

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present on behalf of residents of the communities of Estevan and Benson. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to cancel any severance payments to Jack Messer and to immediately call an independent public inquiry to find all the facts surrounding the Channel Lake fiasco.

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

I so present.

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

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to save the Plains Health Centre by enacting legislation to prevent the closure, and by providing adequate funding to the Regina Health District so that the essential services provided at the Plains may be continued.

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

These petitions come from my constituency, Mr. Speaker, the towns of Redvers, Maryfield, and Bellegarde. I so present.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With petitions as well to present to this Assembly. And reading the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to save the Plains Health Centre by enacting legislation to prevent the closure, and providing adequate funding to the Regina Health District so that the essential services provided at the Plains may be continued.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitions are signed by individuals from the Redvers and Wauchope areas of the province.

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition to present. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to cancel any severance payments to Jack Messer and to immediately call an independent public inquiry to find all the facts surrounding the Channel Lake fiasco.

As is in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

The communities involved, Mr. Speaker, are Coleville, Kindersley, and Flaxcombe. I so present.

**Mr. Heppner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to present a petition. The petition deals with concern over the severance payment to Jack Messer and requests an independent public inquiry into the facts surrounding the Channel Lake fiasco. And these are signed by the good people of Turtleford.

**Mr. Gantfoer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a petition to present. The concerns in the petition are related to the severance payments to Mr. Jack Messer, and calling for an immediate, independent public inquiry. Signatures on this petition, Mr. Speaker, are primarily from the area around St. Brieux.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition to present today from Prince Albert and Shellbrook.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to cancel any severance payments to Jack Messer and to immediately call an independent public inquiry to find all the facts surrounding the Channel Lake fiasco.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

**Mr. McLane:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition on behalf of people of Saskatchewan.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to save the Plains Health Centre by enacting legislation to prevent the closure, and by providing adequate funding to the Regina Health District so that the essential services provided at the Plains may be continued.

Mr. Speaker, this petition has been signed by the people in Assiniboia, and of course that's the home of those people that were in last night.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. Now the hon. member will recognize of course that he won't want to engage in debate in the presentation of petitions. Next petition.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy today to present the petition on behalf of the people begging for relief. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to reach necessary agreements with other levels of government to fund the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway in Saskatchewan so that work can begin in 1998, and to set out a time frame for the ultimate completion of the project with or without federal assistance.

As in duty bound, your petitioners ever pray.

These folks all come from the community of Piapot, Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Osika:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I present a petition on behalf of people from Pilot Butte and east side of Regina. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to save the Plains Health Centre by enacting legislation to prevent the closure, and by providing adequate funding to the Regina Health District so that the essential services provided at the Plains may be continued.

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

I so present.

**Mr. Hillson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also present petitions:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to save the Plains Health Centre by enacting legislation to prevent its closure, and by providing adequate funding to the Regina Health District so that essential services provided at the Plains may be continued.

Mr. Speaker, your petitioners come from Pilot Butte and Balgonie.

**Mr. McPherson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join with my colleagues today in presenting petitions regarding the closure of the Plains hospital. The prayer is:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to save the Plains Health Centre by enacting legislation to prevent the closure, and by providing adequate funding to the Regina Health District so that the essential services provided at the Plains may be continued.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed the petitions are all from the Assiniboia area of the province.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present petitions. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to save the Plains Health Centre by enacting legislation to prevent the closure, and by providing adequate funding to the Regina Health District so that the essential services provided at the Plains may be continued.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that presented the petitions are primarily from Regina here, and I so present.

#### 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 on the following matters: funding the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway; saving the Plains Health Centre; and cancelling severance payments to Jack Messer and calling for an independent public inquiry.

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING, SELECT, AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

##### Standing Committee on Crown Corporations

**Ms. Lorje:** — Mr. Speaker, it is my duty at this point to present the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

Your committee, in examining the matters of the acquisition, management, and sale of Channel Lake Petroleum Ltd. by SaskPower and the payments to Mr. John R. Messer when he ceased to serve as president of SaskPower, has concluded that certain documents in the possession of the government are required in order for this committee to fully carry out its terms of reference.

Your committee recommends therefore, that the Assembly do order the Speaker to issue a subpoena to summon the attendance of Mr. Don McKillop of the Department of Justice of the Government of Saskatchewan before the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations at its meeting on Wednesday, April 15, 1998, at 9 a.m. And that he do produce the following documents at that time: (1) all written legal opinions in the possession of Saskatchewan Power Corporation, the Crown Investments Corporation, and the Government of Saskatchewan, touching upon the terms of reference of the Channel Lake Petroleum Ltd. investigation in the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations; and (2) the long-term gas supply agreement between Saskatchewan Power Corporation and Direct Energy Marketing Ltd. and its three ancillary documents.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded from the member from Regina Coronation Park, that the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations be now concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

**Ms. Julé:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 28 ask the government the following question:

(1) how many cases of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) were reported in Saskatchewan in 1990; (2) how many people died from HIV that year; (3) how many of the reported cases were children and youth under the age of 21; and (4) how many of those children and youth died from HIV that year?

And, Mr. Speaker, I have similar questions regarding the years 1991 through 1997.

I so present.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day 28 ask the government the following question:

Of the Minister of Justice: what plans do you have to relieve volunteers of liability in the performance of their roles as volunteers; in view of repeated calls for help, what help can you give other than that expressed by the volunteer liability workshops conducted throughout the south-west, which has only served to make everyone more fearful; have you any plans for no-fault volunteer legislation to address this ever-increasing problem?

I have another, separate question. I give notice, Mr. Speaker, that I shall on day 28 ask the government the following question:

Minister in charge of multi-national agreement on investment: what position will your government be taking with regards to offering an alternative to the proposed agreement, and what efforts will be made at the forthcoming OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) meeting in late April to contribute to a new framework of principles?

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct your attention and that of the other members to your gallery, and you will see — if you've been counting — a group of 36 students. They're here from St. Andrew's School in the constituency of Regina-Victoria. They're accompanied here today by their teacher, Perry Fafard. They're going to have a tour of the Legislative Building after question period and I look forward to meeting with them after that to see what questions I might be able to answer for them.

At this time I'd like to ask all members to extend a very warm welcome to these students and their teacher.

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

**Ms. Julé:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, Mayor Doug Still of Humboldt, who is seated in your gallery. Mayor Still is highly regarded in Humboldt for his hard work and the advancement of economic growth in the Humboldt area. And Mayor Still came to Regina today to present the invocation at this morning's annual prayer breakfast.

I ask the members of the Assembly to join with me in extending a warm welcome to Mayor Still.

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

**Hon. Ms. MacKinnon:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to welcome Mayor Doug Still to the Chamber. Mayor Still chairs one of the most successful REDAs (regional economic development authority) in the province, and I'm also very pleased that he accepted our invitation to sit on the Provincial Action Committee on the Economy. So another welcome to Mayor Still.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join in welcoming Mr. Still to the Assembly today on behalf of the Liberal caucus and just to say that it's nice to see an old friend. We served on the SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) board together and I'm very pleased to say that today his work and hard effort is an example to all of us. It's nice to know that he's still the mayor. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you, a delegation in your gallery from the Beijing Education Examinations Bureau headed by Mr. Wang, vice-president of the bureau, and hosted by the University of Regina. I'll ask you to stand, yes.

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

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — The University of Regina has a cooperative agreement with the Beijing Educational Examinations Bureau to promote academic exchanges and cooperation. The purpose of the delegation is to learn about post-secondary education standards, examinations, evaluation, and policies governing admission, and we'll be meeting later today.

So thank you for helping me to welcome them.

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

**Ms. Murray:** — Mr. Speaker, my colleagues may know that the 1998 Canadian Fire-Fighters' Curling Championships are taking place in Regina from April 4 to 11 at the Caledonian Curling Club. And seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, are five partners of those curlers. I'm pleased to introduce them to you and to my colleagues. I hope that you're enjoying your stay in Regina and I hope that you will find the proceedings here this afternoon interesting.

Please join me in extending a warm welcome.

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

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

##### Plains Health Centre Closure

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last night in Assiniboia over 200 concerned citizens gathered to express their grave concerns about the closure of the Plains Health Centre. My colleague from Souris Cannington and I attended the meeting and were both thoroughly disgusted with the Minister of Health's refusal to listen to some arguments put forward by those in attendance.

Mr. Speaker, the people of southern Saskatchewan are more convinced than ever that government members are not prepared to listen to them. They are not committed to providing quality services to rural residents.

Mr. Speaker, last night the minister simply provided his pat answer that the number of beds would not be decreasing with the closure of the Plains and that the level of services would

remain the same. Mr. Speaker, the people at the meeting did not believe the minister, nor do they believe his government is currently providing the right level of services.

Mr. Speaker, the message was loud and clear. This government is running a health system on the edge and something must be done.

First, the minister must place a moratorium on the closure of the Plains until an independent review of the entire system is conducted.

Second, the minister must ask himself why the people of Saskatchewan are so upset about the closure of the Plains. The answer to this question was put by the mayor of Wood Mountain at last night's meeting. People are upset because for many the Plains is all they have left.

Since this NDP (New Democratic Party) government came to power, the people of rural Saskatchewan have lost 53 hospitals and witnessed the deterioration of services in the rural and small urban centres such as Swift Current, Yorkton, and North Battleford. If this government is bent on closing the Plains, they must improve the level of services being provided in these communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure what meeting he was at. I was at the same meeting in Assiniboia. This meeting was planned . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order. Now hon. members will be aware that members' statements are not to be debated. Members are entitled to make their own statements but not to engage in debate on other members' statements. And I know that the member from Swift Current will want to guide his statement accordingly.

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you. This meeting was planned and orchestrated by the Liberal Party, who have never believed in medicare and who have used every conceivable way — remember the Keep Our Doctors campaign? — to oppose it.

Approximately 237 people attended the meeting to voice their concerns about the closure of the Plains. Five members of the government caucus attended this meeting, including the Minister of Health.

Some of their concerns, which have been greatly exaggerated by the Liberals, were allayed by the minister in his talk. Here are some of the facts.

When the services are consolidated in the Pasqua and the General hospitals on October 31, 1998, not a single bed will be closed. There will be improved and additional services with the addition of an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) and a CAT (computerized axial tomography scan) scan. And more specialists will be attracted to this modern, state-of-the-art health system.

Mr. Speaker, the only disturbing aspect of last night was the distortion of facts by the Liberal members and their blatant use

of innuendo to prey on the minds of the good folks of Assiniboia and area. Thank you.

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

### Hospital Bed Shortage

**Mr. McLane:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Day in and day out in this session . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order. Order! All hon. members will recognize that the hon. member for Arm River is not seated all that far away from the Chair here, and has been difficult to be heard, and I ask for the House to provide cooperation so that he may be heard.

**Mr. McLane:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Day in and day out during this session, the Liberal opposition is raising concerns about the hospital bed crisis in the city of Regina. The Minister of Health responds daily, on a daily basis, that we're fearmongering. Perhaps the Minister of Health should read today's *Leader-Post* on the front page, which says "Surgery delayed; Critical care beds filled." The headline refers to the fact that another open heart surgery case was cancelled yesterday because of a lack of critical care beds in this city.

What is it going to take for this NDP government to understand that our health care system is seriously overburdened? What will it take for the NDP to acknowledge the Plains hospital is being used to a full capacity and then some. And why does this government not realize that if they close the Plains this crisis is going to get worse. If this government wants to throw dice, they should go down to Casino Regina, Mr. Speaker. Don't gamble with our health care system. Don't gamble with our lives.

### Babcock and Wilcox Expanding in Melville

**Mr. Kasperski:** — Mr. Speaker, in the great state of Texas you can carry a concealed weapon as long as you check it at the door before private hospitals that you enter in that state, but you're not guaranteed the right of free collective bargaining on your job site. You can pack heat under your coat, Mr. Speaker, but you don't have the right of free association.

In short, Mr. Speaker, Texas is a right-to-work state, which makes it a model for members of the Tory Party, as we have found. The members of Cannington, Moosomin, and Kindersley, have often in this Assembly spoken honourably of the states of Texas and Alabama, where workers have no rights, Mr. Speaker.

They want Saskatchewan to become, as our Premier has said so often, an Alabama North. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have bad news for them and good news for Saskatchewan. The Babcock and Wilcox company, based in Barberton, Ohio will be closing its Paris, Texas plant, which manufactures boilers for the power generation industry. It is expanding its plants in Ontario and, Mr. Speaker, in Melville, Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Kasperski:** — Because of, Mr. Speaker, as pointed out by the company, because of the relationship Babcock and Wilcox

has with Canada, with its employees, the provincial and federal governments, and their agencies. The Melville plant currently has 46 employees and plans are to double that number.

Mr. Speaker, this is great news from deep in the heart of Saskatchewan.

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

#### Perogy Police Squad

**Ms. Julé:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recently an article in the *Ag World* newspaper called “Perogy police can ruin a good party” caught my eye. The article stated that an official from Sask Health meandered into the curling rink at Choceland announcing that the locals were no longer permitted to serve home-prepared food. This means no more home-made soups, pies, or perogies. The food served must come from an approved facility such as a restaurant or a bake shop.

Is there no end to the overkill of this administration through regulatory burden? Are we now to have perogy police and cabbage cops patrolling rural Saskatchewan?

Since the birth of this province, Mr. Speaker, and the serving of millions of meals at curling rinks . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. Order. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member for Humboldt . . . Order! Order. Order. I’ll ask for the cooperation of the hon. members on both sides of the House to provide for the hon. member for Humboldt the opportunity to conclude her members’ statement in an uninterrupted manner.

**Ms. Julé:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, are we now to have perogy police and cabbage cops patrolling rural Saskatchewan? Since the birth of this province and the serving of millions of meals at curling rinks and pot luck suppers, I am not aware of a single fatality as a result of home-prepared foods.

I say to the Minister of Health, lighten up and call off your perogy police and cabbage cops. Allow rural Saskatchewan a little breathing space.

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

#### Citizenship Ceremony at Radisson School

**Mr. Jess:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday afternoon at Radisson School in my constituency, a significant citizenship ceremony took place; so unique I might add, that it was televised last night on the local news.

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

**Mr. Jess:** — Thirty-nine students from grade 5 to 8 reaffirmed their Canadian citizenship at that ceremony. Students from other grades participated by singing in the choir. Citizenship Supervisor Garnet Quigley, representatives from the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police), and the Saskatoon West School Division, Mayor Art Meister, and Principal Bill Thon also took part.

I was represented by Irene Arrtux, my constituency assistant, at the function. The highlight of this ceremony, Mr. Speaker, came when one student, Tania Hamp, originally from St. Petersburg, Russia, was given her citizenship. Tania was adopted by George and Irene Hamp of Radisson and she has been in Canada for about a year.

