



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. Don Toth
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall
 Leader of the Opposition — Dwain Lingenfelter

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Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
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Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
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Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
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Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
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Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
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Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
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Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
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Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of introductions that I'd like to make, people that are in your gallery as well as people that are in the west gallery.

First of all, I'd like to introduce seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, to the Assembly, members of the Student Medical Society of Saskatchewan. They're a political advocacy committee. These students are first- and second-year med students in Saskatoon. They were here to talk to both the opposition and government regarding ideas that they have to see better delivery of health care within the province and especially around rural health care and the distributive education model, Mr. Speaker.

They put on a very good presentation, and we certainly had a chance to visit with them. I probably should introduce each and every one, but I'm going to single out Nikki Rewuski who is an ambassador. Last Friday I was in Saskatoon to talk about how important it is to retain our medical students and residents. Nikki is one of those that will be working very hard on that as an ambassador. Maybe if you just want to give a wave.

And so I want to thank her as well as all the medical students for being here today and hope you've enjoyed your day in the legislature. And we'll see how question period develops, but there may be even some questions on medical students. So I'd ask everybody to join me in welcoming them.

While I'm on my feet, I'd like to introduce three members from the Saskatchewan Ophthalmic Dispensers Association: Paul Johnson who is the president, if you want to just give a wave; Ken Sorensen who is the assistant registrar; and Clarence Mott who is the treasurer.

Mr. Speaker, we will be introducing legislation later on today that will certainly make my job a lot easier on the pronunciation of their association as we move forward. I think it will be then called *The Opticians Act* as opposed to the Ophthalmic Dispensers Association, Mr. Speaker. So I'm looking forward to that legislation, and I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them here to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the Minister of Health in welcoming the medical students to the Legislative Assembly today. I understand they have been lobbying the government and working with the opposition. And I just want to say to them I hope your discussions are useful and successful.

I know that, in our discussions and having lunch with a number of the students, I know that these are the young people committed to working to improve our health care. And if this is an example of our future medical profession, I know our health system is in good hands. So welcome here today. And I know the minister speaks on our behalf as well when he wishes you all the best in the years to come and looking after the most important issue in the province, the health care of our citizens. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Silver Springs, the Minister Responsible for Enterprise.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to welcome three guests in your gallery this afternoon, and I just ask them to stand. Joining us today is Kevin Cumming, president of Atco Midstream. Kevin joins us today from Calgary. With Kevin are two SaskEnergy representatives who are no strangers to the House: Doug Kelln, CEO [chief executive officer] of SaskEnergy, and Ron Podbielski who is the director of corporate affairs for SaskEnergy.

I had the opportunity to meet with Kevin and Doug this morning for a good discussion about the joint venture that is taking place between SaskEnergy and Atco, to talk about the expansion of the Kisbey gas plant. One of my colleagues will have more to say on that earlier. I also had a chance to talk to Kevin about the business atmosphere in Saskatchewan, the stable business atmosphere that is conducive to doing more business here.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like, through you and to you I'd ask all members to welcome Kevin Cummings and the SaskEnergy officials to the Legislative Assembly this afternoon.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join with the Minister for SaskEnergy in welcoming CEO Doug Kelln from SaskEnergy and Ron Podbielski here, as well as Mr. Cumming from Atco. Perhaps you can also explain to them the virtues of the Atco-Gordon First Nation wind power project, that he can help out the Minister for SaskPower perchance on that front. But again, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming these people to the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce through you to this Assembly a group of law students who will be articling with the Ministry of Justice over the coming year. And I'd ask them to stand when I mention their name.

Firstly, Marcel St. Onge who began studying law after an extensive career working with young people. He is the former director of open custody at the Yarrow Youth Farm and most recently worked as an advocate with the Saskatchewan

Children's Advocate's office. We certainly look forward to the unique perspective that Marcel will be bringing to the ministry. And, Mr. Speaker, I can also advise that Mr. St. Onge has a dark part in his life. He's my neighbour. He lives just down the street, and we share a mailbox. His mailbox is the community one where everybody stands and visits. So he has spent many years enduring my bad wit.

Katrina Stewart comes to us from the University of Alberta law school. She is an active volunteer, having participated in Easter Seals camps for children with special needs and is a reading partner with the Frontier College Students for Literacy. Mr. Speaker, Katrina also has some experience playing rugby, and the nature of that sport may well give her a good lead into the career in law.

Heather Robertson studied law at the University of Manitoba. We're glad to see that she's come back home to Saskatchewan. Before attending law school, Heather was a social worker with the Government of Saskatchewan, working in child protection and as a support to families with young offender and child welfare concerns. She has been a volunteer with Big Brothers and Big Sisters and has provided a variety of pro bono legal assistance while studying law.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me in welcoming these articling students and wishing them every success in their careers in welcoming to their legislature today. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to join the minister, the Attorney General, in welcoming the new articling students to the Legislative Assembly today. I'm glad to see that the Ministry of Justice continues to attract such a high quality of articling student.

I was going to say that it's going to be a great personal experience for them, but they already bring a great deal of experience to the job. And also I wanted to say that it's a great public service that they'll perform, and I hope that one or two or three of them will continue to want to perform that public service after their articling here, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to welcome a large group of guests in our gallery today. They are here to celebrate the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie 2010. It's my pleasure to introduce to all the members of the Legislative Assembly a young group of francophone students from the Monseigneur de Laval school here in Regina. For anyone in the gallery this morning, these students sang the most enthusiastic version of "O Canada" I have heard since the men's Olympic win.

We also have with us representatives of several francophone community organizations that are here as part of today's celebrations. Would our honoured guests please stand and give

us a wave. I'd like to ask all members to welcome all these young people to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming our guests to the Assembly. I'll have a bit more to say in members' statements on the importance of Rendez-vous.

Mais certainement bienvenue à l'Assemblée législative, votre assemblée législative, et grande bienvenue à Rendez-vous aussi.

[Translation: But certainly welcome to the Legislative Assembly, your Legislative Assembly, and a big welcome to the Rendez-vous as well.]

Welcome to your legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce through you and to you to members of the Assembly, a political science student association group who are seated in your gallery.

Now the association looks after many of the issues that undergraduates and political science students have. And I know that we're going to have a great discussion after question period. So welcome here today, and I know all members will join with me in welcoming you here. And we want to show you how question period works here. I know that you'll enjoy that, and then you'll get a chance to ask me some questions after. So thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan that are concerned about the safety of our highways, in particular Highway No. 10 from Fort Qu'Appelle to the junction of No. 1. Mr. Speaker, this petition clearly states that this highway has now become a very important route because it leads us and the travelling tourists of our great province to our year-round tourist destinations in that area. Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to construct passing lanes on Highway No. 10 between Fort Qu'Appelle and the junction of No. 1 Highway in order to provide improved safety for Saskatchewan's motoring public.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, this particular petition is signed by the good folks from Yorkton, Pasqua Lake, Lipton, and Fort Qu'Appelle. I so present.

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I have the pleasure of introducing a petition that the Saskatchewan Student Coalition put together. This petition is in support of the implementation of a Saskatchewan scholarship fund, as was promised by the Sask Party in the last general election. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to implement the promised Saskatchewan scholarship fund.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people in Langham and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition on the issue of indexing minimum wage, and that minimum wage increases are often very sporadic and do not always reflect the rising cost of living faced by many minimum wage earners, and that indexing the minimum wage would ensure that minimum wage earners would be able to maintain a standard of living as the cost of living increases. And the prayer reads, Mr. Speaker:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I so present on behalf of citizens in Moose Jaw and Regina. Thank you.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm presenting a petition today in support of a middle school for Warman. And the petition indicates that the Warman Elementary School is overcrowded because it was built for 350 to 400 students and presently there are over 700 students enrolled. And they expect that by next fall a further 70 students will be enrolled in that elementary school, so they're indicating that this is a community that desperately needs a middle school to be built. And the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to recognize the urgency of a middle school for the fast-growing community of Warman.

And, Mr. Speaker, all of the petitioners are from the town of Warman. I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to present a petition in support of affordable housing for Saskatchewan seniors. And we know the increasing living costs, including housing, are having a major impact on Saskatchewan senior citizens and that more affordable housing options would significantly help Saskatchewan seniors cope with the cost of living, especially those living on fixed incomes.

[13:45]

And I'll read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to act as quickly as possible to expand affordable housing options for Saskatchewan's senior citizens.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people who have signed this petition come from the town of Marsden. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition in support of a new long-term care facility in La Ronge. Mr. Speaker, it's almost a full year that people have to wait to get into a facility in the Cumberland constituency. And I would like to read the prayer as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately invest in the planning and construction of new long-term care beds in La Ronge.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

It is signed by the good people of La Ronge and area. I so present.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I stand today to present a petition that has been circulated by the Saskatchewan Student Coalition. It's a petition in support of affordable undergraduate tuition, a request that the Sask Party's actions match its rhetoric. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to implement a long-term tuition management strategy in which tuition is increased by an average of 2 per cent or the most recent increase to the consumer price index.

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

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert

Northcote.

Mr. Furber: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and present a petition that's also being circulated by the Saskatchewan Student Coalition. It's a petition in support of reducing the interest on fixed rate student loans to prime, due largely to the fact that the students in Saskatchewan are amongst those paying the highest amount of interest on fixed rate student loans in Canada at prime plus two and a half per cent. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately reduce the interest on fixed rate student loans to the prime rate of borrowing so that students can accumulate less debt and focus their finances on building their lives here in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petition is signed by folks from Saskatoon and Langham, Saskatchewan. I so present.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand to present yet another petition on behalf of rural residents of Saskatchewan dealing with yet another water situation. And that a government ministry has directed that customers may no longer treat non-potable water using methods approved by Sask Health, and that Furdale residents dealing in good faith with SaskWater for over 30 years have paid large amounts for their domestic systems and in-home treatment equipment. The alternative water supply referred by a government ministry is a private operator offering treated, non-pressurized water at great cost with no guarantee of quality, quantity, or availability of water, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to withdraw its order to cut off non-potable water to the residents of the hamlet of Furdale causing great hardship with no suitable alternatives, to exempt the hamlet of Furdale from further water service cut-offs by granting the grandfather clause under *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002* and *The Water Regulations, 2002*, and that this government fulfils its promises to rural Saskatchewan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the good residents of Furdale. I so present.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I stand today and present a petition in support of withdrawal of Bill 80. Mr. Speaker, the results of a stable labour relations environment provide for quality work and safe construction sites. And, Mr. Speaker, the building trades contracts have supported an apprenticeship

system of training which result in a highly skilled workforce. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to withdraw its ill-conceived Bill 80, *The Construction Industry Labour Relations Amendment Act, 2009* which dismantles the proud history of the building trades in this province, creates instability in the labour market, and impacts the quality of training required of workers before entering the workforce.

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

And the petitions are signed by the people in Regina. I so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to rise in my place and present a petition on behalf of residents of the province of Saskatchewan who wish to bring to your attention that many seniors living in Saskatchewan on fixed incomes are victims of physical, emotional, and financial abuse. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners call upon the Legislative Assembly to:

... enact a Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights which would provide Saskatchewan seniors with social and economic security and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good residents of The Battlefords constituency.

I so present.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again rise to present a petition signed by residents of Saskatchewan concerned about this government's disregard for legal and constitutional rights. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to direct marriage commissioners to uphold the law and the equality rights of all Saskatchewan couples, and to withdraw the reference to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal that would allow marriage commissioners to opt out of their legal obligation to provide all couples with civil marriage services.

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

I so submit, Mr. Speaker. And today's petition is signed by residents of Saskatoon.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, as I've risen every day

within session, I'm pleased to rise again here today and present petitions on behalf of Saskatchewan residents as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of their finances by the Sask Party. They allude to the \$1 billion shameful deficit that's been built by the Sask Party, and they recognize that this is a problem that's getting worse, not any better, Mr. Speaker. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Sask Party government to start managing our provincial finances responsibly and prudently to ensure that it does not continue its trend of massive budgetary shortfalls, runaway and unsustainable spending, equity stripping from our Crowns, and irresponsible revenue setting.

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

These petitions are signed by concerned citizens of Regina. I so submit.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise to present a petition in support of the expansion of the graduate retention program. This petition is about fairness and the need to maintain some of our best and brightest here in the province. The prayer reads as follows:

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

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

I so present on behalf of the citizens of Weyburn and Kenosee Lake who have signed this petition.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie

Ms. Schriemer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since 1993, Saskatchewan francophones across the province have taken two weeks to celebrate their culture and language by participating in a variety of activities organized by schools and communities. Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie is being held this year from March 5th to 21st. It will be comprised of two national elements: la semaine nationale de la Francophonie — National Francophone Week, which is the education component — and les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie, which celebrates the achievements of the francophone communities.

The Provincial Secretary will host a francophone reception at Government House on March 15th. The guest list to the reception includes many dignitaries, including francophone mayors and members of the advisory committee on

francophone affairs.

I encourage everyone to reflect on the significant contributions of the francophone community and to recognize their special place in Canadian history.

Félicitations à toutes les personnes francophones de la belle province de Saskatchewan. Merci.

[Translation: Congratulations to all the francophones of the beautiful province of Saskatchewan. Thank you.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Merci bien, Monsieur le président.

[Translation: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.]

The weeks March 5th to 21st have officially been proclaimed Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie in Saskatchewan. La Francophonie brings together over 54 countries and governments who share and cherish the French language and culture. Today is the international day of la Francophonie and the very heart of the Rendez-vous festivities to celebrate both the French language and francophone culture in our great province.

Monsieur le président, Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie du 5 au 21 mars ont été proclamés officiellement en Saskatchewan par le ministre des relations gouvernementales. La Francophonie s'en compris plus de 54 pays et gouvernements qui ont le français en commun.

C'est un honneur pour moi de célébrer cette joyeuse occasion en français dans notre assemblée législative provinciale. Nous apprécions beaucoup la diversité que notre communauté francophone contribue en Saskatchewan. Les contributions de la Francophonie sont indispensables pour le développement social, culturel, et économique de notre province durant toute l'année. J'encourage tous mes collègues à soutenir les francophones tout au long de l'année. Merci, monsieur le président, et vivre les fransaskois, et vivre la Francophonie.

[Translation: Mr. Speaker, Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie from March 5th to 21st was officially proclaimed in Saskatchewan by the Minister of Government Relations. La Francophonie is comprised of more than 54 countries and governments that have French in common.

It is an honour for me to celebrate this joyous occasion in French in our provincial Legislative Assembly. We very much appreciate the diversity that our francophone community contributes to Saskatchewan. The contributions of la Francophonie are indispensable for the social, cultural, and economic development of our province during the whole year. I encourage my colleagues to support francophones throughout the year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and long live the Fransaskois, and long live la Francophonie.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

Honouring the Memory of Clayton Gerein

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in this House to honour the memory of a great citizen and athlete in the province of Saskatchewan. Two weeks after carrying the Olympic torch through Fort Qu'Appelle in January of this year, seven-time Paralympian Clayton Gerein lost his battle with cancer. Clayton's story is a testament to the vitality and endurance of the human spirit.

While training horses in 1982, Clayton broke his neck. However he did not let this unfortunate event hinder his already active life. Within two years, Clayton travelled to Los Angeles to compete in the 1984 Paralympic Games as a swimmer. This experience spurred his interest in wheelchair sports, and so he began his absolutely remarkable career as a Paralympian. Clayton won a total of seven gold, four silver, and three bronze medals.

But Clayton was more than a Paralympian; he was a community leader. His work with the Canadian Paraplegic Association would go on and does go on to inspire others to see their condition as an opportunity for great things. In fact his winning and positive attitude earned him the title of Sask Sport's Male Athlete of the Year in 1987, 1996, and 2001. Clayton retired from sport after competing in the Paralympic Games in Beijing.

Mr. Speaker, Clayton was an incredible role model for us all. Let's ensure that his legacy of athletic excellence and community involvement lives on through all of us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Student Wellness Initiative Toward Community Health

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member from Saskatoon Eastview and I had the pleasure of touring the SWITCH [student wellness initiative toward community health] clinic in the heart of the community of Riversdale in Saskatoon on Saturday.

The student wellness initiative towards community health or SWITCH is a student-managed, intercollaborative, patient-centred clinic where many disciplines — social work, medicine, nursing, physiotherapy, psychology, nutrition, just to name a few — come together around the client to provide the best care possible. The SWITCH health project allows for the extension of the hours of the well-utilized Westside clinic. The student volunteers provide the services from their respective disciplines under the direct supervision of licensed health care professionals.

Aside from the direct health care services, SWITCH clients also have access to things like a needle exchange; affordable, healthy food; immunizations; use of a phone; free child care for program participants; advocacy and other programming.

