



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

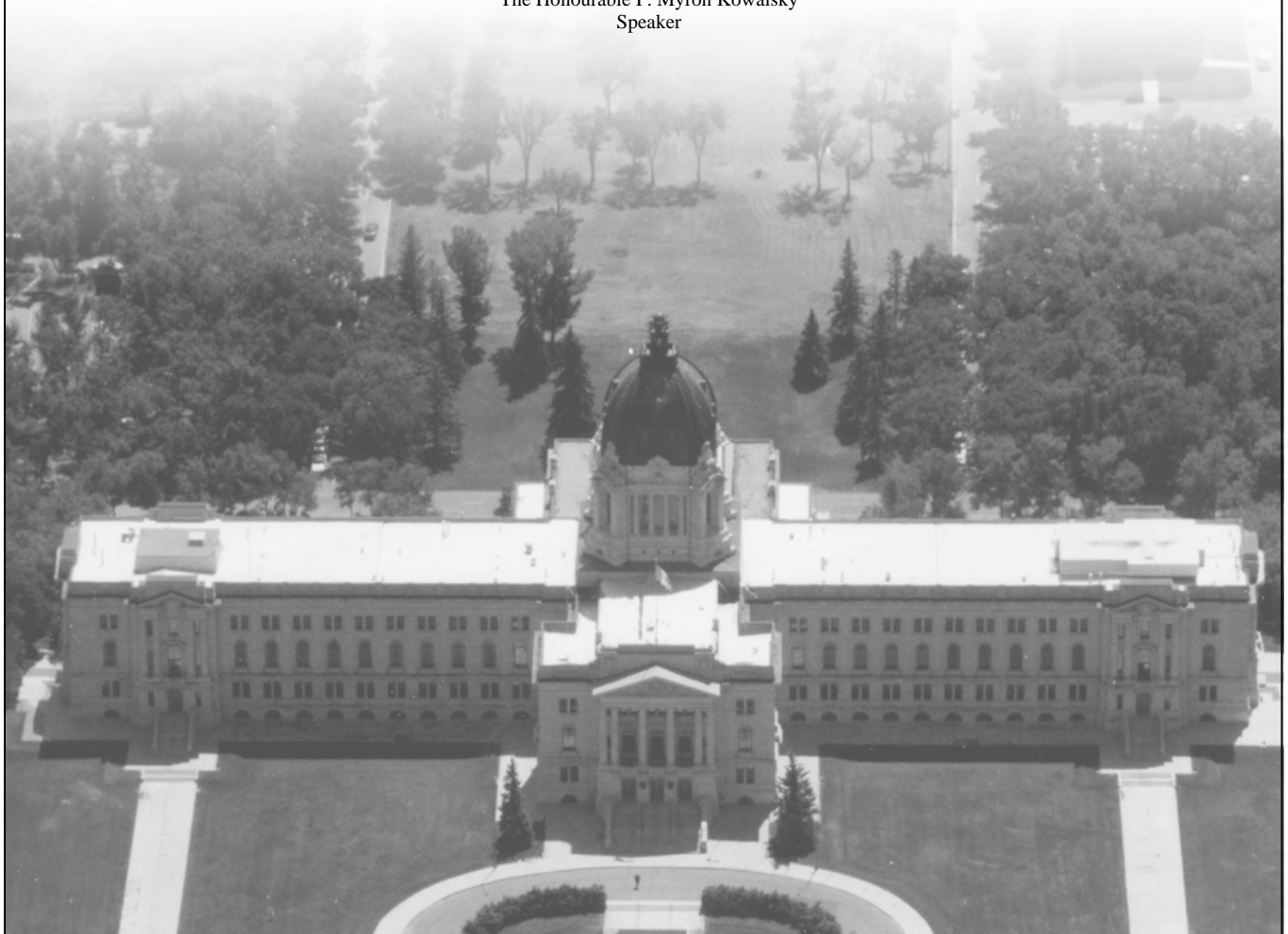
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of

The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky
 Premier — Hon. Lorne Calvert
 Leader of the Opposition — Brad Wall

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Addley, Hon. Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Bakken Lackey, Brenda	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Borgerson, Lon	NDP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Calvert, Hon. Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
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Cline, Hon. Eric	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Crofford, Hon. Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
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Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantfoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
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Hamilton, Doreen	NDP	Regina Wascana Plains
Harpauer, Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Ben	SP	Martensville
Hermanson, Elwin	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Higgins, Hon. Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kerpan, Allan	SP	Carrot River Valley
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Kowalsky, Hon. P. Myron	NDP	Prince Albert Carlton
Krawetz, Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lautermilch, Hon. Eldon	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
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McMorris, Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Ted	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Morgan, Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, Hon. John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
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Quennell, Hon. Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
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Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Van Mulligen, Hon. Harry	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
Wakefield, Milton	SP	Lloydminster
Wall, Brad	SP	Swift Current
Wartman, Hon. Mark	NDP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I have several pages of petitions signed by individuals from around southwest Saskatchewan and other communities in other provinces concerning the condition of Highway 21 from Cypress Park down to the junction of Highway 21 and 13. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 21 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

I so present, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition with citizens concerned about the safety of Highway No. 5. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to upgrade and widen Highway No. 5 from Humboldt to Saskatoon.

