



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

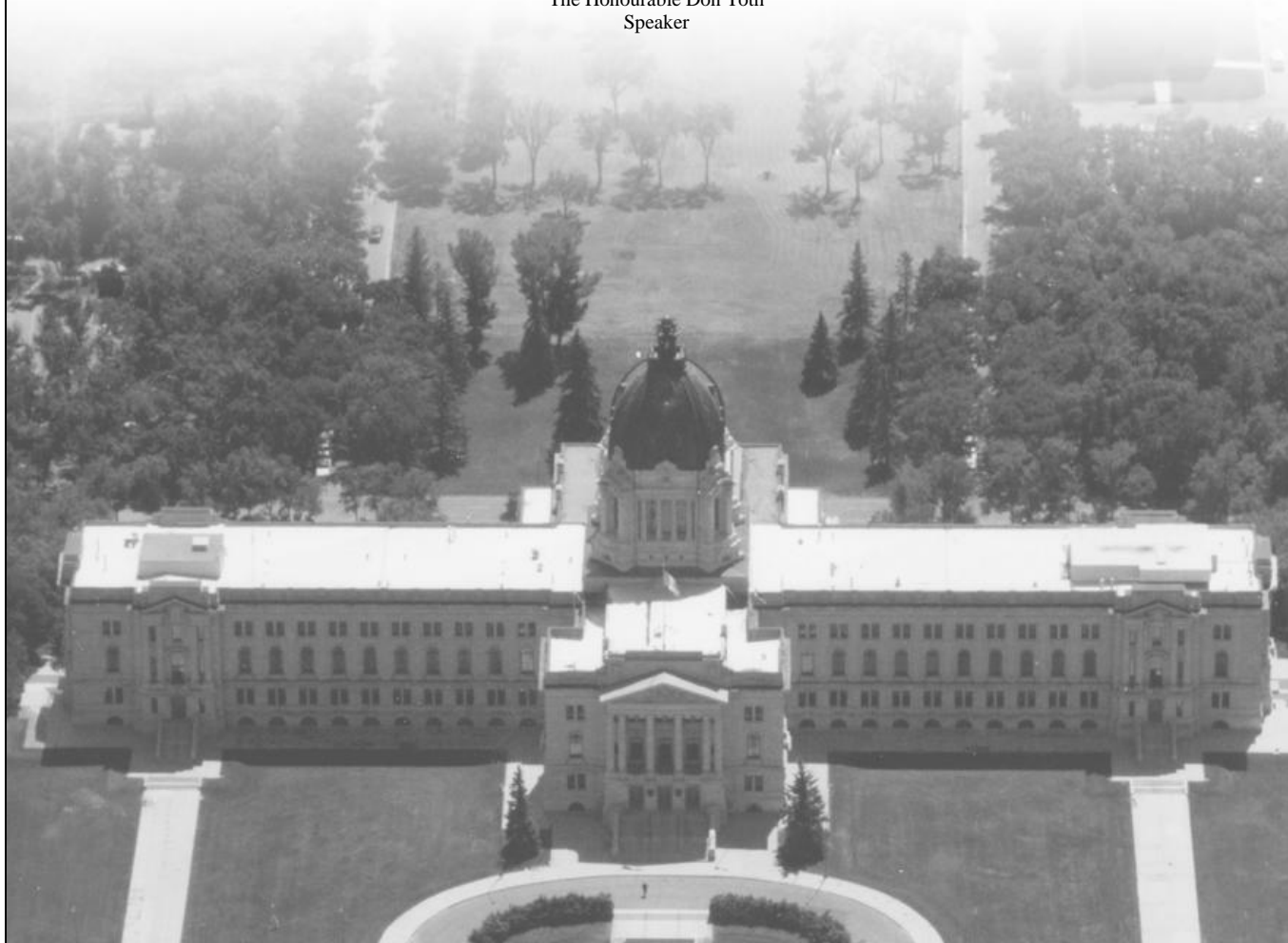
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
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The Honourable Don Toth  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Don Toth  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — Lorne Calvert

| <b>Name of Member</b>  | <b>Political Affiliation</b> | <b>Constituency</b>       |
|------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Allchurch, Denis       | SP                           | Rosthern-Shellbrook       |
| Atkinson, Pat          | NDP                          | Saskatoon Nutana          |
| Belanger, Buckley      | NDP                          | Athabasca                 |
| Bjornerud, Hon. Bob    | SP                           | Melville-Saltcoats        |
| Boyd, Hon. Bill        | SP                           | Kindersley                |
| Bradshaw, Fred         | SP                           | Carrot River Valley       |
| Brkich, Greg           | SP                           | Arm River-Watrous         |
| Brotten, Cam           | NDP                          | Saskatoon Massey Place    |
| Calvert, Lorne         | NDP                          | Saskatoon Riversdale      |
| Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken | SP                           | Saskatoon Silver Springs  |
| Chisholm, Michael      | SP                           | Cut Knife-Turtleford      |
| D'Autremont, Hon. Dan  | SP                           | Cannington                |
| Draude, Hon. June      | SP                           | Kelvington-Wadena         |
| Duncan, Dustin         | SP                           | Weyburn-Big Muddy         |
| Eagles, Doreen         | SP                           | Estevan                   |
| Elhard, Hon. Wayne     | SP                           | Cypress Hills             |
| Forbes, David          | NDP                          | Saskatoon Centre          |
| Furber, Darcy          | NDP                          | Prince Albert Northcote   |
| Gantfoer, Hon. Rod     | SP                           | Melfort                   |
| Harpauer, Hon. Donna   | SP                           | Humboldt                  |
| Harper, Ron            | NDP                          | Regina Northeast          |
| Harrison, Jeremy       | SP                           | Meadow Lake               |
| Hart, Glen             | SP                           | Last Mountain-Touchwood   |
| Heppner, Hon. Nancy    | SP                           | Martensville              |
| Hickie, Hon. Darryl    | SP                           | Prince Albert Carlton     |
| Higgins, Deb           | NDP                          | Moose Jaw Wakamow         |
| Hutchinson, Hon. Bill  | SP                           | Regina South              |
| Huyghebaert, Yogi      | SP                           | Wood River                |
| Iwanchuk, Andy         | NDP                          | Saskatoon Fairview        |
| Junor, Judy            | NDP                          | Saskatoon Eastview        |
| Kirsch, Delbert        | SP                           | Batoche                   |
| Krawetz, Hon. Ken      | SP                           | Canora-Pelly              |
| LeClerc, Serge         | SP                           | Saskatoon Northwest       |
| McCall, Warren         | NDP                          | Regina Elphinstone-Centre |
| McMillan, Tim          | SP                           | Lloydminster              |
| McMorris, Hon. Don     | SP                           | Indian Head-Milestone     |
| Michelson, Warren      | SP                           | Moose Jaw North           |
| Morgan, Hon. Don       | SP                           | Saskatoon Southeast       |
| Morin, Sandra          | NDP                          | Regina Walsh Acres        |
| Nilson, John           | NDP                          | Regina Lakeview           |
| Norris, Hon. Rob       | SP                           | Saskatoon Greystone       |
| Ottenbreit, Greg       | SP                           | Yorkton                   |
| Quennell, Frank        | NDP                          | Saskatoon Meewasin        |
| Reiter, Jim            | SP                           | Rosetown-Elrose           |
| Ross, Laura            | SP                           | Regina Qu'Appelle Valley  |
| Schriemer, Joceline    | SP                           | Saskatoon Sutherland      |
| Stewart, Hon. Lyle     | SP                           | Thunder Creek             |
| Taylor, Len            | NDP                          | The Battlefords           |
| Tell, Hon. Christine   | SP                           | Regina Wascana Plains     |
| Toth, Hon. Don         | SP                           | Moosomin                  |
| Trew, Kim              | NDP                          | Regina Coronation Park    |
| Van Mulligen, Harry    | NDP                          | Regina Douglas Park       |
| Vermette, Doyle        | NDP                          | Cumberland                |
| Wall, Hon. Brad        | SP                           | Swift Current             |
| Weekes, Randy          | SP                           | Biggar                    |
| Wilson, Nadine         | SP                           | Saskatchewan Rivers       |
| Wotherspoon, Trent     | NDP                          | Regina Rosemont           |
| Yates, Kevin           | NDP                          | Regina Dewdney            |

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce two gentlemen sitting in your gallery, Mr. Terry Nylander and Mr. Trevor Park. I just had a very productive meeting with these two gentlemen. They're members of the Blue Goose Energy Corporation that are looking at setting up shop here in Saskatchewan, and we are very, very supportive of that. So I would ask all members of the Assembly to please welcome them to the Legislative Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

**Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through to the members of the Assembly, three guests that are seated in your gallery. They are Mr. Jamie Bresciani. He is the principal of Miller High School in Regina. He's accompanied by his mother, Mrs. Dorothy Bresciani, and by his son, Mitchell Bresciani, who is a student at LeBoldus High. And if they could just stand to be recognized by the members. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature, 11 students from Discovery Learning Foundation in Regina Lakeview along with their teacher, Mr. Wayne Medwid, and I ask all members to greet them here this afternoon.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to members of the House, I'm very pleased to introduce a gentleman in your gallery, Allan Atsu who is visiting us today from Moose Jaw. Allan taught instrumentation at SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] Palliser Campus in Moose Jaw. I'm very pleased that he could join us this afternoon.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a long-time friend, a former defence partner, a great hockey player, Dennis Ulmer who now is working in Regina; I believe with Investors Group.

But for many, many years most of his career, teaching career, was in Notre Dame, and certainly had probably an influence on a number of the hockey players that went through Notre Dame. It's pretty well renowned as a hockey builder, as a player builder for the NHL [National Hockey League]. And Dennis, I know, has probably had a pretty instrumental part in many of those careers, along with his two sons who have also had a pretty good career. I know his one son was able to play the last few games with Wayne Gretzky when he was with the New York Rangers. So I'd like all members to welcome Dennis to the Assembly today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present a petition calling for wage equity for CBO [community-based organization] workers. We know these workers provide valuable services for some of the most vulnerable members of our society, including people living with mental and intellectual disability, women and children in crisis. I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the development and implementation of a multi-year funding plan to ensure that CBO workers achieve wage equity with employees who perform work of equal value in government departments.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And these petitioners come from various communities through Saskatchewan including Indian Head, Melville, Raymore, Grenfell, Wolseley, Lestock, Cupar, and Windthorst. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

**Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present a petition today in support of a new Saskatchewan Hospital. The petitioners, Mr. Speaker, note that the existing nearly 100-year-old structure is in much need of replacement, and they ask the Legislative Assembly to:

... call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately recommit funds and resources for the continued development and construction of a new Saskatchewan Hospital at North Battleford and provide the Prairie North Regional Health Authority with the authority necessary to complete this essential and much-needed

project.

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners all hail from the community of The Battlefords.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand today and present a petition once again in support of the expansion of the graduate retention program here in the province. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately expand the graduate retention program to include master's and Ph.D. graduates.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition, some are students from the University of Saskatchewan, from the University of Regina, as well as a number of health care professionals practising in the province who hold graduate degrees. I so present.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition that supports minimum wage earners that are struggling with the cost of living. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to indexing the Saskatchewan minimum wage to ensure that the standard of living of minimum wage earners is maintained in the face of cost of living increases.

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

The petitions are signed by concerned citizens of Estevan, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to present a petition on behalf of the residents of Duck Lake who are looking for assistance from this government with respect to having affordable, quality drinking water. And the prayer reads as such:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to financially assist the town of Duck Lake residents for the good of their health and safety due to the exorbitant water rates being forced on them by a government agency, and that this government fulfill its commitment to rural Saskatchewan.

They humbly pray.

And I so present on behalf of the good residents of Duck Lake.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

#### Regina Educator Named Outstanding Principal

**Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Jamie Bresciani, the principal of Miller High School in the constituency of Regina Douglas Park, for being selected as one of Canada's outstanding principals for 2009.

Mr. Bresciani is one of 31 principals being recognized this year by The Learning Partnership, Champions of Public Education Across Canada. The nominees are judged on characteristics of outstanding principals, partnerships with parents and community, and a change initiated by the principal that resulted in higher student achievement.

Mr. Bresciani has worked to bring teaching strategies into the Regina separate school system to identify different types of learners in a classroom, and then matched lesson plans with how they learn.

His nominator describes him as a humble man who is a strong academic leader and has a great personality. Mr. Bresciani also relates well to his students and is a strong committee leader within the Regina separate school system.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is fortunate that we have outstanding educators like Jamie Bresciani to ensure excellent learning opportunities for young people in our education system. Please join me in congratulating Mr. Bresciani for his achievement, and to recognize him for his contribution to quality education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

#### Youth for Christ Banquet

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Monday night at TCU Place in Saskatoon, I had the honour to attend the Youth for Christ banquet and appreciation supper. The theme of the evening was Hope and Potential in Every Young Person. Every young person, Mr. Speaker.

Youth for Christ operates mainly in inner-city neighbourhoods. The different programs offered by Youth for Christ were highlighted throughout the evening, along with many powerful stories and testimonies from youth involved with or affected by the staff and volunteers, being the hands and feet, and showing the love of Jesus Christ.

Project Serve takes youth on missions around the globe. The Zone is a youth centre in Hague. The Edge, a summer skate

camp. Disorganized Sports and Gymblast takes activities and sport to communities and schools, along with a positive message of Christian faith, and to discover ways to serve others.

The evening wound up with Dallas Pelly, a young Aboriginal man, telling his story of how this organization has helped him overcome his past and become a strong role model and leader for his people.

And finally, my seatmate and friend, the member from Saskatoon Northwest, as the keynote speaker, shared his story to the capacity crowd of how the acts of a few people in his life showed him he had hope and potential. And his very powerful message that all young people, even those surrounded by prostitution, drugs, violence, and thoughts of suicide, have that same hope and potential.

Congratulations to Youth for Christ in a successful event, and many more to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

#### **Regional Health Authority Volunteer and Spiritual Services**

**Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge and commend the work of the Prairie North Regional Health Authority's volunteer and spiritual services department, its coordinator, Darlene Kingwell, and two individuals, Brian Arcand and Ray Fox, who have been named and are now acting as volunteer Aboriginal chaplains within the region.

According to Kingwell, Prairie North believes that attention to a person's spirituality has a significant impact on his or her health and healing during times of illness. Client-centred care embraces the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs.

Ray Fox is well known as a justice worker, a city councillor, and most recently The Battlefords Citizen of the Year. Brian Arcand is a former police officer and, more recently, an ordained minister.

Fox says Aboriginal patients appreciate being able to talk to someone in their own language, especially in matters of faith. The two volunteers visit health facilities in The Battlefords, and also the Battlefords Correctional Centre and the North Battleford Youth Centre in the same capacity. I ask all members of the Assembly to join me today in commending these individuals and this program for their caring and valuable contributions to patients and families across the northwest part of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Estevan.

#### **Agricultural Safety Week**

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, March 11 to 17 has been proclaimed Agricultural Safety Week here in Saskatchewan, and is being held in conjunction with Canadian

Agricultural Safety Week. It's during this time that we are reminded of the necessity of following safe farm practices. On average there are 113 Canadians killed and 1,500 hospitalized in farm-related accidents each year, according to the Canadian agricultural injury surveillance program.

Saskatchewan Agriculture provides funding to the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture to deliver safety initiatives and services for farm and ranch families. More than 165 of the province's rural municipalities also contribute to these projects.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to improving all aspects of agriculture and rural life in our province. As recent as today at the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] convention in Saskatoon, the Premier announced a number of new and enhanced programs for rural residents, including a reinstated farmyard line relocation program. SaskPower is also introducing initiatives for rural residents to help reduce the risk of power line contacts and improve productivity in farming operations.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier and this government realize the contribution of farmers and ranchers. While this week is recognized as Agricultural Safety Week, it is important that emphasis be put on safety during the busy spring season, and that's coming and hopefully coming soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

#### **Recognition of First Responders**

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in February, 25 students from the community of Moose Jaw were involved in a bus accident. The children were between the ages of 4 and 17. But, Mr. Speaker, there is no need to worry because it was a mock bus accident, and the students were there to act out a variety of injuries that may be seen in an actual crash. All this was for first responders, an extension of emergency medical service, and for them to gain knowledge and confidence to handle situations that may be presented to them.

First responders are called and immediately fly into action. Their duties are to attend to victims, in many cases before an ambulance can arrive, and often they stay with the families after. They do what they have to do and then they return to being anonymous.

Training to become a first responder involves 40 hours of classroom study and a prior certification in CPR [cardiopulmonary resuscitation]. People interested in becoming a first responder can access information from their local EMS [emergency medical services].

Mr. Speaker, this was the ninth annual conference that was held in Moose Jaw and it will be held again next year in Moose Jaw, where there will be special events to mark their 10th anniversary. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in

congratulating and thanking these individuals and coordinators who serve our communities as first responders. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

### Red Cross Month

**Mr. McMillan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. March is Red Cross Month, and I would like to take this opportunity to recognize those who have helped make this an internationally well-regarded organization.

