



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

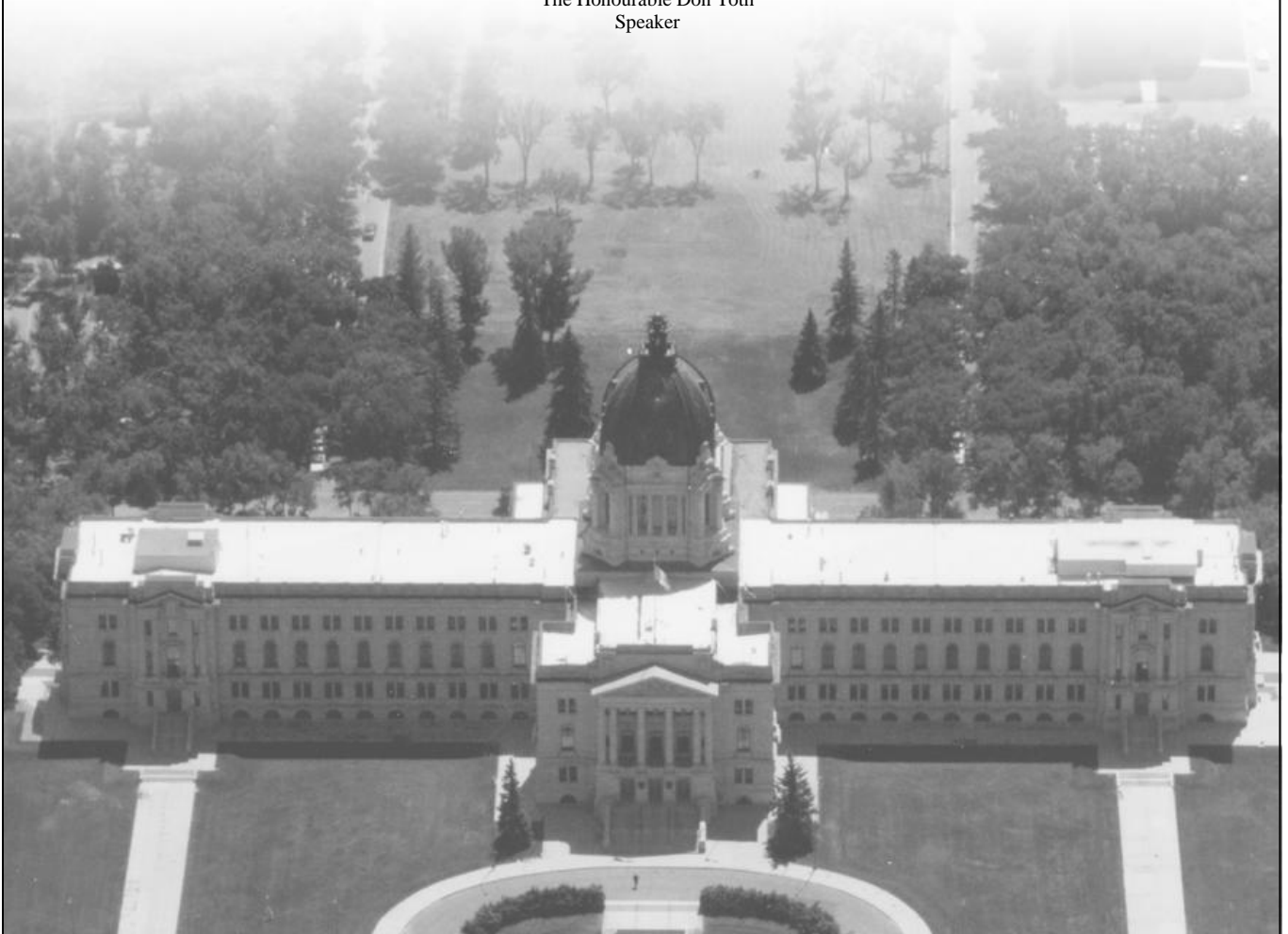
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

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

The Deputy Speaker: — The time being 7 p.m., the House is now back in session. I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's nice to be back here this evening and have the opportunity to continue on the brief few words I have to offer as I started off this afternoon.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we're discussing probably a very important Bill, Bill 117, the Act respecting hunting, fishing, and trapping. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I go any further I want to correct an error I made in my comments earlier this afternoon. At that time, I was under the impression that the member, my good friend and colleague, the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood had a fishing hut out on the ice on a lake somewhere in Saskatchewan here. I was misinformed, Mr. Speaker. I've been since corrected, and he does not have a hut out on the ice. And I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that if he would have had a hut out on that ice this winter that he would have had it off well before the deadline was required by the Act.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to apologize to my good friend and colleague, the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood, for misleading unintentionally, but misleading the thousands of people watching because of misinformation that I had. He does not have a hut out on a lake somewhere in Saskatchewan and certainly not . . . and if he did, like I said, if he would have had, I'm sure it'd been off well before now.

I understand though that the member has had a fair amount of experience at ice fishing, but his experience in ice fishing probably goes along the same line as mine. There's really two things that I catch when I go ice fishing. One of course is ice. I get large volumes of ice. I take large chunks of ice home. But the other one is I usually catch a cold. But that's about the extent of my good luck in fishing. I understand his is much the same.

But, Mr. Speaker, this is a Bill that certainly warrants the opportunity to have fair and reasonable consultation done with the parties involved or the parties that may be affected by this. And I'm hoping that the government at some point in time, before this Bill is rammed and jammed through this Assembly, the government will provide the opposition with some indication as to what level of consultation the government may have done in regards to making the changes to this Bill.

I mean, let's start . . . [inaudible] . . . at the beginning. Who

came forward to the government and asked for this? Who came forward to the government and asked for this Bill to be brought about? What organization, what group of people, what individuals may have approached the government and said that they would like to see this Bill implemented and brought forward through the Legislative Assembly process, the debate to take place, and then it'll eventually be proclaimed and become law. And that would be interesting to see that, Mr. Speaker. As well as in that process that the government was doing its research, its consultations to ensure that whatever effects this Bill may have wouldn't be negative to those out there in this great province of ours that may find it necessary to be making a living off of hunting or fishing or trapping, that this Bill wouldn't directly or indirectly create that many negative issues, any problems certainly within their own personal atmosphere or perhaps even within their business and their community.

And I would like to have those assurances, Mr. Speaker, but until we have them, I suppose it's difficult to go forward with the government's assumption of saying to the opposition, well yes this is a good piece of legislation; just pass it and trust us. Well, Mr. Speaker, I find that a bit of a stretch because that's certainly not the role of an opposition. The role of the opposition is to hold the government accountable, to hold the government to task for its actions.

And I wish that the government would come clean, come clean with what their intentions really are with this particular Bill. Is it as it appears to be, simply a Bill that wants to recognize the heritage and the contribution made by those who are involved in the hunting and fishing and trapping industry over the years, and I mean years, long before this province was a province? Certainly we had trapping going on, and we had hunting going on, and we had fishing going on. Probably even before the trapping was the fishing and hunting, which was a mainstay of providing food for many of our native ancestry, the First Nations people and the Métis people, to be able to feed their families with. And this is of course very, very important.

Mr. Speaker, I think we need to look further than just simply recognizing a day, picking a day on the calendar and recognizing that day as a heritage day for hunting and fishing and trapping. What we have to look at is ensuring that into the future that we have the ability to continue to recognize such a heritage day, and having the ability to recognize that because we have a strong population of wildlife in this great province of ours, whether it be fowl or whether it be fish or whether it be big game. Whatever is involved as far as the wildlife is concerned in this great province of ours, we want to ensure that we have that ability to maintain that population, not just for our own benefit and for our own use but for that of the future.

There is something unique and special about the wildlife that we have in this great province, and we want to ensure that future generations can enjoy them, not only from the sports side but just also from the fact to go out there and watch them and to see them. And I know there are many, many people who have never, ever hunted a wild creature, never hunted a wild creature, but enjoy seeing them in their native surroundings, enjoy driving down a highway and seeing off to the side some white-tailed deer or off to the side seeing, perhaps, a moose.

And in the northern areas you can see a number of wild animals, birds, and probably a very, very beautiful sight is watching a flock of geese fly over top with their V-shape and hearing their honking. And there's something about it just stirs something in a being when you hear that. And those are the things we want to ensure that we are able to retain for, not only for our own use and our own enjoyment today, but for that of future generations.

But in order to do that we must ensure that we have an environment that will continue to be suited to supporting that type of wildlife. We don't want a situation where we have an environment that deteriorates through pollution and through mismanagement and through ill planning, and certainly not being supported in a way it should be that would cause that environment to slowly become polluted, and thus polluting off that wildlife that depends on that environment for its livelihood.

We must ensure that we don't allow that to happen, whether it be in a hunting grounds — for example the white-tailed deer or moose or elk — that they have, the areas that they can graze on, that they can raise their families on, that they stay strong and healthy for reproductive purposes so we maintain a strong and healthy herd.

Yes, we have to ensure that there's a balance here. Mother nature has her own way of insuring a balance, of maintaining that population. I think there's a role for man to play there, and I think if it's looked after and handled properly in a balanced way, there's room for everyone. There's room for mother nature to do its thing. There's also room for man to enjoy his sporting activity that comes along with hunting and fishing and trapping. And if it's handled properly, then I believe that we can maintain that strong herd, I guess you would say, and to provide that opportunity for that herd to thrive, to do so in a healthy way so that it's here for future generations.

And I hope, Mr. Speaker, that that is our goal, and I hope that all of those involved with that industry, immediately and those even further removed, will keep that in mind, and that should be their overall goal . . . is ensure that we have a strong population, a strong herd.

We must make sure that our lakes and our rivers remain as pure as possible, and I think we are very fortunate in this province right now to enjoy that. That's not the same in other areas as I understand it, not having had that much experience, but from reading news reports, from reading stories in magazines and actually talking to some people from particularly Eastern Canada that will tell me of their life spent out there, maybe some 40, 50 years that they spent there, how they've seen the water, and perhaps in their lake close to them, how that water has deteriorated because of pollution and mismanagement of the resources. And as a result of that, they're seeing certainly the types, the species that used to live in that water that they used to be able to fish and retrieve on a regular basis now not available to them. And those that are, are often polluted with mercury and other chemicals that no longer make them available for human consumption.

And I know that's the case certainly in the United States, Mr. Speaker. And I say I know that because I have a number of relatives that live in the United States. I also have some very

good friends down in Cedar Valle, Kansas. And my friends particularly are great sportsmen. They like to fish, not so much hunting, but they certainly like to do their fishing.

And when up here they just, well they think they've gone to heaven when they come up here because we've taken them up fishing to some of the lakes in — I want to say northern Saskatchewan, but in the parkland area, just into the forest reserve — Parr Hill Lake for one, Townsend Lake for another, Smallfish for another, Spirit Lake, Good Spirit Lake also. But these are lakes in, you know, really in the southern part of the province, and though there's a lot of agricultural activities in the area and so on and so forth, they've been well looked after. They've been maintained. They're relatively free of pollutants.

And I hope that we're able to keep that because we, when my good friends from the States come up here and we go fishing, like I said, they think they've gone to heaven because they just can't believe that you can catch a fish in those waters and head to shore and start a fire in the frying pan and do that fish right on the shores of the lake because they can't do it down there. Those fish are so polluted that they simply catch them, but they don't consume them because of the mercury and other chemicals that's in the water and within the fish. But that's not the case here. We really enjoy that uniqueness, I suppose, and of having pure fish, pure waters.

And I hope we keep it that way. We have to work at it. It's not something that's going to just happen by itself. We have to be conscious of the decisions that we make around the environment. We have to ensure that we have good enforcement of the regulations, environment regulations, that we pass here based on the information provided to us by officials and those people across this great province. But we have to make sure that that enforcement is sufficient enough to ensure that our lakes do not get polluted and that we are able to enjoy fresh water and freshwater fish for many, many, many generations to come.

I suppose that there are, you know, there's always exceptions to that rule. We're seeing some indication that some of the activity that's going on in the tar sands in Alberta there is certainly causing some polluting problems within some of our freshwater areas in the northwest part of the province. And I would hope, Mr. Speaker, if that is the case, then there is discussions going on between our officials and those in Alberta that will stop that polluting and, if at all possible, reverse the tide because we certainly don't want to see our fresh water polluted in any manner, shape, or form.

It's going to destroy a resource that we'll never, never get back and a resource that we should be holding very, very precious to us because there are many areas in this world of ours who once enjoyed the same opportunity, once enjoyed the same fresh water, the same freshwater opportunities as fishing presents itself here that is no longer available because they didn't look after it. They didn't look after it. They lost control of it. The industry expanded too rapidly without the necessary safeguards to ensure that the water was not polluted. Polluting took place, and once there, Mr. Speaker, I don't think you can reverse it totally. I know that modern science allows for certain cleanups and to improve situations. But I think once you've lost a freshwater source, you've lost it. You never get it back to the same level.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that this government is aware of that and this government is taking those measures to ensure that the freshwater resources that we enjoy in this province — not only in the centre part of the province or in the South but that we enjoy right across this great province of ours — is protected and safeguarded so that they will be there for the wildlife, the fish life, the wildlife to be able to use into the future to ensure that through that, that's one small part of ensuring that we have a strong, healthy, safe wildlife herd and/or schools of fish and that we have the ability to have wildlife that can survive on their own, in their native way, in the natural way here in this great province of ours for generations to enjoy well into the future.

Mr. Speaker, there are, you know, there are a number of things that need to be discussed here. And I'm hoping that we will be able to enjoy the ability to maintain a strong wildlife herd as far as the hunting aspect of our industry is concerned. I hope that we can enjoy clean and pure waters as far as the fishing aspect of our industry is concerned. And I'm hoping that there will be the opportunity for trappers and for the trapping profession or industry to survive.

[19:15]

Now I know it's under a lot of pressure with the drying up of the fur market and the fact that in Europe, which has always been the major market for furs out of North America, that market has really, really dried up in the last few years. And it's dried up because there's been kind of really an awareness or a conscious effort by those out there who oppose trapping and the killing of wildlife.

And I suppose there is, you know, there's some truth to that. You know, we all value life, and I think we all experience that life of any sort — whether it be a wild animal or whether it be others — certainly has a true value, certainly has a significant value. And, Mr. Speaker, at the same time I would hope that the experience of trappers, the trapping industry, won't get lost in this particular period of time when there is no real demand for the furs and that industry is really drying up and starting to shrink.

I had the opportunity when I was in Black Lake a couple years ago to talk to some of the individuals up there who, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the bulk of their income — up to that time at least — the bulk of their income would have been arrived to them through the trapping industry, by trapping of various fur-bearing animals that were in the area. And at that time — that was two years ago — at that time they were telling me that many of those who have traplines were no longer keeping them up, were no longer participating in trapping simply because there wasn't any return there. In many cases, it was suggested to me that, in many cases, that a trapper would go out throughout the winter months and his entire success of that time spent trapping wouldn't return him enough money to pay for the gas it took to operate his Ski-Doo during that period of time. They just couldn't get enough money back out of the furs to pay for the Ski-Doo gas, never mind replacing the Ski-Doo or all the effort and work that went to it.

So for course as a result of it, Mr. Speaker, many people quit and specifically they weren't pursuing the trapping industry,

and that's understandable. That's economics. But at the same time I would hope that there would be some mechanism to ensure that the techniques of trapping, the knowledge, the wisdom that's been taught often from father to son, from generation to generation, doesn't get lost during this period of time of low income or low prices, fur prices, because there's a wealth of knowledge there that I don't think we can learn anywhere else other than in the field, in a practical way, and that's first-hand trapping.

And of course if you don't have that, you don't have the ability for the elders to pass that information on to younger people, well it'll get lost. And once lost, again, it's going to be very hard to get back. With that information that is lost, then there's less of a chance of an industry returning.

So I would hope that . . . and I don't have the answer to that, Mr. Speaker. I honestly I don't have the answer to it. I just know what the issue is. I know what the problem is. I know up in my area there — I was born and raised, that I said earlier — many of my relatives through marriage used to hold traplines. Some still do. And some do a moderate bit of trapping. I think if they do it, more of a recreation now than actually attempt to generate revenue out of it. And it's maybe an opportunity just to get out and enjoy the winter months and to ride the toboggan and just sort of maintain their cabin and catch a few fur, and do it simply because it's something that they've always done and it's a bit of a recreation. But no longer is there a real drive to ensure that the trapping gets done and that the fur gets harvested in a proper way.