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from Saskatoon, Cudworth; Edmonton, Alberta; Spalding, Bruno, Humboldt, Quill Lake, Wadena, Rosetown, Endeavour, Preeceville, and Penticton. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I have a petition from the area of southwest Saskatchewan that they have lost their motor licensing service in the town of Cadillac. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to reinstate motor vehicle licensing in the community of Cadillac.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed by the good folks of Cadillac and Ponteix. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I have a petition here with citizens opposed to the closure of the SaskPower office in Davidson.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the SaskPower office in Davidson remains open at its current level of customer service and available to all SaskPower customers from the Davidson and surrounding service areas.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens from the town of Davidson. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have another petition today from the citizens of Handel and district who are concerned about the closure of the SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] licensing office. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to reinstate the Saskatchewan Government Insurance licensing agency in Handel.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of Wilkie and Handel and district. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions regarding mandatory drug and alcohol testing where there has been a fatal motor vehicle accident or an accident involving serious bodily injury. I will read from the prayer for relief. Mr. Speaker, I wish to tell the Assembly I receive these petitions on a daily basis and they are now numbering in the hundreds.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the public is protected from operators of motor vehicles who are involved in an accident causing injury or fatality and that those operators be required to undergo mandatory drug and alcohol level testing.

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

I so present, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I once again rise to

present a petition on the condition of Highway 368, and the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 368 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

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

And is signed by the good people of Annaheim, Humboldt, Muenster, and LeRoy.

I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hereby present a petition for a private Bill on behalf of petitioners from the Faith Alive Ministries Outreach Centre Inc. in the province of Saskatchewan.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 14(7) are hereby read and received as addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 4, 7, 22, 26, 31, and 32.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Chair of the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Standing Committee on Human Services

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Human Services to report that it has considered certain estimates and to present its fourth report.

I move, seconded by the member from Cypress Hills:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Human Services be now concurred in.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon Eastview, seconded by the member for Cypress Hills:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Human Services be now concurred in.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried.

The Chair of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure is recognized.

Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure

Mr. Harper: — Mr. Speaker, I've been instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure to report that it has considered certain estimates and to present its fourth report. And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move, seconded by the member for Kelvington-Wadena:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure be now concurred in.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Northeast, seconded by the member for Kelvington-Wadena:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure be now concurred in.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Coronation Park

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Speaker, I thank you. I want to introduce to you and through you to all of my colleagues in the legislature a teacher and some chaperones and 25 just really good-looking grade 3 and 4 students from St. Peter School in the constituency of Regina Coronation Park.

They're seated in the west gallery and the teacher is Mrs. Jocelyn Klein and the chaperones are Mrs. Melodie Wark and Ms. Nicole Carey. And Mr. Carter Klein is listed, but I think he's AWOL — that's away without leave — and coming back shortly. I look forward to meeting this group for pictures and a refreshing beverage a little bit later. I ask all my colleagues in the legislature to welcome this fine group of grade 3 and 4 students from St. Peter School. Welcome.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Lakeview.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature, 15 grade 11 social studies students from Sheldon Williams Collegiate in Regina Lakeview. They're sitting up in the Speaker's gallery and they're accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Rick Peace, and I ask all members to welcome them here to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Services for Rural Communities

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the people of rural Saskatchewan become engaged in the debate of the federal election campaign, they're very interested in what a new government in Ottawa would mean to our struggling rural economy. It is so important that our rural communities finally receive the attention they have so long deserved. And while a new Conservative federal government will be good news for Saskatchewan, a closer look at the provincial NDP [New Democratic Party] government makes us realize a Conservative win in Ottawa is only half the battle.

Just recently the NDP government officially announced the closure of the SaskPower office in Davidson at the end of this year. The SaskTel office in Davidson was recently closed as well, not to mention, as the members know opposite, they closed the rural service centre and also closed a wing of a hospital in Davidson. This means less service for the people of Davidson and area. It also means families moving out of Davidson.

The NDP in this province continue to talk about rural revitalization, paying lip service to serious rural issues, all the while actively removing jobs and services out of rural Saskatchewan into our large speakers.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I want to know is when this socialist NDP government will continue to stop punishing rural Saskatchewan for the way they vote. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Wascana Plains.

Ruth M. Buck Honoured on 100th Birthday

Ms. Hamilton: — Mr. Speaker, last Friday my constituency assistant, Tammy Watt, and I were able to hold a birthday party for a remarkable woman who was 100 years young on November 24. I was honoured to be able to present Ruth M. Buck with her centenarian medallion.

Marion and Sid Bowles, residents, and staff at Country Lane Care Home where Ruth now resides made us feel warmly welcomed. Principal Rod Allen, students, and teachers from the Ruth M. Buck School, family, and friends gathered, some from as far away as British Columbia and Ontario. Daughter, Judith Wintonyk, from Oakville, Ontario was there to be with her mother on this prestigious occasion.

Mr. Speaker, Ruth M. Buck née Matheson was born the seventh child of Reverend John and Elizabeth Matheson at St. Barnabas Anglican Mission near Onion Lake First Nation. She was an educator, served on the Regina Collegiate Board as a member

of the civic voters slate, and retired in 1967. She authored two books and several articles. Her memoirs are on file in the provincial archives.

Last month Ruth M. Buck School invited me to celebrate this remarkable life. I was able to pass the medallion to the students, who filled it with their love and good wishes. There could be no better way to pay tribute to a woman who has touched the lives of so many young people in our great province.

