



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

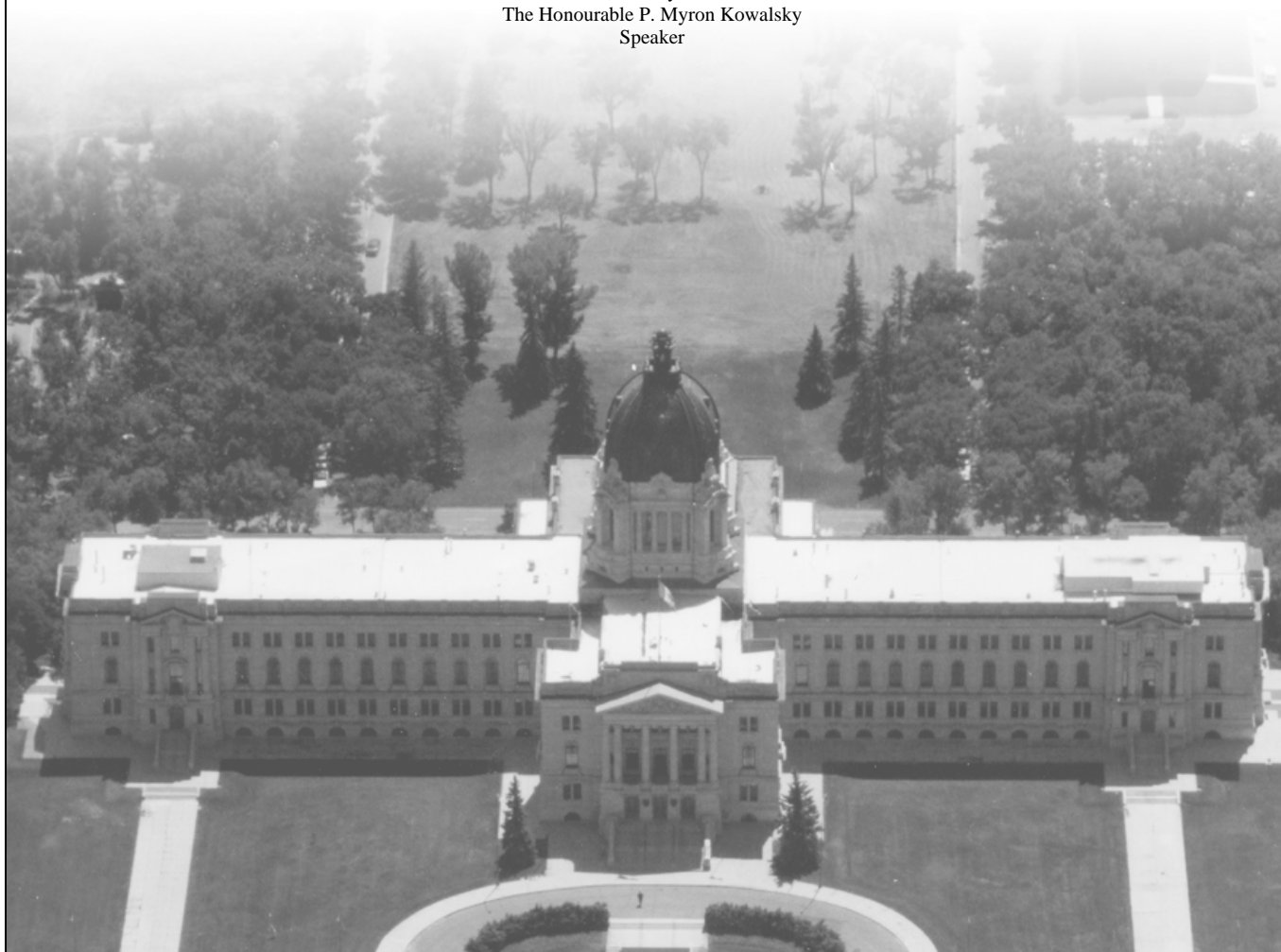
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**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
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
Cheveldayoff, Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Cline, Hon. Eric	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Crofford, Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantefoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Hagel, Hon. Glenn	NDP	Moose Jaw North
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
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
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
Prebble, Peter	NDP	Saskatoon Greystone
Quennell, Hon. Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Serby, Hon. Clay	NDP	Yorkton
Sonntag, Hon. Maynard	NDP	Meadow Lake
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Hon. Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Thomson, Hon. Andrew	NDP	Regina South
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, Hon. Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney
Vacant		Weyburn-Big Muddy

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

reads:

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to present a petition on behalf of individuals concerned about the availability of the cancer drug Avastin. 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 fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed primarily by constituents or individuals from the constituency of Arm River. I so present.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise on behalf of residents of the province regarding the cancer drug Avastin. 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 actions to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people from the Saskatoon area. I so present.

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition as well.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

These petitions, Mr. Speaker, come from Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also have a petition to present on behalf of residents. The prayer

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signators on this petition come from the communities of Kindersley, Kerrobert, Wilkie, Meadow Lake, Milestone, and Saskatoon. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of people who are concerned about the drug Avastin. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause this government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

The people that have signed this petition are from Swift Current, Regina, Clavet, and Guernsey. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a petition to fund Avastin signed by residents concerned that this is the only cancer drug recommended by the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency that the government has denied. The prayer of the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures on this petition are from residents of the city of Saskatoon, and I'm pleased to present it on their behalf.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

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

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

The communities that are involved, Mr. Speaker, in the petition are from Kenaston and Saskatoon. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a

petition signed by citizens concerned with cancer relief. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals from the communities of Swift Current and Regina. I so present.

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

Mr. Wakefield: — Mr. Speaker, I too have a petition signed by citizens concerned with the funding of Avastin, the drug. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

The signatures on this petition, Mr. Speaker, are from Saskatoon and Regina. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise this afternoon to present a petition regarding the cancer drug Avastin.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by residents of Saskatoon and Regina.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to present a petition on behalf of citizens of this province. The prayer is as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary actions to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, come from the communities of Saskatoon, Martensville, and Arelee. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for

Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have several pages of a petition of citizens who are concerned that they have to pay for a drug for cancer, which results in two-tier health care. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from Saskatoon, Emerald Park, Hudson Bay, Tisdale, and Hafford. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member from Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am proud to rise with my colleagues today to present a petition about the concern about no funding for the drug of Avastin. 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 fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

Signatures on the petition today are from the communities of Meadow Lake, Regina, St. Walburg, Kerrobert, Wilkie, Saskatoon. And I'm proud to present on their behalf.

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

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too rise today to present a petition on behalf of those citizens that are very concerned about this government's refusal to fund the drug Avastin. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed by folks from Macoun, Meadow Lake, Saskatoon, Maple Creek, Swift Current, and Prince Albert. I so present.

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise today to present a petition from constituents and citizens of Saskatchewan who are concerned about the government's failure to fund Avastin.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Signed by the good citizens of Clavet and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition with reference to Avastin and the fact that the government made the decision not to fund it. 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 fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by good citizens from Prince Albert, Estevan, Weyburn, and Kindersley. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition. 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 fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

And as duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, the signators of this petition are all from Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too arise today to present a petition about the drug Avastin. 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 fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

And as duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, it is signed by the good people of Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise with my colleagues with this very important petition.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These petitions are signed by the good citizens from Davidson, Bladworth, and Girvin. I so present.

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

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan. 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 fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the good citizens primarily of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. I so present.

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition regarding the government's refusal to fund the drug Avastin. I will read the prayer for relief.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by concerned citizens from Kenaston and Saskatoon. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan who are concerned with the government's decision not to fund the cancer drug Avastin. 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 fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, signed by the very good folks from Saskatoon, Loreburn, Kenaston, Melville, and Martensville. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

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 papers nos. 5, 64, 67, and 638.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice I shall

on day no. 33 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of the Environment: how many ski hills applied for funding from the department in the fiscal year 2005-2006?

And also another question, too:

And which ski hills received funds from the department in the fiscal year 2005-2006, and if so, how much? And how many received funding?

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

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 33 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for CIC: does management of the department have established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risks or to help prevent or detect fraud in the year 2002?

Also:

To the Minister Responsible for CIC: how did management of the department monitor any established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risks or to help to prevent or detect fraud in the year 2002? Does management of the department have any knowledge of any actual or suspected fraud or illegal activity within the department during the year 2002? If so, what is the nature of this activity?

In addition:

What did management of the department find as a result of its monitor of any established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risk or detect fraud in the year 2002?

And in addition:

Is management of the department aware of any allegations of fraud or other illegal activity within the department or its agencies in the year 2002, such as information received from employees, former employees, customers, clients, suppliers, or others? If so, what is the nature of the activity?

And I have the same set of questions for the year 2001.

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 33 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation: did management of the department have established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risks or to help prevent or detect fraud in the year 2001?

I give notice that I shall on day no. 33 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation: how did management of the department monitor any established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risks or to help prevent or detect fraud in the year 2001?

To the Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation: does management of the department have any knowledge of any actual or suspected fraud or illegal activity within the department during the year 2001? If so, what is the nature of this activity?

To the Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation: what did management of the department find as a result of its monitor of any established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risk or detect fraud in the year 2001?

To the Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation: is management of the department aware of any allegations of fraud or other illegal activity within the department or its agencies in the year 2001 such as information received from employees, former employees, customers, clients, suppliers, or others? If so, what is the nature of this activity?

I have similar questions, Mr. Speaker, for the year 2002.

[13:45]

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to stand today and happy to stand today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature good friends of our family, Barry and Chris Firby from Kenaston, Saskatchewan, who are seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, both Barry and Chris have been very strong supporters of community projects in Kenaston and both have spent many long hours as good volunteers. In fact, Mr. Speaker, Barry was . . . The original brain child of Barry's was Super Draft which has gone on to become the world's largest hockey pool, Mr. Speaker, raising a great amount of funds for community projects in Kenaston and right throughout the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. So I'm very proud today to welcome Barry and Chris here to their Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today there are 17 students here from the Western Christian College, accompanied by Harmony McMillan. And I just want to say

what a great addition the Western Christian College has been to Regina Rosemont.

Not only has it brought new life back to the college facility in the community, but a great group of students studying there. I've been at some of their events, their graduations, and I know they're a group of young people who set a very high standard for themselves and for what they hope to do with their lives. So I'll be meeting you later, and I want the Assembly to join me in welcoming them to their legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce some guests from my constituency, are Earl and Gail Priddle who have been very good supporters, worked hard in my campaign. And they have the privilege of having three daughters that also live in my constituency, all of whom have been co-opted and have been active supporters as well.

So I welcome them and wish them well, as well as their children and grandchildren who are now approaching voting age as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

100 Years of Nursing on the Prairies

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the summer of 2005, the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses, in collaboration with the United Nurses of Alberta, have been working on a nursing documentary.

The documentary called *100 Years of Nursing on the Prairies: History of Change and Progress in Our Health Care Systems* was developed in order to commemorate the centennial celebrations of both Saskatchewan and Alberta. The Saskatchewan Union of Nurses will host a gala launch tonight at the Hotel Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, organized nursing began very early in the last century in both Saskatchewan and Alberta. It seems only fitting to celebrate the centennial of each province as the centennial of Prairie nursing.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses and the United Nurses of Alberta represent a combined total of 30,000 members, including almost all the registered nurses in both provinces. It is important, Mr. Speaker, to provide such an integral portion of our Prairie population with a sense of history and a context for the important work that they do.

A DVD [digital versatile disc] of the documentary will be available for purchase and a website has been created to accompany it.

Mr. Speaker, as part of that history I would like to invite the Assembly to join me in congratulating SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] and UNA [United Nurses of Alberta] on the wonderful work they have done in developing *100 Years of Nursing on the Prairies*, and I look forward to attending the gala launch tonight. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Saskatchewan Party Dinner in Prince Albert

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise this afternoon to make this member statement.

This past Saturday, March 25, P.A. [Prince Albert] hosted a fabulous dinner for 400 guests. Mr. Speaker, you should have been there. The dinner was hosted by the Sask Party P.A. connection. It consists of Batoche, P.A. Carlton, P.A. Northcote, and Sask Rivers constituencies.

Mr. Speaker, the people came to hear our leader, the member from Swift Current. They came to hear about Sask Party's positive plan for the future. They came to listen and they came to share their dreams for the future with a large group of like-minded people.

Mr. Speaker, the annual event has grown in the past three years from 100 people to 400. This is a fine example of how the people of Saskatchewan are viewing the Sask Party as a viable alternative to the present government. One of the first questions people ask is, when's the next election, because we need a change in government.

I would like all members to join me in congratulating the fine job that P.A. connection committee did in hosting such an excellent event.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Saskatoon Pianist Wins International Recognition

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, every day in this House and in the media, we hear of the amazing accomplishments of Saskatchewan people. And more and more often we hear that we have some of the best competitors in the world. Saskatchewan has proven its international achievements in many different regards. These achievements become apparent when a TV camera crew follows your every move down the Champs Élysées in Paris.

Mr. Speaker, this is what Thomas Yu from Saskatoon recently experienced after being recognized at the international level for his outstanding ability as a pianist. On February 26 Thomas won the 17th international piano competition for outstanding amateurs in Paris. This is an incredible accomplishment. The competition brings together 100 of the best amateur pianists

from 30 countries around the world.

Of course winning a competition at this level takes dedication and hard work. Thomas still practises religiously despite the demands of working toward his master's in periodontology. Since his win, Thomas has had offers to perform in Florence, Tokyo, Washington as well as two confirmed dates with the Paris orchestra and admits he will have to give serious thought on how to keep his life balanced. But for now he's enjoying his hard-earned success.

Thomas's accomplishments at home and abroad are something that we can all be proud of here in Saskatchewan. I would ask all members to join me in congratulating Mr. Thomas Yu for winning his title at the international piano competition and for putting Saskatoon and Saskatchewan on the global musical map. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

Prince Albert Mintos Win Championship

Mr. Kerpan: — Well well well, Mr. Speaker. Finally the signs of spring are upon us. The water is running down the streets, and it's playoff time in Saskatchewan.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, the high school basketball association wrapped up basketball season with a very successful Hoopla.