Brenda Jackson, a soon-to-be nurse, says one of the best parts of SWITCH for her is the learning that takes place. No matter what a textbook says or what takes place in the classroom, she has said there's nothing better than hearing it first-hand from

the person experiencing it so you can learn from them how best to help address the issue. Says Jackson:

You're learning from the clients, you're learning from the mentors, and the mentors are learning from the students. In that interdisciplinary environment, everyone is learning from each other. It's a big house of creativity where you're finding real solutions, not just band-aids.

SWITCH is one of only five student-run primary health care clinics in Canada with a fifth opening recently in Regina called SEARCH [Student Energy in Action for Regina Community Health].

Members of the SWITCH team will be travelling to Australia this spring to share this model with that country which is eager to learn about and replicate our success. Saskatchewan can be proud to be home to these two innovative and important health projects. Please join me in congratulating SWITCH and SEARCH for the great work they do in our communities.

The Speaker: — Order. I recognize the member from Cannington.

Gas Plant Expansion

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to inform the Assembly of the completion of a major expansion project involving SaskEnergy and Atco Midstream of Alberta. Both companies are joint venture partners in the Kisbey gas plant in the Cannington constituency and which was purchased in 2007.

Mr. Speaker, this \$44 million flare gas capture expansion is funded jointly by SaskEnergy's Bayhurst Energy Services subsidiary and Atco Midstream. This project increases the capacity of the Kisbey gas plant and extends the current pipeline gathering system.

Mr. Speaker, projects of this type are good news for the oil and gas industry, for the environment, and the Saskatchewan economy. Oil producers will reinvest these dollars into further exploration, with spinoff effects felt throughout the region. Communities such as Kisbey, Arcola, Lampman, and Kennedy will all benefit as producers throughout this region now have access to expanded gas processing capacity.

This project means more local dollars for everything from construction to consumer services. Our government supports these partnerships, encourages Crowns like SaskEnergy to continue to put Saskatchewan first in their business planning today and into the future.

[14:00]

I offer my congratulations to Mr. Kevin Cumming, the president of Atco Midstream, who joins us in the Assembly today; to Doug Kelln, president and CEO of SaskEnergy, for his leadership and vision in securing this and other investment opportunities throughout Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Party Tactics

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Author Irene Roth offers us insights into why some kids bully others. Based on recent events, these insights seem to apply quite well to the Saskatchewan Party. She says, and I quote, “Bullies may have a problem that they don’t know how to fix, so they feel vulnerable and out of place. Bullies sometimes lack self-confidence too. So to compensate for that, they usually pick on kids who seem to have self-confidence or have character traits or attributes that they don’t have.”

So, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the SaskParty is resorting to bullying tactics because they have problems that they simply don’t know how to fix, like a \$1 billion deficit or a trail of broken promises. Mr. Speaker, as the opposition, we welcome the extra time.

Or perhaps the Sask Party is resorting to ungovernment-like tactics because they feel vulnerable and out of place, especially during question period. After all, the Government House Leader is in the papers today saying he doesn’t want to extend the sitting days because that would mean more question periods.

Whatever the reason, it is clear that just after five days into this session — five days — the Saskatchewan Party government is going back to its usual intimidation tactics in the hopes of forcing the opposition into silence. Mr. Speaker, it won’t work.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Biggar.

Employment Statistics

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the ninth consecutive month, Saskatchewan has the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan’s February unemployment rate of 4.3 per cent sits well below the national average of 8.2 per cent.

Our province is leading the way in many different economic categories. For example, there are 517,400 people working in Saskatchewan. There was an . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I think it would be appropriate to allow the member to be able to make their statement without so much interference that it takes away from the audience’s ability to even hear what’s being said. The member from Biggar can start over.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the ninth consecutive month, Saskatchewan has the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan’s February unemployment rate of 4.3 per cent sits well below the national average of 8.2 per cent.

Our province is leading the way in many different economic categories. For example, there are 517,400 people working in Saskatchewan. There was an increase of jobs year over year. February 2010 saw an increase of 3,100 jobs over last February. Mr. Speaker, the numbers from this February are a record high for the month.

Of particular note for the member from Saskatoon Massey Place, full-time employment increased by 12,000. I say this to pre-empt the doom and gloom about our great province that comes from the members opposite. At a time when the people of our province are working hard and moving forward with economic opportunities, some people are still stuck in the past. But I guess some people will always want the status quo and look back to the old days as something to strive for.

Mr. Speaker, I’m glad that we are seeing fewer and fewer of these backwards looking people in the new Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Poster

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week the Minister of Environment demonstrated an extreme lack of judgment by sending out a fundraising poster depicting a horrific scene from 9/11. A spokesperson for the fire department of New York said, “We do think the use of images of the attacks for political or monetary gain, like the image on this poster, is in bad taste.”

The event’s guest speaker also said in the *New York Post*, “It was inappropriate without a doubt. They wanted me to talk about September 11 and they bundled it with a fundraiser and with a pig roast. It wasn’t too bright on someone’s part.”

To the minister: does the minister now realize that her poster was in bad taste and was inappropriate without a doubt?

The Speaker: — Members are aware the question should be related to a minister’s responsibility or department. That was strictly a political event. I recognize the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, the minister’s chief organizer flat out refused to apologize when asked by the *New York Post* and instead said that those who were offended are simply “. . . kicking up dust over nothing.”

Well, Mr. Speaker, this story has garnered unfavourable international attention in both the United States and Australia. One comment in the *New York Post* said, “That image is so horrible that no one can convince me there is a need to display it anywhere. I’m a native New Yorker and I still cannot watch the videotape or look at the still photos.”

To the Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs: does he think the New York firefighters, the guest speaker at this event, and those who have expressed outrage are simply kicking up dust over nothing?

The Speaker: — Order. I just reminded the member of the fact that questions are to be directed to ministers based on their responsibilities and their ministerial responsibilities. When it comes to issues outside of ministerial responsibilities, ministers . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Speakers in the past have also ruled in this regard. The rules are there. The rules state that if it's a question related to a direct ministerial area, then the question can be applied. Or the minister, as we saw a number of years ago with the member from Moose Jaw North at the time, the minister may or the minister can refuse to answer the question if it's not directly related to ministerial responsibility. The member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, a few years ago when a caucus staffer referred to President Bush as "President Shrub," the Sask Party was in an uproar stating that we cannot afford to offend our neighbours to the south and we cannot afford to have negative, embarrassing attention. The Sask Party demanded that that employee be fired, and that employee was fired. We are asking for the same thing for something more egregious.

The Environment minister's actions have been widely denounced across Canada and in the United States. Her actions have offended countless people and her actions have brought unfavourable and embarrassing attention to our province.

Will the Premier do the right thing and ask this minister to tender her resignation today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, when concerns about the poster in question were brought forward to the member, the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] responsible, to myself, the government was clear that there was obviously no malintent here at all — in fact the event itself was to in part highlight the heroism of that day in New York City — and the government tendered an apology through the media. It's my understanding that the member herself has been in contact with the New York fire department to tender an apology as well.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think any government in recent history in this province has worked harder to improve relations with the United States than our government, to open doors in Capitol Hill, Mr. Speaker; to open doors to the likes of Senator Kerry and Senator Graham and Senator Lieberman; to open doors in the White House to important issues of energy and the environment.

Mr. Speaker, we take that relationship very, very seriously. And in this case, appropriate steps have been taken, Mr. Speaker, and no further action will be taken.

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

Supply of Health Care Workers

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Cardiac care is in crisis because the Sask Party government has failed to recruit perfusionists to Saskatchewan and indeed has failed to even retain the few we do have. Mr. Speaker, what is the minister doing to ensure that this failure doesn't continue to put people's lives in danger?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, in the two and a half years that we have been government, I would say that priority number one has been ensuring that we have the proper complement of human resources, whether it's physicians, whether it's nurses, whether it's nurse practitioners, Mr. Speaker, or in this case, the perfusionist. We have worked very hard as a government, as well as health regions have worked very hard, to make sure they have the proper complement of health care professionals.

In this case it is a responsibility of the Saskatoon Health Region to ensure they have the proper complement. I heard, after speaking to the CEO, that a perfusionist was starting today to help deal with the backlog. There are a couple of perfusionists away, Mr. Speaker, but the health region is aware of that. They're working to ensure that we have the proper complement.

But what I will say, Mr. Speaker, is there's been more done in the last two and a half years on recruitment of physicians, of nurses, Mr. Speaker. It was ignored for far too many years under the NDP [New Democratic Party] government.

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, the minister has hung his reputation on nurses, I believe, and we're talking about perfusionists at this moment. The perfusionists that we have, they work 2,000 hours a year of regular work, 300 hours of overtime, and they're on call for 3,400 hours. There are four perfusionists in Saskatoon, two of which are on leave due to work-related issues, and the remaining two perfusionists are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Mr. Speaker, cardiac care is in crisis because of this punishing workload. The people are exhausted.

The ministry has told Health Sciences Association to wait two weeks while they figure out something. Meanwhile nothing is happening here and immediate action is needed. What is the minister doing today to fix this problem — not hide behind the health district — but what is he doing to fix the problem to guarantee patient safety?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, all health care professionals in this province are extremely valuable. They're also in demand across Canada and around the world, Mr. Speaker. But it's interesting that the member would say, what are we doing? I've already answered that question.

A perfusionist, an extra perfusionist, started today, recruited by the Saskatoon Health Region. Two are on leave. It was unforeseen, Mr. Speaker. We don't have extra staff waiting around. If two have to leave unexpectedly, Mr. Speaker, it leaves us in a bind. But I will say that the Saskatoon Health Region has done an excellent job. They have one starting as of today that will start lightening the load for the two that are remaining.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, the minister says that they've hired a new perfusionist, but the president of Health Sciences Association says the person is having second thoughts about coming here because of the workload, and then he may not be coming.

Perfusionists are in a group of health care providers who don't have a contract, who have been negotiating for over a year. And there is no end in sight for any of them. And some of the issues at the table are workload and recruitment and retention. Can the minister guarantee today that a new perfusionist is indeed coming, and when will they start?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I would hope that member opposite would understand that it's the Saskatoon Health Region that hires, actually hires the perfusionist, Mr. Speaker. We have the responsibility as a government on an overarching plan to make sure we have the proper health care professionals.

You know, for years and years under that former government, under that former government, Mr. Speaker, they kept the College of Medicine at 60 seats. They kept the residency positions at 60 seats, Mr. Speaker. They eliminated seats for nursing. And, Mr. Speaker, because of that we are facing the problems that we're facing right now.

Our government has changed that attitude and increased seats. We have an aggressive campaign to make sure we retain and recruit our own graduates, Mr. Speaker. We are making progress. It's slow, but it's slow because of the hole that that former government left us in.

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

Ms. Junor: — The minister can play hide-and-seek all he wants, but here's some other facts that he hasn't taken into consideration. His government took over and had \$2.3 billion in the bank. And what has happened since then? Wait times are higher than they've been in two years. Doctor vacancies have doubled. Rural communities are putting black garbage bags over their hospital signs on the highway. The children's hospital is on an indefinite wait-list. Chiropractors are being de-insured. And we have a crisis in cardiac care because there aren't enough perfusionists to deal with the punishing workload. Because of the Premier's fiscal mismanagement, the province is now \$1 billion in debt and the minister is saying, don't worry; be happy.

To the minister: he didn't solve the problems when he had money. How can anybody believe that he can solve the problems now when there is no money?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, today in Saskatoon we have one perfusionist. There's a locum coming into the province. We have another one starting orientation today, Mr.

Speaker, back up to the four complement of perfusionists that were working in that health region before. The question has been answered, and I think by the Saskatoon Health Region answered very well.

But I would say, Mr. Speaker, this is a quote from a former NDP MLA and a retired physician who says, "It is sheer hypocrisy for Judy Junor to carp about rural health care," Mr. Speaker. She was present, and as the present leader of the NDP, to start talking about rural health care, Mr. Speaker, because it was under their government that 52 hospitals closed and hundreds and hundreds of health care workers were laid off, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

Medical Education

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, today in your gallery we have a group of students from the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. Last year when tuition was increased an average of 4.5 per cent across the campus, students in professional colleges saw their tuition increase up to three times as much. This year it's already clear that the minister is forcing through another tuition hike. It's just a question of how much — likely in the double digits.

When will the minister admit that he has no plan around tuition, and he simply takes his marching orders from a disgraced Finance minister?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks and resources.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to take that question on behalf of the government, Mr. Speaker. In the time that the government has been working towards finalizing the budget, the Minister for Advanced Education for the province has been working very diligently with our two main universities in the province, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that they are using all of their resources as efficiently and as effectively as possible, Mr. Speaker.

And I can tell the member that this government is working very hard to make sure that all of the programs that the universities are offering will continue and continue at a rate and at a tuition level that is clearly acceptable to students and to the people of this province.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the students in the College of Medicine are among our country's most talented citizens. The students have told me the experience they gain while working with practising physicians in the community is irreplaceable. These preceptors are vital to the transfer of knowledge and to the building of a strong local medical community. Students are now concerned that the ratio of preceptors to students is too great, placing undue stress on the existing physicians and

reducing the amount of teaching time.

To the minister: when will he admit that there is a shortage of preceptors, and when will he commit to fix the problem?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I had through the introduction, had talked about the medical students that are here today, those were the issues that they were talking about, the whole piece around preceptors, Mr. Speaker, and the fact that we don't have enough yet in the province. And I would agree to that, and that's why I announced today \$2 million to go to the academic health network to work on very issues such as that, Mr. Speaker.

But those issues come because there's been an increase and a growth in the College of Medicine for both medical students and residents, Mr. Speaker, something that should have been done many years ago. Otherwise the province wouldn't be in the situation it is today, Mr. Speaker.

Two million dollars went into the program, Mr. Speaker, that will address that issue, because the distributive education model is the model that we want to see move forward, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't happen overnight, but we've got a plan and we're moving in the right direction.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know who prepares the minister's briefing binder, but he's been using the same answer since he was elected, Mr. Speaker. Students came here today with a very specific issue: the issue of preceptors, the issue of the need for this government to work with partners to ensure that there are more preceptors here in the province to ensure that these students receive the best possible medical education, the education they're used to and the education that they deserve.

My question to the minister, specifically on the issue of preceptors: what is he doing to ensure that there is an adequate supply of preceptors here in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Let me slow it down, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning I made an announcement: \$2 million that goes to the Academic Health Sciences Network to look at these very issues, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we have the proper complement of preceptors around the province.

I guess we could certainly go back. Let's go back to the old days under the NDP. Let's roll the clock back, Mr. Speaker, and let's roll it back to 60 seats in the College of Medicine and 60 residency seats, Mr. Speaker. Then you don't have any problem about preceptors if you go back 15 years, Mr. Speaker.

That's not what our government is doing. We're moving forward, Mr. Speaker, and we're addressing the problems that are faced in rural Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — Before I recognize the next question, I'd just remind members to place the questions through the Speaker and not directly at an individual but through the department or ministry. I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Forthcoming Budget

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Credible sources are telling the opposition that "The budget process has been extremely chaotic." To the minister: does he really think Saskatchewan people can afford yet another chaotic budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — Mr. Speaker, the budget process has been anything but chaotic. It has been very methodical and very carefully planned and laid out. It has started, as it normally does, in the fall of the year when we ask our ministries to come up with the ideas, what they have for their priorities. We went through that whole process with the ministries with a great deal of detail.

As Treasury Board, we met with ministries and went over their specific budgets with a lot of detail. And for the first time, Mr. Speaker, in this budget process, we actually met with regional health authorities to talk about their budgets because they represent such an important segment of the overall budget estimates for the year.

Mr. Speaker, every year you learn something in terms of how you can do things better, and this has been no different than past budgets. We've been very disciplined. We've been very methodical. It's going to be a great budget.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — It's intriguing that that minister's perception is always very different than the reality, Mr. Speaker. According to insiders, the reason why the budget process has been extremely chaotic is because there has been "no central theme, no direction, with ministers committing to expenditure reductions that they don't fully comprehend."

Last year the Sask Party government made revenue projections that did not fully comprehend. We all know how that turned out. Now they're slashing expenditures without fully comprehending the implications. To the minister: why is the Sask Party government making cuts that they don't fully comprehend?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, this budget has been prepared with a great deal of discipline and caution and prudence. That is something we have always exhibited to the very best of our ability, Mr. Speaker. And the whole point . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that it is fair to characterize this budget preparation as being very meticulous and very methodical, very cautious, very prudent on the Finance's revenue numbers, and very disciplined on the expense side. Mr. Speaker, I think that is an important objective for any budget preparation process and I would like to ask the member opposite, if he has quotes that he's attributing to someone, would he please table those documents.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reciprocal to that one might be, that if the minister has any plan, any plan whatsoever as it relates to finance, would he table that and share that with the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, an inside source goes on to tell us: "There is no vision. There is no plan. Hence the cuts are not coordinated. Rather it's a random package of reductions."