Congratulations, Ruth M. Buck.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Saskatoon Resident Receives Chamber of Commerce Award

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to recognize the achievement of the executive director of the Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce. This past September, Mr. Kent Smith-Windsor was the recipient of the Chamber of Commerce Executives of Canada Executive of the Year Award at a conference held in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Kent is well known in the province for his visionary leadership in the business community.

The judging committee noted that, and I quote:

Kent's skills and influence have propelled the Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce forward as the leading business advocate for a myriad of issues critical to economic development and wealth creation.

Kent Smith-Windsor's accomplishments are many. He spearheaded a government productivity agenda in Saskatchewan. He pursued, and was awarded, hosting the 2006 Canadian chamber annual general meeting during Saskatoon's 100th anniversary next year.

Kent is an active mentor to the business community through the Raj Manek mentorship program and with the Saskatchewan Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs. He was instrumental in SYPE's initial formation as the junior chamber of commerce.

Kent is working hard to improve the economic outlook of the city of Saskatoon and the province of Saskatchewan. His peers have chosen wisely in selecting Kent Executive of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask you and all my colleagues in this Assembly to join me in congratulating Kent Smith-Windsor on this honour.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Heritage Language Organizations Celebrate Anniversaries

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan people value cultural diversity. It's no accident that the chorus of the centennial song contains a line, "We are many and we are one."

Today I want to acknowledge and congratulate two important cultural institutions here in Regina that have recently celebrated anniversaries and that over the years have contributed so much to the rich cultural heritage of this city and the province.

Mr. Speaker, for 28 years the Multilingual Association of Regina has been helping to strengthen Regina and Saskatchewan's cultural fabric by promoting the teaching of heritage languages through the heritage language schools. Twenty-five years ago this month the association received permission from the Regina public school board to use Balfour Collegiate for teaching heritage languages, and the school now known as the Regina Multilingual School had found a home.

Mr. Speaker, in 1980 the school held three classes, one of which was German, one of which I was a student, each teaching a different language to about 100 students. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Regina Multilingual School teaches classes in 25 different languages to over 1,200 students.

Mr. Speaker, whether we say it, we are many, we are one, or "from many peoples, strength," or "Together we are stronger," it means the same thing. It means that Saskatchewan is better for the many cultural threads that make up our social fabric. I ask all members to join me in congratulating Regina's Multilingual School and the multilingual association on the celebration of their respective anniversaries and acknowledging their staff and volunteers for their dedication to promoting cultural strength and diversity. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Aberdeen Building a Dream

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, not long ago there was an article in *The StarPhoenix* and the headline was, "Aberdeen building a dream." Indeed, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what they did. Mayor Glen Ogilvy, his council, and numerous other outstanding community leaders had a vision.

They also had the energy, determination, and commitment to see their vision through to reality. That vision, Mr. Speaker, was a \$4.2 million recreation complex that includes a skating rink, bowling alley, wellness centre, playschool, senior centre, library, dance studio, and more all under one roof. The uniqueness and practicality of this complex however does not stop with its multi-purpose design.

The community of Aberdeen was not going to allow the future of their complex to be constantly in jeopardy because of the escalating energy costs. Instead this vast building employs mother nature as its energy source. A half a million dollar geothermal system both heats and cools the various areas within the building. Almost 50 holes were drilled about 75 metres into the ground under the adjoining parking lot. The system supplies the constant energy source that is more than adequate to meet

the facility's needs.

Mr. Speaker, my congratulations go to all the volunteers who worked so diligently in designing, constructing, and fundraising for this innovative complex. It is a facility that will be enjoyed by both young and old for years to come and one that Aberdeen should be very proud of.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cumberland.

La Ronge Resident Appointed to National Advisory Committee

Hon. Ms. Beatty: — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the Assembly today to extend congratulations to a constituent of mine, Roger Ratt of La Ronge, who was recently appointed a Saskatchewan representative to the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] commissioner's national Aboriginal advisory committee.

This committee provides a continuing forum for discussion about policing matters with respect to Aboriginal people, including recruiting, training, community relations, intercultural relations, and other related matters.

Mr. Speaker, Roger Ratt is well qualified to sit on this committee. He has been a student service coordinator for 20 years and Chair of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band Police Management Board since it was formed seven years ago.

Mr. Speaker, Roger is a member of the La Ronge Indian Band. I know he will do an excellent job working on First Nations policing issues as they pertain to Canada and especially to Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

Saskatchewan Invests in Community-Based Organizations

Mr. Borgerson: — Mr. Speaker, the 2005 Speech from the Throne makes plain the vision that we on this side of the Assembly have for Saskatchewan people as we move into our new century. And a big part of it is that no one is left behind on the path to opportunity.

In support of that vision, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is investing over \$30 million in the next three years to help human service community-based organizations attract and retain staff.

Mr. Speaker, human service CBOs [community-based organization] deliver a wide range of services on behalf of the provincial government, including group homes, early childhood intervention, employment supports, residential services for victims of violence, family support, food security, young offender programs, and literacy.

Over \$21 million of this new money is for human service CBOs

affiliated with the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres.

They deserve a lot of credit, Mr. Speaker, not only for making a compelling case for addressing funding disparities within the sector, but for generating a human resource plan that clearly identified both challenges and real solutions.

SARC [Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres] president Dawn Desautel has said this “. . . is about more than funding. It is about hope. It is about making a real difference in the lives of persons with disabilities.”