Founded in 1896 as an affiliate of the British Red Cross society, the Canadian Red Cross society is one of 186 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies around the world. In May the Canadian Red Cross will celebrate its official centennial as the anniversary of its establishment as a fully Canadian organization.

Over the last century the Red Cross has been there to lend a helping hand to those who have fallen on hard times due to disaster. As well as providing training services in areas such as first aid, many people have also benefited from the work of the Red Cross in their efforts to reduce drowning deaths in Canada through their water safety services. Through these measures and many more, the Canadian Red Cross touches the lives of many Canadians.

Through more than 6,800 employees and over 63,000 volunteers, the Canadian Red Cross continues to make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to join me in thanking the Canadian Red Cross for their amazing dedication, their dedicated workers, for over 100 years of service serving Canadians here and people abroad. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

### Scott Blues win City Basketball Championship

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Monday night I had the thrill of being on hand at the University of Regina to cheer on Coach Corey Matthews and the Scott Blues as they won their second straight city championship. That makes it four trips to the city finals in the past five years and a total of three city championships in that period. I know I speak for everybody at Scott and in the neighbourhood of north central Regina by saying, way to go, Blues; we are all very proud of you.

The game saw the Scott Blues win the Regina Intercollegiate Basketball League junior boys' small school title with a 77 to 53 win over the Martin Monarchs. Coach Ian McKillop and the Monarchs put up a valiant effort. Their local MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], the member for Rosemont, was there to cheer them on and recovered from the defeat just in

time to help present the medals and the trophy after the game.

Back to the Blues, Mr. Speaker. I want to highlight the play of high scorers Jordan Allary with 23 points and Jordan Cassie with 16, but it really was an all-round team effort that carried the day. I think of the hard work of Daynen McKay or the spirited play of five-foot-oh point guard, Jarred Mosquito. We are all very proud of you.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a sincere thank you very much to Coach Corey Matthews. Whether with the Blues, the North Central Lakers, or Team Saskatchewan for the North American Indigenous Games, Coach Matthews makes a tremendous difference in the lives of many young people, particularly First Nations and Métis young men in north central Regina. Corey Matthews is a champion, Mr. Speaker, but even better than that, he shows the way forward so that so many others might share in the victory as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### QUESTION PERIOD

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

### Infrastructure Funding

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in his welcoming address to delegates at the SARM convention, Dave Marit said infrastructure in rural Saskatchewan is in a state of crisis. Mr. Marit is calling on this government to step up to the plate and provide rural municipalities with an additional \$95 million for infrastructure. To the minister: will he agree that there is a state of crisis in rural Saskatchewan, and can rural municipalities expect an additional 95 million for infrastructure in the upcoming budget in addition to revenue sharing?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is indeed, as the member says, a crisis in rural infrastructure, and she knows it very well. Actually she and her government stood guard while it happened. Mr. Speaker, for 16 years the members of the former government ignored the urgent needs of Saskatchewan's municipalities with respect to infrastructure. Even worse, they clawed back two-thirds of a billion dollars in provincial funding that was intended to enable municipalities to address those infrastructure needs. Shameful, Mr. Speaker, shameful.

The NDP [New Democratic Party] created the infrastructure problem we see all over the province. That is why we delivered \$100 million in infrastructure funding unconditionally . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. The Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is why we delivered \$100 million in infrastructure funding to Saskatchewan's communities. That is why we announced a new program to cover the entire cost of municipal borrowing for infrastructure projects. And that is why we have worked hard with our federal government colleagues to make sure that the Building Canada fund dollars for local infrastructure projects come to Saskatchewan communities. Mr. Speaker, the NDP turned their backs on Saskatchewan's municipalities . . .

**The Speaker:** — The minister's time has elapsed. I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the president of SARM was clear that there is an infrastructure crisis in rural Saskatchewan, and as SARM President Dave Marit points out, fixing roads and bridges is essential to the future growth of the province. Mr. Speaker, rural municipalities need more than a renewed gopher control rebate program. To the minister: is this government prepared to provide rural . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. The member has the right to place her question without interference. The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow can place a question.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To the minister: is this government prepared to provide rural municipalities with an addition 95 million in infrastructure money which is so essential to the growth and future growth of the province?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a delightful thing indeed when we see the members of the opposition expressing sincere interest in the interests of rural Saskatchewan, something they ignored for 16 years in a row. Where were they all those years? What were they thinking? They abandoned municipalities, both rural and urban.

We've actually turned everything around 180 degrees. That's why we're coming forward with \$100 million in unconditional infrastructure. That's why we're coming forward with all of these other programs, working with our colleagues in the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, they abandoned municipalities all over Saskatchewan. We're doing exactly the opposite — we're looking after their needs.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's clear that the Saskatchewan Party will not be providing rural municipalities with the additional 95 million they need to address the rural crisis. The minister danced all around the question.

To the minister: since the Sask Party will not provide rural municipalities with an additional 95 million that they so desperately need, can rural municipalities expect permanent, long-term property tax relief in this budget?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another issue with a long and sad history indeed. This isn't something that's brand new. This has been something that's been hanging over the heads of municipalities for 16 years. I know that . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — As a former city councillor right here in the city of Regina, I know fully well that the folks on the opposite side of the House when they were in government, when they had a chance, abandoned, they turned their backs on municipalities.

Two-thirds of a billion dollars. The member who asked this question actually personally voted to withdraw nearly \$20 million from her own community. Moose Jaw could have used the \$20 million for safe, clean drinking water. Moose Jaw could have used that money for roads and street repairs. They didn't get it because it was denied by that member.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

#### Effect of Economic Situation on Pension Plans

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, in 2002 Allan Atsu of Moose Jaw was diagnosed with occupational asthma. In 2004 he was forced to leave his job as a program administrator and teacher, and he has been receiving workers' compensation ever since. In accordance with *The Workers' Compensation Act*, Mr. Atsu will soon be forced to retire and to access a pension that has been devastated by global recession.

My question is to the Minister Responsible for the WCB [Workers' Compensation Board]. What is he prepared to do for people like Mr. Atsu who are forced to draw on pensions that have been so greatly affected by an economic crisis?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, obviously it wouldn't be appropriate to get into specific cases regarding the WCB. I can say that as part of our due diligence, obviously we're keeping an eye on the funds relating to the WCB. And it's something we're very attentive to, especially in these uncertain times. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member responsible for Saskatoon Fairview.

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister's platitudes are little comfort to the people that have their pensions destroyed by a global recession. Mr. Atsu estimates that he lost more than 70,000 during the economic crisis, and he will soon be forced to absorb those losses because of his forced retirement. The minister and his officials have now received nearly half a dozen letters from Mr. Atsu imploring them to defer retirement so that his pension has time to recover.

To the minister: is he prepared to step up to the plate and protect Mr. Atsu and many other Saskatchewan people who are being robbed of tens of thousands of dollars? And what is he doing, what is he doing, what is that minister doing to save their pensions?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, obviously it's with great empathy that we're looking at a number of funds right across Canada fluctuate in these times of uncertainty. What we can say, Mr. Speaker, again without going into any specific cases which wouldn't be appropriate in this setting, Mr. Speaker, we're attentive to these fluctuations and obviously we continue to monitor the WCB. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, he's been looking. What we want is solutions. People want solutions. And, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Atsu isn't the only one in this situation. Others across the province will be forced to retire and absorb massive pension losses.

The men and women who have worked to make our province the finest in Canada are watching their qualities of life erode along with their pensions. And the minister, as we just heard, has offered nothing but form letters and rhetoric. He's looking.

Mr. Speaker, Allan Atsu didn't invest his money personally, but he is the one being forced to suffer the consequences now that it's gone.

To the minister: is he finished with looking, with his empty words for pensioners of Saskatchewan? Will he commit today to do something for those like Mr. Atsu, those forced, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the realities of the global financial meltdown?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, it wouldn't be appropriate to comment in individual cases. It's something that we're attentive to, Mr. Speaker, and it's something that is being experienced right around the world. Obviously, it's with a great degree of empathy, Mr. Speaker. What we can say in Canada is we're fortunate to have a system like WCB that helps as many people as it does.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

### SaskWater Services

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, SaskWater needs to remain financially healthy if it's going to be able to provide safe, clean, and affordable water for Saskatchewan communities.

Industrial clients currently represent some two-thirds of SaskWater's total water sales volumes. The Meyers Norris Penny report that was done for SaskWater and referred to yesterday recommends that SaskWater should "... focus the majority of its efforts on the industrial market to seize industrial opportunities, and improve overall financial viability."

Then an analysis prepared for SaskWater states that "A decision to remove [I'll say it again — a decision to remove] new industrial projects from SaskWater's mandate will have major negative consequences for the corporation."

To the minister: will he allow SaskWater to find the new revenue streams it needs to remain financially healthy and viable so it can provide communities with safe, affordable water?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question to the hon. member. The money that SaskWater is going to need going forward is going to be substantial. The concern here is on the residential side. The industrial side, there is options available for companies and businesses. SaskWater provides some of those; also they're provided by the private sector.

On the residential side — and I believe this is where SaskWater has to focus going forward — we had a discussion about this at SARM this morning, and many, many communities are concerned and challenging their government to look further on the residential side. We are reviewing the Meyers Norris Penny report. We are looking at how SaskWater can provide those services to communities across Saskatchewan. I can tell you it's a concern for each and every community, and it's a concern for this minister.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina



Coronation Park.

**Mr. Trew:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, if you lop off two-thirds of the potential of any corporation, it's clearly heading for trouble. They're about privatization, that's what they are. The minister says he's reviewing Meyers Norris Penny report and suggests he's not yet made up his mind, but the truth is, we know he has.

[14:00]

In private meetings, for example on January 15 of this year, representatives of CEP [Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada] met with the minister. Minutes of that meeting are available online, Mr. Speaker, and they reveal that when asked about the future of SaskWater, the minister responded saying, "Change is always difficult and disconcerting."

Well SaskWater's Moose Jaw head office staff and its employees, totalling over 90 around the province, are really wondering, Mr. Speaker. They want the minister to explain what he meant. What change did he believe that the SaskWater 90-plus employees would find difficult and disconcerting?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, changes are a reality. SaskWater is a modest corporation in our province that's facing a very huge challenge going forward — a huge one, and a growing challenge. We are going to be looking at SaskWater and seeing how it can best change, if necessary, or develop in a way to address the needs of the largest portion of Saskatchewan communities.

It's something that needs to be done; it's something that probably should have been done years ago, Mr. Speaker, but it needs to be done. And this government will do, as we do in all Crown corporations, look at the responsible way of doing it, and provide a road map to do that. That's our commitment to Saskatchewan people. If that involves some change, we know that members opposite, they haven't changed much in 16, 17 years. They don't like change. This government is not afraid of change. They will do it in a compassionate way.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

**Mr. Trew:** — Mr. Speaker, there's an analysis of Saskatchewan's role in industrial water infrastructure projects. And it suggests that one of the outcomes of a decision to remove new industrial projects from the mandate of SaskWater, and the analysis states, and listen up, "Substantial layoffs would take place from the corporation's existing staff complement."

Big joke, Mr. Speaker. "Substantial layoffs would take place from the corporation's existing staff complement."

To the minister: is this the change he thought SaskWater staff

would find difficult and disconcerting?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, what we're looking at with SaskWater is taking on additional responsibilities, certainly on the residential side where communities are saying they need it the most. On the commercial side, on the industrial side, there are other options available for companies going forward, Mr. Speaker.

SaskWater is tasked at doing their work in a commercially responsible manner. They've done so, tried to be a break-even. They've lost some money over the last period of time. What the Meyers Norris Penny says, if you increase the industrial side, you may be able to break even.

More importantly, Mr. Speaker, is what do we do with the communities going forward that want safe, reliable water. We want to provide them as much option as is possible. If that means some changes for the mandate for SaskWater, that's what we will undertake to do to provide that service — service that wasn't provided by the members opposite.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Why is this such a difficult issue for the government and the minister? Industrial customers already represent two-thirds of SaskWater's customers, and these customers are obviously seeing the benefit of utilizing SaskWater's services.

The analysis of SaskWater's role in industrial water infrastructure projects explains the many benefits for industry in using SaskWater's services including "Having the province's Crown water utility involved in industrial projects provides a regulatory, competitive advantage for Saskatchewan."

To the minister: why is he so determined to make this so difficult? Why is he so blind to the potential contribution SaskWater could make to creating jobs and creating economic activity throughout Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, it's all about priorities and . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's all about priorities. And clearly the priority going forward for SaskWater is the responsibility on the residential

side. On the industrial side, there are private options, there are public options available, Mr. Speaker, and that is something that is available. The capital needs for SaskWater are going to be enormous. We have to make a decision whether we focus on one priority or the other right now.

And I can tell you, and if members were at SARM this morning — I'm not sure any of them were — they would have heard very clearly from communities across this province that that's the direction that they wanted. That's the direction they were giving me: make sure that communities have safe, reliable water. That's what this minister will be doing, Mr. Speaker. That's what this government will be doing, and it's the right thing to do.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

### Proposed Enhanced Driver's Licence

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Privacy Commissioner continues to raise concerns about this government's move to create an enhanced identity document. Today on CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] news, the Privacy Commissioner listed his three main concerns with the identity document which were: how is Saskatchewan going to protect the information gathered; how to ensure that those who apply for this program are given free and informed consent and understand the risk involved; and three, they contain radio frequency identification tags that were designed for tracking merchandise in warehouses, not the movements of people.

Along with these concerns, we know that these cards are going to cost between \$50 and \$80. SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] said they will cost no more than \$50 to a person who receives one. This means the government is subsidizing the balance. Can the minister assure this House the people of Saskatchewan will not be suffering a rate increase, an SGI rate increase, as a result of their decision to adopt these cards?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated in the House yesterday, we're looking at best practices models across Canada for how to go forward with an enhanced driver's licence. Our prime concern is providing that service to Saskatchewan people. Our message to Saskatchewan residents — to families and to children and to moms and dads — is get a passport in our province. That'll enable you to have border crossings by land, by air, and into other countries, Mr. Speaker.

What we're doing is we're discussing things with the Manitoba government, with the Alberta government. We're looking at best practices. Manitoba has gone forward and hired individuals already. Alberta has decided that their driver's licence is sophisticated enough that they don't have to do any changes going forward, and they're going to try to negotiate on a bilateral basis with the Department of Homeland Security.

We're trying to do it in a cost-effective way that will be responsible, that it'll be up to the individuals to choose whether they want this particular identification . . .

**The Speaker:** — The minister's time has elapsed. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the Privacy Commissioner went on to say that Alberta has already dropped their plan to implement the program in that province. This morning the Privacy Commissioner re-stated what the Alberta minister of government services said last fall. These driver's licences simply have, "Too much cost, for too little benefit."

Clearly this issue has not been well thought out in Saskatchewan. There are significant technological concerns. There has been no privacy impact assessment done by this government even after they said they would do one. And this legislation is the worst in Canada. In fact, when asked if he would be getting an enhanced driver's licence, the Privacy Commissioner said, "I'm certainly not going to apply for one."

We all know how much the Saskatchewan Party loves to emulate their big brothers in Alberta. To the minister: will they follow Alberta's lead, their best practice, and drop this program?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, as with many other things, for 16 years the NDP government did no changes, no changes whatsoever to the driver's licence. I think members will agree we have a very modest licence in Saskatchewan. It's a two-piece paper licence. Alberta made the decision to go with the more complicated, more sophisticated licence and they've agreed to try to convince the Department of Homeland Security that that is sufficient.

Mr. Speaker, I'll remind members opposite what's happening next door in Manitoba . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I recognize the Minister of Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't want to be political on this matter, but I did, I did speak to the minister in Manitoba, Mr. Chomiak, and he said that they are going forward with . . . They've hired 50 people.

Mr. Speaker, we're not above working together with different governments. We look across the country, look at their best practices and enact those. We've received . . .

**The Speaker:** — Minister's time has elapsed. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Meewasin.

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The enhanced driver licence program needs to be scrapped. But the problem is bigger than that, Mr. Speaker. The other part of this Bill is the

one that deals with volunteer firefighters who are promised green flashing safety lights for their vehicles by this government. The government even had a photo op in the rotunda of this legislature of the green flashing light. But because this government has incompetently rolled the provisions of this Bill that contain changes to the driver's licence, the whole Bill is now in jeopardy.

To the minister who tabled this Bill: will he commit to tabling amendments to this legislation to drop the enhanced driver's licence component so that the rest of the Bill can be saved for the sake of our volunteer firefighters?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, the voluntary firefighters . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The volunteer firefighters initiative presented by this government was well received across the province. And we continue to want to move that portion of the legislation forward as quickly as possible. With the hon. members' concurrence, we will see to do that as soon as possible.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, the CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] minister clearly gave the impression to this House that he had discussed the issue of enhanced driver's licences with the minister responsible from Alberta as recently as last week. I quote from yesterday's *Hansard*, page 2199:

Every province in Canada right now is looking at how they can comply with that. As recently as last week, I chatted with the minister responsible from the province of Manitoba and the minister responsible from the province of Alberta. We're looking at best practices . . . [on] how to do that.