Most of us, I suspect, take our Canadian citizenship and our country for granted. It’s pretty easy to become a citizen when all you have to do is be born here.

These students, by publicly reaffirming their citizenship, remind us that ours is a nation to be proud of, and that citizenship within it is both a privilege and a responsibility.

On behalf of Canadians everywhere, I congratulate and welcome Tania and I offer my appreciation to Principal Thon and teacher, Loretta Harpham for organizing the significant event at Radisson School. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Inquiry into Channel Lake

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this afternoon are for the Premier. The Premier keeps telling us he didn’t know anything about Channel Lake or Jack Messer’s severance. Mr. Premier, on March 4, 1998, the day before he was fired, Jack Messer wrote you a memo. The first line of that memo reads, “You are no doubt aware of the recent activities with respect to Channel Lake as it relates to my future at SaskPower.” You are no doubt aware, Jack says. Jack seems to think you knew a lot about what was going on.

It’s funny how you keep having these kind of memory lapses, Mr. Premier. Since there is no record of your written response, you obviously spoke to Jack Messer about this memo. What did you say to him?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I say to the member opposite, obviously we have dealt very succinctly and clearly with the issue of severance and Jack Messer. If the member opposite would care to listen and pay attention rather than just reading from his notes, he would know very clearly that the issue of severance was dealt with over a period of time by the board of CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan), coming to the conclusion that the best way to deal with the issue of whether or not to pay severance after the issue of departure of Mr. Messer was dealt with . . . we came to the conclusion that it would be best dealt with by the Vice-Chair of SaskPower, in consultation with legal advice. And that is the process that was followed.

Now I’m not quite sure which part of that the member from Kindersley doesn’t understand, but it was a process set in place by the board of CIC, and whatever reaction Mr. Messer had to that, he had. The fact of the matter is there was a process. We’ve explained it to you. If you’re unwilling to believe it, that is a difficult spot for you to be in. But that’s the process that

was followed.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — The part that no one seems to understand is, is when the Premier of this province says that he doesn't know anything about this Channel Lake affair, and yet his old buddy, his campaign manager, writes to him, pleads for his job. It's pretty hard to believe that the Premier didn't talk to him about it at least.

Since you aren't going to come to the Crown Corporations Committee and to the Channel Lake hearings and testify under oath, I guess we'll just have to ask the questions here.

Mr. Premier, did you speak to Jack Messer about Channel Lake prior to the March 4 memo? Did you speak to Jack Messer between March 4 and the announcement of his \$300,000 severance package on March 10? What did Jack Messer ask you to do and how did you respond?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear to the member opposite that the issue of severance — I say again and I can't be more emphatic about it — was dealt with by the board of CIC. And the way we dealt with it was to give the file, give the file to Milt Fair, who in conjunction with legal advice came to the conclusion that severance should be paid.

It's my understanding that there was no consultation or discussion with anyone outside of the board of CIC before the time that you mention.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Premier, I think I know how the conversation went. It went something like this. Mr. Premier saying Jack, I don't think I can save you this time but I'll make sure you get a big fat severance package; maybe after the smoke clears I'll find you another job somewhere else. I think maybe that's what happened, Mr. Premier. And I think you should come and testify about it under oath.

If that isn't the way it happened, you should have no problem in coming to the committee and testifying. The only reason you wouldn't want to testify is because you have something that you don't want to tell the people of Saskatchewan about with respect to this.

Mr. Premier, what are you hiding about on this issue? Why won't you stand in your place and respond to the questions?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, let me just review the file with the member who says that we're hiding everything about the file. On the second day of this session, we brought to the House the Deloitte Touche report, which was a lengthy document. We also brought a document from CIC outlining the parameters of the Channel Lake issue. There have been hundreds of questions asked about it.

Today we delivered to the committee a thousand documents, to which one of the members in opposition said: "I think it is important for the record to show that every single document requested by the opposition has now been produced."

Now look, when your government was in power, Mr. Devine — and I remember Mr. Berntson — standing at this desk when we asked about various issues and asked for documents. We got not one shred of information. Not one item. We delivered to you a thousand documents today and you say we're hiding the facts.

What could be more ridiculous; and why don't you try reading the documents?

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact I think the Premier's had another conversation lately. He has ordered his NDP committee members to keep him off the witness stand no matter what it takes. But their excuses are getting weaker and weaker. The NDP members have said that you will be called there if there is evidence that you have something to add.

The committee's mandate deals with Jack Messer's termination and severance. You've already admitted saving Jack Messer's job at least once in the past. This memo shows that Jack Messer asked you to save his job one more time around. This memo shows that indeed you do have something to add.

Mr. Premier, all of Saskatchewan wants to know: will you testify under oath to the committee as requested?

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

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I have given this answer many, many times before — I'll give the answer again. Let's get on with the work of the Crown Corporations Committee. A report of 150 pages was tabled by us. One thousand documents were produced today by us.

There is a work schedule of approximately 20 witnesses who are the main players and the main people involved with respect to this whole matter, which are going to be coming forward and giving evidence.

I have said that if there is something that I can say, of use, to be helpful to the investigation or to provide information, the committee will make that decision.

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

### Hospital Bed Shortages

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health. Mr. Minister, you keep telling us that hospital bed shortages are just isolated incidents. Another one of these isolated incidents appeared on the front page of today's paper. An open-heart surgery patient at the Plains had his surgery cancelled due to lack of critical care beds.

Mr. Minister, these isolated incidents are turning into a crisis. And all your figures about open beds don't help, because empty beds in the maternity or pediatric ward don't help if there are no

beds available for heart patients.

Mr. Minister, Fred Bordas of SUN (Saskatchewan Union of Nurses) says it's a pressure cooker — something is going to give and we're going to have a disaster.

Mr. Minister, what are you doing to address this crisis, and what sense does it make to close the Plains hospital when there is already a critical lack of beds?

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

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to first of all make note to the comment that was made yesterday by the member from Moose Mountain in his speech where he said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we look at and when we discuss the issue of health care in the province of Saskatchewan, it's not just the bricks and mortar and the beds, is what he talks about.

And then the member shows up at a public meeting last night on the coat-tails of the Liberal meeting — which now I think maybe he's deciding to move across, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure what he's doing — and what he then says is that what we need to do in this province, Mr. Speaker, is what we need to do in this province is that we need to introduce health care premiums, is what he says.

And the member opposite today stands up in the House and says that we don't have enough beds. This is the individual who believes that we need to protect health care in this province. This is the individual and the party, Mr. Speaker, based on the information that comes out of the leadership race, where, if they ever had an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, we would see health care premiums, we'd see the privatization of health services in this province. It would be the tearing-down of medicare in this province. That's what this member talks about, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, it isn't just the opposition who's concerned about health care. Your own polling says that Saskatchewan people see health care as the most important issue facing the province today. About 73 per cent of the people think you're doing a poor job of managing the health care system, Mr. Minister — 73 per cent. That's an overwhelming number that say that you are failing.

Mr. Minister, what are you going to do to address the crisis? If things are going as well as you say, why do Saskatchewan people feel that your government is failing in its management of the health care system?

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

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to the member opposite, first that last weekend, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at the Plains Health Centre in this province, what we did is we did six emergency heart surgeries. And we did six emergency heart surgeries, which is over and above the average nine that we do on a weekly basis, to deal with the emergency situation that we had of people who need heart surgeries in this province.

Which says to the people of Saskatchewan that we're always available to provide emergency services whenever they're needed. Whenever they're needed, we're always available to provide that. Eighty-six per cent of the people who use the health care system today say that it is good and excellent — 86 per cent of the people who use it.

At no time, Mr. Speaker, in this province have we turned away anyone who required emergency services. That has always been the case, that will continue to be the case, and we will ensure that we will provide emergency services to people when they need it.

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Minister, your own polling shows that people are fearful of the health care system under your control. Even last night, Mr. Minister, you heard people telling you that you weren't listening; while you were speaking, you were not listening to what people were trying to say.

Mr. Minister, when are you and your government . . . Or Mr. Premier, maybe I should be addressing you this question too. When are you going to start listening to the people of Saskatchewan and addressing the concerns they have in regards to health care in the province of Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, this government has allocated in this budget which is currently before the House under debate, the largest expenditure to Health in the history of the province of Saskatchewan.

And we're doing it in the face of cut-backs by the federal Liberal government; cut-backs which are destroying or threatening — I'll put that word more correctly — threatening the very fabric of medicare in not only Canada but other regions of this country, including parts of Saskatchewan; although we backfilled every penny and every dollar of the way back. And on top of that have added \$88 million. That's what we've done for health care. And we've reformed.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that when we finish with respect to the renovations to the General and Pasqua Hospital, we are going to have the best quality of health care for southern Saskatchewan ever in the history of the province of Saskatchewan.

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

#### Northern Ambulance Service

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 12, 1996, I lost a dear friend in Jake Alcrow. Mr. Alcrow is dearly missed by his friends, his family, and the entire community of Ile-a-la-Crosse.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to relate the incidents leading to his death. Jake was visiting friends in Buffalo Narrows when he was rushed into the health clinic there with chest pains. On examination the doctor felt he needed further examination and was unable to do so without an ECG (electrocardiogram) machine. Jake was then to be sent to the hospital in Ile-a-la-Crosse.

Mr. Speaker, Jake was not sent to the neighbouring hospital 45 minutes away by an emergency transportation vehicle. He was not sent by an ambulance or by air ambulance. Mr. Speaker, he was sent by a taxi. Another example of northern Saskatchewan people being treated as second-class citizens. Jake Alcrow was placed in that taxi with an intravenous infusion line in operation, but without the escort of a nurse or any qualified medical person.

Mr. Minister, I ask you again, is a taxi cab with no medical personnel or medical equipment an appropriate emergency care transportation method that should be used to transport critically injured or critically ill patients, as in Mr. Alcrow's case?

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my best regards to the member opposite on the loss of his dear friend. Any time that that happens to any one of us our condolences are paid, and I pay tribute to you today for the loss of your dear friend.

I want to say to the member opposite that today in northern Saskatchewan, we have just agreed that we will have two new district health boards. These two district health boards are going to ensure that into the future — into the future, Mr. Speaker — we're going to have better health care services than we have today.

Now there isn't any question that access to southern Saskatchewan facilities is not easy. It's not any issue of course, that we know that sometimes the transportation system that we have in the northern part of the province needs additional access. No question about that, Mr. Speaker.

And what we're doing about it is speaking with our federal friends, because the air travel out of the North requires that kind of participation. We're continuing to work with the district health care services there, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we can enrich the quality of services in the North. That's what we're doing, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. My friend Mr. Alcrow died 20 minutes after being loaded into that taxi. He died with no one there and no one to immediately administer CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) or to ease his pain as he died. In fact he died alone.

Mr. Minister, two weeks ago you said, and I quote: discussions are currently under way to enhance services in those areas. We want to provide the people who live in the northern part of this province . . .

I say to this Assembly, the residents of northern Saskatchewan cannot wait for another study. They cannot wait for this government to continue finger-pointing at the federal Liberal government and we cannot wait any longer.

Mr. Speaker, we do not want another study on health services, particularly road ambulance services. We need them. This is another, common example of health care service in northern Saskatchewan.

The level of health care in rural Saskatchewan is embarrassing, Mr. Speaker, but in the North it's truly prehistoric. Will the Minister of Health get up in the Assembly today and tell us what discussions are taking place and what day and when will he make a provincial commitment to the residents of northern Saskatchewan to provide them with fair and adequate road ambulance services?

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

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First I want to say to the member opposite that rural services in Saskatchewan today, outside of the northern communities, have been enriched and enhanced in a significant fashion.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, we have included in our last budget, additional funding for rural physicians in the province; 25 million additional dollars to assist us with physician services in the province, of which \$5.5 million is going to be used for the rural on-call services. That's going to be in southern part of the province.

When I say to the member opposite about northern Saskatchewan that we need to do additional work, and it's not a criticism of our partnership with the federal government, which he has some anxiety about, but the federal government in northern Saskatchewan has responsibilities. And so we sit down with the federal government and we say to them that we need to enhance this partnership so that we can provide better road ambulance services, so that we can put more funding into air travel into the northern part of the province.

That kind of work today is undertaken and it includes people who are sitting on the northern boards who are of aboriginal extraction. Aboriginal people sitting at the table for the first time ever, making decisions on the quality and the level of health care services that they're going to get in the future. That's the partnership approach that we've used in developing those services in the North, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Inquiry into Channel Lake**

**Mr. Hillson:** — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. This morning the NDP members of the Channel Lake inquiry voted against adding your name to the witness list despite your stated willingness to come. They said you wouldn't have anything relevant to add. Well, Mr. Premier, you know that's not the case.

The Liberal opposition has learned that in 1996 you intervened with Jack Messer to encourage the firing of Lawrence Portigal, the same Lawrence Portigal who had earlier been fired by the Tories and paid a severance of \$327,000. I know you have some difficulty remembering intervening in Channel Lake affairs and the management of SaskPower and the firing of officials, but do you recall being involved in asking Jack Messer to get rid of Lawrence Portigal in 1996?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did not speak to Jack Messer to get rid of Lawrence Portigal in 1996, to the best of my recollection.



**Mr. Hillson:** — Do you recall, Mr. Premier, being in a room full of people, saying, why is Lawrence Portigal still around? The clear reference being to get rid of him. Do you recall that it was after that that Mr. Messer wrote a letter advising Mr. Portigal that his services would be terminated on December 20? However they were not terminated and he continued on from December 20, 1996, through the events of 1997 which of course are now before the inquiry.

Will you admit that there are many questions which can only be answered by you, sir, and that therefore your attendance is required before the committee if the committee is to do its full work?

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

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, the question is I think in two parts. I've given the answer with respect to Mr. Portigal and I take the position, I will tell the member this now, that it is the job of the manager, the CEO (chief executive officer) or the deputy minister to be responsible for the people who work and report to the CEO or to the deputy minister. I don't micro-manage. That is the way the process works and the decisions are made by the management and by the board of directors.

With respect to attendance at the Crown Corporations, you have over a thousand documents plus the 150 tabled, plus 20 witnesses which are going to be there testifying, and I repeat again what I've said to the hon. members of the Tory Party over there which I say to you: if there is, after the full examination of the documentation and the questioning of the witnesses involved, any other matters which need clarification or I can add some information to, I'd be more than pleased to help.

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

#### **Workers' Compensation Board Survivor Benefits**

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Minister of Labour spoke eloquently about the tragedy of work-related accidents and the hardship suffered by those who have lost their loved one under such circumstances. Many widows and widowers of Saskatchewan have been denied pension benefits and they're asking this government to amend the necessary legislation that would rectify this injustice.

My question to the minister this afternoon is quite simple. Will his government be restoring pension benefits to those who have been denied monthly payments?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for this important question. The people concerned met with the board representatives some few weeks or even months ago and put their case to them. I have asked the board for a report on the issue, including an estimate of the costs involved, and I'm still awaiting that report. When that report is in hand, then I will take the matter to cabinet with a recommendation, and at this point I'm not able to say what that recommendation will be.