Mr. Speaker, a more stable workforce will help to ensure an even stronger relationship with those who are served by our CBOs, and an even higher level of service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Cancer Drugs and the Provincial Drug Formulary

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Avastin is the first of a new kind of treatment for people with cancer of the colon that has spread. Avastin, combined with chemotherapy, has proven to save lives. This drug has been approved by the American food and drug agency. This drug has been approved by Health Canada. Mr. Speaker, this drug is proven to save lives. About 80 to 100 people in Saskatchewan could benefit by the approval of this drug here in Saskatchewan. Does the minister have all the information he needs to approve the coverage of Avastin?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Avastin is a new drug that's available, that is being reviewed by the formulary committee and the cancer agency within Saskatchewan. That process is not complete, and I think that we should allow them to continue with the process to have that resolved.

Also we co-operate on a national basis with the drug reviews and will continue to do that as it relates to this and other important medications.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Terry Rak, who is in your gallery today, is from Saskatoon. He has been having chemotherapy on and off for the last several years. Mr. Rak's doctor says that he needs to start on Avastin. The clinical studies say that this drug will help save his life.

Avastin is expensive. It costs about \$2,500 per treatment. Terry needs Avastin about twice a month for a period of nine months to a year. You can imagine the cost to this person.

Mr. Rak's life is in limbo while this minister decides as to whether this drug will be covered. Will the minister commit today to paying for the drug that will save his life as well as up to 100 other people today in Saskatchewan? Will he commit to that now?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, it's not helpful at all that that member when he knows better that the minister does not make these decisions, that he says that in how he's wording these questions. Now he may wish to talk to the research department and the people that help them out when they draft these questions.

But, Mr. Speaker, what happens is we work together with the professionals, the pharmacists, the doctors, to make sure that the drugs that are going to be provided in our system here in Saskatchewan are appropriate. They work together with the common drug review for the whole country. Mr. Speaker, that whole process has served Saskatchewan residents well for many years. We'll continue to do that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, Terry Rak spoke to this minister on the day of the Speech from the Throne. He told him about the need for Avastin, and the minister said it was under review for adoption into the formulary. But since that time he hasn't heard a word.

What is very interesting, Mr. Speaker, is the minister just finished saying how the process worked.

Let me tell you how the process worked for the acceptance of Herceptin on to the formulary. We did a news conference one day and then about four months later did another news conference. And just prior to that news conference, that minister, who was out of the province at the time, put out a press release saying that he would be covering Herceptin. If he can do it for Herceptin, Mr. Speaker, why can't he do it for Avastin, Mr. Speaker?

Will the minister do what he has done for breast cancer victims in this province? Will he do the same thing and accept Avastin on to the formulary so we can help save hundreds of people's lives in Saskatchewan today?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, that member has been the Health critic for long enough to know that drugs are not approved on the floor of the Assembly or in the rotunda. They're approved based on the evidence with the appropriate

committees that work on that.

The information around Herceptin was not accurate as the member laid it out. There were many women in Saskatchewan who knew about the information that was provided last May in the international conference on cancer. And at that particular conference, there was new evidence that was brought forward.

People from many parts of the province, including the people that the member opposite has talked about, brought forward this issue. The doctors brought it forward; in fact that's where it came first. And as a result of the information that was provided and how important this would be, a decision was made to go ahead.

And, Mr. Speaker, we'll continue to work with the evidence and with the professionals.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

NorthPoint's Fishing Trips

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, last month CJME uncovered two taxpayer-funded retirement parties for about 35 Department of Finance officials. Now they've discovered that a SaskPower subsidiary has sent about a dozen of its staff on several all-expense-paid fishing trips in northern Saskatchewan.

My question is to the Minister of SaskPower: how many fishing trips have there been? How many staff went on these fishing trips, and what was the total cost to the Saskatchewan taxpayers?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister Responsible for SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, NorthPoint Energy is SaskPower's wholesale electric energy marketing agent responsible for selling SaskPower's surplus energy and capacity into competitive markets outside of Saskatchewan. NorthPoint's customer base is entirely outside the province, and marketing efforts are required to maintain and enhance business relationships.

In competitive markets, customer appreciation business development initiatives such as NorthPoint's are common. Electricity transactions conducted with outside counterparts varies between 100 million and \$200 million per year depending on hydro conditions and how much surplus of electricity there is available for export, Mr. Speaker. The marketing of the fishing trips for customers is about 20 to \$40,000 a year, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the government's answer smells a little fishy because, even if these trips are necessary to make sales which he says they are, which you know we highly doubt, why do they need to send a dozen staff on these trips? It

sounds more like a taxpayer-funded perk to me. Would the minister please tell us how many trips have there been? And for each of these \$40,000 fishing trips, how many staff went?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, the fishy comment is what the Leader of the Opposition would call a special answer I think, Mr. Speaker. The employees of NorthPoint are not employed by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. They are employed by the subsidiary which earns money for SaskPower by exporting electricity. The export dollars earned by NorthPoint of course benefit all domestic electric producers in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, NorthPoint is a subsidiary of SaskPower which is a Crown corporation and the government wants us to believe that these fishing trips are necessary to schmooze clients and to generate sales. So could the minister please tell us for each of these \$40,000 fishing trips who were the clients? How many Crown corporation staff went on each of those trips? And how many clients went on each of those trips?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to provide that information. I'll have to take notice of the question.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the minister . . . These are very simple questions that we're asking of the minister, and what we're interested in is the staff-to-client ratio of these fishing trips because we understand the government is sending about a dozen staff on each of these fishing trips. So does he have any idea of how many clients go on the fishing trips?

