



THIRD 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
Bjornrud, 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
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Cline, Hon. Eric	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Crofford, Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
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Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantfoer, 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, Nancy	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, Hon. 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, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege again today to present another petition in regards to a dialysis unit in the Broadview Union Hospital. And I read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to implement a strategy that will see a dialysis unit placed in Broadview Union Hospital.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petition I present today is signed by the good folks of Broadview and Grenfell. I so present.

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

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand again today with citizens that are concerned about safety when driving on Highway No. 5. And the prayer reads as follows:

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

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from Colonsay, Rose Valley, Humboldt, Kelvington, Quill Lake, and Viscount I so present.

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present another petition from citizens of Wilkie who are concerned about their health care services. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Wilkie Health Centre and special care home maintain at the very least the current level of services.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to

present another petition on behalf of the 600 children under six years of age in the Saskatoon Silver Springs constituency regarding a much needed elementary school in the Arbor Creek and Willowgrove areas of Saskatoon. The prayer of 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 implement an allocation of financial resources to build an elementary school in Arbor Creek.

The petitioners today come from northeast Saskatoon, Wright Terrace, Wright Crescent, Sears Cove, and Eastman Cove. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I rise with a petition from citizens of southern Saskatchewan that are very concerned that the withdrawal of lab services at the Lafleche and District Health Centre would cause undue hardship to residents, especially senior citizens. 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 actions to ensure that lab services are continued at the Lafleche and District Health Centre.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by the good citizens of Lafleche and Limerick. I so present.

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

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from people of Saskatchewan who are deeply concerned about the presence of sexual predators that threaten their communities. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take all steps available to speed up the public disclosure process so that communities are alerted to the presence of known sex offenders in their community as soon as possible.

And as duty bound, you petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, signed entirely by the good people of Cudworth. I so present.

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to rise in the House today to present a petition calling for the widening of Highway No. 5, a highway which runs through my constituency

of Saskatoon Southeast. The prayer states:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by good citizens from Saskatoon and Aberdeen. I so present on their behalf. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — According to order the petitions received at the last sitting have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 15(7) are hereby read and received.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — The Deputy Chair of the House Services Committee is recognized.

Standing Committee on House Services

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on House Services to report that it has considered certain estimates and presents its 10th report. I move, seconded by the Government House Leader:

That the 10th report of the Standing Committee on House Services be now concurred in.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Melfort, the Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee on House Services, seconded by the member for Moose Jaw North, that the 10th report of the Standing Committee on House Services be now concurred in. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

The Chair of the Private Bills Committee is recognized.

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I present the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills, which I hereby table. And, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Cypress Hills:

That the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in, and further, that Bills 301 and 302 be referred to Committee of the Whole.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Chair of the Private Bills Committee, the member for Saskatoon Eastview, seconded by the member for Cypress Hills, that the eighth report of the

Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in, and further, that Bills 301 and 302 be referred to the Committee of the Whole. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried.

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. 56 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister for the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority: is the authority diverting water from lakes in the Watrous and Humboldt area into Last Mountain Lake?

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 56 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Health: how many acute care beds are staffed as of March 2007?

I give notice that I shall on day no. 56 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Health: what is the current occupancy rate of publicly funded long-term care beds in the province?

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 56 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Health: how many acute care beds are staffed as of March 2006?

I so present.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the Assembly, I would like to introduce a group of students in the east gallery. There is 27 grade 3 and 4 students from the Westview School in Estevan, and they're here to visit the legislature today and view the proceedings. Mr. Speaker, they are accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Barnstable and Mrs. Henderson, and also they have a chaperone, Mr. Brown.

I hope to be meeting with the students after question period or the member from Estevan will be meeting with them. And I would ask all members to help me join them in their day here at the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly a couple of gentlemen seated in your gallery. Mr. Darryl Hickie is a police officer from the city of P.A. [Prince Albert] who happens to be the Sask Party candidate in Prince Albert Carlton, along with his campaign manager, Mr. David Bach. And I'd ask the members to welcome these gentlemen to their Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly someone who is seated in your gallery. We have a former Saskatchewan resident, Brent Rathgeber. He grew up in the Melville area, now calls Edmonton his home.

Brent is the executive director of the Progressive Contractors Association of Canada. He is here visiting and having some short meetings and I had the privilege of meeting very briefly with him this morning. We covered a number of issues and it's certainly my pleasure to introduce him and welcome him to his home province and to this legislature. I'd ask all members to join with me.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Swift Current.

Administrative Professionals Day

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is Administrative Professionals Day and I'd like to take this opportunity on behalf of the official opposition to thank those who work in the Saskatchewan Party caucus office and our party organization as well as those who work very hard in our constituency offices.

If it weren't for the hard work of Sylvie Toffan and Marianne Hoffart, Mr. Speaker, our caucus receptionists, our office would quite frankly cease to function. The same can also be said of Erin Brehm who performs those same important duties at the Saskatchewan Party headquarters.

Sylvie and Marianne and Erin continually go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that our entire organization runs smoothly and efficiently and, Mr. Speaker, they are always professional. They're courteous and provide a wealth of assistance to people who call our offices as well as to the 28 MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and 11 staff members within our organization.