Last year it was random revenue projections. This year it's going to be random cuts. To the minister: when will you learn that preparing budgets requires careful and thoughtful consideration?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite might have stumbled on the idea that a budget requires careful preparation. I knew it all along, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I would welcome the opportunity, if you're making specific quotes, that you list the source because I think that that is the appropriate way in parliamentary procedure. But, Mr. Speaker, I can certainly, I can certainly confirm that every minister's been very intimately and detailed involved in this process. Every department and ministry has been involved in it. The Government of Saskatchewan has worked very diligently in preparation of this budget and the Government of Saskatchewan and the people of Saskatchewan are going to be very proud of it.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it gets to my point once again. The fact the minister says that all ministers have been intimately involved in this process, that scares us, Mr. Speaker. That scares us. That scares us when we look to the Minister of Energy and Resources that last year said there was going to be \$3 billion in potash revenues and we're now cutting a cheque for \$200 million. What a joke over there, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, according to insiders, this is what we have to look forward to next week: a chaotic budget; no vision, no plan, no central theme, no direction; uncoordinated, random cuts that the Sask Party government doesn't even understand.

To the minister: why are you setting up yet another budget for complete failure?

The Speaker: — Before I recognize the minister, I would ask the opposition members to allow the minister to respond without a lot of undue interference in the ability to respond to the question. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what part of previous budgets that the member opposite is unhappy with, Mr. Speaker. For example, for example, Mr. Speaker, for example, do they take . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Well just to remind the opposition members that if you want the Speaker to call the House to order, you're just taking away from your opportunity to present questions. Order. Order. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, this government provided \$300 million of tax relief to the lowest income people in the province of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, that was an important initiative. We've implemented the greatest decrease to educational property tax in the history of this province, and that was a good indication.

Mr. Speaker, we paid off 40 per cent of the debt of this province, and that was an important thing. Mr. Speaker, we increased allowances for the most vulnerable in our province to protect them against the wages of inflation, and that was a good thing, Mr. Speaker. All of those things are important initiatives in budgets of this government, and all of them are very important. And I'd like to see that opposition suggest that they'd roll back any of those important initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, we also invested in an unprecedented way into the infrastructure of this province. All of these things are hallmarks of a Saskatchewan Party government, and we're very proud of every one of them.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The minister who's supposed to be answering questions is asking questions, so I respond. What don't we like about the last budget? The \$1 billion dollar deficit; the 110 per cent miss on potash revenue projections; the double-digit, runaway, out-of-control spending of this government; the fact that this government, in just two years, has taken this province from \$2.3 billion of surplus and a booming economy to a \$1 billion dollar deficit. That's shameful.

The fact that when this game started here this year, we had a \$3 billion revenue projection; now we're making cheques back to the potash companies to the tune of \$200 million. That's a chronology of failure. We ask that . . .

The Speaker: — Order . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I agree. But I want to make sure the member's aware of the fact that what we've agreed to in regards to placing of questions. I would ask the member to place his question directly.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — With respect to this chronology of failure, I ask the minister: what's your plan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, we can point with a great deal of satisfaction and pride to the fact that Saskatchewan is again leading the nation in very many categories. For example, we have the lowest unemployment rate at 4.3 per cent and Canada has 8.2 per cent for nine consecutive months. Employment is up 3,100 people; 12,000 full-time jobs created since February 2010. Nearly 6,000 jobs on saskjobs.ca today, Mr. Speaker. We have the lowest youth unemployment rate, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, all of these things are very, very important to indicate that the economy of this province is doing very, very well. And you'll know exactly what the specific plan is on the 24th of this month when the budget is tabled in this Assembly.

[14:30]

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Enhancement to Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on March 11th at the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] convention, I announced enhancement to the crop insurance wildlife damage compensation program. Together with the federal government, we will provide approximately \$2.5 million annually in the cost-shared funding of these program improvements.

First, producers will now be compensated for 100 per cent of the market value of their livestock killed by predators and up to 80 per cent of the market value for injured livestock requiring veterinary services. Predation has been an ongoing concern and this new program feature will help livestock producers address this issue. There has never been this type of program in Saskatchewan until now. For years, compensation has been provided for wildlife damage to crops, and it's important for livestock producers to have the same program benefits available to them.

Second, the wildlife damage compensation program will be enhanced to include compensation for wildlife damage to crops and feed used for swath, bale, and corn grazing. As winter grazing is becoming more popular, it is important we provide coverage for these losses.

Third, we are removing the \$5,200 compensation limit per yard site, for wildlife damage to stacked feed. Wildlife do not have a limit on the amount of damage they cause, so neither should our program.

And lastly, producers will now be compensated for crop damage caused by wild boars. There are certain areas of the province where wild boars have caused significant damage to the crops. Now producers will be compensated for those losses.

Mr. Speaker, these program improvements have been requested by our producers. These new features will help producers deal

with wildlife issues and protect their investment. We are continually working to improve all of our programs to better address the needs of farmers and ranchers. Mr. Speaker, these new wildlife damage compensation program features are a step in the right direction. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for sending across his statement so we could have a look at it. And I want to say that we do appreciate that the government has decided to provide this assistance. I think it's a step in the right direction.

I might add that it's a step in the right direction after a failed program that was tested. And I think the minister would readily admit it, that the paying of \$20 per coyote for killing a number of thousands of coyotes, I think the total cost of the program is about half a million dollars. And at a time when we are at a loss to find money for many programs in this province, to pay out half a million dollars I think the minister would agree with me was a flawed program to say the least.

One farmer, I think he was joking, said that — at least I hope he was joking — made the comment that he could get \$20 for the paws and \$30 for the ears in Alberta, and it was more money than raising pigs under this government. I think he was joking, but it outlines how wrong that other program was.

The fact of the matter is that agriculture in the province has changed a great deal in the last two years, and I know that the members from rural Saskatchewan will know that. Two years ago grain prices were doing very well and farmers were flourishing. That's not the case, that's not the case today. With the collapse of grain prices, grain farmers are struggling. It's fair to say that pork producers . . . The number of animals in the province is more than 40 per cent lower than it was when the minister became Minister of Agriculture . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, that's true. It's down by 40 per cent.

No, the numbers the minister is talking about, and he can correct me if I'm wrong, but Stats Canada shows that the number of hogs in Saskatchewan is down by 40 per cent since the Sask Party was elected. And cattle are in trouble as well. So any little bit of help we can get, like the program announced today, is at least a bit for the farmers of Saskatchewan but it's not enough. While power rates have gone up 20 per cent in the last 14 months at the farm gate, and while many of the things that farmers use are going up in price and grain prices are going down, and there is trouble at the farm gate in this province under the tutelage of this Sask Party government, any little bit helps. And I do say in closing that I appreciate at least this bit that the minister has been able to get out of the Minister of Finance to help the farmers of our province.

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Cannington on his feet?

Mr. D'Autremont: — For a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington to speak to a point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during question period, the member from Regina Rosemont quoted from an unknown document and an unknown source a number of times. Mr. Speaker, would that member please table that document?

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

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just to respond to a point of order, the member knows full well that in this House in the process of asking questions, Mr. Speaker, we can use information that's provided. We don't have to provide that information to one another unless you're using from a government document, and we're not doing so, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Thank you to the member for Cannington and the member from Regina Dewdney for their comments regarding the point of order. However, I would just mention to the member from Cannington that ministers are required if quoting from direct documents. Private members are not obligated to present the information.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 125 — *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of Bill 125, *An Act to amend the Crown Minerals Act* henceforth known as *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's non-renewable resources are key drivers through much of the province's economy, and they are moving forward on our government's vision for a secure and prosperous Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan communities and Saskatchewan people are benefiting greatly from the increased investment and increased activity in our resource industries. We see those benefits in job opportunities and in steadily increasing population numbers in our province.

Ensuring that resource industries continue to grow requires that we provide those industries with the best support services possible from government. We firmly believe this, and that is why we are continually seeking new and innovative ways to make our processes more efficient and effective, which in turn benefits the industry and the entire province.

This is a major aspect of ensuring that Saskatchewan remains a competitive place to do business, and initiatives like this will help keep our province moving forward. We have learned valuable lessons from other jurisdictions when it comes to the importance of creating a positive business atmosphere in the resource sector, and we continue to apply that knowledge here

at home.

Over the past two years, our ministry has laid the groundwork for a complete transformation of our business activities in the area of mining and oil and gas. Beginning in 2009-2010 and extending for the next four years, the ministry will undertake a complete modernization of its business and regulatory systems targeted to the energy and resource sectors.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments that we are bringing forward in this Bill are necessary to support the implementation of a new web-based mineral registry system. Along with the need for new regulation-making powers, legislative amendments are also required to govern the conversion of pre-existing dispositions to the new electronic registry. We need the amendments to allow for the creation of an electronic mapping system as the legal basis for ensuring new dispositions and the assignment of legal status to the electronic records and documents required to operate the system.

We'll be able to move forward with the establishment of procedures for resolving disputes that may arise when electronic mapping projections are converted to actual boundary surveys and to manage the allocation of risk and liabilities related to the use of a web-based electronic registry.

These amendments will enable the implementation later next year of the new mineral administration registry Saskatchewan, the MARS program. The electronic registry system will enable mineral rights for precious metals, base metals, uranium, diamond, and rare earths to be acquired and managed through an online registry. In subsequent years, oil and gas, potash, coal, and quarry will also be able to move into online registry systems as the relevant regulations are updated.

These amendments are part of our ongoing efforts to keep our province competitive and strong. Mr. Speaker, these amendments are a result of the consultation with the industry and its co-operation throughout. Industry wants and needs the government to make these changes, Mr. Speaker.

Implementing an electronic registry will reduce the costs of acquiring mineral dispositions by eliminating costly ground staking. We'll be able to provide registry access for the industry's use any time of day or night anywhere in the world. It will speed up the issuance of mineral dispositions by integrating electronic information maintained by the Energy and Resources ministry and the geportal maintained by the Information Services Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the advanced technology will simplify the administration and mineral dispositions including the filing of reports and the payment of fees. Mr. Speaker, to provide easier access to information pertaining to dispositions, earlier transfer of dispositions importantly will reduce the need for paper documentation. Implementation of new web-based mineral registry systems is a win for the government and a win for industry.

Mr. Speaker, I am indeed pleased to move the second reading of *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Energy and Resources has

moved second reading of Bill No. 125, *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and add some comments to the minister's comments on the Act to amend *The Crown Minerals Act*, Bill No. 125.

There is not many things that the minister and I would probably agree on, but when he talks about the non-renewable resources, the benefit to this province and also the importance to the province — that we can agree on.

They are important to the province and they are important in the many ways that the minister referred to: providing jobs for Saskatchewan people and providing good wages and supporting families right across the province, but also providing jobs for young people entering the workforce and also the benefits, Mr. Speaker, that we see flowing into the provincial government. So it is true.

Now there is something I would like to add, Mr. Speaker. It is important that these companies receive appropriate services from the province. And that was something also that the minister made comment on right when he began his comments and initial speech on second reading of this Bill. But I have to say, Mr. Speaker, I think this really is a well-earned reputation for the people within the mining sector. And when it has to do with the Crown mineral Act, whether it is oil and gas, whether it is the mineral sector, whether it is precious metals, whatever the resource and whatever the activity, Saskatchewan bureaucrats and employees within the various departments have a very well-earned reputation for providing good service to these companies — a professional service and in a very timely manner.

And, Mr. Speaker, time and time again I have heard comments from companies that have dealt both with Saskatchewan and Alberta, and have commented on the turnaround time for various applications and paperwork that needs to be filled for a variety of activities, that Saskatchewan was much more efficient at it.

So when we look at moving to an electronic registry, that's just the next step, Mr. Speaker, because so many businesses, so many functions that we do on a day-to-day basis are now all computerized and technology has taken on a much larger role in the world that we see and the world that we live in, Mr. Speaker. So this is a natural step for this sector and for the minister to move ahead.

Now it was interesting that the minister said that over the next four years, there would be a complete overhaul of not only the business model, I believe he said, and the regulations when it dealt with this whole system. Four years is pretty quick turnaround. So I would, I mean, I know when we get into committee and we have an opportunity to sit and ask more detailed questions of the minister, we will be able to get into the timelines: what work has been done to date; what type of expense will we see with the whole changeover and redevelopment and overhaul, was the words that the minister used.

[14:45]

But, Mr. Speaker, it is important and I know a number of times when we were in government, Mr. Speaker, we would do tours around to various departments and various areas of the province, visit with communities. And I know we had an opportunity to stop one time at an office that dealt with basically just this area — the maps, the information, and the up-to-date information and how it was maintained and kept and the work that went on. It was absolutely amazing.

And, Mr. Speaker, I have to say that that's probably one of the most eye-opening things about this job. I think any of us when we first run for office and are elected to represent our communities, we feel that we're pretty well informed about what's going on, on a day-to-day basis, pay attention to politics nationally, probably, and provincially of course. But it is a real eye-opener once you have the opportunity to travel this beautiful province and just see exactly the amount of work that goes on, the variety of the work that goes on. And in this whole mineral sector, it is important that that's recognized and taken into consideration.

So, Mr. Speaker, what we look at in this piece of legislation, the changes that are being proposed, a great deal of it is, well it's all directly to do with putting in an electronic system. And it lays out what needs to change, what will allow the changes to take place and the work to begin. And as I said, Mr. Speaker, it puts in place a more appropriate piece of legislation to deal with . . . Whether it's transfers or security interests, Crown dispositions, the applications that have to be made — it all needs to be done as a preparation for an electronic system to be put in place.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's going to be interesting as this moves ahead and we have a chance to go through the legislation and ask more detailed questions to find out what exactly has been done to date, what we're looking at for a final outcome in four years time as the minister said it would be — the overhaul would be done within four years — with the other areas to be rolled in. I'm not sure whether he meant everything would be rolled in within four years or at the end of four years we would start rolling in other sectors. He's nodding his head, so that means that we can ask questions after, once we get into committee, on this piece of legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, it looks like a lot of it is just really setting up for the electronic registry. And I have to say, going through the process with ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan], going through the whole process with health records, it sounds easy. But there are always many glitches that we run into. Not that they are not all solvable to the advantage of Saskatchewan residents but, Mr. Speaker, it's a lot more difficult than what it sounds.

So I look forward to having an opportunity to ask more detailed questions as we move into committee, but I know that there are a number of my colleagues that also are looking forward to making comments on the changes proposed for *The Crown Minerals Act*. So at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 125. Is it the pleasure

of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 134 — *The Opticians Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Opticians Act*. In developing this legislation, the government has consulted closely with the Saskatchewan Ophthalmic Dispensers Association. Mr. Paul Johnson, president of the association, and his colleagues are in the gallery today. Paul, I wish to thank you and your colleagues for your dedicated work in helping update the Act in this new Bill.

I would also like to acknowledge the importance your members play in our health system and in serving the health needs of Saskatchewan people as health professionals experienced in providing accurate and appropriate vision, where ophthalmic dispensers have a variety of skills essential to building the kind of health system we want for this province.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Ophthalmic Dispensers Association has asked for a number of legislative changes to the Act. Specifically this Bill will reserve the title optician for the profession of ophthalmic dispensers to be consistent with other jurisdictions across Canada. And it will also change the name of *The Ophthalmic Dispensers Act* to *The Opticians Act* to reflect the title used by the profession of ophthalmic dispensers in Saskatchewan.

In similar fashion, it will change the regulatory bodies named from the Saskatchewan Ophthalmic Dispensers Association to the Saskatchewan College of Opticians. This name change reflects the trend among regulatory bodies for this profession in other provinces across Canada. At the same time, the change from association to college more accurately reflects the regulatory function of this professional organization.

The Bill will include new provisions clarifying that the duty of the regulatory body is to serve and protect the interest of the public, not the interests of its members. The Bill will also appoint three public representatives on the council of the Saskatchewan College of Opticians, one of whom will serve on the discipline committee. Doing so will give the public a greater voice in regulations of opticians.

These changes along with other concerns, minor administrative detail, will make the Act consistent with other health professional regulations.

Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to an accessible, quality, health care system. We will provide leadership in making the changes needed to strengthen and sustain the system for the future. For this reason, Mr. Speaker, we believe it is important to bring this legislation to the House today. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Opticians Act*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Health has moved second reading of Bill No. 134, *The Opticians Act*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And it's a pleasure to rise and offer a few comments on Bill No. 34, *An Act respecting the Profession of Opticians and making a consequential amendment to The Optometry Act, 1985*. Fairly straightforward from the comments that the minister made, but I have a number of questions for sure that came to mind as we were listening to the minister's comments.

I'm glad that there was consultations with the dispensing association and that there had been discussions. And basically, from what the minister's comments were, is that these are being done at the request of the dispensing association, recognizing not only a variety of skills but a name change that makes us consistent or brings us in line with the terminology that's used in other provinces. And that also reflects on the regulatory body, the name change.

