself is that he's a former civil servant living in Turtleford with, what I would expect to be, a fairly large pension. And paying a hundred or \$200 to register his guns would not be a problem for him because he was able to participate in an election without any difficulty financially, as far as I could determine. And that indicates to me, Mr. Speaker, that in this particular case, it isn't a bother if you have lots of

money.

There's another item that is in the *Leader-Post* of, oh, about the 17th of this month. It's a column by Doug Cuthand. And I want to say that Doug is probably in the same category as Neil Currie, although I don't know him that well. But I feel that he's . . . He indicates in the column that he writes that he's an educated urbanite, so far removed from rural Saskatchewan and the people that he indicates that he's writing for, that he doesn't even understand the issues or recognize where the problems are.

In fact he goes further than some other people in saying that, as I would like to say, that the native people in the province of Saskatchewan need a den mother to look after their weapons, and he says:

We need gun control legislation including registration, safe storage and safety courses. And it may come down to storing guns at safe collection sites, such as band offices or local RCMP detachments.

Mr. Speaker, it's an indication in my mind that individuals who have taken the time to look at what is the basis of this legislation would say that there is no basis for it. And those individuals that respond from a gut reaction or what they feel, will respond basis their economic . . . and status in the community, and the richer you are and the more likelihood that you are as a professional, the more likelihood you will be to oppose gun legislation.

And I'd like to say that my belief for that to occur is the fact that most people are taking what they view the world off the TV, and not from the reality and the real facts that are there, and therefore they respond according to the TV shows and the rest of it.

Again, Mr. Speaker, in saying that this legislation has a negative impact in rural Saskatchewan and I believe no one can demonstrate where it is going to be an efficient or effective . . . or even legislation that's workable.

I'm going to be opposing the amendment, supporting the motion that was originally put forward, because this motion removes the problems and leaves in the Act those things that I think are necessary for Canada as a whole to implement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1630)

Mr. Keeping: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to rise here today, and I support the main motion.

Mr. Speaker, I've lived in north-eastern Saskatchewan all of my life. I'm a farmer and former hunter and a former pasture manager. And as a pasture manager and a farmer, I have needed firearms very many times. And I could relate many instances to

you where we needed firearms and needed them very badly.

And, Mr. Speaker, I remember one time when I was a pasture manager and riding in the rain, and I rode up to one of the cowboys that was working with me and he told me of a young cow that was over the hill, further to the west, that was paralysed, seemed to be paralysed in the back legs.

So I rode back over there. It was out of my way but I rode back over there and I found this cow alive and covered, literally covered, with coyotes eating her — eating her alive. And I didn't know what to do. It was a very hard thing to see. The coyotes just ran off far enough that I couldn't throw anything at them. The young cow was alive and crawling along, and here I was with my horse, over two miles away from my corrals and my office.

So I scared them away as good as I could and rode hard into the corral. I got my 30-30 and drove back out with my truck. And sure enough, when I came over the hill, here they were again, eight or ten of them at least, eating this poor animal alive. Needless to say, I shot as much as I could, not very well, but I managed to kill a few, and I had to shoot the cow as well of course.

My point is that many times in rural Saskatchewan over the course of my life we've needed the firearm, and needed it very bad and needed it very real.

Almost every household in my area, as you drive in rural Saskatchewan where I live, has firearms in their house and know how to use them. And we have a very low crime rate, extremely low; probably one of the lowest in Canada, I would imagine.

I know how my constituents feel on this issue, Mr. Speaker, because everywhere I go farmers speak to me about it, business people speak to me about it, the RCMP in the local area speak to me about it, men and women speak to me, women's clubs, men's groups.

They all say, can't we do something about this insanity? Surely there's something we can do, Mr. Keeping, surely there's something we can do. They say, can't we stop this waste of taxpayers' money?

My area of the province is a very good area to hunt in and we have a lot of hunters up there that come into the area, but we also have a lot of local hunters and trappers in that area. And let me repeat again: the crime rate in that area is extremely low — extremely low. And this is what people don't understand. With the cut-backs, the very real and very hurtful cut-backs that the federal Liberal government has been imposing in their budget, how can they at the same time do something that is not going to do any good at all and yet is going to be expensive to ordinary people?