But this could not be the case, Mr. Speaker. On October 27, 2008 last year, there's a quote by the Minister of Service Alberta, Ms. Klimchuk, on the page 1539 of the Alberta *Hansard* where she informs the Alberta legislature that the Alberta government is not proceeding with this plan.

To the minister: why did he tell this House that he consulted with the Alberta minister last week, when he clearly had no knowledge of the Alberta situation?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for

Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — It's funny sometimes, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes the answers come before the questions are asked. I can refer to my earlier answer, that I talked to the minister from Alberta, and she said that they are not going to proceed with the enhanced driver's licence, but they're going to use the card that they have that is sophisticated. They're concerned about the Department of Homeland Security regulations and the changing criteria, as are we. Every province is, every province is looking at it a little differently because the way things are moving forward.

What we have is a situation where we have Manitoba — NDP Manitoba — going full speed ahead, hiring some 50 people already, and we've got Alberta next door that decided they're not going to do it. Mr. Speaker, our licence that we have in place is less sophisticated than Alberta. And for whatever choice the previous government made, that was not improved. At some point in time we're going to have to look at an enhanced driver's licence or an enhanced identification card in Saskatchewan because ours has not kept up with the times.

Right now what we're going to do is we're going to look to Alberta, we're going to look to Manitoba, come up with a best practices. We're going to take the Privacy Commissioner's concerns and work forward with it.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The member's time has elapsed.

[14:15]

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

### Additional Funding for Water Infrastructure Program

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the 2008-09 budget, this government announced a \$6 million farm and ranch water infrastructure program. The program provided for financial support to help farmers, ranchers, RMs, First Nations in southwest Saskatchewan develop long-term water resources. Producers in southwest Saskatchewan had been dealing with drought for several consecutive years with little provincial government assistance prior to this program.

Eligible projects include dugouts, wells, and pipelines. We were able to work with the federal government to secure an additional \$9 million for this program, and this program to date has been a fairly good success. We received nearly 3,400 applications, including 17 on farm well and pipeline projects, 1,500 dugouts, and nearly 80 applications for community wells. As a result of this demand the program budget has nearly doubled to \$29 million.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday we announced the provincial government is committing to an additional 5.2 million for the program to help ensure all eligible projects will receive funding. The federal government has also come to the table and is

committing their 60 per cent share, with an additional \$8.8 million for this program.

Mr. Speaker, this has been a very successful program for farmers and ranchers in the Southwest and we will see the results of this initiative for many years to come.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the program's producer advisory committee, Dave Marit, Doug Steele, and Larry Grant for their input into this program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the official opposition critic, I want to thank the minister for sending a copy to me prior to the sitting of the House at 1:30.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this is the fourth time that I've heard this particular announcement in the last week, as the minister spoke about it yesterday at SARM; he spoke about it last night in the House when we were reviewing supplementary estimates; he spoke about it last week when he announced the further funding to the program, Mr. Speaker.

I know that there are a number of producers and ranchers that just sit outside of the designated area by the province of Saskatchewan and they're not eligible for any kind of support, and will be watching with interest to see whether or not this program can be expanded across the province, as producers are dealing with drought in other regions and other areas of the province.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this is a good program. It's a timely program, and we're looking forward to announcements coming out the next provincial budget that would expand and enhance this program for other producers and ranchers in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

#### Additional Funding for Municipalities

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some exciting, and given today's debates, some very topical news to report on behalf of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

On February 2, 2009, the Premier announced a \$500 million economic booster shot to keep our economy strong in these uncertain times — 131.6 million of these dollars, of that booster shot, is going directly to municipalities.

First, we are providing \$31.6 million to municipalities through the Building Canada fund-communities component or BCF-CC as it's called for short. This is a joint federal-provincial funding program supporting important infrastructure projects across Saskatchewan.

Typical examples, Mr. Speaker, are \$645,400 going to the RM [rural municipality] of Mervin for a new water treatment plant,

\$833,000 to the town of Osler for a lagoon expansion, and \$3.97 million to the city of Weyburn for a sewage lift station. These projects are extremely important for municipalities, allowing them to replace aging infrastructure and to accommodate unprecedented growth in their communities. We hope to announce a second intake for the BCF-CC program in the very near future.

Second, the municipal economic enhancement program or MEEP is a \$100 million program which provides per capita funds to municipalities for infrastructure. This is a program that municipalities have been requesting for many years, and Saskatchewan's new government has delivered it. At the recent SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] convention where the Premier announced this new program as part of the \$500 million economic booster shot, delegates warmly applauded the news. Municipalities welcome and appreciate the work that we're doing for them. We believe in a respectful government-to-government relationship with our province's municipal leaders, and programs such as MEEP are an illustration of the success of this new partnership.

We congratulate all municipalities that are receiving funding under the BCF-CC and we are confident that communities will use their MEEP money to get shovels in the ground as quickly as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first and foremost I'd like to thank the minister for sending across a copy of his statement this afternoon. And, Mr. Speaker, I would agree that it's good news for municipalities right across the province. I don't think any of us in any of our communities don't know of a number of projects that our community, or our city, town, hamlet, rural municipality is looking for funding for.

In discussions the other night in committee, when we had a discussion with the minister on this program and the funding and where it's going, we were assured that there was a very quick application process. And the minister also expressed his expectation that the money would flow to the municipalities quite quickly. So we're looking forward to that.

Now other than that though, Mr. Speaker, there was not a great deal of information available as to the actual projects that had been applied for to date. But the department was quite clear, and the minister, that this information would be forthcoming back to the committee by the end of this month. So it's always interesting to see how many of the projects are new, how many are ongoing in the planning stages, how many are shovel ready and will be on the move this spring.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing that information towards the end of the month. But we did have a fair bit of discussion the other day in committee about how this package has been sold through the media and to the various groups. The minister even said in his statement that this is a program that municipalities have been requesting for many years, and

Saskatchewan's new government has delivered it.

But it's gone nicely from being additional infrastructure money moved up from next year's budget into the current budget, to now being a stimulus or a booster package for the economy. But, Mr. Speaker, there's really no guarantee that there's new jobs being created, so I don't know how you would call it a stimulus package. It's definitely something that municipalities have been asking for, and it really should be called what it is — support for the municipalities across this province. Thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chair of Crown and Central Agencies.

##### Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

**Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies to report that it has considered certain estimates and to present its fifth report. I move:

That the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies be now concurred in.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Chair of Crown and Central Agencies:

That the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies be now concurred in.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried.

I recognize the Chair of the Economy Committee.

##### Standing Committee on the Economy

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report that it has considered certain estimates and to present its fifth report. I move:

That the fifth report on the Standing Committee on the Economy be now concurred in.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Chair on the economy:

That the fifth report of the Standing Committee on the Economy be now concurred in.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to questions no. 253 through 260.

**The Speaker:** — Questions 253 through 260 tabled.

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

##### Bill No. 69

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 69 — *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2008/Loi de 2008 modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires*** be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think almost all of us would agree that we have a social responsibility to children, to the next generation. And I think almost everyone would agree that that being the case, the primary responsibility for the care and raising of children whenever possible, and it's not always possible, but whenever possible is first and foremost the responsibility of the children's parents. And that's what maintenance enforcement is largely about, Mr. Speaker. And that's what the office of maintenance enforcement in Saskatchewan is largely about. And that's what this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is about — ensuring that children have the support that they need, that they deserve, and that people who have responsibilities to those children fulfill those responsibilities and discharge them.

And that means, Mr. Speaker, that a debt, an obligation for child support is not like other debts; it's not like other obligations, Mr. Speaker. And protections that exist in various pieces of Saskatchewan legislation to protect debtors from onerous responsibilities that they may have very well been willing to fulfill but cannot fulfill do not apply when it comes to the enforcement of these kind of orders. And information that would usually be kept private from most creditors is not kept private when it's for the benefit of the child, when the child is the creditor.

Saskatchewan has, I believe, great reason to be proud of its record in this respect, both its legislative record and at the administrative level. There's perhaps one province in the country that might do better enforcing maintenance orders, that might have better collection rates. But Saskatchewan is always at the top — if not the top, at worst second place, Mr. Speaker — in providing that the orders for the support of children are

followed.

And there are, of course, over time, need for changes either because of the nature of the economy or the nature of how people deal with money. And there are always improvements that can be made. And certainly one of the areas that I pressed for as minister of Justice when talking to the federal government is greater co-operation from the Canada Revenue Agency as to receiving the information that would make it possible to better enforce child support orders and allow for the maintenance of children by their parents, first and foremost, when that is possible, Mr. Speaker.

This legislation is legislation, I didn't want to say . . . I almost said tinkering, Mr. Speaker, and I don't want to say tinkering. The legislation does make changes to the maintenance enforcement regime. We'll want to ensure that those changes are to the benefit of children in the province of Saskatchewan and make the operation of the office more effective while ensuring that it continues to operate in a fair manner, Mr. Speaker.

And because of that work of ensuring that the legislation, the principles of which we do not challenge, but to ensure the legislation has the intended effect of improving the circumstances for children in the province by improving the operation of the maintenance enforcement office and its ability to enforce maintenance orders, I propose that we move this legislation to committee.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 69, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2008* be now read the second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed.

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

**The Speaker:** — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, this Bill will be handled by the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee.

**The Speaker:** — The Bill is referred to Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee.

[14:30]

### Bill No. 46

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 46 — *The Labour Market Commission Amendment Act, 2008*** be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a few comments on the Labour Market Commission, Bill No. 46.

Mr. Speaker, I'd first like to start my comments reading into the record some of the comments made by the minister responsible, the Minister of Enterprise and Innovation.

Mr. Speaker, when the minister read into the record his comments, he had this to say. He said:

Mr. Speaker, given the critical importance of labour issues with respect to our economic momentum and the quality of life for the people of this province, [he said] we must be bold, timely, and above all proactive in our approach to them. It is our mandate to do so and indeed our responsibility to those who have given us this mandate. For this reason several key amendments are contained . . . [Mr. Speaker.]

Mr. Speaker, he went on to say:

Because of the major labour issues related to this goal, it is necessary for Enterprise Saskatchewan to have a close working relationship with the Saskatchewan Labour Market Commission. To this end, the revised wording of the Act lists one individual appointed by the minister to represent the agency. [And] This amendment will allow this close working relationship with the agency.

He went on to say:

Also the commission board currently has 19 members. The recommended amendments reduce the size of the board to 11 members in order to enhance its efficiency, its ability to react in a more timely fashion, and continue to ensure the diversity of its representation.

One further amendment was:

The recommended amendments also limit board members by . . . two-year terms rather than unlimited three-year terms.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just some general comments first regarding this Bill. Mr. Speaker, the government has the responsibility to help Saskatchewan meet the many challenges that come with economic growth. We agree with that.

Saskatchewan is currently experiencing some interesting labour situations, and again there's a large gap between what this government is doing and what in fact it should be doing, Mr. Speaker, to address these concerns.

Mr. Speaker, we have on this side of the House a great deal of respect for the work that the labour commission has done in this province. And again, this legislation is based on the government's belief that the current Labour Market Commission is an impediment to economic growth, Mr. Speaker. I would say to the government across the way that in fact this is not the case. But it seems to be the thinking around this issue when they made the amendments.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other concerns that we have is rolling the Labour Market Commission into Enterprise Saskatchewan, and what effect is that to have the Labour Market Commission under Enterprise Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I would say that the one intent here, that it not only appears but is the weakening of labour here in the province.

And as usual, Mr. Speaker, who did the Sask Party consult with before drafting this legislation? This has become the style, this has become the brand, Mr. Speaker, of the government — of drafting legislation, passing it, and without consultation. The processes have become quite evident, Mr. Speaker, as we noticed earlier today in question period around the Bill regarding *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act*, and the concerns raised and the answers from the minister which most certainly were not coherent or clear. Mr. Speaker, this has been also in a number of other Bills presented by this government which have simply been not well thought through, not well thought out.

Again, Mr. Speaker, one of the other concerns is Enterprise Saskatchewan is very much an unknown entity. And we, as I stated earlier, are not in favour of it being folded into the Enterprise Saskatchewan as has been done.

We have heard on a number of occasions that, we're trying to remove impediments to business and economic growth. Mr. Speaker, the definition of that, I would say what we see on this side is in fact that it is in fact a weakening of labour here in the province.

And it is interesting, Mr. Speaker, that this Act is all about getting different groups together to talk about our economy. And just at the time when we need that — in terms of what we're facing in the global situation, and in Canada and in the United States — we have a government bent on not working together, not working together, in fact going off on their own and proposing legislation at the very heart. And it is somewhat contradictory, Mr. Speaker, that legislation which purports to have all sectors of this province working together in fact is brought in without any consultations, any consultations regarding members who are put on the Labour Market Commission.

And, Mr. Speaker, so isn't it funny that an Act that purports to bring different sectors together to discuss our economics or the economics of this province, and in fact that is done without consultation of any of the parties in the province, was simply put forward? And this is somewhat, I guess, disconcerting on this side that in fact that there could so much hypocrisy put into one Bill.

Mr. Speaker, we ask, who was it that was consulted in terms of changes to the Act? We ask, who was consulted in terms of the people that were brought on to the Act? Where was the discussion? Where is there a discussion paper to involve the people of this province, to involve the opposition, to involve members of the society in Saskatchewan, members of Saskatchewan society regarding this very important, the Labour Market Commission?

One of the groups, Mr. Speaker, one of the groups that was completely eliminated was the not-for-profit sector. It was almost like the minister felt that this was not an important

group, that they had nothing to contribute.

You can always argue, you can always argue, Mr. Speaker, that you reduce a body and perhaps it can create efficiencies, but I think the . . . Where is the analysis in terms of what is gained and what is lost, Mr. Speaker, when you reduce the numbers of appointments on there? And what sort of approach . . . And we've seen that approach in a number of ministries where in fact we put forward legislation, consult, and that even when they do consult, Mr. Speaker, it is very confined. They determine who they consult with, and I think so far the experience of the groups who have worked under that, that they have thought that that is a sham, Mr. Speaker. It's not democratic; it's a sham. And they have walked out of those consultations thinking that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I was on the topic of the numbers, on the numbers of people that were named to the board. And, Mr. Speaker, it is doubtful, and in fact it is more than doubtful. We have reason to believe that no one was contacted regarding inputs from labour and business to the people appointed to the boards. And this does cast rather a negative shadow on this enterprise, I guess, in the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation.

Mr. Speaker, when you go from 19 to 11, we have to look at what exactly the Labour Market Commission was to achieve. And do you actually achieve any efficiencies when you go from 19 to 11? And exactly what are those efficiencies? And if they're only efficiencies but you lose what this, the Labour Market Commission, was actually to do, and that was to look at the economy, make suggestions, have input from different sectors, and you would wonder, Mr. Speaker, whether 11 people can actually do that, Mr. Speaker. And these are no doubt people of high quality, Mr. Speaker, but what we are looking at here is bringing people in from all sectors of the province.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that is somewhat concern is the legislative responsibility going from the Advanced Education and Labour to the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation. Training and education were a large part of the Labour Market Commission, Mr. Speaker. When you look at the training that we need for workers, the discussions we've had on bringing more people to Saskatchewan, part of that is training for our economy, Mr. Speaker. And yet we have this very important commission moved from one ministry where it seems to be a natural fit into Enterprise and Innovation, into Enterprise Saskatchewan. And what message does that send, Mr. Speaker?

So what we have is, we have no consultation of groups in terms of putting people on the market commission, Labour Market Commission. We have a movement of this very important body from one ministry to another, and I would venture to say that the . . . My concerns would be, for the record, Mr. Speaker, that it sends the wrong signal to the province. This government has always said that they knew how to manage the economy and I wonder, when they do things like this, when they do, when they make moves like this, what message it sends.

To reach out to be inclusive, Mr. Speaker, is one of the important things that we should be looking at when we enter into establishing a Labour Market Commission — as we did, Mr. Speaker — to make that commission reach out to all our

sectors, reach out to all of the people of Saskatchewan. And I believe that that's what we did, Mr. Speaker.

And I see this as a regressive step backwards, and I would say that in fact that does not allow the commission to work as effectively. Even if you have good people in there, Mr. Speaker, they would be somewhat hamstrung by not having all the input possible that they could have.

Mr. Speaker, probably at this time just in terms of the Labour Market Commission and the what they were . . . the initial part for the commission, the mandate for the commission, if I may:

. . . was formed on the basis that labour market planning and coordination is best achieved through a partnership between labour, business, education and training institutes, government and others stakeholders to essentially "connect the dots" within . . .