[14:00]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, again I'll have to take notice of those specific questions. In respect to the member's questions as to how many employees paid by the taxpayer, it was zero, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I want to stress again that this is a Crown corporation and a subsidiary of a Crown corporation that we're discussing, and we're asking questions about Crown

corporation employees going on these trips.

And it's pretty hard to believe, Mr. Speaker, that the entire amount of these trips can be accredited to the taxpayer-funded fishing trips. Mr. Speaker, this seems to be the sort of thing that's open for abuse. Every Crown corporation has clients, but they don't take every client on a \$40,000 fishing trip with a dozen Crown corporation staff or more.

What is CIC's [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] policy with regard to these kind of perks? Under what conditions can Crown corporations send officials on all-expense-paid fishing trips, and who do they choose to go on these fishing trips?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Crown Management Board.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. For the information of the member, each of the Crown corporations have their own marketing and promotions division of the individual Crown. And the policies regarding how they might market, promote, and sponsor various community events is within the purview of each individual Crown, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Police Officer Positions

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, last night during Justice estimates I asked the minister a very simple question. Of the 768 police officer positions funded by the province in 1999, I asked how many of those positions were vacant. The people of Saskatchewan need to know that number to determine if this government has lived up to its promise to create 200 new police officer positions. They need to know if money is going to police departments, is creating new jobs, or just filling vacancies.

Mr. Speaker, here's what the minister said, "... I don't think we know exactly how many vacancies there would have been." Mr. Speaker, why doesn't the Minister of Justice know this?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, the RCMP in Saskatchewan is managed by an assistant commissioner, which is a fairly high rank, and it is not micromanaged by the Minister of Justice.

I think some of the confusion around police officers actually originates on that side of the House. The member from Saskatoon Southeast said on November 28, 2005, that the Saskatchewan Party caucus, quote, "... have no understanding or ability to be able to count up to 200."

I think this also explains some of the difficulty the Finance critic has, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, if the minister wants to give us some counting lessons, we'd be pleased if he wanted to give us some, shed some light on this today, Mr. Speaker.

The promise made by this government is meaningless if the money for new additional officers is instead going to fill vacancies. This is a concern shared by the police federation. The people of Saskatchewan need to know and want to know if there are more police officers on the streets protecting public safety, or fewer.

Mr. Speaker, the minister can't seem to answer that question and seems to be more concerned with his sense of humour than answering the simple questions that are put forward. He can't reconcile his numbers with the numbers provided by the police federation.

Mr. Speaker, why can't the minister answer this question? What's the point in making a promise if you have no intention of tracking or monitoring the outcome, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, maybe the member from Saskatoon Southeast can explain what the federation of police officers' number is and how they arrive at that because from estimates last night, I don't think the member from Saskatoon Southeast understands that either, Mr. Speaker.

Not only as of this year will we have met the police commitment with 200 police officers, we will have exceeded that commitment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — And we will have exceeded that commitment by 22 — eight officers for the missing persons initiative, 14 officers to the gang suppression strategy, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I spent an hour last night trying to ask that minister a question about the number of police officers and, in that time, was not able to get an answer. I was able to get answers from the police federation and a lot more coherent and a lot more easy to understand, and would recommend that that minister spend some time with them.

The minister said he has a record of the money provided to the RCMP for new police officers, but he has no way of tracking how that money is spent. He has no guarantee the money is going to hire new officers. He doesn't know whether it's going

for cruisers or new buildings and says he doesn't want to micromanage.

At least he could do, Mr. Speaker, is count. Why can't this minister do some kind of calculation to determine how many officers he has added since 1998?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, as I tried to explain to the member of Saskatoon Southeast last night in estimates, if he wants to go back to 1998, there were 13 additional officers provincially funded in that year before the commitment. You can add 13 to 222, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure the members of the opposition could even do that, Mr. Speaker.

We have not only provided new resources since the election — 80 police officers since the last campaign, Mr. Speaker. We have passed legislation to make a hostile environment for crime in this province which has been mocked by the members opposite. And as recently as the legislation is now before the House, has been, has been legislation of which the member from Saskatoon Southeast, and I quote, on November 22, I want to quote: "... point out flaws and inadequacies [of that] ... legislation," Mr. Speaker.

Well you know who else doesn't like that legislation, Mr. Speaker? The Hells Angels don't like it either, Mr. Speaker. The police chiefs in this province support us on this legislation, on these resources. We're happy with our allies, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, one thing the members on this side of the House ...

The Speaker: — Order please. Order. Order. Member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, one thing the members on this side of the House know, and one thing the federation of police officers know, is that more police officers on the street will reduce crime. One thing that the Minister of Justice should be able to do is to be capable of counting the number of police officers that he's added and how many have retired, so that he can keep a running total. He uses the figure of 13. How about the hundreds and hundreds that are working in other detachments throughout the province? How about a global figure? He is totally incapable of knowing how many officers work in this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, how about this minister doing some real calculations and putting some real meat behind getting more police officers on the street and on the front line in this province? How about him demonstrating some leadership and some competence, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — I don't know who in this House is more hopping mad. But I am not the one who said that my caucus has no understanding or ability to count up to 200, Mr. Speaker. That was the member from Saskatoon Southeast. My count, Mr. Speaker, is ...

