



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

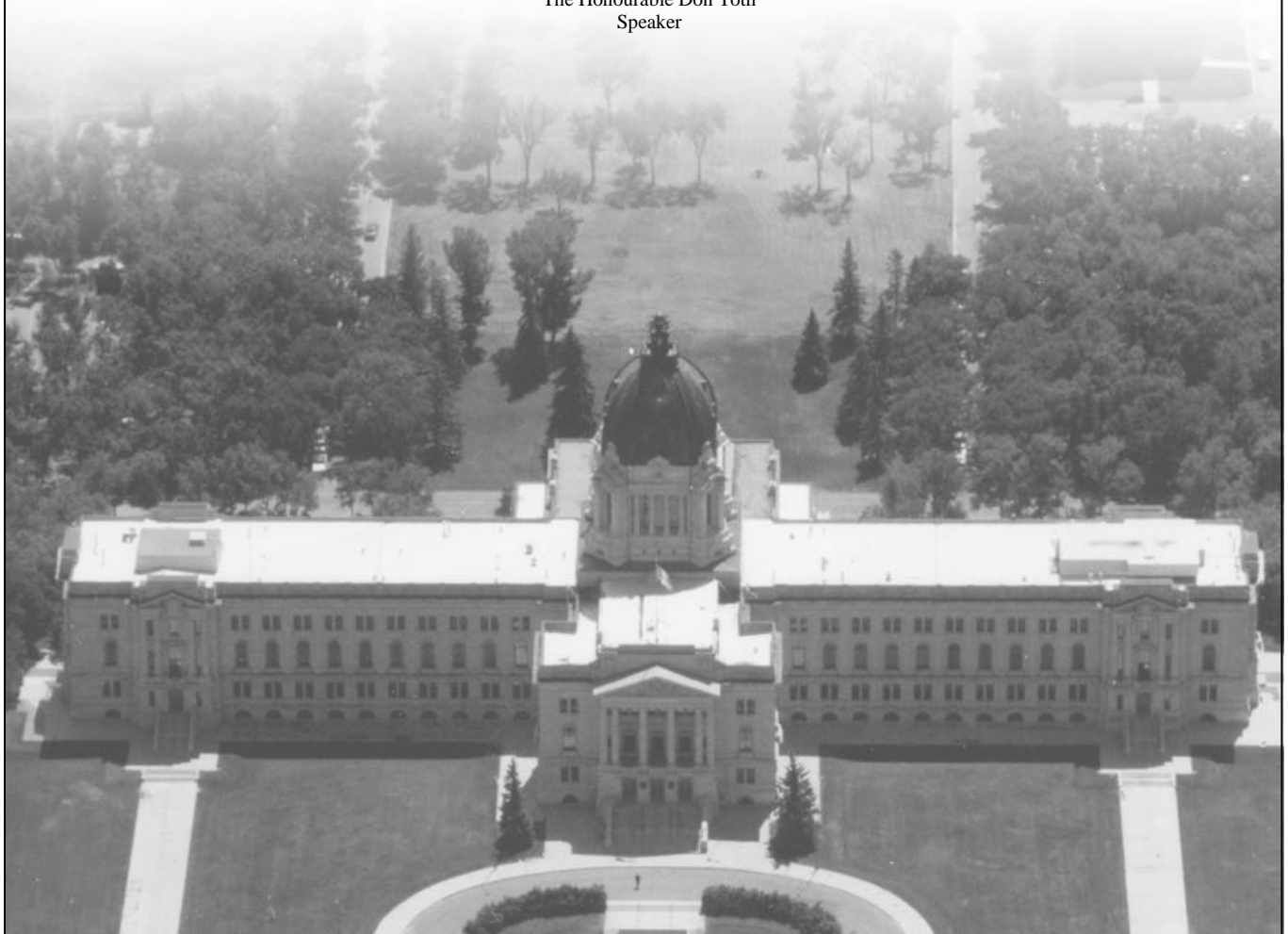
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 9

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Gantfoer that **Bill No. 9 — *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2008*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — Being now 7 p.m., debate will continue on Bill No. 9, *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2008*. I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is truly a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to continue in this debate. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, when I was interrupted by the clock at 5 o'clock, I inadvertently forgot to mark the spot on my speech where I had left off, so I kind of lost track of that. So to ensure that I didn't overlook anything and to help the members over there fully comprehend everything I had to say, I think I'll just start all over again from the beginning, Mr. Speaker. I can hear the shouts of joy coming from the benches across there because I'm sure that there is so much more that they would like to hear on this particular Bill.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few moments just to summarize and capsulize what I have covered earlier on today. As you know, Mr. Speaker, this is a piece of legislation that's quickly become known or nicknamed as the double-dipping Bill. It's the Act to amend the superannuation Act and the amendments is what seems to be quite troublesome by those people who have looked at it fairly closely.

It opens up the opportunity, the real opportunity, for individuals to find themselves in a situation where they can double dip, as far as the compensation is concerned for civil servants. It's a situation where a civil servant could find the opportunity to seek retirement, perhaps after working for 30 or 35 years in the bureaucracy. They could find themselves the opportunity to retire at 70 per cent of their salary range, which suppose . . . let's use, for example, a civil servant who was in the salary range of say 200,000 a year, seen the opportunity to retire at 70 per cent of that or \$140,000 income, which is fair for a retirement package — this is fair — but then be able to return to the civil service and hold the same position, doing the same responsibilities, and receiving full salary. That would put the taxpayers of Saskatchewan on the hook for support for both the pension, the \$140,000 a year pension, plus the \$200,000 a year salary. So then we can end up in a situation where we have an individual who is receiving \$340,000 for doing basically the same job they have been doing for 200,000. So it's just one small example, Mr. Speaker, of what could happen.

And there has in the past been provisions within the Act that prevented this. Section 27, for example, of the superannuation

amendment Act, 2008 and all the other previous Acts all contained the ability to prevent an employee who was collecting superannuation from the Government of Saskatchewan from being re-employed by the Government of Saskatchewan, but continuing their employment without actually retiring, which would allow under this . . . which would be allowed under this provision.

Mr. Speaker, preventing someone from double-dipping and preventing the taxpayers from paying twice for the same service is fundamental and it's an important public policy position.

But this Act, this Act changes that. It opens the door to the possibility of somebody within the system to double dip, to draw their pension while being re-employed by the government at full salary. That, Mr. Speaker, I don't think is acceptable to people across this great province. When they fully understand what is at stake here, I think you will find that most people wouldn't subscribe to that process.

It also has a limiting factor. It limits the ability for young people to get into our bureaucracy, to get into the system, to get into our departments, which is I think very important. I think it's important that we continuously recruit young, bright, well-educated, very capable people to our bureaucracy to continue to support the programs that are identified by government as important to Saskatchewan people.

I believe it's important to have a continuum of renewal. I don't think that we want to have a wholesale turnover of personnel. I think we want to have a continuum of renewal. I think there's a great deal of importance to having young people coming in with a fresh . . . fresh minds, I guess you would say, youthful enthusiasm.

People who have reached their capacities within our educational system and bring those capacities to our bureaucracy I think is very much appreciated, I think, at the same time as being able to retain veterans of the workplace — those who've been around the bureaucracy for a while, those who have seen the highs and lows, I guess you would say, of working within our system in this province. Saskatchewan has been very fortunate in the past to have good quality workers working for us in our bureaucracy, and we continue to have that. I think that's what makes Saskatchewan strong.

I think there's a uniqueness about Saskatchewan. I know it attracts people not only from this province, not only a lot of young people who are born and raised here in Saskatchewan who go on to become very, very strong workers within our bureaucracy, but it also attracts people from outside of Saskatchewan. I know that there's some young people who have come to Saskatchewan for the opportunity to work here simply because they see Saskatchewan as a very strong and progressive province, progressive thinking. And we would like to see that continue.

I had the opportunity here a while back, about a year, a year and a half ago now probably, to have a conversation with two . . . well a conversation with one of the two civil servants that have recently retired who live in my constituency. And I really enjoyed the opportunity to chat with them as we were able to in

fact to share a cup of coffee.

And he was able to enlighten me of some of his experiences over the 35 years that he worked within the system here in Saskatchewan. And he had worked in various departments and had worked under various governments of different stripes and various ministers and really had nothing but positive things to say. His entire 35-year experience working in this province was a very positive one.

I really enjoyed having the opportunity to share with him, to sit and listen to him share with me some of the stories, particularly those of a little darker days of the early '90s when the government here in Saskatchewan was dealing with a tremendous debt situation, and each department had been asked to cut back and asked ways to identify savings, had been asked to make some of those tough decisions.

And we had an opportunity to have a chat about that time. It seemed to be something that he found some pride in because the approach was a co-operative approach. It was an approach where everybody shared in the pain. And it wasn't easy. It was tough decisions had to be made. There were some programs that had to be restricted, programs that he would have liked to see move forward. They had to be, not necessarily eliminated, but shelved or postponed until the fiscal situation of the province was much improved.

But that particular period of time was something that sort of stood out in his mind because much of our conversation was around that. And he took a great deal of pride in the fact that he along with many of his colleagues shared in those tough decisions.