Mr. Speaker, "The Saskatchewan labour market commission will have an industry focus on providing advice to Saskatchewan's key strategic labour market issues."

Those are the pillars, if you may, that we establish, under which we establish the Labour Market Commission. Mr. Speaker, those are important things that people feel that their input would be acknowledged, that their input would be respected.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of that . . . formed on the basis that the labour marketing and the coordination is best achieved through a partnership between labour and business, education, I don't sense that there is a partnership building process, or if in fact that that is the idea of the Saskatchewan Party of what they have embarked on here, since they have come to government as a partnership.

And working together then, I'm afraid that, in fact, they have not been listening to the people of Saskatchewan because there are a lot of people out there who would disagree that, in fact, they are building a partnership, Mr. Speaker. In fact, what they are doing is perhaps driving wedges into Saskatchewan, and I fail to see a partnership developing between business and labour.

Mr. Speaker, when you don't consult with existing members in terms of, if you have no faith in consulting with existing members in terms of when you're forming the new commission or that there will be changes, I think it sends a fairly strong signal that Big Brother knows best and that we are again afraid almost to deal with what we might hear. We might hear from the people of Saskatchewan that they would say to us, you should speak to everyone. You should be inclusive. That is the way you build partnerships, not by attempting to leave out various important segments in our society, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, again we hear different occasions the labour supply causing stress for business. It really strikes me as odd — well more than odd, Mr. Speaker — really does cause me to wonder what is the thinking on the other side. And again I just mention the number of Bills. And we hear it this afternoon, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act*, trying to fumble our way through something that wasn't quite thought through, maybe just a little hasty, Mr. Speaker. And so I would think again we

have a little too much haste here.

[14:45]

In fact it's a wonder that after all that they have been through that they still pursue this sort of no-consultation approach. I'm not sure when they will get the message that consultation is important. But hopefully, Mr. Speaker, they will before . . . I would hope before 2011 because I think they're going to wake up to quite a nasty little surprise on November in 2011, Mr. Speaker, because this is definitely creating huge concerns throughout Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this whole business — and I think you can judge — if you're going to deal with issues of labour shortages or labour retraining, we need the buy-in of everyone. You form a Labour Market Commission because you get the buy-in of everyone so the people can work co-operatively. If in fact they enter into this enterprise, if they enter into a commission and there are suspicions or people have been left out, I don't think you have the trust of those people to work and perform as productively as it could be.

The idea, Mr. Speaker, is an excellent idea. We want — I believe on this side or the other side of the House — we want Saskatchewan to be number one in the country and continue to be number one. But this sends all the wrong signals, Mr. Speaker, it sends all the wrong signals to all those concerned.

Mr. Speaker, the issues of accountability and transparency as well. With these changes, as I mentioned previously, the members on the existing board were not contacted — the Chair, the Vice-Chair, the two Chairs. There are questions, Mr. Speaker, that have been raised with us that in fact nobody knew that these changes were coming.

The legislation, Mr. Speaker — one of the other things — removes the onus to consult organizations representing business and labour before appointing boards. Now when you look at this, and if you accept that the premise of this is the co-operative efforts between labour and business, and in fact that you assume, Mr. Speaker, that you know what's best and put it in there, it does cast a rather negative cloud over the entire situation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when you lose the buy-in, when you lose the buy-in of these people, I would say you have . . . There are many problems that start arising.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of labour and in terms of increasing and in terms of people coming to our province, there's also a component here that we should not miss, and that is the component of immigration, Mr. Speaker. The immigration, and in terms of what we did and what we started, and I would hope that in a lot of cases the government opposite adopted a lot of the programs that we started, even cut ribbons on the projects that we gave money to.

And again, I just think the . . . Some of things in terms of immigration. What it was the new graduate tax exemption that we put in, and again, they cut back on that. They cut back on that, Mr. Speaker. They cut back on the labour commission, and it shows, Mr. Speaker. Because I would believe that any, any



person would think, in a common sense approach, would think that you have to, when you form a commission, that you'd have to form it under trust, that you would have to have the buy-in of all the parties.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we as well, when we established the Labour Market Commission brought together labour, business, First Nations, Métis, and one other thing, the training system, Mr. Speaker, as I said. And these people were to provide strategic advice, Mr. Speaker, on labour market trends, issues, and strategies. That we would bring together the entire sort of society, various sectors that we had that we saw out there, bring these people together under a positive, Mr. Speaker — as opposed to a negative — sort of appointment, a positive cloud, and have all of these people sit together and give advice. And give advice.

And when you bring a commission of that sort together to do that, Mr. Speaker, you should allow them to do the work, allow them to do the work that is necessary so that they could in fact provide you with ideas. Because, Mr. Speaker, it is the people of Saskatchewan that in fact are important here and do provide us with the ideas, Mr. Speaker. They're in fact the creative energy that we need in this province to move it ahead.

But, Mr. Speaker, we did enhancements to saskjobs.ca website to meet the needs of job seekers, and now we hear every day the members opposite talk about the site. We developed a number of campaigns to market the SaskJobs, Mr. Speaker. We put in 39.2 million into investment and trade trainings and created over 2,100 opportunities for Saskatchewan learners, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they were training for all sectors that were put in here. There were ideas that came from the Labour Market Commission. And, Mr. Speaker, we had something that was positive in moving forward. This is one of the things that I think that rises above political and partisan partisanship. And as it should, Mr. Speaker, as it should. Because when you deal with something like the Labour Market Commission and you inflict or create issues of this trust, the commission itself cannot work as well as it might be expected to.

Mr. Speaker, I could talk about in terms of some of the factors, in terms of the tightening of the market conditions. But we have, Mr. Speaker, what is also coming here is the global market, some might say meltdown, but economic crisis. And what better time, what better time then to have a Labour Market Commission that can give you advice, give you advice on what is happening in all sectors of Saskatchewan, in all the corners of this province.

And at a time like that, Mr. Speaker, at a time like that when we need to provide the stimulus, or we need to provide direction, or we need to provide the training, or we need to provide immigration, it is the wrong time, Mr. Speaker, to close the doors and tighten up and create distrust in a body like the Labour Market Commission that could be of so much assistance, Mr. Speaker — so much assistance to this entire Assembly, not only to the government.

To have people input, Mr. Speaker, it's a democracy at work. And, Mr. Speaker, people have been asking, asking for that type

of input. And I think when we open the doors and we feel we are . . . Mr. Speaker, when we have, I guess, the ability, the ability and the confidence to allow input, that becomes very important, Mr. Speaker. Because if you have the confidence to listen to divergent views, Mr. Speaker, you are better for it.

So we have a global economic crisis. We don't know, Mr. Speaker, what is coming. There are things that are happening, Mr. Speaker, and some are in our control and some are not. And what better time, Mr. Speaker, to have a body that feels confident enough and is supported by the government to make suggestions. And that is at the heart of what is causing the problems here, Mr. Speaker, is that the members opposite, the government, I have a sense that they're not feeling confidence in this group, in the Labour Market Commission. Not having confidence to allow people to enter in to sit on this commission and express their views, so that they can deal with this.

Mr. Speaker, the federal Conservatives coming out with budgets that they said would be balanced, and two months later or a month later saying that they wouldn't be balanced, and now they're on board with the stimulus package. Mr. Speaker, with the rest of the countries in the world, can you image that — a country so isolated, a government so isolated that they could not see what was happening around them.

And I think that is the Labour Market Commission, that with people like that could enhance understanding of what is happening there. And I find it, well, Mr. Speaker, it's sad. It's a sad day here in Saskatchewan when we are unable to trust people's input.

Mr. Speaker, my comments in this area — whether they be on the immigration file, whether we're talking about students — this is an overall approach that we have to take. The Labour Market Commission was set up to that, and I think there's been some damage inflicted on it. So at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister Responsible for Enterprise and Innovation has moved second reading of Bill No. 46. Pardon me. I thought I heard reference to committee. The member has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed.

### Bill No. 79

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 79 — The Education Amendment Act, 2009 (No. 2)/Loi n° 2 de 2009 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation** be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina-Dewdney.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased today to stand and comment on Bill No. 79, *An Act to amend The Education Act, 1995*. Mr. Speaker, this is a very

small amendment, but one that could have quite a significant impact in a number of ways, Mr. Speaker.

This amendment simply lengthens the period of time that a school of opportunity can remain in place, from two years to three years, at the discretion of the minister. But, Mr. Speaker, that raises a number of concerns. Is this change simply for political reasons, Mr. Speaker, so that schools would not have to be closed in a year of an election? Or is this truly about giving communities the opportunity to show that they have a plan and are in fact growing, and the need of that school may be required in years beyond that three-year period, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, on the surface this looks like simply extending that deadline beyond the next provincial election and if that's the purpose, Mr. Speaker, that makes no sense whatsoever. That simply allows the government not to have to make difficult choices in an election year.

Mr. Speaker, the more appropriate way to deal with this, the more appropriate way to deal with this, Mr. Speaker, would be to make the term indefinite. Because, Mr. Speaker, it is not always manageable, the eligibility or the potential of a community to grow within a short period of time. And, Mr. Speaker, if a community is showing signs of growth and the potential to reach a level that the school would be viable in a four-year period, would we want to shut that school down, Mr. Speaker, and then be faced with a situation where we're busing children extended periods of time, where if we would have left that school open one more year, those children would have been able to not have to be bused for an extended period of time?

So, Mr. Speaker, the concept of making it longer isn't necessarily a bad one but, Mr. Speaker, I believe it should be an indefinite period of time, reviewed each year by the minister in order to look at the individual circumstances that each community faces.

Mr. Speaker, on the surface, moving it from two to three years looks like simply a political move. If it's truly to give communities a longer period of time to show that they in fact can grow to a level that would require the school to remain in the community, well then we're very supportive of that. We're very supportive because we want our communities to grow and we want our children to go to school as close to home as possible. And we want those families to not have to see their children ride for hours on a school bus, Mr. Speaker. We all want that on both sides of the House — I'm sure we do. I'm sure that we all care about the children in rural communities, Mr. Speaker, who have to travel for hours on buses, potentially, to and from school.

But, Mr. Speaker, the more appropriate course of action would not be to extend it one year because on the surface that looks like simply a political move to get beyond the next provincial election. The appropriate course of action would be to make it indefinite, Mr. Speaker, and have an annual review by the minister. So the minister could in fact review what those communities are doing, the growth within the communities, the potential for growth over the next two or three years beyond that, Mr. Speaker, so that it's not a firm, hard deadline, so that we can be flexible to meet the needs of communities, meet the needs of families, meet the needs of those children in those

communities, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

The idea itself is not bad. But the change put forward limits the ability of that board of education, limits the ability of the community to have perhaps enough time to show that that school in their community is viable. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe we need to give communities the opportunity to show that in fact that they are growing; they're changing; new people are coming to the community. And that doesn't always necessarily occur in an absolute, defined time frame.

Mr. Speaker, the other concern I have is that we have been experiencing unprecedented economic growth in the province of Saskatchewan over the last about four years now. It's been growing and continuing to build. But we're now in an economic situation where that may, for a year or two, slow down, or at least for a period of time slow down because of factors outside control of our own province, factors that are affecting growth throughout the world. And we may not see that growth be as strong over the next number of months, or maybe year, year and a half, two years. And I'd hate for these communities to lose the opportunity simply because of an economic downturn.

Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility to do what's right for the families of Saskatchewan and for the children of this province. And, Mr. Speaker, extending it one year simply doesn't do that. More appropriately would be, as I had indicated earlier, to make it an indefinite period of time reviewed annually by the ministers. So in some cases it might be only one year if there shows no potential for further growth. It may be two years, it may be three, but it may be five in some extenuating circumstances where there is growth. And then perhaps, Mr. Speaker, no growth for a period of a year, but you can see that there is new businesses and new activity in the community developing. So we may have to go beyond the three years in order to do the right thing for both those communities and the children.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the attempt to lengthen the period isn't necessarily negative. It seems like sort of crass political move to make it beyond the next election. If that was the intent — and it may not have been the intent — but if it was I think it's not well thought through and, Mr. Speaker, I do believe an indefinite period of time that the minister reviews on an annual basis would be more appropriate.

We don't have hundreds of schools of opportunity in the province, Mr. Speaker. It's not like it's a burden, an overburden of work on the ministry or on the minister. So, Mr. Speaker, we firmly believe the idea of giving communities the opportunity and working with both the school boards, the communities, the families, and the children is very important.

But, Mr. Speaker, we need to have a plan that in fact helps communities and gives them the opportunity to show that potential to help. A new business doesn't come in and reach its full potential overnight. A community can't necessarily attract a new business and have it up and operating and the influx of potential new workforce in just a short period of time. Sometimes it takes two or three years or longer to develop and build its potential and grow. And if that's occurring, we need to

give that community and that school the opportunity to truly feel that growth and to truly see the changes that occur within the population of the community and the number of children in the school system.

So, Mr. Speaker, the concept of lengthening it, we don't disagree with. But we do believe that there should have been more thought taken in putting in place a program that allows greater flexibility, that would allow the community to make their case to the minister on an annual basis, for the school boards to review it and pass that information on to the minister. And of course ultimately the decision would be the minister's.

It's not a burden that I think is overburdensome, Mr. Speaker, because it isn't like there are hundreds of schools out there that would have to be reviewed annually. There's a few. And, Mr. Speaker, I think we should give the communities and the people of those communities, but most importantly the children, we should give the children the opportunity to keep their school. If in fact there's hope and there is growth occurring, Mr. Speaker, we should give those children every opportunity to keep their school. And, Mr. Speaker, those children are the ones that have to sit on the buses for hours. And I'm sure many members in this House understand that because many of us at one time or another have been on school buses for long periods of time.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's those communities that are showing the growth, that are trying to bring in new entrepreneurial development in their community and their area. It doesn't happen in a year. It doesn't happen in a fixed term necessarily. So I think we have to be flexible. And I think we need to develop public policy that's flexible to meet the needs of the people of the province of Saskatchewan. And I believe, as do my colleagues, that a fixed term doesn't necessarily allow for the flexibility for the needs of the community, the needs of the school divisions, the needs of the children most importantly, Mr. Speaker, and the children's parents who have to deal with these issues.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, we're in a situation where, although a minor amendment, although a minor amendment — I think one that has some merit — it doesn't go far enough to provide the assurances to communities that it should. Mr. Speaker, we would ask the minister to consider our position on this, to look at it from the point of view of community development.

The fact that we're not saying that you couldn't, if we're not seeing the type of enhancement in the community that would ensure that a school should be kept open, but we're just saying, make it indefinite; put a review process on an annual basis in place so that in fact the Ministry of Education can work with communities, can work with families and schools about what the future should be. And as I indicated earlier, when we're developing public policy we need to be flexible, but we also need to be willing to meet the needs of the people of the province of Saskatchewan which we're serving.

And I think when this amendment was put forward, the original legislation had a defined time frame of two years and I think the logical thing was to just increase it by a year. But I think if we take a step back and you look at the public policy initiative that was implemented with the concept of schools of opportunity, an indefinite term that is reviewed on an annual basis by the

Ministry of Education would in fact better meet the needs of the Ministry of Education, better meet the needs of the community, the school boards, the families, and most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the children which the school serves.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's a relatively simple concept to change it from a defined term to an indefinite period reviewed annually by the minister. But I do think that is better public policy. And it's not saying what was put forward is wrong; it's just saying that maybe it wasn't thought through in looking at all the possibilities. And in the construction of public policy, that's why we have debate here. That's why we work co-operatively on most pieces of legislation, and how we actually bring forward good public policy. And in the development of public policy, we as the opposition have a responsibility to talk to the issue and look at it and examine it, as do the members of government.

In looking at this particular piece, I think the public policy is both better served — as are the communities, families, and schools — by looking at this on an indefinite term with an annual review by the ministry. Because I'm sure all members of this House on both sides want to do what's best for the kids, and they want to do what's best for the communities. And in doing so we often put forwards on initial passes positions and legislation that, once you get a chance to take a sober second look at it, take a step back and look at it from a different perspective, there may have been better ways to tackle the problem. And in this particular case, we believe a better way to tackle the problem is in fact to make the term indefinite and put an annual review in by the ministry, by the minister, in order to meet the needs of those communities.

Mr. Speaker, I talked a little bit earlier about, you know, economic development in communities. From start to finish, there is no defined time frame that you can say that an entrepreneur comes to a community wishing to open a new business that may employ a number of people, which may bring new children to the community. That doesn't happen in a defined period of three months or six months or a year. It may take, in fact, three or four years for that business to reach its full potential. Even though the business plan may show in year 1 that it's going to employ 50 employees, it may take three or four or five years of development before it reaches that full, full capacity.

And at that full capacity, Mr. Speaker, there may be sufficient new children in the area to keep the school open. But halfway through that building up of the business, there may not be. But just keeping that school open an additional year or two may allow and may make good sense to keep a school in that community.