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please. Order please. The Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, it was not I who said that my caucus has no ability or understanding of how to count up to 200; it was the member from Saskatoon Southeast. And this is our count: 80 officers up to October 2006 added since the last campaign, Mr. Speaker. While we have been sitting in this legislature, 51 new officers, Mr. Speaker, the 29 to fulfill the police commitment, 8 to the missing persons initiative, Mr. Speaker, 14 to gang suppression. The 80 added since the last campaign take us well in excess of the 200, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Nuclear Energy

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the associations representing municipalities, in combination with the University of Regina, are showing some vision in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They are organizing a conference on the entire nuclear industry so that people can know the facts before any decision was made so that we can have a public discussion and a debate.

To quote Don Schlosser, the president of SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association], he says:

"We want our community leaders to be well-informed as to the potential impact — both positive and negative — that an expanded nuclear industry could hold."

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party couldn't agree more, and we applaud the efforts of SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] and SUMA and the U of R [University of Regina] to have this discussion. The question for the Premier is this: does he support this conference?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, we already on the public record saying that we welcome this conference and we welcome the public debate. I applaud and our government applauds the SUMA, SARM, and the U of R having a public discussion about the issue of nuclear energy in our province.

Of course we applaud that, Mr. Speaker. It should be examined. It especially should be examined, Mr. Speaker, in the context of remarks in fact by the Leader of the Opposition to the media when this matter last rose in the House. When he was asked by

the media after the House after question period what his position was, he said he wasn't sure.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's some confusion in the opposition. We certainly welcome debate and discussion in a democratic and free society, and I look forward to what comes out of this conference, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, back in August, SaskPower made a presentation to the official opposition caucus and told us of the need to increase their capacity by 2,000 megawatts over the next 20 years. SaskPower said they were considering all of their options in order to accomplish this. Those include wind, polygeneration, hydro, gas, coal, importing power, and nuclear power, Mr. Speaker. That's what SaskPower said. Mr. Speaker, according to SaskPower they are considering and have been considering this option for nuclear energy in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier owes it to the people of the province then, and certainly to those participating in this conference that the minister says he applauds, to then table whatever information they have. If we're going to have this meaningful discussion, if that minister stands up and says that he supports it, I assume the Premier also supports it. I'm not so sure about the member for Greystone. But if those two support it, certainly the Minister of SaskPower can stand in his place today and commit to tabling and making public the information that SaskPower has on this important issue.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice, the Minister for SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, SaskPower quite properly has not ruled out any potential source of electrical generation. Why would they, Mr. Speaker? Why would they? I share with the Minister of Industry and Resources an interest in attending this conference if I'm able to attend this conference. I'm looking forward to the discussion. I think sharing this kind of information would be very useful for leaders in the community, both municipal and provincial, Mr. Speaker.

And again I'm sort of with the Leader of the Opposition on whether we're going to have nuclear power in this province or not in the relatively near future; I'm not sure either.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of SaskPower posed a rhetorical question. He said, why wouldn't his officials at SaskPower have a look at the option of nuclear energy? Maybe it's because the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan called it the dirtiest form of energy, Mr. Speaker.

Maybe it's because of that. Maybe it's because the member for Greystone, a member of the cabinet, has said if this government pursues nuclear energy, nuclear generator, he's going to quit. He's going to walk away from the cabinet.

But apparently SaskPower is going ahead — notwithstanding the objections of that Premier and that minister of the Crown — looking at the option which begs the question: if they support the conference, if they're looking at this energy option for Saskatchewan's future, why won't they make public their work? Why won't they give it to SUMA and SARM and the U of R? What are they hiding, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well, Mr. Speaker . . . Mr. Speaker, our government has nothing to hide. We are proud of the uranium industry we have in this province. As I pointed out in the House before, this industry was invited into this province by Premier T.C. Douglas from our party. This industry had its greatest expansion under Premier Allan Blakeney from our party. And recently, Mr. Speaker, our party endorsed the refining and processing of uranium in our province.

We're going to continue to build this industry which we're very proud of. Whether or not there should be nuclear energy is unknown to many, including unknown to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, but it is a matter that should be discussed. It will be discussed by people within SaskPower. It will be discussed by people within the government. And we welcome that discussion and we'll be participating in it, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister commit today in the Assembly then — if he says that his government will be participating in this conference and they support this conference — will he commit, will the government commit, will the Premier commit, now we've had a couple of different people standing up and answering questions on this issue, to simply making public the work that they've done on this issue?

The Minister of SaskPower has confirmed it's an option. We understand SaskPower's been looking at it as an option. These groups in the province want to have a discussion, positive and negative, of public debate on the potential for nuclear energy. This government could assist that discussion by making public this information. Yes or no, will the government make those documents public, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry

and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well we welcome the discussion. We welcome the debate, as I've said, Mr. Speaker. But what this government will do, Mr. Speaker, is to continue to take action. We have taken action to build the uranium sector in this province, Mr. Speaker, and we will continue to do so because under our government, Mr. Speaker, there's an exploration boom going on in northern Saskatchewan which is unprecedented in our history, Mr. Speaker. And we will take action as indicated in our action plan, Mr. Speaker, by pursuing opportunities to further process and refine uranium in our province.