And they just didn't make them helter-skelter. They identified what some of the options were. They talked about it. They tried to weigh the pluses and the minuses to those options and come up with the best solution — the best solution for their department, the best solution for the government, trying to identify ways and means of cutting back and saving some money — but also the best solutions for the people of Saskatchewan, people who at the end of the day were not only footing the bill for these solutions, but were also those who were going to have to live by them.

And in some cases, they were tough decisions. There was programs, good programs that had to be not, like I said, not eliminated but simply shelved. But that I think maybe is what causes Saskatchewan workers — the people who work in our bureaucracy in this great province of ours, people who work in the rank and file and the field and across the service industry of this great province — that's what causes them to really be loyal to Saskatchewan, to share in the Saskatchewan values as the values of co-operation, values of community, the values of looking out for your neighbour, making the best with what you've got in spite of the circumstances you might find yourself in. So I think that's rather unique about Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan people.

But as I noted, Mr. Speaker, there are parts of this Bill that are of concern to us. There are parts that we certainly support, but there are parts that are of concern to us. And one of them that jumps to mind is that quite frankly this piece of legislation is a

fundamental shift in public policy. And what we would like to know is who was consulted before these amendments were proposed. Who did the government talk to, what stakeholders, what groups, even what individuals? Those are some of the questions that we are looking forward to having the answers.

And perhaps when we get to committee, we will be able to delve into that a little further, and I'm hoping at that time the Minister will be forthright and give us the answers that we're looking for. They're just quite simply the questions that I think ordinary Saskatchewan people would like to know. There's nothing wrong with those questions. There's nothing wrong with wanting to know that.

I mean, after all, it's the Saskatchewan people who are the taxpayers who are footing this Bill and the outcome of it. They are going to be the ones that are going to be footing the double-dipping if that should occur and they'll be footing both sides. They'll be paying for the pension and they'll also be paying for the salary. So I think Saskatchewan people have a right to know who was consulted, who was talked to, what stakeholders, what groups, what individuals, what companies, what organizations was a part of the consulting that the government obviously did or should have done.

After all, Mr. Speaker, it's the responsibility of the government to ensure that they bring forward the legislation that reflects the best interest of all Saskatchewan people, not just the fortunate few, but the entire good cross-section of Saskatchewan people deserve to have fair and equitable representation from their government.

With that, Mr. Speaker, like I said there are a number of other issues that come to mind, and I believe that will need to be addressed. And I think we'll need some time to talk to a broad cross-section of Saskatchewan people and just see how this affects them, how this may affect them, how this may affect even the people who are presently within our system, our bureaucracy system, our civil servants. I'd like to hear from them, those who are today on the front lines, but I'd also like to hear from those who have experienced it, who have had the opportunity of spending 30 or 35 years within our system, now retired. I think that they would have a great insight and be able to provide us with a lot of very useful information.

So I'm looking forward to having that opportunity to talk to those constituents of mine who I know have retired from the system and I am sure that other members are wanting that opportunity too. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move adjournment of this debate.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand this evening and have an opportunity to speak to Bill 43, *The Trespass to Property Act*, Mr. Speaker. It's also a pleasure to be the speaker on this Bill following the member from Athabasca. The last time this Bill was spoken to, I believe it was by the member from Athabasca. And I perhaps won't be able to match his passion on this issue as he may stand alone in that field, and I might have some different ideas, but I hope to share a few of my thoughts this evening on Bill 43, *The Trespass to Property Act*.

Mr. Speaker, as it was identified by the minister in second reading when he introduced this Bill, that this is an Act that creates a new provincial offence of trespass. Essentially it would be an offence for an individual to enter a posted or enclosed area without permission. And the other part of it, Mr. Speaker, would be that even if it is not enclosed or not posted, if the individual's given notice that an area is out of bounds, so to speak, that it is a no-trespassing area, that that individual could not go there any longer — the two aspects to this, two of the aspects of this Bill 43.

There's other legislation in place in the province, Mr. Speaker, that deals with other types of transportation, other types of mobility on land. As we know, in Saskatchewan we also have many people who are avid snowmobilers, avid ATVers, all-terrain vehicles, individuals that like exploring the many beautiful parts of Saskatchewan. And the issue of trespassing and the issue of access to land is a very important issue in Saskatchewan because everyone in the province has a deep connection to this place that we call home.

We have for many years valued the ability to go and explore and to take in everything that Saskatchewan has to offer. For people that live in our non-urban centres, this is particularly important for them, Mr. Speaker, as it affects traditional ways and as it affects recreation pursuits, but it's also important for city people as well who enjoy the opportunity to be out of the cities and enjoying the many beautiful parts of this province.

[19:15]

So in looking at this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, we have to examine, we have to take a look and see how this legislation might affect the types of behaviour and activities that have been going on in the province for some time.

With any new piece of legislation, it's always important to ask and examine what is the motivation for this legislation. What are . . . who are the people, is there an instance or a situation that's causing a problem and that this legislation is trying to correct or speak to? Obviously legislation doesn't come out of thin air, so there's a process in place. One would expect that individuals are able to express concerns and government is able to see what problems there may be in a given situation, in a field, and respond accordingly.

But I do think it's a safe assumption, Mr. Speaker, to assume

that no piece of legislation is created completely out of the blue. There obviously has to be a reason for it. There has to be people calling for it. There has to be a good sound argument made by government as to why a piece of legislation should be put in place.

This is particularly true in the area of property and trespassing and of access to space because there is the ability to choose where we want to go and how we want to go, and to do this in a responsible and fair way and a respectful way really cuts to the heart of our democracy because it's an aspect of living in Canada and living in Saskatchewan that we truly do value.

So I did read in the minister's remarks on this Bill that there is separate legislation for snowmobilers and ATVers, and I do think that is a positive thing. And I know in the minister's remarks he commented that it is his hope that this piece of legislation strikes a fair balance in what needs to be accomplished in respecting the rights of landowners with the rights and the wants of individuals who want mobility on land, who want the freedom to choose where they want to go and when they want to go there. So this is putting into law some clear definitions and details around this issue.

Going back to my earlier comments, Mr. Speaker, about how or what is the impetuous or the reason for a piece of legislation coming into being, clearly consultation needs to be a very important part of any legislation that is brought in. Consultation really, in the same way that mobility is so important for a democracy, consultation and the ability of legislators and government to be in touch with the public is very crucial. And in this situation, Mr. Speaker, we have to ask questions and see who has been consulted in this process. That ties into some of the transparency and the openness issues that we've been discussing in this legislature over the past weeks.

It would be interesting, Mr. Speaker, perhaps that when this Bill goes to committee, to have a clear or a more open discussion on what is the impetus for this legislation and who has been speaking to this and wanting this legislation to come forward. Who was consulted before it was drafted? Clearly legislation can change along the legislative process and there can be amendments and it can be vetted and improved, but a lot of work goes in at the initial drafting phase and hopefully, Mr. Speaker, the initial drafting would be greatly influenced and determined by a lot of the consultation that went on, Mr. Speaker. So it's very important to have a very clear and a very open detailing of who was consulted, when were they consulted, in what ways were they consulted in the explanation as to how this Bill came to be in its current state.

There's been a few members from our side, Mr. Speaker, who have had the opportunity to speak to Bill 43, *The Trespass to Property Act*. And the members on our side, they've spoken to different concerns, different problems that could come up through this legislation because with any piece of legislation, there are certainly the intended consequences. And now, those can be by design, and maybe sometimes those can be through the implications that weren't . . . or perhaps they can be accomplishing things through the back door at times, Mr. Speaker.

But there's also the many unintended consequences when

bringing in legislation especially, especially on an issue that's as important as the personal property and the issue of trespassing. It's important to fully explore who are the groups and in what situations might this piece of legislation have unintended consequences — when might something be happening through this legislation that actually, through the consultation process, wasn't in the cards to begin with. It wasn't something that was the reason that was stated, at least publically, as to why a piece of legislation would be coming forward.

So it's very important to be upfront in the consultations because, Mr. Speaker, it's through a detailing of the consultation process where you can see who has consulted. It's a means to check off possible problems that might be coming out through the legislation.

For example, Mr. Speaker, if we know that only group A was contacted on this issue, and group A has concerns around hunting, perhaps this Bill would properly speak to landowners and hunting. However group B might not be related to hunting or landowners, and they might have other concerns.

And now who might the other groups be that perhaps haven't had as thorough of a process for consultation as they would like, and as the opposition would like, and I'm sure that the government at the end of the day also would like. When dealing with land, especially in non-urban areas and remote areas, whether that's in a rural context in southern Saskatchewan, central, or northern Saskatchewan, of course there are issues to consider with Aboriginal peoples in our province — with First Nations and Métis individuals, with traditional uses of land that have been occurring in those areas for many, many years, Mr. Speaker.

It's very important to fully examine, to fully discuss with Aboriginal people, how this piece of legislation could in fact affect their traditional uses of the land; whether it is something, as the minister stated in his opening remarks, like berry picking; whether it is something more significant . . . not more significant, whether it's something different like hunting; whether it is use of certain pieces of land for spiritual and ceremonial reasons as well, Mr. Speaker. These are certainly considerations that Aboriginal peoples would certainly want to be consulted on if it, in fact, it could affect their use of traditional spaces, their use of resources, and of traditional and cultural expressions that may have been occurring for many, many years, Mr. Speaker.