And as late as last Friday night, Mr. Speaker, the Prince Albert Mintos won the Saskatchewan provincial AAA midget hockey championship. Mr. Speaker, of almost 20 years of existence, this was the first time that the Mintos have won the championship. And I want to congratulate obviously, Mr. Speaker, the players, the coaches, and the parents of all these young men.

Mr. Speaker, we have a connection to this young team, to this team in our family. Bobby Spigott from Outlook is a good friend of our family, and I can tell you a very solid defenceman with a great future in hockey, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you also that his parents, Barry and Sharon, have hardly missed a game, and that says a lot given the road conditions and the weather this last few weeks.

Mr. Speaker, there are other players of course on this team. Ten of them are from the city of Prince Albert and 12 from rural Saskatchewan, including Brendan Turner from my constituency. His home is in Tisdale. Dustin Tokarski, who is the top goalie in the league, is from Watson. Others include some from Martensville, Creighton, Watson, St. Brieux, Wadena, Humboldt, and Hoey, Mr. Speaker. As well, Tim Leonard and the coaches and the families and the billets and all the fans certainly are very excited about this event in Prince Albert. And I want to wish the Prince Albert Mintos a very great success in the western regional tournament to be held in Tisdale in April. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Govan Rink Fundraiser

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last weekend the Govan rink committee held a very enjoyable and successful fundraiser. The meal was barbecued steak with all of the trimmings, but the dessert was provided by auction. More about that in just a few seconds.

The program was filled with humour and there was four lucky couples that were showing their friends in Govan how well they knew, understood, and connected with their spouses as they played a game called the Oldly Weds. Once the Oldly Weds portion of the program ended without violence, Mr. Speaker, they moved to the dessert auction. And the desserts were a sight to make mouths water. Of course as the desserts were auctioned, the spouses of the very people that made the desserts had to bid the desserts up to an appropriate level and, Mr. Speaker, they raised nearly \$3,000 for the Govan rink.

The rink committee is chaired by Jason Danbrook. The committee members are Brad and Bonnie Hanmer, Jason and Glenda Danbrook, Sheavon Gales, Kevin and Sheryl Cardiff, and Steven and Melissa Trew. Mr. Speaker, congratulations goes to all of this young and exciting rink committee in Govan and congratulations to the nearly 100 people that participated in a great event in Govan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Clothing Drive for Louisiana Victims

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about a relief effort that is going on. The Knights of Columbus had recently travelled to Louisiana to do some volunteer work there and there they noticed that there is still . . . the victims there are still in need of many things. And one of the needs was clothing — huge amounts of clothing. So they're organizing a clothing drive right now, and also the Sacred Heart parish in Davidson has joined into that effort, organizing a clothing drive right now.

The response from the citizens of Davidson and surrounding area was tremendous. And just in the Davidson area alone a semi load of clothing was loaded for Louisiana and I think right now there's at least four semi loads that have left Saskatoon from that area, heading towards Louisiana. It is this type of generosity that ensures that Saskatchewan remains the top province in Canada on a per capita basis for giving to others in need. The Knights of Columbus in Davidson has done a great deal of community service over the years for charities on a local, regional, and international basis.

It is important to realize the work done by these volunteers in this community and communities across Saskatchewan. In rural Saskatchewan as our young people continue to leave into richer provinces, the work done by these dedicated volunteers are mostly older, retired folks. So I'd like to ask all the members of

this Assembly to join me congratulating the Knights of Columbus of Davidson for their superb effort to assist the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Regina Neurosurgeon Named Citizen of the Year

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday, March 10 someone I know and admire, Dr. Krishna Kumar, was granted CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] Regina's Citizen of the Year Award for his outstanding work as a neurosurgeon and community leader. Kris arrived in Regina in 1962, Mr. Speaker, where he intended to stay for only a year. It wasn't long, however, before Saskatchewan and its people, he says, became special to him. He's been practising in Regina ever since.

Born in Jabalpur, India, Mr. Kumar graduated from the Mahatma Gandhi medical college in 1958. Before arriving in Regina he honed his knowledge of neurosurgery over a term of graduate studies in Halifax. Specializing in both Parkinson's disease and the use of spinal implants as a means to control chronic pain have helped Kris Kumar assist thousands of patients throughout his illustrious 44-year career.

Mr. Speaker, he has earned the recognition of the global medical community as well as numerous medical awards and distinctions. In addition to his various professional accomplishments, Kris has also been a very active participant in his native culture. In fact he was a founding member of the south Saskatchewan Hindu temple here in Regina.

Mr. Kumar's advice for success has always been simple. And I quote:

Work and work and work with honesty [and integrity] and dignity — and the rest will fall into place.

I'd like to invite the members to join me in congratulating Krishna Kumar, the admirable recipient of CTV Regina's Citizen of the Year Award.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Funding for Avastin

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are joined today by a number of cancer patients and, just as importantly, the support groups of their friends and families in the west gallery. Members of the Assembly should be familiar with a couple of the names, Terry Rak and Bob Loepky, that have gone public on this issue before.

Mr. Speaker, these men and their families have driven from

across the province for one reason to this Assembly and for one reason only. They are here today to ask the NDP [New Democratic Party] government why it refused to cover the cancer drug Avastin. This drug is considered to be the standard course of care for colorectal cancer.

On behalf of these people that have driven here today and others that it affects in this province, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Health reverse his decision and fund the cancer drug Avastin?

[14:00]

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think the member opposite will know and those in the gallery and at home watching will know that, when the government announced its decision on March 9, that it was a very difficult decision for government to make and, Mr. Speaker, we acknowledge that it remains a difficult decision.

The whole issue of cancer, the effect on individuals who are affected by the disease and on their families, Mr. Speaker, is difficult for them on a daily basis. Mr. Speaker, our hearts go out to all of those who are affected by this horrible disease.

That having been said, Mr. Speaker, the government's decision was based on science, affordability, and sustainability of the system. Mr. Speaker, since March 9 we have continued to monitor the circumstances in other provinces and across Canada, and at this point, Mr. Speaker, our decision must stand.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, this present NDP government holds a dubious distinction. This is the first time in the province's history that the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency has recommended funding for a drug and the government has refused it.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada, Avastin is considered the standard course of treatment for this type of cancer. This is not an experimental drug; it has been approved by Health Canada back in September '05, six months ago. Will this minister admit that the government has made a mistake and fund the drug that has been recommended by the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency?

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again the member opposite will know and those who have followed the government's decision in this regard will know that the drug is not yet funded on a universal basis by any province throughout Canada. In fact many of the provinces are facing the same dilemma that the province of . . . in fact all of the provinces, Mr. Speaker, are facing the same dilemma that the Government of Saskatchewan is facing — that new cancer, new oncology drugs are coming into the system at

ever-increasing costs. Working with the cancer agency not only to assess the effectiveness of the drugs in dealing with the cancers to which they are attached, but also the affordability of the treatments, Mr. Speaker — these are decisions that we continue to monitor, we'll continue to work with other provinces on, and we'll continue to work with cancer patients and their families.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, this government is sitting on \$1 billion of extra revenue from oil and gas — \$1 billion. Coverage for Avastin works out to \$6.5 million annually. And yet members on that side of the House don't think that they should spend money on this drug that will extend people's lives.

Mr. Speaker, they think it should be spent in other ways. How about six and a half million dollars that they have spent on Minds Eye films only to give them another \$600,000 to produce a Tommy Douglas film, Mr. Speaker? Will this government do the right thing and cover Avastin today?

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency has received a commitment from this government, not just this year but consistently over the history of the agency. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in the last year alone the dollars that have been increased to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency equal 15 per cent of its budget year over year in the last year.

On the new cancer drugs coming into the system, Mr. Speaker, this government has supported an increase to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency of 22 per cent per year in each of the last five years. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to support the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. We will continue to increase their ability to support the people of Saskatchewan who are facing this incredibly horrible disease. And, Mr. Speaker, that commitment extends to working with them on additional oncology drugs that are coming into the system.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, we realize that governments must make difficult decisions. People in this province are wondering now with the government's decision not to fund Avastin if that is precedent setting. People are wondering if they're going to start to need to find private insurance to cover some of these drugs or make other arrangements such as selling their properties to cover such drugs.

I ask the minister today, does it have to be all or nothing? Would the minister consider some sort of copayment arrangement to cover this medication? Will the minister consider some alternative policy so people do not have to do without the standard of care for this cancer?

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Again thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

And again I emphasize the difficulty with which this government had to make this decision. And, Mr. Speaker, I add it was very difficult personally to make this decision as well. In my own constituency, I am very active in the local cancer community and do a lot of fundraising within the community. Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a difficult decision for all of us.

That having been said, Mr. Speaker, when the government was faced with the decision about moving forward on this drug and at the end of the day making the decision that we were not in a position at this time to approve funding for the drug, we did make a decision, Mr. Speaker, that we felt was the right decision. And that was to support those who had the ability to fund the drug themselves and make access to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency a reality for those people to ensure safe and secure administration of this IV [intravenous] drug. Mr. Speaker, that access is not universally available across this country. And, Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure that people who do have access to the drug have safe and secure administration of it.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is the home of medicare. Tommy Douglas believed that a person's ability to pay should not affect their access to health care. The government's decision not to fund Avastin goes against the very core values of medicare.

In their election platform in 2003, they go on to say, our commitment is to "... provide the best ... health care in Canada." Mr. Speaker, the best health care in Canada covers Avastin. Mr. Speaker, will this minister do the right thing and not force this province into two-tier health care which this decision has made? Will he do the right thing and either fund Avastin fully or look at some sort of copay agreement so that people that do not have the ability to pay can still access the drug?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Again thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And again I remind members opposite that the drug is not yet funded on a universal basis in any province in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, here in Saskatchewan we are aware we have one of the most comprehensive drug coverage plans in Canada for cancer patients. The Cancer Advocacy Coalition report recently indicated that Saskatchewan ranks number four of ten provinces. Only three provinces in Canada, Mr. Speaker, fund more cancer drugs than the province of Saskatchewan does. And, Mr. Speaker, we're proud to say that the National Cancer Institute indicates that Saskatchewan has one of the lowest cancer death rates in the country. Mr. Speaker, that shows the commitment of the province to cancer patients and their families in this province.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the minister has said that Avastin is not covered because it doesn't cure the problem. Well there are few cures for cancer. Mr. Speaker, he also goes on to say that it's not cost-effective. Studies have indicated that Avastin can prolong a person's life for up to six months. I wonder if the minister then can put in dollar figures on what he thinks cost-effective is for a month of life. In that context, Mr. Speaker, one would have to re-examine everything that we do in the health care system.

So once again, Mr. Speaker, people around the province that have or do not have the ability to pay for such a drug need it to continue on living. Will the minister revisit his decision and look at either fully funding or copay policies in the province?

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated at the outset, the government's decision in this regard contained a clause indicating our interest in monitoring and reviewing the circumstances of this drug and other oncology drugs throughout Canada. We will continue to work with the other provinces in this regard. Mr. Speaker, our commitment to ensure that the spirit and intent of medicare is felt throughout this province and we continue to be a leader.

Mr. Speaker, just to clarify the original intent, I went back and reviewed the 1961 Throne Speech of then Premier Tommy Douglas on The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Act. The premier at the time acknowledged the value of medicare in Saskatchewan but further acknowledged the need on prescription drugs to have a national program in place to support provinces like Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, we would fully fund a national program, but this government has a responsibility. It can campaign around the province on this very election platform saying we'll provide the best health care in Canada, Mr. Speaker, the best health care.

If British Columbia is covering on a case-by-case basis, why is this government not? They have campaigned saying they've got the best health care policies in Canada, and yet we see the government falling behind other provinces, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, will he at least look at the BC [British Columbia] model and what they're doing in BC because in this case they're far ahead of us.

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And yes indeed the province of Saskatchewan consults with the other provinces, in particular the Western provinces, on all developments in oncology drugs.

We are certainly aware of what's going on in the province of British Columbia. And I think, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows — and he should not exaggerate the circumstance there too much — British Columbia had a surplus

in their cancer drug program this year. They have chosen to utilize that surplus to fund Avastin on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Speaker, that funding in British Columbia could indeed lapse at the end of this fiscal year. And, Mr. Speaker, the province of British Columbia, like other provinces in Western Canada, have not yet approved the funding of Avastin past the end of this fiscal year.

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

Funding for Saskatchewan Health Information Network

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well two-tiered health is alive and well in Saskatchewan under that minister.

I understand that the government has no money to fund Avastin, but Executive Council has approved a payment of an additional \$2 million to the Saskatchewan Health Information Network, SHIN. To the minister: why does SHIN need an additional \$2 million?

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In just a week and a half time, the Minister of Finance will bring down a budget for the province of Saskatchewan. At that time, we will have an opportunity to discuss all of the impacts of spending within health care and across government.

But, Mr. Speaker, let's keep in mind, as I indicated earlier, our commitment to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and Saskatchewan people remains very strong. Last year's budget, Mr. Speaker, increased funding to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency by 15 per cent, and the drug plan under the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, Mr. Speaker, by 22 per cent. Our commitment to people and their families in these circumstances, Mr. Speaker, is intense. Thank you.

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister completely avoided the question. We have an OC [order in council] here from March 2006 that says \$2 million more for SHIN. Why does SHIN need the \$2 million?

[14:15]

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health operates in a very complex national-interprovincial-intergovernmental environment. And, Mr. Speaker, managing the surgical care in Saskatchewan is part of our commitment under the national health protocol negotiated between premiers of the provinces and the ministers of Health.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is currently leading the nation in terms of its Surgical Care Network and ability to monitor waiting times. Mr. Speaker, this is a significant commitment made to the other provinces and the federal government. And,

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to balance the needs of patients in the system with the ability of the system to meet the needs of those people. Mr. Speaker, there are expenses involved in things like that.

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this OC ends in four more days. The \$2 million is to be spent this month, not in the future, Mr. Speaker. So why does SHIN need that money? How many of the health districts are actually using SHIN, and how many facilities are using it?