Years ago that was not the case. Years ago it was certainly a hot commodity with a trapline. And if a trapper was retiring or had a line up for sale, certainly his lease would never . . . You'd sell a lease. You don't own the land. It was leased from the government. But they'd sell the lease, and the lease would fetch a pretty good dollar.

That's not the case today because the fur prices, having backed right off, there are many hunters who — and trappers I should say; pardon me, Mr. Speaker — not hunters but trappers who no longer really maintain their lease. I think many of them hold it. I don't know if they're even paying the fees on it any more or not. Many have dropped that.

So it's interesting because how time changes and how industries react to that time. Certainly at one time, it was very popular in the fashion runways around the world for models to be wearing furs, fur coats, etc., etc., and now that's all gone to the side, Mr. Speaker, with the fact that furs are no longer the popular thing to wear. When that happens, of course the fur price is depressed dramatically now to the point where I don't even know if there's a market for furs. At one time, we used to have a fur exchange here in the city of Regina. I believe that's closed down now. I think the only fur exchange that exists is in Winnipeg, and I think again that's probably on a limited basis only.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is an interest that a government, for whatever reason, has decided to jam the opposition on this particular Bill. The Bill really only has five clauses in it, and if you take out the short title and you take out the coming into force, it's down to three.

An Hon. Member: — There's nothing left.

Mr. Harper: — There's not much left; that's right. And yet the government has decided to jam the opposition and not give us the opportunity to have the ability to discuss this particular Bill with those people who are mostly affected — for our First Nations people, the Métis people, the people in the hunting industry, those people who belong to hunting organizations, sportsmen's organizations.

We don't have the opportunity to talk to them. We don't have the opportunity to talk to those people who . . . Hunting and the activity around hunting, the spinoff from that activity is important to them and their commerce, for example, those people in motels, who run motels, hotels, and lodges across this great province of ours who really look to that hunting season for the opportunity to really generate a fair amount of revenue because of the activity around there and the willingness of hunters to come and stay in a motel or stay in a lodge.

Or even how this would affect the outfitters . . . We have outfitters across this great province of ours in south, centre, or north of the province that really depend upon that activity, depend upon the ability to have individuals come and take part, I guess you would say, in their services that they provide. And we really have a strong, an active outfitting industry in this province.

When I did my tour up north two years ago in regards to northern overtime exemptions, that was one group that I had a lot of discussions with, and that was with the outfitting industry and the Saskatchewan outfitters' industry whose head office is in Prince Albert. And I had the opportunity to meet with our chief executive officer on a number of occasions, but beyond that I was able to meet with many of the outfitting operators in the North on their turf in their own community, had discussions with them.

And later that same year, I had the opportunity of attending their fall convention in Prince Albert. And I found that very interesting because they are truly sharp business people. They know their business; they know it well. Many of them have had years and years of experience in it. And they know that the importance of ensuring that they have a strong wildlife population because that's the basis of their business. That's the basis that draws customers to their businesses and to this great province of ours. And they don't just rely certainly not on only local people. They rely on visitors from and customers from all across the world.

One outfitter I was talking to at the convention there runs a nice operation up in northern Saskatchewan, another one in, another satellite operation in central Saskatchewan. And he was telling me that on a regular basis he will get contacts or calls or emails from people in Great Britain, Scotland, Europe. Germany is one of the countries that he had mentioned. Switzerland was another one, people who are looking at booking with him and coming to this great province for fishing. Fishing was a large part of it. They do a very, very active fishing business in the summer with people coming from all over the place, from Europe, from the United States to their business, to the lodges to participate in fishing and also in hunting.

I was surprised. I didn't realize this, but there was a fair amount of uptake on their ads and their offers and their packages from people from Europe. I know the United States, there's a fair amount of outfitting industry in my old turf there where I was born and raised. And they too enjoy a good support from the Americans, or at least they have in the past enjoyed good support from American hunters and sportsmen. But I didn't realize that the Europeans played such a large role in this particular industry too. And in talking with some of the outfitters, particularly in northern Saskatchewan, they're telling me of the number of inquiries they would get from Europe, particularly from Scotland and from Great Britain. Germany seemed to be a country that was commonly mentioned also.

So it seemed like it was pretty widespread, and they would look at coming into Saskatchewan here and participating in an outfitting holiday. Sometimes it was only a week and sometimes it was 10 days. And that you could imagine, Mr. Speaker, was really a benefit to them, to not only the outfitters but a benefit to our province here because what we have here is foreign dollars, money from Germany coming and being spent here in Saskatchewan, being left here in Saskatchewan.

So that's money from outside the province. There's just not money in this province circulating between the individuals within this province. This is fresh money, new money coming from outside of Saskatchewan and being brought to this great province of ours. And it's done through the tourism industry, done through wildlife and the maintenance of a strong wildlife herd here that was able to support a business on an ongoing basis, a thriving business in the outfitting industry.

And outfitters, when you talk to them, Mr. Speaker, they fully realize that the basis of that operation is the animals themselves, the wildlife population that we have here themselves, whether it be the bear or deer, moose, elk, or in the summer months the fishing and the ability to enjoy pristine lakes and rivers that are pollutant free, that you can actually drink the water without any fear, that you can actually have fish in there that you can catch that fish and take it home or head to the shore and build a fire and do that fish right on the frying pan over an open fire, Mr. Speaker.

It's great because a lot of countries, people can't do that. A lot of European countries can't do that. A lot of Americans can't do that because they've lost their fresh water. They've lost their fresh water because they didn't have the rules and regulations or the enforcement in place to ensure that they were able to sustain that, sustain it for their own use but more importantly sustain it for future, for future generations.

And I think that's something that we all have a duty, we all have a duty to ensure that we don't deprive the future because of mismanagement or mis-decisions or the greed of today. We owe that. That's a duty that we all have. I think that maybe that duty is double enhanced when it's on elected people. I believe that elected people carry even a greater responsibility to ensure that we have the rules in place, rules in place to ensure that the future generations will not be deprived of the opportunity to have that fresh fish, the opportunity to enjoy fresh water, the opportunity to enjoy big game in this great province of ours simply because we've made mistakes or we didn't do what needed to be done at the time. That, Mr. Speaker, would be the

worst possible legacy we could possibly leave for the future, is that we didn't do the right thing to ensure that they had the opportunity to enjoy the benefits in this great province that we enjoy today.

Mr. Speaker, those are just briefly some of the points that comes to mind and has been brought to my attention by the people of my great constituency, the people of Regina Northeast. I know, Mr. Speaker, I've said this before, but it bears repeating that whenever you travel this great province of Saskatchewan — it doesn't matter where you go, it doesn't matter what community you're in — you're going to meet warm and friendly and hospitable people. And I can say exactly the same thing for the fine folks of Regina Northeast. There are no better people in this great province than those who live in Regina Northeast, and I'm so fortunate and honoured to have the privilege of being able to represent them in this great Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and it is truly an honour and one that I hope I can, you know, begin to live up to.

Mr. Speaker, wildlife and preserving of wildlife can only be done when we preserve the ability for those wildlife to continue to thrive and to live. In order to do that, we must ensure that we have a pollutant-free environment. But we also must make sure that we have land set aside to allow mother nature to do its thing — allow them to reproduce, allow them the safety and the sanctuary so that they can continue to reproduce and continue to maintain a strong and vibrant herd.

And I'm thinking, Mr. Speaker, of the program that we have in place here already. It's called the wildlife . . . It's a wildlife preservation where we've set land aside for . . . it's called wildlife land. I don't know exactly the name of the program, but I do know that in my area we have several quarters of land set aside as wildlife land and it's left alone. It's not harvested. The timber isn't harvested. It's left alone. It's left to the wildlife. It's left to the wildlife to be able to find sanctuary there. It's left to them to be able to breed there. It's left to them to be able to have their calves there and to be able to raise them without the interference of man and hunting.

[19:30]

And where we . . . and I say we, I mean we in government here, alone there. There's private industry that also is involved in the same thing, particularly when it comes to elk. I'm thinking of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation which purchases large chunks of land set aside simply for the purpose of elk and the raising of elk there. They allow hunting at hunting season. You're allowed to hunt there. It's on foot only, no machines. You're not allowed to go hunting on your quad or with your half-ton truck or anything like that. It's on foot only and they allow it. And that's one way of ensuring that there's a balance kept. The population is kept down within a manageable level and that the wildlife has the opportunity and has a place where they can find refuge, I guess you would say, and be able to reproduce themselves and be able to ensure that we have, on an ongoing basis, a strong and healthy herd in this big province of ours.

Mr. Speaker, there's countless, countless number of issues that could be discussed in this particular Bill. And it worries me just a little bit, Mr. Speaker. This government over here worries me

just a little bit because, as you know, in order to ensure that we have a strong industry — whether it be in the hunting aspect or fishing or trapping — in order to ensure a strong industry, we must ensure that we have a strong, healthy population of wildlife, wildlife that will continue to thrive and do its thing here in this province. And yet, Mr. Speaker, we see that this government is not as concerned — I guess you would say, maybe is the word to use — not as concerned about the level of the environment and the level of pollutants as perhaps they should be if we want to ensure that we have a strong and vibrant wildlife population in this great province of ours.

Now this government has seen fit to break its promise on a 32 per cent reduction of greenhouse gases by 2020 in this province, Mr. Speaker. Well what does that mean, Mr. Speaker, when they don't enforce the commitment that they made during the election campaign of ensuring that we would have a pollutant-free environment in this great province, and they would do so by ensuring that the greenhouse gases emissions would be reduced by 2020?

Then, Mr. Speaker, the exact opposite happens. We have increased pollution, increased emissions. And what does that do? That pollutes our skies, our lakes, and our rivers. And, Mr. Speaker, that's only the beginning. Then it leads into the food chain for the wildlife, and all of a sudden you have pollutants right through our entire environment. And then you have a situation where the wildlife population is no longer the strong and vibrant population it once was, but rather is a weak population that's finding problems being able to survive because of illness and problems that didn't exist before. But because of the basically poisoning of the environment, you're seeing that become a reality.

When that happens, of course then you lose hunting. When you no longer have a strong and healthy and vibrant herd of wildlife, then you no longer have the ability to attract hunters from afar. As I said earlier, those from the United States who come up here on a regular basis going hunting or those from Europe who come here wanting to hunt for that trophy, that white-tailed deer trophy or that big moose rack or that fine bull elk. Those are the things that attract those hunters here. Many of them, they're coming after the trophy. They're certainly not after the meat, but they're after the trophy. But more importantly, they're after the experience. They're after the experience of hunting that type of wildlife in a wild atmosphere like what we enjoy in this great province of ours, particularly in the North. And in doing so, they enjoy it. It's something that's not available to them in New York City or London or Zurich or any of these communities. So it's certainly an experience that they look forward to.

And like I say, that is a very important part of our economy here because what that does is, Mr. Speaker, it brings in money into this province. It brings in, not circulates the money that we already have, but it brings in new money, foreign money, money from outside of Saskatchewan. In many cases, money from outside of Canada is brought here, so it's a very strong and very important part of our economy.

But, Mr. Speaker, as I have said there are many, many topics that need to be discussed here, and I'm sure that many of my colleagues would like to have the opportunity to touch on some

of these topics. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'll move adjournment of debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise of course to enter into the debate on Bill 117, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*.

Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague and friend from Regina Northeast referred to, at one point, the thousands of people watching this debate — of course by television, not in the galleries, Mr. Speaker. And some members across the way suggested that he might have been exaggerating the numbers, and he may very well have been, Mr. Speaker. I expect the audience is not in the thousands, Mr. Speaker. I expect the audience is not insubstantial though.

We sometimes jokingly call the legislative channel the mothers' network because only the mothers of MLAs [Members of the Legislative Assembly] watch it. Not my mother because she's a resident of Florida, so maybe only 57 mothers watch the legislative channel. But that's unfair as well. I think both of those are exaggerations.

The member from Regina Northeast may have slightly exaggerated the number of people watching this debate when he said it was in the thousands. And calling the legislative channel the mothers' network may be a little bit unfair exaggeration the other way. There are, we know, a number of people who watch and follow the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, and there are a number of people who are watching and following this debate. And we will know that because constituents will talk to us about what we have said in the legislature, and a surprising number of people will actually do watch it from time to time. I don't know if very many people have a steady diet of it, Mr. Speaker. Those of us who have a steady diet of it would understand if others did not care to do that if they were not required to.

But a number of people do follow this debate and the debates that take place in this Legislative Assembly. And the people who follow these debates on a fairly regular basis will note some interesting things about this debate, Mr. Speaker. They will note that unusually we are debating the same Bill that we debated all throughout the afternoon. We're debating it into the evening. We may be debating this Bill throughout the week. Conceivably — I haven't done the math, Mr. Speaker, but — this may be the only Bill we debate this week, if government members continue to refuse to allow debate to be adjourned. And that's unusual, Mr. Speaker.

And why is that the case now? And why is that the case for this Bill, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*?

Well the answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is not immediately obvious. It would think it would be because the government has decided this is the most important Bill on their agenda and they want to make sure that this Bill passes . . . if no other Bill passes, at least in the month of March, that this Bill passes. But I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the reason that we're debating this Bill at length today, at length this week perhaps, perhaps the only Bill or only one of two Bills that we will get to this week, is because this is the least important Bill to the government. And I'll explain why I believe that.

This is the least important Bill to the government and that's why this Bill is up for special treatment today and perhaps this week, that this is a Bill that the government thinks is least worthy of consideration, least worthy of diligence on the part of anybody, including members of the opposition, Mr. Speaker. This is the Bill that they think there's least amount to talk about.

This is the Bill . . . I won't say that they have contempt for this Bill because it's their Bill. Obviously they won't have contempt for it, but they do have some disregard and disrespect for this Bill. I mean they had to pick a Bill, I suppose, and I'll come to why, Mr. Speaker. They had to pick a Bill to treat this way, and I suppose there might be other Bills they treat this way as well. Somebody, some Bill had to lose. Some Bill had to be the Bill they treated this way.

But it's this one, Mr. Speaker, and I think that's unfortunate because this Bill . . . I don't think the government appreciates the extent to which they have drafted a Bill which touches upon historic issues in the province of Saskatchewan and the relationship, in part, the historic relationship between the First Nations people and Métis people who make up the Aboriginal people of Saskatchewan, and the settlers and immigrants to this province and their descendents, Mr. Speaker. And this Bill speaks to that.

This Bill speaks to our attitudes about the environment, Mr. Speaker, and this Bill speaks to the importance of symbols in politics and in our lives. And this is not a Bill that deserves no consideration, Mr. Speaker. That is because the government believes that it's a Bill that deserves no consideration. But it is the Bill we are debating at length today to the exclusion of everything else on the government agenda, Mr. Speaker. All the legislation that the government would tell the people of Saskatchewan is important is not as important as debating this Bill — not because this Bill is important, but just because of the opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Now people who follow the legislature closely and the proceedings of this Assembly will understand that this Bill, like many other Bills, receives . . . Under the rules of this House, agreements have been made between governments and oppositions and when parties play different roles in this legislature . . . that this Bill will get 20 hours of consideration. Twenty hours either here or in committee, but it is entitled to 20 hours of consideration if members of this Legislative Assembly deem it important enough to get those 20 hours, Mr. Speaker. And the government members, I don't think, believe that the legislation deserves that. They don't think the Bill deserves that, Mr. Speaker.

And the reason that we're having this debate, the reason it's on

this Bill, is because the government has realized that once again they have a problem with managing their own agenda, Mr. Speaker. They have put in more legislation — legislation that they don't treat with respect — but more legislation than they can get through this Legislative Assembly in the time allotted along with their budget.

So once again, as they have done before, they seek to limit the ability of members of the Legislative Assembly, particularly members of the opposition, to debate legislation. Because under the agreement that was entered into, promoted strongly by the Saskatchewan Party when they were in opposition, if more time is required — if more time is required — to debate legislation that deserves consideration and respect and diligence on the part of members of the Legislative Assembly, then you add more days onto the session. And the members of the Legislative Assembly on this side of the House, on this side of the House, have said, we would be glad to sit here further into May, into June, into July to provide due consideration for the legislative agenda put forward by the government to this Legislative Assembly. We would do our part.