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Mr. Speaker, widows in British Columbia have had all of their benefits restored retroactively with interest; in fact they had their court costs paid for. The province of Ontario settled in January.

The widows and widowers of Saskatchewan approached the Workers' Compensation Board last October and they agreed at that point to a 30-day time frame. They were told in November that the details of research into their requests would be completed by January.

Mr. Minister, it is now April, and I'm wondering if you'd please explain to this House why WCB (Workers' Compensation Board) and your government have been dragging their heels on this important matter.

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

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, the . . . we are aware of course of the British Columbia and the Ontario situation. I think that the initial estimate of time on behalf of the board was, to say the least, optimistic. It has taken them much longer than they expected to do a search of the file to see how many of the files . . . to see how many such claims there would be, and what the total cost would be.

I'm told that the actuarial work on the matter will be completed by about the end of this month, but it's sort of outside my control. The board has not been dragging its feet on the matter — I think they just didn't understand the amount of work that would be involved in being able to make a complete report to the government.

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — The Ontario legislature took from August 22, 1997 to the beginning of January, 1998 to have cheques in hand to Ontario widows. They were dealing with a far greater number of people than the numbers we're dealing with in the province of Saskatchewan. It has taken the Saskatchewan government absolutely months just to establish the actuary for approximately 300 people; and can and will you tell these widows why — why is it taking that long?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — If the Ontario board acted that quickly — and I accept the member's statement that they did — then they acted with incomplete information, which probably explains why that board is so many billions of dollars in deficit. We're not in deficit in Saskatchewan; our board is in a very strong financial position, and part of the explanation for that is that they don't go off half cocked, making decisions before the necessary research work is done to be sure that the decision is a well-founded one.

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

#### **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

##### **Saskatchewan Indian Federated College Gets New Home**

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased today to inform all hon. members about an important announcement that I participated in yesterday concerning the

Saskatchewan Indian Federated College.

This government is committed to investing in Saskatchewan people, and education is the best investment that we can make. The Saskatchewan Indian Federated College meets an urgent need for the fastest growing segment of Saskatchewan's society, the aboriginal population. This important and unique institution is getting a new home, a home befitting its national and international stature.

SIFC (Saskatchewan Indian Federated College) is the only first nations-controlled university in North America. All SIFC programs are fully accredited through their agreement with the University of Regina, and the new facility will be built on the U of R (University of Regina) campus.

Mr. Speaker, there's a special relationship of cooperation and mutual effort between the University of Regina and the SIFC. And certainly one of the things that characterized the whole announcement yesterday was the maturity of the relationship between all of the partners there. Many students take classes from both institutions; 15 per cent of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College students are non-aboriginal.

In recognition of the Government of Saskatchewan's responsibility, we have increased SIFC's operating grant to \$1.5 million. This has enabled the SIFC to obtain 5 million in financing for the exciting project, which includes a significant capital construction from the federal government and substantial capital fund-raising by SIFC.

The SIFC students will share a learning environment and potential partnerships with the University of Regina's new, high-tech research park and SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) Wascana campus. It was very touching, Mr. Speaker, to see the students cry in joy over being able to have this new facility that either they themselves or their children will graduate from.

So, Mr. Speaker, I predict that this new SIFC building will become a powerful symbol of the wisdom and practicality of Saskatchewan people. It'll certainly take us into the Saskatchewan of the future. And it'll be a sign that we are willing to learn from our past and build a positive future for young people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to indeed begin by congratulating the aboriginal community here in Regina and all across Saskatchewan for finally being able to formulate a deal that will provide, I think a very quality institute to the province of Saskatchewan and to the city of Regina.

While we note that the capital construction of this project is in excess of \$21 million, we still see that there is a need to indeed ensure that all monies are to be provided. I understand that a potential loan, an additional amount of approximately \$8 million, is still required.

And I would hope that the aboriginal community is successful in its efforts to indeed establish a working relationship with new

partners, because I think that's what's going to be needed. I think we're going to have to have businesses, and we're going to have to have other people, join in to ensure that this project is successful.

I think what it also does to students . . . I mean education is very, very important to everyone in this province. And when we see that students will be able to enjoy, I believe a state-of-the-art facility, the fact that it will be coordinated into one institution to allow greater access — not only for aboriginal students, as the minister mentioned . . . There are non-aboriginal people who are also taking classes through the federated Indian college.

So I think what this says is that we have the opportunity to improve — to improve programs, to improve program delivery, to ensure that the programs offered through SIFC are recognized province-wide and indeed that we establish a greater amount of numbers of people that will be educated through this new system.

Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise today to respond to the minister's statement in reference to the SIFC accomplishment.

As an aboriginal person, I want to personally commend both the federal government and the provincial government on the initiative that they participated in, and certainly the support and help they offered to the SIFC and the builders of that particular dream.

I share with the Assembly that I think it's very important that the people understand in the future, we're all going to work in a cross-cultural environment. The future of the population trends, the demographics of Saskatchewan, and the economy itself simply dictates that we have to have efforts of this nature under way. And certainly the aboriginal community had their hand extended over a period of years to try and accomplish that.

Mr. Speaker, the aboriginal people look at this as clearly an investment. And any government that invests in making the aboriginal people become part and parcel of Saskatchewan, of the economy, of the social fabric, of the culture, is something that we all want to become part of, should be commended.

So on behalf of the aboriginal people and certainly on behalf of the constituents of Athabasca, I once again commend both the federal and provincial governments on their initiative.

I also want to point out some of the positive spin-offs as a result of the SIFC establishment. And that was a point you made quite clearly and quite often at the Assembly . . . or at the gathering, was that over the next 20 years, some of the spin-offs in terms of the economic growth as a result of it, SIFC, could be as high as \$1.9 billion. So that's something that we should all be aware of and something that we have to recognize and respect.

(1430)

And the other factor, Madam Minister, is yes, Regina has accomplished a great deal. And yes, SIFC has accomplished a great deal. And often we speak about the hard work and the determination and the coordination of all parties. And I would not do justice to begin to name names because we'd be here for a number of weeks, if not months.

But the clear thing, Madam Minister, is in the future we must look to other regions in the province. For example, Saskatoon. For example . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. The hon. member has been lengthy in his response to a ministerial statement and has already taken more time in responding to the statement than the original statement itself. I will ask him to very quickly conclude his statement.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just can't say enough of this. I'm again very honoured to stand here today and say I'm very proud of the work being done by all parties and I urge you to continue along that path.

Thank you very much.

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

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### Bill No. 22 — The Electronic Filing of Information Act

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 22, The Electronic Filing of Information Act be now introduced and read the first time.

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

##### Bill No. 23 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1998

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 23, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1998 be now introduced and read for the first time.

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

##### Bill No. 24 — The Wascana Centre Amendment Act, 1998

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 24, The Wascana Centre Amendment Act, 1998 be now introduced and read the first time.

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

##### Bill No. 25 — The Pipelines Act, 1998

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 25, The Pipelines Act, 1998 be now introduced and read the first time.

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

#### STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

##### Resignation of Member for Saskatoon Eastview

**The Speaker:** — Hon. members, before orders of the day, I wish to advise the Assembly of correspondence that I have received dated today and addressed to the Speaker, and is received from the hon. member for Saskatoon Eastview:

I wish to advise you and the Assembly of my resignation as the Member for Saskatoon Eastview, effective today.

As I recently indicated in the House, the past ten years has been a wonderful experience for me. All honourable members take pride in representing their constituents and this privilege has been very rewarding for me.

Thanks to the residents of Saskatoon Eastview, to yourself, Mr. Speaker, to all honourable members for their friendship and co-operation, to the legislative staff, and to my loving family, Gwen, Darren, Dean, and Joanne for their love and devotion.

May the spirit of compassion, co-operation and good will continue to guide decision making in the Assembly.

Yours sincerely,

Bob Pringle, MLA  
Saskatoon Eastview

**Ms. Lorje:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, by leave, to introduce a motion. Mr. Speaker, I would like to move the following motion . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. I would ask the hon. member just to advise the House as to the nature of the motion she wishes to introduce by leave.

**Ms. Lorje:** — Mr. Speaker, is to request the Speaker to issue a subpoena as recorded earlier in my Crown Corporations Committee report.

Leave granted.

#### MOTIONS

##### Request for Subpoena

**Ms. Lorje:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would move, seconded by the member from Regina Coronation Park:

That this Assembly requests the Speaker, pursuant to section 20(1) of The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, to issue a subpoena to summon the attendance of Mr. Don McKillop of the Department of Justice of the Government of Saskatchewan, before the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations at its meeting on Wednesday, April 15, 1998 at 9 a.m., and that he do produce the following documents at that time:

(1) All written legal opinions in the possession of Saskatchewan Power Corporation, the Crown Investments

Corporation, and the Government of Saskatchewan touching upon the terms of reference of the Channel Lake Petroleum Ltd. investigation in the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations; and

(2) The long-term gas supply agreement between Saskatchewan Power Corporation and Direct Energy Marketing Limited and its three ancillary documents.

I move that, seconded by the member from Regina Coronation Park.

Motion agreed to.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Deputy Whip it's my pleasure to table the response to question no. 23.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I will ask the hon. members . . . The Chair was unable to hear the indication of the government's Deputy Whip regarding the status of the response to question 23. And I would ask the Deputy Whip to please advise the House again.

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the spirit of goodwill that you read from the letter from a member from Eastview, I am tabling the response to question no. 23.

**The Speaker:** — The answer to question 23 is tabled.

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm also pleased to table the response to question no. 24.

**The Speaker:** — The response to question 24 is tabled.

### MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Not Debatable)

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I now move that this motion be converted to a motion for return (debatable).

**The Speaker:** — Return No. 7 is converted to motions for returns (debatable).

### GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

#### House Adjournment

**Hon. Ms. MacKinnon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Moosomin:

That notwithstanding Rule 3(4) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, that when this Assembly adjourns on Thursday, April 9, 1998, it do stand adjourned until Wednesday, April 15, at 1:30 p.m.

Motion agreed to.

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 2 — The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 1998

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 1998. The Correctional Services Amendment Act provides authority for the establishment of correctional facilities and correctional programs. It sets out the rules respecting administration of correctional facilities and services.

Significant changes were made to the legislation in 1993. These changes have now been in force for several years. During this time we've had an opportunity to monitor the effect of the changes and determine what gaps needed to be filled and what clarifications were required in the existing legislation. The proposed amendments address these requirements.

The Correctional Services Act presently permits the transfer of inmates between, from, and into correctional facilities, but specifies it must be done "with the approval of the executive director of corrections." An amendment will clarify the ability of the executive director to delegate this function to directors of facilities. Since there are approximately 2,200 transfers annually, it is neither practical nor desirable that the executive director should personally authorize all inmate movements from one facility to another in order to authorize inmates to participate in approved programs.

The executive director should be required to make transfer decisions only in cases where there are definite issues of public safety, cost, or inmate conditions of care. Assessment of inmate risk has traditionally been, and should remain, the responsibility of the directors of the facilities.

A further amendment will provide that the rules of the receiving facility will apply during the transfer. This will ensure consistency with recent changes to the federal Prisons and Reformatories Act regarding transfer of inmates between facilities. Transfers of inmates between federal and provincial facilities occur on a regular basis.

Another amendment clarifies that the approved public places that an inmate uses while participating in a community training program are only considered part of a facility while being used by an inmate for the purposes of the program and according to the terms of the program.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments also extend the protection from liability provisions to correctional services volunteers. As these volunteers are performing important functions on behalf of the government, it is appropriate to extend this liability protection to volunteers. Community justice committees are specifically included in this provision. These committees are comprised of volunteers who participate in the delivery of adult diversion programming.

A similar provision extending protection from liability to community justice committees respecting young offenders was added to The Young Offenders' Services Act in 1997. Without this limited exemption from liability, it is difficult to expect volunteers to take on these tasks.

All of these amendments facilitate ongoing programs. They will contribute to the smooth functioning of correctional services.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to amend The Correctional Services Act.

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I have been taking some time to review the legislation that's before us, the Bill that the minister has just been brought . . . bringing forward. However, Mr. Speaker, we do feel it's important to take some time to look a little more closely at this piece of legislation.

I certainly commend the minister for looking at the legislation and reviewing some of the policies in the past and determining where corrections can be made. And I would gather from some of the comments made even this afternoon in clarifying the reasons for this piece of legislation, that the minister has conferred with a number of people and they've come to some conclusions that I think are certainly appropriate.

(1445)

The fact that to date only the executive director of a correction facility is able to delegate authority, when you look at, I believe the minister talked about some 2,200 transfers that take place annually, it certainly seems appropriate that the executive director can give authority to directors of facilities to facilitate the transfers of inmates and allow for the process to run smoothly rather than having to follow a chain of command. And that we all know, Mr. Speaker, does take time and I think that certainly will be something positive in regards to how inmates are dealt with and certainly how correctional officers are able to perform their duties as well. Probably take away some of the paperwork that they have to deal with on an ongoing basis.

The area dealing with the transfer of prisoners from facility A to facility B and being subject to the rules and regulations of facility A, changing that to facility B, following the rules, I'm not exactly sure on that process. But, Mr. Speaker, that's an area I think we can certainly — as we debate the legislation before us a little further and certainly get into committee — we can converse with the minister and get some clarification as to how that impacts and how that improves the transfers that do take place. And so we look forward to further debate in regards to this part of the legislation.

I think it's also important, Mr. Speaker, and I think for those of us who were able to attend the Saskatchewan Prayer Breakfast Committee this morning, the speaker at the committee talked about Saskatchewan as a place of voluntarism, a place where people do volunteer their time and services. And I understand even in correctional centres we do have many instances where there are volunteers or people giving volunteer time.

And I believe it's appropriate that the department certainly amend the Act to extend protection to correctional services volunteers and community justice committees. I think that's important; it's important if we expect people to continue to offer their services and volunteer their time and efforts. Without that protection . . . And we know in this day and age how easy it

is for people to file suits or to make accusations against other individuals dealing in circumstances such as people are dealing with in regards to providing services to our Justice department and to the inmates of this province. It's important that we treat all people equally.

I think what the minister is saying is that we are going to do that. We're recognizing that there was a little glitch here. I don't think there was any intention in the Act originally not to recognize this, but I think it just . . . what it does is it just confirms what the department has probably viewed all along but never was technically before us in legislation.

So it's something that as opposition members we look at very positively.

So with those few comments in mind, Mr. Speaker, I think it's appropriate for us to take a little more time to review the Bill before us. And with that, I move to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

### **Bill No. 3 — The Public Utilities Easements Amendment Act, 1998**

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of The Public Utilities Easements Amendment Act, 1998.