So, Mr. Speaker, in some ways, it's housekeeping. But what brought to mind when the minister was making his comments, I know that we've just dealt with a couple of days ago *An Act to amend certain Statutes to facilitate Labour Mobility*. And I was wondering how these tied together and if there was changes that were needed, or if the changes were implemented into the original Bill that was tabled last fall, Bill No. 128. Or if it was even an issue whether *The Optometry Act* needed the changes. And, Mr. Speaker, in looking through, it looks like there was some changes in Bill 128 that's been made to *The Optometry Act, 1985*.

So I've been flipping back and forth trying to figure out how this all fits together. And I'm sure the minister has thought of that when he has put forward the Bill. And I'm sure that he's initiated the appropriate changes, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that all self-regulating bodies are up to date, that their skills are appropriately recognized, and that the correct terminology . . .

As you're well aware, Mr. Speaker, there's a mountain of legislation that applies in the province of Saskatchewan, and it is almost a full-time job to make sure that it is up to date, appropriate, using correct terminology. Because not only does the process of governments change, but also all of these professions are forever changing, forever updating their skills, improving areas of operation. And legislation needs to keep pace with these professions.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that there is not a lot of issue with what's being done. But I do know that my colleagues would like to take a closer look at it. So at this point in time I would adjourn debate on Bill 134 until a number of my colleagues have also had an opportunity to speak to it. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow has adjourned debate on Bill No. 134, *The Opticians Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 117

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Heppner that **Bill No. 117 — *The Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to join in the debate today on Bill 117, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*.

Mr. Speaker, I think there are concerns from people in the Cumberland constituency, also in the North, that actually do trapping. And the process that a Bill like this has come forward, there's so many concerns that people have and they're not sure. And I think the government of the day has given people who do trapping for a living . . . And as part of their culture as First Nations and Métis and northerners, it's an inherited right for them to do that, and they have done it for generations and for many years.

And when I look at this Act, and I realize they want to respect hunting, fishing, and trapping, and it's fine to say that to show the respect and have a heritage day and honour our hunting and fishing and trapping. But always there are some concerns and caution that people have. And we don't know exactly where this Act will go and what else will come of this Act. You know, we have certain regulations that after the fact things are passed. People don't ask the questions, and we have an opportunity to debate it.

And I am very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to get into this debate to discuss an Act. And I know it seems harmless. And some people will say, oh pass it, and you know, it's harmless. It's good for everybody. It recognizes one day, November 15th I believe is the day they want to recognize each year. But there are concerns back home and in the North with some of the, I guess, regulations and Acts that have been passed by the Sask Party. There's so many concerns about the duty to consult and accommodate from First Nations and Métis people and traditional land users that this government, any time it brings in an Act when it comes to fishing, hunting, trapping, it's quite a concern to some people.

And just to allow, you know, an Act like this to go ahead without debating it, Mr. Speaker, and truly understanding — what else will come? This is one start. I'm not sure why an Act like this is needed to have a Heritage Day, to honour a day respecting, they say, the trappers.

When there's regulations passed, Mr. Speaker, that really to be honest with you, when I think of just one, I want to give an example that's been brought to my attention by people back home in the Cumberland constituency. You know, they're 30-some years old. They've trapped a long time. They trapped

with their grandparents, with their parents. And now they're asked that they have to take a course in order for them to get a hunting, a fur licence, to get a big game licence. It's a little concerning to them and to myself to find out that there are regulations out there that this government has passed, supported to take away.

Who did they consult when they went and made these new regulations, you know? I'm looking at, you know, a copy of it. People born after January 1st, 1997 must graduate from a firearms safety or hunting education course in order to hold or apply for a Saskatchewan gaming or fur licence. The individual should be prepared to present proof of training when purchasing or applying for a licence. First-time trappers.

Well that's a regulation I realize of this government passed in, I believe, 2009. I've had people asking when these regulations came out, and I guess Acts, who do they consult with, Mr. Speaker? And I honestly have trouble to find out anybody that they've consulted with or they talked to in the First Nations and Métis community and trappers. Some people are very concerned where we're going with this.

[15:00]

And their track record as a Sask Party government is not good when it comes to duty to consult and accommodate First Nations and Métis. It's kind of appalling what's been going on. And I have to wonder what's on their agenda. You know, we want to recognize and say we respect hunting, fishing, and trapping. And there's always these concerns from people back home. What are they up to? It's not as simple as we sometimes think that, you know, will this affect their traditional trapping? Will it affect somebody who's a traditional commercial fisherman, hunter hunting for sustenance? And a lot of First Nations and Métis and northern people do. And I guess you can look at an education.

So if I look at a regulation, and if they're willing to go this way with a regulation that was passed and ask that a trapper who has trapped for 30-some years to get a course in hunter safety or have to show that they're, I guess, certified or have the experience, well I think 30-some years on the trapline with their grandparents, with their parents . . . I find it a little appalling and I think, you know, alarming that we expect somebody with 30-some years as a trapper to actually go out and have to get a course, take hunter safety. I mean to me it just doesn't make sense. And then when you ask them, as a trapper, were you ever consulted? And I haven't found anybody.

That just goes to show you, Mr. Speaker, where these guys are willing to go. It's about a trust thing. And any time, Mr. Speaker, you have a government willing to, you know, say they respect and want to have an Act to name a day, Bill 117, well I wonder where they're going and what's the motive behind it, Mr. Speaker. What is that motive behind respecting it?

We have respected the trappers who have 30-some years. I don't need to have a government come up with a regulation to tell me that we should respect a trapper or a commercial fisherman who's gathered food and has done that as a living — traditional, lived off the land, and supplement their income. Why should we expect that they should have to take a course?

Again it goes back to the Sask Party government's duty to consult and accommodate with First Nations and Métis and the land users. You guys have no intention on working with them and consulting. You just want to get your own agenda. You want to bring legislation that, for whatever reason, you think is best for them. You want to tell First Nations and Métis what's good for them. And the trappers, fishermen, traditional land users, and people who hunt for subsistence as First Nations — an inherent right.

You know, the Supreme Court of Canada makes it very clear. The Crown has the obligation to accommodate, to consult First Nations and Métis, Aboriginal people. The Crown does; you have. This government has an obligation to do that. And I see people telling me that they were not consulted when these regulations were changed. They're very concerned; they're alarmed. And nobody seems to really want to face these challenges that they're having. I think it's up to the government to face them. You guys have an obligation as the government, the power to be, to make sure that First Nations and Métis people, northern people are accommodated, that they feel like they've taken part in a debate, that they've had their say.

They know the land. Nobody knows the land better than some of our First Nations and Métis and northern trappers. They know the land. They breathe it; they eat it. And they truly understand.

And I find it a little . . . No, I don't find it a little, I find it just appalling that we change regulations that impact traditional land users. We go in there and it just goes back to show what the Sask Party's all about. Your agenda, I don't know what it is, but people are concerned, Mr. Speaker.

So when I look at, you know, the Bill 117, you want to support it because you think maybe it'll be a good thing to recognize and honour hunting, fishing, and trapping. But on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, I wonder what's next. What would this government table next when it comes to traditional land use? Well what's the agenda?

And I'm very concerned that First Nations, Métis, traditional users of the land, Mr. Speaker, will not be consulted. And this Bill 117, just watching what's gone on in the last two and a half years of this government, the Sask Party government, it truly sends some concerns out there. And people aren't feeling like this government truly is taking the best interests of the commercial fishermen, the trappers, and the traditional land users.

The government talks about it. It comes up with a draft policy framework for co-operation and all that, and they say, oh yes we've gone out, we consulted with the people, and this is what they want. Here it is. But you know, a lot of people are being affected by some of the legislation that of course may affect them, may not. But the ones that are truly affected, has this government gone out and, Mr. Speaker, talked to them? Make sure that their concerns . . .

And, you know, you go back and you think about the fish management regulations. Who did they consult? And this goes back to here's another Bill we have, 117, hunting, fishing, trapping. Who did they consult, Mr. Speaker, when they went

out and changed this and come up with a draft? You know, fish management regulations, policy, plan, whatever you want to call it, it's concerning that they don't go out and consult with the people. They just want to say, here's what we have for you. It's good for you. Accept it. Well that isn't good for the people in the North. It isn't good enough for the rest of Saskatchewan people. They should be appalled. Demand, hold the government accountable.

We have an opportunity to come here and debate and talk about Bills that will affect traditional land users, First Nations, Métis, northerners, trappers, fishers, hunters. We find it so easy to pass regulations or Acts, whatever it will be, and especially this government. To actually go out and consult, I don't see it. We don't hear it out there. Mr. Speaker, they just want to go out and this is what's good. Here it is. That's the way it's going to be. Well that's not good enough, Mr. Speaker.

Traditional land users, First Nations who hunt and fish and gather for food, have a right. And there's a process and this process is supposed to work for everyone in our province. But, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe there's enough. I don't believe that this government's doing enough when it comes to the file of duty to consult and accommodate. It's appalling. They know that, Mr. Speaker. It's very clear. You're going to do the cheerleading one day a year to say, oh we have a heritage day, November 15th. Wow, isn't that . . . We recognize, and don't we respect the hunting and fishing and trapping that goes on? That's not enough. You have an obligation as a government, Mr. Speaker.

I don't think this Bill actually, to be honest, is going to do anything. I wonder why it's even here. What's it supposed to accomplish? What's behind it? And I know people back home want to know, why all of a sudden have a heritage Bill? Traditional land users, hunters, fishers, they are a very proud people. They do it for a living. They have years and years . . . They have more experience. They should be teaching this course, giving a course, not expecting someone with 30-some years to have to go take a course. It's appalling. But regulations are passed. They have to follow. I know some that couldn't get their fur licence because they didn't have the scores. That to me is appalling.

So when I look at Bill 117, I sometimes wonder, is this a start to something else? Where else will they go? Oh, they say, oh it's to honour you and respect you. One day we're going to honour and respect trappers, fisher, hunting . Well I'm a little concerned. Why don't you take that one day and have First Nations, Métis, traditional land users, hunters, fishers, trappers come in and sit with them and truly do the duty to consult and work with them? You know, that's something I'd like to see. Let's spend the day doing that. But no. No, that doesn't happen.

Mr. Speaker, I know back home people are very proud — the trappers, the fishers. And they want to make sure that . . . It's part of their culture. It's not just . . . some maybe subsidize their income a little bit. They try their best.

And sometimes they're impacted by the mining sector or by industry and whatever come into their traditional lands. And a lot of times, they're not consulted. You know, you look at it and, Mr. Speaker, some of them are very frustrated and I think

sometimes feel left behind, that somebody's allowed to come in on their traditional land, destroy their trapline, impact it so greatly that the animals flee. They don't come back. They don't come back. Once an area is disturbed, Mr. Speaker, they don't come back. It's very concerning.

You know, Mr. Speaker, that we look at, oh some of the business, that there's outfitters that impact traditional land users, the outfitters. And this Act recognizes maybe some of the . . . Oh, let's see. I'm trying to make sure that I word this properly, Mr. Speaker. We have a number of people who, I guess as a business, tourism business. Let's see, who else does this?

You have some of the people actually, outfitters. You look at what the outfitters are accomplishing, some of the outfitters. And they will, Mr. Speaker, be outfitters that will enter a certain land and, for some reason, without consulting the trappers or the traditional land users, the outfitters will go in or the government grants them licence to go and hunt bear, big game, go impact on a land that somebody has occupied for maybe generations.

Just goes to show you, the people back home are losing control over their traditional land and they're upset. They're appalled, and they should be. They were there. They have a footprint and there's an imprint of them. It could have been their great-great-grandfather, great-great-grandmother.

You know, I just find it, Mr. Speaker, very alarming and again appalling that a government would not do the duty to consult and accommodate before they go and allow outfitters, before they allow anyone to go on. Very disappointing. And you know what? It's a good point, Mr. Speaker. It is very disappointing that this government, the Sask Party government does not take the duty to consult and accommodate more serious, Mr. Speaker. It's appalling, and they should be ashamed.

There's more work has to be done, and I know we will keep them on their toes. And there's going to be a process, and it will come before this Bill. Bills will come here. We'll debate them. We'll talk about them.

But what's really sad is when I go back home, and I have people approach me, Mr. Speaker, and they're concerned about legislation or Acts that are going to impact their traditional lands. They're unhappy. They say, why weren't we consulted? Once somebody's on your land — and you have a traditional land — and somebody's going in there and just doing what they want, they didn't talk to you. They just show up. To me that's appalling, and it should be to anybody.

There should be more . . . Yes, there should be more protection. We put more protection into the wild ponies than we have on protecting First Nation and Métis rights. That's appalling to me . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No. And who do they consult on that one? They didn't consult First Nations. They didn't consult traditional land users. They didn't consult the Métis. What did they do?

[15:15]

So, Mr. Speaker, going back to this Bill, Bill 117. You know,

it's interesting. I don't know how it's going to impact my grandchildren. I don't know, you know. I'm going to talk to them a little more about it; I have to be honest. One day a year we're going to recognize and say, oh what an honour. We're going to honour the, you know, hunting and fishing and trapping. They don't want to be honoured in that way for one day in November by this government and an Act that does that. They want respect 365 days a year.

So to tell me that one day out of the year this government's going to pass an Act to shed some light on a heritage day is appalling again. Respect them 365 days a year, Mr. Speaker. They have a right. They have been there for generations. They know the land. If you will consult them, they will tell you what's best for it, what's the right way to go, Mr. Speaker.

So when I think about Bill 117 and the impact, you know, I was sitting here thinking about it and some of the people that have made comments to me: how come the government want to recognize one day a year? And how come they're coming out with regulations, whether it's for traditional land use, whether it's trapping, fishing?

You look at the fish management policy they're coming up with. Well they call it a draft. That's got to be so concerning out there to so many people. But have they gone out and consulted? No. Do they care? No. But the Crown made it very clear, you know, and the Supreme Court made it very clear, the Crown had the obligation.

So let's make sure that the NDP and the opposition holds them accountable so that the people that truly are using the land for hunting, fishing are recognized, that are using it traditional — not with barriers and ways of telling them they can't get a fur licence because they didn't take a course. They're 30-some years, Mr. Speaker, that they've been on that land, trapping, hunting, and they need a course by some regulation.

So I wonder where Bill 117 will go. Is it a start of something else? I don't trust them. Back home they don't trust this government, the Sask Party government; they do not. They're very concerned. Your track record in the last two and a half years is not very good. So don't say and tell the people out there that you do the duty to consult. I mean that's your opinion; you may want to say that.

So when I see Bill 117, Mr. Speaker, the way it will impact and, you know, a heritage day, the heritage Act, one day, November the 15, again I want to go back to this — I'm concerned who will it impact, Mr. Speaker. Will it impact some of our commercial fishermen back home, the trappers, you know? The hunting, who gather for some . . . I know a lot of the First Nations hunt on a regular basis.

The Métis have won their inherent right. The Métis have a right to hunt and fish and trap. And it's a tough one. They should be given that right and the government should come up with an Act that does that, that allows them to recognize, which the Supreme Court of Canada has.

So this Bill 117, you know, to recognize hunting and fishing for, again, one day a year. One day a year. You know what? It should be coming out with something that says, honour and

respecting them with a duty to consult 365 days a year, is what that government should be doing — not one day, you know.

You go back home and you watch the fur business and you talk to some of the people that are actually out there. They're working hard. They're trying to make a living. They supplement their income with, you know, trapping, fishing, and they're doing an excellent job. They share it with their grandchildren. They want to make sure that the next generation knows.

But you know, it's concerning to see how their land is being impacted. And every time the Sask Party and this government changes regulations or an Act, it impacts them, and greatly. And it's alarming to them, but they don't feel like this government cares. It's got an agenda. It's working on that.

Tourism is good. It's wonderful for everyone. There's some business. But sometimes the outfitters impact and there are times where it's not good. But again, if the opportunity comes for a business the Sask Party, the government supports the outfitters to go in an area. I've had people concerned. They weren't consulted when the government gave somebody so many licences to go in and shoot bear on their traditional land. They weren't consulted. They weren't even talked to. They just, that's the way it is. Sorry, that's how we're doing it. That's the way the regulations are. That's the business.

So your track record as a government, Sask Party government, when it comes to the duty to consult and accommodate First Nations, Métis, traditional land users, trappers, fishers, is terrible to be honest, Mr. Speaker. It's terrible. It's a shame.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there's going to be a lot of regulations. And I imagine the government will be bringing them forward. And they'll come before, I guess if it's an Act, it will come before the House. If it's the regulations, it will go to order in council. It's concerning to a lot of us back home, the impact it will have on us when we're not consulted and talked to, when we don't sit around a table and get a chance to express our concerns and the impact it will have on our generation and after generation.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are so many different things that impact traditional land use. The government has an obligation to make sure it works with those people, those individuals, to make sure that they're protected and their rights are protected. Honour them. Show them the respect that they deserve. Don't come out with an Act for one day — November the 15th — we'll respect hunting, fishing, and trapping. Don't try to sell that. It's not right. There should be the respect 365 days a year that this government should honour.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, regulations come out. Acts come out and different people have input. But I know for a fact the people I have talked to personally on this matter, they were not talked to. They didn't have a chance to say how it would impact them. But now they're being told. They're being denied a fur licence because they don't have a course, but yet they've been on the trapline for 30-some years. It doesn't even make sense. It doesn't make sense, Mr. Speaker. So every . . .