So much of this, Mr. Speaker, also it comes down to the definitions. It's important for us to examine and to look at how the definitions in a proposed Bill — how detailed they are; how a definition might be able to bring more clarity for groups that are thinking that perhaps this affects them; how a definition might set people at ease knowing, okay, I understand how this will operate, this makes sense to me — because it affects some of the group, Mr. Speaker, that would certainly have concerns about *The Trespass to Property Act*. I've touched on the role of Aboriginal peoples using land.

Another area that's very important, Mr. Speaker, for having freedom of movement, as I mentioned, when it comes to the core principles of our democracy, is the freedom to gather in an

area and to protest peacefully, whether that is for a formal organization within the labour movement, Mr. Speaker; whether that's an ad hoc group of individuals who are simply coming together around an issue; whether it is an issue to do with the economy. Maybe it's agricultural producers that are protesting for some reason, Mr. Speaker, and doing this in a public space.

It's very important to define, to have very clear definitions in the Bill as to what is Crown land, what is not Crown land. It's very important to clearly state what the areas of concern might be, how different areas will have effects on groups so that they can respond appropriately, so that the individuals in this province who might express concerns about this can look at the document for themselves, see the definitions, and see as to whether or not that would apply to their situation, Mr. Speaker.

So I know there have been some concerns expressed by members from our side who have spoken to this issue. And there's been people in the public as well that have agreed with some of the concerns that we've been raising on this side, Mr. Speaker, recognizing that while there may be aspects to this Bill that have merit and that are addressing an issue, but individuals realizing that in fact when bringing in a new piece of legislation, especially on something so important as the freedom of movement and the issue of trespassing, it's important to get it right and to ensure that there are not unintended consequences coming to pass because of the legislation.

In an article that was presented, Mr. Speaker, on the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] Saskatchewan website on Thursday, November 13 — around the time that this Bill was being introduced to the Assembly on the first reading — some of the discussion that we've been having, Mr. Speaker, there were some comments by a U of S [University of Saskatchewan] law professor, John Whyte. And in the article Professor Whyte agreed with some of the concerns that we've been raising or said that they were indeed legitimate concerns. Not saying that there are not other parts of this Bill that might be accomplishing things that need to be addressed — because again we don't know what the consultation process was, so it's hard for us to know exactly why this Bill was being designed in the way that it was — but Professor Whyte speaking of the unintended consequences that might come to pass because of this legislation.

And this is a quote from the article, Mr. Speaker, from again from November 13. And the title of the article is, "Saskatchewan trespass bill generating debate." And towards the end of the article, Mr. Speaker, the quote from Professor Whyte reads:

Still, while the trespassing law was not designed to restrict people's rights to protest, the NDP has raised some concerns that need to be discussed further, Whyte said.

The concerns of possible unintended consequences and how different groups might be affected in a way that would restrict their traditional ways of activity and might restrict their ability to peacefully gather and protest or to express their views to the public.

And within the blogosphere, Mr. Speaker, there's obviously a huge spectrum of opinion that is presented on any given item.

There's the people on the far, far right; people on the far, far left; people in the middle; and sometimes people on other planets, Mr. Speaker. But in the truly democratic blogosphere — in a way that people can provide comment, you know, any way that they would like, more or less, Mr. Speaker, within given responsibilities — there was one posting that an individual, that a reader to this article made online and that was presented the same time that this article was printed.

And this blog post or this posting on the blog, Mr. Speaker, or the feedback from the article says:

Well spoken sir. The need to make sure the peaceful protest is essential in a free and fair democracy. It would be really stupid to not allow protests on a 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 peaceful protests/picket lines must not be broken over this.

Over this — speaking to perhaps the unintended consequences that might be coming about through a piece of legislation.

So it's fine and it's appropriate for government to be addressing a particular concern that, through a process of consultation, would've been brought to their attention and would be seen as a concern. And, Mr. Speaker, that might be, as a lot of this the minister's opening comments on this piece of legislation would indicate, would be addressing the use of land by hunters, which is a huge part of Saskatchewan life. For many people it's part of childhood. It's something you do as a family. It's something you do in your old age.

So it's fine to design a piece of legislation around that, Mr. Speaker, but it's very, very important to fully examine a piece of legislation and see how there may be instances where the Bill could be put to use, could be applied in a way that it was not originally designed to. At least that's the comments on the front end of the Bill, with government saying that's not what the Bill was designed to do. But I do think, as Professor Whyte has indicated, it's fair to ask these questions about who else is going to be affected by this piece of legislation.

[19:30]

Who else might have the freedoms that they've always appreciated and always valued affected in a way that they do not feel is consistent with their democratic rights? Who else might have their traditional behaviours and activities affected? And we can think of First Nations and Métis people who have been using the land in Saskatchewan in a responsible manner for many, many years. How might this piece of legislation affect groups like First Nations and Métis peoples?

How might it affect labour organizations and their right to picket? How might it affect organizations that do not belong to the labour movement, their ability to assemble in a public area and to state their points of view on any given topic, whether that's a view and opinion from the far right or a view and opinion from the far left? The beautiful thing about living in Saskatchewan and Canada is the ability to gather and to present those views.

How might it affect individuals that are having a particular issue with the economy, whether that is a farmer wanting to protest through the use of his combine, whether that's a student wanting to have a march, whether that's a pro-life or a pro-choice group getting together somewhere expressing their deeply held views on an issue? So it's very important, Mr. Speaker, that when we look at the Bill, that we ensure that all the bases are covered, that the Bill's designed properly, and that there are not unintended consequences that could have a negative effect on the traditions and the values that we have as Saskatchewan people.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know there are other members who in the future would like to be speaking to Bill 43 and I know we have a number of items on our plate this evening for other Bills for further discussion. So cognizant of the time and having expressed some of my basic and initial thoughts on Bill 43, I at this time, Mr. Speaker, would like to adjourn debate. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Saskatoon Massey Place 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. 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 Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm very pleased this evening to enter into debate on a very important piece of legislation, *The Arts Professions Act, 2008*, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while this is a good first step, there are many, many things that should be in this Bill that are not there, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Where this Bill does put in place contractual obligations between artists and those that are purchasing the services, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it fails to truly help artists in their need to seek and gain meaningful, Mr. Speaker, financial stability, Mr. Speaker. It does not in any way help enhance the financial stability of artists, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we had a Bill before the House about two and a half years ago. The previous government had a Bill that died on the order paper, unfortunately, and was never able to be renewed prior to an election, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the new government chose to significantly diminish that piece of legislation and remove any provisions that would have helped those in the artist community make a meaningful step forward in providing a greater degree of financial security for artists in our community and in our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to talk today about some of the circumstances in which artists find themselves in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and in fact in this country. Mr. Deputy Speaker, today in this country a full 62 per cent of those who make their earning as an artist in our country, 62 per cent have an income less than \$19,000. So 62 per cent of those in Canada who make their living as an artist have an income less than \$19,000. That's a shame. That is a shame in today's world, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, across this country artists are trying to fight to get a financial stability in their lives, to have greater recognition of their contributions to Canadian society and to the people of our province and to our country, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the Bill that we had before the House in early 2007 would have provided that financial stability, would have provided benefits that this Bill doesn't.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while this is a good first step perhaps, it falls far short of what our artist community in Saskatchewan need, in fact what they deserve. Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the average earnings at about \$22,000 and with 62 per cent making less than \$19,000, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill does nothing to help them with those dire financial situations they face on a daily basis.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what's different from this Bill? What's different from this Bill than the Bill that was before the legislature in 2007? There's one fundamental difference — that's the right of artists to bargain collectively to get a fair remuneration for their services, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And artists today deserve that. As many of us want to be fairly remunerated for our services, Mr. Deputy Speaker, artists want the same thing. They want nothing that the rest of us do not want.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are other very serious anomalies in the financial stability of those in the artist community. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is interesting that the percentages of the actual workforce that make less than \$19,000, those who are working, is 41 per cent; in the artist community, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 62 per cent.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, within that artist community, women are even more financially at risk, Mr. Deputy Speaker, than their male counterparts. Mr. Deputy Speaker, females in the artist community are making less than the males. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's shameful.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this particular Bill that's before the House today does nothing to improve that very serious situation for the arts community in our country, and in particular the arts community in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the arts community still would like to see a Bill and still would like to see the ability to bargain collectively to enhance their own financial situation in the workforce of the province of Saskatchewan. And why wouldn't they, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They would like to earn fair, fair remuneration for their efforts, for their jobs, and for their livelihood, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

For those who work in the artist community, Mr. Deputy Speaker, contribute to our economy. They contribute to our society, and they contribute to our province — as we all do. Mr.

Deputy Speaker, it is shameful that the average is less than \$22,000 Canada-wide, and that 62 per cent make less than \$19,000 in this country.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to say that in this country since 1990, the average has actually been going down in comparison to other Canadians. As a percentage of other Canadians, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the income of those in the arts community is actually decreasing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what are we doing about it in this Bill to change that? The answer is, nothing. We are doing absolutely nothing for those in the arts community with this particular piece of legislation. It does nothing to help them with their financial situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now the Bill, the Bill that was in the legislature in early 2007, put in place fundamentally the right to bargain collectively, which would have resulted in an increase in the average income taken home by those in the arts community, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But this Bill doesn't have that. It does have the provisions to enforce the fact that artists and those procuring their services would have to, in fact, enter into contractual agreement. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that allows them to enforce that contractual agreement, but it doesn't do anything to raise the actual income of those in the arts community.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to help those in the arts community to be recognized and to be given credit for what they do for our province, as we do for all other occupations, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a very small percentage of artists in our country that do well. You know, there is 2 per cent of artists, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who actually make over \$100,000 a year. That's 2 per cent — 2 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that is not very many in an arts community in this country that is more than 100,000 people, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Two per cent. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's absolutely shameful.