Mr. Speaker, The Public Utilities Easements Act provides a process that allows a landowner to voluntarily reach an agreement with a company in order to grant that company an easement to cross or use the landowner's land. This new interest in land, the easement, may then be registered in the Land Titles Office.

It is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that the Act deals only with rights voluntarily granted by the owner of the land and in no way provides for access to land by a public utility where the landowner does not consent. Without this Act, there would be no easily identifiable way for parties to reach an agreement for an easement that can be registered in the land titles system.

When this Act first came into force in 1950, it did not foresee the new types of interests and the new types of companies that would develop in Saskatchewan. For example, CO<sub>2</sub> pipelines and cable television companies were simply beyond the contemplation of this legislation at the time it was introduced.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is intended to introduce the flexibility necessary to consider accommodating new technologies and new types of companies as they develop. It will permit a prescribed company to receive prescribed rights in the form of a public utility easement from the landowner. For example, CO<sub>2</sub> pipelines could be expressly included in the regulations as a prescribed right for which a public utilities easement could be granted by a landowner. By building this flexibility into the Act, desirable business and economic developments will not be delayed by an inability to properly register and protect those interests. By voluntary agreement with the company involved, landowners can agree on the terms and conditions they deem fit to grant a variety of rights to such a prescribed company.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan is committed to the concept that the best solution to any problem is an agreement between the parties involved. With these amendments, new types of companies and new types of technologies will gain access to a voluntary process for establishing easement rights on real property.

No decisions have yet been made as to the individual rights and the individual companies that may be set out in the regulations. This will be the subject of further consultations; however, with this flexibility incorporated into the Act, these Act's issues can now be considered.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to amend The Public Utilities Easements Act.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to The Public Utilities Easement Amendment Act, 1998, the minister I believe talked about making it easier to reach voluntary easement agreements. And I guess one of the issues that I have in regards to this — and it really isn't a big issue — it seems to me on many occasions just thinking back to times when, as a landowner, a property owner, have been approached by companies — whether it's SaskPower to build a power line, or whether it's natural gas to put through a gas line — we've always I believe, had the opportunity to sit down, and companies have come and certainly sought approval before they've moved across property and sought the approval of the landowner.

And I guess I've just taken it for granted that that was something that was always there. We've always . . . but I suppose on many occasions companies may find that there are hindrances when they, when they try to come to agreement with landowners regarding easements and the ability to move across public property in order to provide a service to the community or to the public in general.

In my mind, as I look at this piece of legislation, I don't see it as being a major piece of legislation that really has a lot of hang-ups or things that would hold up the piece of legislation.

But it seems to me that it certainly would be appropriate for the opposition members of the Assembly to take the time to do some more consultation and make sure that we do understand what the legislation is doing, follow it up a little more clearly. And indeed if there are concerns to be addressed in regards to the legislation, there are issues or questions that we may have missed or that people feel may not be addressed as clearly as the legislation may appear to be, that it would be important for us to take that time to review those questions.

I believe the minister has talked about the fact that this covers a number of companies and it covers a lot of public companies, utilities as well. It grants companies the opportunity to carry wires or cables or conductors, telephone electrical lines or for spur tracks, snow fences, drainage ditches, sewer pipes and water pipes across landowners' property. And I think that's something that most of us in Saskatchewan are most likely aware of as the result of a number of the operations that have taken place over the past number of years.

And the delivery of services, whether it be natural gas or

whether it be power lines or whether it be sewer lines or whatever we're dealing with, or even CO<sub>2</sub> pipelines as we see are now being expanded in the province of Saskatchewan . . . And certainly when we talk about CO<sub>2</sub>, we think about natural gas and we think about some of the problems that may result, and certainly we've seen that just in last fall, a couple of explosions on natural gas lines. I think most people would look at CO<sub>2</sub> lines, they would see them as fairly volatile too, and you would want to make sure that they're carefully laid down. And I'm sure that when it comes to a line such as that, a property owner may have some questions or concerns in the regards of laying such lines.

So it's a . . . Mr. Speaker, I guess it is . . . we look at any piece of legislation. It's important that we do take the time to address concerns, to talk to people who would be directly affected, get their opinions; so that we indeed can address any concerns directly with the minister as we get into further debate on such a piece of legislation.

With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

#### **Bill No. 4 — The Saskatchewan Evidence Amendment Act, 1998**

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise again today to move the second reading of The Saskatchewan Evidence Amendment Act, 1998.

The Government of Saskatchewan is concerned about those who are most vulnerable in our society. Therefore we are very pleased to introduce this Bill that will facilitate the participation of vulnerable people in the civil justice system.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill implements some of the recommendations of the steering committee on the abuse of adults in vulnerable circumstances and also provides further support for vulnerable adults.

In December of 1997, the steering committee on the abuse of adults in vulnerable circumstances presented its report and recommendation to the ministers of Justice, Health, Social Services, Labour, and Municipal Government.

The steering committee is made up of representatives of community agencies and provincial government departments concerned about the abuse of vulnerable adults. The steering committee's report and recommendations follow extensive community consultations respecting the abuse of adults in vulnerable circumstances.

Specifically, the committee focused on older adults and adults with disabilities who because of their circumstances, may be vulnerable to abuse or neglect. The steering committee's consultations reveal that adults in vulnerable circumstances find access to the justice system to be an issue.

As witnesses, their stories may not be believed or their evidence may be deemed unacceptable. This is a problem particularly for those with intellectual disabilities, mental illnesses, or communication problems.

Mr. Speaker, one of the proposed amendments will allow a witness who has difficulty communicating evidence because of a mental or physical disability to testify behind a screen or outside the courtroom. This process will allow witnesses to feel more comfortable while giving their testimony and it will facilitate the courts' receipt of valid evidence.

The Saskatchewan Evidence Act already contains a similar provision with respect to children which will be extended to include vulnerable adults. The provision is used when it is the judge's opinion that excluding a witness from the courtroom or allowing his or her testimony to take place behind a screen would assist the court in obtaining full and candid evidence. Arrangements are made for other parties and the judge and jury to watch the proceedings on closed circuit television.

Mr. Speaker, the federal Criminal Code contains a similar provision that applies to both children and adults who have difficulty communicating evidence because of mental or physical disabilities.

Another amendment, Mr. Speaker, will authorize the use of videotaped evidence by vulnerable adults. Again The Saskatchewan Evidence Act already contains a similar provision with respect to the evidence of children.

The steering committee recommended extending this provision to adults with disabilities affecting memory or ability to recall. This would include persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with cognitive impairments or psychiatric illnesses that affect memory or recall.

The provision will also be extended to adults who may have difficulty communicating their evidence because of mental or physical disabilities. The federal government is considering such an amendment to the Criminal Code, which contains a similar provision with respect to children.

This provision states that videotaped statements are admissible as evidence if the videotape was made within a reasonable time after the events occurred and the vulnerable adult adopts the contents of the videotape in his or her testimony.

The third amendment, Mr. Speaker, will allow witnesses under 14 and witnesses who have difficulty communicating because of mental or physical disabilities to have support persons with them when they testify, if the court is of the view that the proper administration of justice requires this. Again this amendment was recommended by the steering committee.

Mr. Speaker, under the Criminal Code a judge may allow a witness under the age of 14 to have a support person close to him or her while testifying. The support person sits next to the witness or in the body of the court; however the judge may order that the support person and witness not communicate during the testimony of the witness. The support person's function is to provide emotional support to the witness.

Mr. Speaker, a further amendment will allow witnesses who have difficulty communicating by reason of physical or mental disabilities to give evidence by any means that enables the evidence to be intelligible. Another amendment will allow

witnesses to identify accused persons visually or by other sensory means. The federal government is considering similar amendments to the Canada Evidence Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan government is very concerned about the abuse of adults in vulnerable circumstances. The proposed amendments to The Saskatchewan Evidence Act demonstrate the government's commitment to responding to the recommendations of the steering committee on the abuse of adults in vulnerable circumstances and to protecting the interests of vulnerable people in our community.

In closing, I would like to thank the steering committee, and all those with whom the committee consulted, for their thoughtful examination of the difficult issues facing adults in vulnerable circumstances in our society.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Evidence Act.

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

(1500)

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I listened to the minister present his reasons and arguments for the pieces of the legislation, Bill No. 4, The Saskatchewan Evidence Amendment Act.

It would certainly appear that there are some very sound ideas that have been brought forward — in fact some very sound suggestions and reasons for this piece of legislation. And I too would commend the steering committee for some of the work, just on the surface of what I see in the legislation that's brought before us.

Mr. Speaker, I think even in this Assembly, being here the first time, most of us found it just a little intimidating to stand up and speak in the Assembly, speaking on behalf of our constituents. While we felt we were carrying out our responsibility to the people who elected us to stand and speak here, when you come into an auditorium such as we have here and you're a new member and there's a number of members that have been around for awhile, it is somewhat intimidating and it takes awhile to get used to that.

And certainly, whether or not you have some disabilities, like some people in our society, even to be in a courtroom or to be called as a witness, I can assure you it can be very intimidating as well. And for those who may face or do have the unfortunate task of having disabilities, and to face the pressures of trying to testify in a court hearing, this piece of legislation . . . And certainly, while the minister acknowledged that a judge could make a decision on behalf of a witness, I believe this piece of legislation goes a little bit further in addressing a number of those concerns and in helping individuals feel more comfortable and preparing them, which would allow them to basically answer and present the truth to the best of their ability in a more comfortable way and a less intimidating form.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I think it's appropriate that this steering committee has certainly followed . . . and the Department of Justice has followed the guidelines and the

wishes of the steering committee in being a little more forthright, rather than always leaving the issue at the discretion of a judge. Especially when you already have a trial in progress and then you have to go through the debate that may take place in determining whether or not a witness is given the opportunity to either give testimony outside of the court and use a video camera in the court or, as also indicated, by the use of a screen.

And we all know that the process of having a trial proceed takes some time. And, Mr. Speaker, to have a debate pursued about the fact of whether or not this specific witness should have these provisions and have an argument in the court, this I believe would certainly allow opportunity for the court to make that determination ahead of time. And it would allow, I would suggest as well, possibly even a speedier process to a court proceeding.

But I think, Mr. Speaker, as I look at the piece of legislation, look at the information that's been brought forward, it certainly appears that there are some very good and very positive recommendations that are coming forward in this piece of legislation and recommendations that this legislation is addressing — issues that I believe certainly will, and I hope will, enhance the role of the courts and the recognition of the rights of individuals. And recognizing the fact that there are people in our society that we need to give a little more thought and caring consideration to.

And I believe that's what the minister is talking about in this piece of legislation as well, what his department is trying to address. The concerns that . . . and even the fact that in our day and age we do have, even amongst our population, having some very grave concerns about the whole process of justice and how it's conducted.

And this piece of legislation just goes a little further in addressing some of the concerns that are out there. And, Mr. Speaker, I think as I look at this piece of legislation, I believe that there are some real positive amendments and suggestions that are coming forward with the legislation that we see before us.

And while I'm not here saying we're just ready to move into committee today, I believe, Mr. Speaker, there are some very positive and sound recommendations that are being brought forward in this piece of legislation and we look forward to addressing them even further in the future.

However at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

### **Bill No. 11 — The Trustee Amendment Act, 1998**

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Trustee Amendment Act, 1998.

The Trustee Act governs the appointment and discharge of trustees, the investment and administrative powers of trustees, and the remuneration of trustees. The proposed amendments respond to the need to update the rules respecting trustees' investment powers.

The changes will replace the restrictive list of authorized trustee investments with an investment power comparable in scope to that usually conferred by well-drafted trust instruments.

The changes are based upon proposed legislation adopted by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada. The Law Reform Commissions of Ontario and Manitoba have recommended similar changes. The "prudent persons" standard has been adopted in other legislation, such as financial institution and pension legislation. It is also used in the trustee legislation in several provinces.

Mr. Speaker, the new provision will allow trustees to invest in any form of property in which a reasonable, prudent person might invest. This will provide greater flexibility to trustees in choosing investments that balance the need for a reasonable rate of return on investments, with the need for trustees to invest in secure investments.

The "prudent person" standard is in essence a statement of the common law duty of care and skill required of trustees in discharging their duties on behalf of the trust and its beneficiaries. The new provision requires that when trustees are investing trust property, they must act with the same degree of skill, diligence, and judgement as a prudent investor.

The adoption of this approach to trustee investments permits flexibility in choice of investments to meet changing economic conditions. It reflects the realization that every investor must take account of the economic cycles and market movements and be in a position to adjust his or her portfolio to respond to changes.

The legal-list approach presently in The Trustee Act is not capable of adapting to ever-changing economic and financial conditions because it is too restrictive. The flexibility and diversification that the "prudent person" concept brings to investment choices are characteristics that are vital to the well-being of any trust in today's economy.

The Act will set out criteria a trustee must consider when making investments. The criteria directs the trustee's attention to considerations that are relevant to the development of a successful investment strategy. The legislation requires the trustee to diversify investments to the extent appropriate in the circumstances. Diversification is a feature of good investment strategy that is important enough to warrant the imposition of an express duty to diversify.

As well, Mr. Speaker, under the new provisions, trustees are being given the authority to rely on competent investment advice. Trust law assumes that trustees will exercise their own judgement and discretion. Their ability to rely on investment advice without express power to do so is in some doubt. These amendments remove that doubt. Similarly, under general trust law, a trustee needs to be wary of delegating authority unless the document establishing the trust gives the trustee the express power to delegate the function. Delegation of some authority to an investment manager will frequently be a normal and prudent act on the part of present-day investors. Thus this Act updates a trustee's ability to appoint agents and delegate authority to agents.



Mr. Speaker, the powers given to the trustee by these new legislative provisions will continue to be subject to the terms of the trust. This Act also limits a trustee's liability in the event of a loss on the value of investments if the trustee has acted prudently. It is intended to protect trustees whose overall investment activity and strategy are sound. They will not be held in breach of trust merely because individual investment decisions may appear to have been imprudent when viewed in isolation, with the benefit of hindsight.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation responds to requests from a number of sources to review the current statutory restrictions on trustee investments. This is primarily because the restrictive list prevents trustees from investing in mutual funds. In today's economy these are among the most popular investment vehicles for the non-expert investor.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to amend The Trustee Act.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think, Mr. Speaker, that this particular Bill has been a long time in coming, that a number of people that deal with trusts are certainly looking forward to having a vehicle that is more appropriate to today's economy rather than what suited the economy of the 1950s. When you look at the differences in the interest rates alone in a savings account today, you may be getting an interest rate of 2 to 3 per cent, whereas the trust accounts that could invest in mutual funds could be generating 10 to 20 per cent. And that includes such things, Mr. Speaker, as people's pensions.

You know our own pension plan within the . . . as MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) is certainly generating more than 2 to 3 per cent. If it wasn't we would be unhappy, as would any of the other members of the civil service if their pensions were generating those kind of returns that trust accounts have been held to. So that's certainly a good change.