What we will not do, Mr. Speaker, is do what the Leader of the Opposition said he would do when asked by the media the last time he raised it. They said, what's your position? He said, I'll refer it to a committee and ask them for advice. Well he can do that, Mr. Speaker. But what we have is a plan set out in our action plan. He'll study. We'll take action, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Government Whip.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will stand today and order question no. 563 on behalf of the government.

The Speaker: — Question 563 has been ordered. Order please.

Deputy Clerk: — Committee of Finance.

The Speaker: — I do now leave the Chair for the Assembly to go into Committee of Finance.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Motions for Supply

The Chair: — The matters before the committee is the resolutions for The Appropriation Bill. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Madam Chair. I move, number one:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2006, the sum of \$579,488,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

I so move.

The Chair: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that, number one:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2006, the sum of \$579,488,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? Is the Assembly agreed with the motion before the House?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Madam Chair, I move that the committee rise and that the Chair report that the committee has agreed to a certain resolution and ask for leave to sit again.

The Chair: — It has been moved by the minister that the committee rise and report the resolution and ask for leave to sit again. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

FIRST AND SECOND READING OF RESOLUTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair of committees is recognized.

Ms. Hamilton: — Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Finance has agreed to certain resolution, has instructed me to report the same, and asked for leave to sit again.

The Speaker: — When shall the resolution be read the first time?

The Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the resolution be now read the first and second time.

The Speaker: — Moved by the Minister of Finance that the resolution be now read the first and second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Clerk Assistant (Committees): — First and second reading of this resolution.

The Speaker: — When shall the committee meet again? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Later this day, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Later this day.

The Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Bill No. 29 — The Appropriation Act, 2005 (No. 3)

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I move that Bill No. 29, The Appropriation Act, 2005 (No. 3) be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 29, The Appropriation Act, 2005 (No. 3) be now introduced and read the first time. Is leave of the Assembly granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Clerk Assistant (Committees): — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be read a second time? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly and under rule 57(2), I move that the Bill be now read a second and third time.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to move the motion. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. Moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 29, The Appropriation Act, 2005 (No. 3) be now read a second and third time. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Clerk Assistant (Committees): — Second and third reading of this Bill.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 20

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Higgins that **Bill No. 20 — The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exception Act** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Canora-Pelly.

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, before the Assembly today we have Bill No. 20, a Bill that we feel is obviously needed because the different employers in the province of Saskatchewan want to move forward, want to ensure that labour costs that they can predict are in fact guaranteed by way of a negotiated agreement.

But, Mr. Speaker, as was noted yesterday in question period, the problems that arise in the province of Saskatchewan is that The Trade Union Act restricts, and I say that, Mr. Speaker, very, very clearly that the restriction is placed on both unions and employers on the length of time that a contract can be put into force.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to do two things this afternoon. I want to indicate the problems that have developed over the years as a result of section 33 of The Trade Union Act and to indicate to you how it has become quite cumbersome and in fact has become quite costly.

Mr. Speaker, a legal firm here in the province of Saskatchewan called MacPherson Leslie & Tyerman produces an update, and the update is a periodic release of information about the kinds of things that are going on regarding labour issues in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in a 2005 update, the MLT [MacPherson Leslie & Tyerman] referenced a case that was before the judicial system. And the case involved the . . . and I'm going to indicate this for the record is that it was a decision regarding the United Steel Workers of America local 5917 versus Wheat City Metals, a division of Jamel Metals Inc. And this occurred on May 19, 2005, and the LRB [Labour Relations Board] file number was 060-05.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the update about that particular case is this. It says:

A recent decision of the Labour Relations Board, which has been upheld on judicial review by the Court of Queen's Bench, adds to the difficulty of attempting to negotiate a longer term collective agreement in Saskatchewan.

That's the interpretation, Mr. Speaker, of the MLT update.

In their review of this particular case, they make reference that the employer, in this case Wheat City Metals, during collective bargaining for a revised agreement, proposed a contract duration of more than three years. And as a result of conflict between the committees and an impasse occurred and a lockout occurred, there was indeed a ruling by the Labour Relations Board on an unfair labour practice.

Mr. Speaker, the court ruled that in fact that was unfair and the employer was forced to in fact reimburse lost wages for all people that had been affected by the lockout.

Mr. Speaker, in this document as well, the update says this:

The negotiation of longer term collective agreements in Saskatchewan has always been problematic. Where employers and unions have come to agreement on contract duration in excess of three years, they have resorted to various techniques in an attempt to assure enforceability for the full stated duration, knowing that short of special legislation . . . the vulnerability of these arrangements could be tested by a notice to renegotiate after three years. The ruling in *Wheat City Metals* adds to the problem by greatly reducing the negotiating capability of a party [in parentheses, Mr. Speaker] (most often the employer) to reach even that point.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the reason I quote from that document is to show that the Bill that we have before us is in fact that special legislation that was referred to in this document produced by MLT. It has been problematic, as is stated in this very document, that employers and employees who want to negotiate something greater than a three-year agreement are prohibited from doing so because, as stated, the term can be in fact challenged at the end of three years, or you have to appeal to this government to say, can you put in place legislation that in fact is going to make this new term that we have negotiated firm and not challengeable?

And, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what we have before us in Bill No. 20. Bill No. 20 does two things, Mr. Speaker. It replaces an old Bill. And in fact it rescinds one of the clauses, as I indicated, is clause no. 4 that says that:

The IPSCO Inc. and United Steelworkers of America, Local 5890, Collective Bargaining Agreement Act, 2002 is repealed.