Now there are more female artists than male artists in the arts community, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but as I indicated earlier, female artists tend to make even less than their male counterparts. We have not done a single thing as this legislature. As those of us vested with the responsibility in this province to work on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, we haven't done what we should have done to help those in the arts community.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite seem not to take this very seriously. They tend to be laughing and joking as I'm talking about a very serious issue. I'm talking about the well-being, I'm talking about the well-being of a segment of our population in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm talking about those who make less than \$19,000 a year — 62 per cent make less than \$19,000 a year. And the average in this country, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is only \$22,000 a year. That is just slightly above the poverty level, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can do better. This is a province that has led in many ways. We had the first arts board in the nation. We led in this country developing Canada's first arts board. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's now time again for us to lead

and show the artists in our province, people of our province that we can indeed lead, take bold new steps in a new direction.

In 2007 we were attempting to do that. The opposition of the day, the current government, stonewalled that attempt, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And then, Mr. Deputy Speaker — then, Mr. Deputy Speaker — we couldn't get that Bill through, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And after the election what happened, Mr. Speaker, just after the election what did we see. We see nothing for a year, and then we see . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is an important piece of legislation, but more importantly is what is not here. And as we're talking about this, I know that there seems to be a few sore paws on the other side, and people a little bit concerned about me pointing that they cut out, cut out, eviscerated the major part of a Bill that was before the house in 2007 and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, left the artists in our province at a financial disability . . . or disadvantage, pardon me, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, artists today in Saskatchewan are not, are not getting the benefit of having an opportunity to bargain collectively for their services. Mr. Deputy Speaker, had that been there, had those provisions been there today, artists would be much happier. They would be seeing the benefit of a greater remuneration for their services, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they would be paid more appropriately for the service they do for their province, for the people, and for themselves, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you know, the opposition can't put forward provisions in a Bill that cost money. We can only appeal to the government to have some care and consideration for those who are making an average income of about \$22,000 for their services on an annual basis, for the 62 per cent that make \$19,000 or less a year, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 43 per cent of the artists in Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker — this is a very important number — 43 per cent of those who make their living as an artist in Canada make under \$10,000, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is just not acceptable, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's outrageous in today's world that people who are making a living in the artist community are making less than \$10,000 a year.

[19:45]

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this clearly has got some of the members opposite worried or offended or . . . I'm not quite sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But they should be, they should be ashamed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to put forward a Bill that doesn't deal with the fundamental need of the arts community in our province.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I spoke earlier that we were leaders in the nation in this province with Canada's first arts board; we were leaders in the nation in developing rights for artists; and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, today, today when we need to step up to the plate, we need to do things for the arts community in our province, what are we doing? Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker,

we're giving them half a pizza. That's kind of a common theme over there, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They don't give anybody the full deal. They give them half a deal, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And they can't even do that right, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because this half a deal or half a pizza, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they forgot the cheese. There's nothing there to attract them at all.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a Bill that does not go far enough. It doesn't help the arts community in the ways it should. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to reiterate what the arts community is saying: this legislation does not allow for collective bargaining in the arts community in Saskatchewan. But those who are involved in the arts community in Saskatchewan would still like to pursue the right to collective bargaining in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want the members of the government to hear that. They would still like to pursue the rights to enhance their remuneration in the province of Saskatchewan through a collective bargaining process, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And so perhaps if we can't do it this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, perhaps they will step up to the plate next year and bring in an amendment that will allow that to happen. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's so easy because in 2007 we had legislation before this House that did just that. They don't have to do an awful lot of work. They just have to go back and draw out those sections, put in an amended Bill in 2010, and we can deliver that.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite want to talk about delivering pizza, not about delivering programs to the people of Saskatchewan. That's the problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they want to give us all half a pizza and then they want to deliver it. But, Mr. Speaker, they always go to the wrong address with the pizza, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because they didn't come anywhere near to addressing this issue. They missed the whole thing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill doesn't cut it. It doesn't do what the artist community in Saskatchewan needed. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, members opposite can be laughing over there, but this is a serious issue for those artists in our communities who don't have enough, who make less than \$10,000 a year. The 43 per cent that make less than \$10,000 a year, do they think this is funny? No, they don't think that's funny. That's about \$850 a month they have to live on. Try to live on \$850 a month. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you couldn't and I couldn't, members opposite couldn't, my colleagues on this side couldn't. So why should we expect somebody else to, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The answer is, we shouldn't.

We should be willing to look at provisions and put legislation in place that would help these people because these are our friends and neighbours, Mr. Deputy Speaker. These are the people who live in our province. These are the people we work for. We're here today representing the people in the arts community, all of us, and we have to be responsible in putting forward provisions that help the arts community. We need to work collectively to help those who are making less than \$10,000 a year make a more appropriate remuneration or a more appropriate income, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to take this seriously. And this Bill, this Bill does very little to help those who are making that less than \$10,000 a year. It does put in place contractual obligations but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the contract is still for what it was five years ago, it does very little to help. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where this Bill does some of the things that the arts community likes, it does some of the things that I think we as legislators need to deal with, it doesn't go far enough.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite, it's nice to see at least they're here, a number listening to this speech. It's gratifying to see that at least they're listening. It's gratifying to see that they're here. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, being here isn't good enough. We need to be judged on what we do while we're here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And this Bill, this Bill doesn't do it, Mr. Speaker. This Bill does not do it. And we need to consider passing this this year, and then coming back with an amended . . . a new Bill next year that actually puts in place the provisions to collective bargaining for artists, the provisions that help with their financial situation. This doesn't do it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, people in our society just want to be treated fairly. They don't want more than they deserve, but they want to be treated fairly. They want to be able to work each day, but also to be able to live with the benefits of that work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And today artists don't have the benefits of pensions. They don't have the benefits of health plans unless they pay for them themselves, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's very difficult, very difficult to do with an income of less than \$10,000.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, members opposite are asking questions, while it's good to hear they're asking questions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but the tough questions they need to ask to their own minister. They need to ask their own minister why she refused, and why she wouldn't put in provisions that would actually help, would actually help the artists of our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And the question isn't for us, because we had it there and it's not there today. So the artists community, the arts community in Saskatchewan, know this opposition would have put those provisions in place, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the dying hours before the election, the members opposite refused to support it. The Bill didn't proceed and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the new government comes in and they just strip out anything that actually would have helped the arts community in Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this isn't the only program that they've taken away that would have helped those who are most needy in our province. I remember the teen parenting program out of Saskatoon, the vulnerable workers program, Mr. Deputy Speaker — programs that are going to help those who are the most vulnerable in our society and those who need our help to get fairness, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They have not been willing to help. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's unfortunate. It's actually shameful, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There's a pattern forming and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, over the next few years I'm sure Saskatchewan citizens will see that pattern continue.

But for now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've made the comments I wish to make. I hope and pray that in the future that we

continue to take these areas and issues very seriously to help advance the well-being of Saskatchewan citizens, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It doesn't matter if they're from the most advantaged in our province or the most disadvantaged. We as government, we as members of the legislature need to represent those individuals. We need to balance, put forward balanced positions that help advance the well-being of all our citizens, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can only hope that in the future that we see a new Bill with some additions that will actually help the arts community to advance their situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So with those few, brief comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would move we adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Dewdney has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 68, *The Arts Professions Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure today to continue speaking on Bill No. 71, well, *An Act respecting Innovation Saskatchewan*, known as the innovation Act. And I don't want to spend a lot of time repeating what I said when I previously spoke because I have some new material that I want to get to tonight.

But in the short version of some of the things that I said the other day was that Saskatchewan has a very long and proud history of innovation without an innovation Act, without a Bill respecting innovation. I mean we've got the only synchrotron in Canada. We've got the petroleum research institute right here in Regina. I always grew up knowing that at the University of Saskatchewan, they invented alkali-resistant concrete right here in Saskatchewan. And that was a contribution that we've spread right around the entire world.

There's a whole lot of other innovation. I mean just ask anyone who's farmed for any length of time about some of the innovations that they've had to come up with to make their business work, their farm work. And I know from experience that there are literally thousands of people around this province that come up with some of the most amazing designs — some of them very small, some of them quite large — but things that just . . . innovative things that they've seen a need for and decided that they would simply make it work.

What I have not gotten to was the structure of Innovation

Saskatchewan which is going to have a seven-person board that will respond . . . Well the Chair of it is going to be the Minister of Innovation. It's a similar structure to what the Crown corporations have, with the exception of the Chair is also in this instance the minister. Not so with the Crown corporations.