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer to that question is very simple indeed: it is all of them. And in fact all of the regions want us to improve our ability to do that. Mr. Speaker, being able to monitor people on waiting lists applies not only to the regions, but to the Saskatchewan cancer care agency as well. And, Mr. Speaker, this is an important part of reducing waiting lists in this province and across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to indicate that this government will continue to work with other provinces and our federal counterpart not only on a national pharmaceutical plan, but on a plan that will improve surgical care and reduce waiting lists for all of those in the system across our province, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Support for Agriculture

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many of us read the story in the paper this weekend and saw pictures from a large farm auction near Stockholm in my constituency. Land and equipment in most cases went for fire sale prices. And, Mr. Speaker, with the number of sales in the province this spring, we're expecting this story to be repeated over and over again.

Mr. Speaker, there's so much hurt in rural Saskatchewan, and now the NDP government is adding to that hurt and adding stress to farm families. We understand that registered letters are being sent to crop insurance clients across Saskatchewan. These letters demand payment of all outstanding balances before Friday of this week. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of the 2006 contract.

Mr. Speaker, why are these letters being sent out to Saskatchewan farm families with such short notice?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Mr. Chair, I'll take that under advisement and get back to you.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for

Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not satisfactory to the farmers that are contacting us. After Friday they're without crop insurance, Mr. Speaker, and the predicament that they're in, the last thing that they need is to farm without crop insurance. They cannot stand the risk, Mr. Speaker.

So the minister must be aware that these letters are going out. Mr. Speaker, the government is spending \$7 on a registered letter telling a farmer that if he doesn't respond and do something by March 31, you have no coverage. These are farmers that are already in financial trouble. The stress level is at all-time highs, and we have a minister that says, I will take it under advisement. That's not good enough. These farmers need to know today that this government and that minister will extend that deadline by a couple of months and give them time to make arrangements to come up with this money.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're well aware of the difficulties that many farm families are facing. Mr. Speaker, we have been putting pressure on the federal government to come through with payments to provide initial support for farmers for seeding, Mr. Speaker. And Mr. Speaker, I have been very clear in terms of the kind of support that we have provided and the encouragement and the challenge that we will continue to make on the federal government to meet the needs of the people in this province, Mr. Speaker.

At over \$700 per capita, we've provided support for agriculture over this past year. Mr. Speaker, we know this important industry in this province needs support, Mr. Speaker. They need the support of our federal government in order to meet the deep needs that are caused by inequities in trade, low commodity prices, Mr. Speaker. And as far as the crop insurance question, I have said I will take that under advisement and get back to them. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, we saw the kind of support this NDP government and that minister show farmers. In the past number of years we saw 22 rural service centres close. We saw spot loss hail removed from crop insurance. We saw a 20 per cent reduction in rebate on bulk farm-fuel purchases, and the list goes on. We saw downloading in the past 10 to 15 years on the municipality which translates down on to farmers. We saw them download education tax on to farm land which also cost farmers many thousands and thousands of dollars a year.

And when asked to do one thing that really wouldn't cost them money — give an extension to the deadline on crop insurance and help a farm family out there — the minister doesn't step forward and do that. Mr. Speaker, it's an easy request for the minister to respond to. Will he extend that deadline today and help Saskatchewan farm families?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a new federal government that has promised to give support to farmers in this country — promised. These folks across the way backed them heavily, Mr. Speaker. And Mr. Speaker, when they come to this province, when they speak internationally, what do they say? What do they say, Mr. Speaker? Well we don't have authority to do it. We just can't do it, Mr. Speaker. That's what we hear back from them.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not good enough in a world where international pressures, trade issues are taking the legs out from under our farmers. We need it. We need it now for the farmers of this province, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, this government — this provincial NDP government — has been there for the farmers in this province: on BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy], Mr. Speaker, on education property tax, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have been there every year, on every program that has come forward providing the support that farmers have asked for. We'll be there in the future too, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, Mr. Speaker, before the Minister of Agriculture completely blows a gasket, I'd like to inform him that this is not the federal government's fault. It's not the federal government's responsibility. It's his responsibility and that NDP government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, why is this NDP government so against helping farm families? It's the backbone of this province. It's an economy driver out there. And this government doesn't seem to get it.

For 14 years, we've been downloaded on by this NDP government, and farm families can't take much more. They're at the end of their rope. We know of farmers that are scared to even answer the phone any more because it's somebody wanting money, trying to collect a bill. The last people they expect to be on the other end of that call or the other end of that \$7 registered letter is their own government — their own NDP government — from the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that minister and that government can help farm families, and it's time to do it now.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Clearly during that rant, it became evident that the member opposite

really does not have a handle on the crop insurance program. Mr. Speaker, this is a tripartite program — provincial government, federal government, and farmers, all involved. There are rules that are established by the federal and provincial governments, Mr. Speaker, across this country. And, Mr. Speaker, those rules must be followed. I have assured them that I will take this under advisement. I will follow up immediately and find out what the issues are and whether we are constricted by federal-provincial rules.

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

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this program has paid out significant dollars over the last few years — over \$2 billion, Mr. Speaker — to provide substantial support to the farmers of this province. It is a good program, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to build it. We will continue to support it. And, Mr. Speaker, I will get back to those members opposite with the full information.

The Speaker: — Member's time has elapsed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 30

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Quennell that **Bill No. 30 — The Film and Video Classification Amendment Act, 2006** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to speak to Bill No. 30, The Film and Video Classification Amendment Act, 2006. It's very timely to be discussing these types of issues, Mr. Speaker. As we know, with the advent of Internet, children and all people can have access to all sorts of unseemly types of productions. And we certainly need to look at those types of items as well as what's being sold in video stores and as far as video games and videos — as far as their violent content — and other areas that parents and society need to be concerned about.

It's paramount, Mr. Speaker, that we in society protect our children from inappropriate types of videos and information that can be downloaded from the Internet. And, Mr. Speaker, the number one safeguard in this whole area has to be the parents. I know parents are very concerned about the types of information and video games and pornography and those types of things that the young people can get their hands on through both rented video games, computer games, videos that they rent at stores, and also things that can be downloaded from the Internet. But it's just not only . . . Parents can only do so much, and I know parents do the best they can. But certainly as a society . . . And this government has to take safeguards in order

to address those concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I know of young people that can walk into video stores and buy computer games that are of a violent nature, and it's interesting to note that no ID [identification] is asked for. There's stickers and marks on the games which are rated for a certain age of child, but it seems that they're rarely enforced. And so I think it's a step in the right direction to be looking at those types of classifications.

And of course it's one thing to have things classified; it's certainly another to enforce those classifications. And I think there needs to be really a learning process and an educational process with the stores and small businesses that sell and rent videos and sell computer games to people, not only young people. And so I think it has to go hand in hand with the reclassification. The educational portion is also very, very important.

Mr. Speaker, the minister spoke about compliance to the ESRB [Entertainment Software Rating Board] ratings. And he goes on to say:

As a result it will be an offence to sell, rent or exhibit video computer games classified as mature to a person under the age of 17, and sell, rent or exhibit a video or computer game classified as adults only to a person under the age of 18.

And we certainly will want to speak to all the stakeholders involved, Mr. Speaker, because there's a number of issues. First the ages that are listed here, are they the right ages that . . . is that the right threshold of young people that will be allowed or not allowed to buy certain video games or rent certain videos? That certainly is an issue. And again what procedures and policies are going to be put in place at the level of the store, of the video game renter, and also the computer stores that are selling these other games, and to make sure that those types of issues are addressed to protect our young people from really material that is of a more mature nature.

It's interesting to note as well, Mr. Speaker, is there's been studies done on what violent videos . . . what kind of an effect they have on young people. And I believe that type of information needs to be brought forward to get everyone — the legislators and the public — a better understanding of the effect violent videos and those types of games have on young people. And that's why I speak of, is the classification and the certain ages appropriate? Should they be lower? And those are types of areas that need to be addressed, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

It's interesting to note that there has not been an amendment, I believe, to this Act since 1985, and that certainly has been a long, long time, given the nature and the change and advancements in technology. That's quite frankly an unacceptable time to lapse before we in the legislature deal with this type of an amendment.

As we know, the computer industry and the video industry has really exploded, quite frankly, and I understand it generates about \$1,890 million in total revenue. So this is certainly an

industry that is growing and that also will put pressure on retailers to sell more and more. And it certainly is very necessary to have the proper classifications to address these issues and what is allowable to sell to young people or rent to young people and what is not. Mr. Speaker, I certainly will want to speak to the stakeholders involved and get a better handle on what is being asked for and what should be in the Act.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that also the penalties for contravention of the Act are to be updated. And I understand failure to comply with the Act is guilty of an offence and liable for a first offence a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or imprisonment not exceeding six months; for a corporation, a fine not exceeding \$100,000. And the second offence either both of a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or imprisonment not exceeding one year; for a corporation, a fine not exceeding \$500,000.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's a number of offences that are also part of the Bill that are of very significant nature. The Act, I understand, establishes a new regulation-making authority to the Lieutenant Governor that includes: setting out the classes of video games not included in the definition of video game; setting out the classification scheme to be used for classifying films, including establishing different classifications for different classes of films; adopting by reference a classification scheme established by another person or body subject to changes that the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers appropriate; also prescribing the process to be followed in making appeals pursuant to the renting of films; and for the purpose of classifying video games, prescribing criteria to be followed by the person or body in classifying video games.

So there's a number of areas that need to be looked into. There's a number of people who we would like to speak to. And so at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Biggar that second reading debate on Bill No. 30 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Bill No. 31

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Quennell that **Bill No. 31 — The Miscellaneous Statutes (Accounting Professions) Amendment Act, 2006** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to rise to speak to Bill No. 31 this afternoon, An Act to amend certain Statutes and regulations with respect to Accounting Professions.

As explained by the minister, the intent of the legislation is to recognize three accounting designations within our province —

Certified General Accountants' Association, the Society of Management Accountants of Saskatchewan, and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Saskatchewan — and to recognize that members of these three recognized accounting professions may perform the duties imposed by this legislation.

The Bill is intended to complete the task of including certified general accountants and certified management accountants with chartered accountants when referring to this profession and in particular to recognize that all of these designations would qualify to perform the duties of a professional accountant.

The minister has stated that the three agencies have been consulted and are supportive of this legislation. My understanding that in years gone by, the designation of chartered accountant was generally associated with all of the aspects of accounting but recognized as the experts, if you please, in the auditing function. Their training that led to achieving their specific designation involved more concentration on this aspect of accounting than did the CGA [certified general accountant] program or the CMA [certified management accountant] program. And likewise, the certified management accountant program concentrated more on management areas of accounting and less on the auditing aspects.

I note in this Bill that, in the changes in the wording, the new wording refers to “a member in good standing of a recognized accounting profession that is regulated by an Act.” This restricts the more restrictive, a chartered accountant, as was in the previous Act.

I also note in this same section of the Act in describing other designations that are listed include a lawyer, an architect, an engineer. And I would wonder why the word accountant could not be used to simplify this profession. Obviously in referring to a lawyer, an architect, an engineer, there is the implications that these designations infer membership in good standing of a recognized profession that is regulated by an Act.

In most cases, this legislation is including more professionals that could perform these tasks. However in section 37 I note, Mr. Speaker, that the wording originally was:

Clause 37(a) of *The Mutual Medical and Hospital Benefit Associations Act* is amended by striking out “member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Saskatchewan or any other accountant satisfactory to the registrar” and substituting [now] “member in good standing of a recognized accounting profession that is regulated by an Act”.

So, Mr. Speaker, the intent appeared to be to include certified general accountants and certified management accountants whenever accounting work is to be done, and yet this part specifically includes someone who was referred to as “. . . any other accountant satisfactory to the registrar.” Now I would assume if the person was satisfactory to the registrar, then they were in a position to perform those duties.

This proposed legislation may accomplish its intended purpose to recognize the designation of chartered accountants, but also the designation of CGAs and management accountants, as all

having the qualifications of a professional accountant and therefore in a position to perform the duties in prior legislation limited to chartered accountants originally.

As we intend to study this proposed legislation further with those involved, including the three recognized accounting associations, I would at this time move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford that the debate on second reading of Bill 31 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Bill No. 32

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Quennell that **Bill No. 32 — The Victims of Crime Amendment Act, 2006/Loi de 2006 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les victimes d'actes criminels** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm happy today to be able to speak to this Bill, this particular Bill, Bill No. 32, which involves a lot of the segments and issues surrounding victims of crime and compensation and so on and so forth. It is obviously an amendment to The Victims of Crime Act that was passed in 1995 in this very Assembly.

And it carries with it some changes into the Act, Mr. Speaker, that I think are important, that could have been perhaps dealt with at an earlier time. However, they weren't for one reason or another. I can't speak to that because my time in this legislature is short and relatively short compared to some others.

And certainly, you know, I guess if you look at the government's history, this particular government's history, NDP government's history dealing with issues of crime and violence and policing in our society, we know that the government obviously has fallen well short of — well short — of what we think could have and should have taken place many, many years ago. But not only just us, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about violent crime and victims thereof, but the people of the province themselves are saying those exact same things. They are saying that, you know, we are concerned about the safety and the well-being of our property and our personal selves on a daily basis.

The reason I want to open my words by speaking about this, Mr. Speaker, because they're so related, so directly related to what happens after a crime takes place. And that's sort of where maybe the other half of the story takes place. The lead-up to the crime and the crime itself is something sort of different and should be dealt with differently than what takes place after a conviction or after it's realized that there are victims of any particular crime. And really, you know, you look at . . . there's lots of, lots of different areas of crime that are certainly serious,

but some more serious and some more personally devastating than others. And sort of that's what I wanted to talk about today.

But, Mr. Speaker, as I said, you know, in my travels around the province, in my time in politics both federally and provincially over the past 13 or 14 years, I've had the opportunity to speak to a lot of people, a lot of people about how they feel about the security and the safety that they feel in their own homes and in their own communities. And, Mr. Speaker, every public meeting that I think I've ever held, I always ask for a show of hands as to if you feel comfortable within your own home or your community. It's amazing. It's amazing, Mr. Speaker, the number of people who say they are not comfortable.