[14:30]

Now, Mr. Speaker, the people would wonder, well if you've already passed an Act in 2002, why do you need to repeal it today? Well the situation that the employer, in this case IPSCO, has found itself is that they want to ensure a continued labour cost so that they can plan for the future.

Mr. Speaker, it's no longer good to look at six-month plan or a twelve-month plan. You're now needing to look, if you're a business in a global economy that we have — and of course IPSCO and Shaw Pipe Protection Ltd. is in fact competing in a global market — they need to know, what are their costs, what are their labour costs. So as a result, back in 2002 they reached an agreement that would take them to the year 2006.

Mr. Speaker, that Act is being repealed because, as indicated, now we're going to have two situations involving IPSCO Inc. The first one is that there is a continuation as is indicated in clause no. 2(1), that the agreement that was negotiated back in 2002 is in fact still going to be in force and it has still a duration of time that is part of the agreement, that being until July 31, 2006. So there is a continuation. This Act is going to ensure that even though that old Act has been repealed, the clause that created that extension of an agreement longer than three years is still in force.

But what it also does is under clause no. 2(2), it has now created a second agreement. And that second agreement, Mr. Speaker,

is going to come into effect on August 1, 2006. As soon as the old agreement that we have looked at in (1) is completed, a new agreement is coming into force on August 1, 2006.

Mr. Speaker, the section of the Bill says that the expiry date that is there shall be "the expiry date set out in the collective bargaining agreement." Well, Mr. Speaker, that agreement that was reached at a negotiation table, at a collective bargaining table, is in fact going to be July 31, 2011. It's going to be a contract that will be in place for five years. That is what was negotiated. That's what the employer was looking for. That's what the union was looking for on behalf of its employees to ensure that in fact there was stability, that there was predictability, and that there was indeed an attempt to ensure that the employer in this case could look at bidding on contracts worldwide, knowing that its labour force would in fact be there to be able to deliver that service.

And, Mr. Speaker, they have to come to this Legislative Assembly to say to the government, well your law, The Trade Union Act, says maximum three years. So they have to appeal to this government to say, can you change this? And that is what is being done.

And we're very happy, Mr. Speaker, as the official opposition, to indeed support this. Because I think what it's showing is that there is a willingness, there is a willingness between employers and unions to bargain in good faith to create a situation that is both predictable and stable. And that's what we have here. So we're now going to be approving, Mr. Speaker, a contract that will begin on August 1, 2006, and it will have an expiry date of July 31, 2011.

Mr. Speaker, the third clause involves a different corporation, and that corporation is Shaw Pipe Protection Ltd. And it involves a different union. The union representing the workers there is the Construction and General Workers' Union Local 180, which I will refer to as CGWU.

Mr. Speaker, CGWU and Shaw Pipe Protection Ltd. have a contract that has come into force, or come into effect, on November 1, 2005 — just at the very first part of this month. And, Mr. Speaker, they have negotiated a contract that will also last for five years. The expiration date of the new contract, as is indicated, even though the date's not here, it's in the actual Bill that we're having, is the expiry date as is set out in the collective bargaining agreement. And, Mr. Speaker, that is October 31, 2010.

Again a corporation and a union negotiated a contract, negotiated a term of agreement that was in fact going to be five years. Mr. Speaker, because of The Trade Union Act, the restriction of The Trade Union Act that says you cannot have a contract that is longer than three years, it may be challengeable and the expiration date will then revert back to three years, or you have to go and get special legislation. And that's what we have before us, Mr. Speaker. We have special legislation to deal with these two particular companies.

And as I indicated in my opening remarks, Mr. Speaker, the company, Wheat City Metals, wanted to do that as well. They took a different approach, one more of conflict — ended up in an impasse, ended up in a lockout, ended up in a judicial

situation where the judge has ruled that because The Trade Union Act says what it says, you don't have the ability to sign an agreement that is in fact going to be in force if it is longer than three years in duration.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think clearly this points out that there needs to be a revisiting of The Trade Union Act — specifically section 33 — that talks about a negotiated agreement. This is causing the situation that we have before us in the House. We in fact are dealing with an Act for the second time in three years and we're dealing with another company who now wants to sign a contract.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the government members would take this under advisement. We have a spring session coming up and I think there needs to be a review so that we don't have to put in place obstacles — obstacles that companies and unions are going to have to hurdle to indeed create a positive labour climate in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we're pleased to support this Bill and we want to see it put in force during this fall session and we would be pleased to make further comments during committee.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the Minister of Labour that Bill No. 20, The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exception Act be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Clerk Assistant (Committees): — Second reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Labour.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 20, The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exception Act be referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Labour that Bill No. 20 be referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the work of the policy field committees, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that this House now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:38.]

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Minister of Crown Management Board
Minister Responsible for Public Service
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Minister Responsible for Immigration

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Hon. Clay Serby
Deputy Premier
Minister of Rural Development

Hon. Maynard Sonntag
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations

Hon. Len Taylor
Minister of Government Relations

Hon. Andrew Thomson
Minister of Learning
Minister Responsible for Information
Technology
Minister Responsible for Literacy

Hon. Harry Van Mulligen
Minister of Finance

Hon. Mark Wartman
Minister of Agriculture and Food