



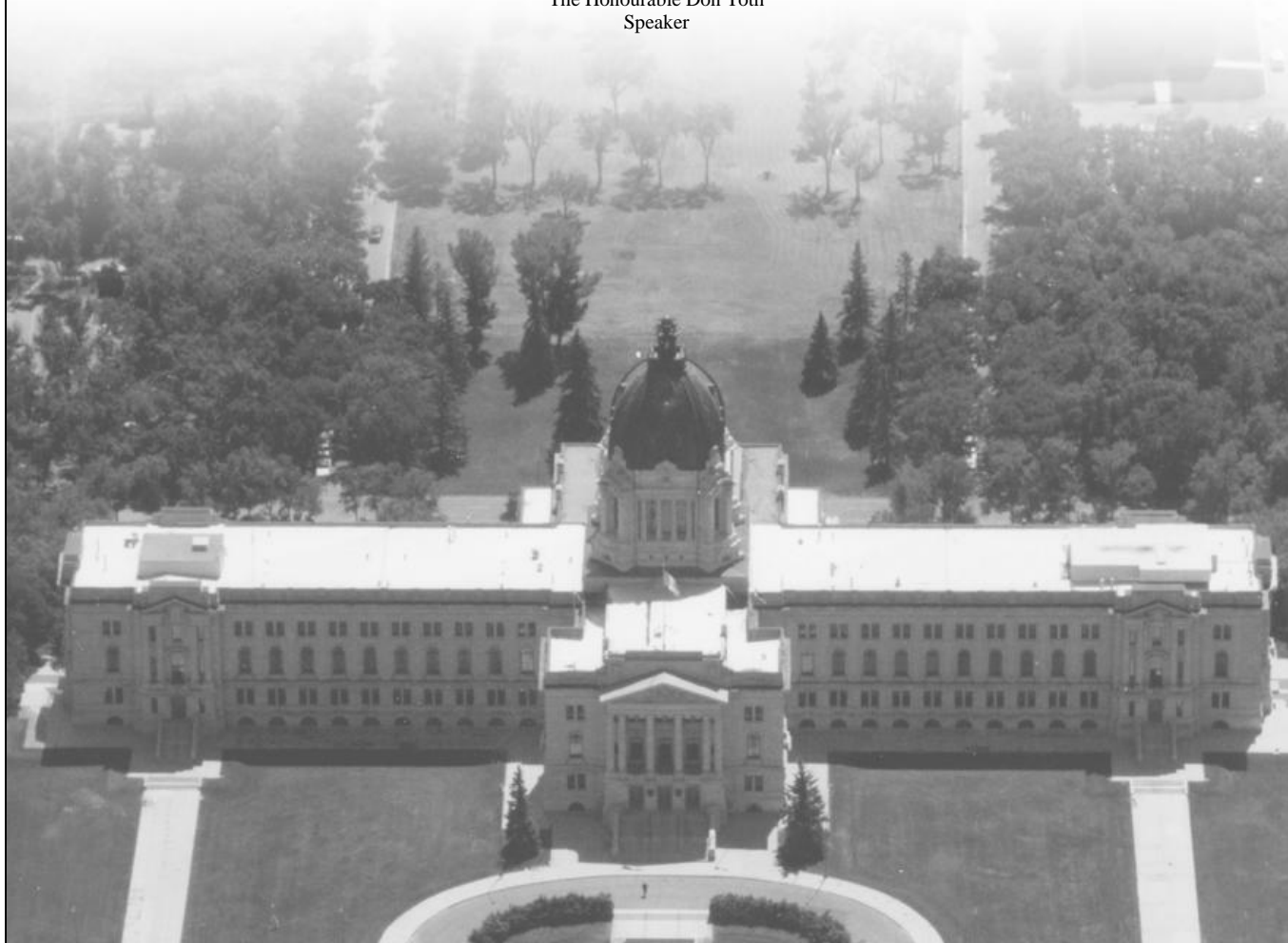
FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
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Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
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Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
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Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
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Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
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Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
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Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
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Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
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Ross, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Toth, Hon. Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

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

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, with leave to make a statement regarding the Holodomor Memorial Day.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has asked for leave to make a statement regarding the Holodomor Memorial Day. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

International Holodomor Remembrance Week

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleagues. Mr. Speaker, November 22nd to 28th is International Holodomor Remembrance Week. During this week, people around the world remember the millions of victims of the famine genocide that occurred in Ukraine in 1932 and 1933.