And it really doesn't, it really doesn't seem to matter too much the age group or the demographics of any particular group that I talk to. Certainly I see it more often in groups of seniors or elderly because they are probably less able to defend themselves in cases of assault, robbery, break-ins, those kinds of things. But it really follows everywhere.

You see now, Mr. Speaker, in what we might consider upper-middle-class neighbourhoods of Saskatoon or Regina and other cities in the province where people will say that very same thing, that they're very concerned about their safety. And it's their own safety obviously plus their children's when they go to school and they're subjected to, you know, violence within in the school systems or subjected to drug and alcohol abuse to a much higher degree — gang violence obviously in some areas — than we were before. And so that leads up to, that leads up to, you know, people of all demographic areas being truly concerned with their health and welfare.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill particularly deals with the victims of that kind of activity. And it also deals with the ways that perhaps the society, the government, the taxpayer . . . call it what you will. I'm talking about the same group of people of course, how they will compensate people who have fallen victim to crime. And that's where as I said before, Mr. Speaker, that's sort of a clear line has been drawn, if you will, between what happens as you lead up to the crime and the crime itself and then what happens after.

[14:45]

Probably some of us, maybe most of us, maybe all of us are familiar with cases in the past where . . . They're highly publicized cases, and people come before the courts of the province or the courts of the land during a trial when a person is accused of a crime and they have been victimized. And it might have been that they were victimized physically. It could be that they were victimized . . . their property was victimized. Their car may have been stolen. Their house may have been broken into. There are a whole host of ranges and levels of that sort of activity, Mr. Speaker. And I could go on and on and on at great length about this very subject. However I won't because I know that time is of the essence in this legislature. But there are a few things that I really feel are very important to say and I'd like to talk about them today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there are clear lines between federal and provincial responsibilities when it comes to victims of

crime . . . [inaudible] . . . In my former political life, I was very involved in working with victims of crime with parole, with the correctional facilities at the federal level as a Member of Parliament when I served for seven years, two terms in the House of Commons. And I got really interested and involved in those kinds of things.

And when I was first elected to this legislature almost three years ago now, Mr. Speaker, that was my critic duty as well . . . was to look after being the critic for Corrections and Public Safety in the provincial legislature. And I actually had the opportunity to spend some time with the member for Greystone, and I appreciated the openness that he afforded me when we talked about those kinds of issues, Mr. Speaker.

So I understand that there is certainly a clear delineation between federal and provincial. But I just want to touch on a couple of cases that were before Canadians. It didn't matter whether you were a resident of Saskatchewan or a resident of Newfoundland or any place in Canada; they were really high profile public-type cases that we all became aware of.

And the one that I want to speak about first, Mr. Speaker, is the murder of Constable Brian King just north of Saskatoon. It's a good number of years ago of course. It's a Saskatchewan case; it has obviously Saskatchewan people involved. But it became a major, a major case that was sort of groundbreaking right across the country, Mr. Speaker.

And that particular case I remember very well. We held public meetings on that case. And that was one of my first kind of forays into victims of violence, victim of violent crime, because I had the opportunity to meet and speak at great lengths with Mrs. Brian King . Of course this was a few years later, after the fact of course. But the thing that amazed me, Mr. Speaker, that truly, truly amazed me — and I guess in retrospect I shouldn't have been so shocked but I was — as to how serious that impact was on Mrs. King and her family years after the crime.

And I'm going to say some dates. I think that that murder took place in the late '70s just north of Saskatoon. And the time period I'm talking about was the '90s, so that's a good number of years later. But, Mr. Speaker, Mrs. King's . . . well you had to be there to really appreciate how she felt and how her entire family felt a good number of years after that.

I had also had the experience, Mr. Speaker, of meeting the actual police officer from the Saskatoon Police department who made the arrest on those two individuals that were charged and convicted of that murder at that time. You know, you would think that police officers deal with those kinds of things every day in their career and so they wouldn't get jaded by that. I was impressed in a bad way, in a negative way, negatively impressed at how much impact that simple — if you want to call it that — arrest had on that police officer from Saskatoon . . . is something that deeply disturbed him, that particular murder of a fellow police officer.

And to make a longer story somewhat shorter, we spent a lot of time with that group of people — the police officer, Mrs. Brian King, her family — and the big impression that I got coming out of that was how much they felt that they were not properly dealt with.

We got started on that case, Mr. Speaker, because we were fighting the removal of section 747 of the Criminal Code which was called the faint hope clause. And again I know that's federal, Mr. Speaker, and a federal responsibility but directly tied to this case in Saskatchewan. It allowed people who are convicted of murders to apply for early parole prior to that 25-year minimum that should have been put on first-degree murder cases. That's how we got involved in this case. And I went to the courts during that particular 747 hearing, and again the negative impression that I got from all of that case, that particular case, was how little the victims of that crime were listened to.

Yes, they were allowed to make a statement before the courts to talk about what their lives were like having lost a loved one because of violent crime. Yes, they were allowed, and I'm not going to stand here and say they weren't. But I felt, Mr. Speaker, that the courts of the land didn't do justice to those kinds of heavily emotional impact statements that the victims give at parole hearings or those kinds of events, Mr. Speaker. And that was the biggest concern I had.

We aren't talking even about financial compensation at this point in time. We're talking about emotional problems with having a convicted murderer of your loved one allowed to be released back into public without the courts or society truly listening to and hearing how you feel about them. And that's sort of what we're talking about in this Bill, Mr. Speaker. I know that that's maybe not the crux of the Bill or the most important part of this Bill, but it's certainly a factor.

Mr. Speaker, I also have spent some time over the past few years as an auxiliary RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] constable. Mr. Speaker, I took my training in Dundurn. I was attached to the Hanley detachment of the RCMP and served with them for a number of years. And, Mr. Speaker, for those that don't know, an auxiliary police officer really is a sworn-in peace officer. He or she has the same powers of arrest as a regular member of the RCMP or any other police force that he or she happens to be attached to.

It just so happened that I was attached to the RCMP in Hanley. And what we do basically as auxiliary officers is we're a second pair of eyes in the car. Many times of course now police are single. They travel by themselves. They don't have a partner. And in rural Saskatchewan at great distances, it is really difficult for one member — especially if he or she gets into physical trouble — to protect themselves. And that's why this auxiliary program was born. It's a good, strong program, Mr. Speaker, and I fully support it. Most of the police officers that I talk to support that program as well.

But in my time serving as an auxiliary member, we had the opportunity to go to a good number of calls. Obviously we're busy. You know, police officers are busy whether they operate in Saskatoon or rural Saskatchewan or any other city. It's just the nature of the business.

Again I could say, I could say at this point, Mr. Speaker, throw in as an aside that the government has not lived up to its promise now — for how many years, six or seven years? — to hire 200 new police officers. I could say that. Well what the heck, I will say it. In fact I have said it.

And that's part of this whole big issue . . . is that when you get out there as a police officer and you are short-staffed to start with and you go to a call where . . . let's say it's a victim of property crime which might be considered somewhat lesser importance than a victim of violent crime.

But, Mr. Speaker, you go to one of these places. Let's say . . . I'll use for instance a case where a farmhouse has been broken into when the couple was away. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and anybody who's had a break-in occur in their own house or their own property, they have a feeling of being violated. You know, your house doesn't feel the same for a long time because somebody that they didn't know went into their house without their permission, and they may have stole something. They may not have. But the fact remains that they were victims.

And one of the things that I've found as an auxiliary officer with the RCMP was that you didn't get a lot of time to spend with these people to try to make them feel somewhat better about the situation, if you might call it that, at that end of it, Mr. Speaker, because, you know, you just didn't have the time to get in there and to do those kinds of things and, you know, try to make the victims feel better about living in their house or on their property after they had been broken into or something stolen.

You can then take that to the next level where you want to talk about being a victim of physical crime. Certainly there's been lots of high-profile cases, and I could again speak at great length about them, Mr. Speaker. I mean there's so many, many high-profile cases — high-profile cases certainly in Saskatchewan and right across the country. Every time we turn on our TVs or we turn on or read our newspapers, we see more evidence of those kinds of crimes.

Mr. Speaker, you know when you talk about being a victim of crime . . . and as I said, we'll go now and talk about being a victim of some sort of physical violence. It could be a sexual case. It could be, you know, an assault. It could be a break and enter. It could be an armed robbery. It could be any number of levels of physical violence, Mr. Speaker. And it could be, you know as I said, sexual cases, assaults, so on and so forth.

And each one is individual. Each one is an individual case. Each one will have, the victims thereof will have a different level of hurt, if you want to call it that. Some people bounce back pretty quickly from being a victim of violent crime. Others take much longer and still others take forever to get past those kinds of things. And when you get . . . And that's where I think our system falls down is that we need to spend more time dealing with, on an individual level, those kinds of victims of crime.

Mr. Speaker, you know the Bill, you look at the Bill . . . and I haven't read it in its entirety. I have looked at it briefly and I have been briefed by the member for Saskatoon Southeast who is the critic, Justice critic for our party, and I see some things that deal with victims of crime in it. But I see some things that aren't there. In other words by their absence I become concerned that maybe this government is not as concerned about victims of crime as they would like us to believe.

I know in the Bill it talks about . . . A victim may apply for some sort of compensation or restitution from the courts. And of course as I said, every victim of crime is going to deal with their loss or their hurt in a different way.

I also know that, Mr. Speaker, that in some places . . . And again we're talking about property crime. Some places like the island of St. Thomas for instance — and I'm not suggesting for even a second that we want to be like the island of St. Thomas, but just for your example — on the island of St. Thomas, if you have . . . if a young person for instance is found guilty, tried, sentenced, accused, and convicted of a property crime and under their law they are required to repay the victim of that crime. In other words, they stole your '67 Mustang and wrecked it; they would be responsible to pay for it back to the victim of crime.

Mr. Speaker, that's not just . . . Lots of people would say that's a pretty good . . . that's not a bad law. But here's the kicker on that. The kicker on that is that if that young person, let's say it's a young offender, cannot afford to pay for that '67 Mustang, then it becomes his or her guardian's or parent's responsibility. In other words if my child stole that particular automobile and couldn't pay restitution to the victim, I would then become responsible.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that that's where we want to maybe go in Canada or in Saskatchewan. But I can tell you, I can tell you from talking to people and studying that system that it certainly has dropped the level, the rate of property crime on that particular island. In fact, Mr. Speaker, they have a clause in their Criminal Code in St. Thomas — I'm sure you'll be interested to hear this — is that if in fact your child does not go to jail, you as the parents could go to jail because you're responsible for your child. Mr. Speaker, I again, I want to make sure that we're not saying we have to go there. I'm not advocating that. I'm just giving you an illustration as to what kinds of things happen in other jurisdictions.

[15:00]

And so it's important that we talk about all the issues and all the levels because what I've found in my time in politics is there's sort of like a pendulum. And one time, you know, the pendulum will be on the side of prevention, and then the pendulum will swing around to the side of punishment. And someplace in the middle is where the balance ought to be, Mr. Speaker, and oftentimes we as societies do not have that good balance.

And that certainly follows with this particular Bill on the violent victims of crime Act. And I wanted to make sure that I illustrated those to this legislature today because I think they're important in this debate, I think they're factors in this debate. And when we speak about this Bill at a later date, I think we ought to talk about some things like this.

We ought to talk about things that, you know, like dealing with time periods — the time period that you would be allowed to apply for compensation or restitution from a crime that has been committed against you. Again, and here's a factor, Mr. Speaker, that we all know of course that the federal Criminal Code and what we . . . Our provincial correctional facilities deal with different sentences and they deal with different areas of parole

and so on and so forth.

Of course if you're convicted of a crime and sent to a provincial correctional facility, it will be two years less a day at the very most. So you know that in that time period the person who committed that crime against you, and it could be — again it could be a property crime or some other type of crime — you know that person is going to be released within two years less a day. That's the most you could keep them unless of course they commit another crime while they're in jail, or while they . . . If they're found guilty of another crime while they're in jail then of course they could, the length could be added to that sentence.

And so, Mr. Speaker, you know the reason I say that, my point being here is that if you're a victim of crime and it's a crime that's what we might call a crime that's a heinous crime against person or property, and that particular victim is having a difficult time handling that, then two years becomes a very short time. Two years goes by pretty quick if you're a victim of crime and you have been violated for some reason, and you know that that person is out in two years. And we don't go far enough in lots of ways in dealing with those personal, particular issues because they are very important, and they are very, very, very serious.

This Bill 32, it talks about secondary victims as well. And of course those would be, you know, if the victim is an adult, the spouse, or child of the adult victim could be what you might call a secondary victim. And they need to have . . . And again I want to refer back to this Brian King case — because that's where this section of this Bill really becomes clear to me and kind of jumps out at me — because when you speak to Mrs. King you would of course know in a very short time how grievously her fear and her loss and her life has been destroyed. There is no question. You need only to sit with her for a minute to know that that is the case.

But if you talk about her children now, her children that were Brian and her children, and they would then be called, they would be secondary victims of that particular crime. And you have to only talk to them for a short time, Mr. Speaker, to realize how much their life has been impacted by the loss of their father. Now these children obviously were pretty young when they lost their father. And we haven't put a mechanism in place where their voices or their hurt could be heard, Mr. Speaker.

That could be done in a Bill like this. It's not been done in the federal Criminal Code, I know that. They have taken some steps to address victims of crime in the federal Criminal Code as well, Mr. Speaker, but we could do that in the province. We could do that on our own. We could say, yes okay we understand, you know, that this crime has been committed. It's a heinous physical crime — it could be murder, it could be assault, it could be rape. It could be a secondary victim such as a child of a person that's been sexually assaulted. It could be. It could be a spouse. It could be, you know, those sort of short-arm's-length people that really become directly involved in these crimes.