But I have to sometimes wonder, what does it mean when it says a reasonably prudent investor? Now somebody who invested in Bre-X when it was on the rise could have been considered a reasonably prudent investor, but as it was in the downturn, questions would arise. So I think we'll need an explanation a little more clearly thought out as to what a reasonably prudent investor would be classified as, Mr. Speaker.

(1515)

Also when it comes to terms like diversity of your account. Now if I want to invest in the grain industry, does that mean I'm diversified if I have invested in five different grain companies? Does that mean my portfolio is diversified? Or does diversified mean I invest in gold, I invest in oil, I invest in land, I invest in manufactured types of companies? I think the minister needs to explain a little more what he means by diversify.

Previously trustees have been limited to such things as government bonds, savings accounts. I think it is a good move to allow this change that will allow people to invest their trusts in a greater number of financial vehicles.

But the minister also talked about allowing agents to handle those trusts. The trustees, up until now, have been responsible for making those financial arrangements. They could invest in various and sundry financial vehicles but they dealt with them themselves, for which they received a remuneration for dealing with the trust and the trust accounts.

If they in turn though, under this piece of legislation, turn all of that managerial responsibility over to an agent such as a broker, why would you carry on paying the trustees their remuneration when they are not bearing the responsibilities that had originally be assigned to them? So I think there needs to be some discussion on that particular point and perhaps some clarification from the minister.

When you talk about trustees no longer being liable if they have acted as reasonably prudent investors, even though they may have invested in what others may have thought was a high-risk investment, does it mean that no one is going to be held to account? I would hope that this piece of legislation wouldn't be used by the government to turn SaskPower into a trust, and therefore be able to exonerate the ministers and the board of directors if they weren't reasonably prudent investors in things like Channel Lake, Mr. Speaker.

I guess one other thing that I should mention, Mr. Speaker, is subsections (13) through (17). And we will certainly be asking the minister to explain what is the purpose of those particular subsections in this clause, because on the surface they don't seem to relate. So I think the minister will need his explanation as to why the Wascana Park Act is included in this particular piece of legislation, or the Meewasin Valley Authority, and those particular pieces. So we'll be asking the minister to explain why he has included references to those Acts in this particular Bill.

There are a number of groups, Mr. Speaker, that need to be consulted on these particular pieces of legislation. They have not yet responded to our queries; so at this particular time, Mr. Speaker, I would move that we adjourn debate on this Bill.

Debate adjourned.

#### **Bill No. 5 — The Animal Products Amendment Act, 1998**

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to rise and to be doing the following second reading speeches on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture. At the end of my remarks I'll be moving the second reading of The Animal Products Amendment Act, 1998.

Mr. Speaker, the *Agriculture 2000 — A Strategic Direction* developed a few years ago, directs the provincial government to work with the industry to undertake changes which contribute to the development of family farms, diversification, and value added production.

We are working closely with our food production and processing sectors to establish quality assurance programs. The goal of both federal and provincial governments is to harmonize food inspection regulations. This will facilitate the interprovincial and international trade of Canadian food

products.

Saskatchewan is working with other provinces and the federal government to develop a common legislative and regulatory base for a harmonized Canadian food inspection system. That working group is working toward the development of national codes for dairy, for meat and poultry, and for the retail sector. This will result in a cost-effective and safer food inspection system for the consumers of Canadian food products.

This will ensure our quality products have continued access to the markets. It will address a number of concerns that consumers have and the demand for quality, safe food products.

The proposed amendments will provide Saskatchewan with the ability to develop modern, cost-effective, and efficient inspection systems. They will address hazards associated with food production and processing of animal products, and they will help create effective partnerships with industry for their delivery. Lastly, they will enable Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food to eventually consolidate all meat inspection regulations under one Act.

The amendments will also provide the opportunity to clarify and modernize language. In some sections they will update offensive and . . . offence and penalty clauses. They will renew the constitutionality of inspection powers. And the legislation is consistent with the desires of the Saskatchewan Meat Processors Association, who are interested in developing a hazard analysis, critical control, point-based quality assurance program for small meat processors, and who did not want a more expensive, traditional, government-delivered inspection program.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the Assembly to support this Act, and I therefore move second reading of Bill No. 5, The Animal Products Amendment Act, 1996.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, on the surface this particular Act seems like a fairly innocuous, small piece of legislation, but it does raise a few questions and a few concerns, Mr. Speaker, when it talks about records which would now include electronic records.

Does this mean that if the government for some reason wanted to review those records, that they could now walk off with the processor's computers, or does it simply mean they would extract a record from that computer and allow the owner or the processor to maintain his records in his computer. Some of those things are the types of questions that need to be answered, Mr. Speaker.

It also goes on to talk about the amendment suspension and revocation of a licence of any person issued under the Act. Well, Mr. Speaker, it says that there can be a hearing but it doesn't say who will actually be doing the hearing — who will be responsible to hold this hearing and who will be the advocate or the judge at that kind of the particular hearing. It needs to clarify that, Mr. Speaker.

It also goes on though later in the Bill to say that the minister

has the power to change, suspend, or revoke such a licence without a hearing if he feels it's in the public interest, although a hearing would then have to be held within 15 days. Perhaps we need to find out from the minister just what kind of issues he would see arising that would necessitate the suspension of a licence for public interest, and again who would be holding the hearings, Mr. Speaker.

Does this particular Act, Mr. Speaker, have any impact on hunting and trapping? Because we hear a great deal of contention from some corners about hunting and trapping. So would this, any changes to this Act, have an impact in that particular area?

Also fines, Mr. Speaker, are changing for penalties under this Act — I shouldn't say penalties perhaps, fines under this Act — to raise them from \$1,000 to \$20,000 for offences but it doesn't impose a penalty. Well if somebody gave me a fine for \$20,000 that would sure sound like a penalty to me. You know so I think we need to again clarify some of the terminology, Mr. Speaker.

Also under this Act the government is taking the power onto itself to state exactly how animals will be killed or slaughtered, and how they'll be processed. I know that is of concern to some processors, Mr. Speaker. I talked to a processor about a year ago that deals with some of the animals that would be dealt with under this Act, some of the exotic animals. The problems he was facing, which were not so much provincial regulation but federal regulation . . . and hopefully this particular Act will not be adding a further burden to him, because he was trying to process animals like emus and ostriches, to do it in a kosher manner.

So some of these things were causing severe problems for his business because he had to do so many things to meet regulations that it was making his business unprofitable. He was operating in a proper manner for his customers, to provide the services they need in a safe and healthy manner, but nevertheless regulations were virtually driving him out of business. And hopefully this particular piece of legislation will not add regulations that will further increase his costs and diminish his time to carry out his duties.

One final thing in this particular Act, Mr. Speaker, that seems to be perhaps a take-off of the federal Liberals' Bill C-68, is that it absolves representatives of the Crowns, ministers, inspectors, or any employee of the Saskatchewan government of any threat of lawsuit for exercising their authority under the Act or the regulations. If they're exercising their authority in a proper manner, Mr. Speaker, indeed they should be protected.

But if for some reasons they have abrogated somebody's rights or acted in an unlawful manner, they should not be protected under this particular piece of legislation — indeed under any particular piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. If they have acted beyond their authority, they should be subject to the penalties of the law, the same as any other citizen, Mr. Speaker.

Because we have some questions, because we need to talk to the people who will be affected by this, the processors, I would move at this time that this Bill be adjourned, Mr. Speaker.

Debate adjourned.

**Bill No. 6 — The Cattle Marketing Deductions Act, 1998**

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my remarks I will move second reading of The Cattle Marketing Deductions Act, 1998.

Saskatchewan has a strong cattle industry which contributes significantly to the provincial economy. In order for the industry to expand its opportunities, continued investment in research, development, and promotion is required. The livestock industry recognizes this need. They supports the current cattle check-offs for use on research, development, and promotional activities.

The industry has approached the government and has asked for some changes to the existing legislation. To accommodate this request, rather than amend the existing Act, it was decided to develop a new Act. The new legislation does not change the intent of the Act. It modernizes the language and powers in the current Act. It clarifies the intent of the Act to meet the needs of the livestock industry.

The new Act better describes the mechanics of collection for the current cattle industry check-off. The new legislation provides for the collection of a proposed national check-off.

Once again I point out to the members this was a request of the provincial cattle industry. This legislation has been developed in consultation with the industry and is consistent with the desires of Saskatchewan's livestock producers for this type of legislation. The cattle check-off established in this legislation will be directed toward research, development, and promotional activities.

I ask the members of the Assembly to support this Act, and I therefore move second reading of Bill No. 6, The Cattle Marketing Deductions Act, 1998.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes indeed, the stock growers of this province have been looking for some changes in this particular Act, but I'm not sure if they were looking for changes that increased the cost of the deductions that were set out under the previous Act at \$1. Now, under this Act, it would allow the government to set whatever fees it deemed to be appropriate.

It also allows it, Mr. Speaker, to direct how those funds are going to be allocated. Under the previous regulations, there was a committee in place made up of stock growers that directed how those funds would be used, what projects they would invest those funds in. And they directed those in a manner that best suited the cattle industry.

Mr. Speaker, that is what needs to continue. Those funds need to be directed to serve the best purposes of the cattle industry. And a lot of those purposes are such things as showing how good beef is, the value of it, the protein and fat level, and showing that indeed, Mr. Speaker, the fat content in beef has decreased over the years.

Those are some of the things that this type of deduction has been used for and should continue to be used for. It shouldn't simply be left into the hands of the minister to make those

determinations. It needs to be carried on by a board of stock growers.

Now I note that there has been a list of people drawn up for one of these Acts as to who would be on a board. And it's perhaps one of the other ones here. It's perhaps The Stray Animals Act I'm thinking of, because we've got a lot of agricultural Acts coming up, Mr. Speaker.

But there was a group of people that had been designated on there previously and those need to continue, Mr. Speaker. I note that the Canadian Wheat Board replaces a representative of the Western Cow-Calf Producers Association.

Now I ask you, Mr. Speaker, why would the Canadian Wheat Board have a representative on a cattle check-off board in Saskatchewan. Doesn't make a lot of sense. Unless perhaps this government, with the encouragement of Mr. Goodale, because he did say in the changes in C-4 for the agricultural Act, the Canadian Wheat Board Act that's been presented to the Canadian House of Commons, that they could expand what the Canadian Wheat Board could deal in.

(1530)

Maybe they want to get into cows now. I certainly hope not, because Canadian Wheat Board certainly has no place, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with cattle. I hope this is perhaps an error, a typo some place on this particular thing and we can clarify that. Because I certainly would not be in favour of allowing the Canadian Wheat Board to sit on a cattle check-off board, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan. The people who raise the cattle, the people who sell the cattle, those are the people who need to be involved in this particular kind of a fund.

We have to be careful, Mr. Speaker, that the monies that are raised on this simply don't disappear into that black hole known as the Consolidated Fund. That they do indeed serve the best interests of the stock growers.

The one other area that we need to be careful of, Mr. Speaker, is that the use of the term administration or administrating the Act, that costs associated with that do not eat up the entire amount of the fund. And that will be up to hopefully the committee to keep a control on that.

But the money is being paid to the Department of Agriculture for those costs of administration and hopefully they won't be too high. And that needs to be tracked to make sure that it doesn't happen.

So, Mr. Speaker, once we have had the opportunity to discuss this with the stock growers associations, with the cattle producers of this province, we will be prepared to proceed with this particular action. At the present time, I would move that the debate be now adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

**Bill No. 7 — The Pastures Act**

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — At the end of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will move second reading of The Pastures Act, 1998.

The Government of Saskatchewan continues to identify and pursue all opportunities to diversify the agricultural economy so as to ensure a sustainable agricultural economy in the 21st century. The Government of Saskatchewan supports and encourages the livestock industry in Saskatchewan. Fifty-six pastures in the Saskatchewan pastures program are a service to the Saskatchewan livestock producers.

Saskatchewan introduced the unique concept of the community pasture to the world. The program was introduced in 1922 with the acquisition of Crown land previously leased to the Matador Land and Cattle Company.

The program has enjoyed continuous and successful development. The livestock herd size in Saskatchewan has increased and the quality of animals has improved. The various livestock management services and programs introduced within the pastures have contributed to this improvement.

The services and programs have provided supplemental grazing to 2,500 patrons. The appeal for producers was such that the program now has 56 pastures throughout the province.

The program provides an improvement service for producers who wish to maintain cattle and sheep but do not have the land, feed, or time to pursue livestock management. For a fee, Mr. Speaker, producers can place their animals in a Saskatchewan Crown land pasture. The fee covers professional livestock management services provided by Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food.

For many years the Saskatchewan pastures program was operated as a program within various branches of Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food and the former Department of Rural Development. In June 1996, the pastures program was housed within the newly created pastures branch of Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food. This branch is dedicated solely to the potential contribution of Saskatchewan pastures to Saskatchewan's agricultural diversification and economic development through the production of livestock.

The proposed legislation entitled The Pastures Act will allow for the consolidation of legislation and regulations that govern the Saskatchewan pastures program. The program is currently administered under the auspices of two Acts and one set of regulations. The Acts are The Agricultural Development and Adjustment Act and The Department of Agriculture Act. The regulations are the provincial community pastures regulations.

The program's finances are handled through the conservation and development revolving fund which is contained within The Department of Agriculture Act.

Existing authority for the pastures program is located in various Acts and regulations. Efficiencies would be achieved and the public and the government would be served by the consolidation of legislation and regulations pertaining to the Saskatchewan pastures program within one Act.

The proposed legislation would also ensure that all operating details of the pastures program have clear legal authority and are under one statute. The new pastures branch would like to implement programs that would enhance the existing grazing

programs.

By consolidating the legislation under one title we can ensure that proposed activities and program enhancements will continue to assist agricultural diversification. It is imperative to ensure that all activities are adequately defined by legislation. The pastures program is changing but not as a result of this new legislation.

I encourage you to adopt The Pastures Act, and I move that The Pastures Act be now read a second time.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think some of the members opposite want to put me out to pasture already. I think there's a good number of them, Mr. Speaker, who will be out to pasture after the next election.

Because of that, Mr. Speaker, we have some concerns when part of this Act deals with purchasing of more land. I think we need to give some very serious consideration to the amount of land that Saskatchewan Agriculture already holds before we go around purchasing any more, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think overall we're in favour of this particular Bill. We're always in favour of simplifying things, cutting out the red tape and the regulations, and this Act does go a long ways towards doing that.

But again, we need to discuss the situation with the people who are most affected — the clients of the community pastures — to determine whether or not this suits their particular needs. Because I know that over the last few years I've had a number of people complaining to me about the operation of the community pastures, how the costs have increased over the last couple of years, particularly in areas dealing with the elimination of the bull program on a number of the community pastures. That had been a long-time service. It provided what the minister was talking about, the increase in the quality of cattle in this province because a number of people, when it was initiated, could not afford to buy purebred animals for their own herds. This gave them access to those kinds of animals.