Mr. Speaker, as MLAs we also rely heavily on constituency

assistants, both full- and part-time, to ensure that our constituency offices are able to provide as much information and help to the many constituents who call, write, email, and stop by our offices.

And if I may, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Crystal Martens in my office in Swift Current. In many cases they take on a lot of the roles of an MLA while we're either on the road or here in Regina sitting in the Legislative Assembly. They also help us schedule our busy lives and ensure we are at the right place at the right time. It's very important that we take some time today to recognize them for their work and to say, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is Administrative Professionals Day. Celebrated every year on the Wednesday of Administrative Professionals Week, today is a day to identify the invaluable work of clerical employees everywhere.

In 1952 the first National Professional Secretaries Week and National Secretaries Day were established to recognize the great contribution that administrative professionals make to any office. In 1998 the name was changed to its present form in order to more accurately represent the full range of clerical possibilities and positions. Today we honour administrative assistants — our own in all of our offices and in the building — the receptionists, paralegals, constituency assistants, and many others.

Mr. Speaker, according to the United States Department of Labor statistics, today there are more than 4.1 million secretaries and administrative assistants working in North America and more than 8.9 million people working in various support roles, which represents the close to 475,000 administrative professionals who are employed right here in Canada.

As I'm sure my colleagues know, Mr. Speaker, it's customary to give small gifts today as tokens of appreciation. And I hear that chocolates or flowers are often appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, I'd like to thank the many administrative professionals of our great province on this Administrative Professionals Day. Without their efforts, the running of any office would simply not be possible. Without their efforts, our work here would not be possible for this great province. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

First Nations Veterans' Memorial Teepee

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, at 2 o'clock this afternoon there will be an official sod-turning ceremony to celebrate the

construction of the veterans' memorial teepee at the First Nations University of Canada. It's imperative that we all remember the sacrifices made for this country by thousands of First Nations men and women from across Canada, including approximately 800 from Saskatchewan, during both world wars, the Korean War, and other conflicts.

While First Nations men and women served side by side with other Canadians and were equals on the battlefield, they returned to a nation and to a province that was inhospitable and ignored their contribution outright. After World War I, veterans' settlements were not equitable, and nearly 70,000 acres of reserve land in Saskatchewan was given to non-First Nations veterans. First Nations veterans received none.

After the Second World War, First Nations again did not receive equal treatment as the men and women that they served with in the battlefield. It was only after considerable lobbying by the Saskatchewan First Nations Veterans' Association and other groups that long-overdue restitution was finally obtained from the federal government in 2002 — far too late for some veterans.

Mr. Speaker, today is a proud day for all of Saskatchewan. Recognition will finally be given to our First Nations veterans. I look forward to the completion of the veterans' memorial teepee that will not only serve us to remember but also to ensure future generations are educated about the sacrifices of our First Nations veterans and the battles they continued to fight long after the guns and the tanks were silenced.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

United Way of Regina Tribute Luncheon

Hon. Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A few days ago I had the pleasure of attending the United Way of Regina's annual tribute luncheon and AGM [annual general meeting] to see several Regina businesses and citizens recognized for their involvements and efforts on behalf of community.

Warden MacDougall and Chantelle Matic, along with Mo Bundon, received the United Way of Regina President's Awards recognizing individuals or groups that have made outstanding contributions to the community and to the United Way.

The Distinguished Corporate Philanthropy Awards recognize the outstanding corporate community support and the spirit of leadership in building a stronger community as a whole. This year, IPSCO and IBM [International Business Machines] Canada took the honours.

Glenn Trafford and Mavis Olesen each received Investors Group Volunteer Awards for their ongoing and outstanding efforts as community builders. I'm especially familiar with the good efforts of Mr. Trafford in the Core Community

Association.

And the Labour Community Service Award, recognizing a trade unionist who has demonstrated the principles of the labour movement while working to strengthen the community as a whole, went to Janice Bernier, a long-time resident in the fair riding of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. And we are very proud of her, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues in the Assembly to join me in congratulating the recipients of this year's United Way of Regina's annual awards and in extending further congratulations to newly chosen United Way CEO [chief executive officer], Joanne Grant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Saskatchewan Party Leader's Dinner

Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to announce that last night the Saskatchewan Party hosted its largest leader's dinner in the history of the party. Last night our leader addressed more than 1,200 people at the Queensbury Centre here in Regina. Last night's event was enjoyed by people from all walks of life, and our leader delivered another outstanding speech.

I would also like to note that since the Saskatoon leader's dinner held earlier this year, where he spoke to more than 900 people, our leader has been speaking at a number of engagements in constituencies all across this province. Those constituencies include my own constituency of Weyburn-Big Muddy but also Saskatoon Eastview, Prince Albert Northcote, Prince Albert Carlton, Saskatchewan Rivers, The Battlefords, Saskatoon Riversdale, Carrot River Valley, Wood River, Melville-Saltcoats, Thunder Creek, and Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Speaker, our leader has addressed more than 5,000 people in that time, bringing them the message of positive change put forward by the Saskatchewan Party. Mr. Speaker, our events continue to grow in size and scope as we continue to attract new faces at each and every event. I'd to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House to congratulate our leader, the member for Swift Current, on the many successful dinners, and thank he and his wife Tami for dedicating themselves to the betterment of our province. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Saskatchewan Party Code of Ethics

Mr. Trew: — Today's question is, why. Mr. Speaker, last year the Sask Party adopted a code of ethics. Why? When we point blatant breaches of their own code of ethics, the Sask Party continues to look the other way. Now the member for Last

Mountain-Touchwood, in his constituency report for March 2007, makes the following accusation on page 4, and I quote:

If they aren't turning highways back to gravel, they are blackmailing local governments into helping pay for the rebuilding of the highway.