So what we have is a super ministry of Innovation to look after the innovation Act, and what you've got is a seven-person board making recommendations to the Chair, who will then . . . The Chair will take it to the cabinet for their decision making, and then what comes out of there will be what the Chair wants for the public to hear. So it's a very tightly scripted, tightly controlled little operation potentially, and that really is a concern. And it's especially disconcerting from the opposition's perspective because the Sask Party government has admitted — the Minister has admitted — that there will be political involvement in the decision-making process around investments.

We know another concern around that is that the Sask Party says that Innovation Saskatchewan will only invest in non-mature businesses. And yet we know that the government opposite is a group that took \$320 million out of the Green Future Fund, which I don't think anybody would describe green innovations as a mature industry in Saskatchewan.

We have again a pretty good track record on that. I mean, start whenever you want. In the '70s there was an Enersave program that I think led all of the nation, and that was to help homeowners insulate and do things in their residences to reduce our use of fossil fuels and reduce our electrical consumption. And that was way back in the '70s.

Then along came the '80s and the Conservatives axed that program, and instead what they did is they paid for half of a hot tub to get elected. They had a program where rich people could put in a hot tub and get half of it back. And I say rich people because my colleague, the member for Dewdney, Regina Dewdney, was talking about 43 per cent of artists that make less than \$10,000 a year. Well those aren't the people that were putting in hot tubs. I can guarantee that.

[20:00]

So we have . . . I think I've hit some nerves, and I'm enjoying pausing to listen to some of the heckles, Mr. Speaker. But the fact remains that we've got a government that says it will only put money into green or new projects — new, not mature projects. And I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I'm very offended at that very notion on one level, and this is the level I'm offended. You look at the forestry industry where I mean the word today is hard times, unemployment, a forestry industry that in virtually every phase, every aspect of Saskatchewan's forest industry is shut down today. Virtually every aspect of it.

And I mean, I think what offends me the most, we had in the works, we were working to reopen the Prince Albert pulp mill. And I hear \$100 million thrown out, and \$100 million meant that the taxpayers of Saskatchewan weren't on the hook for any environmental damage on that site. Yes, you bet it was a good beginning of a deal, and we were determined to follow it through. And you bet we'd have had that mill open.

But what did we hear, what did we hear from the now government? We heard a vote for Darryl is a vote to open the mill. That's what they said in P.A. [Prince Albert]. Well here we are nearly 17 months later, that mill is locked up tighter than it ever has been. There's no sign of that mill opening. And you bet I'm offended when this government says they've got money for new things, and yet you have a whole huge sector of our economy shut right down. I say shame.

If you want to look at agriculture, this is an area where what's the government's answer been this year? I'll tell you one example that I know of, Mr. Speaker. Lands branch that rents Crown land to farmers. A farmer whose total bill last year was 3,830-some dollars — it wasn't 3,840; it was 3,830-some dollars to rent — and this year it's over \$9,800 to rent that exact same land. That's what they're doing for agriculture. And then they have the audacity to say oh, but they're the friends of agriculture. Well I just, I mean with friends like that, I'll tell you there's an awful lot of farmers that don't need enemies.

Mr. Speaker, I'm offended now. I'm hearing a member opposite saying I don't believe that. You bet your bottom, I believe that. I know it to be factual. I know it to be factual, Mr. Speaker. That's what offends.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order.

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Speaker, here we are with the Saskatchewan innovation Act. We have a government that is wanting to set up a seven-member board to advise one minister on where the money should be put in. That minister will largely control it as Chair of Innovation Saskatchewan. That minister will take any suggestions, presumably, to cabinet, a very small group of people who will then say yea or nay. And then what information is going to come out? It will be exactly the minister, the information that that minister wants to come out.

So we have some real concerns with the way this Act was set up. We have some real concerns with taxpayers' money being scrutinized or not scrutinized, as the case may be. We have lots of questions around Innovation Saskatchewan. There's potential, Mr. Speaker, for the budget to show up just a one-line item, and we say yea or nay. And frankly, that's not good enough. I mean how can anybody be opposed to some economic development for Saskatchewan? But the problem is, we've got who knows how much taxpayers' money on the hook here, and without the ability of an opposition, necessarily, to be able to scrutinize it in a timely fashion.

So yes we're concerned about the relative secrecy, and we're worried about this Act which looks like it potentially can avoid questions in the legislature, and we're concerned about secret deals.

We're only going to hear, Mr. Speaker, I predict that we'll only hear about what Innovation Saskatchewan invests in or does when it's a winner, when there's a photo op and a cake to cut. That's when the people of Saskatchewan will hear it. That's when it'll appear in our weekly and our daily newspapers and maybe on the 6 o'clock news at night. But I predict we're not going to hear much about some of the bombs, some of the failures. And so we're really quite concerned about this Act. It's not something that we take lightly. And I want to say, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, that right wingers have a long history of not minding the purse, and we're pretty darned skeptical about it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know that I've touched some nerves over there. I know that a number of my colleagues yet have much to add to this debate. Many of them want to speak to it. I've done the best I can to outline a few of the concerns that we have. And so at this time I move adjournment of this debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Coronation Park has moved adjournment of Bill No. 71, *The Innovation Saskatchewan Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Carried.

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 Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to enter into this debate on *An Act to amend The Education Act, 1995*. And I find this short title intriguing — *The Education Amendment Act, 2009 (No. 2)*. I've not seen that too much in my time here, a Bill entitled No. 2 when we've already got a Bill in place by the same title. Kind of an unusual process here, but nevertheless it's what's before us. And so I will talk a bit about that.

And clearly it's not a very long Bill. The Bills I have talked about today haven't actually been long. They've been talking about numbers. Here the guts of the Bill really is striking out the number two and substituting the number three. Kind of an interesting concept . . .

An Hon. Member: — And then there'll be number four.

Mr. Forbes: — We're hearing a number four, maybe? I know one minister prefers no more than five, and one wants no less than 11. I think that's the way it goes.

But I do want to, Mr. Deputy Speaker, talk a minute about this. And I always go back to hear what the minister had to say. And here we are talking about *The Education Amendment Act, 2009 (No. 2)*, and this is what the minister had to say back on March 9, just last week. And I'll quote. And this is a quote; this is a direct quote from the minister:

This change will better ensure the impact of the changing Saskatchewan economy can be more fully realized in the community before the effect on school enrolments is assessed.

That's pretty straightforward. But I find this very interesting, the word that they're now using to describe the Saskatchewan economy. It is now changing. I thought it was booming. I thought things were going great here. Now they're actually starting to position it as an economy that's going through some

changes. That'll be very interesting to see what they really mean in the year, in the months, weeks ahead. So what does that really mean? Changing.

So clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're concerned about that. I'm just talking, I'm just saying, repeating back what the minister already said.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I recognize the member.

Mr. Forbes: — I'm just saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is what he said. Changing. I thought it was booming, Mr. Speaker.

But here, this is another quote that I find very interesting. The minister said:

Education partners raised no objections when they were again consulted on the lengthening of time a school may be designated as a school of opportunity to three years.

And I think that's probably straightforward. They probably didn't have any concerns, but did they realize that what that meant was that was going to be yet another version of Bill No. 79, *The Education Amendment Act, 2009 (No. 2)*, which means it could take some time? This is not as straightforward. This could have been done a lot more simply, a little easier if it was done through committee and just done as an amendment, and we could have done that. I think that would have been a relatively more straightforward way here, but clearly this could be something that's a little bit more complicated, more complicated than needs to be.

You know, as I was reviewing this and I found that I was reading again the response that the member from Battlefords raised some very important points, and I want to quote from him. And it goes, and I'll direct quote:

For example, you know, the question that the stakeholders are probably asking is, how do you put a time frame on an opportunity?

And that is so true. How do you put a time frame on opportunity? And, "Why do you put a time frame on an opportunity . . ." Why is it just a number? Really, ". . . isn't it an infinite number, Mr. Speaker?" And I think that's a really good point.

Why is it that they're putting a number on this? Now somebody might be cynical and say, well it's interesting; we're getting to the number three. And I've heard number four shouted out across the way. Just as long as it gets us past the next election, somebody might suggest, because they don't want to be dealing with this during an election period. Clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is something we're starting to see already as when we have a fixed election date, we know the year it'll happen. We know it'll happen, and so the minister and the cabinet on the other side is starting to prepare, to start looking ahead. And clearly this must have come up after they put *The Education Amendment Act*, Bill No. 79, together and came up with yet another version of Bill No. 79, *The Education Amendment Act, 2009 (No. 2)*, realizing that this is a time to get it in because if they did it a little later, they could be problematic.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that we have a lot of questions about this. We do want to know, when they did consult with the stakeholders, would the stakeholders would've preferred that this be in Bill No. 79 (No. 1) as opposed to Bill No. 79 (No. 2). I think there's a big difference in those two and which ones will get passed through this session. I would like to know, were the stakeholders consulted on the process or were they kind of surprised of how this is getting to be kind of a complicated process?

Well, Mr. Speaker, this really is relatively straightforward. I think that we're getting hung up on the numbers here, whether it's two, three, or four. Some people say there should not be a number. That will be the discussion that we should have. I wonder if the stakeholders actually asked that very question because in their own language, when the economy is changing — not booming now, but changing — maybe when you're in a bit of a downturn . . . We had the previous speaker just talk about the forestry sector, if there are communities along the forest fringe.