And, Mr. Speaker, I don't want us to pass up those opportunities. I think we have to be flexible. We have to be open-minded and we need to look at what's in the best interests of both — that business in attracting people to work in his business, but also the community itself, the school and those who are employed in the school, Mr. Speaker, but most importantly the children that go to that school.

Mr. Speaker, those children who may have started their education in the school, it means a great deal to children to be

able to continue to go to the school which they're accustomed to, they're used to. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we should not take that away from them without looking very carefully at what the viability of that school is over a longer period of time than just maybe two years.

Now I'm not saying, in some cases, the decision might be clearly made within a year. It may not even take the two years. But what we're saying is, make it an indefinite period of time and have it reviewed annually by the minister. And that review could take place by ministry officials in conjunction with school board officials and in conjunction with the community. I'm sure that we can come up with collectively an appropriate way to do that review on an annual basis, that everybody feels at least that they have had input into.

Mr. Speaker, I attended some of my schooling in very small schools in smaller communities, and those are very important years in my development, very important years to me. And I'd like those children in communities to have the same opportunities that I had, and I'm sure that many of you had as well and many of my colleagues on both sides of the House. Many of us who stand in this Chamber have attended some of these schools, smaller schools in smaller communities. And they're important to those communities, but most importantly, they're important to those children.

And, Mr. Speaker, we need to do what we can to put in place good public policy to ensure that if, if growth is occurring or the potential for growth exists, we give it an opportunity to flourish before we make a final determination on the viability of a school in a community or in the surrounding area, Mr. Speaker. In some cases we might have two or three schools within 25 miles of each other. Maybe some collective changes with growth in the area allows all of the schools to remain open, and makes it viable for all the schools to remain open in a meaningful, cost-affordable way.

But all we're saying, Mr. Speaker, is by making it an indefinite term, that we in fact — and reviewed annually by the minister — that we're developing better public policy than having a definite end date.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that members opposite have probably not spent a lot of time thinking about the concept of an indefinite period of time and reviewed annually by the ministry. I'd like them to take the opportunity to review that, in light of concerns raised by the opposition.

In our role in this legislature we're to talk about alternatives, we're to help implement good public policy, and we're to work collectively to meet the needs of the people of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, we'd like the government to re-examine their position on this issue, to look at it from a prospective of what are the needs of communities, the needs of the government, the needs of families, the needs of school boards, but most importantly, what are the needs of the children.

But, Mr. Speaker, there's nothing more important in our society than those who are going to ensure that those of us who are in the Assembly are looked after as we get older. Our children are our future. We want to give those children every opportunity to have a good quality education, as close to home as possible, Mr.

Speaker, because spending hours on a school bus, although many of us have had that opportunity, doesn't necessarily contribute to a good quality education.

So in developing our public policy and developing our position on schools of opportunities, let's be flexible enough to ensure that when we put this public policy in place that it does what we really desire to do. And that is to, in communities with the shrinking school population where the school may no longer be viable, but there is the potential for growth and there are things occurring that may indicate growth, that we examine what that potential growth is to see if that school should remain open.

[15:15]

And, Mr. Speaker, leaving the term indefinite, reviewed annually by the ministry, creates no overburden, doesn't create an unreasonable burden on either the community or the ministry, and in fact enhances public policy, takes a better position for the people of the province of Saskatchewan, takes a better position for the communities, and takes a better position most definitely for the children of our province.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we're discussing the development of public policy, a lot is talked about consultation, and is that consultation meaningful. And, Mr. Speaker, as we look at this particular change which on the surface may seem to be insignificant, was the consultation done with communities.

I'm sure they're grateful for the additional year. I would be if I was one of those schools, one of those communities that was impacted by a potential closure. I'd be extremely grateful for the additional year. But good public policy would state or would indicate for all of us that we should really put in place a system that allows us to evaluate in a more timely manner, with examining the potential of the community, and should not necessarily be time constrained as it is today. Now, Mr. Speaker, having said that, previously it was two years. This is better with going to three years, but more appropriately it would be an indefinite period examined each year by the ministry.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that the members opposite would probably agree with this. I think that when the legislation was initially put in place, the time frame was picked, and they've now determined the time frame doesn't necessarily meet the needs. But I'm not sure three years any more meets the needs than two years does. It is best to look at this from a more broadly, a broader public policy initiative and put in place a system that allows some flexibility, but allows ministerial oversight so that a minister can, on an annual basis, make a decision.

And, Mr. Speaker, I spent some time looking at this issue. I think that it's an important issue for the people of Saskatchewan. I think it's a very important issue to many communities. It's an extremely important issue to families. Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, this is about children. This is about children getting a quality education in their home community or as close to their home as possible. And, Mr. Speaker, we all have a responsibility to the children of Saskatchewan. We have a responsibility to develop good public policy, to implement good public policy, and most importantly, to give every child in Saskatchewan the opportunity to have the

best quality education they can at a school as close to their home as possible.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with that I have outlined very clearly my concerns and our need for a re-examination of this issue more than once, hoping the members opposite would pay some attention to the issue because this is a very important issue of public policy — important as I indicated to a variety of stakeholders, but most importantly, the children. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move that we now adjourn debate.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Regina Dewdney has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 79, *The Education Amendment Act, 2009*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 43

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 43** — *The Trespass to Property Act* be now read a second time.]

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to first of all take this opportunity to add the following points to Bill 43, *The Trespass to Property Act*, and I also wanted to thank the Assembly for certainly indulging with their time in hearing some of the concerns that I have in relation to this Act.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's really important to point out that the great Roman leader, Caesar, was warned before he was of course done away with, beware the ides of March. As you all know from history, that's a famous quote that everybody is aware of. And what I would tell folks is we often hear the warning. And we also hear the person that was warned. But we didn't hear about the person that did the warning, Mr. Speaker. And what I would point out to the Sask Party opposite and to the people of Saskatchewan is beware the ides of March — this March Bill, Mr. Speaker — when we talk about Bill 43, *The Trespass to Property Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this story and this Bill was spoken about on CBC radio. And I looked through the transcripts and I certainly followed the story with great interest. And there's a couple of comments that . . . People are allowed to comment on the story following the airing of that particular story. And I don't know the gentleman that made the conversation or made the comment on the CBC story, but I'll quote, Mr. Speaker:

I expect whomever is in opposition to closely examine all proposed legislation and offer appropriate criticism, so that the government's bills are sound and do the job they were drafted to do. I expected it of the Saskatchewan Party and now that they are the majority I expect it of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, *The Trespass to Property Act* is exactly what we're examining now, and as an NDP opposition we are going to clearly examine what the intent and what the role is, and what the purpose of this particular Bill is about. And as I mentioned at the outset of my comments, be very careful, beware of the ides of March, and beware of this particular March Bill because I think there're some serious ramifications and some serious issues that are attached to this particular Bill.

And, Mr. Speaker, people ought to pay very, very close attention to what this Bill is trying to do, and what this Bill is about. Now the minister, in trying to downplay the whole notion of this particular Act, indicates that it's to stop ATVs [all-terrain vehicle] and snowmobiles and other people that may be using mechanized vehicles to trespass on farmers' property.

And, Mr. Speaker, nobody wants to see trespassers in the fashion that we often see on TV or hear in the news of degrading land, being reckless, and being disrespectful to the landowner and so on and so forth. Nobody wants to see that aspect of Saskatchewan occur. And while the minister could say that's our intended target, we in the opposition and we in the NDP say, be very careful, Mr. Minister, because what you're asking for is not what you're going to get.

Often we see, Mr. Speaker, that this particular party is so inept at what they're trying to do, they try and move things forward, and they throw a whole bunch of other things in the back of some of these Bills. And what people don't realize is the net effect, like who are you going to affect, are you going to meet the intended objective, and what is the Saskatchewan Party's hidden agenda. What is their hidden agenda, Mr. Speaker?

And I propose today in the Assembly that *The Trespass to Property Act* is going to create some significant problems for Saskatchewan as we know it now, Mr. Speaker. I don't have a law degree; I've taken a few classes in post-secondary, but that's the extent of my post-secondary experience. But what I do know from the perspective of being a northerner and being a Saskatchewan person, is that land in Saskatchewan is always something we prize. Control of our land is so very important. There's so many people, including industry, and of course, including some of the folks that use the land for a number of purposes, whether it's recreational purposes, hunting, etc.

Now, Mr. Speaker, *The Trespass to Property Act*, it does create a new provincial offence of trespass, but you got to be very careful what you're asking for here. Because often what happens with the Saskatchewan Party is they don't know what they're doing, Mr. Speaker. They don't have a clue what they're doing.

And when you have simple Acts like the trespass Act, you say well, what does that do. Well the minister says, and I quote from the article that he spoke of. He indicated that it's intended to stop ATV users and people that are trespassing on properties from desecrating land or degrading property.

And I think one of the things that he also pointed out, and I think it's important that I quote that, is that he mentioned the fact that it will not stop his mother for berry picking. And I think certainly from that perspective, I think he intended to alleviate some of the concerns that maybe even his mother

expressed in terms of accessing land for berry picking.

But I would say as an NDP opposition at this day, that you got to be careful because what you're asking for here is a lot more than what the Act is proposing to do, Mr. Speaker. And those guys opposite, those guys opposite don't realize what they're doing. They intend, as we think, they intend to say okay, if somebody puts do not trespass sign on a building, or on some property, then guess what? The unions can't go there and protest. Well, Mr. Speaker, we believe that was their intent.

The second part of the trespass Act, from our perspective, is that, okay, we don't want ATVs and snowmobilers wrecking property and disrespecting the landowner and the farmer that occupy their land. And yes, we believe that's part of the problem as well. But the problem we have, Mr. Speaker, is that there are so many laws that are impacted by this simple Bill.

And that's why I say to the government and to the people of Saskatchewan — beware of this Bill. Because there are some serious ramifications on land access that we believe, as an opposition, is going to create a significant amount of problem to a number of parties, including the party that they're trying to help — and that of course are the agricultural producers and the farmers of this great province, Mr. Speaker.

I will point out that if you look at discussions of the Bill, who did they speak to, Mr. Speaker? Who did they consult with? And the whole notion of the trespass Act, what is their intended objective?

Now the minister says it's to stop ATVers and snowmobile from being disrespectful to landowners. Well don't we have an organization called Saskatchewan Government Insurance, and don't we have a traffic Act that really discourages folks from operating ATVs and snowmobiles illegally? Don't we have a snowmobile association that tries to organize snowmobilers in a respectful fashion to make sure that they're not out all over the place destroying land and destroying property? Don't we have all these rules and regulations, zoning and municipal by-laws, and the list goes on as to how we put rules and processes and procedures in for those that operate ATVs, those that operate snowmobiles in the manner that the minister described? Aren't those already covered in that particular aspect of governance of Saskatchewan?

And I would suggest that, Mr. Speaker, they are. So what is this Bill about? What is this Bill intended to do? And as in opposition, we have a lot of theories, Mr. Speaker, that this is a Bill designed to stop people from accessing land on a number of fronts and that, Mr. Speaker, is what I think the hidden agenda of the Saskatchewan Party is all about.

And I pointed out earlier again as you look at what the Bill's intended to do: do not trespass. If you trespass, you get a fine. So we turn around and we say, okay, did you speak to the Trappers Association in northern Saskatchewan about what we think is . . . what they believe — the trappers — when they have a trappers' area that they think that's their access to that particular land. If somebody comes and trespasses there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what's the net effect? What is the reaction?

Because quite frankly in the North, they have a lot of people

that are landowners as well as the South. Now you look at the Outfitters Association. So if you're an outfitter in southern Saskatchewan, and you've got an assigned operating area and you want to go and harvest the animals that you have legally a right to do so within a defined area of the region, to the operating area, now they go on to farm land that is posted. Are the outfitters now going to be charged for trespass? Because technically, Mr. Speaker, they could actually do that with this Bill. Now how are they going to overlap the outfitting association's needs and the rights of the farmer under the trespass Act, Mr. Speaker? And I don't think they've figured that out. I don't believe they've figured that out.

Have they talked to the First Nations people — who in their minds and their view and in their position, and they go back in history to the treaties — have they talked to the First Nations people and saying, look, this trespass Act doesn't allow you to go hunting over here anymore. If that farmer posts his land, then you can't go hunt over there because you could be charged for trespassing. Is that the case here, Mr. Speaker? I believe it is. And these guys aren't telling the whole truth when it comes to the issue of what the intended target is in relation to *The Trespass to Property Act*.

[15:30]

Now what if the First Nations say, well this area is our traditional territory, and our traditional territory has rights of ownership and of access. Now what's going to happen to these guys when the court case comes up and they get charged for trespassing, and the landowner says, well I don't want those guys hunting on my property. And another person says, well hold it, that's our traditional territory so we have a right to go and hunt there. So what's going to happen to that clash of ideals? Who will be charged there, Mr. Speaker? Who will be going to court if that occurs, Mr. Speaker?

The Métis Nation as well, under this whole notion of their role of the right to harvest and their right to hunt and their right to gather, like do they have a role to play in this whole trespass Act that these guys are moving forward? And one of the things that's important, I say to the First Nations and the Métis Nation themselves, is that they have always traditionally hunted in certain areas. They've always been very supportive and co-operative when it comes to working with the non-Aboriginal community on management of lands, on management of wildlife, and we have shared the land, Mr. Speaker. We have shared the land without fear of being charged. This Act now makes it very possible to be charged, Mr. Speaker.

As well, I find it kind of contradictory by the Saskatchewan Party when you look at some of the folks out there that hunt. Whether you're First Nations, Métis, or non-Aboriginal, a lot of people in our community, like in our province, like to hunt. And they love to hunt, whether it's duck, whether it's elk, moose, deer. There's a lot of excellent hunters in Saskatchewan and they love to hunt. And Saskatchewan has that reputation as a province that loves hunting and manages their wildlife quite well.

And what happened now last month, or last several weeks, the Saskatchewan Party government announced Sunday hunting's opening. So one week they give us Sunday hunting, the

following week introduce the trespass Act.

So my point is, you guys should make up your mind what you're going to do. Are you going to encourage hunting? Are you going to encourage participation of all groups in the management of wildlife? Are you going to foster a co-operative relationship between all the land users? Well this trespass Act doesn't do it, Mr. Speaker. There are some serious problems that many of us in this Assembly will start to see as a result of this Act, will start to see as a result of this Act, Mr. Speaker. And I'm right now today warning the people of Saskatchewan, beware of this Bill, because there are some serious ramifications that that party has not even thought for one second what they could be.

Why? Because they are . . . In that, they haven't consulted and they simply do not know what they are doing, Mr. Speaker. And that, I think, is a major problem for this province and the growth of our province, because we have to build together. And when you start to isolate people and alienate people through ideological Bills like this, Mr. Speaker, that's going to create and foster a lot of hard feelings between a number of groups.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I asked the question of whether this Act will have any effect on the landowners, encouraging more posting. Are we going to be seeing more posting of land as a result of this Act? Are we going to see more posting of land as a result of this Act? I suspect we are. I suspect we are.

And the other notion, Mr. Speaker, is that as you look at outfitters, one of the concerns that the outfitters had, the Outfitters Association are saying, well all the area, all of Saskatchewan, you should not be able to hunt in the province unless you go through a registered outfitter. Now what happens if the landowners become outfitters? What's going to happen to the existing outfitters, Mr. Speaker? All of a sudden, this Act begins to create some trouble for them. Will we see outfitters being charged for trespassing? Will we see the average person being charged for trespassing if they're out hunting? And will we see the average person picking berries charged with trespassing because the landowner doesn't want that particular individual on their land?

So as you look at the notion of traditional territory, look at the notion of the relationships built over the years. Look at the notion of how the non-Aboriginal people and Aboriginal people have coexisted, of how we have the right to harvest a provincial animal no matter what land we went on as long as you were respectful of that process. Mr. Speaker, that was working towards a co-operative model — a co-operative model — and that's what we stand for and that's what we represent.

Over there they're saying, no that's all gone out. Here you have a trespass Act that would have serious ramifications. Now what I tell First Nations and Métis people is, go ahead, make your land claim, go ahead and declare the traditional territory. Because all of a sudden, if the Supreme Court of Canada recognizes your provincial or your traditional territory, or the territory where you've hunted and fished for centuries, then does that trespass Act apply?

So let's take the industry's perspective now. Now industry comes into Saskatchewan and says, oh, I want to be able to

develop the resource 20 miles over here. But I can't now because your trespass Act is quite clear. Now they've got to turn around and say, oh, oh, we got a problem over here. This company wants to go and cross his land and this guy won't let them. Now what happens if a traditional territory claim comes along and says, oh no, no, that's our traditional territory. We're not allowing you to cross. We're not allowing you to trespass. What happens there, Mr. Speaker? Now what happens if a group of people decides to go hunting ducks or deer, and they're walking along and they're hunting and all of a sudden they get charged simply because somebody doesn't want them on their land?