Now the government has eliminated that particular service from a number of the pastures. I think we need to talk to the clients of the pasture to determine whether or not these pastures are actually serving them in the manner that they need.

Also another concern that has been raised, Mr. Speaker, has been access to the pastures. Some pastures seem to have a policy of allowing people, ranchers, into those pastures with a small number of units, let's say five to ten animals, and then growing it over a period of time.

Other pastures simply say that if you're all ready in there and there's some increased opportunities there, the people who are already utilizing the pastures get to increase their herd size and no one new seems to be able get access.

That's a problem, Mr. Speaker, as we have a change in the intergenerational transfers of agriculture in this province. Young people need to be able to gain access to these pastures, Mr. Speaker. And at times that seems to be difficult for them to do so.

So perhaps when we do get this particular Bill into committee, the minister will be able to respond to some of those kinds of questions or any other questions that we may hear back from the clients of the community pastures, Mr. Speaker.

So at this time I would move that we adjourn debate on this Bill.

Debate adjourned.

**Bill No. 8 — The Stray Animals Amendment Act, 1998**

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the good member opposite thought the last one applied, maybe this will have more application.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of my brief remarks, I'll move second reading of the amendments to The Stray Animals Act.

Mr. Speaker, the government's strategic direction in agriculture is founded on diversification. Saskatchewan producers are diversifying into specialized livestock. We're seeing growing numbers of bison, wild boar, and elk, and other specialized livestock on Saskatchewan farms. The economics and markets are there.

Mr. Speaker, there is a need for government to amend The Stray Animals Act to reflect the new realities of a diversified livestock on Saskatchewan farms. It is the government's responsibility to create a legislative regulatory framework for sustainable growth. The specialized livestock industry and rural municipalities are asking the government for changes in legislation to meet these new emerging realities.

The current Stray Animals Act does not provide adequate provisions to deal with non-traditional or specialized livestock, which include the production and marketing of bison, wild boar, and elk.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment contains provisions for dealing with dangerous stray animals, compensation for damage, and cost recovery to the municipality of impounding and caring for strays.

Amendment of the Act is aimed at including provisions such as specifically naming new species to be covered under the Act; giving municipalities the right to transport strays to pounds outside of their RM (rural municipality); to protect proprietors from liability if a stray is accidentally injured on their property; and allows destruction of dangerous strays by any person if the situation is immediately threatening; to update fees by RMs to reflect current costs of capturing, impounding, selling, or destroying a stray animal; and provides for an increase in fines that more closely reflect the value of crops, livestock, and property destroyed by strays. The Act provides the opportunity for mediation.

Two amendments I want to emphasize are, the municipality waits seven days before an animal of unknown ownership is sold. This allows for time to locate the owner and addresses concerns regarding premature action by the RM. The second amendment I want to emphasize is that a dangerous stray can only be destroyed if the stray is in the act of harming,

endangering, or pursuing any person or livestock. There is a need to deal with stray animals, compensation for damage, and the cost recovery of impounding and caring for strays by RMs.

The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and the livestock industry, such as the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association, have requested a legislative review of The Stray Animals Act. The amendments we are making provide the provisions to meet the changing realities in diversified livestock production in Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the Assembly to support these amendments to The Stray Animals Act.

I move second reading of Bill No. 8.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's quite a number of these Bills so it's like being in the pasture, Mr. Speaker, you have to watch where you're stepping. Mr. Speaker, this particular Act has been brought to my attention by some of the RMs in my area because they did have a great deal of concern about stray animals that were at large in their particular areas.

And I can understand how some of the members opposite have some concerns about this particular Act also because when they're put out to pasture it would be a shame if they were to stray. They would no longer be under control of the party whips and need an administrator to fulfil that function for them.

One of the things this Act does is the appointment of an administrator in the RMs to deal with the stray animals. The concern expressed to me by a couple of the RMs was that they did not want the responsibility of putting their neighbour's cows into a pound and disposing of them in some manner. It was their hope that some other agency would carry out that role for them so that they could maintain harmonious relationships with their neighbour.

(1545)

It would seem that under this Act that does not happen, Mr. Speaker. That the administrator would be someone, in all likelihood, either the administrator of the RM or on the RM council, or perhaps the pest control officer for the RM, or someone of that nature.

Hopefully though, some other arrangements for those RMs that would like to make them could be made so that somebody else could be designated as the administrator and therefore would bear the responsibilities of making the decision of whose animal should be impounded.

Because, Mr. Speaker, any animals at large do indeed cause a hazard. If animals are at large at night and you're driving down the road, you may very well strike them and cause yourself and your property considerable damage.

And that's certainly not unheard of, Mr. Speaker. In fact, just four miles south of my place here about a month and a half ago, a driver at night struck approximately ten to a dozen horses, killing five or six of them and injuring a large number of others that necessitated their destruction. Thankfully, no persons were injured in the accident but the vehicle that was involved, I

believe, will be a write-off. So this is certainly a danger in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

One of the items in this particular Act states how a pound is to be constructed. And I think it would be important to review that particular piece, Mr. Speaker, to find out exactly what the government is talking about in that particular area. I note that they've increased fines in this area to \$5,000 from \$500 for the unlawful restraint of an animal or for removing an animal from a pound.

The minister was talking about things like wild boar and elk. Many of the elk animals today, Mr. Speaker, particularly the females, are valued upwards to \$25,000. So for removing an animal from a pound with a fine of \$5,000 does not yet seem to be appropriate in that area.

Bison, Mr. Speaker, are again a very lucrative animal if you happen to acquire one through removing it from a pound, and the \$5,000 fee, while in that area it may indeed cover the cost, it would be very close.

So we need to talk, Mr. Speaker, to those people that would be affected, to the RMs, to the producers of animals in this province, including elk and bison and ostriches and emus and horses and cows and sheep, to determine what they believe is the most appropriate, if this Bill represents their need or if some changes need to be made to it.

So at this particular point in time, Mr. Speaker, I would move that we adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### General Revenue Fund Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Vote 30

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to introduce Brent Cotter, my deputy minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs; Melinda Gorrill, the director of administration on his right; Ernie Lawton directly behind me, the assistant deputy minister in charge of Aboriginal Affairs; and, Paul Osborne, directly behind the deputy, the assistant deputy minister in charge of Intergovernmental Affairs. I welcome them here today.

#### Subvote (IA01)

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you. Welcome to the minister and to the officials. It's great to see you here. And when we first . . . before we really get into questions, I would ask the minister to give me an overview of what's going on in his department this year . . . in the last year.

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by just indicating what the mandate of the department is. The mandate is to promote Saskatchewan's interests through the management of the province's relations with other governments in Canada and abroad, and to work with aboriginal peoples in the province and their organizations to develop and implement

policies and programs which advance our common interests.

And as the member may know, within the last year the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs has taken on a new face and been integrated with the Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat, which was previously a separate secretariat. So we have brought together those two elements of government into a new department carrying out the mandate as described here.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Maybe you could explain how, in the government's eyes, seeing the . . . joining Intergovernmental Affairs and Aboriginal Affairs was something that would make sense.

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — The position of governing the peoples of our country and creating relationships between them is a unique fact in this federal state of Canada. We have obviously one of the better governing systems in the world; has developed one of the best countries in the world. In fact a country that's been named to be the best country in the world. And it has been so done by creating a relationship of respect and mutual interest between all bodies . . . all governing bodies in Canada.

We have provincial governments, we have federal governments, and we have aboriginal governments. And so there is a common notion to the idea of the new department where these all come together in one place.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I read an article a week or so ago that was . . . talked about Canada being the best place in the world to live in, Saskatchewan of course being part of that. And though I agree, I thought it was an interesting perspective that the writer brought forward saying they wondered what would happen if the United States had paid their UN (United Nations) fees, would we still be considered the best place in the world to live. So it's just an interesting side note.

Mr. Minister, I noticed that in the next year you're expecting to spend an additional \$9 million. And we're talking about . . . the number of employees are going up — pardon me, it's nine more staff you'll have — the number of employees have gone up by nine and yet it looks like we're spending exactly the same amount of money. Can you tell me how we can have . . . how that can happen?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — I want to begin by responding to the concluding comment of the member opposite with respect to the best country in the world in which to live. I think there is nothing the United States of America could do to compete with Canada in that sense. They're not even paying their United Nations dues because Canada is a country of a unique spirit of cooperation and mutual interest that is unparalleled anywhere in the world.

And I think the reason that Saskatchewan is named to be the best province within this best country is because that spirit of cooperation is really rooted most solidly here, and many of the elements of the nature of Canada which makes it such a wonderful place have been gifts that have . . . gifts to the country which have been begun here.

With respect to the department staff and programing, there are some increased staff in the area of preparing for celebrations of

the millennium and government information services through the web site.

There are other areas where resources have been shifted. As the member knows, last year we spent a lot of energy on the national unity consultations and related exercises, so there has been money shifted from areas which are at the moment not costing as much in the upcoming year and some of that is being shifted into new planning exercises.

One of the excitement . . . exciting elements of this department is that it is, as a central agency of government, in tune with the changing needs of the province of Saskatchewan in its relationship with other Canadians and people of the world. And so sometimes there are changes in emphasis that happen even within the year and sometimes adjustments will have to be made for that.

But in so far as what's here, there is a shift from resources that were spent on other elements last year into new elements for next year.

**Ms. Draude:** — Are there any of the people that are in your department paid under contract, or is everyone paid just by salary?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — There are four personal services contracts within the department of the total departmental functions.

**Ms. Draude:** — And, Mr. Minister, can we get a copy or can we get those documents please, and the information?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Yes, we'll forward them to you.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Minister, last year I . . . the government, the Premier, and a number of ministers made trips out of the province — Team Canada and some of the other expeditions outside of our country, and even within the country but to different provinces. Can you tell me how many different trips were made by department staff, or by the Premier and the ministers?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Mr. Chairman, the numbers are being compiled and they are not at the present complete for the year. But when they are we will make them available to you.

(1600)

**Ms. Draude:** — Last year I was delighted to attend a supper, a meeting with a delegation from the Ukraine. I'm wondering if each delegation, each time we have visitors in from outside of our province and to Saskatchewan, if its kept track of separately and if you can give me an idea of what the cost of that was?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — The element of information the member is asking for is under the protocol office, which is headed up by the Provincial Secretary. So maybe when the Provincial Secretary is here for his estimates — it operates under the same authority as we do — maybe you could ask Mr. Shillington at that time.

**Ms. Draude:** — Okay.

Mr. Minister, I noticed that — and I'm not sure where it was now — there was quite an increase in the French language coordination. Can you give me an idea of what's happening in that area?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — That is also under the guidance of the Provincial Secretary and I'm sure he will make that information available to you.

**Ms. Draude:** — So any of the questions that I'm going to ask you under that, you're not going to give me an answer to?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — I'd be delighted, but I would be stepping on my colleague's toes.

**Ms. Draude:** — So will you answer any questions under accommodation and central service?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Yes.

**Ms. Draude:** — Okay, can you give us, or can you supply us with, a list of the properties that are owned by SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) as opposed to rented by SPMC?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Mr. Chairman, I may have answered the previous question too quickly or not clearly understood the intent of the question. The central services property management is the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, which is under the minister in charge of Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

The facilities which we use, which are SPMC properties, are three. One is the Government House, and then the two facilities that presently house what was the Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat and what was Intergovernmental Affairs, which is going to be brought in together. You may notice a budgetary change with respect to facilities. They're going to be brought together in the facility downtown that was once vacant space in the, I guess it's still the Ramada, I guess.

**An Hon. Member:** — The Delta.

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Oh, it's now the Delta. Sorry. So there will be the amalgamation of our department into one facility. And to that extent we have the information specific to our department.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Maybe I'll go on to an issue that is something that I know that you have a lot of information on because we just finished dealing with it in December of this year, and that was our unity debate.

We had asked for some information on the exact cost that was paid out for the unity debate and I'm wondering if you can give me that information.

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — The total cost was \$584,978.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Minister, the paper that you have in front of you probably breaks down specific costs. And I was interested in the costs of the bussing all this information out to the MLAs every day. It was more propaganda than information

that was great for our talks with the people in our constituencies. Can you tell me what the cost was for all those bussings?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Mr. Chairman, if officials have the detailed cost sheets here of couriering information, I will relay it. If not, we can take note and send you the detail on that.

I would like to respectfully disagree with the characterization of the information that went to MLAs as propaganda. We planned and were pleased to have a very collaborative, all-party approach to this discussion. We met weekly when we could, and sometimes not every week but as often as we could, to jointly plan everything that was done to keep MLAs informed with information that would support their discussion in their community.

I think the result was probably one of the best processes in Canada with a very, very positive response from the people of Canada, and certainly the most involved process from any province in Canada, where we had, I think, 150, 160 meetings. All MLAs need to take credit for the energy they put into this, and they were supplied with information as the process went on, to inform them about issues and meeting places and resources for their meetings.

I think it was a necessary part of the exercise. In fact it would have been irresponsible to have engaged in that discussion without giving proper support to MLAs and their citizen Co-Chairs. So I would say whatever the cost was — and I'm sure the cost of mailing would have been modest in the grand scheme of things — it is a central element of providing adequate information for a public discussion.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Minister, it was interesting that when we began the original discussions about the unity debate and we talked about costs, the MLAs were told that all costs were going to be covered — which of course they were — but they were covered out of our own expenses, the MLA expenses themselves.

And if those of us that spent a lot of time travelling around the province meeting with constituents or meeting with interest groups around the province had spent most of their money already, but we found ourselves out of money at the end of the year. And although the unity was a very important issue, a lot of us were forced to cut back on the number of meetings that we could hold and the discussions that we could hold because of this kind of costing.

Now I'm wondering why the decision was made that all of these costs weren't involved . . . weren't paid for out of this department. And if you . . . the five hundred and some thousand — can't remember now, you'll have repeat it for me — that it was actually spent on unity, it did not include any of the costs for the MLAs for the meetings they held, for the travel they had, and that type of thing.

Can you tell me why it was decided to be spent out of our own expenses? And can you tell us how much . . . have you figured out what it would cost if you actually add all the cost to the unity discussion?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Yes. The costs of meetings were covered. The costs of MLA participation was not, in that part of our duty and part of the all-party agreement with respect to carrying out this marvellous consultation was it was to be an extension of the people's democratic structure, in coordination with local citizen Co-Chairs, who could bring a non-political, non-legislative element to that discussion and to those meetings.

And I think, without remembering the details of the discussion between the representatives of the parties when these agreements were made, I think it would have been seen that as MLAs, one of our first duties, and I think our most important duty, is the representation of our constituents. And the allowances which we are given really are given for that purpose.