We know that not much has happened from the government in terms of leadership over the past 17, 18 months. Clearly two years, three years is not enough. Communities have been put on hold and this government has not shown the leadership in the forestry sector that really needs to step up to the plate. So those communities along the forest fringe really are at risk of losing schools. And clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether it's two or three years really doesn't make a lot of difference, they probably would prefer to see no number in there because they do still believe in their communities. They do see their schools as schools of opportunity, and yet these folks, the government, seems intent on putting a number on it and really maybe there should not be a number at all, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I'm a little surprised. I am disappointed that the minister would not take a broader look at this and say listen, two or three really isn't working; really you need to judge each school by its own merit, and why have we come up with a number here? This is not helpful, and clearly it's not helpful again when they put it into a separate Bill. That makes it even more complicated, and some people may actually think it's moving forward when they're thinking Bill 79 is moving forward. But it's not Bill No. 79 (No. 2) that's moving forward; it's Bill No. 79 (No. 1) that's moving forward. And so it's kind of complicated, and I don't know if it's very helpful at all.

[20:15]

And I would really encourage the minister and his staff to think about clear, clear language when they're putting these Bills together so people can follow and understand what the real intent of their Bills are and they can track their progress. Because when you have Bills with the same title, the only difference is the (No. 1) and (No. 2), how can you tell the difference?

So, Mr. Speaker, with that I think that I will have many questions in committee because we do want to know, is this Bill here simply because of political reasons? Are they taking it out of the election time zone next time? Why did they pick three as opposed to two? What is the evidence to suggest three is better than two when you're talking about communities or schools of

opportunity, as I've said? Why not indefinite, clearly indefinite?

We know that we're into challenging economic times, as the minister would describe them. They're changing economic times. It's a fortunate thing that Saskatchewan has been able to be sheltered from the storm that's been happening across the globe, but we don't know. But we've seen forestry — forestry is a good example and there are others — but forestry is a clear example of a sector that's taking more than two years, more than three years to recover, not just in Saskatchewan, across Canada, in fact in North America. But we hope that does bounce back.

We do hope that this government does take some leadership in that. But when you see one department, one ministry, not recognizing their responsibility in leadership in some of the economic sectors, they . . . We talk about the social economy, but that was just written off by the Labour Market Commission — just written off. Yes, eliminated. Then you have the forestry sector; there's not much movement. So I do have some concerns here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So with that I know others will want to speak on this Bill because they are concerned about the confusion that's arising from this and also the idea of what really are the facts here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. With that then, I move that we move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 79, *The Education Amendment Act (No. 2)*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre 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. 73

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

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure tonight to stand and bring a few remarks to Bill 73, a Bill that would amend *The University of Saskatchewan Act*.

And if I may say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to be able to participate in this debate. I have not had this opportunity for some time, given various responsibilities that I've held within government and within the opposition. And I am grateful to my colleagues for allowing me to have a little opportunity to speak to this Act tonight which involves the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, an institution which many of us have known as students. And I look forward in fact in my own life to a closer relationship with that university in future, and therefore I have some real interest in this particular piece of legislation.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for those who may not have had the chance to study this Bill, it proposes a variety of amendments which I understand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have been recommended to government by the University of Saskatchewan. And that provides for these amendments a certain level of high recommendation, knowing that the amendments have been suggested by the university and are supported by the university. And with other members who have addressed this Bill in the House, both from government and opposition, we recognize that for the most part these amendments will enjoy the support, I'm sure, of all members in the House.

One of the amendments, as I understand it, will delete the designation of a visitor, which is an old designation allowing what were described as visitors to be part of the university governance. That will be deleted and I think we're in agreement that that's entirely appropriate.

And another amendment will extend the ability of board of governors to be appointed not just for two but for three consecutive terms. And again we've indicated our support for that concept, thinking that that experience of serving as a member of the board of governors at the university on occasion requires longer than the two terms, and a three-term limit, we will agree, is appropriate.

The one amendment which has a certain level of debate attached to it is the amendment which has to do with the selection of a chancellor for the University of Saskatchewan. On this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is some difference of opinion. Up until this amendment, according to the existing Act, the chancellor is selected through a voting process which is available to all former graduates of the University of Saskatchewan, through the convocation. All of those who have received a degree from the University of Saskatchewan are eligible to cast a ballot in the selection of chancellor.

The amendment that is before the House now would change that process to bring it into a process of a number of the board of governors and the senate making a recommendation to the senate, the senate then acting on the recommendation, effectively changing the process from one of a wide vote among all graduates to a more selective process through the board of governors and the senate.

Now if I may say, Mr. Speaker, I believe there are good arguments on both sides of the questions. Good arguments can be made by those who would support the amendment and the change, and some good and decent arguments made by some who would not support the change. And somewhere in the balance, Mr. Speaker, we look for the change in legislation.

The minister in his second reading remarks pointed out that in his view this . . . I should actually quote it I think, Mr. Speaker. The minister responsible in his second reading remarks said simply, the ". . . process for selecting a chancellor . . . [is] simply . . . not effective in today's environment." But he didn't say much more than that about the reason for the change from his point of view.

Now it can be argued that the process of selecting the chancellor through a vote of all of the former graduates of the

University of Saskatchewan has in fact been effective when we look at that distinguished list of men and women who have served as the chancellor of our university: John Diefenbaker, Sylvia Fedoruk, Peggy Mc Kercher, Tom Molloy, currently Vera Pezer, Emmett Hall. All of these have been selected through the process which we have known, which is the process of vote. I think it can be argued we have through that process elected some very, very significant individuals who have done very good work in the role of chancellor.

I would suspect that part of the issue that has brought this to the legislature is that, I'm told, that the vote turnout, the number of graduates who actually do participate in this election, is relatively small, relatively small. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I expect you would find on the government side of the House . . . and I know you would find the opposition side of the House somewhat of a difference of opinion. And members, I think, have to side one side or the other on the balance of this question. For my own part, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not yet convinced that we need this change. I am not yet convinced that denying the opportunity for all of the graduates of the University of Saskatchewan to participate in selecting the chancellor is a process that is not still effective.

In fact just this very day, Mr. Speaker, I received a very nice letter from the Alumni Association of the University of Saskatchewan. And whenever we have that contact with the university, it reminds us of the significance of the institution and our role in supporting that institution. The ability to cast a vote for a chancellor of the university is yet another ability to maintain that contact, maintain that sense of interest and support.

I fear that one more removal of the alumni's engagement in the university is not to serve the university well. Therefore in the balance, Mr. Speaker, I would argue that this amendment need not proceed. As I say, this is not an issue that's determined by any partisan or, I think, philosophical point of view. It's more of an individual choice. On balance I would stick with the process. I would encourage the university in fact to encourage its alumni to be part of that process in the next opportunity to select a chancellor.

That said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I suspect this legislation will pass the House. As I've said on the other amendments, there is little or no controversy. I expect the legislation will pass the House, the changes will be made, including the changes for chancellor. And let us be clear, I don't believe that the future post-secondary education in our province hangs in the balance on this particular piece of legislation, but would argue and do argue that I do not believe, as an individual member of this House, that the time is right to make the change on the chancellor.

Now I know that other members have opinions on this matter and will want to express those opinions in the debate. And with that therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will move to adjourn the debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale 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. 49

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 49 — *The Ambulance Amendment Act, 2008*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Calvert: — Again, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to *The Ambulance Act* which makes a number of very important amendments to *The Ambulance Act*.

Again, Mr. Speaker, you have heard other members of the opposition speak to this Act. And you will have sensed, I'm sure, as members of government will, that on balance there is little that we will be critical of in these amendments. A number of questions have been asked and a number of questions yet need to be pursued in committee.

But we see these amendments to *The Ambulance Act* as being in fact appropriate and in some ways necessary — necessary to describe more completely the governance of the ambulance system in our province and appropriately to make the changes required by *The Paramedics Act* that gives the self-regulating to the paramedics as a profession. We were pleased in government to work with the paramedics in putting that Act in place. And these amendments, as I understand them, put *The Ambulance Act* in line with the new paramedics.

Every member in this House, Mr. Speaker, I think would want to stand in this debate and recognize the extremely important and valuable role that our emergency services provide, and in this case, particularly our ambulance services. We have built in Saskatchewan over time a significant continuum of care for emergency care, ranging from the first responders to the ambulance crews to the paramedics — and the growing role of the paramedics — to the ERs [emergency room], the nurses and doctors, to the specialists. It's a long continuum of care.

As a result of my own experience serving in the Ministry of Health — and I'm sure every Health minister before and after — we all quickly recognize the challenge that faces the province of Saskatchewan in delivering quality health care services, given we are, in the Canadian context or in a larger context, a relatively small population in a very large geography.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to meet the needs of our people, many of whom live in small communities, in remote communities, in distant communities — I think of our North, for instance — the role of the first responder, the role of emergency care is very, very crucial. I think every minister of Health recognizes that and, I believe, every member in the House.

And therefore we have very much supported the paramedics and their growing role in providing that first level of care. The amendments to *The Ambulance Act*, I know, identify that new role and recognize it. And therefore we're very, very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to be in support of the Act.

Again I know that other colleagues wish to make comment on

this Act and so I would therefore seek to move adjournment of this debate.