The phrase, "they are blackmailing local governments," is a new low-water mark even for the Sask Party. We are being accused of committing a crime by a Sask Party MLA using taxpayer dollars. This is not civilized discourse and disagreement. This is underhanded, unethical name-calling.

The Sask Party has a code of ethics. Why? Will the Leader of the Opposition ever admit that his caucus acts in an unethical manner or will he continue to act just like he did in the Devine era and turn a blind eye to the cesspool of ethical misconduct surrounding him?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Enforcement of Anti-Harassment Legislation

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Monday the NDP [New Democratic Party] government introduced legislation to expand the definition of harassment in The Occupational Health and Safety Act to include bullying and abuse of power. Mr. Speaker, critics say that this is nothing more than a knee-jerk reaction from the NDP to get out of a sticky political situation and, Mr. Speaker, I'm worried that this actually might be the case.

While the Saskatchewan Party is generally supportive of the Bill that was introduced earlier this week as it will strengthen workplace protection for employees, I would like to put on the record that if this expanded definition of harassment had been in place in 1994 when the first complaints of harassment by Murdoch Carriere were lodged, it would not have made a difference.

The problem in the Murdoch Carriere scandal was not that the policy wasn't strong enough, it was that the policy was simply ignored. Mr. Speaker, these nine women followed the policy. However their complaints were simply swept under the rug to protect a close friend of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, the policy that was introduced on Monday won't be worth the paper it's printed on if the NDP government continues to lack the will to enforce it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Former Government Caucus Worker

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in

1992 the NDP [New Democratic Party] caucus office hired a new director of administration, a woman named Ann Lord. In late August 1992 Ann Lord disappeared quite suddenly. It turns out that she was on the run from police, and Ann Lord wasn't even her real name. Her real name was Ann Davey, and she was wanted for 85 counts of fraud and embezzlement in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: did Ann Davey ever commit fraud or any type of misappropriation of taxpayers' money while she worked in the NDP caucus office?

The Speaker: — While the member may wish to respond to the question, I take note that matters within a caucus are generally not regarded as responsibilities of cabinet ministers, and questions should be asked of a cabinet minister. Nevertheless I will allow one response to this.

Next question.

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, on November 21, 1992, a story about Ann Davey appeared in the *Leader-Post*. In that story, police said there were no complaints against Davey in Saskatchewan. And according to officials in the NDP caucus office, there was no . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order please. Once again if the member can relate this question to a ministerial duty, I would invite him to do so. Otherwise he would have to use an alternate venue which is provided, which there is room for in this legislature. Next question.

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, to the minister responsible for the position of Culture, Youth and Recreation, was any misappropriation of funds by Ann Davey, was he aware of any misappropriation of those funds, and if he was, did he immediately report them to the police?

The Speaker: — Once again the response . . . Order. Order please. I have made a ruling on this. The member has not been able to . . . is not directing it to a ministerial responsibility. So I would ask members to carry on with question period, but let's go to the next topic. The Chair recognizes the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we'll hear in a moment that those kinds of questions have been certainly allowed and then answered by this government related to a similar . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. I would ask members not to comment on a Speaker's ruling. Next question. The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement

Mr. Wall: — My question is to the Premier of the province. For the last several months the NDP government has shown a startling lack of enthusiasm or interest in a trade agreement between the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia. We know, Mr. Speaker, that had Saskatchewan shown some enthusiasm, some vision, some interest, they could have been at the table some number of months ago — years ago actually — when the negotiations first began.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we know the government has finally released the study by the Conference Board of Canada on the impact of that trade agreement on our province economically should we engage, should we sign on. Today the Conference of Board of Canada report shows that Saskatchewan would gain 4,400 new jobs and increase our gross domestic product by over \$290 million.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why has the NDP government waited so long to get engaged in the new West, to get interested in this agreement to the great benefit of the province of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one would never accuse the Leader of the Opposition of using exaggeration, but to say that Saskatchewan has not been reflecting on questions of internal trade in a timely fashion I think is inaccurate.

The fact of the matter is that BC [British Columbia] and Alberta have been between them discussing this agreement for a period of more than three years and then agreed to have further discussions on this. I think the people of Saskatchewan might be given, you know, a few months to reflect on this agreement and to have public input as to what this agreement might mean for the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, if the Premier was attending meetings of the Council of the Federation, he would have known that these two provinces had been having these discussions for some time. More to the point, he and I had a discussion of this in this very Legislative Assembly now a year ago — a year ago, Mr. Speaker. The government has taken a year to begin — what? — another consultation process. And we are now, Mr. Speaker, behind. Even as we're talking today, we understand that those two provinces are actually reaching out to Ontario.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's not just the Conference Board of Canada that is saying that our province could stand to benefit from this particular agreement, should we sign. Also University of Saskatchewan Professor Eric Howe has weighed in on the matter — professor of economics at the University of Saskatchewan — and here is what he had to say:

Signing TILMA would increase our standard of living. There is a strong additional argument that the Conference Board analysis produced an underestimate of the Saskatchewan's net benefits.