And so that it would have been a natural element, that when we're engaged in consultation with our constituents, whether it's on a theme of a community's request or in this case a theme of broad, provincial coordinated action by all parties in the House, that it is reasonable that those should be paid for from the funds that we are given to consult with our constituents.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Minister, as official opposition we do not only represent our constituents but people across the province who have issues that they want to be brought forward to this government. And because there are of course not as many of us here as there are sitting across the floor, we have obligations to be travelling right across the whole province. So if we were talking about spending our money wisely, we do it every time we get in our vehicle, every time we answer the phone and we want to talk to people of the province.

I think it was a disservice to the people in our constituency, because if we didn't have the monies available to have as many meetings as many of the members on the other side did have, because they weren't constricted by the amount of money they had left when it came to actually representing the people in this province . . . So I was very disappointed in that and I can assure you that when we went into these negotiations we weren't aware that this was the way it was going to be.

Can you give me an idea of what other provinces spent? I imagine because you have been talking to counterparts across Canada and deciding on how these issues should be brought forward to the people of Canada . . . what kind of numbers were spent in other provinces?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — I suspect the range of costs would be substantial, because provinces use very different procedures, but I do not have the direct costs of any of the other provinces. The members may be able to get that information. If it happened to be compiled by someone and made available to me by those provinces, I would put it forward but it is not presently being compiled.

But I do want to reiterate on the question of representation, that the cost for the constituency meetings was covered. So the cost that you would have borne would be driving from your home and the meals you would consume on the day or the days or the evening of the evenings that you had travelled to those meetings. And I think, for me at least, the participation with a group of my constituents is valuable and productive, and I think



there could not be any greater purpose for which we would spend that time with our constituents than for the purpose of preserving the greatest country on the face of the earth and building it to a stronger nation.

**Ms. Draude:** — I'm sure you haven't heard us disagree with the fact that it was a very important issue. What I'm disagreeing with is the fact that we didn't have the same resources and the same time obviously to do what you have done; so I think it was a disservice to our constituents is what I am telling you, Mr. Minister.

I wonder if you can tell me what the response has been from the Premier of Quebec about Saskatchewan's participation in the unity debate?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Again I don't want to return too often to the question of the issue of participation by constituents. There are 58 MLAs in Saskatchewan. Each of those MLAs have agreed to allowances for their expenditures to consult with their constituents. The structure that was in place for this was that each of the MLAs would participate in their constituency and not beyond, in their constituencies with Co-Chairs consult . . . to engage in this consultation. So the number of people in a caucus does not change the proportionate amount of money available to any MLA with respect to these consultations, and every MLA of whatever party or independent members had the same resources and I think that was fair and I think the result was good.

And I want to thank you and the members from all constituencies in this province for the very good work they did with that, and I think the decision of the joint party committee that met to discuss this was fair, and I think the results have been good and notable.

With respect to the Premier of Quebec, I have not had a direct response from the Premier of Quebec with respect to this initiative. But as you know, Quebec has not engaged in it.

You are aware that the Bloc has visited Saskatchewan and we have . . . one of the opportunities I had when they were here was to demonstrate to them Saskatchewan's commitment to unity from the many, many responses we had here in Saskatchewan.

In fact I showed them the collection of responses that we had had and pointed out to them that Saskatchewanians were very proud of our country and were committed to continuing to build it and that we had a fundamental disagreement with the Bloc and others who would rather fracture the country.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Minister, you haven't had an opportunity to speak to the Premier but I would imagine then you were just . . . were on the phone the next day after Mr. Charest was now going to be involved in Quebec politics and to indicate your support again. So I'd be interested to hear what he had to say to you.

(1615)

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — I have actually not had the privilege of speaking to Mr. Charest recently. I can say that the Premier has.

But I can say that I have had past relationships with Mr. Charest. He was the federal Environment minister when I was the provincial Environment minister.

And I respect him highly and I think he has taken on a duty and a responsibility on behalf of Quebec people and on behalf of Canadians to work to build this country and I wish him all the best in his exercise.

**Ms. Draude:** — No doubt this trend with joining of the Conservatives and the Liberals will probably be something you're looking at and you're thinking is a great thing as well.

Mr. Minister, when the delegation came from the Bloc Québécois to discuss their agenda, was there any provincial costs involved? Was there anything paid for meals, accommodations, for that delegation?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — I hosted no events on their behalf. I'm not aware that there would have been any. I think there would not. I had a meeting with them in my office and that was the extent of our engagement.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. The Aboriginal Affairs department is probably I believe one of the most important departments we have in Saskatchewan, because they are facing an issue that's going to be important to everybody in this province, especially important to the aboriginal people, the dealings that the province has with them right now.

And we all feel strongly that in order for everyone to go into the next millennium with the very best opportunities, it's going to take cooperation not only with aboriginal and non-aboriginal, but it's going to take cooperation between the federal government, the provincial government, and aboriginal governments.

I was upset to see that although the aboriginal people represent 14 per cent of the population in Saskatchewan that there was only an increase of \$650,000 in their budget this year but about eight and a half million . . . or I guess you could probably tell me better how much . . . there was more money given to Intergovernmental Affairs, is that correct?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Yes, the increase in expenditures on the Intergovernmental Affairs side is mostly on the . . . or on the non-aboriginal side is mostly the taking on of duties that were previously done somewhere else — the web site and Government House, they were budgeted elsewhere before. So I think Intergovernmental . . . or the non-aboriginal portion of the budget is relatively constant.

The major part of the Aboriginal Affairs budget is the annual allocation for the settlement of treaty land entitlements. So by far the greatest portion of that budget is that the portion that is not treaty land entitlement is about \$3 million, and there was an increase of about 5 or \$600,000 to that, to achieve that expenditure this year. So the increase actually has been quite significant.

We are focusing in areas of facilitation . . . facilitating joint exercises to improve employment, to improve economic development, and to achieve, as I am pleased to hear you say,

growth for aboriginal people in this province because this is an initiative that's important to us all.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Minister, I realize that just about 23 million out of the \$26 million is for treaty land entitlement. And I would like to know what do you really do with the other \$3 million? We have Northern Affairs dealt with under Economic Development. We have Social Services dealt with under the other departments. What do you actually do with this \$3 million?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — The expenditures on the Aboriginal Affairs side of this department are in policy and coordination. They are in support for aboriginal organizations and the initiatives that support them, and they are to plan jointly with other elements of governments things like the northern strategy, economic development initiatives and the like.

One of the areas that is significant in the Aboriginal Affairs side of the department is the aboriginal employment development program. This is a program that is leading in opening the doors between aboriginal people who are looking for employment and employers who are trying to create a workplace that is welcoming. And of the many initiatives of the government this is one of the very most successful, and we've increased their budget a lot this year to help them grow more.

But I want to say that central to success in this area is the recognition and the leadership by the private sector in Saskatchewan who have come to invite a partnership between aboriginal leaders, between the province, between the federal government, and between themselves in readying their workplaces so they are welcoming workplaces, and participating in training and provision of job placements that are productive for the private sector employers and for the aboriginal people who very ably meet the needs of these job placements, and as a result, help build our economy.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Minister, there is considerably more money spent in northern Saskatchewan through the northern development fund that's sponsored or through SaskPower than is done through the Aboriginal Affairs. And it would appear to me that there's got to be an overlap in work that's done through Economic Development, through the Department of Northern Affairs, through the northern development fund, through your Aboriginal Affairs. We must have more people trying to figure out who's working for who than we do actually helping the people out there.

This northern development fund, do you deal with it at all or is that specifically dealt with through SaskPower?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — The Department of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs is responsible for facilitation program development but many programs, as you indicate, are housed elsewhere. But additionally, as the private sector employers are seeking help to work together with us and with the aboriginal people of Saskatchewan to build the economy, so are other institutions.

One of the good examples of the improvement in aboriginal employment is with the Saskatoon Health District Board where, after they had participated in that program, the employment

rose to multiples of what they had previously employed.

When we did the Crown review, one of the suggestions of the Crown review was that there should be an aboriginal strategy within the Crown sector because this is a very important part of the business of Saskatchewan. It's 17 per cent of the gross domestic product of Saskatchewan.

So we have seen within the Crown corporations, a commitment to build job and business opportunities with aboriginal organizations and with the aboriginal community.

So while our department has the privilege of being a facilitator, the leadership in the growth of the aboriginal participation in both business and employment is often happening within the private sector, within the Crowns, within the health districts, and within the departments of government.

You may be coming to this question but may I answer it in advance. We have a great distance yet to go with respect to achieving equity in government employment for aboriginal people. But we can say proudly that we have moved from 3 per cent of the government employees being of aboriginal origin to about 6 per cent in the time since we've taken government. We acknowledge that the target is in the 10 per cent range and we have some miles left to go.

**Ms. Draude:** — So, Mr. Minister, does your department take any responsibility for coordinating the efforts between the different Crown corporations and different entities that are actually trying to work with aboriginal people and northern people to ensure that monies are not being wasted through administration and bureaucracy?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Yes it is one of the roles of our department to both facilitate policy development that is coordinated and seeing to it that the administration of those policies is coordinated. And if there are instances where that's not so, we obviously would like to be advised of it because it's one of our duties.

**Ms. Draude:** — So do you do it? I mean, do you have specific examples of cases where you have . . . people are saying, where am I supposed to go to here? There's seven different programs and opportunities here. I know I have calls in my office from people who are saying — from aboriginal people who say there is opportunities here but everybody is telling me to go phone this number, phone that number, and it gets to be a lot of red tape and regulations.

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Well I would, I would say that, that if there is doubt in anyone's mind about who to call, my office would be pleased to act as a, as a call, as a call centre for distributing that information. There are, there are . . . This issue is well coordinated in Saskatchewan but it is, it is made more complex by the fact that the primary responsibility for aboriginal people in Canada is with the federal government, and the federal government has a number of agencies.

The truth is that they are . . . that it is Saskatchewan residents that we are talking about often who have, who are . . . for which the federal government has responsibility. So we feel we have a duty and an opportunity to work with all Saskatchewan

residents to build the economy. The federal government has the primary responsibility and, I can say, have been doing some progressive things in recent months.

I would like to pay public tribute to the federal Minister of Indian Affairs, the Hon. Jane Stewart, because they are recognizing some of the needs of the aboriginal community and are working in partnership with Saskatchewan and with first nations people in Saskatchewan to build that future for all people in our province and within our country.

So there are those complications of multiple levels of responsibility, including band level responsibility to provincial initiatives, because we want to build the economy and areas of federal responsibility. All of us who work in this area are most pleased to help make other people aware of where programs exist. But there's a fairly clear designation of what's there for everyone.

(1630)

The issue of services for my constituency are not much less complex for my neighbour who's not aboriginal. If they want to do economic development, they have a number of areas of the government in which to go, and I consider it a privilege in my job as an MLA to help guide those requests for information.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Minister, I don't think this issue is all that complicated. The people that are living in Saskatchewan are Saskatchewan residents and they come to you for help, and when you shut the door on them they're not getting the help they need. Over half the aboriginal people of this province do not live on reserves. They are directly your responsibility and they are hurting badly. And I think that there is a lot of work that has to be done, not hiding behind what the federal government does or doesn't do.

Can you tell me, the treaty land entitlement money, is that given directly to bands, the provincial share, or is it given to the federal government and then back to the bands?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Our money is paid twice annually to the federal government who then place it in a trust fund together with their funds, and then it is dispersed when the appropriate designations of treaty land purchases are complete.

**Ms. Draude:** — I notice that in an order in council during the winter sometime, there was an additional \$895,000 given to fulfil provincial obligations under the Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement to support federal-provincial unity and social policy reform initiatives. What portion of that was for the Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement and why wouldn't it be just a specific . . . there's a set amount each year that is owed to bands for entitlement and so why would there have to be an additional amount?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — There were three areas in the special warrant to which the member refers, Mr. Chairman. There was treaty land entitlement tax loss compensation, and the initiatives with respect to the costs of operating the National Council on social policy, and the costs with respect to the consultations that went on in national unity.

With respect to the element of this that was tax loss compensation, the amount paid for treaty land entitlement resolution is fixed and that is paid twice annually. So that amount does not change.

But the amount that's required to be paid into the tax loss compensation fund is dependent on the amount of land actually purchased and put into reserve status on an annual basis. So that amount we create an estimate of the budget, but if there is more that is transferred than was estimated then the additional funds need to be placed into the tax loss compensation fund so the RMs can then benefit from them.

**Ms. Draude:** — I understand in partnership to the federal government, there is a committee that deals with specific claims. Can you tell me if the provincial government . . . do you have . . . tell me about the meetings that you have, the number of people that are on the committee, and if there is any provincial money given to this committee for specific claims?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — The issue of specific claims, Mr. Chairman, is an issue that relates to losses of land unfairly. And so those issues are issues where the federal government acted in a way — when they are true — that was inappropriate relative to the lands of first nations people. That issue is there for an issue between the federal government and the first nation and we, other than encouraging the relationship and the discussion between them and the discussion with the RMs with respect to tax loss compensation for it, it does not fall within our jurisdiction at all but we do play a facilitating role in hoping to bring these people together.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Minister, I guess I understand it that there is no funding available — at least I didn't think there was any funding given provincially. But in some documentation that I received from the federal government, they talked about partnerships and one of the federal provincial partnerships was this specific claim steering committee. And I'm wondering if this is something that you have been dealing with or if this is information I have received that isn't appropriate.

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — I may be able to get more information from the member, Mr. Chairman, but the . . . we have provided some money to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities to help them work with the federal government on this issue. And so there may have been a steering committee set up between the municipalities and the federal government but we haven't taken any direct involvement in any of that. So if that possibility fits with the information you have, that's probably what has happened.

**Ms. Draude:** — I'm just going to ask one more question before my colleague from Athabasca asks some questions regarding the residential schools and the pay-outs that were given. Was there any provincial money in those claims?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — No.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Just a couple of questions, Mr. Minister. Could you give us a very brief overview of the agreement, as you understand it, in 1998 in reference to the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range agreement with the federal government?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Mr. Chairman, first of all I welcome the questions of the member from Athabasca. The 1998 negotiations on the agreement have not yet been completed so there is no information publicly available on that negotiation.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Just for the sake of following through with some thought and consultation to the people that may be watching this particular segment of the Assembly, could you give us a brief historical overview of how the Primrose Air Weapons Range was established and the negotiations that took place and the fees that your government currently receives at this point in time?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — I'm trying to be judicious in the amount of time I take in entering information on the record here by reading it. I will read in some very generic background information to say that in 1953 Canada and Saskatchewan signed an agreement granting Canada exclusive use of almost 1.6 million acres north of Meadow Lake Provincial Park for military purposes. The agreement is a lease in perpetuity. It can be amended through negotiation, but can only be ended at the federal government's initiative. Alberta has a similar agreement for an equivalent area just across the border. Saskatchewan still owns the land.