[20:30]

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 49. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 45

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 45 — *The Credit Union Amendment Act, 2008*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that my House Leader, my caucus have asked me to make a few comments on these Bills tonight — all of which are not high, if I may say, in controversy — in fact Bills that I can find myself, for the most part, in support of. And this is another. The amendment to *The Credit Union Act* is an appropriate, is an appropriate amendment, Mr. Speaker.

Again I think all members of this legislature will readily recognize the significant role that the credit union movement plays, has played, and will play in the province of Saskatchewan. We know that as our province has changed, so also has the credit unions in our province. We know that in many of our smaller rural communities where the chartered banks in fact have left many areas of Saskatchewan, the credit unions in fact have stepped up to the plate, and they have opened, actually opened branches in many of our smaller communities.

Mr. Speaker, we've seen amalgamations of our credit unions. They have come together. They have come together willingly. They in fact could demonstrate, I think, to government on how that kind of work can be done — bringing out the best of both local control and more provincial or regional presence.

Mr. Speaker, the Act before us seeks to simply change the board which is responsible for the Deposit Guarantee Corporation of the credit union. Again, given the circumstances, the times in which we are in, and given the direction for boards of oversight of this nature should be as independent as possible from the institution, again the amendment is appropriate. This will reduce the number of board members, make the board more independent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think the last time we dealt with *The Credit Union Act* — maybe not the last time but the time that I clearly remember — the time the most recent changes to this particular feature of the Act was made was in, I believe, 1998. And if I recall, at that time *The Credit Union Act* that we dealt with in the legislature here was as thick as the Regina phone book or Saskatoon phone book, was a very, very thorough piece

of legislation. And I want to compliment my colleague from Lakeview who at that time steered that very major piece of legislation through.

But even though that's the most recent change to this provision of the legislation, the Guarantee Corporation, the Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation, has been in existence since 1953, Mr. Speaker, and it has a sterling and a flawless record of protecting the depositors in the credit union movement. I do not believe there has ever been a depositor who has lost his or her money in the credit union movement simply because of this provision in our credit unions.

I believe members of all sides of the House are in these days meeting regularly with members of the credit union. I know I met with members of my own local credit union and of Credit Union Central just about a week ago, and we talked again about the importance of the movement in the province and the importance of this Deposit Guarantee Corporation. And we want to be very supportive of it.

Now I know, Mr. Speaker, in terms of meeting with the credit union delegates, they are yet concerned and seek response to the issue of insurance sales within the credit union movement. This is on their agenda, and it's something that government will have to wrestle with and provide direction to this legislature and to the province.

But in terms of this amendment, Mr. Speaker, I — and I expect all members of the Assembly — will be supportive. I do know though, Mr. Speaker, in conversations with some of my colleagues, they too wish to have a few comments to this piece of legislation and the amendment. And therefore I will be pleased to move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 45. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 51

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 51 — *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2008*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. It's a pleasure and a privilege to rise and debate in this debate, debate on Bill No. 51, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2008*.

Earlier this evening when our House Leader suggested that I should say a few words on this particular Bill, I turned to one of my colleagues and said, you know, what in the world would I possibly know about the Provincial Court. And he said, well I don't know much about it either other than that I was there

once. So we won't go into that any further. But we won't ask him for the details of why he made it. I'm sure it was just as a visitor.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, that there are times when we do work that has been to do with pensions and benefits and matters that are relating to remunerations and those things that assist with ensuring that the people who serve the public through government are compensated in manners similar to those in other provinces, and assure that we need to review these procedures every so often and update them and always require a bit of work. But it's essential that we ensure that those people who serve us well, whether they be within government or within the justice system, which is an arm's length of government of course, are fairly compensated and are compensated along the lines that they would receive in other provinces.

And I'm sure that we have a system built in. And I think the Minister of Justice and his officials probably ensure that we have a regular review to ensure that the compensation packages that are offered those people in our province here are equal to those that would be received by those in other provinces with the same level of responsibilities. And I think it's only fair.

I think it's fair that we have people who are willing to take on these tasks and do these duties. They're not easy. I don't think anybody for one moment would suggest that a judge's job is easy or anybody working within our court system is an easy job. I don't think it is. I think in a lot of cases it's probably stressful. I mean, in a lot of cases, a lot of weight is put on those decisions that are being made by these good folks, and they should be fairly and reasonably compensated and their benefit package should be that of equal to any other province, and I'm sure that the Ministry of Justice moves in that direction. And I hope that we will continue to have regular reviews to ensure that the compensation packages are fair.

I know that this legislation has taken a little while to come through the Ministry of Justice. I remember back a little over a year ago when we were sitting in the legislature here. The New Democratic Party was the government at the time, I believe, when this process first started. And I think that this is good to see — it's been carried through with the speed but also the due diligence that it requires.

And I would like to see this move forward in a reasonable manner, ensuring that all the work gets done reasonably and that we have a good opportunity to review to make sure that we're not making any mistakes; we don't move in too great a haste and make decisions not based on good research and good understanding. And I think the minister probably is moving in that direction and I really don't see too much issue with this.

It would be interesting to know what discussions have taken place with the stakeholders as far as determining what is fair and reasonable compensation for their workload. I would like to know how broad those consultations were, whom one might have talked to. How broad were those consultations with representatives of the legal community? Did they include the entire legal community, or was there just an aspect of it? We need to know those kind of questions and answers to those kind of questions.

I think that what we see so far is certainly well headed, I guess you would say. But I would like to know the length of time the consultations took place over, what were the topics of the consultations, how broad were they, what part of the legal community was consulted. Was it the entire legal community? If it was, who was consulted, who were the representatives of those various aspects of that community?

So with that, Mr. Speaker, there is a number of questions that I think that I have. My colleagues probably have more questions and would like to put those questions forward at the first opportunity. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move adjournment of debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Northeast has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 51. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 59

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 59 — *The Election Amendment Act, 2008*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again I appreciate the opportunity to enter into this debate — particularly into this debate, Mr. Speaker, because here we are . . . through this piece of legislation, government is seeking to amend *The Election Act*.

Whenever, Mr. Speaker, we seek to amend *The Election Act*, we are moving into an area of very significant public policy because how we choose, how we choose to govern ourselves when it comes to process of election, comes very close to the heart of our democratic process and principles in this province. And so every amendment or change to *The Election Act* I think deserves the very high scrutiny not only of members of this legislature but of the public generally, Mr. Speaker.

Now the particular amendments that are before us — other members have addressed them — would seek, if I understand it, to limit government advertising in a period of time leading up to an election. This of course is made possible by the decision of government that we should move to a fixed election date.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it can be well argued that these are perhaps good amendments. Others have argued in this debate that in fact even with these amendments in place that the system can be manipulated by government if it so chooses to do so.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we've watched for instance at the federal level a Prime Minister give us what he described would be a fixed election date for federal elections, and then when push came to shove, of course decided he didn't need to do that and he could simply call an election or dissolve parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have a strong, strong feeling on the specific amendment that's before us, but I have some very strong feelings about what I observe has been happening in our province when it comes to electoral reform and a discussion around our electoral process. Mr. Speaker, I will argue that what government has been doing is a very piecemeal approach to electoral reform. And so we have, on one occasion, we're going to move to fixed elections. We have another Bill before the House that would have us move to Senate elections, with all the debate around that. Mr. Speaker, now we have another piece of legislation that would govern the process of government in the run-up to an election.

My point, Mr. Speaker, that I want to make as briefly as I can tonight is that this piecemeal approach is not sufficient to the task that I believe should be before us in this legislature and as the people and province of Saskatchewan. I will argue, Mr. Speaker, as I did in the campaign before the most recent provincial election, that instead of piecemeal looking at the electoral process, that we ought to as a province and a people take a fundamental look at the entire electoral process, Mr. Speaker.

Now I think all members will agree that there is much that can and should be done to encourage a more wholesome engagement of the people of Saskatchewan in the electoral process, in the democratic process.

The democratic process, the electoral process, *The Election Act* itself, Mr. Speaker, in my view is not, first of all, the property of government or the property of the legislature. The democratic process, the electoral process, in my view, is property of the people of Saskatchewan. This is a process owned by the people. It's not owned by a political party. It's not owned by a government or an opposition or a legislature. It is a process owned by the people of Saskatchewan. And when it comes to a fundamental look at the system, that fundamental look should engage the people of Saskatchewan. It ought not to be just a few legislators deciding on how we're going to run an electoral system. It ought to engage the people of Saskatchewan in a full and wholesome debate.

[20:45]

Mr. Speaker, this government, I believe, has yet an opportunity, has yet an opportunity to offer to the people of Saskatchewan a real chance to consider all that needs to be considered about the electoral and democratic process in our province. This government has the chance. They have a strong majority. They won the last election. Mr. Speaker, they have a chance. Now that chance will disappear with every passing month as we approach the next election. The next window will follow after 2011. But I believe the window is still open.

Where this government, instead of piecemeal making change to the electoral system, could take the lead that I saw happen in British Columbia — which I thought was a very healthy and creative process — where the citizens of British Columbia in congress, randomly chosen, widely representative of the people in British Columbia, came together and gave real consideration to the electoral process in their province and considered issues like proportional representation versus first past the polls.