And that's where we could, as a province, we could in this Bill, for instance if the government of the day, the NDP government, had the courage to step forward and say, we're going to take

this a step further, Mr. Speaker, and talk about some of these very serious blanks or things that are missing in the federal Criminal Code but also the provincial statutes.

And that's why I really wanted to talk, Mr. Speaker, about the connections between those kinds of crimes — the federal versus provincial. There's another one that I really think is important too — and again this one didn't happen in Saskatchewan but there is a Saskatchewan connection — and that's the case of Clifford Olson, Mr. Speaker. Clifford Olson is a well-known name in Canada, Canada-wide.

And Clifford Olson, the connection of course with Saskatchewan is that he is incarcerated in the Saskatchewan federal penitentiary in Prince Albert. He has been for quite some time. But the point I'm trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is that there are still many, many, many victims of that crime who have many years later, certainly still are very concerned about their own safety and about the safety of people in general.

Another example that I'd like to give, Mr. Speaker, that I think is important here are the victims of crime in Saskatchewan who are children, the segment of society who are least able to protect themselves. And that could be a property crime, Mr. Speaker, or it could be a physical crime against children. And, Mr. Speaker, to be honest with you I really don't have that much time, I don't have much time for people who commit crimes against children. I just don't.

And yet we in our society today, we allow people who have been convicted of pretty serious crimes to be released back into our streets without the public, without the victims — without even the victims, Mr. Speaker, — of that crime being notified that the perpetrator of that crime against them is free.

And I don't have much time for that, Mr. Speaker, because as I said, young children — the weakest, the youngest, the most vulnerable people — in our society are being left behind, Mr. Speaker, by this government. They're being left behind because their voices are not heard.

And that's where this secondary victim of crime section of this Bill is so important. Because obviously sometimes a young person, a young person could be even at . . . so young in age that they couldn't speak for themselves; they couldn't speak on their own behalf. So that's why this secondary victims of crime is critical because that would allow then a sibling, a parent, or a guardian to speak on their behalf.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that you're a father and many of us are parents in this legislature. And when you see hurt in our youngest people, our children — it might have been something that happened to them at school or on the playground, and it might have been a very innocent thing that's certainly of not much consequence — but when that young child comes home from school or from play and they tell you their feelings, as a parent you know your first reaction many times is that you want to stand up for your child, that you want to be able to go to a forum that would allow you to speak on your child's behalf.

Now sometimes, Mr. Speaker, I will admit that children will maybe come home with the story that's not the complete story. And one should do some investigating prior to that of course.

But the point is that there are times . . . And again I want to relate another Saskatchewan crime to you, Mr. Speaker, or I . . . again it was an incident that happened in Martensville a number of years ago. Members of this House will no doubt be very well aware of that Martensville case. And, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter where you sit on either side of that case, whether you truly believe there was something criminal going on or whether you don't believe it. It doesn't matter. The point is, my point being on this particular instance, this example is that there was concern. There was concern amongst parents. There was concern amongst community. And there was concern amongst society about this particular instance.

There was also concern, Mr. Speaker, on the law enforcement side of it obviously. But the victims . . . and I've spoken with the victims if you want . . . the people named, the parents and children that were involved in this case. And they didn't feel that they got the complete opportunity to really have their voice heard at the time that those things were happening and at the time that those cases were taking place.

So, Mr. Speaker, you know I've mentioned quite a few examples today that, you know, most people are certainly aware of and have come to be familiar with over the last good number of years. And you know that, that having said what I have said today, that I support the idea of a victims of crime Act. I don't think there's any question. I don't think there's any . . . There's not a member in this House who would not support the idea or the theory of a victims of crime Act.

But you have to, I think you have to lay out in clearer form, Mr. Speaker, what those responsibilities are by . . . on the side of the justice system or on the side of the government of the day. And again it is the NDP at this time but hopefully not for very long. And I'm pretty sure it won't be for very long because I think the people of the province are going to give us a chance to be able to listen to victims of crime from that side of the House.

But my point again is that I think we need to be very clear when we lay out the mandate of this government, of any government and how we're going to deal with the victim of crime in the future. We need to be clearer on levels of compensation. We need, you know, we need to talk about the restitution of cases and the orders given for restitution and how much it's going to be and where it's going to come from and who's responsible for restitution, where it's going to go to if it's a secondary victim. If it's a child that was the victim, where does that restitution go to? Does it go to a trust fund for that child? Are the parents able to use it for some other financial means? Those are things that I don't think this Act deals with and I think we need to be much clearer on that.

The other side of it, Mr. Speaker — and this might be the most important part, and I talked briefly about it a few minutes ago — is that I think we ought to expand the responsibility of the government and not necessarily even in the area of restitution or compensation. But we need to expand and look further at who we listen to and how we listen to the victims, and that we ought to treat every one on its own individual basis and we ought to treat every case separately because every case is different. It could be as I said a man; it could be a woman. It could be a child. It could be somebody who deals with what's happened to them in various ways.

And that's why it's important that we allow the people that are good at these things to take the ball and carry the ball in these cases. It could be psychologists that are needed. It could be teachers. It could be parents. It could be a group. I know that First Nations people have healing circles. And that's a sort of an example of things that work well. That's a First Nations custom, and it's a custom that has been gone on for many, many years and should be continued.

There are other ways to make sure that people who are not First Nations people have that same kind of access to the same kind of rebuilding of their lives after they have become a victim of crime. And that's why we need to clearly lay out and enunciate exactly what we want to do and how we want to handle those kinds of issues when it comes to victims of crime, Mr. Speaker.

Money is part of it. The compensation is certainly important in property crime and must be dealt with, but it's only part of it. And the other part deals with people. And I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I think the government is sorely lacking when it comes to dealing with people. They claim to be, they claim to be and they have claimed to be the defenders of human right and good, and they've claimed to be the party of the people.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not what I hear out in the country. The people of this province feel generally very much left behind by this government when it comes to dealing with these kinds of issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion then I guess, you know there are things that I would support in this Bill, and we may end up supporting the Bill, Mr. Speaker. But the government has a great opportunity here in this Bill. The government has a great opportunity in this Bill to fix some things, to help some people, to really take a step forward to show the people of the province that they're concerned about victims of crime.

[15:15]

And they could go two ways on this. They could either say, well we're going to listen to the opposition; we're going to work with the opposition; we're going to fix some of the problems. Or they could say, no we're just going to leave the Bill the way it is, and carry on and keep their head in the sand and not to worry about it.

But, Madam Speaker — as I see now, you're in the Chair — if you haven't heard anything, I maybe could start over again. But having said that, having said that, I won't repeat it, Madam Speaker, because I know that my time is certainly getting short today.

But the government has the opportunity in this Bill to really make a difference. The court of public opinion is going to decide whether they've taken that opportunity to make a difference. Because, Madam Speaker, until you look into the eyes of a victim of crime . . . And again I want to go back to where I started when I talked about Mrs. Brian King and when I talk about talking to victims. And I have talked to victims of Clifford Olson and the families of victims of Clifford Olson.

And I know my colleague from Rosetown, who is the former leader of this party and a former member of the House of

Commons, has had the opportunity to talk about and to listen to those people as well when we were in Ottawa. And he can tell you and he'll support, I know he'll support me when I say that until you look into the eyes of those people, those victims, you will never know the hurt that they feel. You will never know the loss that has destroyed their lives and their well-being until you listen to those people. And it doesn't take a year or two or five to get over it; in some cases it takes forever.

So the government could really step up to the plate here in making significant, substantive changes to this Bill. And so we in the opposition — and of course that's our job; that's our job in the opposition — that we want to make sure that, and to push them to make those changes. And then they get to be in opposition — and that's going to happen soon — then it'll be their job as opposition to push us to make changes. Well of course we will already have made those good changes — but having said that, it will be their job. And the few of them that will be here will have the opportunity to stand up just like I'm standing up and speak to a Bill and tell us and tell the province how they think things should be done.

So, Madam Speaker, I want to just end by throwing out a challenge, issuing a challenge to the government. And I challenge them. I challenge them to . . . I challenge Minister of Justice. And I know my colleague is willing to sit down in committee or sit down in this House and discuss the changes that we think are necessary.

I would challenge the government, challenge the Minister of Justice to come to this House, to bring some amendments to this Bill, to make the changes that I think are necessary, and to really stand in front of the people of this province and say yes, we are listening to you; we are concerned about your feelings, your sense of hurt, your sense of loss after you have gone through a crime. And again disregarding the level of the crime, but talking about listening to the victims of crime.

And, Madam Speaker, they can go two ways on this. They can either step forward, step up to the plate and make it happen, or they can continue their wayward ways and govern as a government, as a party that's on its way out.

Madam Speaker, I'm looking forward to their answer to that on this Bill and many others. And at this point in time I would move that we adjourn debate on this Bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved that we adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 33

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Nilson that **Bill No. 33 — The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2006** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand today and talk to Bill No. 33, an Act respecting The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act. Now what this Bill deals with is actually amending the Act, to repeal a portion of the Act so that land can be sold as part of the TLE [treaty land entitlement].

Now that's a very important aspect of this amendment, Madam Deputy Speaker, because the Mistawasis First Nation has actually completed all of the requirements to purchase this particular chunk of land. And I should actually read the land that's in question into *Hansard*. Existing provision is:

737 All those lands in Township 50, in Range 2, west of the Third Meridian, described as follows:

. . . the north half of Section 21;

the south-west quarter of Section 27;

the south half of Section 28 . . .

And item 737 is amended to remove 638 acres to allow these lands to be sold to the Mistawasis First Nation to satisfy a specific claim settlement. Only the southwest quarter of section 28 is retained.

Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, we recognize the value of the process and the commitment to provide assistance where feasible to the transfer of lands to reserve status. Now the conditions have all been met, as I said, by the First Nation, the Mistawasis First Nation.

So therefore this amendment is necessary to remove the land from the critical wildlife habitat protection list in order that it can be sold. And this sale would be done through the Sask Ag and Food, who is presently responsible for the management, administration of the 258 hectares under this selection.

Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, there are some outstanding concerns with this Bill and it is . . . I'm wondering what kind of consultation has actually been done with the wildlife federation. We know that this NDP government does not have a very good track record when it comes to consultation, and I could probably talk about a great number of cases where in fact the consultation processes has basically been done by lip service. It has been two NDP supporters in a coffee shop and they consider that consultation.

And I'm really wondering if the wildlife federation was consulted in this and what their comments might be, because the lands currently are protected under The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act. And we realize that wildlife habitat protection is very important, Madam Deputy Speaker, to protect some of our critical habitat.

Now I won't go so far as to say the possum might be one of these critically protected animals up in this part of Saskatchewan, and I will not repeat the story of my colleague from Arm River-Watrous with his possum story. But there's an example maybe of some land, some critical wildlife that needs to be protected and that's why the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation is very concerned by land that is being removed

from the wildlife habitat protection system.

Now another concern that has been raised by the wildlife federation is there's some pretty good land that is being removed from the wildlife habitat protection. And if it's being replaced, is it being replaced with the same quality of land? And what impact does it have on an area for the critical wildlife of that particular area?

To give an example . . . and I don't know; again this is done through consultation. But if you have a parcel of land, say, in the northern part of the province that is designated as critical wildlife habitat and you remove it, you remove it from the list of critical wildlife habitat land and you replace it with some land from a different part of the province and now designate that as critical wildlife protection land, is it of the same value? And is it of the same value for the species that one is trying to protect?

For an example, if moose were a critical habitat area in lands in a certain area of the province and you replace it with land in the west central part of the province, I don't think that would really lead to the protection of the critical habitat of the moose because you're replacing it with land that is far different. And that is a concern of the wildlife federation.

Now there's another issue actually with this Bill and the way the government deals with lease land. We know that unoccupied lease land is not an issue. And unoccupied lease land, the government can say in this particular case we want to remove it . . . and the people that are more affected by this, well the animals, but also the wildlife federation if it's unoccupied land.

But now we get into occupied land that creates a far different set of circumstances. And I refer to about a year ago when we had an issue with Crown lands that were occupied and under lease agreements. And under these lease agreements the government was not prepared, this NDP government was not prepared to renew leases in the last one or two years of the lease. The reason for that, because if the lease expired then who is the owner of the land?

And we do know that the deal was going to be between a willing buyer and a willing seller. Well if you lease the land and the government does not renew the lease, the lease in essence expires. Now who's the owner of the land? It's back to the government, so the government could be a willing seller, but it's at the expense of the person that was leasing the land.

Now this had a huge impact in areas of ranchland when ranchers were being told that they couldn't renew their leases, because now how do you make a cattle operation if you're leasing a number of sections of grazing land . . . And we know in some areas of the province you might be able to run six head of cattle per quarter section, so you need quite a large tract of grazing land to make a go of it in ranching. So if the leases were not going to be renewed, then how could these ranchers stay in business if their land was going to be taken back by the government, which would have in fact given the NDP government the opportunity to sell that land as a willing seller? That was an issue, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I think that's been held in abeyance right now.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, with this Bill 33, the fulfillment of treaty land entitlements, we're all in favour of having the treaty land entitlements fulfilled. I am again concerned about the consultation process with the wildlife federation, and I would like to hear from this government what kind of consultation took place with the wildlife federation. So until we hear back from them, Madam Deputy Speaker, I'll adjourn debate at this time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 34

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Nilson that **Bill No. 34 — The Wildlife Amendment Act, 2006/Loi de 2006 modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur la faune** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Biggar.

An Hon. Member: — Arm River-Watrous.

The Deputy Speaker: — Arm River-Watrous. Sorry.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to get up to discuss a few points about this particular Bill, an Act to amend the wildlife. I know that there's a few amendments in here. I'd like to talk a little bit.

Any time you open up The Wildlife Act, it goes right across board. It'll affect quite a few people and all aspects of wildlife. Anybody that has been watching the news lately will know what's happening in Eastern Canada with the seal hunt, affecting their . . . That's a licensed, regulated hunt that's very regulated, and yet it's very contentious in the news right now. And you know, for the people doing it, there is problems. There's always a danger of somebody getting hurt there, in that particular end of it, when it comes to hunting. And Saskatchewan can be no different with hunts.