An Hon. Member: —Where is the common sense?

Mr. Vermette: — Where is the common sense? There you go. There's none. No common sense. So, Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 117, as far as I see it, it's a could be a start to something and we don't know where it's going to go.

This government can pass certain Acts and want to bring them before . . . But I know that I'll talk to the people back home to make sure that when we come in here to debate these things we know what's going on, how they're being impacted back home, how they're not feeling consulted, how they're not feeling a part of the process when a decision on regulations or an Act is made.

You know I find it's . . . You know, I talked to my brothers and, I don't know, Mr. Speaker, they love to hunt. And you know being Métis people, we have an inherent right to hunt. And I find it pretty alarming and concerning that when they want to go out and hunt for sustenance, you know, there's all these regulations that may come into effect to stop them. And some will go and hunt and some are not scared. Some are challenging it, and they're challenging them in court, Mr. Speaker.

And you know to honour Métis people who go hunting and gathering fish for sustenance . . . Fishing — give you another thing — you know they love to do this. And sometimes people have done it for generation after generation. And now they're being told, no you can't. Supreme Court of Canada makes it very clear the Métis have won that right. We've been challenged in this province on different times. I think it's time that we don't recognize the Métis for their . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, their tradition. And I don't think it's time that the Métis should have to anymore.

Why don't you bring an Act in that way that will see the right, that they're the rights bearer of the land to hunt and fish for sustenance and gather for their family, that they provide? Why don't you bring an Act like that in that covers them for 365 days a year — instead of playing — honouring that? So there's many challenges.

I talked to my uncles and, you know, they've got concerns about where this government's going on the traditional Métis. Well you know they're wondering what exactly would this Act do, you know when you ask them, recognize hunting and fishing for one day out of the year. How come we're not recognized 365 days a year? It's very interesting.

So not only does the younger generation talk about it, Mr. Speaker, but the older generation as they move on are wondering, what's this government's plan for us? We had a traditional lifestyle. And you know if they want to hunt and gather for sustenance, it's very clear. But sometimes you know people are challenged. And the government comes along and says, no you can't. And it's regulations and Acts, I guess, that are passed here.

An Hon. Member: — What do the elders tell the youth?

Mr. Vermette: — Well the elders tell the youth . . . And this is interesting. The elders say, through our eyes and through what the elders have gone through — and they have hunted and fished for generations — and what they've learned, that's part of the culture. And they're trying to bring them back, Mr.

Speaker. They're trying to bring the youth to their culture — hunting, fishing. It is living a traditional lifestyle. They're working hard.

There's some programs out there that are a huge success, going back and getting in tune, in touch, going back to the culture that they were very proud of. First Nations and Métis are a very proud culture — like many cultures are — their traditional lands and the traditional lifestyle. And there's been challenges, Mr. Speaker. But you know what? They've got over those challenges. They've worked with people and sometimes, you know, the battles were long and hard.

But you know, sometimes, Mr. Speaker, they worked through them, and they felt like the government heard them. But this government right now, Sask Party government, doesn't hear them. They know that. They're not happy about that. They know they have rights, inherited rights. And it's time that, you know, Mr. Speaker, it's time that the government act on that and respect the Métis for their hunting and fishing. It's time. So let's bring in an Act . . . Why don't they bring an Act in that gives them recognition 365 days a year?

And let's go back. I just want to make sure we talk about our elders and the respect they have for the land, the traditions that they have, and what they want they want to bring back to their people, the pride in their culture. They're very proud, and they should be very proud. They have a lot to be proud of. I am very proud as an Aboriginal person.

You know, Mr. Speaker, so when I see a Bill coming forward like 117, you're going to recognize again and I just — one day a year — I wonder where it's coming from. What's behind the agenda for that? One day we're going to recognize hunting, fishing, and trapping. And to me, that's concerning.

You know, they can say, oh just support it. It's a Bill. It's good. You know, when somebody tells me oh just support it, it's good for you — no way.

An Hon. Member: — Just trust me.

Mr. Vermette: — Trust me. Yes, right, trust us. Can you imagine that, Mr. Speaker — trust us? We see their track record. Well we've seen their budget. Trust their budgets? What a joke that one was.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to go back and think about Bill No. 117. You know, really when you look at it, what's behind that, Mr. Speaker, I wonder. What is behind that Bill? What is this a start of? What else are we going to have one day to recognize? We're going to take things away that you used to get 365 days a year and we're going to recognize it for one day and we're going to make an Act for it. That's what concerning to some people. They're wondering where that's going.

So, Mr. Speaker, at this time I've shared some things from what I've heard from people that trap. They're concerned. They can't get their fur licence because of the . . . They've been trapping 30-some years. You know, this individual was very concerned. He spent more time than anybody, than others have, the one about this. With his grandparents, he was on the trapline. He grew up and he learned his culture. He truly knows how to hunt,

fish. He could give this course. But you know what? He couldn't get a fur licence because the regulations say he had to go take a course.

He just found it so frustrating. And you know what?

An Hon. Member: — Where's the common sense?

Mr. Vermette: — Yes. Go back to that. You know, I've heard different people say, common sense. Where's the common sense here, Mr. Speaker? Sometimes, I don't know, the motives behind people and what they say sometimes are different than what they do. So I think it's time that we make sure that, Mr. Speaker, we get a chance to debate this 117 more.

[15:30]

And I think some of us are going to talk to some of the trappers, the fishers, the hunters to make sure how this will impact them. And will it impact them? We don't know for sure. Because we don't know what this is the start of. We don't know where it came from. Why is it even here? Whose agenda? Whose agenda is this? I wonder.

First Nations and Métis, they know. They're proud. They don't have to have one day to respect their culture. They respect the land. They respect the wildlife. They will manage things well. They have done it for generation after generation. They don't need somebody to come in and give them one day of recognition. They truly know how to manage the land, the resources.

But you don't consult them, First Nations and Métis. And you need to do more of that. This Bill should go before them and see what they think about it before we enact it: make sure they accept it; make sure they even want it.

So, Mr. Speaker, at this point, you know, I'm trying to . . . I know my other colleagues want to get in on it and I want to let them get in on the debate. You know, I'm very pleased and honoured that I had an opportunity, especially when I go back home. And I can share with the community members that are there in the Cumberland constituency that truly trap, fish, hunt, that have concerns about the Sask Party government's, you know, dealing with certain issues and topics. Their track record is not very good, not very good at all, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well okay. I'll tell you about it.

You know, they talk about budgets and they come and present certain information. Some of them even talk about \$3 billion potash. And, you know, they come back and they have to write cheques, rebate cheques back. I don't know what you call them, but it's a little alarming. Two hundred and, I think, four million dollars in a refund cheque? Well you know, refund cheque? Like that's kind of appalling. That's sad.

You know, I can tell you more about some of the things they've done on roads in the North. Well roads — on housing. It's terrible . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well you guys want to know more. Okay, they're asking over there, Mr. Speaker, for more. So, Mr. Harrison, I will do that. The Minister of Municipal Affairs wants to hear more. I'll pass that on.

You know, you look at some of the conditions of our housing. You look at some of the roads and the infrastructure. It's not very good, Mr. Speaker. Terrible. So there's a track record right there. I don't know if they want to hear more about some of the things that they're not doing to the North or to the rest of the province. But you know, I'd like to go back now, Mr. Speaker, and really talk about Bill 117, you know.

It's touched a lot of people and I think, Mr. Speaker, common sense, common sense would tell you to go and consult First Nations and Métis and the traditional land users, northerners, before you bring Bills like this forward. But do they? No, of course not. That's commonsense things to do. That's the right thing to do. Make sure you know. Well you know, again I go back to this, Mr. Speaker. I know a lot of my colleagues would like to get on to this debate, so I'll share you a little bit more, Mr. Speaker, then.

Well it's interesting. You know, I'm not sure how budgets are going to affect Bill 117. Except you can see what will budgets impact. Are we going to be able to have the balloons and do the cheerleading with this budget that's coming down? I hope so. When this thing passes, I hope with the new budget there'll be money in it for having the cheerleading and the balloons that they're so used to using and they could cheer loud — loud, Mr. Speaker.

So I hope . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh, yes, yes, they might have enough money in that budget. Well maybe some of us could lend them some so they could buy a cake. You know, that would be nice . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well there you go. What's a party. So they want to have a party. So hopefully, Mr. Speaker, that when we celebrate this Bill — if it passes, Mr. Speaker, if Bill 117 passes — that there'll be enough money in this budget and, you know, the way they've done that, that there'll be enough in the new budget on March 24th to buy balloons and cake and to do a little bit of a celebration on this if that's what they want to do.

So, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well no, we won't even go there because like I know, you know, I want to stay focused on Bill 117.

And some of the money that they might be able to find in the budget to have a party and celebrate, you know, should this Bill ever pass, you know . . . And it might pass, you know; it might not. But it's nice to know that we have time to discuss it and make sure that at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, that we truly have an opportunity to debate it, to make sure that people that it will be impacted had a chance to share with the official opposition — and I hope with the government members — how it will impact them on the traditional trapping, fishing, hunting.

And I think it's time that the government listen to those individuals. It's time. Come and join us. We'll share with you around the North. We'll tell you what we need. Better ideas, Mr. Speaker. You can learn from northern people. They will tell you. First Nations and Métis, traditional trappers, land users will tell you the best way to manage the resources. They have a lot of knowledge and they care. They truly do, Mr. Speaker. There is a compassion when these people speak. They know the land. They understand that they've been through cycles.

So, Mr. Speaker, at this time, I hope the government will reach out to traditional land users, First Nations and Métis, and make sure that they're hearing their concerns and how Acts like Bill 117 impact them — that they truly do care and want to listen to northern people.

And you know, the Aboriginal . . . And being Aboriginal, I want to just say, there's an opportunity for government to reach out and I truly hope they will reach out to the Aboriginal communities. They are the traditional land users. They hunt, they fish, they gather for sustenance. It's very important about some of the traditions, and we must protect that. And I commend what First Nations and Métis people and northern people and traditional land users are doing to protect their lands. And they need to do more, and we need to protect them. And we need to stay focused and work with them very hard.

Mr. Speaker, at this time — and again, it's been an honour to share some of the concerns from back home, some of my own thoughts, and my concerns, some of my own experiences — at this time I would like to move adjourn this debate, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 117. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

An Hon. Member: — No.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join the debate on Bill 117 on the hunting and trapping and fishing — a day, Mr. Speaker, to recognize the important role, Mr. Speaker, that these individuals have played in our province over the years.

Mr. Speaker, and it's a true honour, a true honour to follow in the footsteps or follow the speech after . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Why is the member, Government House Leader, on his feet?

Mr. D'Autremont: — It's tradition in this House, Mr. Speaker, that members speak from their seat, not from a neighbouring seat, Mr. Speaker. The member has simply moved over now.

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

Mr. Broten: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand here and enter into this debate. I know my seatmate, he becomes very animated when he speaks. And the arm movements, Mr. Speaker, I was simply being careful that I would not get a cuff on the ear or a whack on the head that I wouldn't appreciate. So I'm glad to be in my seat, Mr. Speaker.

When looking at Bill 117, an Act representing hunting, fishing, and trapping, it's important to examine the motives. It's important to examine why individuals on the opposite side would find it appropriate, would think that it's the best approach to bring forward this type of legislation.

There are a variety of motives, I think, that members opposite have when they are bringing forward a piece of legislation, a variety of different rationale, different points that they want to bring forward when they're introducing a piece of legislation.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, a piece of legislation is brought forward because members opposite think that it serves an important public policy purpose — it serves a role that makes the province stronger, makes the province better. It serves a role in ensuring that when we're looking at what kind of future we want in Saskatchewan, the piece of legislation will address the particular issue that they have put forward in the legislation.

There are other instances, Mr. Speaker, where a piece of legislation is brought forward to simply speak to an issue in a particular area. Perhaps there's a hot spot with an issue, individuals are wondering what in fact can take place with this issue, and legislation is brought forward to address a concern.

There's another type of legislation that I see members opposite bring forward at times, Mr. Speaker, and this is a type of legislation that is not necessarily a bad thing. It's not something that serves against the interests of Saskatchewan people, but it opens up a can of worms in the sense that it causes us to ask many questions about what is the motivation for this particular piece of legislation.

And with *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*, as I listen to my colleagues speak and this Act where there would be one day recognized where the role of hunters, fishers, and trappers would be paid special recognition on that one day, it causes me to ask as a member of this Assembly, what is the rationale for bringing this forward?

Is this something that the individuals who have spent time in the North have been wondering about? Is this something that individuals that are engaged in these traditional pursuits want? Have they been calling for this? Is this something that makes their life better and makes the work that they do in their traditional territory — the hunting, fishing, and trapping that they engage in — easier for them, more special for them? Or is this . . . So that's the one argument, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps these individuals are asking for this type of legislation because they think that it serves some benefit.

The other hand, Mr. Speaker, which could be a competing motive for why this piece of legislation, Bill 117, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping* to come forward is more along the lines of — I'm not saying this is the situation — but it could be a degree of tokenism where instead of addressing concerns, as the member from Cumberland said, on an ongoing basis throughout the year, 365 days, members opposite try to have some piece of legislation that provides a day of recognition in the hope that it would deflect criticism in other areas, in the hope that when they are criticized or questioned or called for their behaviour to do with aspects that affect hunters, fishers, and trappers that they could point to this one piece.

They could say, I know we are not consulting with you in a proper way, in a way that speaks to understanding what are your concerns, what are your needs. But we have appointed a day; we've recognized one day, Mr. Speaker, where we're able to recognize the role that hunters, fishers, and trappers have in

society.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't know where in fact members opposite fall with what is their motivation in this Bill, whether this is something that they are bringing in order to speak to the needs and concerns of individuals engaged in hunting, fishing, and trapping. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker. But also, Mr. Speaker, there's a very true and real possibility that this Bill could fall more into the window-dressing category where members opposite simply want to introduce one specific piece of legislation as a means to deflect criticism in other areas where they are failing the people of Saskatchewan so badly. And as my colleague from Cumberland pointed out, there are many concerns that northerners have, that Aboriginals have, that First Nations and Métis people have in the province about how this Bill does in fact affect individuals, Mr. Speaker.

When looking at the legislation, the proposed legislation, Bill 117, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*, the preamble makes reference to the role of hunting, fishing, and trapping, the role that it's played in shaping our social, cultural, and economic heritage. And I think in looking at that whereas clause, Mr. Speaker, that's certainly something that I could support because I know the role of hunting, fishing, and trapping has indeed formed a great part of our history and a great part of what we as Saskatchewan people recognize as our very rich history.

I mean, it's known — perhaps not known well enough — but you know, I remember being in grade school and learning how the fur trade, Mr. Speaker, opened up the West, how individuals explored further and further into the West, how Europeans had contact with First Nations people. And that's part of our very rich heritage and a heritage that is proper and is good to celebrate here in Saskatchewan.

[15:45]

So in that aspect, Mr. Speaker, I do think that in looking at this whereas clause; where the fishing, hunting, and trapping has played an important role in the social, cultural, and economic heritage, I would fully agree with that. And I think many individuals in this Assembly would in fact also agree with that.

Mr. Speaker, but this is where I have my concerns. Because it's one thing to have a good whereas clause. It's one thing to have a bright idea to recognize the role of hunting, fishing, and trapping here in the province. But it needs to, Mr. Speaker, be tied into a larger, a more focused and thoughtful approach to how we deal with individuals who are engaged in hunting, fishing, and trapping. It cannot be, as I see it, Mr. Speaker, an approach to simply pass a day of recognition for individuals in this type of work and hope that everything will be fine, that everything will be okay, to hope that any concerns that northerners have about hunting, fishing, and trapping are then swept under the carpet, are completely . . . the whole situation is at peace and at ease simply because there is a day to recognize an *Act Respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*.

So while I'm not necessarily opposed to the notion of having a day of recognition for individuals engaged in hunting, fishing, and trapping, I don't think, Mr. Speaker, that it's the silver bullet that can allow members opposite to go about their

business and say that everything is wonderful in the North and that individuals who are engaged in hunting, fishing, and trapping are pleased with what this government is doing and how they are consulting with them. I don't think that is the situation.

I would draw a comparison, Mr. Speaker, to when we have International Women's Day here, celebrated around the world and here in the province. Mr. Speaker, while it is appropriate, while it is proper to recognize on one day the role that women have served in society, in our province, and in our families and our workplaces, that's not an excuse, Mr. Speaker, during every other day of the year to ignore the concerns that women have in society, to ignore important issues. Whether it's pay equity, Mr. Speaker, whether it is violence that individuals may experience, whether it is any type of sexism, Mr. Speaker, simply because there is a day to recognize International Women's Day, it does not mean that it is fine to turn a blind eye every other day of the year on that issue.