We could have a significant look at those who will argue that the age of majority, the age to vote should be lowered to 16, for instance. There are some who argue that. There are many who argue we need stronger education. We need education in civics, in governance, in electoral systems. Mr. Speaker, there are those who will argue we need change in electoral financing in our province — not just the matter of fixed elections, not just the matter of electing senators, not just the matter of restrictions on government in a pre-election period.

There is an entire, there is an entire field of discussion where, if we could engage the people of Saskatchewan in a real dialogue, in a real debate about their electoral system — not about our electoral system, not about the electoral system that exists for politicians — but the electoral system which is our democracy, which belongs to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, my argument is that we have an opportunity now.

This government has an opportunity now to lead that kind of discussion, to set all of these piecemeal approaches aside and let us have as a people, a people, serious consideration of our electoral system. Because, Mr. Speaker, we ought all despair when we see voter turnout falling. We ought to all despair when we see young people who do not feel engaged in our electoral process. We ought to all be concerned when we have First Nations and Métis and Aboriginal peoples who are not feeling engaged in the political process in our province.

Mr. Speaker, there are new tools that can be used in the political process, that we need to better understand. My fundamental point, Mr. Speaker, is that now is an opportunity, and the opportunity is closing if we do not seize this opportunity now for significant, significant consideration of our electoral system.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't have strong feelings on the amendments here. I think they don't really provide the kind of guarantees on government that the government opposite, I think, would advertise and suggest they will. But that said, there is so much more, so much more we could be doing and thinking about when it comes to how we engage in democracy in this province because, Mr. Speaker, no one of us would have an opportunity to stand in this House, no one of us would have an opportunity to serve in this House if it were not for that democratic electoral process.

And it is — I agree with Churchill — it may be a difficult process, but there is none better. And so to guard that falls to government, falls to opposition, and I would encourage the government to go beyond this piecemeal approach to elections and electoral change and to let the people of Saskatchewan engage in a real, fundamental, fundamental discussion.

Now I know, Mr. Speaker, that other members have some very strong opinions around this Act and will want to voice those opinions in this House, and therefore I am pleased to move an adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 59. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 60

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 60 — *The Senate Nominee Election Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand and speak to this particular Bill. This Bill was introduced in this legislature on November 18 by the Minister of Justice. And at that point I think there was some sense that this Bill made sense, that it had some utility in Saskatchewan.

But just over four weeks after November 18, the Prime Minister appointed 18 new members to the Senate using the system that had been used for quite a number of decades. And all of a sudden this Bill doesn't seem to have a purpose.

And so my first point tonight, Mr. Speaker, is that I would ask the Minister of Justice to seriously consider withdrawing this Bill, and if he wants to come back with another Bill of a similar nature, he should do that in light of the present circumstances and the fact of the circumstances of December when the Prime Minister effectively took all the legs off this stool. They took everything away that this Bill was intended to deal with.

Because, Mr. Speaker, there seemed to be a sense that this Bill was introduced by our present government in Saskatchewan as a gift or as a token towards the Prime Minister and to the federal Conservatives who had as a goal some form of elected Senate. And so this Bill was brought forward on that basis.

But unfortunately when the Bill was actually presented in the legislature, it doesn't fix many of the problems that many people in Western Canada see as problems with our Senate. And because it doesn't fix those problems, I would argue that it actually adds to the problems that are there. And that was clearly confirmed just four or five weeks later when the Prime Minister ended up appointing a whole number of people to the Senate.

Now what is it about the Senate that has raised the hackles of our party, both provincially and federally? Well I think, Mr. Speaker, it has to do with a role or a Senate which doesn't seem to provide any kind of equal rights across the province.

Quite often, I think, for those of us in Western Canada who have many of our roots in Western United States, we look at what kinds of things happen in the state Senates and state legislatures just south of us or in the national Government of the United States, where the Senates provide a role of giving every state an equal representation no matter how large or how small the area in geography or in the numbers of people that are in a particular jurisdiction.

And clearly the way the Canadian Senate is set up now, it doesn't have that role in any way that's a fair way. And I guess that fundamental question arises, that what is the purpose of the Senate? Many people have written about this, but ultimately the

answers have not satisfied many of us that there is an effective role for it.

So I guess my own sense would be to humbly request that the Minister of Justice take another serious look at this particular legislation and maybe come back with something based on a set of hearings like what the Leader of the Opposition was just talking about as it relates to electoral reform. But that to bring this particular legislation in the November 2008 version which was totally, I guess, sidelined by December 2008, serves no purpose for Saskatchewan people. And in fact it just further complicates an area that doesn't make much sense for us.

Now I think that that particular task of performing or being a gesture of goodwill toward the Prime Minister is no longer necessary, and therefore I would ask that the minister seriously consider removing this particular legislation.

As you can tell, I don't have much use for this particular piece of legislation, and I know a number of my colleagues have similar comments to make about it. But I think ultimately when you have legislation that serves no useful purpose, then it's incumbent upon the people who are proposing that — the government — to take another look and come back with legislation, if they wish to legislate in this particular area, that reflects the present circumstances rather than what was here a year ago.

But I know other of my colleagues will want to comment on this, so I move to adjourn the debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 60. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 61

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hutchinson that **Bill No. 61 — *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2008*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to talk to Bill No. 61, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act*. And my comments tonight will be relatively brief, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say right off the top that this looks to be a very good piece of legislation. This looks to be a legislation that I believe has been developed with the Department of Municipal Affairs and SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] over quite a number of years, let me put it that way.

Part of why I think it is quite a number of years is I know that Reeves and mayors and councillors get elected for many of the

same reasons that MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and I suspect MPs [Member of Parliament] get elected, and that is because they want to offer themselves for service to their community, to their friends, and so on to do the job of governance — in this case local governance — but no matter what level that we may offer ourselves for service, I believe it's a good offer. And of course it's ultimately up to the electorate whether your services are required or not and for what term.

I was pleased to see some changes respecting by-elections and the need . . . For example if there's a vacancy in a reeve position, then councillors can run under this Act, can run for the reeve position without resigning. Of course if, for example, four councillors run, well by definition only one is going to win in my example. You would not have four by-elections as is currently the case, but you would have simply one by-election that is where the councillor became reeve. And that would serve people very well, so I think that's a very, positive thing.

I did notice one thing that I've not figured out yet and I look forward to us getting into committee. And that's under section 10 where it is one vote per elector exception. And it speaks of where you're resident in one municipality and you own land in another, well there's an exception. You can vote in both. If it speaks to, if you are resident or own land and you can vote there, and if you have an interest in a resort village, then of course you can vote in a resort village.

But I'm not sure . . . I read that section and I couldn't glean, Mr. Speaker, whether it's designed to cap it at two or what would happen if someone owned land in three, four, five municipalities. And today with . . . There are people that own land in even more than that. Now there are not an awful lot of people, but there are some. And it begs the question, how many times do they get to vote? I don't have the answer. I just don't see it defined here, and I know that I'm confident that in the future that will become an important issue for large landowners or property owners; I can put it that way.

[21:00]

Mr. Speaker, I'm actually quite pleased with the way this Bill seems to be moving the electoral process. So it's very similar to one that I know, having run a number of times as an MLA, and it addresses things like who's an eligible voter. It addresses things like what the candidate can and cannot do in the polling station. It addresses signage. It addresses all sorts of issues in a very straightforward, responsible manner that really is most fair.

So I'm quite, quite pleased about most of what I'm seeing in this around *The Election Act*. There are a few problems yet. I've identified one of them tonight, and I know that I have some other colleagues that may find some other areas that they want to ask questions about or consult and check. So in the interest of allowing for that ongoing scrutiny, Mr. Speaker, I move that the debate on Bill No. 61 be adjourned.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Coronation Park has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 61. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 76

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Heppner that **Bill No. 76 — *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to just make a few comments on this particular piece of legislation. It is legislation that normally comes to the House each year as there are things that are discovered that are errors, and there's a couple of those, or there are some adjustments made to the lands that are included under *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act*. But it is important that this legislation is dealt with and that these lands are dealt with in the legislature because this legislation has an important purpose for our province.

In reading the information that's been provided in the legislature on this particular Bill 76 up to this point, I don't think it would be clear to somebody reading the record what land is involved, in the sense of where it is. And so I will just provide a brief explanation that shows that where the pieces of land . . . There are two pieces of land that are being removed for errors, and one of those pieces is just east of Kyle, Saskatchewan on Highway 342. And, Mr. Speaker, if there's anybody in that particular part of the world that is interested, they should look and find out where this land is, but it is quite close to where to my colleague grew up. And it's an important part of the province.

The next area which is just a small piece of land that's being removed from the legislation is land that is just east of North Battleford up towards Mayfair, and I think it's important that people understand that there's some land that's involved there. I think it's quite a small chunk of land.

There's some land that's being added to *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*. And one piece of land that is being added is just to the east of Highway 16 from between North Battleford and going up toward Delmas, and this is land that, I think, is on the shore of the North Saskatchewan River, and was not previously included in the land and is now included.

Another piece of land that is involved is land that is just south of Paradise Hill, and this is particular land that is being removed for a yard site. That seems to be in order. And the final piece of land that's included here is a quarter section just to the east of Mayfair, Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, all of these are appropriate uses of this particular legislation. I know that some of my colleagues may have some comments on the particular land that's involved, and so therefore I move to adjourn debate. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 76. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, considering the hour, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — This Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 21:07.]

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