It's amazing to ordinary people — and they can't understand how this can happen, how that in this day and age we can waste

money — the Liberal government in Ottawa is planning to waste money in this way. Everyone, everyone without exception, knows that it's not going to do any good at all. Anybody inclined to use a firearm for any illegal act is not going to register it, so what good will registration do?

Everyone is angry about it and everyone has been talking to their local Member of Parliament, and me, as MLA, to ask if there isn't something we can do. I have written a letter to the federal Minister of Justice. I wrote him several times actually; I wrote him asking . . . and one of the questions I asked him was: surely there's some way, Mr. Minister, that Saskatchewan can opt out of this plan because it's no good in our provinces. It may . . . it's no good in our province. It may be good somewhere, but it's no good here.

What we need, Mr. Speaker, is enforcement of the laws we have now. Everyone I talk to agrees that what we need is the laws that are now to be enforced, and what we don't need is more laws and more rules. Mr. Speaker, I support the main motion and I will be voting against the amendment. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langford: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak in support of the amendment brought forward by the member from Saskatoon Fairview and seconded by the member from Indian Head-Wolseley.

In my constituency, Mr. Speaker, I've talked to many farmers, wildlife federation people, and they totally have told me that this Bill C-68 was not one that they wanted us to support. And they gave me a lot of reasons why.

One is they have . . . Indians, they go out hunting; that's a way of life. They've got their guns. Their revolvers or handguns are registered now; so they say, we don't need more legislation.

Farmers also, Mr. Speaker, in my area are also saying look, we have guns, we've got legislation in, and we are definitely not in support of Bill C-68. They've asked me to talk to the minister and put support behind to go to the federal minister and ask him to drop this Bill C-68.

I think, Mr. Speaker, also the people in my constituency are very frustrated with the Liberal government. Mr. Speaker, our Liberal MP from Prince Albert-Churchill has not been supporting our wildlife federation or the farmers, so they've asked me to stand up for them.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion and I will not be supporting the amendment. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Thompson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I only want to say a few words in support of the motion by the hon. member from Saskatoon Fairview and the member from Indian Head-Wolseley. I want to support this motion, Mr.

Speaker, and I want to oppose the amendment proposed by the hon. member from Thunder Creek.

Pretty well everything has been said today on this Bill. I just want to make a few remarks to put them on the record. And first of all, why are we dealing with Bill 68? Well Bill 68 is supposed to take firearms out of the hands of the criminals. And I want to just indicate that we can have all the registration that we want of firearms and if a person is so inclined to use a firearm in a criminal offence, registration most certainly is not going to stop that individual. There's many ways that they will get these firearms. They can get them through the black markets; firearms can be constructed; they will be stolen. And even if they steal the weapon and it's registered, that's not going to stop anything.

Bill C-38 is going to create a large bureaucracy and many hardships. If one was to stop and just realize how many firearms there are in Canada, some homes, some households, would have six, seven firearms. Some of them would be owned by different members of the family, some of the members not even living in the homes, but there would be millions and millions of firearms that would have to be registered and different figures have been thrown around as to how much it's going to cost to register these firearms.

Well, I suspect that the cost is going to run into the millions and millions of dollars. We now have registration for firearms. Any person who purchases a firearm in Canada has to have a firearms acquisition certificate. No one can go out and buy a firearm in Canada . . . and that's been in effect since the early 1980s. You always have to get the certificate before you can purchase a firearm.

So I just think that there are so many regulations that are in place. And if you go through a federal park, you go into a park, you register your gun, you have it sealed. That seal is not broken until you go out the other side of the park and the park warden will take the seal out.

So there are lots of regulations for firearms but those regulations do not apply to individuals who are going to go out and commit a crime or commit an offence. It's going to cause many hardships, as was stated today, with Northerners. It's going to cause many hardships with rural folks who live on the farms, and the sportsman, and an added expense.