So what Professor Howe is saying is actually the Conference Board, who are saying there are more jobs and investment to be had in TILMA [Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement], are underestimating the impact. Again because of

the lack of leadership from this Premier, we're a year behind where we should be, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier stand up and respond? Will he answer the question? Why has he waited and delayed so long on this particular opportunity?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Well, Mr. Speaker, an important ingredient of leadership is consistency, and I note that the Leader of the Opposition was saying this morning that he supports consultations. And now he comes into the Legislative Assembly and says why should we have consultation?

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the member is selectively quoting from reports that were published by the provincial government. But he doesn't quote from a report by, I think it's Professor Helliwell of the University of British Columbia, where Professor Helliwell says that, as I understand it:

That the methodology that's employed by the Conference Board of Canada is not credible. It's like trying to forecast a GDP by asking your neighbour how they're doing these days [Mr. Speaker].

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that the Leader of the Opposition, to be fair to the people of Saskatchewan, should talk about all of the information that had been released today.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, in example after example whether it's the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, Mr. Speaker, whether it's the Energy Council, whether it's an initiative on the part of those two provinces to improve the regional college system to deal with the labour shortage, under this NDP government who don't like either the Liberals in BC [British Columbia] or the Conservatives in Alberta only for ideological reasons, this tired old NDP government refuses to engage.

Professor Howe of the University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, goes on to say that:

If Saskatchewan does not sign TILMA, it will forego an economic opportunity. There's an economic cost to not signing TILMA, he says. Saskatchewan businesses will be less competitive in their access to customers to the West. Consequently business activity will have a less incentive to locate here and more of an incentive to locate elsewhere.

The minister was asked this question moments ago: why has he been dithering? Why has the Premier been delaying on this? Why have we now wasted a year and only now beginning those consultations?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again those two jurisdictions, BC and Alberta, have been discussing this for over three years, Mr. Speaker. I think again the people of Saskatchewan should take the time to study what it is that they're proposing.

And I want to ask the member this. Some of the provisions of TILMA clearly would be to the advantage of Alberta and even BC. Why is the member so strongly advocating we sign on to this agreement without any further study, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the difference between this side and that side of the House is that the Saskatchewan Party has confidence in the ability of our economy to out-compete Alberta and British Columbia, Mr. Speaker.

This is the low-cost jurisdiction. This is the same insecure and insular argument we heard from the NDP during the free trade debate. You remember that, Mr. Speaker? That member over there, now the Premier of the province, said that free trade would be the ruination of the West and of Canada. And of course it's turned out to mean jobs and a trade surplus for Western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier: why does he lack the confidence in our province to out-compete Alberta and BC given a level playing field?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, there is no lack of confidence in the Saskatchewan economy on the government side. Let me tell you that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, we took the financial devastation left behind by that party, and we repaired the financial devastation. And then, Mr. Speaker, we have spent the last five years building the Saskatchewan economy so that today, Mr. Speaker, we can say with confidence we have an economy that is stronger than this province has known for decades, Mr. Speaker. It's true in job numbers. It's true in investment. It is true, Mr. Speaker, in opportunities for our young people here at home.

Now the question, Mr. Speaker, in this TILMA debate as it unfolds, Mr. Speaker, will be, what is the position of the Leader of the Opposition? A year ago in this House, a year ago he's issuing new releases. A year ago he's saying that Saskatchewan, without even thinking about it, should sign on. But, Mr.

Speaker, when he's in correspondence with individuals or groups, what's he saying? Well the Saskatchewan Party government would quote "study it," Mr. Speaker. What is the position of the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Former Government Caucus Worker

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions have to do with the use of taxpayers' dollars and with the administration of justice.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has obtained a copy of a letter dated August 23, 1992. It is a letter of confession. The letter says, and I quote, "I have used Caucus Office funds for personal use by inflating the cheques payable to me for petty cash and other cash reimbursements." This is written in confidence from Ann Lord.

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please. I would ask members . . . Order please. The member will come to order. The member will come to order. I've asked the member twice, and so this is the third time to come to order and I would ask, I would . . . Order. The member wishes to raise this issue. They have every other opportunity except for question period. The purpose of question period is for the purpose . . . Order. The purpose of question period is for members to have opportunity to ask questions of ministers about ministerial responsibility. Next question.

The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Flooding Conditions

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday I called the office of the Minister of Highways regarding highway officers holding up trucks trying to get much needed sand into Fishing Lake to fill the sandbags to fight flooding. I was told it was a single incident. But later that day I found out that the day before one truck has been stopped at least three separate times to check the amount of sand he was hauling.

Now, Mr. Speaker, surely this NDP government's priority must be saving people's homes, especially when everyone knows that Highway No. 310 is the second worst highway in this province. I know of an individual from Alberta who managed to send two semi trucks of equipment to Fishing Lake to help homeowners in their fight to save homes.

So my question to this NDP government: what are you physically doing to help the people of Fishing Lake right now? Are you sending people? Are you sending equipment? Are you sending barricades? Are you sending fibreglass barricades? Are you sending generators? Are you sending pumps? What are you doing today to help the people of Fishing Lake?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Public

Safety.