[15:30]

I know that there has been always a move to remove the bear hunt. It started in Eastern Canada and maybe not so much here in Saskatchewan, but there always is that movement to restrict hunting when it comes to Saskatchewan at that end of it and across Canada and the United States. And that movement — I think I've talked about it in another Bill, in the veterinary Bill — it's growing out there.

So when we open up this Act, you always have to make sure that the hunting is protected, but it's being very, very regulated. That is one of the worries out there of the people. And it should be very regulated as hunts go on. This Bill deals with some big game changes plus some smaller game at that end of it.

Out our way, big game has been growing. We've had mule deer. In fact it's even being a problem now with all the grain piles that are on the ground this year because there's been such a poor movement of grain and a good crop taken off. Unfortunately there isn't a price for it, and the system just isn't moving it right now. So there's huge piles of grain and lots of them spread out in my constituency from one end to the other. I know there's a pile along No. 11 Highway. I drive there and early in the morning, it's not uncommon to see as many as 30 mule deer spread out all through that pile. Now unfortunately they may have trouble selling that grain at that end of it.

And we never used to have a problem in our area with mule deer. And right where I farm, we don't yet but it's coming very close. It's within 10, 20 miles that you will see herds of 30, 50, maybe 80 deer and that was unheard of. When I was a kid growing up, you never seen that. If you were lucky, you seen a few white-tailed deer out our way. Mule deer were protected. You couldn't even hunt mule deer in our particular zone because they were pretty well . . . there was none. They were hunted to . . . I wouldn't say near extinction because that wasn't true up north. But in our area, they probably were, in our zone at that end of it. Now they've opened up hunting on mule deer at that end of it. So it's shown how restricting hunting and moving licences around can affect wildlife.

Another one is moose. We never had moose. When I was a kid, you never seen a moose out home — never. And now it's not uncommon to see moose. And I was talking to a conservation officer — that was last year — just in our area alone, there were 60 to 80 moose. And ten years ago that was unheard of, to have that many in an area. In fact they're almost now a problem.

At first when the first moose moved in, you know, a few years ago they were a novelty. I mean everybody just was, you know, happy if they happened to catch a glimpse of it. That was story that they would see somebody in town, they'd say yes, you know, I just seen a moose.

I remember the first time that one was spotted in our area. It was near dark and a guy had spotted it. He came and he said, that's a moose. And I said no, that's got to be a horse, just a horse running wild, not a moose out in our area. I mean where I am, it's pretty flat and not a lot of bush. I say, you know, like where can you get . . . where you going to see a moose at that . . . And it turned out all of a sudden somebody else saw. The story grew from there that it is . . . they have seen moose and they've moved into our area.

And in fact when I was talking to a conservation officer, he wanted to open hunting on it. He said, you know, we need to regulate it. We need to open hunting in our area. And the word got out a bit, and all of a sudden there was a push, probably out of Saskatoon, Regina, from . . . [inaudible] . . . Oh you can't open moose hunting, you know.

And they just dropped it right away. The conservation officers didn't push at that end to the government. And I'm not sure exactly where the government stood on that, but he said, it's going to be a problem. They are starting to break fences. They are out in one wheat pile that's west of me. There's five or six of them on top of that wheat pile now, and there's getting to be lots of them around. So they're going to have to look at opening

hunting and different things here.

And also we're talking about hunting in this different wild Act amendment. I'm not sure how it deals with bird games at that end of it, but I know that we never used to have a lot of bird hunting in our area too, and now that there is bird hunting going on in our area. And they're not with outfitters because in southern Saskatchewan, Madam Speaker, right now that there is . . . the zones haven't been broke up. I kind of split . . . where my farm is . . . splits what you'd call zone 22 and zone 23. And both them zones come in . . . They're as large as a constituency. They're as large as my Arm River constituency. Zone 22 I think starts way out by Lucky Lake and runs up past Davidson. It probably takes in 5,000 square miles. Zone 23, same thing — probably takes in a good 5 or 6,000 square miles at it.

But there was a survey. And I had a couple of calls from people that do take game or bird hunters out, and there's been a survey done with these hunters asking them if they would want to have outfitters, or they'd only be allowed to come across and hunt birds without outfitters at that end of it. And they were a bit concerned with it because they know how big the area is here, that you're basically not going to get an outfitter with that big of an area. And the survey was . . . There's more surveying, but it was also worded that it may be legislation coming.

Now when I talked to the one hunter, he couldn't tell me whether it came from Saskatchewan or if it was a Government of Canada kind of a survey, looking on input on it. But I know every hunter had said that . . . filled out the survey also had some other questions on. One of them was, would you pay more for a licence to come to hunt in Saskatchewan? Would you pay more to have more birds taken in? And then also, would you just pay to have an outfitter? And I know that the hunters I talk to, they said that they would pay more to be able to hunt more birds, allowed to hunt more, or a longer period. But they all said no, they would not want an outfitter. They would not want to be under an outfitter because a lot of these hunters came here for years and years at that end of it.

And they've used local people. I know a couple of them that's . . . They make some extra money on that side of it. When farming's a little tight in the fall, they will guide hunters around. They're not licensed because of the outfitting restrictions here in southern Saskatchewan. The zones are too big. There's one outfitter who has zone 22, and another outfitter has zone 23 which I said are close to about 5,000 square miles at that end of it. And so they're a little worried that if they weren't allowed to come here, if they had to have an outfitter to come here that they wouldn't probably be able to hunt in southern Saskatchewan.

Now that's huge to the hotels. When they come into the Govan-Nokomis area, the hotels are full. The rooms are all taken. They're there for a week, and to them it's a holiday. They spend money. They come here to hunt, and they spend money. It's good for the local economy. It helps the people. The service stations, they're selling them a tank of gas every day. They're into the restaurants, and they also help the provincial government. They're spending money. That's tax money they're getting. They're buying licences.

And the biggest thing is they're thinning out the bird population

which is growing. As I've talked about deer, if you think deer are growing, we've had more trouble with ducks and geese. More geese coming from up North, and snow geese are huge. I've seen, like the skies full of them at times. And this year, this fall with the crop being taken off late, it's been a problem. There was guys that probably lost 30, 40 acres of a field that you know they didn't collect anything off it. And if you don't have wildlife insurance, it's hard to collect any money on it. Because crop insurance, you may have thousands of acres and it won't affect your yield, but you've lost 40, 50 acres here that's gone. And you basically can't collect money on it.

So we need to look at expanding the hunting here and not bring in the outfitters at that particular end of it with amendments. And there's various amendments here. Some of them are dealing with making it tougher if somebody gets caught doing hunting illegally, which it should be. It should be. Hunting should be very regulated, but it shouldn't be so restrictive that people can't come here.

And it's good that they're making certain acts of it, if you're caught now hunting illegally that you're fined more because it's getting to be more of a problem. I think you've read the paper that there's been more hunters caught illegally because the States are getting hunted out. Eastern Canada is getting hunted out. You take Saskatchewan, Manitoba, BC, Alberta are probably the last — and the Yukon territories — are really the last places where you can hunt freely. You've talked to people that come across . . . I know somebody from South Carolina. He comes to Saskatchewan. There, they have to pay per bird when they hunt. They go basically to hunt farms. That's it. A guy will own a part of a sloughy area, and you have to pay to hunt there . . . [inaudible] . . . of your licence to the state, you also pay this person, and you have to pay per duck. And he will hunt there all day. And he says, if I get five ducks, I was happy, he said.

He came to Saskatchewan the first time. And I mean, the first five shots he got five birds, and he couldn't believe it. And he says, I'm coming back every year. And he tells his neighbours and his other hunter enthusiasts that they come here. And that's good for the economy. That's what we want.

We talk about the tourism for this province, and that is one aspect that we can . . . economy that can grow here. And it can grow with the hunting as long as it is regulated at that end of it.

Big game is another thing added now. There are hunters that will pay big money for bear hunting. My cousin runs a hunt farm, not a hunt farm, but he does a little outfitting way up north. And he said it's people that come to hunt bear, that's where he makes his money at. You know, the ones who come to hunt deer, you know, the prices aren't that high, and they don't pay a lot. But he said they will pay a lot to hunt bear up north. And there is lots of bear there, and he said that's basically what he makes his living off, as a lot of many northerners do.

Many First Nations people up north, that's how they make their money, isn't it? And that is a growing economy that can help First Nations up north, that we can grow with that and help them at that end of it, Madam Speaker.

And that needs to be . . . that's why these Bills, when you open something on the amendment Act, it needs to be looked at and

needs to be respected and done right. And when you make amendments to here, they should be done right. And with this government, you never know because they've messed up a couple Bills.

And one of them is they don't consult a lot of people. And a lot of them don't have a lot of the experience at that end of it. And I don't think they talk to the groups that do . . . the wildlife federation, different end of it; outfitting groups, I don't think they've talked to them at that end of it a lot.

So that's why when they bring a Bill forward, it's up to us — and we've done that a lot — to make sure that these people have consulted with people that's going to be affected. When I talked to the legislation before . . . Basically when you deal a piece of legislation, it affects peoples' lives. You're talking about peoples' lives, talking about their livelihood at that end of it. You're talking about how they make a living.

And when you affect this Act, it affects a lot of people. It affects outfitters. It affects hunters. It affects landowners that make money off the hunting. It affects the bar owners in the area, the hotel owners, the restaurants, the gas stations. Also it talks about hunt farms. It affects people that work on that end of it. And it affects a wide-variety of people.

And that's why when you bring forth legislation like this, we like to get it out to the groups to make sure that down the road you don't have to mend it or that you've hurt a business. And this is a business that is just starting in this province. It is just starting to grow in this particular province. And this is a business that can help the economy. Saskatchewan is suffering. We've had under this government, you know, numerous job losses and population loss. Now we are going to have to do whatever we can to help the people here still make a living, and that is one of them at that end of it.

This Bill also talks about game farming which is a growing business at that end of it. There are huge game farms. And people in the city sometimes think of a game farm, they think maybe they're dealing with a penned animal, that's not much bigger than this room. Well it's not. It's over sections of land. And basically all it is, it's no different than an outfitter. A guy is turned loose, and he can go in that area just like he can whether it's an outfitter up north. He has just a certain area to hunt in and to hunt a particular animal.

This Act also . . . The minister talked about in part of it here, dealing with seizures of animals at that end of it. When animals are seized, I guess right now that they are taken off the farm or taken off the property. Now he's talking about that they may . . . the cost is great in transportation. They may leave them on the farm at that end of it. And you know, that can be good. But that also can cause a lot of trouble too. You have to know the reason why they were being seized, whether it's on account of disease. Yes, that's different. Maybe they can quarantine them right there on the farm and contain them rather than move them off. But if illegal activities are being done, that can make a difference because gates can mysteriously get opened through the night and animals can disappear. You know it's happened before at that end of it.

It also deals with dealing with the sale of illegal animals, which

I said is growing here and not just here in Saskatchewan. But it will be a problem in Saskatchewan because it's growing in other provinces and other states where people will pay big money for trophy animals whether they hunt them out of season or not. And it can be quite tempting for somebody that doesn't have a lot of money to . . . yes, take somebody out illegally and hunt an animal, try to find a trophy animal out of season, to take to that person. And it's happened quite a bit.

And as the money gets bigger and bigger, which it's going to be as time goes on with trophy animals, there's going to be more and more money. People are . . . I've heard stories of guys willing to pay \$10,000 for a trophy animal. And I mean, that's quite attractive to somebody that maybe doesn't have much money. And, you know, if you were kind of in an area you know — if you're from northern Saskatchewan — you know where some of these trophy animals are. But it's out of season and they can't be hunted.

[15:45]

Or if they're in an area like where I am, where moose, where they can't be hunted. They're not licensed right now. And they will pay up to \$10,000 for a trophy moose right now. And it can be pretty tempting to know that what's eating your wheat pile there and basically costing you money . . . Or you could lose that wheat pile right now because as you know, that right now that basically there's zero tolerance for any feces in wheat, basically zero tolerance right now. And the animals are getting to be a problem out there, and you can lose — that's your livelihood — you can lose a couple, 5,000, 10,000 bushels. That might be the idea between break even. And even feedlots won't even take it if it's badly spoiled at that end of it and badly damaged. So that's a concern out there. And also, you know, if there's a guy sitting there — you know, things are tight and there's a moose eating his . . . or it's a trophy deer — and he knows in the States he can get \$10,000 for it. It can be pretty tempting to suddenly dispose of that moose and try for that \$10,000 at that end of it.

That's why when you open it, you have to make sure that the business is regulated. That it doesn't get overregulated. And it isn't in Saskatchewan. It needs to be . . . I think it needs to be the hunting to adjust it here. One of the kids had told me — that does take these bird hunters out — saying, I don't mind if you bring this outfitter licence in but, he says, you've got to make your zones smaller. He said, give me a chance to outfit in a 25-mile radius of my hometown, he said. In zone 22, you'd probably have 10, 15 legal outfitters then instead of one trying to monopolize it at that end of it.

So I hope that government — and I'm not sure whether it's coming from the Government of Canada or the Government of Saskatchewan — that they were doing some surveys saying, with birds, that you have to have an outfitting licence before you come across, that they're looking at it. Now the rumour was that legislation was coming at that end, but now I've heard that there isn't. But I don't know if that means that they're still looking at it.

Now if you're looking at that particular piece of legislation, I hope that you look at breaking the zones down at it in southern Saskatchewan because they are huge. They were drawn up in

the Hudson Bay days pretty well. Because at one time there was very little hunting in southern Saskatchewan at that end of it. Where I was, like I said, 10 years ago, there was no hunting. There was no bird hunting. You know, and now we have seven, eight hunters from the States that come just to our area, and we're not even on a bird path. You get in the Imperial, Govan, Nokomis areas, and I mean there's hundreds of thousands of birds pass through there and tons and tons of hunters at that end of it.