And it's going to be tough for enforcement officers to try and enforce that. It's an Act that is going to be just about impossible to enforce and it's going to cause a lot of hard feelings between the officers who will have to enforce it.

I just want to indicate that some of the regulations are going to be so severe. If you have your firearms, you have to have them in one room; you have to have them locked up. Your ammunition, you have to have it in another room and they also have to be under lock and key.

And this just doesn't even make any sense, some of these

regulations. If somebody is coming into your yard or coming into your house, going to break in, you have to get into one room, you have to find the right key and unlock where you have your firearm stored, then you have to go into another place to get the ammunition to use it. And the same applies up North in the wooded area where in the springtime, when bears come breaking into your home, you have to make sure that you have that weapon and you know how to use it and that it's accessible.

I can think of up in the far north country where trappers and commercial fishermen who have . . . they buy a firearm and it stays up in isolation in their trappers' cabins and their fishing cabins, and that weapon stays there, or that firearm. It's used in the springtime when they're out trapping. They're in a tent along the rivers, the bears are coming out of hibernation, they're hungry and they're dangerous, and they most certainly have to have that firearm with them at all times and ammunition to use it with.

I think, Mr. Speaker, what we need now more than ever is more education. We have to teach people how to handle their firearms. It takes skill and knowledge to use guns safely. And I think that this is something that we have to take a look at, more so than registration of firearms; but it's just education and how to handle firearms.

As far as the violent crimes that happen in our country or any place around the world, the majority of them are . . . violent crimes are committed with knives — that's one of the biggest offenders — and other instruments other than weapons.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate quite clearly that I support this motion by the Attorney General and I just ask all members also to support the motion. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1645)

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased . . . I know the time is short, but I just want to get in to say a few words on this resolution. I was pleased to find when I returned today that this resolution had been put forward because this is a very important issue.

I want to note, Mr. Speaker, that I found it quite funny that the Liberal leader . . . you know, when the legislation was introduced initially in Ottawa, she agreed with it. And she came home to Saskatchewan and now, well, maybe she doesn't agree with it. I think it depends which way the wind's blowing. I think that's a very important point to note for all people in this province, how Liberals work together, saying what's appropriate at the time and — wherever they are — whatever's good for the moment.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to know where our federal Liberal MPs are in this. Why are they not standing up for the majority of people in Saskatchewan? I suppose maybe they aren't because they saw what happened to some of their colleagues

when they didn't in Ottawa. They got stripped of all their duties in the legislature by the Prime Minister. A great way to act — if you don't toe the law, especially on an issue that's unpopular, you'll get stripped of your jobs.

Mr. Speaker, that goes a good long way to say how this Bill is being operated in Ottawa and the unilateral, almost what I would call dictatorial, acts that are coming out of our Liberal government, the federal government. Where is Mr. Goodale? I was at a SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) meeting, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Goodale said that \$85 million was going to be the cost to administer this gun legislation — 85 million. Could you imagine if they put the \$85 million into policing and forget about making criminals out of honest people who think they shouldn't have to register the guns?

What about the grandmother? Someone came up to me the other day and said, my mother is 90 years old, and I know there's a couple of guns somewhere in the basement. If she doesn't register them, she's a criminal. And why should I pay to register them? And they're family heirlooms, so we don't want to destroy them.

Mr. Speaker, there's a number of these types of things: the collectors, the honest hunters. And as other speakers have said, that makes absolutely no sense, and I think it's important that we have the option, as this motion says, to opt out of any legislation with this regard. It would also give the provinces who decided to stay in . . . it would give the country and the federal government a chance to compare whether or not the legislation is actually deterring crime and criminals.

An Hon. Member: — Pilot project.

Mr. Upshall: — It would be like a pilot project, as my colleague said. What a better way . . . and what basically what the federal Liberal government is saying, Mr. Speaker, is the province of Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatchewan, the wildlife federation, the SARFO (Saskatchewan Association of Responsible Firearm Owners), and all the police organizations, they don't know what they're talking about. These people don't know what they're talking about when they say registration won't stop criminals.