Hon. Mr. McCall: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. What this government is doing, has been working for months in preparation of this flooding season. What we've been doing is making sure that we've got the knowledge in the hands of the local authorities, making sure that the local authorities have plans to cope with the coming flooding season.

What we've been doing is making sure that, as the local authorities need the help of the provincial government, that we've been there through the Corrections and Public Safety department, through Highways, through the Sask Watershed Authority, through the good work of people in Health, in Community Resources. I know the members opposite like to mock about these things, but we've had some very successful responses to flooding situations in Red Earth.

What's happening in Fishing Lake is a tragedy, Mr. Speaker. It's a disaster. But what we're trying to do is to do what works and not what will worsen the situation. In terms of . . . I can go on about this, Mr. Speaker, but I'll wait the next question.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I received an email from Donna and Larry Jacobs of Fishing Lake. They quote the minister about the advice he gave in this House last year. He told the people of Saskatchewan, last year in this House, they should build their homes above the high waterline and that would solve the problem.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if the people of Fishing Lake would have followed his advice, they would still be under water today, since according to the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, the lake level has already exceeded the high-water mark and is expected to rise another foot to 18 inches. And then they're going to have to deal with the ice that comes.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP government hasn't come up with a solution, and the ministers have to see the situation themselves. You have to see it to believe it, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister commit to coming out to Fishing Lake on Friday and meeting firsthand with the people whose lives and homes are devastated from the flooding of Fishing Lake?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Public Safety.

Hon. Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This government has been working very closely with the local authorities to make sure that there is a response to these situations on the ground. In the specific case of Fishing Lake, there is a local emergency operation command post that has been set up. There has been work that has been done on an hourly basis in terms of SaskEnergy, in terms of SaskPower, to make sure that the situation around power, around gas, to make sure that critical infrastructure is both kept safe, but to —

particularly in the case of SaskPower — to turn off the power both locally and on a larger base in terms of containing the threat that could come from power lines going down with all that water around, Mr. Speaker. Again it's very dangerous work, and I'm sure the members wouldn't gainsay that.

What's going on in communities like Fishing Lake, Waldsea Lake, the work that was done on Red Earth, at Yellow Quill First Nation, there is some heroic work being done, Mr. Speaker, and this provincial government is there to support that effort.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Draude: — The beaches at flooding lake today have been described today as a floating garbage dump. Three permanent residents were phoned at 4:30 a.m. this morning and told to evacuate their homes immediately because the dikes had failed and their homes were going to be flooded.

The people of Fishing Lake have asked me to ask this government to commit to finding a long-term solution for their flooding this year. We need a commitment now.

Will the NDP minister responsible commit to finding and implementing and funding a long-term solution so the people of Fishing Lake won't again lose their homes and businesses?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Public Safety.

Hon. Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, one thing I want to make very clear to the people of Saskatchewan and to municipalities and individuals that have experienced disaster, through the past number of days, there's been some question around the availability of provincial disaster assistance program funding. And I'm not sure if members opposite are trying to stoke uncertainty about whether or not this provincial government — this NDP government — will be standing by our responsibilities in terms of the PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program].

And you know, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the past two years alone, we've introduced nearly \$23 million in terms of funds to enable local authorities, local municipalities, individuals to work to mitigate the effect of disaster. And we're working on that longer-term solution as well, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, to this government, the people of Fishing Lake who live . . . Their homes are in Fishing Lake. That's where they live permanently. They're watching to see what this government is saying. They've been waiting for 10 years to hear that this government will come up with a solution that's going to solve the problem — not just a solution — but

today and funding it. That's the question that needs to be answered today. For the people of Fishing Lake, will you fund a permanent . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Would the . . . I'm sorry, apologies to the member. Would the member please repeat her statement through the Chair.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, to the minister: will this government please commit to funding a solution to the flooding at Fishing Lake today? We need an answer today.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, the question around a long-term solution at this particular lake is a difficulty for many people involved.

Ten years ago there were two projects that were outlined that might resolve some of this. One of them was to divert water that was coming in from Hazel Lake into Fishing Lake and perhaps reduce the amount of water.

Another project was to move water from Fishing Lake into Whitesand Lake, into Newburn Lake, and finally into the Whitesand River. But that particular project meant moving a lot of water downstream. They could not get control of the land that would then be flooded in another part of the province. And it also would affect the water quality of all of the downstream facilities.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Brkich: — The lack of a plan from this NDP government is also hurting people in my area. Instead of addressing the problem in the beginning, this government did nothing to prepare for the flooding, and now we see the product of their inaction, Mr. Speaker. Highway 15 right now has water flowing across it a quarter to a half a mile wide.

What emergency measures is this government going to do to address this? What happens when the residents in towns lose this highway for an extended period of time? What is the government going to do to address this problem?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Highways and Transportation.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to recognize the work that's been done by the Watershed Authority, by the Department of Highways and other departments who have been collaborating on plans with municipal governments across this province. But I think it's also fair that the members opposite should recognize we've got extraordinary high water levels. In some cases, 1-in-100 years

doesn't even register the level that we're facing this year. So it is a challenge.