Now is that the result we want for Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? The answer is no. I don't think those guys got themselves figured out in terms of what they do. The simple thing is you just start coordinating amongst yourselves. You have one minister promoting Sunday hunting and you have another promoting the trespass Act. Like, make up your mind. Are you going to work towards a common solution? Or are you going to make a bunch of individuals out of us at the end of the day that'll weaken our province and not build a future together? And, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what's . . . the trespass Act.

Another comment, another comment that's really important, Mr. Speaker, another comment that I think is relevant here, when you talk about the trespass Act, we think, we think that people should have a right to peacefully demonstrate. This is Canada. This is not Homeland Security office out of the States telling people you shouldn't or you can't do this. This is Canada. We're different from the States. So if people want to protest — guess what? — let them protest. If it's a peaceful protest — guess what? — let them protest. Because that's what makes Canada special; it makes Canada unique.

Now these guys want to Americanize our land rights. They want to Americanize how we do demonstrations, and they want to do all these other things, Mr. Speaker. Again I go back. They don't have a clue what they're opening here. They're opening a can of worms that they will not be able to control. And after they make a big mess of things, they'll be forced out of office and we've got to come and clean up the mess again. And, Mr. Speaker, we don't have an appetite to clean up another mess; especially when it comes to land rights, hunting rights, and Aboriginal rights. And all these values will clash under this Act, Mr. Speaker. And I think you, as well as all the people in Saskatchewan, need to be warned. We need to warn the people of Saskatchewan, you need to pay close attention to what is going on with this trespass Act.

As well I'll point out, when you look at some of the comments, some of the comments made . . . And I'll go to another comment as a result of the CBC story that I spoke of earlier. And the story said, and I quote:

Well spoken sir. The need to make sure to peaceful [demonstration] protest is essential in a free and fair democracy. It would be really stupid to not allow protests on public land/highway. I remember my dad peacefully taking part in a highway blockade with his combine about ten years ago and other people's . . . protests/picket line must not be broken over this. I am in trust that the wording of this Bill will be sufficient to prevent this from

happening.

That was another listener to that particular story, Mr. Speaker.

And can we trust that farmers in rural Saskatchewan that want to protest when they come to the Assembly and they block traffic, will they be charged under this Act? Well according to the Act the answer is yes. And will that government and will that minister charge those people that bring combines to the front of the Assembly or farm trucks and they post a sign, do not trespass, will they be charged under this Act? Well according to the Act, Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes. They can charge those individuals.

So we need to understand for every action these guys have there's a reaction out there, and it's very negative because they haven't thought these things through, Mr. Speaker. So I go back to the list. Have you consulted with the Trappers Association? Have you consulted with the Outfitters Association? Have you talked to the First Nations? Have you talked to the Métis nation? Have you talked to the hunters who see a Sunday open sign for hunting, but all of a sudden on this side you also see a trespass Act coming into effect? Mr. Speaker, have you looked at the effect of more posting of land? Have you talked to the Wildlife Federation? Have you talked to the hunters that enjoy hunting these provincially owned animals if you will, whether it's deer, moose, or elk or ducks? If they're on private property, whose animal is that? Whose animal is that? Have they thought that out?

And the answer is, Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. They have not thought it out. And as a result of having an inept government that proposes because their philosophy believes it, that we need to protect private land more, what the net effect is, you're going to divide and you're going to segregate Saskatchewan and it's going to hurt more people — including the ones you pretend to help — than ever, ever before, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm telling folks out where I am, beware of this March Bill. Because whether the minister wants to downplay the seriousness of this matter, it is a serious matter. So whether you're hunting animals or whether you're exploring for oil and gas or whether you're simply picking berries, this Act will subject you to a trespass action if the owner, the farmer, or the landowner decides that's what he wants to do.

And before, Mr. Speaker, there were so many of the agricultural community when I served as the minister of SERM [Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management] that I know donated their land and they donated a lot of money. They wanted to make sure they kept their land in pristine condition. They are connected to the land, they respect the land, and they contribute to the quality of land in Saskatchewan. So they come along and many of them didn't post their land. Many of them didn't post their land. All they asked was be respectful of the property and the land. And as a result of what they're trying to do they're trying to make sure . . . Well what we'll do with this Bill is we'll get farmers happy with us because we can charge people for trespassing their land.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what's going to happen is, the net effect is you're going to get a lot more people engaged. You're going to

have the repercussions if there's a protest in the city by the agricultural community — which we have seen before — and what's going to happen then? What's going to happen then? And what happens now to the traditional territories or the traplines that the northern people have or the forestry agreements that are out there? Are all that considered private property? Mr. Speaker, is that considered private property?

So my notion of bringing this Bill through, quite clearly, in my opinion, is they have not thought the Bill out, Mr. Speaker. They have not consulted, which is very dangerous. And what they don't realize is the net effect of some of their philosophical blinders that they have on. You're going to create a province that is less tolerant and less co-operative, Mr. Speaker. And the big issue that'll drive Saskatchewan's people apart is land. And the big weapon that'll be used to protect land is simple things like a trespass Act that they don't realize will certainly foster a lot of misunderstanding between groups.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at a number of other issues that I spoke about — the supporters of the RAN program, the representative area network; the people that want to have ecological sites that are protected; you know, people that are active with the hunting aspect of Saskatchewan; the hotels, the gas bars, the grocery stores that see a bump in business when you have American hunters come out here — and you look at the protests that we have in Saskatchewan over a number of things, I don't think this Bill is going to do it. I think it's going to create such a significant backlash and it's going to alienate and it's going to isolate people to a degree we have never seen before. All because, all because these guys are saying, well we want to stop ATVs and Ski-Doos from going on land.

Well my goodness, you've got something called the highway traffic Act. My goodness, you've got something like SGI. You got the snowmobile association, as I mentioned earlier. All these entities and all these groups are intended to make the use of ATVs and Ski-Doos and other all-terrain vehicles licensed, properly used, and of course, organized in terms of how they're able to use these vehicles. And yet they come along and they say, well we need this Act to do this.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we don't buy it one bit. We don't buy it one bit. They are so desperate to hang on to the votes they have right now, they'll do anything and promise everything. And what they don't realize, when you try and promise to be everything to everybody, you end up being nothing to all. And that's exactly what's going to happen as a result of this Bill. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, I for one will not be supporting this Bill because there are so many problems with this Bill that the minister has not thought it out.

[15:45]

And we haven't heard one bit from the minister about how he's going to protect all the interests attached to hunting, attached to access the land, attached to the development of some of the resources underneath that land, attachment to the hunter group, attachment to First Nations and Métis rights to hunt and gather, attachment to the non-Aboriginal community that like to go out and picnic and pick berries, and perhaps do a little bit of hunting while they're out there with their sons and their grandsons or granddaughters — all those options now come



into question.

Because if I'm a landowner and I have an opportunity to say, no I don't want people on my land, this Act allows me to do that. This Act allows me to do that. And guess what? If you don't want to get off my land, then I'm going to charge you with trespassing. I'm going to phone a peace officer and say, I want this guy off my land. And guess what? You'll get fined, and that peace officer will remove you from that land.

So, Mr. Speaker, what these guys are doing is they're Americanizing our land issues. They're Americanizing how we deal with the shared resource of wildlife and mineral resources and the shared pleasure of this land. They're trying to Americanize that and segregate — and segregate — the province of Saskatchewan.

And they're sitting here saying, oh no, no, no, we're not trying to do that. Well, Mr. Speaker, the intended consequence is you are doing that. You are doing that. You're doing exactly that.

You talk to an outfitting association member? No. Have you talked to a Wildlife Federation member? No. Have you talked to any particular Aboriginal groups? No. And now they say this Bill is going to be great. Hey, well guess what? You can go pick berries.

Mr. Speaker, I don't buy it for one, one bit. These are the questions I have for the people out there that really know how to look after these things and really listen to what they're saying — these guys are not doing that of course — but listen to these questions that we have as an opposition. What circumstances make this Act necessary? What circumstances make this new Act necessary?

Like I said, if they want to stop ATVs, well they have laws for that. We have licensing for that. We have associations that work with the ATV industry.

Who will benefit from the passage of this Act? Nobody, Mr. Speaker. Nobody will benefit from the passage of this Act because it's going to affect unions, it's going to affect people going on land, it's going to affect peaceful protest by the farm community when they drive their combine down on Albert Street here. Nobody will be protected, Mr. Speaker.

Are there specific activities or problems that this Act is intended to address? And if so, what might they be?

Here's another question for them, Mr. Speaker: are there any specific examples of situations where this Act would be seen to be particularly useful? Will it be particularly useful? The answer is no. You will create a new Saskatchewan that is less tolerant and more segregated and certainly not sharing in the common vision that Saskatchewan has always been proud of, Mr. Speaker.

Who was consulted before this Act was drafted? I can answer that question. Not one person, Mr. Speaker. Not one. And that goes back to my issue about leadership, is you don't have to listen to all the advice you get. You don't have to listen to all the advice you get. But a smart leader would listen to it. You don't have to use it all, but you listen. You listen to the people.

A good leader, 80 per cent of the time is listening and 20 per cent of the time is adding to the solution.

These guys don't listen. They don't add a solution. They are just driven by their political velocity. That is very, very dangerous — especially when you see Acts like this come along and they try and make it look as innocuous as they can. And, Mr. Speaker, as an opposition, we don't buy that one bit. There's no trust. There's no confidence on this side on the Saskatchewan Party, and we'll never have that trust or confidence in them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this new Act, it definitely requires further review. And we're going to do that to determine whether its passage may have unintended consequences. That's a question that really attracted my attention.

Now what happened to the whole notion of duty to consult, where the First Nations and the Métis people have what they view as the important thing, the duty to consult? And what the Saskatchewan Party has is way beyond what they interpret. So there's two interpretations behind duty to consult.

This trespass Act has a lot of ramifications on First Nations and Métis people that might want to go hunt in a certain area and they've always hunted in that area before. Is that not considered traditional territory? And should they have been consulted on this? Well the Sask Party would say, well we had a public meeting about five months ago on this duty to consult. Well we had it over here. Oh, you guys weren't there? Yes well, okay, well we're done with duty to consult. We had it already.

And most First Nations and Métis people would say . . . Well you know what? There's a lot of phrases they'd use, but for the sake of this particular hallowed hall of democracy, I'm not going to use those phrases. But their interpretation of duty to consult and accommodate is a heck of a lot different from what the Sask Party has been touting as what the answer would be under duty to consult.

There are some radical differences. There's this huge divide between what they interpret and what they interpret as duty to consult. And, Mr. Speaker, we've got to wrap our heads around that particular aspect because it's going to have a lot of ramifications.

Now I had a lot of experience with different organizations in Saskatchewan, whether it's the Wildlife Federation or whether people that wish to support and protect land through the RAN program, the representative area network. And I'm telling you I've seen some amazingly beautiful people that want to do one simple thing, is build Saskatchewan together — non-Aboriginal people and Aboriginal people. They want to build together.

So what does this do? What does this do? It divides them. It divides them. And you're not trying to protect agricultural land. That's not what you're intending to do here. Your intention is so ideologically driven that it's blinding you of the consequences of this Bill. You're talking about private property rights. Well let me talk a bit more about what I think is going to happen.

What's going to happen is these people that are not allowed to

hunt in certain areas of land because they're posted, they'll be charged. Farmers driving down Albert Street to protest a lack of farm action, they'll be charged. Mom and dad and their sons going on hunting on posted land, they could be charged under this Bill. Somebody going out that they hunted for years on certain land, they could be charged under this Bill. People that want to go berry picking or even picnicking on certain areas, they can be charged under this Bill. People that want to go hunt on Sundays and they're not given permission, they can be charged under this Bill. An outfitter, that all of a sudden I post my land saying, you're not allowed to outfit here any more, they can be charged.

So you look at the trespass Act and I can't figure it out what the intended purpose of this Bill is. What is the intended purpose of this Bill? I'm trying to find that out, Mr. Speaker, and so far I've had no answers.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. Order. I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, let's say I turn our attention now to industry, whether it's uranium development, whether it's forestry development, or whether it's oil and gas. Now does this create more problems for them? Does this create more problems for them? I would suggest that it will. I would suggest that it will. What happens now, some Indian band or some municipality or some organization or some landowner says, well this is my territory and you're not coming on my territory unless you have my permission. And if you don't have my permission and you come on, I'm going to charge you under *The Trespass to Property Act*. I'm going to charge you.

And, Mr. Speaker, they haven't thought that out. They haven't thought that out. So in their hurry to try and appease and trying to attract more political support for them, they are creating some dangerous precedents here as a result of this Bill. And the Minister of Justice ought to know that. Because after all, he is the Attorney General for Saskatchewan. He knows that for every action that they undertake, as innocuous as it may seem, there are some serious legal ramifications attached to some of this action, Mr. Speaker.

So my point is, my point is, has he thought that through? And the answer simply is no. Because any person who has any kind of legal background, of sufficient legal background will know that you start opening up access and trespass laws and so on and so forth, you are creating some significant problems in a lot of other areas. It's not just one little tidy, neat, little Act. There are a number of Acts that'll be impacted. And for every action under this Act, there will be reaction in a number of other areas. And that, Mr. Speaker, is what we're worried about as an opposition.

And I say to people out there listening to this particular debate, and people that are in the know, and students that may be watching the debate under *The Trespass to Property Act*, you got to really study this hard and heavy. And I would encourage them to participate and research and offer that help and that research to those guys opposite because what you have is a bunch of rookies trying to figure out how to govern.

And as a result of them not knowing how to govern, they make

silly mistakes like this, that make Saskatchewan weaker by using land as a wedge between a number of groups — whether it's the Wildlife Federation, whether it's oil and gas industry, whether it's the Aboriginal people, whether it's the hunter. And, Mr. Speaker, that's not the Saskatchewan that I want for my grandchildren and my children, and I don't believe anybody wants that kind of Saskatchewan.

If you love the American model so much of land ownership, I will tell the Saskatchewan Party, move there. Pick up your belongings and move to the States because in Saskatchewan, we're a different province. We're a different province. We know that the agricultural community built this province; we know that. We know that the oil and gas industry and the uranium industry and the forest industry are going to continue building this province; we know that. We know, and we want to include Aboriginal people. We want to include non-Aboriginal people. We want to include the producers. We want to include the students, the cities. We want to build together. And this trespass Act, Mr. Speaker, is going to create some significant problem. It's going to segregate and it's going to hurt a lot of people.

So the question I have for the members opposite, if some guy goes on the land on private property anywhere in the South, and trespasses, they'll be charged. And according to the Act, the answer would be, yes. Some farmer comes along on his combine and blocks traffic here on the main road, under the Act they'll be charged. If some guy wants to go hunting with his son that he's gone to traditionally for years to hunt, they could be charged under the Act.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Act doesn't help anybody. It doesn't help anybody. Because that's the biggest question that I have, is who is the Act supposed to help? It doesn't help anyone that I can see, Mr. Speaker. And that's one of the most important things that I want to get up today, as an opposition member, and tell the people of Saskatchewan. The passage of Bill 43 is going to create more problem than ever for Saskatchewan.

And that's why as an opposition, I hope my colleagues join me and vote against this Bill. I hope they join me, and we vote against this Bill because unless you start understanding the ramifications of what you do to some of your Bills as a rookie government, you're not going to fully understand the people of Saskatchewan. And therefore, you'll not get the respect of the people of Saskatchewan.

That's why, that's why, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of people out there losing faith fast in the Saskatchewan Party. Not because the money that they have spent, that we left them — they spent that already — that's gone. The rainy day fund is gone. And the rainy day is yet to come. But they put Acts like this that they don't think through. And in a hurry to try to get things done, they put Acts like this without giving proper thought.

And yes, the NDP are those cagey old veterans that people say, well maybe we'll change them for awhile — see how these young guys are, or these younger, this new party acts. Well, Mr. Speaker, we've seen that act before, and Saskatchewan is still paying — is still paying — for that act, Mr. Speaker, of the late '80s.

And I say to the people of Saskatchewan, be very careful because what you got is, you got folks in the Saskatchewan Party that don't have a clue what they're doing. They'll say anything before the election and do nothing after the election. After they spend their money and put us back in deficit and back in debt, then all of a sudden they'll be gone. They'll get jobs somewhere and they'll be gone. And what do we inherit? Not only get more and more problems, but you're going to inherit much more of a less tolerant Saskatchewan if we let these guys get away with some of these Acts that they're trying to bring forward.

Mr. Speaker, I wish I had the opportunity to speak from the highest hill in Saskatchewan, and as loud as I can, to tell the people of Saskatchewan, watch out for these Acts. Watch out for this action; watch out for these guys because they don't have a clue what they're doing when it comes to Acts like Bill 43. The trespass Act is going to create some significant problems.

And they laugh across the street, and they laugh across the way. They think it's funny.