But that's showing how much it's been growing, that the snow geese is a problem, that we should be trying to encourage these guys to come more to do more hunting. Because they are doing more damage. I understand up north that they are damaging the tundra quite a bit — the snow geese — that it's becoming a problem at that end of it. Yet there's always that push to ban hunting. I mean I've talked about PETA [People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals] and Humane Society and different aspects of it that, you know, in their minds that there should be no hunting. But if you want . . . There should be and there should always be regulated with rules.

Talking about the conservation officers, they're spread thin out my way. We have a few at Blackstrap, a couple at Elbow. And you talk to them and they say, you know, it's all right to bring in some of these rules and make it tougher for people that do illegal game hunting which is good . . . or legal big game hunting. But he says we don't have the resources to catch them. And he said if we catch somebody, it's just pure luck. He said, we're just happened to be at the right place at the right time. He says, we . . . there just isn't enough of us.

There's been some cutbacks at Blackstrap. There's been some cutbacks, I understand throughout the province, a bit over the years. Just like everything in Saskatchewan, they just keep cutting a little bit at a time. They never cut a lot where somebody will raise a lot, but they will always cut a little. And I can talk about SaskPower . . . [inaudible] . . . about conservation office. They cut one office a year. And then next year they will cut one SaskTel office.

And sure when you only cut one at a time and say, well this one in this area isn't being used. But as you cut, it grows every year. And it's with the conservation officers. They says, we've been cut back our funding a little bit every year and cut back with manpower a little bit here. Maybe this year they'll cut one man here or they'll cut some man hours over in northern Saskatchewan. They said eventually it's catching up.

And this government over the years has been cutting and cutting and cutting. And all this government knows how to do is just basically it seems like cut jobs, especially when it deals with rural Saskatchewan. And when you're dealing with this particular amendment, they say, you know, we won't be able to hardly enforce it, you know. And it's going to be more of a problem out there with hunting and trying to regulate that, because there is going to be more and more possibly illegal hunters coming across the border, especially if they know the danger of getting caught is pretty slim, at that end of it. And right now unfortunately out in our area it is.

If you're . . . I know when guys go out hunting now it's very rare you ever see a conservation officer, very rare, at that end of

it. And at one time when I was a kid they were always out there. You seen . . . if you went hunting two, three days in a row, you'd always see one, you know. He'd stop you, look for your licence, you know, ask you how things are going and that. Now you can hunt for two weeks out in our area and, you know, you'll never see one at that end of it, just because they're stretched so thin. There's only, you know, two or three for an area probably the size of my constituency at that end of it. And they're supposed to regulate the hunting and make sure the illegal activities aren't going at that end of it.

But dealing with this particular Bill, An Act to amend The Wildlife Act, and we're always in favour of being it regulated and being that it's done right at that end of it. Because there needs to be rules. People want their wildlife protected but they also want to be able to hunt it in safe, reasonable manners — that it's managed right at that end of it.

And when you deal with this particular Act, I know that we would like to talk to people . . . I'd like to show it to some of my hunters back home and talk a bit with them to see what their feeling is on this particular one. I don't have any hunt-farms in my constituency but I'm not sure exactly how it fits . . . will affect them or not. But that's something that should be also discussed and shown to them at that end of it.

So with that, Madam Speaker, I will adjourn debate on that particular Bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Arm River-Watrous has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 35

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Quennell that **Bill No. 35 — The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2006/Loi de 2006 modifiant la Loi d'interprétation de 1995** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Well it's a pleasure to rise today on this Bill that deals with corporate entities, deals with the directors and officers of corporations and their responsibility towards their shareholders and towards the public.

You know, when you take a look at some of the major news stories in the last few years — particularly dealing with Enron and WorldCom — you find out that sometimes things are not always as they appear to be in the corporate world. And I would include in that all kinds of corporations — private corporations, public corporations, co-operatives. There have been difficulties at every level here, Madam Deputy Speaker, when it comes to ensuring that the information provided to the public is accurate and factual.

What this particular piece of legislation does is changes the onus a bit and in fact rolls back the role of the directors and the CEOs [chief executive officer], giving them more protection than they may have previously had in the near past. And I find that kind of surprising in light of what has happened with Enron and WorldCom when it comes to their reporting structures. It says in this particular Act, Madam Deputy Chair, that when people do their work honestly and with due care in relying on the reports coming from professionals within their organization or the external auditors, that they are absolved of accountability and responsibility.

Well I'm not just sure, Madam Deputy Speaker, that it should be quite that blanket. I think we need to define and determine exactly what the role of directors and officers are of the corporations. What role do they play in ensuring that the information being provided to them by the professional is actually accurate? Do they have a responsibility, do they have a duty to their shareholders, be that private shareholders or in the case of public corporations, the taxpayers of, let's say, Saskatchewan? What duties do they have to ensure that the information being provided is indeed valid and verified?

The Act doesn't explain whether this is written information such as a report from an accountant that says, you know, these books are duly audited and everything is as it should be in an annual report. Or are these oral reports where a professional — a lawyer, the accountant, the engineer — says, yes I've looked at this and it's okay. And everybody at the board of directors, the officers say, okay well the accountant said it's okay, the lawyer said it's okay, so it must be okay, and we'll just sign off on this.

I think perhaps there needs to be more involvement than simply that. I think the officers and the directors have a fiduciary duty to ensure that the information provided to them is at least questioned in some manner as to its veracity. They need to ensure that they have asked appropriate questions of the officials to determine whether or not the information provided is the correct and proper information. And I don't see that spelled out in this particular piece of legislation, when in actual fact they're rolling back the responsibility of and the accountability of the directors. So I think that's one area, Madam Deputy Speaker, that we need to be concerned about.

I think perhaps what we need to be also looking at is ensuring that the information provided by the professionals is indeed correct, that's it's accurate to the best of their abilities. You know, after Enron there's value-for-money auditing starting to be developed and utilized. And I think that's a very important part of the responsibilities of directors and officers to ensure that that is occurring.

It's not simply a matter of saying that there was \$10 came into the corporation and we spent nine of them, so there's \$1 left over for profit. It's did you get the value that you should have got for the money that you spent? And that needs to be incorporated into the rules. That needs to be incorporated into the decision-making process of the directors and the officers of the corporation to ensure that the information they're receiving and the information that they're providing is accurate to their shareholders.

One of the issues as well is that if there is a concern, if there is some litigation, if there is some legal activities that are taking place in questioning the directors and officers and their role and their statements, it allows for the corporation to provide some cash, some remuneration for them to pay their ongoing legal expenses. And I think in that particular case, because there's been no guilt found, there's been no fault found, there's been no error found yet, that that would be appropriate. So on that area, Madam Deputy Chair, I think that is probably a valid step forward. Obviously at the end of the day though there has to be some sort of mechanism in there to perhaps recover some or all of that expenditure if indeed the transactions have been fraudulent or have been less than forthright in their statements, Madam Deputy Speaker.

So I think, as I mentioned earlier, there's a duty on behalf of the officers and the directors to ensure that the information they're receiving from their professionals is correct and valid in some manner. So that they need to be able to show — perhaps before a court of law — that they did ask the appropriate questions to determine the validity of the statements, that they simply weren't taking the statements at face value, because not all of the people that may be providing information are living up to a professional standard, Madam Deputy Speaker. So the directors of the corporation need to be in a position to be able to verify that they did carry out their proper fiduciary duties in ensuring the correct information was provided and that the shareholders were protected.

And in the case of the Crown corporations in this province, those shareholders are the people of Saskatchewan. So they, the people of Saskatchewan, need to be able to be assured that the officers and directors of say SaskPower, SaskTel, any of the Crown corporations are carrying out their duties properly, that they're questioning the information that's coming forward.

Because we've seen things like Channel Lake where the president of the corporation was not carrying out the duties that were within the boundaries of SaskPower. The president of the day was carrying out gas arbitrage which was outside of the realm of the corporation. This had been gone on for some period of time and eventually amounted to a loss of greater than \$10 million. So in the reporting structures within the corporation, how was that dealt with? How was that transmitted from the actual operations of the corporation to the board of directors and from the board of directors then to the shareholders of that corporation, the public of Saskatchewan?

[16:00]

Well we know that that was covered up for a period of time and that what was going on was not proper. The proper authorizations were not there. So just the fact that there are professionals involved in these issues, the fact that there are professionals making the reports, doesn't necessarily mean that the reports are accurate.

So we need to ensure that there is a strengthening of the need and the demand. That when professionals provide that information, that we the public, that we the shareholders of the corporation, or that the directors and officers can rely on the validity of that information. So if you're going to roll back the responsibility and accountability of the officers and the

directors, you need to strengthen then to ensure that the information they're receiving is valid. And I'm not sure that that's happening in this piece of legislation, Madam Deputy Speaker.

There are also a number of other changes that are taking place within this particular piece of legislation because it's a fairly wide-ranging Bill, an omnibus Bill that is dealing with various sectors all in one particular piece of legislation — even though they are not directly related to each other — because we're talking about the responsibilities and the indemnification of officers and directors of corporations.

Whereas in the same piece of legislation, we're actually dealing with the meanings of words when it comes to the use of French within the legislative structure. It explains the meanings of the words like *année* and *Assemblée* and *avocat*, *banque* — how they're officially understood within the legislation, Madam Deputy Speaker. So, you know, and there's pages of these words.

I guess the concern that I would have on this is that this particular piece of legislation will allow the government to interpret the meaning of those words that it wants to define a new definition to by using regulations. That the Assembly does not necessarily find out in a timely manner what the new definition of the word is because the government does it in regulation, changing the definition of a particular word. Now if you look at English, if you want to understand the definition of a word, you look at the *Oxford English Dictionary* to make that determination. And I'm assuming that there is a similar dictionary in French that would define the meaning of a word.

So I'm not exactly sure why the legislature needs to give the ministers responsible the ability to define individual words. So that the minister can make the definition as to what the definition of a word is and how it's going to be applied to one Act perhaps? Is it going to be applied equally to all Acts? Those are some of the questions I think that the minister needs to be prepared to provide some answers for in dealing with this omnibus Bill that deals with a variety of different subjects.

So I think we need to have the opportunity, Madam Deputy Speaker, to take a look at exactly what this piece of legislation is doing, what these definitions are being changed from or to, if they're being changed at all, Madam Deputy Speaker. So at this time, I would move that we adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Cannington has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 36

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Quennell that **Bill No. 36 — The Miscellaneous Statutes (Directors' and Officers' Indemnification and Insurance) Amendment Act, 2006 (No. 2)/Loi correctif (indemnisation et assurance au profit des**

administrateurs et dirigeants) de 2006 (n° 2) be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. It's a great pleasure for me to rise and speak to Bill 36, an Act to amend certain Statutes with respect to indemnification and Insurance of directors, officers, and certain other individuals.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe the intent of this Bill is to . . . Under directors, officers, and certain other individuals, I believe it only refers to those involved in non-profit corporations and co-operatives, Madam Deputy Speaker. And this is apparently a Bill that's mainly of a housekeeping nature that will bring provincial legislation, hopefully, regarding indemnification and insurance as it relates to directors and officers of non-profit corporations and co-operatives up to date with federal legislation.

These changes appear, Madam Deputy Speaker, to be needed to assist Saskatchewan-based non-profits and co-operatives in recruiting and retaining officers and directors, Madam Deputy Speaker. I refer to the minister's own words when he described this Bill in this Hon. Assembly on March 20 of this year. And he says, and I quote:

These changes broaden the basis for indemnification and insurance which . . . [would] assist in the recruitment and [the] retention of officers and directors for such corporations.

Members of the bar . . . [have] raised the concern that the existing provisions are out of date when compared to the federal legislation and that this is creating [an] additional risk for officers and directors serving with . . . [the] corporation.

And he, previous to that quote, Madam Deputy Speaker, he clarified the fact that this Bill updates the indemnity insurance positions contained in The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995 and The Co-operatives Act of 1996.

Without these amendments, Madam Deputy Speaker, officers and directors face additional liability risk when they serve on the boards of non-profits and co-operatives. Madam Deputy Speaker, I think we'd all agree that this is not acceptable in Saskatchewan where we have a high level of volunteerism and many of us have sat on the boards of non-profits . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Good. Have sat on the boards of non-profits as volunteers, strictly volunteers.

I go back to 1990 in my own case when I was a member of the board of directors of the Pense rink corporation at the time when that rink burnt down. The last thing on my mind the day of the fire was whether or not I was covered by insurance. But in subsequent days as I found out there was considerable damage to rooftops of houses in the village of Pense — and relieved to say that no one was actually injured in the fire, but there was considerable property damage — I became somewhat concerned as to what my legal standing might be, as did other directors.

And, Madam Deputy Speaker, as it turned out, there was no action taken. This was considered a community event, and those who suffered losses I presume made insurance claims. In this case the claims were rather on the small side so there was no . . . the matter was not pursued further. So I guess we don't know to this day what our legal standing really was.

But I understand that since 2001 when the federal legislation was changed — that would be the Canada Business Corporations Act that was amended in 2001, Madam Deputy Speaker — that our legal standing may not have been as solid since that time. And that is apparently the purpose of this legislation, Madam Deputy Speaker, to put those volunteers and those members of boards of non-profits and co-operatives on more solid legal footing, make them more insurable, and to be sure that they're covered that way, Madam Deputy Speaker.

But it occurs to me that in the five years since the Canada Business Corporations Act was amended that there may have been some real legal difficulties in this province. And I can't put my finger on any specific cases, Madam Deputy Speaker, but I suspect there have been some in five years. And maybe the bigger issue is attraction and retention of directors and other officers to these types of corporations, Madam Deputy Speaker — these types of corporations that keep our small communities alive, that is co-operatives and non-profits, and play a role in all sizes of communities in this province as well, Madam Deputy Speaker.

In the time since the Canadian business corporation Act was amended in 2001, I suspect that non-profits and co-operatives have had a very difficult time in retaining directors and other officers. And it makes me wonder why this government hasn't moved on this Bill in a more timely fashion.