But the members opposite, the government do not want to live up to the agreement that they promoted. No, they do not, Mr. Speaker. They do not want to add more days. They are willing to add more time. They want to add more hours — and we'll have that resolution tomorrow apparently and we'll have that debate — but why? Why, Mr. Speaker, will they not comply with the agreement? Why will they not agree with the opposition to do what the rules provide to have done, to add days to the legislative sitting?

Well they've been fairly forthright on why not, Mr. Speaker. They have been very forthright about that. They don't want the additional question periods, Mr. Speaker. They do not want to answer questions from this side of the House about what the government is doing, about what the government is not doing, and about the consequences of its actions and its omissions, Mr. Speaker. That's what they do not want. They do not want one more question period. So they want to add hours. They want to add hours, but they do not want to add days.

[19:45]

Now, Mr. Speaker, a Legislative Assembly in Canada — and I guess I'll have another opportunity to speak to this — but a Legislative Assembly in Canada, in the British parliamentary tradition has a tension. The majority has a right. A majority has a right to pass its legislative agenda. A majority has a right to pass its budget, Mr. Speaker. But the minority has the right to hold the majority to account, to ask questions, and to get answers. And the plan of this government is to shut down this Legislative Assembly, this session, this sitting as quickly as possible to avoid that accountability.

And to do that, Mr. Speaker, to do that and still cram through their legislative agenda, they have decided — as a tactic, as a tactic — to extend hours or to attempt to extend the hours. And as part of that tactic now to test the opposition's resolve to actually provide due diligence and consideration to legislation, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — I would ask the member to return to

the Bill that's up for debate, No. 117. I think there will be ample time for this other debate later on in the week.

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, the Act respecting hunting, fishing, and trapping is the Bill . . . The proposed Act is the Bill that we are now going to debate, have debated all day, will debate into the evening, will probably debate till 10:30 adjournment, and we'll probably debate it again this week and on and on, Mr. Speaker, the only legislation that we will debate. And the reasons we will do that I have outlined briefly I think, and I will move on to some of the specific clauses of the Bill.

One of the interesting pieces about this particular Bill — and it's similar to other Sask Party government legislation — is that the Bill contains a preamble. And this government likes preambles, Mr. Speaker, and there's a reason why the preamble here and a preamble in other legislation brought by this government. And the fundamental difference or one of the fundamental differences — I shouldn't say the fundamental difference because I think members on both sides of the House could identify a number — but a fundamental difference, one of them, between the members opposite and the members on this side of the House is that while the members opposite talk about restraint in government spending, fiscal conservatism, balanced budgets, the members on this side of the House when in government actually practise that.

But another perhaps not so fundamental difference between this government and the previous government is this government's love for preambles, Mr. Speaker, as in the preamble in *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*. And the reason, I think, the government likes preambles so much, and the preamble in this Bill in particular so much, is because of the, perhaps, lack of substantive policy change set out in the Bill.

I know that the Ministry of Justice, and formerly when I was attorney general, we were not too fond of preambles. The intent of legislation should be clear from the legislation. And if it's not, if the purpose of the legislation is not clear from legislation, then what's the point of the preamble? If the intent is clear, the preamble is superfluous. If the intent of this Bill is clear, the preamble is superfluous. And if the intent of the Bill is not clear, then the intent should be clear. It shouldn't need a preamble, Mr. Speaker. So why a preamble?

And the reason for preambles, Mr. Speaker, is because it's a symbolic Bill. It's about symbolism, and I don't mean to diminish that, Mr. Speaker. I will speak about the importance of symbolism and the importance that it plays in this Bill and that it plays in legislation generally because what we say does matter, maybe not as much as what we do matters, but what we say does matter.

But where the government likes preambles the most, where you're most likely to see preambles as in this Bill, is where the Bill itself perhaps doesn't have a great amount of substance. But the preamble is there, Mr. Speaker, and I think that it raises some very important issues, some issues of longstanding in the province of Saskatchewan, issues going back long before the province of Saskatchewan even existed, Mr. Speaker. And they are debatable, and I think they continue to be highly relevant.

I think speakers on this Bill today, and on previous days already

in this sitting, have highlighted the relevance of the issues that are raised by the Bill that I hold, that the government is treating as a football in their political gain, in respect to shutting down the opposition and trying to cram through a legislative agenda. If anything, I mean the Bill is, at best, you could say a test case for their attempt to ram legislation through the House, Mr. Speaker. And even if the Bill did not raise important issues, even if the Bill did not have the symbolic importance that it does on areas of the environment, on areas of relationships between peoples in the province of Saskatchewan, even if it did not, because the government has chosen to use the Bill this way, Mr. Speaker, the Bill would receive this kind of close attention and diligence from members of the Legislative Assembly, or at least members of Legislative Assembly on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker.

Now the first clause of the Preamble states, “WHEREAS hunting, fishing and trapping have played important roles in shaping Saskatchewan’s social, cultural and economic heritage.” Mr. Speaker, a number of speakers have spoken to the history of northern Saskatchewan in relation to trapping, and I probably will want to comment on that. But I don’t believe any of the speakers have talked about the fundamental difference in roles that hunting played in the shape of the southern part of our province compared to the role that trapping played in the northern part of our province.

And to just briefly touch upon the role of trapping and the fur trade, and I will come back to it, but particularly the reference to it in the first clause of the preamble — and speakers have spoken to this — about the economic trade relationship really between equals in northern Saskatchewan, northern Canada, in the exploitation of the fur trade and the trading relationship, which became family relationships and led to the origins of the Métis people in northern Canada and in particular, for the purposes of this legislation, important to the heritage of trapping and of hunting and fishing in Saskatchewan.

That relationship is probably the first relationship and probably the most admirable relationship, the one we like to talk about because, as I said, it was a relationship more or less amongst equals, trading for a commodity and an important commodity — or at least it was considered to be important at the time — the beaver pelt. It was important enough to end up on the back of one of our coins. And of course the fashion that spurred it on, pushed it on, was the fashion for beaver hats in Britain.

And just a little bit about the cultural consequences of that, I mean, they are much broader than we think, I think often. Today there is again in the theatres another version of *Alice in Wonderland* which has the character of the Mad Hatter played this time by Johnny Depp. And the Mad Hatter was based on the fact that there was an occupational hazard to making beaver pelts into hats. They used mercury, Mr. Speaker, and that’s the origin of the insanity of the mad hatter. So we, you know, think of culture as something as kind of archaic . . . you know, something we drag out for tourists. But the cultural legacy of the fur trade is in Victorian England and in literature of Victorian England and now in movies about a children’s story, perhaps. Mr. Speaker, the cultural legacy is far-reaching on these matters.

But I wanted to talk about, a little bit about the very different

effect, the very different legacy of hunting in southern Saskatchewan because although northern Saskatchewan was the first part of the province — not then yet a province — that was where Europeans travelled, traded, worked with, intermarried with the First Nation people that were there. And the oldest church in Saskatchewan is in northern Saskatchewan. It wasn’t as if Europeans worked their way across the Prairies and then ventured north. Europeans first came through the river system and only later came to the South.

And when they came to the South, they hunted. And what did they hunt, Mr. Speaker? They hunted — I guess I shouldn’t use air quotes for Hansard — they hunted bison, Mr. Speaker. And they nearly decimated the herds. And when they destroyed the herds — not just in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and Alberta but throughout North America — they destroyed the food source of the First Nations people of the Plains. They eliminated that food source. And those people, fiercely independent people with great traditions on the Plains hunting the bison were deprived of the very source of their livelihood and forced to be dependent upon either the American government or the British Crown.

Now I suppose to the credit of our ancestors and to the American government of the day — maybe to a lesser extent given some of the history there — it was recognized that this was not empty land, that there had been people there. And although they were now deprived of the source of their food and the source of their livelihood, they were people to whom the British Crown had an obligation.

And treaties were entered into, Mr. Speaker, and there’s a reference to those treaties — and I think importantly — in legislation that talks about hunting and trapping, recognition of those treaties and acknowledgement of them in the Bill, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*.

Now those treaties were observed as much in the breach as they were in the observance decade after decade after decade. And it’s not recognized as much by those of us who are descendants of immigrants, but everyone who lives here is a treaty person. Members of First Nations are acutely aware of being treaty people, but we’re not so aware of being treaty people. But we are. And it falls upon us, I think, today to acknowledge that better. And we do acknowledge that, Mr. Speaker, and it was acknowledged in the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and the references here in the Bill. And in a way, this Bill, in its reference to the rights of Aboriginal people, in its reference to treaties, in its reference to section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, in its reference to the social, cultural, and economic heritage of fishing, hunting, and trapping is really about that historic relationship and what has been accomplished and what remains to be accomplished, Mr. Speaker.

[20:00]

Now treaties without observance on both sides are just pieces of paper. And section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, without recognition of its value, is just a piece of paper. And the government, by referring to section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, by referring to the treaty rights and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal people to hunt, fish, or trap, or any of their other rights, well that’s just a reference and piece of paper, Mr.

Speaker. And if they don't respect this legislation, and if this legislation, if this Bill is all they're going to do, if this Bill exists in empty space, then as some speakers before me have referred to, this Bill borders on being an insult to those people and to that relationship, Mr. Speaker.

The importance of hunting and trapping . . . I think if you think about the development of southern Saskatchewan, if you think about the development in northern Saskatchewan . . .

An Hon. Member: — Remember the '82 constitutional discussion.

Mr. Quennell: — Yes. And a member reminds me about the '82 discussion about the inclusion of section 35. And when I get to clause 3, if I get to it tonight, if I get to clause 3 . . .

An Hon. Member: — That part I find especially interesting.

Mr. Quennell: — I find it interesting as well. The member says he finds it interesting. I have to admit I find it interesting too, although the member doesn't have my excuse. I'm a lawyer and when people mention the constitution, it's not like fingernails going down a blackboard. The member's interest in the constitution, I think, is admirable, Mr. Speaker, admirable because the member in question isn't a lawyer . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well my heart is warmed by members of the Legislative Assembly who have an interest in constitutional law and who are not lawyers. I'm overcome, Mr. Speaker.

Anyway when the former member from Cumberland, Joan Beatty, came to this House — and she was elected same year as the Minister of Enterprise; the Minister of Justice; some other members of the House, the survivors of 2003, myself, the member from Regina Walsh Acres — when she came to this House, she noted the social and cultural references to the British Crown, to the partnership of the English and the French, the founding people of Canada. But she did not see in this Chamber, she did not see in this Chamber a recognition of the people who had lived, hunted, fished, trapped on this land for thousands of years, Mr. Speaker.

John Ralston Saul calls Canada a Métis nation. And that's a difficult phrase, at least for me to understand, and I'm not sure I can explain it. Mr. Saul is a more sophisticated thinker than I am by far. I don't think he was suggesting that we're Métis. There's a very small group of people, even in the province of Saskatchewan, who are, proportionally. But I think he was talking about how this government was shaped, or how this country was shaped, excuse me, Mr. Speaker, how this country was shaped by people who hunted, fished, and trapped.

And particularly in the case of trapping, Mr. Speaker, those people were Europeans, those people were First Nations. And they worked together and they were involved in a global trade, a trade that might start up at Cumberland House but ended up on the streets of London, Mr. Speaker. That's the history of our country. That was the beginning of our country. And our country had to accommodate — it's compelled, I think, by morality to accommodate — the people that were first here. And that partnership and that accommodation make us in Mr. Saul's view a Métis nation.

And I think that's what the former member of Cumberland knew but could not see in this House. And it's because of her . . . because I remember saying to her well I don't know what to do about it. The Speaker controls the Chamber in that respect; she should go to the Speaker. But it's because of her — and I assume that's how she followed up; I don't know — that there is a mace runner and there is a beaver pelt next to the mace, the symbol of parliamentary independence now combined with symbols of the origins of all the people of Canada, all the people of Saskatchewan on that Table.

And that is the type of issue, that is the issue that this legislation addresses. That is the issue that this legislation brings up. I think when the government drafted this legislation, they thought, well we'll throw out some nice words there — social, culture, and economic heritage. Nobody will debate them. Nobody will look behind them. Nobody will examine whether we're providing any meaning or substance behind these words that are in the preamble.

And this is a perfect Bill to use to test the opposition's determination to do its job to hold the government to account. This is the Bill we can use because this Bill really means nothing to the government. It really means nothing to them. And that is ironic because, just in that first sentence of the preamble, I think this is a fundamental Bill about historic relationships which have not been treated properly by the dominant partner and we all continue to reap the whirlwind today. Some of us suffer more than others, Mr. Speaker, but that's the nature of injustice.

Now the reason that there's a preamble to this Bill is because this is a government that doesn't want to take substantive action if it can take symbolic action instead. And if a slogan will not buy off somebody, well we'll give them a day, Mr. Speaker. And that's what this legislation does. It gives a day — not a holiday, just a day — that might provide a photo op for the Premier of Saskatchewan at some point on a November 15th.

But that's all that it's for. There's no intent to do anything. There's no intent to change any policy. There's no intent to change any law. I think that will become clear as you work your way through the Bill. As a matter of fact, just the opposite. It's a Bill that says, status quo, status quo, status quo, heritage day, Mr. Speaker. I mean that's it in a nutshell — the statement of the current circumstance, that nothing changes in the current circumstance except that, amongst all the other things that November 15th might be on the calendar, it will also now be now Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Day in Saskatchewan.

That's what the government likes to do on so many fronts, Mr. Speaker, and on this one, is to take symbolic action to say something. If they can't do it in a slogan to escalate . . . as I say, to a day. And that's the source of this legislation, and that's the reason why it has a preamble.

Now the second clause of the preamble — and I may have to return to the first clause because it's fundamentally important — but the second clause of the preamble states that "WHEREAS hunters, fishers and trappers have made important contributions to the understanding, conservation, restoration and management of Saskatchewan's fish and wildlife

resources.” Now I think a previous speaker from Cumberland, the current member from Cumberland spoke of this government’s true regard or lack thereof for the contribution made by hunters, fishers, and trappers on the issues of understanding, conservation, restoration, and management of Saskatchewan’s fish and wildlife resources.

The member from Cumberland made the point quite eloquently earlier today that the government is acting as if they think that the people who hunt, fish, and trap for their livelihood know the least about the conservation, restoration, and management of Saskatchewan’s fish and wildlife resources. The preamble suggests otherwise, but their action, the member from Cumberland did say today, is the reverse.

I think the statement is true. The government may not actually believe it. They may not demonstrate it in their actions, but the statement is true. Hunters, fishers, and trappers have made important contributions to understanding, conserving, restoring, and managing Saskatchewan’s fish and wildlife resources, and they could do so in the future, Mr. Speaker.

Now the environment of Saskatchewan, as we know, is rapidly changing, more rapidly than a few years ago we would have believed possible, Mr. Speaker. I think many members of government continue to be in denial of that fact, but the denial has become very quiet. There are a number of things that members opposite probably still continue to believe, have certainly stated that they believed in the past, but are no longer willing to be so explicit about in their beliefs and in statements about their beliefs.

I think the majority of people in this Legislative Assembly — and certainly one member on the government side, not a minister but the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood — do recognise that there is substantial change in the environment, substantial change in the climate both globally and locally, and of course locally here in Saskatchewan. And this is fundamental to the issues of understanding conservation, restoration, and management of our resources — all our resources, all our natural resources, all the living resources at least, dependent upon an environmental balance and how this is changing.

I think it was the member from Regina Northeast who talked about the irrevocability of over hunting and the few whooping crane that work their way north from Texas to northern Saskatchewan and back again, and how their arrival and how many of them arrive is so closely examined every year in our province. And of course a population like that, that was not — until almost too late — treated with respect by certainly the dominate culture in Canada and in Saskatchewan, is very much at risk of environmental change.

But environmental change is affecting all wildlife resources, the wildlife resources referred to in the preamble of *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*. Stories are being written now about communities in northern Saskatchewan or in northern Canada that are now seeing polar bears very far south, further south than they’ve ever been seen before or at least recorded and remembered by the Aboriginal people who have occupied the area for centuries.