Now what happens now if a First Nations person comes along and says, a leader says, well this is my traditional territory, right around here. And so that's our property, that's our territory. We don't want no trespassing. What happens then? What happens then? They're going to be told no, it's not your territory. And yet they talk about traditional territory.

Again I will say loud and clear, their interpretation of the duty to consult and accommodate is far different from what the First Nations and Métis people believe is the duty to consult and accommodate. And, Mr. Speaker, accommodating the duty to consult and accommodating doesn't mean having one or two meetings and telling us what you're doing. You should give them prior knowledge of what's going on. They should know of every company that has any interest in that land, Mr. Speaker. They should know that.

And they should also make sure that Acts like this don't further erode their treaty rights, or their Métis rights, or even the traditional rights of non-Aboriginal people to hunt, to gather, to access land, and to enjoy the land that Saskatchewan has. What's happening is once again we're seeing the privatization agenda, whether it's in the Crowns, or whether it's health care, and now in the land issue.

[16:00]

And my goodness, Mr. Speaker, this province was built on a co-operative spirit. It was built by people working together — First Nations, Métis, the German community, the Icelandic community, and the list goes on as to how many groups and how many organizations built this province. And we built it based on co-operation, not on Acts that divide us and segregate us.

And I say to the people today in Saskatchewan, and especially some of the students that may be watching this, is please help these guys out because they need help. What they don't realize is when they put simple Acts like this through, there are some significant consequences. So figure it out, and if you can't figure it out, all you got to do is ask for help.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the agricultural community — before they get too wound up in their laughter over there — that the agricultural community has a profound amount of respect from this particular party and this government and this individual and the Aboriginal community. We do. We know the backs, the back of Saskatchewan, the farm, is based on the producer, the farmer, the people that really make a difference. And we respect them. We respect them and we see that they do a lot of hard work and they built this province and we respect that as well. We built it side by side.

And the important thing is this is going to affect them too. This is going to hurt them. At first they may say, well yes, maybe better control of my land would be a net effect. But what happens if I go down to Regina with my combine — I'll say it again — would I get charged there? What happens if my son who works for a union goes to protest in front of one of the shops in my community because he's not getting fair wages? Well guess what, your son gets charged too.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of ramifications here, a lot of ramifications. And these guys have not figured it out. They have not figured it out. The Saskatchewan Party are so inept, and they've been out of government so long that they don't even know what to do when they become government. And that's scary, Mr. Speaker, that's very scary. And the problem is if you've been so programmed and so ingrained in opposition, that when you win government you still don't know you've won, then you've got to stop making Acts like this come forward until you can figure out how to be government.

And today, Mr. Speaker, we've seen no evidence of that. None whatsoever. They don't have a clue what they're doing. And comes everything from Bills like this to some of their ideological positions on things like health care and the Crowns.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note that I for one don't take the position of the Minister of Justice that it doesn't hurt anybody; it's focused on the ATVers and the snowmobilers that disrespect property. I don't buy that for one bit. That's not what this is about. This is not about that whatsoever. And when he continues to insult the people of Saskatchewan's intelligence by saying, oh no, it doesn't do that. Then the people of Saskatchewan say, no way, we don't believe you, as the opposition doesn't believe you.

And we're going to continue holding them to account. And, Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue opening up, opening up the sores left behind by some of the Acts that that party is trying to push forward. Sores that will begin to fester and divide our great province and our great community called Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'll close with this comment, and I'll offer an incident comment myself. Anything we do as a government, or we did as a government is all about economic and social justice. If it doesn't help with the good, the greater good of Saskatchewan, then we ought not to do it. We got to remember that, the total vision for the entire province. And when you start picking winners and losers as the trespass Act does, it becomes a major problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, for every person . . . [inaudible] . . . under the trespass Act, charged under the trespass Act, Bill 43, I say to

them — whether it's a farmer processing with his combine or whether it's a son hunting with his father or whether it's somebody berry picking — that if you're charged under the trespass Act, then you thank the Saskatchewan Party. You thank the Saskatchewan Party for that charge. Because what happens is, they already have people that could be charged under the automobile Act, under SGI, under the highway traffic Act. They could be charged for operating illegally ATVs and also snowmobiles. And the respectful snowmobiler out there, snowmobiling around, guess what? You could be charged.

But for every charge — and they better be consistent because that's what they're supposed to do as government — they can thank the Saskatchewan Party for this new Act and those new charges because in their inept position as government, they haven't consulted and they haven't thought out these Bills long and hard enough. And the net effect is, you have a weak government that's going to push through certain philosophical Bills. And that's going to end up hurting all of the people of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. This Bill has some dire consequences. And this Bill is going to create some significant problems, legal problems. This Bill is going to hurt everything, everybody from industry to First Nations to the agricultural community.

And this government is hell-bent on getting it through. Why? Because they want to Americanize our land system in Saskatchewan. And I say to them, if you love America so much, see you later. We got a province that, if you move out there, we'll do the work. And we'll take over again, and we'll show you how it's done, Mr. Speaker.

So at the end of the day, whether it's Iran supporters, the trappers, the oil industry, the forestry people, the people that enjoy the recreational value of the land, they're all going to be impacted and affected.

And mark my words, Mr. Speaker, mark my words. This is going to be a very uncomfortable Bill at the end of the day for that party because they're going to see the consequences were not intended by them. They're going to see in spades some of the consequences that some of us think were not intended, but I believe were intended fully by the Saskatchewan Party.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't support this Bill. I will not be supporting this Bill in any way, shape, or form. And I move that we adjourn the motion on this Bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 43, *The Trespass to Property Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 9

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Gantefer that **Bill No. 9** — *The*

*Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2008* be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to add some comments about this particular piece of legislation. And I'm going to be relatively brief but I have a couple of things that I want to say.

Basically this is a very short Bill. It has just a few provisions in it, and some of them are minor amendments that correct some problems around pensions. But there's one particular clause that relates to the whole double-dipping issue for people who are on defined benefit programs.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to speak to that one specifically and say this: this particular piece of legislation was brought forward to our government on many occasions to bring forward this exact provision. We had a legislative instruments committee that was comprised of ministers and members on the government side. We had a very thorough discussion of this particular issue, and it was our considered opinion after much discussion that this kind of provision was not acceptable to the public of Saskatchewan, and so we did not bring this forward.

Mr. Speaker, I was very surprised that this came forward from the government when it had been rejected so many times before. And, Mr. Speaker, my only conclusion is that the government does not now have a committee of private members and ministers who back Bills before they come to the legislature, and that therefore this one has shown up on the floor of the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think that not having proper processes within government caucus should be a reason to bring forward Bills that are not acceptable to the public. So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to adjourn debate on this particular matter.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 9. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried.

#### Bill No. 68

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 68** — *The Arts Professions Act/Loi sur les professions artistiques* be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand today and speak to Bill 68, *The Arts Professions Act*, Mr. Speaker. When we think of the things that we love in this province, there are many things we really do love about this province — many different people, many different experiences.

Among the things that we as Saskatchewan people love the most are our artists and the arts, the many contributions that the arts community, the art sector provides to our province.

Whatever the situation that we find ourselves in as individuals in this province — whether it's the times of joy or the times of sadness, the times of reflection, and perhaps the times of thinking to the future — I know for each of us here we can think of experiences we've had with the arts community that really encapsulates what our emotions are and our thoughts at that time. Whether it's theatre, whether it is graphic arts, whether it is any type of the arts sector, Mr. Speaker — music as well of course — we know that artists play a very crucial and important role in the life of Saskatchewan. And that's something that I'm sure members on both sides can most certainly agree with.

The Bill 68, *The Arts Professions Act*, much of the discussion around this Bill has been on the floor of this legislature and in the broader Saskatchewan community for some time. Many of the topics that are discussed are not new ones, Mr. Speaker. The status of the artist Act which we saw under the previous administration and legislation that was brought forward, dealt with many of these same matters, Mr. Speaker. And this was part of a larger, federal initiative that we saw where this type of legislation was being presented in various jurisdictions around the country with the hope of elevating and providing more stability to the arts sector.

You know, in my intro comments when I talked about how important the arts community is to the province because of their importance, because of the important role that they've had in society, they deserve to be treated with the same respect and have the same stability and predictability in their business affairs as other sectors in the provincial economy.

And the initial legislation that was presented under the previous NDP government, the status of the artist Act dealt with many of these issues that would bring a greater deal of stability and predictability to the business affairs for artists in the province.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, when that legislation was being looked at in the previous term, the legislation was not completed; it was not passed into law. And there were a number of components, Mr. Speaker, to the legislation. But the sticking point that was the issue that really brought the legislation to a halt through the actions of the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, was the component of collective bargaining.

And it was the members opposite who had such . . . who were so uncomfortable with the aspect of collective bargaining that they chose not to allow the previous legislation to go forward, Mr. Speaker.

We can see from a *Leader-Post* article of November 21, 2008, and the title says "New act defines professional artists." Mr. Speaker, the individuals that commented in this article — some from the arts community — are commenting that there are aspects of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, where progress is being realized and that are positive steps for the arts community.

However, Mr. Speaker, the comments do suggest that it's not going far enough because of the absence of the collective

bargaining portion. And we know it is the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, who do have such discomfort with that component. We can read from the article, there's a quote, and this is speaking to the previous Bill that was looked at by this legislature before I was a member, Mr. Speaker. The quote is:

However, that bill stalled in committee as the then-opposition Saskatchewan Party raised concerns with the collective bargaining portion of the legislation.

[16:15]

So, Mr. Speaker, we know why the legislation was not realized and completed in the earlier instance when it was debated in this legislature.

So this Bill, Mr. Speaker, has a different name which is one indication that things have gone in a different direction. It's called *The Arts Professions Act* which is unique in vis-à-vis other Canadian provinces where this type of legislation has come into effect. A Bill can be noted for the aspects that are included in a Bill. We can look at the various provisions that are in the Bill.

As equally interesting in many instances, Mr. Speaker, are the things that are left out of the Bill and how telling that is. And in this case, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is silent on the collective or sector bargaining for artists, something that the arts community is very clear that it continues to support and would like to pursue.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's fine to have legislation that's brought forward and accomplish some of the things that needs to be accomplished. But it only makes sense to, when you bring in legislation, to make sure that it fully captures everything that needs to be discussed; that it fully addresses all of the issues.

When we look at the contributions that artists make to our province, it's only fair that they have the predictability and stability in their lives. There are many artists who have been active in one area of the arts sector for many, many years. But because of the nature of that sector and the laws that are in place that govern the affairs of artists with those that are contracting their services, they might find themselves now, Mr. Speaker, getting closer to retirement and they don't have the benefits and the stability that other professions and other individuals would have in this province.

And that's a concern, because we as the official opposition, and I know members opposite would agree with this as well, we want the best for every Saskatchewan resident in the province and for all the professions that are active in our province and make Saskatchewan such a great place to live.

So that's why it's troubling, Mr. Speaker, that what we see with Bill 68, *The Arts Professions Act*, what we see here is a Bill that captures some of the items that need to be addressed for the arts community, but it fails in so many others. And as I mentioned before, we can look at the aspects of a Bill that are presented in the text and we can read what it wants to do, but as equally telling, Mr. Speaker, when looking at a piece of legislation, equally telling are the aspects that are left out. And in this situation, there's no better example than Bill 68, *The Arts*

*Professions Act*, that clearly is responding to some of the needs in the community, is responding to some of the aspects, some of the changes that the arts community would like to bring to increase stability and predictability to their business affairs. But it doesn't go far enough, Mr. Speaker. It's only doing half of what actually needs to be done and accomplished at the end of the day.

It is puzzling, Mr. Speaker, why the current government would choose to change the name of the Bill. I think that is an indication where they realized, I mean, that they were accomplishing some of the things that the previous legislation would, but they knew they had to put their own brand on it. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, it's a brand that stands for and reminds people of a half measure. It reminds people that only half of the things are being accomplished in this Bill that actually need to occur for the arts community.

Also the timing of this, Mr. Speaker, coming into effect in 2010 also raises some concerns. And it is sad and disappointing that for me and for many members in Saskatchewan, certainly the arts community, that the good opportunity that occurred for the status of the artist Act, that that good opportunity was not seized. And instead, we are left in a position now where we find ourselves in the legislature here debating Bill 68, but debating a measure that doesn't go the distance, debating a measure that does not meet all of the needs of the arts community.

When we look at some of the responses to the arts community, they'll admit, as will I, that there are aspects in Bill 68 that are important. There are components that are a continuation of the discussion that took place earlier and elements that the arts community calls for.

But we also know that the arts community wants more. We know that their right for collective bargaining or sector bargaining is important to them because it's part of the larger piece and the larger puzzle, that will bring the stability and the predictability to the lives of the arts community.

We know we value the artists in our province and all members would agree to that, Mr. Speaker. We know there's been earlier legislation discussed in this House that was not passed, earlier legislation that met the needs of the arts community. We know, Mr. Speaker, that it was the members opposite who had problems with the legislation and chose to have this legislation stall in committee. We know that there is a new Bill in front of us, Bill 68, and we know that it addresses some of the issues that need to be addressed in the arts community. But sadly, Mr. Speaker, we also know that this Bill is leaving out a lot of important aspects that would bring the stability and the proper and appropriate benefits to the art sector.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know there have been some members from my side who have commented on the sad situation we find ourselves in with Bill 68. And I know there will be other members from my side who will want to comment on this and further explore some of the ways that Bill 68 meets their requirements, but more importantly, many of the ways that Bill 68 does not meet the needs of the arts community because of the measures that it leaves out.

So given that there are more members who would like to

discuss this, Mr. Speaker, I would move that we adjourn debate at this time. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Massey Place has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 68. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried.

### Bill No. 73

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 73 — *The University of Saskatchewan Amendment Act, 2008*** be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to get my remarks for the record. Mr. Speaker, the university amendment Act, Bill No. 73 comes about because of a request made by the university that noted . . . in terms of some of the legislation in selecting a chancellor, Mr. Speaker. Also in there was the two-term limit set in existing legislation that they wanted removed and the way of appointment, the voting for the chancellor.

Mr. Speaker, this is an interesting Bill. Interesting from the standpoint that in fact here was something . . . the questions that we often ask about the Bills, ask of the Sask Party, that it is amazing — that it is amazing — every once in awhile that they get it, Mr. Speaker. The light bulb comes on and here it is where the question we asked, where did this come from? Why are we doing this? And here is the clear answer: the University of Saskatchewan requested it and they are doing it.

Mr. Speaker, we value the universities that we have, the post-secondary institutions. We see that the universities play an important role in our society. And, Mr. Speaker, the campus of today is not just an academic institution, Mr. Speaker, as the member from The Battlefords said. He said, campuses today have research facilities, Mr. Speaker. They are a place of developmental opportunities, disease control. Mr. Speaker, the scientific community is benefiting people all over the place, and we are all proud of the University of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, but what this Bill did is it allowed for debate, Mr. Speaker. It allowed for debate because it was clear we knew where this Bill was coming from, and our members could pose questions, Mr. Speaker. The member from Nutana raised concerns because she had voted in past elections on a chancellor, and she felt that this was important. So, Mr. Speaker, we will probably not have problems supporting this Bill as it stands here. And that is good for the Assembly and it is good here.

But I just want to make those points, Mr. Speaker, that here it is quite clear what is driving this Act. It sets out the conditions and, quite clearly, the amendments that are required. And then we have time to debate because we understand where these are

coming from, unlike the other Bills that we saw earlier today or the track record here that we have seen. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would adjourn debate on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 73. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried.

### Bill No. 71

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 71 — *The Innovation Saskatchewan Act*** be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today it's my pleasure to speak to Bill No. 71, which is *The Innovation Saskatchewan Act*. And frankly I have a fair amount that I wish to speak to on this. We have a situation where the government introduced an Act called the innovation Act, and they would have the people of Saskatchewan believe that somehow they've invented innovation. And the truth of the matter is innovation is what Saskatchewan has been about since long before any of us in this Chamber were born.

We have a history full of innovation, as I've mentioned. We have done things like created the synchrotron here in Saskatchewan. It's the only synchrotron in Canada. And that happened in the last decade, when it came into being. But as I say, it's the only one in Canada.

We have the petroleum technology research institute right here in Regina, attached to the U of R, University of Regina. That's a very innovative notion, and it helped the oil industry to develop new and innovative ways of bringing ever more oil out of the oil reserves that are in the ground, all of which is worth literally hundreds of millions of dollars to the Saskatchewan treasury. So we have a situation where research in areas like oil recovery tends to pay many times what the initial investment is.

We have the International Test Centre for Carbon Dioxide Capture, again at the University of Regina, a leading-edge development innovation. We have the Innovation and Science Fund to leverage funding from the federal government and other national bodies, in other words to work together with the more senior level of government and others as on special projects as it may happen, as it may be required, as may enhance Saskatchewan's economic future if I can describe it that way, or environmental future or however.