In the same way when we're looking at Bill No. 117, *An Act Respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*, introducing a day to recognize hunters, fishers, and trappers, okay, that's fine. And perhaps this is what individuals in the North are wanting. I've spent some time in the North, but certainly not to the extent that the member from Cumberland or the member from Athabasca or any number of my colleagues have spent time there. Perhaps this is what they're wanting.

But what I can guarantee they don't want, Mr. Speaker, is an approach to their concerns, an approach to the issues that they bring forward, that is one of just simple tokenism. It's not enough to have one day carved off or highlighted with a ceremony recognizing the concerns of individuals engaged in hunting, fishing, and trapping. It's not enough to have one day. It needs to be something that has a focus 365 days of the year.

And sadly, Mr. Speaker, on so many occasions, this is a reality that escapes the Sask Party. We can look at any number of instances and we see this pattern of behaviour. And that's why I have concerns about Bill No. 117 because I'm concerned that this type of tokenism, this type of a bit of fluff and a bit of hoopla around an event — though it may be fun, though it may be okay, though it may be appropriate — it doesn't necessarily address the issues.

A perfect example also: essential services legislation. Members opposite, instead of encouraging negotiation to come to a good settlement, Mr. Speaker, in order to ensure that we have the best health care system around the year, 365 days of the year, members opposite would prefer instead to simply use a hammer in times when it's convenient for them. I don't think that is an approach that is a well thought out approach or a thorough approach, one that speaks to the needs in that sector.

And in the same way with Bill 117, by simply having one day that recognizes the role of hunting, fishing, and trapping, while perhaps some individuals in the province want it and perhaps it's something that I could indeed support at the end of the day, the concern that I want to state on the record now is that it is not enough, Mr. Speaker, to simply take one day of the calendar, throw a dart at the calendar, choose a day, and then that is the extent of policy thought and legislation that goes into the area

of hunting, fishing, and trapping.

Mr. Speaker, so I in fact would like to spend a great amount of time on this Bill, Mr. Speaker, but I know there are other colleagues who do want to speak to this piece of legislation. So as I've had a chance to talk about some of my feelings about this Bill in the respect that perhaps there is a decent motive, but perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the motive is not so decent. Perhaps the motive is one of tokenism as opposed to a thoughtful and considerate legislative plan.

And to me that is not yet clear. And I say that, Mr. Speaker, because I've seen many instances by this government when approaching issues — whether it is something of essential services, whether it is something like International Women's Day, Mr. Speaker, whatever the issue is — there's a great tendency of members opposite to have a lot of hoopla, to have balloons, to have cake, to have ribbons, Mr. Speaker, but to not actually be speaking to the issues at the core of the concern or the problem or at the core of the needs of individuals in that part of the province.

So I'm concerned that this could in fact be, Mr. Speaker, I think there's some strong evidence to suggest that this could in fact be another example of tokenism by the members opposite, as opposed to a thoughtful and considerate and a reasoned and balanced approach to dealing with the issues that affect hunting, fishing, and trapping in the North.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will draw my remarks to a conclusion as I know there are other individuals who want to speak to this. And, Mr. Speaker, I would move on this Bill that we adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Massey Place has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 117. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Those in favour of the motion, say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed, say nay.

Some Hon. Members: — Nay.

The Speaker: — I believe the nays have it. I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it truly gives me a great deal of pleasure to have the opportunity to enter into this debate, this debate on Bill No. 117, the Act respecting hunting, fishing and trapping. And, Mr. Speaker, I will attempt to follow my colleagues who have done such an excellent, excellent job of discussing and debating and bringing up the issues that the opposition of course have concerns with in this particular Bill.

And whenever, Mr. Speaker, a Bill comes forward, I think it's

the duty of the opposition to be you know careful that we do a good job. The duty of the opposition to do a job of reviewing the Bill and looking at the Bill, not only in the face value which is quite obvious, Mr. Speaker, but to look at as to what is the government really up to, and what does the government intend to achieve by this Bill.

And I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the normal process in this House is the House gives the opportunity for members to express their thoughts and their positions of that, of themselves but also of their constituents on a particular Bill, and then being able to have the time to go out and consult with those folks who are impacted by this Bill. That of course, Mr. Speaker, I think is a very important thing for opposition to do because when you look at the Bills, this Bill in particular but other Bills the government has brought forward, you can see that the government hasn't done its duty of consulting. And so the role of consulting would have to be that of the opposition, and of course the opposition would need time to do that.

So the normal process in the adjournment of the Bill is to give us the opportunity to consult with those various groups and individuals who are impacted by this Bill, to identify whether, according to them and their beliefs, that this Bill is going to be a positive effect on them, whether it be a positive effect on them as an individual or a positive effect on them as a group. Or is it going to be negative? Perhaps it's going to be negative. And if it's going to be negative, in what way will it be negative?

And that's the role really of the opposition, to be able to identify, with the help of those people being affected, identify those issues so that we can then bring it back to the floor of the legislature and have an earnest and honest debate and open discussion with the government members, to be able to inform the government members if they have failed to do their consulting, they've failed to be able to consult with various groups. And as a result of that failure, they haven't been able to identify some of the negatives that this Bill is about to bring about on individuals or groups right across this great province.

And that would be the role of course of the opposition to bring forward . . . It would be the role of the government to be able to debate that with the opposition and recognize, recognize the error of their ways. Recognize that the government has failed to do its consulting. Recognize that they have failed to be able to identify the negative effects it may have on individuals or groups and to be able to right that wrong. And that's the role of a government. I believe a government is intended I think, in the best of ways, to try to provide legislation that's going to benefit the people of this great province.

And I would think that that would be the role of a government of any political stripe. That should be their goal. That should be their intent to be able to achieve, bringing forward changes that are going to modernize the legislation, to bring it in line with the times, perhaps identify errors that have been made in the past or shortfalls of the legislation in the past, to correct those errors as the wishes of those people who are being affected.

I don't see that, Mr. Speaker, as being something that this government has been high on because there's been really no evidence of them doing — them, I mean the government — doing a decent job of consulting with the people across this

great province, especially those people who are being affected.

Now since, Mr. Speaker, this is an Act respecting hunting, fishing, and trapping, I think it's safe to say that those people who are probably foremost to be affected by this Act would be those people of First Nation heritage and Métis. These really, in this great province of ours, if you look at the history of Saskatchewan, we would quickly identify that these were the people who were the first to be involved in the activities of hunting and fishing and trapping.

And for many of them, it's a generational thing. It's an occupation that's been passed on from generation to generation to generation. I think you can safely bet that the older trappers, you know, say the father has passed on the techniques of his trapping and the experience of his trapping. Those experiences and those techniques have been passed on from father to son over a number of generations.

And that's an important thing to recognize because when we make these changes to an Act, and I think, Mr. Speaker, it's safe to say that when it's . . . One has to be careful when one's in government. One has to be careful when you do make changes to an Act because what would seem to be a simple change, often in the intricacies of government, a simple change will have long-ranging effects.

It's sort of like the domino effect. When one falls, many other things fall. So when you make a change in one Act, it has an effect on many other Acts, many other pieces of legislation, and many other regulations throughout government. So it's very important that government, before they make those changes, that government does a thorough job of consulting, a thorough job of talking to those people within our society and within our economy that are affected or could be affected through certain changes to legislation and certain changes to the Act.

And I haven't seen any signs that this government has done that on this particular Bill. It saddens me to say that, Mr. Speaker. But there doesn't seem to be any evidence that they've done that thorough job of consulting because we haven't heard or we haven't seen anything that would suggest that that was the case.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I've already said, and I think we all would agree, that those people who are probably the front-line people to be affected by these changes are our fine people, our citizens of First Nations ancestry and Métis. And these are the people who have a long-standing tradition in this great province of ours of being involved in the hunting and trapping and fishing industry. And they have a heritage, I guess you would say, in that industry and one that's been passed on from father to son over many, many generations.

And I suppose in today's world, Mr. Speaker, it's probably passed on to father to daughter. I think you'd probably find that the traditional thought process was that the trapper out there or the hunter or the fisher was always a male. Well it's not the case today. I think in a lot of these instances you'd find that there's females are involved very much in this industry.

[16:00]

I know that in fact some of my colleagues here, Mr. Speaker,

who are females are very much avid hunters and have experienced hunting on many, many occasions, both for waterfowl and for big game. And I think that's the case to say right across our society, is that whenever we enter into any of these occupations, there was always the traditional belief that this was an area that was strictly the jurisdiction of a male. But that today is no longer the case. We have women involved in hunting and hunting industry and are very good hunters. And certainly fishers and trappers would probably fall into the same category.

And I think that's a movement forward. I think that's a positive movement, moving this forward to allow all of our society to enjoy the benefits that one does receive from getting out into the great outdoors and to fresh air and enjoying the opportunity to participate in for example hunting. I know a number of good hunters have done some great job in hunting and done so in a way that they certainly enjoyed their time there.

And I think that that would be fair to say that First Nations people fall into that same category. I don't think it's any longer just isolated to a male occupation or a male right or a male tradition to be able to enjoy the privilege of hunting. I think that you'd find that both male and female very much do that.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think again we need to ensure, we need to ensure that when we make these changes as outlined in this Act here, that these changes come about only after, only after government has done a thorough job of consulting with those occupations and those that will be affected by this, but also those occupations that have a tradition of being involved in that industry. And those groups of people who have a tradition of being involved in the industry, we need to know that the government has done a thorough and honest job of consulting with these folks to get their opinions, get their thoughts, many times their experiences. Because it's the experiences of the first-line people there that will outline what is the necessary changes to the legislation to make it more accommodating, to make it more effective to those involved in the industry.

And there's a long long-standing tradition in this great province of ours of hunting. I think that not only is it a way of life for those of the First Nations community and the Métis community, its substance and sustaining of life is probably the basis to a lot of their hunting activity and their involvement in the hunting activity.

But it has also become very much of a large sport in this great province where we have a lot of people involved in hunting in a regulated way. And particularly in the fall time, I'm thinking about the big game. There's all types of hunting. There's hunting for waterfowl that takes place earlier in the year. And in a lot of ways it's a very essential part of maintaining a balance within our waterfowl population. Licences are provided to ensure that the waterfowl population is kept at a level that is healthy, that we need to ensure that the waterfowl population is not allowed to outgrow its ability to have areas to forage in.

And what happens often in mother nature when you have population that has a boom, I guess you would say, or a huge increase in its numbers, it often sets the stage for diseases and issues such as that — mother nature's way, I suppose, of controlling the population. But it has then a negative effect on

the ability for the hunters to go hunting, the ability for the commerce around that hunting industry.

And there is a big commerce around hunting. For example, I had the opportunity this fall to travel around this great province of ours, and I was travelling one particular day with the thought of being able to overnight in Shaunavon, Saskatchewan and assuming that, you know, Shaunavon is a small rural community in Saskatchewan; likely it wouldn't be bombarded with a great deal of tourists that would create a situation where I would have a hard time to find a room to overnight in.

So with that I just quite frankly didn't phone ahead and did not make provisions for a reservation. I pulled into Shaunavon about . . .

An Hon. Member: — That was a mistake.

Mr. Harper: — That was a mistake. That was a mistake, Mr. Speaker, because I pulled into Shaunavon about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and I went to the first hotel I came to. And there was a big sign outside — no vacancy. So well okay, that's the first one, but certainly the second one wouldn't be the case. So I went down the street a little ways and there was a second motel and sure enough, sign there in the window — no vacancies. Unfortunately I went to the third one and it was exactly the same thing — no vacancies.

So then I went to the hotel which had a little bit of a motel attached to it, and I went in and I asked if there was any room. And the lady said, no, I am booked up until the end of the month. And I said, wow, I said, this is the fourth motel I've been in in Shaunavon and, I said, there's no vacancies. What's going on? She says, it's goose hunting season. Goose hunting season. Right. So there I was standing in the middle of Shaunavon with a lot of motel rooms there, but they were all booked up, and why is because it was goose hunting season.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that would tell me one thing. That would tell me that that particular season is a good economic driver for that community and other communities across this great province of ours. If you can have that type of a turnout and that type of an interest and that type of enthusiastic following that's involved in the goose hunting industry, then that's good. That's good.

So to end my story, Mr. Speaker, I know you're wanting to know what I did. Did I stay in Shaunavon in my car overnight? Well no, I was forced to drive back to Swift Current and stay there. And then since I had meetings in Shaunavon the following morning, I had to make the trip back again.

But that was an experience, Mr. Speaker, and that tells me just a little bit — and I think it tells many others — it tells me a little bit about the strength of the hunting industry in this great province of ours and how important it is as a part of the puzzle of our economy, is that if you can have that type of interest, that type of interest in hunting that you could have all the motel rooms in small town Shaunavon . . . And Gull Lake, by the way. I stopped at Gull Lake and I forgot to tell you this. On the way back I stopped at Gull Lake. There were a couple of motels there and they too were booked up. So it was goose hunting season and quite frankly they were all booked up.

So from now on, Mr. Speaker, if I'm going to be travelling in Saskatchewan, I'm going to (a) phone ahead and make sure I have a reservation. But (b) I'm also going to check to see what time of year it is and what the activity may be. And if it's a hunting season of some type in rural Saskatchewan, I'm going to certainly be phoning ahead to make those reservations because it is a strong, strong economy.

And it certainly indicates the importance of wildlife and it indicates the importance of the hunting industry to us here in Saskatchewan and to the business communities across the way. I would think it's safe to say that in rural Saskatchewan it's a hunting season like that would bring not only a fair amount of activity, positive activity to the motels but also to the restaurants and the grocery stores and the service stations selling gas and the support of the industries in a lot of different ways.

So in a lot of ways Shaunavon, which is a farming community, which is in the heart of farm land in Saskatchewan, here's some of the prime farm land, great farm lands of Saskatchewan, certainly benefits an agriculture industry. But hunting is a very important cog, I guess you'd say, in the economic wheel of that particular community.

So I think this is just one little point or one little lesson that we can learn from my experience of travelling Saskatchewan this fall, that hunting is something that we shouldn't just disregard. Some of us who have been involved in the industry, although a lot of years ago, Mr. Speaker, but I think there are many in our Chamber here that do participate on a yearly basis. I know some of my colleagues do on a regular basis go out for white-tailed deer and I think they've gone out for moose and so on and so forth. So I think it's just a small indication of how important that industry is to not only to this province but to our economy in this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's also fair to say that there is a need to maintain that and to in fact in some ways encourage it so that it maintains a balance, a reasonable, safe, healthy balance within our wildlife population. Hunting is no doubt a very important tool that is used by the Department of the Environment to control and to be able to manage the wildlife population of this great province.

And that is done in concert — I would hope at least it's done in concert — with those people who are involved in the industry as a requirement for their way of life, for example the First Nations or Métis people who have the inherent right to hunt. It's because it's simply a part of their livelihood. It's a very important part, in many cases, of their ability to feed and care for their families. And that has always, that's been a long-time tradition for First Nations people who've had access to wildlife and access to game to be able to feed their families.

And that reminds me of a situation where I had the opportunity of, a couple years back, to travel northern Saskatchewan, although it'd be on a whole different issue. It'd be on the issue of the northern overtime exemption. But during my experience involved in doing the research and doing holding hearings and consultations on the overtime exemption issue, I had the opportunity of visiting with the council at Black Lake.

And when we got there, we met with the council and a number of the members of the council, and one of the first things that was pointed out to us was that the chief was not available simply because the chief wasn't in town. The chief was north; north of Black Lake. He was up hunting and was a part of the hunting party and they were hunting caribou.

And that was a long-time, again, tradition where the chief would take some of the very experienced hunters from the community and they would go north and they would spend a reasonable length of time. I can't remember now — I'm just trying to search my memory as to how long they were up there — but I think it was something like three weeks. And during that period of time they were hunting caribou. And the proceeds of their hunt, the success of their hunt, would be brought back and to be shared with all the villagers. And that was a very important part of the substance that the villagers would use to sustain their family throughout the forthcoming winter and throughout the forthcoming year.

So hunting is to many of us here in this building and many of us in the southern part of the province, is something that we've either experienced as a sport or we've been involved in it in some manner, shape, or form at some point in time in our life. But for many it's a way of life; it's a way of life.

First Nations, Métis people have the inherent right to hunt because it's a way of life. It's a part, and a key part of their ability to feed their families, to maintain themselves. And it is something that I would hope that when the government has made changes as they propose in this Act and as well as other Acts, Mr. Speaker, that they take to heart and that they actually go out and they talk to those people who are so closely tied to our wildlife population and have been for generations upon generations upon generations. And that they have serious consultations with these folks to find out from them what changes that they foresee should be done within the Act to improve their particular situation. Because, Mr. Speaker, I believe it's the intent of any government to, hopefully, to bring in legislation that will improve the quality of life for the citizens of this great province. I think any government, that's their hope and that's their desired achievement.