Dictatorship in Ottawa — I don't think that's what we need at this point in time, Mr. Speaker. I certainly want to support this motion. I don't think the amendment that has been put forward will serve any purpose, so we have to get to the main motion to send a united voice to Ottawa, saying that we in Saskatchewan believe in democratic system. And this democratic system . . . maybe there should be some checks and balances, and let's allow provinces to put forward that check and balance to make sure the legislation is doing what it's supposed to do.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words . . . and I want to say one or two more things. I want to compliment the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation and their Canadian partners on the stand they've taken on this issue, the common-sense

stand. I want to compliment the Saskatchewan Association of Responsible Firearm Owners to compliment them in the stance that they've taken. And I want to compliment the Minister of Justice and all my colleagues and the police associations of Saskatchewan for taking a firm stand, a logical stand, and saying to Ottawa, we don't need a dictatorship telling us what to do in Saskatchewan. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today to speak this time on the amendment to the motion by the Justice minister. I'd just like to note that while we were busy debating this particular issue, I received a number more petitions. And these petitions in particular deal with the legislation in question and the amendment, that being the legislation currently on the order paper to deal with Bill C-68.

And as I'm sure every member in the House has heard the prayer, I would like to read the whole issue on this page dealing with this particular petition. And it reads:

To the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in legislature assembled:

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly sheweth:

That the federal government has tabled gun-control legislation for rifles, shotguns, and handguns;

That the proposed changes are overly restrictive and unnecessary considering legitimate firearm owners register their guns, follow stringent regulations, and use firearms for sport, recreation, and protection of livestock;

And that it is imperative that the province of Saskatchewan be allowed to enforce regulations regarding firearms that are fair, equitable, and reasonable for Saskatchewan without the interference of the federal government;

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to support Bill 31, An Act to amend the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code (Property Rights) which will benefit all property owners in Saskatchewan, and specifically firearm owners, in order to halt the federal Liberal government from infringing upon the rights of Saskatchewan people.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

The prayer part, I have been standing in my place, Mr. Speaker, every day, reading that, dealing with Bill 31. Today these particular petitions come from the White Fox, Nipawin, Cumberland House, Garrick, Sturgis areas. There's so many of them, Mr. Speaker. I can't find them all: Endeavour, Kelvington, and — that place that the Premier likes to refer to

every so often when he wishes to refer to some place in rural Saskatchewan — Preeceville, Mr. Speaker. Also from the Neudorf community, a considerable number from Neudorf.

Mr. Speaker, all of these citizens, as well as the others that we have presented throughout the entire session and those that we have yet to present, all support some action, Mr. Speaker, by the provincial government, by this legislature. They're calling for support of Bill No. 31, which is part of the amendment as moved by my colleague from Thunder Creek.

I'd like to talk a little bit about Bill 31, Mr. Speaker. Bill 31 was the first piece of legislation that I introduced dealing with the firearm issue, Mr. Speaker. And the title of that particular piece of legislation is An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code (Property Rights). And what it deals with is placing property rights within the Canadian constitution, to allow Saskatchewan's Human Rights Code to deal with property rights in this province, that it's a right under the Human Rights Code and that the Human Rights Commission would therefore be empowered to deal with property and property rights.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of the avenues which would provide an additional framework of protection for Saskatchewan's firearms owners. Now the government members have indicated that we do not have jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker, that the federal law has paramountcy over Saskatchewan law. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have a written opinion from the Legislative Law Clerk that states otherwise. The government, the ministers of Justice back and forth have not yet provided any type of legal opinion, other than their own verbal opinions, that this is not the case.

The member from Regina Churchill Downs continues to say that section 92 of the constitution where it deals with exclusive powers of the province doesn't really mean that the provinces have exclusive power, that they only have jurisdiction in those areas if the federal government wants to allow them to have jurisdiction.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if the drafters of the Canadian constitution in 1867 and again in 1982 had meant that the federal government had jurisdiction in those areas, they would have said so in the constitution. If you look at section 91 of the constitution, it says, yes, these are the areas in which the federal government has jurisdiction. But in section 92, it says, exclusive powers of the provinces.