And I misspoke myself when I said Saskatchewan in reference

to polar bears. But I was just recalling the other day, and some other members may recall, the story from a few years ago about some people who were fishing on Lac La Ronge — I believe it was Lac La Ronge — and were pursued by a very skinny polar bear and only escaped, only escaped because they had a motor on the canoe. And nobody would have believed that story except they also had a video camera. And that bear was lost. But bears are moving further south, not as far south as that in most cases, but in that case.

But I’ve noted on my drive now to Regina from Saskatoon, to come here to the Legislative Assembly, that the signs have changed. The crossing signs have changed near Dundurn. Mr. Speaker, I think they probably have changed in your constituency.

There used to be a sign with a deer, a silhouette of a deer — not an actual deer, Mr. Speaker, but a silhouette of a deer on the sign — on the sign. And there’d be a number of them and properly so, Mr. Speaker. Because after the bison were decimated, almost wiped out, and farming broke the land, white-tailed deer found that to be a very accommodating environment and moved up into Saskatchewan, and there are still a number of deer along that highway. And unfortunately some of them come colliding into vehicles — or vehicles collide into them is perhaps more fair to put it — and at best there’s property damage and at worst there’s a loss of life, not only on the part of the deer but on the part of the driver and perhaps the passengers of the vehicle.

[20:15]

But now those signs have been replaced, Mr. Speaker, with the silhouette of a moose, and for good reason, Mr. Speaker. Because outside of Saskatoon, to the south of Saskatoon on the prairies, there have been, I’ve seen the carcass of a moose on the side of the highway. It’s been obviously hit by a vehicle and killed. And now on the highways, you’ll see roadkill — not just porcupines, an occasional muskrat or a fox, but raccoons, Mr. Speaker. I don’t remember there being raccoons in Saskatchewan when I was a child. I don’t remember having to worry about hitting a moose south of Prince Albert when I was a child, Mr. Speaker.

The environment in Saskatchewan is changing in ways that are not so subtle, perhaps not so severe as the Arctic but not so subtle either. And whatever experience, whatever knowledge anyone can bring to these issues, particularly the knowledge that can be brought by people who live with the resource — hunters, fishers, and trappers, who are not always but are often Aboriginal people — well that knowledge and that experience should be valued. And it’s only proper that the government Bill values that knowledge.

But as the member from Cumberland pointed out, this is the only place that they acknowledge it, Mr. Speaker. They don’t acknowledge it anywhere else. They don’t acknowledge the importance of the environment anywhere else. And they don’t acknowledge the contribution that can be made by Aboriginal hunters, fishers, and trappers or others anywhere else. As a matter of fact, they contradict it in all their other actions, Mr. Speaker. So we get a symbolic Bill with a nice preamble that recognizes the importance of this understanding. But what

environmental action do we get from this government?

Forget the commitments of the previous government, Mr. Speaker. That's the previous government. And as the members opposite are fond of reminding us, there was an election and they won it. We did not. The Premier of Saskatchewan has the confidence of this legislature for the time being, Mr. Speaker. So forget the commitments of the previous government. Forget the actions the previous government was taking on climate change and other environmental issues.

This government, the Saskatchewan Party government, has broken almost every environmental promise it made — from green vehicles for government to greenhouse emissions — Mr. Speaker, their own promises. Not just the actions taken by the previous government, not just the commitments made by the previous government — their own commitments to the people of Saskatchewan on green vehicles and greenhouse gases.

The member from Thunder Creek had something very witty to say about gases, so I trust he'll be entering this debate at some point.

The next clause of the preamble — I might actually get through the preamble this evening, Mr. Speaker — the next clause of the preamble talks about . . . Well I'll read it, Mr. Speaker. It's brief. "WHEREAS the best traditions of hunting, fishing and trapping should be valued by . . ." [Inaudible interjection] . . . The member from Cypress Hills says that I'm a typical lawyer.

And I know the member from Cypress Hills very well. And the member knows, because I've spoken about this, Mr. Speaker, the member knows I hold him in the highest regard. I think that we . . . I know, Mr. Speaker, that we disagree on many things, disagree on many things. I think the member from Cypress Hills and I know about as much about the practical effects or practical procedures in hunting, each as to the other.

Anyways I digress a little bit, Mr. Speaker. But the member from Cypress Hills entered the debate from his desk, so I hope I will be accommodated a little bit. I hold him in the highest regard. He knows that. I've said that in this House before, although we disagree on many things. So I know when he makes a remark like that, that he does mean it in the nicest possible way. So I take no offence, Mr. Speaker.

Now if I may proceed to be a typical lawyer, Mr. Speaker, and I won't say without further interruption because I recognize the right of members to interject from their seats on occasion. I take no offence at that either, Mr. Speaker.

Oh but I do forget where I was, so I might have to return to the first clause of the preamble and work my way back down to the . . . Oh no, it was the third, it was the third clause of the preamble: "WHEREAS the best traditions of hunting, fishing and trapping should be valued by future generations," Mr. Speaker.

Again another fine sounding phrase from the Government of Saskatchewan contained in a Bill which I think we have demonstrated they have very little regard, Mr. Speaker — ". . . the best traditions of hunting, fishing and trapping should be valued by future generations," Mr. Speaker. And I think that the

government seriously thinks that well if nobody really addresses their mind to this Bill, that they will believe that the declaration of a Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Day, as they declare in section 4 of the Bill, will ensure that the best traditions of hunting, fishing, and trapping will be valued by future generations.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we know that won't do that. We know that's not enough. Tradition, if it's going to be a living tradition, Mr. Speaker, has to have a basis to survive. No one's going to remember or care or learn from or value or understand, even, the best traditions of fishing if you can't fish in Saskatchewan. And a day won't do it, Mr. Speaker. And no one is going to remember the best traditions of hunting or care about them or be able to learn from them if no one can engage in them, Mr. Speaker.

And I appreciate that the vast majority of people of Saskatchewan, particularly as the province becomes more urban, may not ever — like the member from Cypress Hills or I — hunt or trap. Maybe they'll rarely fish, although that's hard to believe. As one of the speakers, I think the member from Regina Northeast, commented, that the province is blessed with thousands of lakes, as is our neighbouring province of Manitoba. And it's a major part of the recreational life of so many Saskatchewan people to go to the lake and often to fish there.

An American comic once asked the question to a Canadian audience, when you Canadians go to the lake, is it the same lake? I guess that's just not an American expression, Mr. Speaker — going to the lake. But it's a Canadian expression, and I think it's a Canadian expression for a reason. It's because we live, most of us, very close to the American border, along a thin line along the American border. Most of us never see the most northern part of our country. But we live along another border — a border with the forest, a border with the North, a border with the lakeland. And that is, I think, a living part of a much broader tradition for a much broader group of people in the province than perhaps hunting and certainly trapping is.

But these traditions will only survive if they're practiced. If we stop practicing a tradition, if we give up a tradition, if we don't pass it on to our children or if we cannot pass it on to our children, then the tradition dies. The tradition, like a language that's never spoken, that no one can learn how to speak because they never hear it spoken, the tradition dies. The culture that goes with the tradition dies. The language, the words around the tradition die.

And you don't save them by declaring a day, Mr. Speaker. You save them by preserving the basis for them. And the basis for much of our traditions of hunting, fishing, and trapping, and the best of our traditions as different peoples coming together, are in the environment of northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And where is this government's commitment to that environment without which those traditions cannot carry on, Mr. Speaker? Where is it? There is no issue that this government is more silent on. And they are silent on a number of issues, but there is no issue that they are more silent on than the threats to our northern environment, to its air and to its water from activities to the west, Mr. Speaker.

Now this government doesn't even know, what are the consequences of the oil sands on northern Saskatchewan? This government doesn't know what affects on the air. This government doesn't know what affects on the water because this government doesn't want to know, Mr. Speaker. The government doesn't want to know. Because if it did know and the people of Saskatchewan knew, then the government would have to take some action. The government would have to take a position. The government would have to admit what balances they struck, what trade-offs they made, and what trade-offs, benefits go to people outside of the province of Saskatchewan, and what costs are paid to people inside Saskatchewan, and the cost particularly paid to the people of northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

I can't talk about the devastation that might be being cost, and I wouldn't want to be hysterical or exaggerated, Mr. Speaker, but the government doesn't monitor water quality. The government doesn't monitor air quality because the government doesn't want to know, Mr. Speaker. What the government wants to do, because it costs them nothing, is say that we respect the best traditions of hunting, fishing, and trapping, and we will go this far. We won't just repeat a slogan, and duty to consult is a slogan to this government, Mr. Speaker. I'll come to that.

We'll give a day. And if this day isn't good enough, I expect we'll get a day for northern Saskatchewan, heritage day for northern Saskatchewan. But that is not going to preserve anything for future generations, Mr. Speaker. And the context of this Bill — what my high school art teacher would've called the negative space in which this object exists — the context for this Bill is inaction and what lawyers call, for the benefit of the member from Cypress Hills, wilful blindness. Mr. Speaker, wilful blindness.

The government doesn't want to know. And what the member from Cypress Hills may also know, as well as the term and what the term means, is that it's not a defence. As a matter of fact, it's not negligence, Mr. Speaker; it's above negligence because you choose to be wilfully blind. And wilful blindness actually can be the basis of criminal responsibility, Mr. Speaker. I'm not suggesting that the omissions here are criminal, except in the broad or rhetorical sense, Mr. Speaker — not technically criminal, although some people might wish that they were.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, to the extent that there's meat . . . Not finally on the Bill, not finally on the Bill, but finally on the preamble, Mr. Speaker, the last clause of the preamble which comes to, I suppose, to what meat there is in this Bill. "AND WHEREAS, it is desirable to observe a day to celebrate hunting, fishing and trapping as an integral part of Saskatchewan's heritage."

[20:30]

This is, Mr. Speaker, where all the well-sounding phrases, they finally come to the grand culmination in more than just a mere slogan, Mr. Speaker, but an actual day. An actual heritage day, Mr. Speaker, to celebrate hunting, fishing, and trapping as an integral part of Saskatchewan's heritage.

Well we certainly don't disagree that it's an integral part of Saskatchewan's heritage. I think speaker after speaker on this

side of the House talked about the fundamental role that these activities, these industries played in the making of our province, the making of our current economy, the making of our current society, partnerships, and to a certain extent failed relationships that currently exist in the province of Saskatchewan.

And so for all that deserves a day in the view of the government, it doesn't deserve substantial environmental legislation. It doesn't deserve the government keeping its promises on environmental legislation or environmental action, doesn't deserve a monitoring and close watch and due diligence on the state of the northern environment, Mr. Speaker. In the view of the government, it doesn't deserve any of those things. What it deserves is a day. It's a rhetorical statement. And again, Mr. Speaker, I said I didn't wish to diminish the importance of symbols, symbolic action, and words. And it may sound like that because I seem dismissive of what's in this legislation.

I think symbolism is important. Symbolic actions are important. I think words are important. I think other symbols are important as well, and that's why I commented on the new symbols that were brought into the House since I have been here that reflect the heritage more accurately of the people of Saskatchewan in this Chamber, in this Legislative Assembly. I think symbols are important and statements of principle are important that are said on this Bill. I think they are important. I think they're important to politics, Mr. Speaker. I would say to a well-balanced political diet, Mr. Speaker, they are important. But without substantial policy, alone, Mr. Speaker, symbols are thin gruel. As part of a balanced political diet, I think they are important, Mr. Speaker. For without substantial policy . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The member from Indian Head-Wolseley wants to enter the debate as well.

They are important, but on their own, Mr. Speaker — and the Minister of Health might appreciate this — on their own, they're an insufficient diet. And the government I think is at risk of suffering from political rickets, Mr. Speaker. Political rickets, because they are trying to survive on so many issues — on statements of principle, on slogans, on symbols — with so little substantial sustenance behind them, Mr. Speaker.

Now once one gets past the preamble, Mr. Speaker, and the government invites debate on preamble by putting it here. And government members may wish that they hadn't had to listen to the last hour of discussion, but it's their Bill, Mr. Speaker. They thought that, well they could make it look like something substantial, a whole page by making half a page of preamble that set out some nice-sounding phrases about principles, about symbols, about things that the government cares about enough to declare a day — enough to recognize that they are important, but not enough to do anything about in a substantial way in areas of responsibility of the government such as the environment. But that's the government's decision, Mr. Speaker. And it's the government's decision to use this Bill to test the resolve of this opposition to examine the legislative agenda of this government, which is not just our right but our duty and our responsibility, Mr. Speaker.

But once one gets past a preamble, what everyone might think of that, and moves on to what would have to be called, because everything is relative, substantive parts of the Bill. Moving on to numbered clause 2, section 2, proposed section 2(1): "A

person has the right to hunt, fish and trap in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, I perhaps unfairly sum this Bill up as statement of sentiment — status quo, status quo, status quo, declare a day. This clause, the person has a right to hunt, fish, and trap in accordance with law as it exists from time to time, is the first status quo clause. This provides no new right. This changes no law. This has no effect whatsoever; like the preamble, exists perhaps to make the Bill a page long, Mr. Speaker.

“A person has the right to hunt, fish and trap in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time.” So a “person has the right to hunt, fish and trap in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time.” And there, Mr. Speaker, is a statement that a person’s right to hunt, fish, and trap is whatever their right is under the law. Doesn’t change the law. Doesn’t change the right. Doesn’t do anything, Mr. Speaker. Why is it there, Mr. Speaker? Why is it there?

Well really, Mr. Speaker, the Legislative Assembly and legislation and the people of Saskatchewan and the law do not deserve to be treated to legislation that is superfluous and redundant, legislation that does nothing, that is brought in solely for the purpose of bringing in legislation, solely for the purpose of making a political statement on the part of the government. The whole Bill cannot be criticized on that basis because the Bill declares a heritage day, but this clause exists for no reason. That’s not good enough for the government.

Perhaps it’s not long enough for the government, Mr. Speaker, because then there’s a subsection that follows that: “The reference to the law in subsection (1) includes . . .” Now this isn’t the complete list of the laws because I don’t think anybody in the government wanted to sit down and figure out what laws touch upon the rights of the wildlife of hunting, fishing, and trapping in province of Saskatchewan. I don’t think they wanted to do that.

But they highlighted a few, Mr. Speaker, but it’s not an exclusive list, I don’t imagine. I think I could probably add some other legislation that touches upon those rights that’s not listed here. The government decided to list, and again perhaps just to lengthen the length of the Bill: *The Wildlife Act, 1998*; *The Fisheries Act, Saskatchewan, 1994*; the *Fisheries Act, Canada*; the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, Canada*. Now some of these Acts are provincial Acts, Mr. Speaker. These Acts are in reference to matters that can be under provincial jurisdiction or federal jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker. *The Wildlife Act*, provincial legislation. *The Fisheries Act*, Saskatchewan provincial legislation because fish within the province, particularly freshwater fish in our lakes, may live their entire lives within the province. Other fish may be interprovincial, and because of the salt water fishery, it’s a shared jurisdiction with the federal government. And so we get federal legislation, the *Fisheries Act, Canada*.

Now how the *Fisheries Act* of Canada could possibly impinge upon any of the concerns, the principles, the sentiments set out in the preamble, I don’t know, Mr. Speaker. How they could possibly have impinged upon the heritage day proposed by the Bill, I don’t know, Mr. Speaker.

So why this list of legislation, Mr. Speaker? Again, just to make the legislation look more substantive, make it look more important. Ironically, Mr. Speaker, because as I have said this is legislation that the government is treating with complete disregard and disrespect, the only reason this legislation is brought forward in this manner — being debated throughout this day, into this evening, perhaps for the balance of the week, perhaps to the exclusion of any other legislation, Mr. Speaker — is as part of a tactic of the government to test the resolve of the opposition to live up to our right, our duty, to examine legislation, Mr. Speaker. That’s the only reason.

And the reference to these other pieces of legislation within the Bill, the reference to people’s right to hunt, fish, and trap in accordance with the law, it’s just here as mere words . . . [inaudible] . . . just words to make the Bill longer, Mr. Speaker, to suggest there’s some substance with it.