But I don't see, Mr. Speaker, any evidence, any evidence that this government has gone that far. I don't see any evidence that this government has gone out and done serious consultations with those people who are the front-line people to be affected by the changes, such as our First Nations people and our Métis people. Have they talked to them? And if they have, then I would like the government to provide us that proof, provide us that information, provide us a list of those people who they've talked to. When and where and what was the results of those consultations? What did they hear? What were the testimonies that was put forward by the First Nations people that would cause the government to say, okay, this is all we have to do. All we have to do is select one day, one day out of the year, and that day we'd call it Heritage Day, and it would be in honour of trapping and fishing and that would satisfy those people in that industry.

And I don't think, Mr. Speaker, it comes anywhere near that, and I don't think it does simply because they haven't had the opportunity or haven't taken the opportunity to consult with the

front-line people — First Nations and Métis people — of our great province. So it brings then, Mr. Speaker, it brings up the question: why the urgency? Why the urgency? Why is the government bringing this forward at this time? But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, why is the government jamming it? That becomes the question.

So then, Mr. Speaker, you say, well looking at it, it's only got five clauses to it; it's really not a much more than a housekeeping Bill. Or is it? That becomes the question. Or is it? Is it a housekeeping Bill? If it is a housekeeping Bill, then why is the government jamming it? If it's not a housekeeping Bill and if the government is prepared to indicate that it's not just a housekeeping Bill, then begs the question: what is the hidden agenda? What is the hidden agenda on what really, really is a narrow Bill? Five clauses, Mr. Speaker.

[16:15]

So it brings out a number of questions, a number of questions that certainly need to be answered. The first question that I would like to have an answer to is: has this government done any consultation — not all but any consultation — on this Bill with the front-line people who are affected by the changes to this Bill, the First Nations and Métis people? Has there been any consultation on that front?

Has this government done any consultation with the sports organizations? This is sports organizations that represent the hundreds if not thousands of sports people who are involved in hunting, fishing, in this great province of ours. Have they talked to these sports organizations? Have they talked to them as . . . Are they in favour of the thrust of this Bill, or do they have any suggestions to make changes to it to make it more effective and more suitable to their members?

Mr. Speaker, this Bill really is designed for hunting, fishing, and trapping. There's supposed to be one day set aside, and it's supposed to make everybody involved in those industries real happy and feel warm and fuzzy and say, well this is a great government. They haven't done anything to affect our industry that would make it better, but they've set aside a day of heritage that we can all feel good about. And for those of us in the industry, we'll just all feel good and fuzzy, warm and fuzzy for one day, and we'll go back to the problems that we face on each and every day other than that within our industry. I find that, Mr. Speaker, a bit — I'd say — puzzling, for a lack of a better term, simply puzzling.

Trapping, Mr. Speaker, I think again, if you look back at the history of this great province of ours, even beyond that, if you look at the history of Canada, you will see that trapping was a very, very big part of the development of this country. Earlier on that was probably the driving force behind the first settlements in Canada, was to be able to extract the resource which was very, very much in demand in Europe. And that resource was the fur resource. And as a result of that, you've seen settlements spring up in central Canada, particularly in Quebec area, that from that grew the industry, the fur industry that expanded right across this great country of ours and really opened up the West in a lot of ways through those individuals who were rough and tough — and I mean tough people — who went out and weathered the elements to be able to establish a

fur trade and bring that fur back. It would be shipped back into France and to European countries right across the piece. That certainly fed that industry.

And you have to take your hats off, Mr. Speaker, to those people who had the nerve to go out into the wilderness. I mean there was no development at that time in this great country of ours. All it was, was wilderness. They used the rivers for their motorways, I guess you would say, to find their ways back into the heart of this great country of ours, Canada. And they did that for the intentions of being able to trap, being able to identify the fur resources that were here and be able to harvest them. And they did so with a great deal of vigour.

And that then of course, Mr. Speaker, led to the fact that there was great distances, the great distances that they would have to travel from Quebec or from Montreal into the heart of this great country of ours to be able to extract the fur and take it back to feed the growing fur industry and the growing demand for fur in Europe . . . that they decided to build a system of transportation, a system where you could winter . . . a system where you could link one area to another area.

So they developed the Hudson Bay Company, then set forth as one of the companies. North West was another company that set forth into this great country of ours to build forts to be able to set up the ability to move from one area to another and have an area of refuge, an area of comfort. And that was the development, I guess you would say, of the fur industry in this great country of ours. And it of course led to the development and the expansion of this great province of ours, Saskatchewan. So when you look at the history of trapping in Canada, it's a history that's entrenched in the history of Canada. And as a result, it's also entrenched in the history of this great province of ours.

So trapping has been a very important part of our history. It has been a very important part of our commerce in the past, although perhaps not as great, it plays perhaps not as great a degree now. But I can remember as a youngster — lots of years ago, Mr. Speaker, I'll be the first to admit that — but I can remember as a youngster that up in my neck of the woods there where I was born and raised, trapping was something that many, many people participated in, in the wintertime. Many of my neighbours owned traplines, and that they would farm in the summer. But they would trap in the winter, and that would be a source of revenue for them, a source of income for them that would help offset the cost of raising a family, and it was a very important part.

And there was many, many of my neighbours . . . In fact some of my relatives through marriage held traplines, and I believe that maybe some still do. But they would participate on a very active basis and again, these people earn their money. Trapping is not an easy occupation. It's one that you, of course, you do outdoors, but you do it in the winter months, and you do it. You go and check those traps out. And it really doesn't matter what the weather is. Whether it's storming or whether it's 45 below, you would see them go.

And I know that it's a tough, tough life because the first thing in the fall time when the snow first falls and the ground is frozen, you find them going out there, and they're establishing their

trapline. They're identifying beaver houses. They're identifying those types of things in their trapline as to . . . And then they put together a system or a line that would allow them to be able to spend, hopefully, one day. But in a lot of cases, it would be two and three days continuous on that trapline to be able to service their many sets that they would have out.

And of course beaver being the mainstay for any trapper . . . I think like a farmer with growing grain, wheat has always been the mainstay. They would do other things, but you'd always, you know, grow wheat as your mainstay of your operation. Well in a trapping operation, the collection of beaver pelts would be the mainstay of any operation, sort of like the bread and butter of any operation so that the first thing that a trapper would do would be to go out and be able to identify the number of beaver houses in his or her trapline and then in some of the cases cut a row, cut a trail to that beaver house because (a) it may be a new beaver house where there wasn't one before, so there wouldn't be an existing trail, but in (b) a lot of cases even if there was an existing trail, it may not have been used for a year or two and wind and windfall would have fallen across that trail and it would have to be cleared. And it would mean simply going out and cutting off dead windfall, throwing it aside in order to make a trail so that they'd be able to get to the beaver house with their snowmobile.

And that would facilitate then their ability to check out the beaver house, find out where the runs are . . . And of course you'd have to do that kind of carefully because if it's early in the fall (a) the ice isn't all that thick, but it's even thinner where the beaver run is because the beaver run . . . beavers moving back and forth really keep the ice very, very thin.

So you'd find the trappers are quite careful, quite skilful at being able to identify the thickness of the ice and identify where those beaver runs are because they need to identify where that beaver run is for (a) so they don't break through the ice and get themselves wet. But more importantly, they need to identify that so they can set up their trap in that beaver run and hopefully be able to catch a beaver or beavers going back and forth from their house into their slough area where they have amassed a fair amount of feed for . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes.

My colleague asked me if there's a maximum weight a trapper should be. Well no, I don't think there is. But certainly you want to walk gingerly on thin ice because you don't want to break through. Particularly you don't want to break through, say, up to your waist in water when it's 40 below outside, and you're probably 10 miles from camp. That's a long way to ride the snowmobile when you're that wet and that cold.

Not that I've ever experienced going that far, but I have experienced breaking through ice and on a beaver dam crossing, actually on a beaver dam, and getting wet up to my knees, not my waist, up to my knees, and being six miles from camp. And by the time we got there — and I was lucky I wasn't alone — time we got there, I was glad I wasn't alone because I would have not been able to get off my snow machine because my legs were numb, numb, simply numb from the knees down.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's very important that we recognize the tradition and the importance of the trapping industry to our

great economy, to our great society, and the great roles played in our history. And as I said, I know that many of . . . and I know first-hand from having family members involved in the industry but also from coming from an area where trapping was quite prominent.

My farm at the time was about 12 miles from the edge of the forest reserve, and so there was large forest reserve that really went, simply went north, east, and west, I should say past our farm, and many of my friends and neighbours who were involved in the industry would have traplines in the forest reserve and that they would go up there and they would in some cases . . . One I'm just thinking of off the top of my head. Boy, if I would have known I was going to be speaking on this subject today, I would have asked them if I could use their name because I would be proud to use their names in this debate. But as a father-son operation there, that farm in the Danbury area during the summertime, and they have a trapline straight north of Danbury in the pine forest reserve, and they do a wonderful job of maintaining that trapline. They take a great deal of pride in it.

And they have a cabin at the south end of their trapline, and they have another cabin at the north end. The north cabin is getting up awful close to Parr Hill Lake area, and the south end cabin is about five, six miles I guess from the forest reserve boundary inland and that's their entire trapping area. So what they do when they go up there, they simply cover their spots, I guess you would say, or their trapline in the south. And it takes them a full day, and it's a long day and a full day to be able to cover that area. And then they overnight in their cabin at the south end.

The following day they will then make their way north. And while they're making their way north, they'll be checking sites and traplines all the way on their trapline, all the way north till they get to their north cabin. That again is another day and it's a full day. Once they're there, then they will overnight in that cabin, and then they will spend the third day, third consecutive day, checking their traps in the north of their cabin, north end of their trapline. And it's a three-day affair, Mr. Speaker. And then of course they come back and they basically start all over again.

But this is a . . . I'm just trying to demonstrate the fact that it is not an easy life. It is not an easy life. It's a hard life involved in the trapping industry. So when you make changes to the Act, it's going to have some effect on that industry.

You would hope, you would hope the government would be mindful of these people who spend a lot of their time, a lot of their time in that industry and that the government would talk to these people — these people who have had the front-line experiences of a trapper spending three days, four days, five consecutive days on the trapline — in order to find out from them what changes they would recommend be made that would affect their industry in a positive way. And I would hope that's what the government would do.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I see no signs that this government has done that. I see no signs that this government has taken time to talk to the trappers of Saskatchewan who use this — in the cases of my neighbours — use it as a form of offsetting their secondary income, I guess, offsetting their costs of living by

being able to generate some revenue throughout the winter months by trapping. But it's equally important, or perhaps even more important that the government should have talked to those people who are on the front lines, those people who have a long tradition in the industry — those people, of course, being the First Nations and Métis people of our great province. These are the people who are what I would call the front-line people. These are people who have had not just years of experiences, they've had generations of experiences in this industry.

And these are the people who are affected because trapping, in many cases, is a mainstay to their income, is a major plank of their income platform. It's the major thrust of their revenue that they generate to feed their families and look after their families. And changes to the Act would have effects on them. I would hope it would not be negative effects; I hope it would be positive effects. But I haven't seen any evidence coming forward from this government, through this Act or any of the other Acts that they've put forward, that that is the reality, based on the consultation that this government has done.

The sad part of it is, when you look at it, Mr. Speaker, one would have to suggest that no consultation has been done. No consultation has been done with these people who are the front-line people, the people who have to live by the changes that are made.

[16:30]

And perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the minister or whomever it is over there who has decided to jam this is trying to sneak it through so that those folks out there, it's changed before they get wind of it. It's changed before they have the ability to react to it. It's changed before they have the ability to organize and come down here and lobby government publicly for this Bill to be shelved, or at least for reasonable and decent consultation to take place before this Bill is introduced for a final reading and passed in this great Assembly of ours. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that isn't the case, but I see nothing, I see nothing to suggest that I am wrong.

Mr. Speaker, fishing. Fishing is also a part of this Bill. It's hunting, fishing, and trapping. Fishing is once again, Mr. Speaker, is like hunting or perhaps even like trapping. It represents the mainstay, a very important food source for our First Nations and Métis people for generations. They were the first fishers in this great province of ours. They were fishers out of necessity. They were fishing because that was a form of food on the table, sustained their families, fed their families. The importance of fishing is very important to the First Nations people, Mr. Speaker. Again it's just like hunting.

And in fact in some ways, it's even greater than trapping because fishing, hunting and fishing was something that the First Nations people were involved in long before trapping even came along. Long before the white man came to this great country and said, well here we can have a fur industry here, and you can help us develop this fur industry, and we would pay you a small, small reward for the pelts you sold us. And that came much later in the system. Really, when you look at it, Mr. Speaker, hunting and fishing is something that was the mainstay for the First Nations people from the beginning of history.

And it is interesting, Mr. Speaker, that this government hasn't seen fit, this government hasn't seen fit to consult with those people who have played such an important part in the history of this great province of ours, hasn't seen fit to consult with them in regards to changes that would affect a long-standing traditional sources such as hunting and such as trapping and such as fishing.

And I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that it was either an oversight by the government and that they will recognize it was an oversight and that they would do what they could do to correct the errors of their way by instituting some type of a consultation process, and to do so without jamming the Bill. To stand up in the House and say, yes, the opposition has identified that we haven't done what we feel is a reasonable job of consulting with the front-line people who are affected by the changes to this Act, and that we're going to put the Bill on a shelf and it's going to stay there until such time as we can do adequate consultations with the First Nations people, and they will bring back to ensure that the changes to this Act does not have a negative effect on them.

That's all we're asking, is has that consultation taken place? Have those talks taken place? Have they talked with the individuals out there? Have they talked with groups out there to ensure that the changes here would not end up having a negative effect upon those First Nations people? Because I think it's so important because these are the first; the first trappers, the first hunters, and the first fishers in this great province of ours were those First Nations and Métis people. And I think it's only respectful that we would talk to them about proposed changes to an Act that could — that could — possibly have some effect on them.

And I would hope that that would be something that this government wouldn't hesitate to do, to admit that perhaps they hadn't done a thorough enough job of consultation, and they would step forward and look at doing such a thing as that.

We have, Mr. Speaker, the importance, the importance of the hunting industry. The hunting industry, not only the importance for our First Nations people and our Métis people and really, Mr. Speaker, not only the importance to the sports people across this great province of ours who participate in hunting; whether it be in waterfowl, fowl or big game hunting. And we know that there's lots of them.

And if you look at the fall time, if you look at the synopsis, the hunting synopsis put out by the Department of Environment, you'll see that that hunting period is stretched over quite a large period. There's all types of hunting. When it comes to big game, when it comes to big game, there's the bow and arrow, believe it's called bow and arrow. And I think crossbow is in that category too.

Hunting, I think there's a week or something set aside for that, for those people who are involved in that sport. Those people who are involved in that sport, they can certainly take advantage of that period of time. They can go out and they can build their blinds, or perhaps be able to inherit a blind from somebody in the area there, and be able to hide there and be able to participate in their sport. And if they enjoy it, that's fine. They should do that. They should do that.

And then, Mr. Speaker, they will find that there's a period of time put aside for black powder hunting, and that's the old musket. That's where the hunters go out there in the old traditional style, where they use the front-loading musket and they pack the charge in there, and they go hunting with that. And it's a great sport, I would think.

I mean, you've only got one shot. And I don't know how accurate those things are, and I would think that it would be quite a challenge, quite a challenge to be able to fall your game with that one shot. Because you've only got one crack at it because by the time you've got it reloaded if you missed, the time you reloaded it, I'm afraid that deer — as well as me — would be a long, long way away. So I think that it would be quite a challenge. It's something I've never been involved in, but I do know that there are those out there who do. And they find it with a great deal of joy, take a great deal of joy in that sport. And I would think that it would be quite a challenge. There's no doubt about it.

But if you notice in the synopsis, there's a period of time set aside in the fall months for hunting. A period of time set aside for black powder hunting. There's also a period of time set aside for bear hunting. And that is another sport that I've never, never ever been involved in. I know some of my neighbours, I believe perhaps even some of my colleagues, have done that. But I've never, never, ever been involved in bear hunting season, Mr. Speaker.

There's those who have said that it's a great sport, going out and hunting black bear. In our area up there where I was born and raised, it would be black bear. There might be the odd brown bear, but the predominant bear population in that area was the black bear. And as much as I have a great deal of respect for bears, Mr. Speaker, I've seen many, many of them all through my lifetime. And I have never seen one up real close because there are usually both bear and I going in opposite directions when we spot each other. And I freely admit that.

And I've often said with one of my colleagues here, I said I wouldn't be scared to actually go out and bear hunt with one of my colleagues here because I believe that all I would need to ensure my safety is a good pair of running shoes. My colleague would say, well you'd be foolish. You'll never outrun a bear. And I said I had no intentions of outrunning the bear. I just had intentions of outrunning my colleague. That's all. Not my seatmate, no. One of my other colleagues, not my seatmate. I want to make that clear, Mr. Speaker.