We have the Saskatchewan Research Council which has just a tremendously positive history. The good people at the Research Council are constantly engaged in projects. Some of them seem to be standard projects that are ongoing for a lengthy period of time, and others tend to be short-term in nature. But whatever they're charged with, they inevitably seem to be up to the task and they just do terrific work on behalf of, or not on behalf of

so much as to the benefit of all of the people of Saskatchewan and even well beyond that.

We have fostered commercialization of new technologies in enhanced oil recovery. We've done all sorts of things in Saskatchewan in very innovative ways. We set up the first fibre optics network in the world through SaskTel; that was an innovation that was born right here in Saskatchewan. So I want right off the hop to make it very clear that this innovation Act isn't inventing innovation. There has been much innovation over the years.

What troubles me too about this particular Bill, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, is I see this as being a say one thing and do exactly the opposite Bill from the Sask Party government. Say one thing and do the opposite. I'm fairly confident that the overwhelming majority of people in Saskatchewan would believe that the government, the current government members say and have said repeatedly that they should not be picking winners and losers. They should not be investing taxpayers' money in winning or losing propositions, and yet that's exactly what this particular Bill is set up to do, is to fund winners and losers. And I will come to that particular theme; I'll return back to that in a minute.

[16:30]

I want to refer, Mr. Speaker, to the minister responsible for the innovation Act and some of the words that he used when he was introducing this Act, December 2, 2008. So this is in *Hansard*. I'm not inventing words and I know that, I do believe that the minister firmly believed the words, but they raise flags for this member. What I wanted to refer to is in the very third paragraph where . . . I'll use the full paragraph. "This ecosystem is based on foresight, flexibility, creativity, [again we have creativity, Mr. Speaker] and the freedom to act on these qualities."

And that's what strikes some consternation, raises questions in my heart.

. . . the freedom to act on these qualities. Innovation Saskatchewan will be a new, special operating agency.

And "a new, special operating agency," Mr. Speaker, just leaves all sorts of questions. Is Innovation Saskatchewan going to operate under rules that we understand other Crowns or agencies of government operate under? Or is it going to be so special that what we wind up with is one line on the budget item, one simple line without explanation as to where the money has gone without adequate explanation of where money might be going? And that causes some concern.

Later in the paragraph, I'll go on with the quote. The minister says, "Our growth and competitiveness is already considerable, but it must be encouraged and sustained."

I've no disagreement with that statement, Mr. Speaker. What I have disagreement with is that it clearly is talking about picking winners and losers. You either fund all, or you're picking winners and losers. That's just a simple definition of how you would enhance Saskatchewan's ability to be competitive in an international trade. You either fund all, in which case you're not picking winners and losers, or you select winners and losers by

definition. And it can be no other way. There's just no possibility of it being any other way.

So what we've got, Mr. Speaker, is in effect . . . I'm going to go back a little bit, and in the 1970s the Conservatives of the day made much political hay out of SEDCO, Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation. And the charges were that the government of the day, the Blakeney New Democrats, were lending money indiscriminately. And in fact there were some losses.

And what SEDCO was set up for . . . I'm not going to get into too long a harangue about what SEDCO was, but in broad strokes what SEDCO was set up to do was to be a lender for start-up companies, start-up companies that would have difficulty or find it impossible to raise the funds necessary from a lending institution, a credit union or a bank. And in those days there were plenty of it. The '70s were a heyday of economic development. So that was set up to help start-up companies. And absolutely there were losers. And absolutely there were winners, Mr. Speaker.

And there were tens of thousands of jobs created in Saskatchewan for Saskatchewan people because of SEDCO and its existence. And again I'm not going to make this all about SEDCO, but I want to point out that the right wing Conservatives of the day said that SEDCO was wrong, and that government should not be involved in picking winners and losers. They said that then. And they eliminated SEDCO when they formed government, when they formed government in 1982. So far that seems fairly consistent. So far that seems like that's at least saying one thing and following through.

But the problem with it, Mr. Speaker, was that the wheels fell off it very quickly. The wheels fell off it very quickly, and the Devine government of the day started picking its own winners and losers. It started its own list without the benefit of SEDCO or a professional group to help make recommendations. They just went out, you know, you almost think, Mr. Speaker, that they went out with just a shopping list. And I say that because amongst other things, they had a big investment in something that was called Supercart — Supercart. It was a three-wheel cart, and they actually built, I believe they built three prototypes of the Supercart, but they just couldn't find anybody to make it work.

The list goes on of things that the Devine right wing government invested in. They invested in \$7.4 million that they lost actually in Westank-Willock. They lost \$10 million in Flexicoil. They lost \$15 million in Federated Co-op, 16.8 million in Intercontinental Packers, 17.2 million in an impact packaging scheme. And I haven't mentioned the \$1.5 million that they lost in Joytec, a golf simulator that my colleague, the member for Regina Rosemont, pointed out the other day that it didn't improve this member's golf game one bit. I want to just for the record say, it takes an awful lot more than a golf simulator, it would take probably hundreds of lessons to improve my game to anything remotely acceptable.

But the fact is, Joytec, one and a half million taxpayers' dollars later and it was gone. And that was done under the Conservative government through the '80s, the forerunner to the Sask Party. I haven't talked about High R Doors and the

loss there in The Battlefords. There's many, many things that I haven't talked about, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to innovation and the innovation Act, which is an Act that allows the government to pick winners and losers.

But there was another loser that was another thing that happened in the '80s and that was the STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], Eagle Bus of Texas scandal and 11 buses picked — and the rest is sort of history on that front. But GigaText — remember that, Mr. Speaker? — the English to French translation scheme that was cooked up, largely I think history will prove, largely cooked up by one Eric Berntson or at least he took a lead role in it. And my purpose here isn't particularly to beat up on Mr. Berntson, it's just simply he took the lead role from the government perspective.

But I can remember when it was announced in this very Chamber — because I was here then in opposition. — and I can remember we burst out laughing. We actually just burst out with uncontrollable laughter at the ludicrousness of this translation, this capability. I know that now, now it's possible, Mr. Speaker. There's no question about that. Now it actually can happen. But not in 1988 and not with obsolete computer equipment that GigaText had. And there's a whole story there as to how it came about it.

But we went from giggling about it here, uncontrollable laughter in the Chamber when it was announced, to I remember getting outside the Chamber doors and then saying, well can it? Can it work? Can it happen? Is it possible? Because we had to do a little bit of due diligence in opposition at the time. And so we all called up all the computer gurus that we knew and many that we didn't know, and the answer universally came back that, you know, in the future this is going to be possible, but the technology does not exist at this time. In the future it's going to come — that's what we were told — but the technology does not exist at this time.

And so then the rest — we did our job and went after GigaText at length and were proved to be right. I mean it was five and a half million dollars just absolute dead loss that should not have happened. And it was because the government of the day picked a winner that turned out to be, for taxpayers, a colossal loser.

But just as a side note, I remember the first time the GigaText people brought the media in — and I'm sure this is a matter in the archives — but the first time they brought the media in to show them they were going to do some simple English to French translation. They couldn't boot up a computer. They couldn't get it to go. And the story said, all they got was a poof of smoke, but no translation. And that was the showcase for GigaText. And that should have sent some alarm bells to the government of the day, but they kept chunking in — I've been doing a little research on it — they kept chunking in \$50,000 a month just to keep that facade alive.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly the sort of thing that causes us all kinds of questions around Bill No. 71, the innovation Act, because what this Bill sets up is for minister and six appointed boards appointed by the minister to run Innovation Place, run the innovation fund.

I can tell it is time to refer to some of the specific things in the



Act, because as I was going through the Act there were some things that really caused me some questions, Mr. Speaker. And I have the Act before me right now and I have it marked up.

Section 11 is the chief executive officer and other staff and 11(1) starts off with a word that really troubles me:

Notwithstanding *The Public Service Act, 1998*, the agency shall employ a chief executive officer.

So that means you don't have to go through the normal hiring process. You don't have to go through the Public Service Commission. That's what that clause 11(1) says.

(2) The agency shall determine the chief executive officer's conditions of employment and remuneration.

So we have the hon. minister, the member for Thunder Creek and his hand-picked group of people that are going to set the salary unilaterally of the chief . . . or they can set the salary of the chief executive officer of their own new, special creation.

(3) The agency shall pay to the chief executive officer the remuneration determined pursuant to subsection (2).

That's straightforward. It just says whatever rate of pay you say you're going to pay, whatever the benefits are, you're going to pay them. That's pretty straightforward. It doesn't make it any less troublesome for me but it's pretty straightforward.

I go to 11(5) where it says:

Subject to any policies established by the board, the chief executive officer may:

(a) [again] notwithstanding *The Public Service Act, 1998*, hire, on behalf of the agency, any employees that the chief executive officer considers necessary for the conduct of the agency's operations; and

(b) determine the employees':

- (i) duties and powers;
- (ii) conditions of employment; and
- (iii) remuneration.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the special creation is becoming pretty apparent. The specialness of this innovation operation is becoming more apparent the more we just look at the Bill. For a government that got elected largely on the issue of transparency and public accountability, this Bill flies in the face of that, Mr. Speaker. This Bill leaves me to believe it's from a say one thing, do another thing government. That's what I read from this Bill. That's what I see from this Bill.

And I see, Mr. Speaker, history simply repeating itself. The cycle goes around and round and round. I believe that this iteration of a right wing government has the same beliefs that the previous iteration in the '80s had — the same beliefs — and with a few twists are going to deliver us essentially the same thing. And that causes me some consternation.

[16:45]

I don't mind a philosophical dispute. I don't mind that New Democrats believe that it is an obligation of government to help start up companies to create jobs and to create wealth here in Saskatchewan. I don't shrink from that and never have, not for a minute, Mr. Speaker; that's broadly what New Democrats believe. We have an obligation to help our population, give them a hand up, not a hand out — a hand up. We believe in creation of wealth and helping Saskatchewan grow. And we did it and we've done it through history. We have done it repeatedly.

What we see from . . . Here's where I have difficulty, is right wing governments say that government can't work. Governments should get out of the way of business. And then they get elected and what's the first thing they do? Oh here, let me pick a winner, let me pick a loser. My friends are going to be winners. If you're not a friend of mine, you're going to be a loser. It's by definition. You either have a process that's logical and easy to follow or — or — or you're picking winners and losers. It's one way or the other.

I think I've struck a chord, Mr. Speaker. I hear much yelping from across the floor.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. Order. I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I have no quarrel with an ideological difference. I have a quarrel when a party or a government or an opposition says one thing and does another. That offends. That offends. And that's what I see happening in this Act . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, I hear, I hear the member for Moose Jaw North saying that I don't know what I'm talking about. I know that when I was raising the potential loss of 90 jobs at SaskWater headquartered in Moose Jaw that that member was laughing. I know that earlier this day.

So I may not have all of the answers; in fact that's the job of opposition is to ask the questions. Our job is to point out what we see as the weaknesses in every piece of legislation. That's our job. We're tasked to do that. And it's the government's job to react, and we're hoping that they would listen to some of the ideas we have. We're hoping that they will respond and that we can somehow legitimize the government, somehow make it a better government.

When we've got legitimate concerns, we have not just the right, we have the obligation to raise them on behalf of not only our constituents, but all of the people of Saskatchewan. And it is my, always been my pleasure in opposition to do so. In many ways I wish that we didn't need to have an opposition. I wish we could be just one big collegial gang and slap each other on the back and cash our paycheques, but that doesn't seem to be the universe. And it's not the world that I've seen any in my lifetime, Mr. Speaker, and I don't think I'm about to see it.

So Bill 71, *The Innovation Saskatchewan Act*, I'm going to go to clause 12 which is the superannuation and other plans. Superannuation, in other words, pension and benefits. Twelve says:

The agency may establish and support any or all of the following for the benefit of the chief executive officer and other employees and the dependants of the chief executive officer and other employees:

- (a) a superannuation plan;
- (b) a group insurance plan; and
- (c) any other pension, superannuation or employee benefit program.

That's a pretty good gig, pretty good gig, notwithstanding *The Public Service Act*. It's not a bad gig that they can establish all of that.

Go down to clause 16 which is the capacity to contract, Mr. Speaker, and (2) says, "The agency may, on behalf of the Crown, contract in its corporate name [presumably Innovation Saskatchewan may contract in its corporate name] without specific reference to the Crown."

So they can contract with a certain amount of stealth if they wish, Mr. Speaker, or I wonder if that's possible.

As a rather humorous aside or at least I took it that way, section 17, is a common seal and the entire section says, "The agency is to have a common seal." And I'm wondering if that's to match the dome of silence that we get on all other matters of accountability from the government members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Part IV deals with financial matters. And much of that is straightforward, but I have some questions around the annual report which is in clause 22, Mr. Speaker. Clause 22 (1)(b) says, "a financial statement showing the business of the agency for the proceeding fiscal year, in any form that may be required by Treasury Board." And that's the way it'll be.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that Treasury Board is an operation of the Legislative Assembly, but it is an operation that is 100 per cent government without opposition and probably should be. But here we have the government saying the Treasury Board, an arm of executive government, will dictate the form that the annual report will come in.

This administration is long on promises and short on delivery. You know, Mr. Speaker, it strikes me as kind of like the federal Conservative money, their infrastructure money, you know, that they're so proud to announce and then re-announce and then announce again — like it's a brand new thing — and then re-announce and re-announce again. And it just goes on and on and on, but the money never seems to flow, and that seems to be the way the promises are here.

Accountability is one of the key aspects of this Bill or one of the key things that's necessary in this Bill, but I don't see it. Accountability, and I want to say for the record, Mr. Speaker, I think that government members got elected believing their own rhetoric about accountability. I think they genuinely wanted to be accountable to the people of Saskatchewan. But somewhere in the process of governance in the first 15 months that's proven to be a little difficult at times. And so what maybe was intended

a year and a half ago, sometimes there's some difficulty in delivering it. And I think that in far too many cases on accountability, the government has stumbled and indeed has even fallen.

And so this Bill, this innovation Act, *An Act respecting Innovation Saskatchewan*, Bill No. 71, kind of scares me because it talks of a special agency. And it talks throughout its . . . The Bill itself, it speaks, Mr. Speaker, about a special relationship. If the normal relationships were more accountable, you know, we might not have this same fear.

But when you introduce the notion somehow of a super agency or a special agency with special rights that in its own Act says things like, notwithstanding *The Public Service Act*, small wonder that the opposition would have some questions around this. Small wonder. You couple that with the say one thing, do another attitude that says we will not pick winners and losers — and that's public record. I think people absolutely understand that, Mr. Speaker — but say one thing, do another. Because this Bill is clearly, as I pointed out, it's clearly about selecting winners and losers.

Again the very minister himself says, comments about the freedom to act. In his remarks as he introduced the Bill, December 2, 2008, when he was introducing the Bill, they wanted the freedom to act. They want to set up . . . It looks like to me that they want to set up an innovation entity that the minister and his small, hand-picked board can control. And they can pick the winners and losers with minimum, minimum scrutiny from the public, without the ready ability of the opposition to go line by line and scrutinize.

Mr. Speaker, I sure hope I'm wrong. I really hope I'm wrong. But the history of this Saskatchewan Party government is not conducive to me believing I'm wrong. I hope I'm wrong, but I don't think I am. I don't think I am. All of their history, all of their history, their short history, says that I am absolutely right.

This is a government that was born, this is a party, for Heaven's sakes, born in the secrecy in the dark of night; born in the secret deal. They've made themselves palatable by . . . They won an election . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Not so palatable on this side. But legitimized themselves by winning an election. And I give them that.

But the harsh truth is, it was a party formed by a small handful of MLAs, disgruntled MLAs — mostly Conservatives and a few Liberals thrown into the mix — that got together and formed the Sask Party. And away they go.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. Some order in the House. I recognize the member from . . . Order.

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Small wonder that there's a shortage of trust on this side. And as I've pointed out, it's a group of people that have said government should get out of the way of business. Just get out of the way and let business do its job. That's what they say. And yet Innovation Saskatchewan says exactly the opposite thing. It says, we're going to . . . We, the Sask Party, are going to pick the winners and are going to pick the losers. Their friends can be the winners and hang the rest.

What a shame, Mr. Speaker. It is small wonder that we've got all kinds of questions around this Bill, all kinds of questions because of the say one thing, do another thing government. And it's just unacceptable — the terms of setting up the board, the terms of paying its chief executive officer, the ignoring the Public Service Commission, the notwithstanding clauses in its very Act to set up this Innovation Saskatchewan thing. It is small wonder, Mr. Speaker, that we have concerns on this side of the House.

We got lots of questions. I mean not just restricted to this Bill, but we got more than enough questions to go around on this Bill. We don't believe it is a right-spirited Bill. We wish the government would have had the courage to say, we want to pick the winners and losers. I wish they'd have had the courage to say, we want to pick the winners and losers. But no, they're going to do it by stealth and without accountability, Mr. Speaker. And that's a shame.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The time of adjournment having been reached, this House now stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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