There is no statement, Mr. Speaker, that would be more superfluous than one can imagine than that statement in legislation that says that a person’s rights exist in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time. Well of course, Mr. Speaker, of course they exist in accordance with the law from time to time. How else would they exist? What law that doesn’t exist would they be in accordance with, Mr. Speaker? It’s a sentence that I suppose is true, I suppose is maybe even marginally relevant to the issue of hunting, fishing, and trapping since it refers to that right, but it’s completely unnecessary, Mr. Speaker.

Then of course the reference to various, various laws. And the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, Canada*, is somewhat interesting, Mr. Speaker, and I feel that I can discuss it briefly because it’s referred to in the Bill that’s before us. The *Migratory Birds Convention Act* is Canadian legislation about a matter — that’s wildlife — in Saskatchewan, ducks and geese, for example, that would fall under provincial jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker.

And why do they fall under federal jurisdiction? Well a question that people who are interested in constitutional law . . . And I was quite happy to learn that there are members of the Legislative Assembly who are interested in constitutional law. It’s because of the treaty making power of the federal government.

I’ve spoken briefly about the treaties between the British Crown and First Nations in Canada and of course in the province of Saskatchewan, while I was on my feet, but this treaty is with the United States in regard to migratory birds, Mr. Speaker. And if the federal government makes a treaty, then the matter that’s governed by the treaty, even though it falls under provincial jurisdiction, because it’s governed by the treaty, the federal treaty making power trumps the provincial legislation.

The *Migratory Birds Convention Act* which existed before 1994 — I mean this is the most recent form of it — was the legislation that established the federal government’s ability to affect provincial jurisdiction in free trade agreements, Mr. Speaker. And I think it was firmly established by their ability to move forward with legislation affecting wildlife, and no dispute that that legislation governs the rights of people in Saskatchewan.

The rights might vary depending on whether those Aboriginal rights or rights that otherwise accord with law as set out in this Bill . . . The *Migratory Birds Convention Act* does remind one of a story that I think sort of elucidates the discussions that took place about constitutional law in the country before the *Constitution Act* in 1982, when the big concern and debates around constitutional law were about provincial and federal jurisdiction, as this legislation was, Mr. Speaker.

[20:45]

And it was about international students who were asked to write an essay about the elephant. And the British student wrote an essay called, if I remember, “The Elephant and the British Empire”; the French student about the love life of elephants; the American student about raising elephants for profit. And a Canadian student, his essay was entitled “Elephants, a Federal or Provincial Responsibility.” And that was the typical Canadian debate and still continues on to be the typical Canadian debate.

Whose jurisdiction is this? Is it federal? Is it provincial? This legislation of course when it talks about this Bill, the Act respecting hunting, fishing, and trapping, when it talks about the rights that people have to hunt, fish, and trap that exist in accordance with the law, Mr. Speaker, has to refer to provincial and federal legislation because of that concurrent overlapping jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker. But really, how is the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* or in any of its other forms since it was first created or the regulations made pursuant to that Act, how did they affect the Bill in respect to Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Day in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? It is a mystery and I think the answer can only be that they don’t, that there was no need.

There was no need to set out in this legislation, in this Bill, the right to hunt, fish, and trap. It’s not created by this legislation. The heading that’s in front of or above section 2, clause 2, “Right to hunt, fish and trap” is misleading, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly. It’s misleading and I think highlights the inappropriate way that legislation — this legislation, other legislation — and this Legislative Assembly is used by this government to put before us legislation that in part, that in part, Mr. Speaker, is completely superfluous.

And I say misleading to this extent, to the extent that the title would suggest that the Bill declares a right to hunt, fish, and trap. And a less than careful reading of the sections that follow that heading would suggest that the Bill provides a limited, conditional right to hunt, fish, and trap. But it doesn’t, Mr. Speaker, because that right already existed.

That right already existed, existed at common law, Mr. Speaker, existed at common law. It is set out, modified, provided with conditions in legislation, some of which is mentioned in the Bill: *The Wildlife Act, 1998*, *The Fisheries Act (Saskatchewan), 1994*, the *Fisheries Act (Canada)*, the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*. The right is modified there. The conditions on that right are set out there. The various dos and don’ts of hunting in Saskatchewan and in Canada, which I may have occasion to come to, are all set out there.

The implication that, particularly from the title and from the

beginning of the section, that a person has a right to hunt, fish, and trap seems to suggest the Bill has a substantive purpose. And a substantive purpose is to create a right to hunt, fish, and trap. But we all know that’s not the case. In fact, it’s just a statement of fact, Mr. Speaker. It’s not even a statement of value. It doesn’t even say that the government believes that there should be a right to hunt, fish, and trap. I think the government does believe that, Mr. Speaker. I don’t want to suggest that the government doesn’t believe that. But it doesn’t say that the government values that right, wants to celebrate that right — although that may be somewhere else in the Bill. It just states that people have a right to hunt, fish, and trap, you know.

What’s next, Mr. Speaker? Legislation advising us that we have the right to walk down the street in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time, Mr. Speaker? I don’t think that we need . . .

An Hon. Member: — Right. Drive the speed limit.

Mr. Quennell: — Yes, that’s right, Mr. Speaker. Are we going to get legislation that says that a person has the right to garden in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time, Mr. Speaker? Are we going to get legislation that says a person has the right to shop in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time, Mr. Speaker? I mean is the government reduced to legislation that advises people of rights that they have taken for granted for centuries in the province of Saskatchewan? Is that what the government is reduced to doing, Mr. Speaker?

And is the declaration that a person has the right to hunt and fish and trap in accordance with the laws that exist from time to time so important, Mr. Speaker, that it . . .

The Speaker: — I’d ask members of the Assembly while there’s conversation going on between members, if there’s conversation you’d like to have, that you could gather behind the bar rather than shouting across the floor. That would be appreciated, to allow the member from Saskatoon Meewasin to be heard in his remarks tonight. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, we’ve got — well depending on how you want to cut it, Mr. Speaker — 40 per cent into, 40 per cent into the Bill, 40 per cent into the Bill. And what do we have, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — Order. There are a number of members on my left behind the bar who continue to draw other members into conversation, and they’re making it very difficult for their colleague to make his remarks. I’d ask the members to come to order and allow the member from Saskatoon Meewasin to proceed.

Mr. Quennell: — Well thank you again, Mr. Speaker. We’re 40 per cent into the Bill and probably, maybe a little bit more than 40 per cent through my remarks, Mr. Speaker.

We’re 40 per cent into the Bill and what has the government proposed? Now that’s if you exclude the preamble, Mr. Speaker. But into what the government would I think call a substantive part of the Bill, beyond the expression of sentiment, Mr. Speaker, and what do we have? What we have, Mr.

Speaker, is a declaration of a centuries-old right, both in the old world and the new world, that a person has the right to hunt, fish, and trap — not the absolute right, not the unconditional right — but the right to do so in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time. A person has the right to carry on common activities of their lives and their community in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, in a way it's a profound statement, but it's not a necessary one. It's certainly not necessary to put it in legislation, Mr. Speaker, not at all. Now I suppose it could be worse, Mr. Speaker. In light of the disregard for the environment, in light of the disregard for the duty to consult the Aboriginal people of Saskatchewan on that part of this government, I guess it could be worse. The government could explicitly be further limiting the right to hunt, fish, and trap, but they're not. At least they're not doing it by legislation, Mr. Speaker.

I have suggested, I continually suggest in my remarks that by their inaction, their wilful blindness in respect to matters of the environment and matters of relationships between Saskatchewan peoples, that they are in effect limiting those rights to hunt, fish, and trap, perhaps putting at risk the preservation of active, meaningful traditions in those areas, Mr. Speaker. But they're not doing it by legislation, no. In the legislation they're just making expression, a statement of fact, perhaps a statement of value to the government, at least theoretically, that people have a right to do the things that they do in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time, Mr. Speaker.

Clause 3 goes on to do something very similar. And it reads:

Nothing in this Act abrogates or derogates from any existing Aboriginal and treaty rights to hunt, fish or trap of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada that are recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Mr. Speaker, again a very specific example of the very general statement in clause 2. The government does not need to state, as they have stated in this Bill and as they've stated in other legislation, that this legislation does not affect any Aboriginal treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada that are recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The reason they don't have to, they don't have to say that, Mr. Speaker, is because they can't do that. They can't abrogate or derogate from those rights, Mr. Speaker.

They couldn't do it if they wanted to, Mr. Speaker. They can't because those are constitutional rights. Those are constitutional rights of people, of citizens of this country, and they can't be affected by the government. And for the government to say in this legislation, well we can't affect, we don't affect in this Bill rights of these people, is really no more necessary, no less superfluous than the statement in clause 2 that all people of Saskatchewan have rights to hunt, fish, and trap in accordance with the law. It's an unnecessary statement; of course they can't affect the rights of those people. They can't affect them because they are, as the Bill points out, recognized and affirmed by a section of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

They can't do it, Mr. Speaker. They can't do it. It's like putting

in the Bill, nothing in this Act will make the sun rise in the west. Well yes, that's right. Nothing in the Act will, Mr. Speaker, because that's not within the jurisdiction of the provincial government of Saskatchewan. It's not within the jurisdiction of this Assembly to affect Aboriginal rights of any sort, including the rights to hunt, fish, or trap. It doesn't exist.

Now again it looks like to a casual observer, and it's our duty in the opposition not to be casual observers, that the Bill seeks to preserve and protect Aboriginal rights, just as it seemed that the Bill by the heading of clause 2 acted to create a right to hunt, fish, and trap, which it did not do. That's the way it's made to appear.

And as previous speakers have pointed out, the entire suggestion of the Bill, looked at at its face, if not examined, if not scrutinized, not given proper attention which I think the government thought the opposition wouldn't do. I think that's why we have this Bill. This Bill — because any Bill could have served the government's purpose of testing our resolve to insist on the agreed amount of examination of a Bill, any Bill could have done that — the reason we have this Bill I think is because this Bill contains very little from the government, very little that's important to the government except expressions of sentiment and statements of fact.

But the impression that might be given by a recognition of Aboriginal rights is that we have a government that's concerned about section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Now in 1982 the prime minister of the day, Pierre Elliott Trudeau wanted to patriate the constitution, I think an act that most Canadians agreed with. He wanted to bring in a charter of rights that had constitutional effect, unlike the Bill of rights that John Diefenbaker had brought in, but which turned out not to have any effect on any other legislation, much like this Bill, Mr. Speaker, perhaps unfortunately in that case. And that's about all he wanted to do.

[21:00]

But, Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians have learned that you don't start talking about the constitution without addressing many, many issues. And Aboriginal people stepped forward and said, the treaties have not been observed. They have not been followed, and we desire, we require, we deserve . . . and I think Canadians agreed that recognition of those Aboriginal treaty rights, including the Aboriginal treaty right to hunt, fish, or trap to be entrenched in the constitution. And that was done and that's set out in section 35 of the *Constitution Act*.

Now following those debates and those decisions that were made in 1982, some sense has been given to what those rights are and what they mean, Mr. Speaker, you know, I think approximately five years ago, it may have been a little bit longer.

Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court of Canada talked about the duty to consult and that there was a duty to consult — whatever that might grow to mean, be developed to mean, be negotiated to mean, or determined by courts to mean. There was a duty to consult with Aboriginal people in respect to activities, economic activities or otherwise, that might affect Aboriginal rights, including the Aboriginal right to hunt, fish, or trap.

And that's a phrase, duty to consult, that like its commitment on the environment, the Saskatchewan Party leaped to grasp when they were in opposition. They were all about the duty to consult, Mr. Speaker. They were all about greenhouse gas emissions decreasing; they were all about green vehicles in government — both promises that they broke — and they were all about the duty to consult. Now, Mr. Speaker, it's become apparent that to the government, that is only a slogan. To the government, that is only a phrase. The government recognizes no duty to consult, Mr. Speaker.

Now the development of the understanding of Aboriginal rights and of that right to a duty to consult, that can be developed one of two ways, Mr. Speaker. It can be developed in a very adversarial way where every interpretation, every nuance is litigated and decided in a court. Or it can develop as reasoned discussions between governments, First Nation governments and other governments, Mr. Speaker, as to what that means.

Now duty to consult, for the New Democratic Party government as set out by the Supreme Court, was a floor upon which to build a better relationship with First Nations and other Aboriginal people, Mr. Speaker. That's what it was. To this government, it's a slogan, Mr. Speaker. And on Bill after Bill after Bill, members of this House have risen — particularly members from the North, but not only members from the North — have risen and said, in what way has the government, in respect of this legislation or in respect of this action, in what way has this government sought out to respect, to negotiate, to co-operatively define a duty to consult, Mr. Speaker? And the answer from across the way, the silence, Mr. Speaker, because they haven't and they don't.

Now the question was asked, who asked for this Bill, Mr. Speaker? Who asked for this Bill? I don't think that the sentiments in the preamble are objectionable. I just don't think the government really, really cares about them. I don't think the heritage day is objectionable, I just think that it's a sop from a government that's not willing to do anything else, Mr. Speaker.

I don't think there was demand from the community, from the North, from the community of hunters, fishers, and trappers in this province for a heritage day, Mr. Speaker. I think they want protection of the environment on which they rely, Mr. Speaker. I think that's what they want. I think they want a government that really believes in the duty to consult, that sincerely believes in the duty to consult on projects that affect hunting, fishing, and trapping. I think that's what's asked for. I think what's received instead is a Bill that says, we believe, we care, and we're going to give you a day. That's the response of this government.

And so, Mr. Speaker, that takes us to clause 4. Clause 2, a statement of fact, status quo. Clause 3, statement of fact; clause 3, status quo. Clause 4, the action of this government — the action of a government that broke its promise on greenhouse gas emissions, broke its promise on green vehicles, broken all its environmental promises — the action of a government that can mouth the words, duty to consult, but can't follow through on them.

The action of that government after preamble that talk about our history, mutual history of the peoples of Saskatchewan, the

important contributions the government recognizes in words, but not in actions. Understanding conservation and restoration of management of those resources. Preamble that talks about traditions, but doesn't provide legislation to preserve the environment in which those traditions can continue to exist. The end of all this and some statements, a fact about the law, which are superfluous, and an abuse of the power to legislate, this Legislative Assembly, and of the law, after all that, Mr. Speaker, and still not really a page — the declaration of the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Day, Mr. Speaker.

And that is the Bill. And why, people might wonder, people who were not watching at 7:30 when I took my feet, they might wonder why this Bill, why this Bill was debated this afternoon, why this Bill is debated this evening, why this Bill's going to probably be debated until adjournment tonight? I dare say this Bill may be the only Bill that we debate this week.

Why? This Bill, this Bill that's half preamble, half statement of facts, and one line of substance as far as it goes, Mr. Speaker, why does this Bill get this treatment, Mr. Speaker? Because it's the Bill that the government thinks that, of all its legislation, is the least important, the least substantial, the least deserving of debate and support despite the issues that it raises about relationships between Saskatchewan people, historic relationships between Saskatchewan people and the environment in Saskatchewan.

This Bill has been treated by the government that brought it forward with such disrespect and such disregard because — and I know it's a convoluted path, Mr. Speaker — but because this government doesn't want to answer questions in this House, Mr. Speaker, because the government does not want to conform with an agreement that they in opposition proposed and advocated for, Mr. Speaker.

The government — it's a majority government, Mr. Speaker — has a right to pass its budget, has a right to pass its legislation. The rules that were agreed upon between the parties that are in this House, and actively promoted and advocated by the Saskatchewan Party when they were opposition, provided that if the 20 hours of debate consideration on a Bill such as *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping* was not sufficient, then we would add additional days to the sitting of the legislature.

For the second time, the second time in two years the government is breaking that agreement. For the second time in two years the government is breaking that agreement and extending hours because they do not want to extend days because they do not want to be answerable to the opposition.

In the British parliamentary tradition and pursuant to the agreements that we have reached between parties in this Legislative Assembly, the government has a right, this majority government has a right to pass its budget, pass its legislation. But that is balanced with the right of this opposition to question the government about its actions, about its omissions, about the consequences to the people of Saskatchewan of the way it's conducting itself, Mr. Speaker.

And it's that balance, and it's that balance that the government will not respect. It is that balance that the government seeks to

overturn, Mr. Speaker. And we'll see that tomorrow when we get the motion, but today what we see is a test by the government as to whether this opposition intends to speak and debate and consider the legislation that the government has put forward by it.