It is said, Mr. Speaker, at least seven million and perhaps as many 10 million people fell victim to this man-made famine at the hand of Joseph Stalin's dictatorship in Ukraine. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, the citizens of the region abundant with hearty farmlands suffered from unfathomable starvation during a time of bumper crops. It should not have happened, Mr. Speaker.

The international recognition of Holodomor as an act of genocide continues to grow every year, and in 2008 this Legislative Assembly became the first jurisdiction in Canada to recognize this genocide with *The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act*. The Government of Canada soon followed with their Act and by establishing a national Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day. And similar legislation has been passed by the provinces of Manitoba, Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec. Mr. Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to visit Ukraine, and I was able to light a commemorative candle at the new Holodomor monument in Kiev to honour the memory of its victims.

As I also mentioned earlier, we have a number . . . Mr. Speaker, I will be introducing a number of special guests of Ukrainian heritage later on that are in the galleries today. They came to the legislature today, Mr. Speaker, to participate in a special candle lighting ceremony that took place here earlier today. The candle lighting is a symbolic gesture of recognition in memory of those whose lives were lost.

A similar ceremony will take place at many of the international commemorations in Ukraine and around the world, Mr. Speaker. Memorial candles that have been blessed by clergy are distributed and then lit from the memorial candle which has been lit from the original memorial candle at the Holodomor

memorial in Kiev, Ukraine. People are then asked to light their candles at home on Saturday, November the 27th, International Holodomor Memorial Day, in memory of all those who lost their lives. And the spirit of the national memorial in Kiev is then passed on through these candles.

Mr. Speaker, the candle used to light the memorial candle in the ceremony this morning kept with this tradition. It was lit using a candle provided by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Saskatchewan Provincial Council. And that candle was lit from the Holodomor memorial candle in Kiev. This candle, Mr. Speaker, will remain in the rotunda until November 28th to show solidarity with people around the world who are taking time to remember.

Mr. Speaker, if I may, I'd like to quote the 19th century Ukrainian poet and humanist, Taras Shevchenko, who said in his poem entitled "Where'er We Roam, Whatever We May Do."

Where'er we roam, whatever we may do,
We men are proud and foolish, through and through!
We boast that we, each son or daughter,
Whether we live on earth or on the water,
In shining palaces or dungeons dark,
Are monarchs all, are despots true and stark,
Above ourselves — real masters we must be,
Whether on thrones or in captivity.

And that conception issues from our will,
And through our reason must keep flaming still
Like a bright beacon on a sea of ill —
To wit, the sea of life. Thus it is come
That in the lighthouse of our cranium
The fiery pharos of our reason flares
Which further oil of knowledge oft repairs;
And so we hymn, with thoughts ill understood,
Man's destiny, if it be ill or good.

Mr. Speaker, I find these ancient words of Shevchenko remain true and relevant. And as I read them aloud here today, I am humbled by them, humbled by this concept that despite our circumstances, whether we live in palaces or dungeons, we are as Shevchenko says, monarchs all, that each and every life has value and that knowledge is the oil that feeds the lighthouse in our minds.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members here today to take a moment and reflect upon the value of the lives lost and share the knowledge of this horrible time in our modern history just as we share the flame from the memorial candle in Kiev. And in doing so, we honour and remember the many people of Ukrainian descent in our province and the country who lost loved ones during Holodomor. Thank you.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, with leave to make a few comments.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has

asked for leave to respond. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Assembly for allowing me to say a few words on this very important and significant event in world history.

Mr. Speaker, the Holodomor originates from the Ukrainian word *holod* and *mor*, which means hunger and plague respectively. The term originated directly from the expression, *moryty holodom*, which means to inflict death by hunger. In 1932 to 1933, an estimated 7 to 10 million people perished in the Ukraine as a result of this famine.

Mr. Speaker, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress Saskatchewan website states that they are there to serve the Saskatchewan-Ukrainian community and maintain, develop and share the Ukrainian-Canadian identity, culture and aspirations.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank these unsung heroes here in Saskatchewan, particularly UCC [Ukrainian Canadian Congress] Saskatchewan President Ed Lysyk, his members, Vice-president Slawko Kindrachuk, Secretary Vera Feduschak, Treasurer Larry Balion, and past President Eugene Krenosky. Members-at-large, Peter Abrametz, Prince Albert; Orest Gawdyda, Regina; Cathy Schabel, Saskatoon; MaryAnn Trischuk, Yorkton; branch presidents, Paul Kardynal, North Battleford; Taras Korol, Canora; Elmer Malec, Prince Albert; Orest Warnyca, Regina; Merle Maximiuk, Yorkton; and Stan Ganczar, Weyburn.