Under the agreement, Saskatchewan retains the right to the resources on the range and has a responsibility for forest fire protection. The agreement requires that Canada pay compensation annually for lost revenue resulting from limited resources accessed. And then it goes from there to the from-time-to-time amendment of the agreement and the negotiations and the one to which you refer that is presently under renegotiation.

**Mr. Belanger:** — As a result of this particular agreement, arrangement, then the provincial government does arrive at an annual lease fee. Is that correct, and if it is, what is the amount?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Saskatchewan presently receives \$243,670 annually for the renewable . . . from limiting access to the renewable resources.

**Mr. Belanger:** — And since 1953 that's the same amount that you have gotten, in terms of the provincial — sorry — the federal lease fee to this province.

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — I think I won't be able to answer that question with absolute certainty, but I will get you the information. I suspect that the rates have been changed since the original negotiation. But I can't answer that with certainty and with detail.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Would it be safe to assume, Mr. Minister, that over the 46 years that this has been happening, that we could assume that at the very least we may look at 6 or 8 or \$10 million that the province has received from the Primrose Air Weapons Range.

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — I can't affirm a number because I don't know what the early lease fees were, but suffice it to say that an annual amount has been paid that would, over time, amount to a significant amount of money.

And I think it is appropriate. I think one of the elements of the renegotiations that we think the compensation is inadequate for Saskatchewan lands. That these Saskatchewan lands are really provincial lands belonging to the people of Saskatchewan and the compensation ought to be appropriate for that as if it were any other land — agricultural land, land for oil and gas drilling, whatever it is.

So one of the issues that actually are at stake in the 1998 negotiations are the fair compensation to the province for the federal use of this land.

**Mr. Belanger:** — I just wish to offer a different perspective on terms of who owns the land and who had access to the land. And quite clearly, the 1.6 million acres that was taken away from northern Saskatchewan people had most certainly a drastic impact and effect on the economies of their communities.

In the early '50s, the Primrose Air Weapons Range area offered significant financial benefits to many, many families. And any time you take 1.6 million acres of land away from a people, a certain area, it's going to have a drastic effect on not only the current economies of the 1953, Mr. Minister, but you look at the perspective of the 1998 dollars and you can see that the impact and the fact, as a result of the loss of land to the people of that area, would have significant — significant — economic impact.

So the question I have is in terms of the annual lease fee that the province gets from the federal government in terms of leasing that particular section of land: where is the money allocated, or where is the money put?

(1645)

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Well if I caught the specific question correctly, the question is what does the province do with its revenue? The province does with its revenues that which it does with all its revenues — it puts it into the General Revenue Fund and then allocates, according to the needs of the province, expenditures appropriate to the people of the province.

But I want to say with respect to the matters raised by the member from Athabasca, that he is pointing to a very significant fact that when the federal government made this agreement with Saskatchewan they agreed to compensation, and in fact did provide some compensation for both Indian and Metis people at the time. There is a very strong feeling amongst Metis people and amongst the first nations people in the area that that compensation was inadequate, and the federal government has recently agreed to pay additional compensation to the first nations in the area.

Unfortunately the federal government has not paid the same respect to the Metis people in the area, and I met recently with the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range negotiating committee on behalf of the Metis, to hear their position on this, to receive their concerns about it, at which point I conveyed their concerns to the federal minister, Minister Ralph Goodale, the federal interlocutor on Metis affairs, and encouraged personally the Hon. Ralph Goodale to meet with the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range negotiating committee in order to address these issues around which they feel they have not been dealt with

fairly.

And so I say again that I thank the members of the community. I've heard their concerns. They are real, and I would encourage the federal government to take this matter seriously in the discussions with the Metis. And I suspect what I hear the member from Athabasca saying, that he would support the province in their support of the Metis to achieve a reasonable resolution of this issue of compensation for lost benefits as a result of inadequate federal compensation.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I guess most certainly we can talk about our commitment, your commitment, and my commitment to work towards a common resolution to the problem, and as I've indicated on many occasions to you — on a few occasions — that certainly that you can count on my support and count on my office's efforts to try and accomplish that very objective.

I just want to make sure that, based on your information as of today, and if we assume — and I stress that, we assume — that the \$243,670 you get each year — again we're assuming that you got that each and every year — is it fair in a yes or a no statement to stand today and say that yes, for the past four to six years we have been getting \$243,670 from the federal government on the lease of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — As I said earlier, I can't confirm that number because I don't know what the . . . how many times the number was changed in renegotiations since the original agreement.

But I would again state for the benefit of the member opposite that this land is no different than any other provincial lands. And whether the federal government leases it or whether my neighbour leases it to graze his cattle or whether an oil or gas company leases it for purposes of oil development or mineral . . . for mineral development or forestry companies for forestry development, it is a provincial asset for which the province, the people of Saskatchewan, should be compensated regardless of who leases it.

And so I would again hope that that would be a common interpretation by the member of Athabasca. These are Saskatchewan resources that, to whomever they are leased, there ought to be appropriate lease fees paid.

If the member opposite is trying to make a link, which he has not yet done, but if he's trying to make a link between compensation and reasonable rental of land, there is no link to be made. Because the agreement that was struck provided a lease payment to the province of Saskatchewan which has been renegotiated from time to time and provided that the federal government would provide compensation to those displaced.

And again I appreciate the member opposite's commitment to work together with us to encourage the federal government to meet their obligations with respect to these Saskatchewan people.

**Mr. Belanger:** — No, Mr. Minister, I was not trying to make a link.

I think the key thing here, Mr. Minister, is we go along another path here if I may, a couple more questions before we'll certainly have other opportunities to talk about this matter at greater length.

In reference to northern Saskatchewan, when you do have the treaty land entitlement process in place, in southern Saskatchewan you do deal with third interests or third-party interests such as the farming community, perhaps municipal governments, perhaps RMs.

In northern Saskatchewan a huge chunk of the lands that you are selling in the North is Crown land. It's government-owned land. And I understand from the negotiations that you have on the treaty land entitlement that any sale of any lands, 70 per cent is paid for by the federal government and 30 per cent is paid for by the provincial government. So if I were to buy a hundred acres off the member from Kindersley, which I know is going to be an inflated price, and for example if it's a \$100, I would have to . . . the federal government would have to pay 70 per cent of that cost to the seller. And the province had to sell . . . would have to cover 30 per cent of that.

Now what happens in northern Saskatchewan when the owner of the land, which is the provincial government, when they own the land, do they in essence receive the profits of all those sales of Crown lands in northern Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — With respect to the question of what happens in the northern areas, the . . . first of all, the amount of land that has been sold out of provincial land, provincial land base in the North, is very, very small. The successful negotiations have often been greater in private land sales.

But in the North, when there is an agreement achieved, the province sells the land at an appraised value for the purpose of transferring it. But in those instances, the province puts up 30 per cent, plus another 19 per cent to compensate the federal government for the fact that they are, in a number of cases, then taking on northern resource, northern communities, northern infrastructures, that have previously been a provincial responsibility.

So if a community is taken into reserve status that was previously funded by Municipal Government in the province, this becomes a savings to the province. So the formula is constructed in such a way that an additional 19 per cent is paid by the province towards the total compensation, but we have already sold it for an appraised value, that which is, hopefully, fair.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Well, Mr. Minister, I have to admit to you I'm, at this point in time, very confused about the answer. Am I to understand that in the event that you're selling some northern land, instead of paying 30 per cent of that northern land, what in essence you're doing is you're, you're achieving a 70 per cent profit rate as a result of this land going into treaty land entitlement? So in essence instead of costing you 30 per cent, you're gaining 70 per cent. So you're saying now today that you also assess the property and you pay an extra 19 per cent to sell it to yourself?

So I'm just trying to get a better bearing, Mr. Minister, in the

event that you are able to explain clearly what the process is, where does the purchase of northern Crown lands dollars under the treaty land entitlement process — where does that money go?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Well that's a very simple question to answer, and if you had ever joined with me in my profession you would understand that when somebody who owns land — like a farmer sells land — the farmer who owned the land gets the money for the land. It is also true if the province happens to be the owner of the land. If the province owns land and it's sold to anybody — including a first nation — the province gets the money for the sale. The province then makes its contribution, except it's a larger contribution, to the purchase of those funds.

So if the province sells a parcel of land for a hundred thousand dollars, then it makes its contribution of \$30,000 for the regular contribution to treaty land entitlement settlement, plus it makes an additional contribution of another \$19,000 to compensate the federal government for, on average, their acquisition of assets that used to be assets that were a provincial expense, like community infrastructure. So if the province sold a hundred thousand dollar parcel of land, they would pay 49,000 towards the treaty land entitlement cost structure, and the province would then have \$51,000 left from a hundred thousand dollars value of land.

**Mr. Belanger:** — So on a hundred thousand dollar price tag you'd pay 49 per cent, or 49,000. Nineteen of that thousand . . . 19 of the 49,000 would go to the federal government as the Indian band is assuming the responsibilities of a small municipal government that'd be maybe at the borderline or within the borders of the Indian band. The other 30 per cent — who do you pay that to?

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — All of the money goes to exactly the same place. The provincial contribution to the sale of that treaty land entitlement arrangement is 49 per cent and the federal contribution is 51 per cent as opposed to 30/70 for lands in the South.

So it is just part of the annual contribution we make, and it is allocated in such a way that the provincial government pays an additional portion and the federal government pays a lesser portion because they will eventually assume costs in the cost of operation.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Would you . . . is it safe to say that the 30 per cent that you're supposed to pay, do you pay it to the federal government, do you pay it to the northern revenue-sharing trust account, or do you pay it to yourself? Do you pay it to yourself? Your 30 per cent, where does your 30 per cent go on the cost of the \$100,000 piece of land? It's paid to yourself.

So the fact of the matter is, and you look at the other 19 per cent, Mr. Minister, that you say that you pay in addition to assuming some of the municipalities within the treaty land entitlement process, that 19 per cent will add substantial savings to the operation of municipal governments across the North. Now where are those savings going to?

So what I'm trying to get at here is that in northern Saskatchewan once again the sale of Crown lands to the treaty

land entitlement process is of significant — significant — financial gain to you in the immediate future and in the long-term future as well.

And I end my question with that, and of course we'll have other opportunities to go along this path.

**Hon. Mr. Wiens:** — Again, if you had joined me in my noble profession of farming, you would understand that whether one owns the land or whether one sells the land, in one case you have the opportunity to make your life from the land and the other case you lose the opportunity to make your life from the land; and the payment somebody gives you or the compensation for the fact that you no longer have the land from which you can make a livelihood.

So how one would describe this as somehow a gain for the province, it is an arrangement the province has agreed to as a dutiful participant in the treaty land entitlement negotiations — to contribute its portion to the resolution of this issue of outstanding treaty claims that have never been resolved. The money that the province pays, whether it's 30 per cent or whether it's 49 per cent, depending on where the settlement is, goes into the federal trust fund.

And the federal trust fund simply provided a little less money for those northern lands from the federal government because the province pays more. That's the simple explanation.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

Krawetz.....	521
D’Autremont.....	521
Toth.....	521
Bjornerud.....	521
Heppner.....	521
Gantefoer.....	521
Draude.....	521
McLane.....	521
Goohsen.....	521
Osika.....	522
Hillson.....	522
McPherson.....	522
Belanger.....	522

**READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**

Clerk.....	522
------------	-----

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING, SELECT, AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**Standing Committee on Crown Corporations**

Lorje.....	522
------------	-----

**NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS**

Julé.....	522
Goohsen.....	523

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Van Mulligen.....	523
Julé.....	523
MacKinnon.....	523
Belanger.....	523
Crofford.....	523
Murray.....	523

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

**Plains Health Centre Closure**

Toth.....	523
Wall.....	524

**Hospital Bed Shortage**

McLane.....	524
-------------	-----

**Babcock and Wilcox Expanding in Melville**

Kasperski.....	524
----------------	-----

**Perogy Police Squad**

Julé.....	525
-----------	-----

**Citizenship Ceremony at Radisson School**

Jess.....	525
-----------	-----

**ORAL QUESTIONS**

**Inquiry into Channel Lake**

Boyd.....	525
Lingenfelter.....	525
Romanow.....	526

**Hospital Bed Shortages**

Toth.....	526
Serby.....	527
Romanow.....	527

**Northern Ambulance Service**

Belanger.....	527
Serby.....	528

**Inquiry into Channel Lake**

Hillson.....	528
Romanow.....	528

**Workers’ Compensation Board Survivor Benefits**

Haverstock.....	529
Mitchell.....	529

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**Saskatchewan Indian Federated College Gets New Home**

Crofford.....	529
---------------	-----

Krawetz.....	530
Belanger.....	530
<b>INTRODUCTION OF BILLS</b>	
<b>Bill No. 22 — The Electronic Filing of Information Act</b>	
Nilson.....	531
<b>Bill No. 23 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1998</b>	
Nilson.....	531
<b>Bill No. 24 — The Wascana Centre Amendment Act, 1998</b>	
Crofford.....	531
<b>Bill No. 25 — The Pipelines Act, 1998</b>	
Mitchell.....	531
<b>STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER</b>	
Resignation of Member for Saskatoon Eastview	
Speaker.....	531
<b>MOTIONS</b>	
Request for Subpoena	
Lorje.....	531
<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
<b>WRITTEN QUESTIONS</b>	
Hamilton.....	532
<b>MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Not Debatable)</b>	
Hamilton.....	532
<b>GOVERNMENT MOTIONS</b>	
House Adjournment	
MacKinnon.....	532
<b>GOVERNMENT ORDERS</b>	
<b>SECOND READINGS</b>	
<b>Bill No. 2 — The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 1998</b>	
Nilson.....	532
Toth.....	533
<b>Bill No. 3 — The Public Utilities Easements Amendment Act, 1998</b>	
Nilson.....	533
Toth.....	534
<b>Bill No. 4 — The Saskatchewan Evidence Amendment Act, 1998</b>	
Nilson.....	534
Toth.....	535
<b>Bill No. 11 — The Trustee Amendment Act, 1998</b>	
Nilson.....	536
D'Autremont.....	537
<b>Bill No. 5 — The Animal Products Amendment Act, 1998</b>	
Sonntag.....	537
D'Autremont.....	538
<b>Bill No. 6 — The Cattle Marketing Deductions Act, 1998</b>	
Sonntag.....	539
D'Autremont.....	539
<b>Bill No. 7 — The Pastures Act</b>	
Sonntag.....	539
D'Autremont.....	540
<b>Bill No. 8 — The Stray Animals Amendment Act, 1998</b>	
Sonntag.....	541
D'Autremont.....	541
<b>COMMITTEE OF FINANCE</b>	
General Revenue Fund	
Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs — Vote 30	
Wiens.....	542
Draude.....	542
Belanger.....	547