There are some conditions — Highway 15 is one of them — that we're experiencing some high water levels. I can say that the Department of Highways is putting the appropriate staff in the appropriate areas to work with local residents to find solutions, Mr. Speaker. And I would want to thank all of them who have been working very long hours on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Flooding is not only affecting Highway 15; it is affecting the grids on both sides of Highway 15. The residents right now are looking at a detour of close to 300 miles around. Right now there is a bridge that is being washed out as I speak. What does the minister plan to do about this? Will there be funding for municipalities to rebuild lost infrastructure?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that our relationship with municipalities and funding arrangements, as it relates to municipal roads, has been much enhanced this year, and I think the members opposite should know that. I think it's fair to say that we will assess the damage on the provincial road system. We will work with municipalities to assess the damage that these high water levels have made in their communities.

But I want to say this, Mr. Speaker, in closing. To listen to members on the other side, they would expect the government to control the amount of snow, the amount of rain, and the amount of moisture on these roads. But I think people of this province understand when you have extraordinary situations, you have to work together in cooperation to find the solutions. Sometimes residents are inconvenienced, but mother nature has a way of doing things that can't even be controlled by this NDP government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

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

Mr. Brkich: — The minister talks about not controlling the flooding. That's another question I'm going to ask to the Saskatchewan water authority, Mr. Speaker. Has Sask water authority been diverting water to Last Mountain Lake? Because the water that is coming through my constituency isn't coming through . . . from my constituency from melted snow, that melted a long time ago. The local flooding, Mr. Speaker, is that.

My question is, is Sask water diverting water from the Humboldt area — from lakes into Last Mountain Lake — and in the meantime washing out highways and roads on their way doing that?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, to my understanding that kind of arrangement is not being made. Any project like that is the kind of project that takes all of the local communities working together to design something like that.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the difficulties we've had in a number of parts of the province is to get all of the people in a region to agree on the appropriate movement of the water.

Mr. Speaker, our job as government is to work with the local governments, the local people, to make sure that we can provide the best response in all of the trying circumstances that we have. We have a great deal of sympathy for many people who are out of their homes, and we will work hard to make sure that they get back there.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes . . .

Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day I'd like to . . . [inaudible]. . . a point of order.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort, the Opposition House Leader on a point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to make some comments, if I could, on the admissibility of future questions in regard to the direction of questioning that was introduced today.

Mr. Speaker, in 1996 a member of the official opposition questioned the government on what steps were being taken to recover funds that were defrauded from the government caucus in the late '80s and '90s. These questions were asked in 1996 on March 14, April 3, May 10, May 13, May 15, and May 29, Mr. Speaker, and they're duly recorded in *Hansard*. These questions were not ruled out of order by the Speaker. In every instance, the questions were allowed by the Speaker. And in every instance a minister did respond.

These questions that were being asked and are planned to be asked in the future are along the same lines. The only difference is they deal with the current government instead of a former government. Furthermore, these questions deal with the administration of justice and wrongdoings that would occur. And, Mr. Speaker, it is directly related to mismanagement of funds of the taxpayers of this province and it is clearly important that they be allowed. I would ask Mr. Speaker to review these dates in the *Hansard* record to make sure that we clearly are allowed to ask these relevant questions in the future.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of order, the Chair will recognize that the judgment of the Chair is the appropriate criteria used. There will be some criteria that make it permissible to direct questions regarding the conduct of executive government by executive government. And that I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, upon review of the situation, that you will make a decision that is consistent with precedent and past practice.

The Speaker: — I thank both members for their intervention and I will undertake to review this and bring back a ruling on a later time.

Why is the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre on his feet?

Hon. Mr. McCall: — With leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please. The member's requested leave for introductions. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As we might say in . . .

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Hebrew.]

I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, five individuals seated in the western gallery. They are Jeremy Parnes and Chris Dodd. Jeremy, of course, is the director of programming over at the Beth Jacob Synagogue. Jeremy, if you could, and Chris, if you could stand and give us a wave, please.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McCall: — They are accompanied by Igor and Ana Grebenyuk and Viacheslav Popik.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McCall: — These individuals, the three last individuals that I introduced, Mr. Speaker, come to us from the state of Israel.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Hebrew.]

Coming here today.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Hebrew.]

And, Mr. Speaker, they are here to investigate possibilities for work and for immigration to our fair province. I know Jeremy and Chris are doing a tremendous amount of work out of the Beth Jacob Synagogue, along with our, they've been in fairly constant contact with our Minister of Immigration and working to bring people from the state of Israel, [the hon. member spoke for a time in Hebrew], to here in Saskatchewan.

So please, members, all join me in saying [the hon. member spoke for a time in Hebrew] to our guests here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 66 — The Occupational Health and Safety (Harassment Prevention) Amendment Act, 2007

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

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my remarks, I'll move second reading of Bill. No. 66, The Occupational Health and Safety (Harassment Prevention) Amendment Act, 2007.

Mr. Speaker, this NDP government knows that healthy and safe workplaces are key to making Saskatchewan the best place to live, work, and build strong futures. That is why I am pleased that this legislation brings forward amendments to strengthen Saskatchewan's workplace anti-harassment legislation.