And I don't think it's any surprise that the government puts forward a Bill that the government thinks is insubstantial and unworthy of debate and consideration, a five-clause Bill with a preamble of sentiments, Mr. Speaker. I think that's why we're debating *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*, Mr. Speaker.

Because I think the government knows, the government knows that a substantive Bill, a substantive Bill increasing perhaps the ability of a Crown corporation to borrow money which the government can then draw on to address its financial mismanagement, or a Bill to allow the municipalities to borrow money in replacement for the government's broken promise on revenue sharing, that a Bill like that would easily get, easily get 20 hours of consideration at least — the 20 hours that we're allowed, Mr. Speaker, from the opposition — and debate.

The government wonders about whether we have the resolve to speak from 8 in the morning to midnight — if that's what the motion says and if the motion carries — if we have the resolve to do that on all their legislation, even the legislation that they don't care about at all such as this Bill, Mr. Speaker, whether we have that resolve. So that's why we are on our feet, Mr. Speaker, I guess, is how much does the member from Saskatoon Meewasin care about the rights of the opposition? How much does the member from Saskatoon Meewasin care about his duty to the people of Saskatchewan to hold the government accountable? How much does the member from Saskatoon Meewasin care about his duty and responsibility to provide due diligence in examination of Bills, Mr. Speaker?

That's why we're debating this Bill. This is, I suppose, a test. I don't know how many Bills the government's going to want to do, one after the other, to test this resolve, Mr. Speaker, but I want to advise the government that the member from Saskatoon Meewasin and other members on this side of the House can find a lot to say about hunting, fishing, and trapping. And the member from Saskatoon Meewasin doesn't have a lot of personal experience with hunting, fishing, or trapping, some with fishing, but none I'd want to talk about in the House.

And quite frankly I'm not sure it would be relevant. I'm not sure it would be relevant for me to talk about my fishing experiences anyways, Mr. Speaker, but . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well I don't think the member from Rosemont can talk about my fishing experiences because he fortunately wasn't there to observe any of them.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is a lot to talk about in this Bill. And the history of the province, the current relationships between peoples of this province, they are all tied up with these traditions — this history of hunting, fishing, and trapping; the social life of our province, the cultural life of our province, as the Bill acknowledges, all tied up with hunting, fishing, and trapping.

[21:15]

The environment of Saskatchewan, the physical environment, particularly of northern Saskatchewan but of the entire province, all can be seen through the prism of wildlife and therefore hunting, fishing, and trapping. The traditions that come out of that history, all seen through the prism of hunting, fishing, and trapping, a great deal to talk about that's in this Bill. And issues of the environment and actual concern for the environment beyond the sentiments expressed in legislation that creates a heritage day, and issues about Aboriginal rights and duty to consult and giving living meaning to those terms and those phrases beyond the declaration of a heritage day — Mr. Speaker, they are all touched upon by this Bill.

And there may be other pieces of legislation that don't raise as many sweeping issues, as many questions about why this and not more, Mr. Speaker. There may be, but I don't think the government picked the right one. I don't think they picked the right one because this Bill cries out, why this and not more? If you are going to talk about the right of Aboriginal people to hunt, fish, or trap as set out in the *Constitution Act, 1982*, then why this and not more? A provincial government could have a lot to say about the duty to consult. A provincial government could have a lot to say about these rights and about how they have to be conditional upon environmental concerns or they have to be conditional upon balancing other rights and other interests, and what those balances are and what those interests are, Mr. Speaker. Provincial governments have a great deal potentially to say about those things.

And the Bill recognizes that. The Bill recognizes that when the Bill refers to our rights to hunt, fish, and trap in accordance with the law. The Bill recognizes that when the Bill refers to the rights of Aboriginal people by treaty and otherwise to hunt, fish, or trap and refers to those rights being recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitutional Act, 1982*.

The Bill recognizes that there's a lot that this government could say about the duty to consult. There's a lot it could say about Aboriginal rights. There's a lot it could say about this provincial government's role in developing that duty, giving living meaning to those rights, clarifying by negotiation, by co-operation, by consultation, meaning of those rights, the meaning of that duty and of our joint and collective interest as citizens of Saskatchewan and protection and preservation of the environment.

There's a lot the government could say. The government is silent, Mr. Speaker. They're not entirely silent, Mr. Speaker, because there's the sections in this Bill. But the Bill highlights that silence. The Bill draws attention to the silence, underlines the silence on those issues, Mr. Speaker. This government on so many fronts — and this Bill does highlight it, this Bill on so many fronts — this government recognizes that people are concerned about fundamental issues, the relationships of people in the province of Saskatchewan, the relationships between Aboriginal people and immigrants and the descendents of immigrants to this province.

The care for our environment, the concern about our environment — the urban environment, the rural environment, the northern environment — the government recognizes these concerns. It recognizes how important these are to the people of Saskatchewan. So the government isn't entirely silent. The

government has some symbolic action to take, and the symbolic action is contained in part — in large part unfortunately, Mr. Speaker — in *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*.

Now to be clear, in case it's not clear — I think every speaker has probably made it clear, and I certainly want to make it clear — the opposition doesn't oppose the day. It doesn't oppose the heritage day. Why would we oppose it, Mr. Speaker? We don't oppose it. But the Bill, again, highlights the silence of the government about meaningful action and respect to the issues that the Bill raises — issues of conservation, protection of the environment, issues of Aboriginal rights and the duty to consult — because this government has said, this government has said if you will not be happy with a slogan, if a slogan does not address your concerns, then we will give you a day. But that is where we stop, Mr. Speaker. That is where this government stops. It stops with this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

And here we are with a government trying to show the opposition, the people of Saskatchewan I suppose, how serious it is about its legislative agenda. They want to show the people of Saskatchewan how serious they are about their legislative agenda — not serious enough to risk one more question period, Mr. Speaker, not that serious, but serious enough to make backbenchers sit from 8 in the morning to midnight. They're that serious about their legislative agenda.

And to highlight that, Mr. Speaker, to highlight that seriousness, Mr. Speaker, what do they bring forward for debate to show how vital their legislative agenda is, to show what their priorities are? Well, Mr. Speaker, they have Bills about municipal borrowing. They have Bills about Crown corporation borrowing. I'd be very surprised if, Mr. Speaker, we're not going to get another anti-crime Bill from the government. They have, I mean, they have legislation that I think we would all agree is important, Mr. Speaker.

But the government gets to pick its priorities. The government picks its priorities. And so in an action meant to demonstrate to the people of the province and certainly to the opposition about who's boss in this Chamber, the government, to show how serious it is about its legislative agenda, brings forward first and insists upon the passage of, in the next few days . . . Because they won't let us adjourn debate on this Bill. They don't want to move to any other Bill. We're willing to move on to Bills that they think are important, but this is the Bill, this is the Bill that is important to the government, not because of its substance, not because of its substance, but because of the point that is being made, Mr. Speaker, the point that's being made.

They want to make the opposition prove that we are willing to debate for 20 hours straight, if necessary, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*, which actually has very little to do with hunting, fishing, and trapping and a lot to do about the declaration of a day, a day which I suppose, as I said, might become a photo op for a premier on a November 15th but provides no new rights, makes no change in the law. It's just entirely symbolic, Mr. Speaker.

And what this debate is about, Mr. Speaker — and I know that there's a Bill — and what this debate is about is whether the government is willing to respect the rules that they negotiated

and advocated and argued for when they were in opposition, whether this government is willing to respect the balance between the majority passing its legislative agenda and its budget and the minority right, the opposition's right and duty to hold the government to account.

That's what this debate is really about, Mr. Speaker. It's about symbolism instead of action in respect to the environment and in respect to the rights of Saskatchewan people, and it's in respect to relationship in this legislature and the rights of the opposition to hold the party in government to account. That's what this debate is about, Mr. Speaker.

And it's a significant debate. It's an important debate. The issues touched upon in the Bill, whether the government intended it or not, are important issues, and they will continue to be important issues. The strained relationship because of the disregard that is held for Aboriginal and treaty rights mentioned in this Bill, those strained relationships and all the consequences of the disenfranchisement of significant proportion to the Saskatchewan population for decade after decade after decade, these things will not be resolved soon. I hope they're resolved within our children's lifetimes. I'm not confident about that necessarily, Mr. Speaker. I wish I was. These are not unimportant issues.

And issues of the environment, Mr. Speaker, those are not unimportant issues either. And the fact that the government will in respect to those issues . . . and you can look at the legislative agenda of the government and the Bills that are before this House and on those issues that are touched upon in this Bill, there is no legislation of substance. There is no action of substance on the part of the government. The government's intent is to, as sometimes we say in politics, Mr. Speaker, touch and go. Touch the environment and get out of there. Touch duty to consult Aboriginal rights and get out of there. Just get out of there. And this is a touch and go, Mr. Speaker. And the government thought the opposition would treat this Bill as a touch-and-go Bill, Mr. Speaker, but we're not, Mr. Speaker. We're not.

This Bill is getting the attention that every piece of legislation that the government has seen fit to bring before this Legislative Assembly will receive. We will give these Bills, Mr. Speaker, including this Bill, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*, we will give these Bills the respect that the government that drafted and put them forward does not, Mr. Speaker. We'll treat them with the respect that we believe all legislation brought before this Legislative Assembly should deserve, whether all the legislation brought before this Legislative Assembly by this government deserves it or not, Mr. Speaker.

And this government will not, by bringing forward superfluous, redundant, meaningless legislation, cause this opposition to neglect its responsibility of due diligence, for due consideration, for examination, for consultation, and for debate. We will not do it, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, if we're going to do it at 8 in the morning, we'll do it at 8 in the morning. If we're going to do it at 3 in the morning, Mr. Speaker, we'll do it at 3 in the morning. And if a Bill has not received its due consideration, if a Bill has not

received the consideration pursuant to the agreement that we stand by — even if the other partner to the agreement will not — then we will make sure it does receive that consideration before we are done with it, Mr. Speaker.

Now as I say, for the second time, the second time in this government's history, two years, this government has decided that, well we had a purpose. We had a reason why we wanted a Bill respecting . . . *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*. We wanted this legislation. We thought it was important. Now it may just be, it may just be . . . And it sure looks like, when you go through it clause by clause as I have, I mean only briefly, I understand that, only superficially, but when you go through the Bill and you examine it, it appears to be merely puffery, Mr. Speaker, mostly superfluous, mostly superfluous, an abuse of the Legislative Assembly for the most part, Mr. Speaker.

Not the fourth clause. Not the declaration of the day. But, Mr. Speaker, it could have been, it could have been a three-clause Act. It could have been a three-clause Act. That would have been the honest thing to do, Mr. Speaker, but they wanted to dress it up. They wanted to fluff it up with some statements of fact, some statements of value. But they wanted to bring this in for political reasons.

They can't say anything else in the North about the environment. They can't say anything else in the North about duty to consult. They can say, well we have a day. We have a day where we recognize hunting, fishing, and trapping is important to our heritage. If we can't do anything of substance, if we can't do anything of substance, we will do this.

[21:30]

So this Bill, this Bill to declare a day and not do anything of substance, was important to the government — important enough to become legislation and important enough to take its lineup in all the other legislation, Mr. Speaker. And we in the opposition believe that the government, with or without our support, have a right to pass every single Bill, including this one, Mr. Speaker, a right to pass every single Bill and they have a right to pass their budget.

But they don't have that right, they don't have that right — they can force this, Mr. Speaker, and they will again; they have before and it sounds like they're willing to do it again — they can force this but they don't have the right, they don't have the right to force the Legislative Assembly, force the Legislative Assembly to pass their legislation, pass their budget without the corresponding ability to question the government, to hold the government accountable, to do what the opposition was brought here to do.

Mr. Speaker, yes, the government is very fond of reminding the opposition that they won the election on November 7, 2007, very fond of that. Members there are quite excited about it still, even at this time of night, very fond of that, Mr. Speaker. But you know, I think once or twice in . . . once maybe in Canadian history has a party won every seat in the legislature. It happened in New Brunswick. It's never happened in Saskatchewan and it didn't happen in 2007.

And people in Saskatchewan elected an opposition to hold the government to account, Mr. Speaker. They elected a government to govern. They elected a government to make choices, Mr. Speaker, and this government's inability to make choices has resulted in a \$1 billion deficit. The government is not doing what it was elected to do, Mr. Speaker. But we will do, and in examination of this Bill — and every other Bill, but particularly in examination of this Bill, *An Act respecting Hunting, Fishing and Trapping* — we will do what we were elected to do, whether the government does what it was elected to do.

And we were elected to examine the actions of this government, both in legislation and in execution by its executive, and to hold this government to account. And the parties in this House agreed about we were going to do that. And this party, the New Democratic Party, has always lived up to that agreement, Mr. Speaker. And when we were in government I can tell you, and a number of members on this side of the House that were in government can tell you that it wasn't always comfortable living up to that agreement because of the power it gave the opposition in this House. But we always lived up to that agreement, always. Twice, twice now this government has failed to live up this agreement, Mr. Speaker.

And for those wondering, those who follow the sitting of the session of the Legislative Assembly, wondering why we're debating at length not just one speaker today, but two, three, four, and maybe more to follow after me if I run out of steam soon, Mr. Speaker, why we're debating the same Bill hour after hour after hour, it's part of the government's tactic. Part of the government's tactic to justify breaking the agreement that the Saskatchewan Party entered into for the second time, Mr. Speaker. That's what it's about. That's what it's about, Mr. Speaker.

So I know, and I think I've probably said pretty explicitly that there are members on this side of the House, other than me and the other ones that have spoken, who want to address the issue raised in this Bill. And I know some of the speakers who haven't spoken yet or are yet to be speakers on this Bill, and I know how eloquent and articulate they are. I know how much many of them have thought about these issues of the environment, duty to consult, the relationship between the First People of this country and those that followed.

And there will be many more eloquent and articulate things to be said than I've been able to say tonight. And I know some of the members opposite have pointed out that perhaps somebody more articulate could maybe speak better to the Bill. And so to allow those voices to be heard, Mr. Speaker, and knowing that this Bill is going to receive full consideration by members of the Legislative Assembly, at least by the opposition, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Those in favour say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — I believe the nos have it. I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to weigh in on a topic that's very important to both our province and to myself and my family. But as a hunter, Mr. Speaker, for many years and a family of hunters, we have a bit of a motto. And that's that you don't shoot rabbits when you're hunting big game, Mr. Speaker.

And what we're doing here tonight is exactly just that. We have a government that's put forward a Bill of little substance. Little substance. One that in many ways, as the member from Meewasin has so articulately placed, basically reaffirms statements of facts and has a one-line clause of some substance. But what we see here is the all too common theme and trend of the Sask Party government, and that's that they grab the low-hanging fruit that's available to them. They use it for their own believed political good; put a balloon in the air, a pompom in the air, do a photo op.

And that's really all this Bill in substance will provide — a day on November 15th for the Premier to pretend maybe that he's a fisher, maybe that he's a hunter, maybe that he's a trapper, and to go get a picture taken with some of the fine individuals and families who have built their lives on those very, very activities, Mr. Speaker. So some political grandstanding by the Premier to once again go out and pretend, pretend that he's something that he's not.

But, Mr. Speaker, certainly it is disappointing, as someone who recognizes the place that hunting, trapping, and fishing has played within Saskatchewan and as someone who values it both within my own life and within our family's history, part of our own story here in Saskatchewan, to see the little regard, the disregard, the disrespect, and to see legislation as it relates to hunting, fishing, and trapping being treated in this manner, being dismissed and disrespected. Because I tell you, Mr. Speaker, when you look at our province's history and you look out beyond, you know, thousands of years past, our story is one of hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering. That's the basis for which Saskatchewan was formed.

Our First Nations people who lived here for thousands of years and in harmonious ways, with systems of justice and health and education, with unique skills and knowledge that were lent and borrowed and taught through generations, their own processes of spirituality and hunting, trapping, fishing, and gathering at that point in time provided those people the very substance and sustainability within their life.

And as we move forward into our somewhat more modern history, we have the fur trade, Mr. Speaker, that we talked about already with the movement of Europeans in through Western Canada, through our waterways in the North. And this goes

back 150 years or so before we became a province, Mr. Speaker, 250, 300 years ago, a story that is a rich part of our history, the story that basically brought about the Métis people, Mr. Speaker, for which we'll also be addressing in here and looking at the oversight for those individuals, for those people that make up such an important part of Saskatchewan's history, present and future, Mr. Speaker.