But the thing here, the point I'm trying to point out, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a category of time set aside for bear hunting so that those sportsmen who are involved in that industry, those sportsmen who find it a challenge to go out and hunt black bear — or bear of any kind but I will use black bear for the example — then they have that opportunity in that period of time that's listed in the synopsis. They have that period of time to go out there and do the hunting.

And then after that will follow a period of a draw. There's a draw season where hunters will be able to submit their names. I believe they make application; I believe they even pay a small fee to the Department of Environment. And so many hunters will get drawn per block or per area, per zone I believe it's

called, and they will be able to hunt a certain type of animal — let's say, draw a moose for example. They'll be able to hunt, I believe it's cow and bull moose during that period of time. And they will be able to . . . But there will only be a certain number selected for the particular block or particular zone and that they'll be able to hunt in there during that small particular time period, which I believe is a week.

And then there will be the open hunting where everybody, if you go and you buy a permit, a licence, you can go hunt. And there'll be so many for white-tailed deer and there'd be so many for . . . I think there'd be two tags now for white-tailed deer, and certainly one tag for moose, and even elk is in that category. I believe you can buy a licence to go out and hunt elk at that particular time. But if you look at the synopsis and if you look at the period of time that the hunting season is open throughout in Saskatchewan here, it's a long, long period of time. It covers, I believe, at least a couple of months if not more. Well, Mr. Speaker, can you imagine the financial impact that has on our province when you have hundreds of hunters travelling across this great province of ours hunting?

It has a tremendous impact on our communities. For example, as I said earlier about my experience in Shaunavon, going into Shaunavon during goose hunting period, the motels were all taken up so that means there was a lot of people in there goose hunting. That means that motels were getting revenue out of it, but so would the restaurants, so do the grocery stores, so do the service stations selling gas, and the convenience stores selling goodies and so on and so forth. The hunters would buy. The hunters would buy. And that would be in every community across this great province of ours. So that would be a very important part of the economy of that community, that period of time when those hunters would come in and drop their money for the services that they would receive and do so willingly.

But that was just for one period, Mr. Speaker, for goose hunting period. Now can you multiply that by the number of other seasons and the number of other species that are hunted in this great province, what a tremendous economic impact that has on our province. So you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, that many of the small business people throughout Saskatchewan here depend upon that period of time.

I know of a gentleman who I don't think is in the business anymore, but used to be in the motel business in Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan. And he used to tell me that moose hunting season, hunting season period, but particularly moose hunting season . . . That area was famous for its moose. I mean there were some very, very big moose brought out of that area and some trophy antlers brought out of that area. But he used to own and operate a motel business in there, and he used to say that moose hunting business was his harvest. That was his harvest. He really looked forward . . .

I mean he did a good job throughout the summer months with tourists and tourists travelling through there because it's a beautiful part of the province to drive through; it's a forest area, and it certainly is a very welcoming area. If you've ever had the opportunity to stop into that community, as I've had, you'll find that the people are very warm and friendly and welcoming there, as they are I guess in any other part of Saskatchewan.

But it was the opportunity for fishing in the summertime. Of course fishers would go through there, and they would stop and stay overnight in his motel. But he used to say that moose hunting, that moose hunting season was his harvest because he would be booked up, year after year, solid. I mean every room would be taken up. And it would be not just for one year, but he would have reservations for year after year after year. So that was something that he counted on as a very big part of his revenue for his operation overall.

Now he wouldn't be the only one there, Mr. Speaker; there'd also be the gentleman down the street who owned the restaurant, and there'd be the gentleman down the street who owned the automotive centre that serviced vehicles, sold gas, that did the servicing of vehicles, perhaps sold some tires. So it all was linked together, I guess you would say. And the ties that bind was the hunting industry. It was the wildlife themselves that was the main thrust here. That was the ties that bind this whole industry together, and the ties that bind the commerce and the economic benefit that's enjoyed by the communities across Saskatchewan.

So when you make changes to an Act, when a government makes changes to an Act that could possibly have some effect on that — that significant economic activity that goes on — one would think the government would take the time to consult with those people involved in that, that economy, and ask them if these changes are going to be positive changes or could they identify anything negative about these changes that perhaps the government could fix before they brought the Bill to this great Assembly.

I haven't seen any signs of that, Mr. Speaker. I haven't seen any signs or desire by this government to make sure that their changes are the right changes. I haven't seen any signs that this government has any indication to do what is the right thing for the people involved in this industry, for the people who the spinoff in this industry is so important to their livelihood, whether it'd be those people in our communities that provide the services to the hunters. I don't see that, Mr. Speaker.

[16:45]

What I do see here is a government that must be afraid of something, because they're jamming this legislature on a Bill with five clauses in it. Mr. Speaker, they're jamming this legislature, attempting to deny the true operation, I guess you'd say, of democracy here, by jamming a Bill with no more than five clauses in it. And they're doing it on day five of the sitting of this House. Mr. Speaker, it's unbelievable.

It's unbelievable that a government would try to bully the opposition, but also try to bully the people of this great province into denying the ability for the opposition to have the time to consult with those people who are going to be affected by the changes to this legislation as to whether or not these changes are beneficial or detrimental. That's all we ask, Mr. Speaker, is just the opportunity to have that consultation because, obviously, the government hasn't done it. Certainly they're not indicating any signs that they have done that, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, you have to wonder why. What is the hidden agenda? Why is the government jamming? What is their hidden

agenda? What are they hiding? But more importantly, what are they afraid of? Are they afraid of something? There's something here that they're afraid the people of this great province might discover, that the opposition might uncover something that would be embarrassing to this government in this particular industry.

I don't know, Mr. Speaker. I would hope not. I would really hope not. But the way they're going about jamming this legislature and trying to limit the debate on this particular Bill is something that puzzles me. I wonder why. Why are they doing this, Mr. Speaker?

Nothing like a sip of cold coffee to get you going again.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when we look at this Bill, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*, Bill No. 117, a very important part of this is the fishing aspect. Fishing aspect is something that I think we enjoy in this great province. I think we're kind of fortunate because wherever you look in Saskatchewan you'll see the opportunity to enjoy the sport of fishing, and I think many, many, many of our citizens do.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I have been known myself to go out and on occasions to try my hand at fishing. I will freely admit, Mr. Speaker, that I am a poor fisherman. As my colleagues indicated, I am a poor fisherman and I will freely admit to that. I will do that because if I don't, my wife will be the first to tell everybody that she is a much better fisherperson than I am. And that is true. That is true, Mr. Speaker. When we go out fishing, I don't even try to compete any more. I have given up on that because she knows more about fishing than I ever hope to learn. And she has shown me up on more than one occasion on our fishing trips of being able to not only catch more fish than me, but she's able to catch the bigger ones than me too, Mr. Speaker. And I admit that because if I don't admit it, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that somebody will come along with her approval and urging and point that out.

An Hon. Member: — Did you know that ice shacks have to be off the ice by the 15th of . . .

Mr. Harper: — There you go. Thank you for that. Yes, there's a good point. I didn't realize that, and I'm sure that many of our colleagues here may not, is that the provisions within the Act that calls for the limitation of the time that a fishing hut can be on the ice for winter fishing and that is certainly . . . If you've ever have done winter fishing, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure you have. I think everybody in Saskatchewan tried their hand at winter fishing at some point or other. I used to like to say ice fishing, but that's the only thing I used to catch is the ice — never caught any of the fish.

But so winter fishing, Mr. Speaker, there is a limit, as those who are avid winter fisherpersons or ice fishermen — fisherpersons, politically correct. They, you know, have a hut out on the ice. During that period of time they can seek protection from the cold winds and can even build a little fire in there to take the chill off and while doing that enjoy the opportunity to do some ice fishing. And for those who are quite successful at it, I think they, you know, they benefit from it. Me, there's two things that I used to catch when I would go ice fishing. One was ice and the second one was cold. Those are the

two things I pretty well guaranteed, guaranteed.

But I understand that according to the rules and regulations that operate and govern the ice fishing in this great province of ours, there is a limitation or a date past which you cannot have your hut on the ice. And I understand that that is today, March the 15th. I understand that's today. If you've got a hut out there, you'd better hurry up and get it off there because I think when, sun down tonight, it would probably be . . . you could be in trouble with the rules and regulations and you could have the Department of Environment officer out there giving you a ticket first thing tomorrow morning because you've surpassed the eligible time to have a hut on the ice.

And so I guess you could say, Mr. Speaker, I'm playing my part in doing a public service announcement, just reminding people, the thousands and thousands of people are tuned into our television, they're watching this, that they're running out of time to get that hut off the ice.

And I see some of the members over there must have just realized that now because they finally woke up to the fact that — or maybe they were just sleeping anyway because of my speech, Mr. Speaker, I don't know, but — anyway I see a couple of members that woke up and it must be because they have an ice fishing hut out on the lake and they forgot to take it off and they didn't realize that today was the last day. So you know what, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to see them scurrying out of here at 5 o'clock, headed for their favourite lake, to hook onto the ice fishing hut to get it off there before dark.

So I can expect, Mr. Speaker, I will see certainly the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood being one of the first out of this building to get out there and get a hold of his ice fishing hut and pull it off. So . . .

An Hon. Member: — It's daylight until after 7 today.

Mr. Harper: — Now I see . . . Well yes, that's right, Mr. Speaker. The days are getting longer. So he doesn't have to really rush at 5 o'clock. He could kind of take a little bit easier because he has probably until, oh, 7:15, 7:30 before it gets dark. So plenty of time to get out there and get a hold of the ice fishing hut and get it off that lake there just in time, so that the conservation officer doesn't come around at the urging of the minister tomorrow morning and leave a nice big ticket stuck on the door of that ice fishing hut, so that the member, my colleague across the way there, wouldn't find himself in an embarrassing situation of having to pay a fine for the ice fishing hut that he forgot to take off the lake in time.

But yes, Mr. Speaker, you should allow a little time because it's been warm the last few days here and there could be some premature melting on the ice there and that fish hut could have maybe settled in a little bit. And if it froze by evening, it'll be starting to freeze already, so he may have to dig it out a little bit. So be a little bit mindful that it may take you a little time to get it out there and get it off.

But I think it's safe to say that if you're out in the middle of the lake like that and you're rescuing your fishing hut, you don't have to worry about beaver runs because they wouldn't have beaver runs in that part of the lake — at least I would hope not.

But anyway, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the public service announcement here has been beneficial to the thousands of people that are watching as well as my colleagues in this Assembly here.

But on a little more serious note, Mr. Speaker, I think the intent of the Bill, at least at first blush, is probably one that is of good intent. It's suggesting that the hunting and the fishing and the trapping industries are important industries to our society, important industries to our economy, important industries to this province, important enough that it should be recognized in a special day set aside to recognize the importance that it has brought to us throughout our history and been such a driving force and a development of our great province of ours. But it also is important to recognize that it's a huge contributor to our society and to our economy on an ongoing basis.

So I think if that is the intent, and I think it's certainly an intent in the right direction, my concern, Mr. Speaker, is, is this simply the only thing that this government intends to do as far as the industry is concerned? And as far as being able to satisfy the industry's needs as perhaps, as perhaps organizations representing the industry here have been lobbying the government for certain changes, certain changes to Acts that exist today, and that this government has decided that well no, they don't want to make those changes. They don't want to make the changes that various organizations have been lobbying this government for.

They would rather try to perhaps satisfy the concerns by simply designating a day out of the year and then turn to these organizations and say, well no, we're not going to be able to make the changes to the Act that will affect your livelihood. We're not going to do that at all. But we're going to set aside a day. We're going to call a special day — November the 15th, I believe it is — and set that aside and call it a hunting, fishing, and trapping heritage day. And that should be enough to satisfy you.

Yes, we're not going to make any changes that's going to have a positive effect on your industry, or those changes have a positive effect on your ability to maintain your livelihood and that, to feed your family. But we're going to make you feel warm and fuzzy for one day, and we're going to set aside a day. In fact we may even etch it on the calendar. We may even have it etched on the calendar at some point in time saying that this is the hunting, fishing, and trapping heritage day, and that you should for that one day just feel warm and fuzzy because your industry's being recognized.

It doesn't do anything as far as ensuring your livelihood. It doesn't do anything ensuring that you have wildlife in this province from generation to generation to generation to be able to sustain that livelihood, but also just able to sustain our sports industry that depends upon, quite frankly, those wildlife.

And that is quite frankly disappointing to me, Mr. Speaker, because in order to do that, the government would have had to go out and consult, consult with those people involved in the industry — not only the First Nations and Métis people who depend upon it as a way of life but also to consult with the sports fishing and the sports industry, whether it be the fishing industry or whether it be the hunting industry or those involved

in trapping in the trapping associations across this great province of ours. And they do have associations because they have conventions every spring.

And to talk to them and to ask them to put forward recommendations as to their suggestions or what changes should take place that would be beneficial, be positive to their society, to their industry so that the government could incorporate that in the changes when they introduce an Act in this great Assembly of ours. When they introduce an Act, I would hope, Mr. Speaker, it would be modernized, modernized up to the current time so that it reflects the reality of the industry as it exists today.

In order to do that, you need to go out and talk to those people who are involved in the industry so that you can get that feedback, so you can get the feedback from the industry and get their recommendations as to meaningful changes that would ensure the industry would be strong and the industry would thrive into the future. And the industry has everything at stake and nothing to gain and everything to lose if they don't do their part working hand in hand in concert with government officials to ensure that we have a strong wildlife population in this province and that wildlife population stays strong, not only into the foreseeable future but for generations to come.

Because we've identified, Mr. Speaker, I think as a society we've identified in the past mistakes where certain species were overhunted and were perhaps even hunted into extinction. We've identified those certain species that were saved just in the nick of time, and I'm thinking of the whooping crane, for example. There was just a few whooping cranes left and it was with a good intervention and a great deal of very careful planning, careful handling by officials and people very versed at doing this stuff that we were able to save that species and have that species around for those of us of our generation to enjoy and hopefully for generations to come.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we don't want to see anything that would jeopardize those species that we have today. In fact what we want to see, Mr. Speaker, is rules and regulations put into place by this government or any other government that would ensure that that wildlife population would stay strong, would stay healthy, and would be there for the future generations to enjoy.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in order to balance that population, to ensure that population stays balanced so that it's healthy, so that it's capable of being able to sustain itself into the future; this is where man plays a role in setting a limits of hunting. And that limits of hunting, Mr. Speaker, is so important because that ensures that we have a safe and healthy population to be able to be enjoyed by those coming in the future.

So to do that, Mr. Speaker, you need to — before you make changes such as introducing in Bill 117 here, making changes to the hunting and fishing and trapping industry in this great province — you need to carry out that consultation. You need to talk to those people whose livelihood it is, whose livelihood depends upon having that strong wildlife population. And it's not just, Mr. Speaker, the individuals who are involved in hunting.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker. What we need to do is to talk to

people. We don't need to jam. We don't need to bully. We don't need to try to intimidate. What we need to do is to talk to those people who are involved in the industry, Mr. Speaker. And I would urge that this government would have done it. It's disappointing, Mr. Government, to see that this government . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Being near the hour of recess, 5 o'clock, this Assembly stands recessed until this evening at 7 p.m.

[The Assembly recessed until 19:00.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

McMorris	4161
Lingenfelter	4161
Cheveldayoff	4161
McCall	4161
Morgan	4161
Quennell	4162
Draude	4162

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Harper	4162
Trew	4163
Higgins	4163
Atkinson	4163
Forbes	4163
Vermette	4163
Brotten	4163
Furber	4164
Morin	4164
Iwanchuk	4164
Taylor	4164
Quennell	4164
Wotherspoon	4164
Chartier	4165

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie

Schriemer	4165
McCall	4165

Honouring the Memory of Clayton Gerein

Tell	4166
------------	------

Student Wellness Initiative Toward Community Health

Chartier	4166
----------------	------

Gas Plant Expansion

D'Autremont	4166
-------------------	------

Party Tactics

Belanger	4167
----------------	------

Employment Statistics

Weekes	4167
--------------	------

QUESTION PERIOD

Poster

Morin	4167
Wall	4168

Supply of Health Care Workers

Junor	4168
McMorris	4168

Medical Education

Brotten	4169
Duncan	4169
McMorris	4170

Forthcoming Budget

Wotherspoon	4170
Gantfoer	4170

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Enhancement to Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

Bjornerud	4172
Lingenfelter	4172

POINT OF ORDER

D'Autremont	4173
Yates	4173
The Speaker	4173

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 125 — *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*

Boyd4173

Higgins4174

Bill No. 134 — *The Opticians Act*

McMorris4175

Higgins4175

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 117 — *The Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act*

Vermette4176

Brotten4181

Harper4183

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