Saskatchewan began our long and proud history as a leader in workplace health and safety when the NDP government of the day introduced North America's first comprehensive occupational health and safety legislation 35 years ago. In 1993, the NDP government again led the continent by introducing anti-harassment protections into our occupational health and safety legislation. Today, with only four other jurisdictions in Canada providing some type of harassment protection for their workers, Saskatchewan remains at the forefront on this important issue. But it is clear that we can do even better.

Our government believes that Saskatchewan workers have the right to work in a healthy and safe workplace, and that means a workplace free of any kind of harassment. Since I was appointed as Minister of Labour, I have heard repeatedly about the importance of addressing this critical issue. Concerns about harassment that is not related specifically to such things as age, gender, religion, or sexual orientation that are protected under the Human Rights Code is an emerging issue that is also gaining recognition in other jurisdictions across Canada and around the world.

And we believe that this is an area where Saskatchewan can once again take a pioneering role in responding to an important occupational health and safety issue. And so with this legislation, Saskatchewan will become the second province in Canada, and one of the first jurisdictions in North America, to clearly send a message that bullying and intimidation in the workplace is not acceptable behaviour.

We are broadening the definition of harassment and creating a special adjudicator's position to independently resolve harassment appeals. This new definition includes expanded language to address personal harassment in the workplace. Personal harassment is degrading or humiliating to a worker. It has enormous effects not only on the health and safety of workers, including their psychological well-being, but also on the productivity of the workplace. We know that some workers experience repeated bullying, intimidation, and abuses of power that we can help stop by bringing in the changes that are contained in this Bill.

Let me be clear that though we are expanding it, the definition of harassment in this legislation is specific. Actions must fit that definition. The legislation is clear that management is not prohibited from supervising and managing their staff. Rather we are addressing actions that are hostile or unwanted and cause humiliation or intimidation that affects a worker's well-being. The new special adjudicator will help people who have filed a complaint with the occupational health and safety division and who wish to appeal the outcome of their investigation. This will allow us to dedicate full-time, independent resources to hearing harassment appeals.

These changes will build healthier and safer workplaces for Saskatchewan workers and demonstrate our government's vision for making Saskatchewan the best place to live, work, and build strong futures. Our goal since introducing North America's first occupational health and safety legislation 35 years ago has always been to reduce workplace illness and injuries and the negative impact they have on our economy and on the lives of working men and women.

That is why I am pleased that with this legislation Saskatchewan will be providing protection against personal harassment for our workers. And we're doing it, Mr. Speaker, because it is the right thing to do. And with that, I move second reading of Bill No. 66, The Occupational Health and Safety (Harassment Prevention) Amendment Act, 2007. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Labour that Bill No. 66, The Occupational Health and Safety (Harassment Prevention) Amendment Act, 2007 be now read a second time. The Chair recognizes the member for Martensville.

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister said that this legislation that's being introduced is being put forward because it's the right thing to do. And while I appreciate his comments, I think that the right thing to do would have been to have defended Murdoch Carriere's victims in the first place. That would have been the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, we have stated quite clearly for weeks in this Assembly and outside of this Assembly that the official opposition welcomes any legislation that will make workplaces safe for the workers. But we worry that the reason for this Bill that we're discussing today is not so much about protecting workers but about protecting the NDP from the continued backlash that they're facing because of the Murdoch Carriere

scandal. They failed to take action where Murdoch Carriere was harassing women in the workplace and they want to be seen as having taken action today.

While Carriere's victims did face intimidation, the real source of their complaints was sexual harassment in the workplace — something that is already banned. There is already legislation in place to protect workers against sexual harassment. According to rules, regulations, policies, legislation already in place, sexual harassment is not to be tolerated in the workplace. The situation for Murdoch Carriere's nine victims was not a lack of legislation. It was a complete abdication of responsibility to enforce that legislation.

The NDP's Bill today is more smoke and mirrors to divert attention from their appalling record on enforcement of sexual harassment legislation. Rules already in place today state quite clearly that any supervisor that ignores sexual harassment in the workplace will face consequences. Rules state that it is misconduct for supervisors to ignore sexual harassment. However we have yet to see any disciplinary action against one person with regard to this matter. We have yet to see this NDP government take any responsibility.

The Minister for the Public Service Commission during her press conference on Monday repeated the need for accountability, and we welcome accountability. But I would say again that this NDP government has yet to hold anyone accountable for what happened to these women by Murdoch Carriere. The NDP have repeatedly bragged about the changes in harassment policy that they implemented in 1993. All the legislation, rules, and policies in the world are worth nothing if they are not enforced.

The Minister for the Public Service Commission was in committee a few days ago, and I asked her a very simple question which required a yes or no answer. I asked her if this proposed legislation that we are discussing today, if it were in place in 1994 or 1997 when Murdoch began harassing his victims, if this legislation would have made any difference to those nine women. The minister was unable to give us any assurance that it would have made any difference. And because it was a yes or no question, I asked her repeatedly for an answer on this. And her only response to this was, don't put words in my mouth, which would indicate to us that this legislation would have not made a difference as the minister could not verify that it would have.

[14:30]

Murdoch Carriere's victims were sexually harassed. And I will say again, Mr. Speaker, that legislation to stop those actions in 1994 and 1997 was in place and it was not enforced.

The minister says that there will be an education component around this legislation — and we welcome that — that the intent is to increase awareness of what victims of harassment can do and where they can go.