And then hunting of course plays an important role — fishing and trapping — into our homesteading nation, and a mixture of the fur trade being operated into the North, the development down in the South where homesteads began and sport hunting as well, Mr. Speaker, that plays a very important role within our cultural fabric, within our social fabric, within our economic fabric as well, Mr. Speaker. And I'm going to get to all of these points.

And we get to this point here today from thousands of years, Mr. Speaker, where hunting, fishing, and trapping have played such a significant part of our province's history. And we get to our modern Saskatchewan. And it should play no less important of a role at this point in time in our history and into the future, at the present as it has into the past. I know for certain that it'll be a different role that it plays. That's the evolution of life, Mr. Speaker. But what we do need to recognize and always ensure is that the ability to hunt, fish, and trap in Saskatchewan is preserved, enhanced, and maintained.

So we see a government that put forward this piece of legislation with disrespect and with contempt for it, Mr. Speaker, with contempt for hunters, fishers, and trappers, Mr. Speaker. And shamefully so, Mr. Speaker. The reason we're dealing with this piece of legislation today and the reason — for the many, many people tuning in at home here right now — the reason that the opposition is speaking to it with many speakers repeatedly is the fact that the government has tried to overrun the rules of this legislature once again, tried to overturn democracy within these very chambers, Mr. Speaker.

And of course this isn't something new to this government. This isn't something new to this government. This is the second time in their short two and a half year history as government in embarking on this sort of a fashion, ramrodding through a process. And it is the direct result, Mr. Speaker, the direct result of their own mismanagement, mismanagement of legislation within this Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

And I think that that mismanagement is certainly reflective and endemic within all activities and functions within this government, certainly from the very basic functions as it relates to the financial management of this government that individuals are weighing in on from around this province, that are so disgusted by the lack of a plan, by the creation of a deficit that this government has created. And it is directly that kind of mismanagement that gets us here today — mismanagement as it relates to the House.

And so here we are speaking to Bill No. 117 here today, Mr. Speaker. And the reason this is put forward is because the government put forward something that they thought, they thought that people wouldn't mind being disrespected. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to tell you this right now is that this member, this caucus, the New Democrats, the opposition are

certainly not going to disrespect the role of hunters, fishers, and trappers in Saskatchewan. Not thousands of years ago, not 150 and 200 years ago in the fur trade, not 100 years ago in our homesteading nation, and certainly not now, Mr. Speaker. Because the ability and the opportunity to hunt, fish, and trap in Saskatchewan is something that is precious, Mr. Speaker, that in many ways binds our communities, binds generations, binds families, and is a way of life for many, many people.

It is to different people and different families different things, Mr. Speaker, without a doubt. For some it's a way of life. For some it's a matter of subsistence and sustainability and making sure that there's the product and the meat for their families and for their communities.

For others it's part of the social fabric of a family, much as the story within my family, Mr. Speaker. Born into a family of hunters and in many ways, Mr. Speaker . . . I know the family that I was born into and the story of our family of course coming to Saskatchewan in that homesteading time, basically the story within the Wotherspoon family was to attend church, to farm and work, and to hunt and fish, Mr. Speaker. And those were . . . And to care for family. And that was sort of I think an unwritten creed of our family and something that's instilled into my generation and certainly into my family.

[21:45]

So it's important that we recognize the important different roles that hunting, fishing, and trapping has played within Saskatchewan. It's important as well that we should be looking right now at much broader legislation that has some substance to it. Because if we really, really, really want to do something special as it relates to hunting, fishing, and trapping, Mr. Speaker, we should be looking at the environment, and we should be looking at conservation. We should be looking at protection of the lands. We should be looking at programs to work with landowners, Mr. Speaker. We should be looking at programs that educate our young people and engage young people into best practices of hunting.

We should be doing all of those things, Mr. Speaker, and, never to be overridden by something that's completely being dismissed here, and that we should be respecting the duty to consult with Aboriginal peoples. We should be looking directly at Aboriginal rights and how we can enhance our province, our legislation, and our landscape moving forward, not simply create some sort of a photo opportunity which is simply what this legislation provides.

And hunting and fishing and trapping plays important, important roles within our economy. We can speak specifically even just to hunting for a moment here. The economic impact, Mr. Speaker, is one that's significant. When we think of the basic activity of going about hunting, we're dealing with certainly a purchase of fuel and some commerce that they're flowing in many of our rural centres. We're talking about filling up hotels in rural centres that certainly appreciate some of that activity and those dollars that flow. We talk about the groceries and the restaurants that go about typically on a hunting trip, Mr. Speaker. And these are all meaningful, meaningful contributions in dollars that flow within our economy, something that should never be minimized or disrespected as

they are by this government, Mr. Speaker.

We should recognize, further to that, the role of outfitters within Saskatchewan and their association and their organization that represents outfitters because it's not particularly a strong time for the outfitting industry right now in this province, one that represents Saskatchewan very well and very proudly. In fact many, many people may only meet Saskatchewan or come to Saskatchewan on a trip where they would be having an exchange with outfitters and with our natural environment. And for that, Mr. Speaker, they play a very valuable role from a perspective of exposing individuals from around the world, from many, many nations across the ocean and across North America who come to Saskatchewan and are exposed to our beautiful landscape — something we should be preserving, protecting, and enhancing — and to our wonderful people, many of those individuals whom they come in contact with through the outfitters of Saskatchewan.

But this Bill, Mr. Speaker, disrespects all of that. It disrespects the economic impact of this Bill. It disrespects the contributions of Saskatchewan outfitters. It disrespects looking at ways to enhance and drive some of that economic activity, Mr. Speaker. And it's frustrating to the opposition to see such short-sightedness by a government on this front, Mr. Speaker.

So we talk about the economic impact that is provided through hunting . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I hear one of the members opposite suggesting someone's far-sighted. And, Mr. Speaker, I guess what we're looking for is a government with good vision, 20/20 vision, Mr. Speaker, that's able to peer into the future and plan for it and that's able to see the immediate challenges here as well. But the Deputy Premier is looking . . . hoping that the government is perceived to be far-sighted. Well that's not what we would aspire to be, Mr. Speaker. We would aspire to be able to have a very clear lens on what we're dealing with and the challenges that exist at a given time.

So we talk about the economic impact that certainly hasn't provided any weight within this legislation. There's no discussion of that. There's nothing that enhances that. And something that plays a fundamental role in many of our rural communities, Mr. Speaker, we don't see anything that develops further relationships and partnerships with landowners, Mr. Speaker.

In many ways landowners of course in this province are the best stewards of our land and very, very vital individuals in preserving our natural landscape, Mr. Speaker. And I believe that because of the close connectivity to the land they are equipped both with will and with knowledge to do so, Mr. Speaker. But sometimes we need to have a government that's going to partner at this point in time. We don't see that. We see a government that's more willing to dismiss and disrespect and disregard the role of hunting, fishing, and trapping in Saskatchewan. And that's a real shame, Mr. Speaker.

But it's not simply just the social fabric, Mr. Speaker, that hunting affects. It's also has such a social story within our province and a social impact within our province. Of course, as I say, hunters, fishers, trappers, and gatherers are First Nations people who have lived here for thousands of years. That is, has been their story, and the wealth of knowledge that resides

within that population, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to these very topics in our natural landscape is profound and something that is yet to be appreciated in a significant fashion by government.

But this legislation doesn't do any of that. It doesn't do any of that, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't enhance the duty to consult. In fact it disregards it. It doesn't reflect or enhance Aboriginal rights or reflect that. In fact it disregards that. It does the exact opposite, Mr. Speaker.

And the government basically trying to again, as we've talked about, overthrow democracy in this very Chamber, trying to override the rules that they were a full partner in creating, are now putting forward a Bill which in the end disrespects hunting, fishing, and trapping and the contribution of hunters, fishers, and trappers, and those industries within our province.

And I say that's shameful. Because as we read in our newspaper, Mr. Speaker, and we know the reasons that have been expressed by the government, Mr. Speaker, the reason that the Sask Party is trying to overthrow democracy once again, Mr. Speaker, in these very chambers are unprecedented, twice in their short two-year history, because they've mismanaged the House and because they're afraid of accountability and transparency.

Specifically, and very specifically, the House Leader of the Sask Party stated that what they don't want is any more question periods where the people of Saskatchewan can ask them questions about the programs within their purview that their ministers have responsibility for. It's that very House Leader, and I suspect speaking on behalf of that Premier, that is stifling that opportunity, is afraid of that opportunity.

And we say that that's a shame because Saskatchewan people have questions, Mr. Speaker. And if it's a matter that this government has mismanaged their Bills, their legislation, and what we get into is a circumstance where we need to extend sitting hours which would be . . . or sitting days, which would be by rule of the legislature, by agreement of both parties which has been the history here, then there's going to be a couple of extra question periods, or many more question periods depending on how much legislation we need to work through. Certainly we're committed to going through that task, but this government, this House Leader, this Premier are afraid and are not willing to allow the people of Saskatchewan, vis-à-vis through the opposition, to ask these very questions.

And that's interesting, Mr. Speaker. So they're more willing to overthrow and upset democracy in the province that they represent than to answer to the people that have elected them. And maybe that's what's such a frustrating fact for this government, is that they know full well that it's the people that elected them, many that had voted for them, that are now asking the opposition to represent their concerns as it relates to this legislature, to bring those forward.

And I see the Speaker referencing to keep the focus on the Bill, and I agree, Mr. Speaker. That's where the focus will maintain, but I needed to describe and need to describe very clearly why we're debating this Bill today.

We're not debating this Bill because the Sask Party thinks that

we should be debating hunting, fishing, and trapping for 20 hours. They're doing it because they think that they can disrespect hunting, fishing, and trapping and because they want to overthrow democracy once again. Because they don't want to follow the rules of this legislature that they agreed to, and because at the very core of this whole concern, Mr. Speaker, is their fear, their great, great fear of facing questions from the public through question period.

Now this isn't an activity that any government should hide from, Mr. Speaker. It's an opportunity for ministers and for the Premier to explain back to the people of Saskatchewan the efforts, the programs, the work, the initiatives that they are undertaking to address the questions of the people.

But not this government, Mr. Speaker. Not this government. They hide from that. They hide from shedding light on issues. They hide from making information available, and they hide from answering the questions, sometimes tough questions, Mr. Speaker, when you're talking about billion dollar deficits, massive issues in rural health care — Mr. Speaker, the list goes on — the cost of living that's hammering the quality of life for many Saskatchewan people. But this government hides from it.

And that's the exact opposite thing that a government that's planning to govern for a period of time with a plan should be doing. And the whole thought that they have that they can simply overturn the rules, overturn the democratic process as we know it, as they know it, as decided by partners, is shameful, Mr. Speaker.

And so here we are on a Monday evening at 9:56 in the evening with many speakers to the hunting, fishing, and trapping Act. And we're pleased to speak to these matters. Don't get me wrong, Mr. Speaker. It's the very disrespect that the Sask Party shows to these very industries and to these matters that concern us because in many ways this is talking about something that's the crux of a way of life in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, the crux of a way of life.

So we see legislation that's put forward that's basically going after low-hanging fruit, that has very little substance — that has a preamble that was highlighted so eloquently by the member from Meewasin that is in great length but would have no substance — which has three clauses that simply are a statement of fact, Mr. Speaker: clause no. 1, clause no. 2, and clause no. 3, statement of fact, statement of fact.

Clause no. 4, a bit of substance there, they're going to mark a day, November 15th, to celebrate hunting, fishing, and trapping, a day, a photo opportunity for the Premier to go on and maybe put on some sort of a hunting cap or something and meet with some hunters and have some sort of a photo opportunity. But I think the hunters, trappers, and fishers would be looking for more. I think they'd say there's an opportunity here to do something with our land and with our habitat and with our environment. I think that there's an opportunity for us as treaty people, all of us being treaty people, to be able to look at Aboriginal rights and the duty to consult in a way that's consistent with the Supreme Court, not in a way that this government goes about — basically just providing lip service, spin, and gamesmanship to all that they touch, Mr. Speaker.

Now they spend a lot on communications. We know that. But basically that's all this legislation accounts to, is a communications exercise, Mr. Speaker, for matters that run deep in this province and something that profoundly affects the people's lives in this province, whether that be culturally, socially, or economically, Mr. Speaker. And I'd say it's a shame. And it's a recognition that a government is completely out of touch with both the people of their province, but of their history as well, a shared history that we should be rightfully very proud of, Mr. Speaker, and opportunities to move forward in meaningful ways that we could enhance some of these opportunities.

So we do have questions as we talk about this legislation. And we know that consultation that needs to go on rightfully — should go on for every bit of legislation — doesn't go on when the Sask Party's in power. What they do is they ram through legislation without consulting. We've seen this with school boards in education. We've seen this with finance. We've seen this with labour. We've seen this with health care. The fine elements that are appreciated by the Sask Party certainly aren't consultation. They fail on this front all of the time and to the detriment, the great detriment of Saskatchewan people, to the great detriment.

[22:00]

So the question would be and the questions that we'll certainly be soliciting and looking for answers in response to . . . and time in committee will provide that as well. However the Sask Party seems to not want to allow us to move that Bill along as well as it relates to questions that need to be asked to the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, to the many, many, many wildlife federations within local communities that are fundamental, Mr. Speaker, in the organization and the vibrancy of communities, both from a social aspect and an economic aspect, Mr. Speaker.

And I tell you — you know it, Mr. Speaker — there's nothing I enjoy more and something I look forward to . . . and anyone who's watching tonight, I invite your invitations to attend your wild game dinners and your Wildlife Federation branch meetings. These are the best gatherings in this province because you bring together people with a great passion for their community, a great passion for their environment, their landscape, and for hunting, fishing, and trapping or elements of those. There's nothing I enjoy more, Mr. Speaker, and it's something that I regularly undertake to go out and meet and wonderful opportunities. We need to meet with these groups. We need to understand what this legislation means for them. And we need to understand, you know . . . Certainly as far as having a day that recognizes, we support that principle but the bigger fact is, is there more we could be doing?

And I know that answer without even asking it, time and time again. The question will be how many, how many good ideas are we going to get? And I know we'll get many, Mr. Speaker. But that would require a little bit of hard work on the Sask Party's behalf. It would require more than just a light lifting and snagging of low-hanging fruit. It would require some due diligence, some work, some resources, and some planning — all things that this Sask Party is deficit of, Mr. Speaker. So very interesting aspects.

We need to go out and meet with the outfitters and the association that represents them to understand how this affects them. We need to understand if there's other aspects of this legislation that would be able to reflect some of their needs because we know there's challenge and turmoil within the outfitters industry. And these are of the finest entrepreneurs and individuals within this province. And as I've said, Mr. Speaker, these are individuals who many people new to Saskatchewan or visiting for the first time are their first points of contact, their only points of contact, and economic drivers within their own communities, within our province as a whole . . . something that we should enable to flourish, not something that we should stifle. What else could we doing on that front, Mr. Speaker?

I think it's worthwhile to look at the contributions in local communities, many of these from the Wildlife Federation branches, programs such as archery programs, Mr. Speaker, in local schools, or hunter safety type programs, teaching best practice, but specifically some of the archery programs and then some of the elite competition on the provincial and national level. It's something that has been to the great benefit of many, many young people in our province and to the great benefit of our community and to the great benefit of our province as a whole, Mr. Speaker.

I'm a great, great believer that when young people, Mr. Speaker, are able and provided the opportunity to connect with their natural environment through hunting, that that individual develops a greater appreciation for the natural environment, for habitat, for wildlife, for conservation, and that we're better off with having more individuals connected with hunting, fishing, and trapping — not less, Mr. Speaker.

This gets to a very vital role that hunters, fishers, and trappers play within our society. I believe it, as an activity as a whole, creates a good, strong, whole society. I'd promote more of it. But further I think that it plays a very, very fundamental role in the management of stock, of habitat numbers and make sure that we maintain and control diseases and sickness, overpopulation. And there's a very fundamental role for government to be partnering with Saskatchewan people on that front, to be partnering with our local wildlife branches, to be partnering with landowners, to be partnering with and respecting First Nations duty to consult and Aboriginal rights, Mr. Speaker, of which none of this legislation sets out.