So, Mr. Speaker, in the Bills before this Assembly, Bills 31 and 48, deal with section 92 of the Canadian constitution in providing protections for Canadian citizens, that they should have the right to hold property, to own property, Mr. Speaker. And in property we don't mean just real properties, but we mean chattels and movables, Mr. Speaker, as well as real estate.

So, Mr. Speaker, firearms would fall into that category. And the amendment, as moved by my colleague from Thunder Creek, is talking about these particular pieces of legislation. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe that they are very reasonable pieces of

legislation. They have the support of the many, many . . . the hundreds and thousands of people that have signed the petitions, Mr. Speaker, in support of property rights protected by Saskatchewan law.

The first Bill, no. 31, deals with the Human Rights Code and placing property rights in such. The second Bill, no. 48, Mr. Speaker, deals with an amendment to the Canadian constitution specifically, utilizing the notwithstanding clause as the vehicle to put property rights into section no. 7 of the Canadian constitution, such that it would read: life, liberty, property, and protection of the person. No, that's not quite it . . . anyways, that you can't be arrested without due process, etc.

The minister is somewhat shaking his head there that . . . Security of person, that's what it is: so life, liberty, property, and security of the person, Mr. Speaker. And this would again allow Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan firearms owners, and indeed all movables and chattels . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Why is the member on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — I've been listening with care and enormous interest to what the member from Souris-Cannington is saying. He's spoken before, and I believe having done so, he's thereby limited to the strict parameters of the amendment which is really fairly narrow. It does not, I think, include a wide-ranging discussion of the merits, which are considerable, of the motion moved by the Attorney General.

The Speaker: — Order. I have listened very carefully to the member from Souris-Cannington, and although the member makes a good point of order . . . because I was going to interrupt but not on the same point of order. I think the member's point of order is not in order. But I would ask the member not to get into details of the two Bills, but on the principle as to why the passing of those two Bills is a good amendment. So I don't think the member's point of order is well taken.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed the reason why it would be proper for this Assembly to pass these two Bills, nos. 31 and 48, is that it would provide that protection that the firearms owning public of Saskatchewan is very desirous of. They wish to have some form of protection provided by the Saskatchewan legislature, by the Government of Saskatchewan, for their property. And these particular Bills, Mr. Speaker, that are on the order paper today would indeed provide that type of protection. It would reinforce, Mr. Speaker, those provisions of the Canadian constitution which are already there.

When we're dealing with the Canadian constitution, Mr. Speaker; we're talking about a very nebulous group of laws that need to be interpreted, Mr. Speaker, that continuously are being read and reread by the Parliament of Canada and by the courts of Canada including the Supreme Court.

The particular pieces of legislation that are on the order paper

or that this motion deals with, Mr. Speaker, would clarify our jurisdiction over property and over firearms, Mr. Speaker, in the province of Saskatchewan. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, that passing these two particular pieces of legislation are very important to the firearms owners of this province. It's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that another piece of legislation was unable to be carried forward, but perhaps the government members would be interested in dealing with that particular piece of legislation.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian constitution allows in section 92 for both property rights and for the Human Rights Code to be the exclusive jurisdiction of the provinces. So in passing these two Bills, Mr. Speaker, with the approval of the Assembly, it would allow us that protection.

And, Mr. Speaker, I understand though that the government members are very reluctant to deal with these two pieces of legislation because they feel that somehow or another we are providing too broad of a stroke. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree with that. If they would carefully look at these two particular pieces of legislation, they would see that it's narrowly defined to what kinds of properties are being talked about and, in passing, that it also clearly states that firearms are an example of the kinds of properties that these particular pieces of legislation are dealing with.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the government opposite and the members opposite wish to deal with the federal legislation, but they seem to be unable to determine how best to do so and what would be the best vehicles within this legislature to provide that.

The Speaker: — Order. It now being 5 o'clock this House stands recessed until 7 o'clock this evening.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.