Murdoch Carriere's victims told people. They talked to supervisors about what was going on, and they even wrote to the Premier of this province to alert him to the situation. Mr. Speaker, if no one is willing to listen and then to act, then all

the training in the world will not help.

And we know the story of Carriere's nine victims, that at the end of the day they were ignored and that the system failed them. And what we continue to lack from this government is the assurance that supervisors and others in places of power and authority who ignore harassment in the workplace will actually face repercussions for their lack of action. And we continue to be concerned that the NDP refused to answer any direct, legitimate questions surrounding the failure to protect Murdoch Carriere's victims.

Mr. Speaker, what remains outstanding in this debate is the continued lack of answers to those very questions. And just a few of those questions that remain unanswered are, why were complaints of harassment ignored? For years, for almost a decade these women went ignored. Why was no one held accountable for ignoring these women? And why was Murdoch Carriere not fired long before when allegations were raised as early as 1994? Without knowing what went wrong in the past, Mr. Speaker, it's almost impossible to fix what went wrong and go forward.

In the spirit of openness and co-operation, I would urge this NDP government to support the motion that we put forward to send this scandal to a legislative committee . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. I would ask members to confine their debates to behind the bar. The Chair recognizes the member for Martensville.

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, in the spirit of openness and accountability we would urge the NDP government to support the motion that we put forward a while ago that would send this scandal to a legislative committee so that we could investigate what went wrong. And as I said, if we don't know what went wrong, we can't fix it. And the minister was quite clear when we asked her questions that the legislation today, that we are discussing today, would not have made a difference for these nine women.

So while we welcome any changes that will keep workers safe, we continue to be concerned about the lack of will by this NDP government to enforce legislation that already exists. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd simply like to add to some of the good comments that my colleague, the member from Martensville, has already made with regards to this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, the minister first introduced this Bill just on Monday and we certainly have to do our due diligence and look at what is contained in this Bill, Mr. Speaker. As my colleague has said, there are certainly some very positive aspects to address the issues that this House has been dealing with during this spring sitting, Mr. Speaker.

One of the aspects of the Bill though also addresses the issue of bullying and we certainly have seen it in recent times. Some of the very negative effects that have taken place have been the consequence of bullying, Mr. Speaker, and particularly, schoolyard bullying.

We all remember the tragic events of student suicides and of those type of issues. And if the provisions of this Bill, if they go a long ways to addressing that issue, Mr. Speaker, we view that as a very positive amendment that's contained in this Bill. As my colleague said, the issues of harassment and that whole area, if in fact this Bill does accomplish some positive steps in that area, we would be very supportive of that Bill.

Mr. Speaker, we have moved very quickly on this Bill. We have sent it to both employer groups and employee groups asking for their comments and their assessment of what is contained in these amendments, Mr. Speaker. Time, of course, has been very short and we have not yet received those comments.

However there has been some comments in the media as recent as in today's *Leader-Post*, where there's an article that deals with comments both from the employers' associations and the employees' association. Mr. Hubich is quoted as saying he has some concerns about the Bill, Mr. Speaker. Also the representative of the Federation of Independent Business says they are assessing the Bill, Mr. Speaker. And so therefore we certainly do not want to delay, in any manner, passage of this Bill but we certainly must live up to our responsibilities, Mr. Speaker.

One of the issues that we would require further explanation on is the special adjudicator and the whole process of that position being appointed by order in council. We would need assurances on the independence of a special adjudicator, Mr. Speaker. And I think back to the words of our former Clerk when she was given the opportunity to address us upon her retirement, Mr. Speaker. And I would quote one paragraph I think that all members of this Assembly need to ponder on and give some substantial thought to. And I'm quoting Ms. Ronyk here from *Hansard* of December 6 of this past year where she says:

Some very significant reforms have recently been done, especially the new committee system that was designed to strengthen the role of private members and to increase citizen participation in the legislative process. But now you have to make those reforms work. You have to let them work. You have to use those committees. Use them to involve the public and to enhance the roles of members and to strengthen the accountability of the legislature.

And I certainly can't help but agree with those recommendations, Mr. Speaker. And those are things that we as members of this Assembly must pay heed to. I believe it was excellent advice given by Ms. Ronyk.

And so what I would propose, Mr. Speaker, is that rather than holding up this Bill and continuing to debate it in this House, that we would move this Bill to the appropriate committee. But we'd also recommend, Mr. Speaker, that the committee look very seriously at calling witnesses so that members of the public can have the opportunity to bring forward their recommendations as a result of their examination of this Bill

and consulting with their members — whether it be employer members or whether it be employee members. I think it's important that members of the public on this very important issue have an opportunity to put their recommendations on the public record.

And so therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would move that, I would recommend that this Bill be now moved to committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the Minister of Labour that Bill No. 66, The Occupational Health and Safety (Harassment Prevention) Amendment Act, 2007 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this Bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — I move that Bill No. 66, The Occupational Health and Safety (Harassment Prevention) Amendment Act, 2007 be referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Labour that Bill No. 66 be referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. Bill No. 66 stands referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Chair recognizes the Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To facilitate the good work of the Committee on Human Services this afternoon, as well as to undertake the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal service this afternoon which will be held in this Assembly, I move that we do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Deputy Government House Leader that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:42.]

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