And I think of some of those great archery programs across this province, many within our fine city here of Regina. Some phenomenal ones up in, I know up through Canora-Pelly area. The Stecyks run some great programs up through there — really, really good programs. I know some very good programs that are run across this province, specifically a newer one in Raymore High School, Mr. Speaker, that's had great uptake and response from within the community, great leadership from the vice-principal there in that school to deliver that program in the community as a whole and the great support that's received to those kind of programs that are funded by wildlife branches, Mr. Speaker.

So this is important legislation, Mr. Speaker. And I'm profoundly disappointed, disheartened, surprised. I shouldn't say surprised because with this government nothing seems to surprise me anymore, though, that they would disrespect,

disregard, and discount the role of hunters, fishers, and trappers in this province, in our present, in our history, and into our future. And the way they're going about this here today is disappointing. I expect more. I expect more of the government, Mr. Speaker.

And I know that many, many, many, many, if not all people within this province would share that concern because hunting, fishing, and trapping is not some fleeting exercise or some new activity, Mr. Speaker. As I've said, this is the history of our province going back thousands and thousands of years to our First Nations people who lived fishing, hunting, trapping, gathering across our great province — southern Saskatchewan, northern Saskatchewan — and lived off of the land, lived off of the land.

But the story doesn't end there, as we go then many . . . few hundred years ago, 150 years or so prior to the province becoming a province, the fur trade and the Europeans that used these waterways as systems to connect with Saskatchewan, ways to connect for commerce, ways to connect for trade, and valuable partnerships that were formed, but beyond that, the development of the Métis people, Mr. Speaker, who play a fundamentally important role in our province's history, very proud role, and certainly need to into the future and will, Mr. Speaker, and will.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this legislation has failed to achieve some of the meaningful work that partners and stakeholders with hunting, fishing, and trapping would like to achieve. I think that this Bill provided an opportunity to enhance and enrich those opportunities, and none of that has been provided by this legislation.

There's opportunities to engage landowners, Mr. Speaker, who I've said before, farmers and landowners, producers in touch with our land, are our greatest allies and the best stewards, Mr. Speaker, of our land. And it's their connection to the land, Mr. Speaker, in many ways. And where was that consultation with landowners, Mr. Speaker? Where was that discussion around conservation or partnerships and programs to ensure that natural environments are enabled to flourish and prosper, Mr. Speaker?

I know recently of course, we were meeting with SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], the association for rural municipalities in Saskatchewan and the conversation with many individuals as we spent much time there — and spoke about really relevant issues for them as related to health care and finance and education and cost of living and housing and various programs and services that are required — another common thread was a discussion of hunting and fishing. This is a topic, an activity that binds our province.

I recall talking with one individual about the goose shoot that their RM [rural municipality] holds and the clay pigeon competition that they have, and talked about what this means to their community in bringing together generations and individuals who have dispersed across Saskatchewan in various parts to come back to the community for that weekend. And an incredibly important social activity for that weekend, for that community, for those families, for the community as a whole. But as well, an incredibly important economic activity for that community, Mr. Speaker, for many communities around this,

across this province and just, I guess, speaks to how important hunting, fishing, and trapping is within this province, even in our proud new Saskatchewan embarking on all sorts of new opportunities.

We need to ensure that it plays the important role that it has in its past. It might be a different role certainly than it was thousands of years ago, where the bison were providing First Nations their sustainability — and play a very different role probably than the fur trade when we go back 300 years ago, as Europeans started to find their way into our province and to trade and to partner with First Nations individuals — but yet no less important role from a cultural and from an economic and from a social perspective, a different role. And for this government to put forward legislation as it relates to something that's so core to Saskatchewan's heart, so important to our history, and to basically put forward legislation of very little substance, basically symbolism instead of action or symbolism instead of substance, Mr. Speaker, we'd say is shameful.

And the member from Meewasin highlighted so many of these points so articulately, but basically this legislation simply is a declaration to carry on with common activities or a common activity that's centuries old in fact in this province and in accordance with the laws. Well really, Mr. Speaker, does that really say anything, Mr. Speaker? Does that really have any impact or any importance, Mr. Speaker? Certainly not.

And the member from Meewasin highlighted the numerous other activities that people embark on, on a day-to-day basis, within their daily lives and within their . . . and certainly through our history, Mr. Speaker, as governed by the laws. And are we now just going to see new pieces of legislation that just touch the surface and provide a photo opportunity on that front, Mr. Speaker?

And I wouldn't be surprised, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't be surprised because we know with this Sask Party government that they'd rather just touch the surface, just grab the low-hanging fruit, just spend the money on communication and spin and gamesmanship but not get into the substance of the real issues that challenge our province. They don't want to address the health care challenges in this province that are wreaking great havoc in communities across this province, that are becoming larger problems under the Sask Party.

We look at the 50 per cent increase in vacancies for doctors across this province, Mr. Speaker, and I know communities across this province are looking for remedy of this. And I know they're saying when we meet with them, they're saying, well this Sask Party, they made promises and we bought it, they say.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? There's nothing more disheartening, more frustrating, or that makes someone more angry than to realize that they've been tricked, that they've been had, that they've been sold a hill of beans that a government couldn't deliver on. Because this Sask Party had gone across Saskatchewan and made all sorts of promises for which it had no ability — and we're realizing now not even the will or desire — to actually follow through with. And that's hugely disappointing, Mr. Speaker.

And we see, we see this here at this point in time, this certainly

isn't a government, the Sask Party, that manages things well. The reason that we're here tonight is the mismanagement of the legislature here, Mr. Speaker. And this I guess is paralleled, Mr. Speaker, if we look at finances.

[22:15]

The financial mismanagement of this province by the Sask Party is something that the rest of Canada is looking at, looking at with shame, with disappointment to see Saskatchewan that was provided the great opportunity that it had economically where we have revenues flowing in, economic drivers that are functioning well and we see a government that's mismanaging the province and racking up debt at this point in time, Mr. Speaker. And I think there's nothing that drives people more upset in this province than to recognize that we have a government with a healthy balance sheet as it relates to revenues but then we look at their expenditures that are far too high, Mr. Speaker, and they are creating and have created a massive \$1 billion deficit. It's not getting any better.

And we see the growth in debt, Mr. Speaker. Growth in debt. And it's a question, Mr. Speaker, of when the billboards that the Sask Party has up around this province right now — you'll see them on many of the main drags, Mr. Speaker — that basically say something that isn't true, Mr. Speaker. The billboards say something that's not true. The billboards rightfully . . . And we're looking and waiting for the right time, Mr. Speaker, but we're surprised that the government wouldn't choose to be forthright on this. Those billboards, Mr. Speaker, rightfully should be saying that they have a deficit, the debt is going up, and that taxes as a result will be forced to increase for everyone. Now their billboards say the exact opposite, Mr. Speaker.

And it just speaks again to the mismanagement of this government. We see it as it relates to health care and the worsening circumstances that are affecting the lives of communities. We see it as it relates to education. We see it as it relates to cost of living. And people in this province are expecting some answers, Mr. Speaker.

And I know that as individuals who value hunting, fishing, and trapping in this province, as they regard these proceedings, their disappointment in the Sask Party for grabbing simply low-hanging fruit and not doing something more as it relates to enhancing those activities will be of great disappointment. But further to that I think they're going to be very disappointed to understand how they've been disrespected, dismissed, and disregarded by the Sask Party.

The fact that you take something as core to our society as hunting, fishing, and trapping, put it up in debate in a disrespectful fashion with the government's attempt to overthrow the democratic rules, democratic system that we have, is a big disappointment, Mr. Speaker, for Saskatchewan people.

The fact that the Sask Party had an opportunity to do something meaningful on these fronts, many other fronts, and all they put forward is a piece of legislation that provides a bit of symbolism, a bit of symbolism but no action, a bit of symbolism but no substance, Mr. Speaker, and that's a disappointment. It's a disappointment when you thumb through

legislation, Mr. Speaker, and you read through a preamble that basically doesn't need to exist because you have the clauses following here that basically elaborate on the Bill.

And as you go through those clauses, you recognize that the first clause, well that's just a statement of fact, doesn't change anything. You look at no. 2, “. . . the right to hunt, fish and trap in accordance with the law as it exists from time to time.” Statement of fact, Mr. Speaker. I mean this is one of the most ridiculous statements that I've ever heard, Mr. Speaker. I mean if there's ever been legislation with less teeth, it's this Bill right . . . I wouldn't know what that Bill would be than this Bill right here, Mr. Speaker.

So we're simply looking at statements of fact, the current landscape that exists. We look at the clause no. 3 as it relates to Aboriginal and treaty rights, Mr. Speaker. And again we have a statement of fact, Mr. Speaker, because of course, Mr. Speaker, they make a statement about the rights affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act* in 1982. Well of course, Mr. Speaker, no legislation in this legislature can override that, Mr. Speaker. So to have that statement in is completely unnecessary, poorly planned, poor oversight, and just simply a statement of fact, Mr. Speaker, and I think a failed opportunity to make a broader statement as it relates to Aboriginal rights, Mr. Speaker.

So you get to clause 4 and this is the great substance, the great substance of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, and that's that we designate November 15th as Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Day in Saskatchewan. That's the great substance. Now we don't oppose that, Mr. Speaker, but it's the kind of gamesmanship and communications stunt that the Sask Party is all about. It's simply touching the surface.

Now I support in principle the establishment of a day in this nature. I'll certainly get out and either partake in hunting that day or fishing, probably hunting that day, November 15th. We are getting close to white-tailed deer season there, Mr. Speaker. And if I'm not able to do that, Mr. Speaker, I at least will make contact with those that are at that point in time.

So we have a Bill of little substance that's a big disappointment to a province, to a province that has a rich history, rich history of hunting, fishing, and trapping, Mr. Speaker. And trapping of course has had some challenges in recent years with respect to fur prices that are significantly low. This Bill does nothing to address that, Mr. Speaker, nothing.

And we look at trapping, a exercise that serves a social, cultural, and economic purpose. We see trapping as something that may be lost as we move forward. This is something that we need to make sure isn't lost. We need to preserve and protect and enhance that activity because the skill transfer and the knowledge transfer and the values transfer that occurs through the trapping industry, through the families that have embraced trapping for years and years and years in our province, is not something, Mr. Speaker, that we should be dismissing.

So it's dismissive of trapping and the real challenges that exist. It's dismissive of Aboriginal rights and not doing something more. It's dismissive of hunting and hunters' and fishers' needs and opportunities as it relates to protection of land, enhancement of habitat, and of course better stock management.

And I talked a bit about trapping, Mr. Speaker, and the different roles it's played in different communities. And you know, as a more modern-day example, Mr. Speaker, I couldn't think of a better one than Robertson Trading Post in La Ronge. I'm going to say this is a modern-day store because trapping is certainly something through the North West Company and through the Hudson Bay Company that has existed in our province for many, many years, going back 150 years before us becoming a province. So we're talking 2 and 300 years ago.

But we have a modern story, Mr. Speaker, in this last century, in La Ronge, Mr. Speaker. And if you're in La Ronge, Mr. Speaker, I'd recommend that you stop in at the Robertson Trading Post. And I hear my colleagues weighing in, and I think it's appropriate at this point in time for us to recognize Alex Robertson from Robertson Trading Post who has passed away just recently. And Alex Robertson has developed a business in La Ronge that's become a fixture. It's become a conduit of trade and economic opportunity for many families — Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, Mr. Speaker.

If you ever go in there, just from a very sort of face value kind of a perspective, it's a very worthwhile place to go into and to see some of the incredibly beautiful leatherwork and beadwork and the very fine meats and goods from the region, Mr. Speaker. And a region that's rich with those mammals, with those animals, with those fish, with those goods, and rich with the resources and skills and talents of those people, and certainly in Alex Robertson's store in La Ronge, Saskatchewan that is all highlighted, and you see still the coming together of the North and the fur trade, Mr. Speaker.

And I know that Alex Robertson will be missed greatly in La Ronge, Mr. Speaker, and that he will be remembered fondly. And I know that his son Scott will be offering huge leadership and has offered huge leadership for many years to their operation, and that that operation will be hugely viable into the future, but not with dismissive, disrespectful treatment as we see by the Sask Party as it relates to hunting, fishing, and trapping, Mr. Speaker. What they require is a thoughtful government that consults. A thoughtful government that goes about some of the challenges that affect their industry, Mr. Speaker; their region, Mr. Speaker; and something that's important to their viability, Mr. Speaker.

So it's disappointing that we arrive at this point here today to talk about hunting, fishing, and trapping — a topic that I'm proud to speak about at length, Mr. Speaker, with a proud history within our own family, as a proud hunter, fisher myself, and because of the important role it's played in many different functions through the thousands of years in this province, Mr. Speaker.

But it's a shame that we're not looking at something of substance, Mr. Speaker. It's a shame that we see more communications and spin and gamesmanship from the Sask Party instead of going about and doing what a government should be doing: consulting with the people of the province, recognizing some of the needs and challenges, and putting forward legislation that reflects that, Mr. Speaker. We see nothing in this legislation as it relates to the environment and the protection of that environment that's fundamental — fundamental to the healthy fish stocks in this province, the

healthy habitat, the healthy wildlife within this province, Mr. Speaker. Hunting, fishing, and trapping is absolutely dependent, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I would ask the opposition members not to drown out their own member. Order. I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — And, Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to hear my colleagues weigh in because I know they are as frustrated as I am to see a government disrespect hunters, fishers, and trappers, Mr. Speaker, because it's something that shouldn't be going on. It's disappointing to see a government that wants to, for their own good and as a result of their own mismanagement, override legislative rules that serve this Assembly well, rules that they were a full part of putting together, Mr. Speaker.

It's the only reason we have this Bill before us, Mr. Speaker, this Bill that unfortunately is of little substance; low-hanging fruit within this Bill, Mr. Speaker, providing simply another little communication stunt for that Premier, Mr. Speaker, who has difficulty going beyond just that, Mr. Speaker.

But as you go and you meet with the wildlife branches across this province, when you go up and you chat with Scott Robertson up in La Ronge, when you chat with the trappers, when you chat with the outfitters association, they'll let you know something different, Mr. Speaker. What they'll let you know is that there's all sorts of different needs, different challenges, different opportunities that exist as it relates to hunting, fishing, and trapping.

What they'll say is they'd be hugely disappointed to see a government go about opening up a Bill as it relates to those very activities that are so fundamental to our province and to do so little, Mr. Speaker; to disregard the Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to duty to consult and Aboriginal rights; to disrespect doing anything meaningful as it relates to the environment, enhancement of land, of habitat, and of stocks of wildlife and fish, Mr. Speaker. What a failed opportunity, Mr. Speaker. It's a disappointment for the people of this province.

And they need to recognize why we're here, Mr. Speaker. We have a government that mismanages everything it touches. It mismanages its finances. It inherits \$2.3 billion in surplus, it inherits a booming economy, and where are we today, Mr. Speaker, in two short years? Well we're \$1 billion in deficit, Mr. Speaker, running unmitigated throughout this year, Mr. Speaker, without a plan. We sit and we question that Premier, that Minister of Finance regularly, and not a day goes by where any sort of a plan is presented, Mr. Speaker.

We expect more, Mr. Speaker. And it's this kind of mismanagement as it relates to health care, as it relates to cost of living, financial mismanagement that's endemic within this government and reflected here today, the very reason that we're now dealing with hunting, fishing, and trapping for many, many hours in a fashion where the Sask Party is actually being disrespectful of those very activities and the place of those individuals within our province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, hunting, fishing, and trapping plays an incredibly important role socially, economically, and culturally. It's played

an incredibly important role through our history, Mr. Speaker. It needs to play an incredibly important role into our future. Providing anything less is a shame to Saskatchewan people and reflective of a government that just can't get its priorities straight, isn't willing to do the hard work, and wants to overthrow democracy at every opportunity that it has. We're going to push this Sask Party government to do more on all of these fronts, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, I think this is a lesson for the government here tonight.

At this point in time it's been my pleasure to weigh in on debate, and I will adjourn debate at this point in time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to speak on this Bill and go after the government for their . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Reaching of the time of adjournment, this House now stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

[The Assembly adjourned at 22:30.]

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