We also wonder, Madam Deputy Speaker, whether or not this Bill goes far enough to protect those directors and we'll be asking input from the principals involved in these types of endeavours, Madam Deputy Speaker. And accordingly, Madam Deputy Speaker, I move we adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Thunder Creek has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 37

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Quennell that **Bill No. 37 — The Miscellaneous Statutes (Directors' and Officers' Indemnification and Insurance) Amendment Act, 2006** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The current piece of legislation, Bill No. 37, that we're dealing with at this moment, Madam Deputy Speaker, is actually somewhat similar

to the piece of legislation that we just had before the Assembly a few moments ago, Bill No. 36. And as the minister had indicated when he introduced this piece of legislation, he mentioned the reason for the Bill is to update the indemnity and insurance provisions contained in The Business Corporations Act, The New Generation Co-operatives Act, The Credit Union Act, 1998, and The Crown Corporations Act, 1993.

And, Madam Deputy Speaker, one of the questions I think we need to ask is why it actually has taken the government so long to respond to changes to the Canada Business Corporations Act of 2001. And I understand the reason for the amendments to Bill No. 37, as we have them before the Assembly today, were to address some of the concerns and to indeed bring legislation in this province into line with legislation we have across Canada in other provinces, and certainly the Dominion of Canada.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when you consider the fact that across this province we have many co-operatives, many credit unions, new generation co-ops, and each and every one of these organizations operates solely on the basis of volunteer work by men and women across this province who donate their time — volunteer of their time — to act as members of the boards of these many co-ops and credit unions In fact, Madam Deputy Chair, I would suggest that many members currently sitting in this Legislative Assembly have at one point or other been a director for a local co-op or a credit union.

And I know myself a number of years ago I was on a co-op board, a director of our local co-op, at the time not really giving any consideration to the fact that as a director I might be held liable for a decision that was made by our co-operative board if something had gone wrong and individual members had taken action against the board for a decision we had made.

And I believe, Madam Deputy Speaker, that if you were to ask people across this province, each and every one would indicate that the reason they're a director on their local board is because they believe in the co-op movement. They believe in the new generation co-ops. Or they believe in the credit union, their credit unions and the work they're doing to serve the people of Saskatchewan, serve their communities and the surrounding area. And I'm sure you would find, Madam Deputy Speaker, that very few would even have given any thought to the fact that they might be held accountable for a decision that they made and that they made in good faith — a decision that they may have made, whether it was a monetary issue or an issue regarding how they're going to provide loans in regards to credit unions or how a co-operative is going to expand.

[16:15]

And I think each and every member out there and those of us who have been part of boards, Madam Deputy Speaker, over the years when we decided to move ahead on an issue, have relied on good, sound, what we felt was solid information that was provided to us by individuals or professionals in the field that we were counting on, to come forward and ensure that we had whatever information necessary — all the information, all the details necessary — in order to make a decision as to what direction our co-op would take, or our credit union for that matter.

And many directors, Madam Deputy Speaker, I don't believe would have even given it a second thought about the fact that if the decision was something that would have gone awry, that they might be responsible, especially if it happened to be a monetary issue.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, as my colleague before mentioned, when the minister mentioned the changes to The Business Corporations Act in 2001, it would seem that the five years have gone by. The government should have been aware of the fact that we needed to move on this issue.

And I guess the question is why has it taken us this long to finally come forward with a piece of legislation to address some of the provisions in regards to legislation to ensure that in the province of Saskatchewan directors are certainly protected from any . . . officers and directors are protected from any actions that may be taken against a board of directors. And, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think we certainly agree that it's high time. And it's certainly time. It's appropriate that we've now moved in that direction.

I guess the concern as well, Madam Deputy Speaker, and any of these boards or organizations or directors may have become aware of the fact that . . . and had some concerns about their responsibilities as a director in regards to decisions they made and the feeling that they may be held responsible. Madam Deputy Speaker, I know it's happening in our area that it's becoming more and more difficult for local co-operatives and credit unions to even find individuals who will put their names forward to act as directors for those corporations.

And, Madam Deputy Speaker, I don't believe it's necessarily related to the issues surrounding this Bill and protection from liability. I think it's just the fact that men and women, and young men and women, are becoming more and more involved. They've got their families and there's activities that are taking their time. And it just becomes more and more difficult for younger individuals to get involved as they did in the past in regards to being a member and a director for a local co-op or a credit union.

And so, Madam Deputy Speaker, it seems quite appropriate that we're finally moving ahead in this area despite the fact that it's five years past due, I would suggest.

But I believe, Madam Deputy Speaker, as more people become familiar with the Act and with the legislation before us — individuals who are directors and officers of these corporations — I'm sure . . . and they become more familiar with the consequences of actions that may have been taken in the past and realize that they didn't really have the protection of any actions taken against them and that they might have been responsible for any liabilities, that I'm sure, Madam Deputy Speaker, more and more people will take the time to come forward to volunteer of their time to serve on these boards. And so that our credit unions and our co-operatives and our new generation co-ops, as we see across the province, can continue to function and serve their local communities and their membership well.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I guess one of the issues that has come to our attention has already been indicated in regards to Bill 36,

is the recruitment and the retention. And I think it's certainly appropriate that this piece of legislation, Bill No. 37, The Miscellaneous Statutes (Directors' and Officers' Indemnification and Insurance) Amendment Act, be brought forward to ensure that the boards and the directors and officers of these boards are not held accountable for actions they take in good faith based on the information that they are presented with and the decisions they make based on that sound information.

And, Madam Deputy Speaker, it would seem to me that, in view of while it's taken five years, I think it's important as well that we take the time to ensure that this legislation addresses all the concerns and that it meets the requirements, certainly brings the Act in the province of Saskatchewan in line with what's happening across Canada and in other provinces. And in order to facilitate that, Madam Deputy Speaker, I move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Moosomin has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 38

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Quennell that **Bill No. 38 — The Settlement of International Investment Disputes Act** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I've enjoyed the debate on a number of issues or Bills brought forward by the government this afternoon. It strikes me though that most of the legislation we've been dealing with, while it may be of a housekeeping nature and have some significance, is not particularly significant to the problems facing the province of Saskatchewan.

Nevertheless we have before us the . . . a Bill 38, An Act respecting the Settlement of International Investment Disputes. Madam Speaker, this Bill is quite a bit different than most pieces of legislation that come before this House in that it deals with existing legislation that is part of an international agreement. And I read with quite a bit of interest the minister's inaugural speech on the second reading debate of this Bill and there were some, I think, significant pieces of information that were left out of his speech, and I would hope at some point maybe a member from the government side would fill in some of the details that were omitted.

First, Madam Speaker, I noticed that the original agreement that has brought about the Bill that we are dealing with today was struck in 1965. In 1965 I was but a child, Madam Speaker, and while the minister says that there have been some changes between 1965 and 2006 that has required the legislature in Saskatchewan to, I guess, ratify or sign on to this international agreement between states, as far as international investment

disputes are concerned he really didn't outline in any clear or significant terms why we're at this point in time dealing with this piece of legislation. Apparently the Government of Canada has asked that the provinces bring forward pieces of legislation like this. He didn't even indicate in his speech at what point the federal government has made representation to the provinces to introduce legislation such as Bill 38 that we are dealing with today in the Saskatchewan legislature.

So I would hope that the Minister of Justice would instruct someone from his side or perhaps would in some way answer some of the questions that he omitted in his rather short second reading speech with regard to the Bill.

We know that this Act makes changes to incorporate the international agreement and its application in Saskatchewan. Madam Speaker, I think it would be important to know what the implications of these applications are within the province of Saskatchewan.

We are in an age where international agreements have never been more important. And, Madam Deputy Speaker, we have international trade agreements that began with the trade agreement with the United States and has spread to include Mexico and the western hemisphere. And we're looking at World Trade Organization agreements that would help agriculture and help softwood lumber and some of the areas where there has been some contention as far as trade is concerned.

Now, Madam Speaker, this Bill does not deal with trade, but it does deal with international investment disputes. And, Madam Speaker, if we want Saskatchewan to be a place where investment is encouraged, we need to make some changes. Possibly one of the changes is to vote in favour of this Bill.

Obviously other changes would be to change the provincial government here in the province of Saskatchewan. And my guess is that if we change the provincial government and gave the investors confidence in Saskatchewan, that would do a hundredfold more to bring investment into our province than would passing Bill 38, An Act respecting the Settlement of International Investment Disputes.

In fact the member that's chirping over on the other side has been one of the biggest problems. That minister was the minister that gave Saskatchewan a black eye over the SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] issue. That minister is the person who is giving Saskatchewan a black eye by not resolving the Weyerhaeuser dispute.

How are we going to attract investment — even if we do pass this Bill, Madam Speaker — if the member from Prince Albert Northcote continues to give Saskatchewan a bad reputation? If he continues to be a bad apple in the NDP barrel over there, Madam Speaker, how are we going to attract investment? What investment disputes will we even have to mediate if in fact there are no investments coming to our province whatsoever?

Now I'm sure, Madam Speaker, that this legislation would also protect our investors who are investing in other places. And that too is a problem here in NDP Saskatchewan because Saskatchewan people are fearful to invest in their own province

when they have a government like the NDP in charge of economic decisions, in charge of labour laws in the province. We've seen so many Saskatchewan people leave this province, take their investment dollars out of the province. They're not even worried about whether or not we need to have a dispute mechanism for investments here in Saskatchewan. They're concerned about their investments in other parts of the world.

Now, Madam Speaker, there were a couple of phrases . . . I looked at the Bill actually, and there were a couple of lines in here that caught my attention. And I'm not sure what the impact of these two lines are on the province of Saskatchewan if in fact we pass this Bill. But just the wording, it made me think of the NDP, Madam Speaker. If you will look at section 3 on page 22 of the Bill, which is the conciliation proceedings, and you look at the very first . . . article 32 (1), it says, "The Commission shall be the judge of its own competence."

Well, Madam Speaker, that is the wording in the Bill. You'd have thought the NDP wrote this Bill. Now I think this is part of the international agreement. I'd love to hear the minister clarify that for us in this House, but you know you have to be a little bit concerned when "The Commission shall be the judge of its own competence." It's exactly what we're seeing from the NDP government. They're deciding that they will in fact be the judge of their own competence. And so they set the bar as low as they can where even, you know, an ant can get over it, and they say they've done a fine job.

Well that's not the only place in this Bill where we see someone being the judge of their own competence. If you'll flip over a couple more pages to page 26 in the Bill . . . we're still in section 3, but now we're looking at the powers and functions of the tribunal. And this is article 41(1): "The Tribunal shall be the judge of its own competence." Now, Madam Speaker, I would love to have the minister who introduced this Bill explain what the implications of being the judge of your own competence is on the effects of this agreement.

We certainly know what the effects of being the judge of your own competence is here in the province of Saskatchewan. We have the weakest government with the least amount of confidence of the public that we have seen in many, many a year.

Madam Speaker, the minister claims that this Bill will streamline investment dispute mechanisms with other countries and Saskatchewan. If that is in fact the case, you can be assured, Madam Speaker, that the official opposition is supportive of that principle.

Also this Bill apparently undertakes that the court may make any rules that it considers necessary to regulate the practice and procedures with respect to proceedings under the Act. That of course causes a little bit more concern, Madam Speaker, because apparently that gives this court pretty extensive powers. And again I think the minister would have been wise had he, when he spoke to this Bill on second reading, more clearly outlined what effect these extensive powers would have here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Because the minister, as is the case with the NDP, left so many questions unanswered, it is incumbent upon the official

opposition to ask the questions and do the research. Madam Speaker, we've done an excellent job of doing our research. We have done our research on Avastin, and the government is in big trouble there today. We have done our research on agriculture issues, on social issues.

Madam Speaker, the official opposition certainly will scrutinize this piece of legislation. We will continue to ask the minister to be forthcoming with answers. If he doesn't do it in the second reading of this Bill, then we'll have to take our requests for information to the minister at the committee level.

[16:30]

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would ask the government to bring in more significant legislation. This obviously is a piece of legislation worth considering. But given the significant problems we're facing, I think that there are more important and higher priority issues that need to be brought forward.

Nevertheless, Madam Speaker, we are going to continue to look at this piece of legislation, Bill No. 38, The Settlement of International Investment Disputes and to do that, Madam Speaker, I would therefore now move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Rosetown-Elrose has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Madam Deputy Speaker, I request leave of the House to introduce two motions.

The Deputy Speaker: — Leave has been asked. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Agreed.

MOTIONS

Leave of Absence

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Madam Deputy Speaker, I move by leave of the Assembly, seconded by the Opposition House Leader:

That leave of absence be granted to the members from Regina Northeast and Saskatoon Silver Springs for Monday, March 27, 2006, to Friday, March 31, 2006, to attend the CPA Canadian Regional Council in Washington, DC, on behalf of this Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Moose Jaw North, the Government House Leader, and seconded by the member from Melfort:

That leave of absence be granted the member for Regina Northeast and Saskatoon Silver Springs for Monday,

March 27, 2006, to Friday, March 31, 2006, to attend the CPA Canadian Regional Council in Washington, DC, on behalf of this Assembly. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hours of Sitting

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Madam Deputy Speaker, by leave of the Assembly I move, seconded by the House Leader, leader of the House for the opposition:

That notwithstanding rule 3(1) and the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* that when this Assembly adjourns on Thursday, April 13, 2006, it do stand adjourned until Wednesday, April 19, 2006, at 1:30 p.m.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader and seconded by the member from Melfort by leave of the Assembly:

That notwithstanding rule 3(1) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* that when this Assembly adjourns on Thursday, April 13, 2006, it do stand adjourned until Wednesday, April 19, 2006, at 1:30 p.m.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Madam Deputy Speaker, I move this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — This House does stand adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:34.]

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Premier

Hon. Graham Addley
Minister of Healthy Living Services
Minister Responsible for Seniors

Hon. Pat Atkinson
Minister of Advanced Education and Employment
Minister Responsible for Immigration
Minister Responsible for the Public
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Saskatchewan Inc.
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Provincial Secretary
Minister Responsible for Gaming
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Gaming Authority
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Hon. Clay Serby
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