Without their efforts, the commemorative ceremony at the legislature today and many services throughout Saskatchewan would not be possible. The Ukrainian community and all Saskatchewan owe a deep gratitude for their tireless efforts to make this day a reality. Many of us would have thought this was not possible.

Mr. Speaker, politics and life are truly amazing. In 2004 here at the legislature, we watched and witnessed the Orange Revolution in the Ukraine. Mr. Speaker . . .

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

The Orange Revolution started in the immediate aftermath of the runoff of the 2004 Ukrainian presidential election. The November 21st election, marred by corruption and electoral fraud, caused huge protests beginning on November 22nd, 2004 and continuing until January 2005 when Viktor Yushchenko was declared president of the Ukraine by the electoral commission.

It was not until November 28th, 2006 that the Ukrainian parliament passed a law finding the Holodomor a deliberate act of genocide and the public denial illegal. It was a time of excitement and the flame of democracy truly flickered for Ukraine. Again, it was the UCC Canada that brought the international remembrance flame to Canada. And with the coordination of the UCC Saskatchewan it passed through

Saskatchewan in 2008, carried by Mr. Stefan Horlatsch.

Mr. Speaker, the UCC of Saskatchewan has been there throughout, bringing awareness and educating all of us on this genocide. And, Mr. Speaker, on a personal note, I want to thank the UCC for igniting in me a greater sense of identity and pride in my heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I did high school Ukrainian by correspondence and even took a Ukrainian language class in University of Saskatchewan but, Mr. Speaker, how easy it is to forget our roots in this day-to-day business of living. That is why the UCC is so important, not only the work they do for the Ukrainian community, but the work they do with newly arrived immigrants to our province. They maintain that language and cultural ties, and they tirelessly promote such important events as the Holodomor.

Mr. Speaker, there are again dark clouds on the horizon in Ukraine, a country with incredible debt load and concerns over irregularities in local elections. Mr. Speaker, democracy is truly a fragile piece.

It is into this void that the UCC Canada and Saskatchewan organizations have stepped and why their work is so important. These Ukrainian Canadian and provincial organizations have been directly responsible for no less than five provinces and the federal government now declaring the Holodomor a genocide. Mr. Speaker, just this past June, the province of Quebec joined Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and the federal government in declaring the fourth Saturday in November to commemorate the Holodomor in the province and country.

Mr. Speaker, I am a son of Ukrainian immigrant farmers, and it's not often easy to speak of these horrible events. And I think of times I listened to the stories of my grandparents, and they were stories of oppression in Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, I want to end with two quotes. First, I was at the UCC Nation Builders event in Saskatoon a week or so ago, and I want to end with what former judge Ernie Boychuk said in receiving his Nations Builders award. Mr. Speaker:

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

And today in the rotunda, President Ed Lysyk ended his speech with:

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery today is a very special group of people that I'll reference a little bit later in members' statements, but if I can, Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, introduce them now. And maybe as I introduce them

they can give us a quick wave.

In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, are Kim and Sharla Knox. Sharla is the mom of a Saskatchewan hero, the late Chris Knox. And joining them is George Yannitsos. He is the president of the Chris Knox Foundation.

And then very special guests indeed, Mr. Speaker, Jan Fowler is a grandmother to Reyce Ball, who I'll introduce in a moment. His mom Erin is here as well. And ladies and gentlemen of the House, Reyce Ball has also joined us today.

And just in a little while, Reyce is going to be going to Grey Cup because of everyday heroes in the province of Saskatchewan and companies that are going to make that possible. And we'll talk more about that in a moment. But I had a chance to visit with him a little bit before the proceedings today, and Reyce has a lot to say on a lot of subjects and was just a delight to be able to meet.

And I look forward to talking a little bit more about the Chris Knox Foundation later on. I wonder if all members would help me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly today.

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am especially blessed. Through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly I'm very fortunate to introduce one of my brothers and his wife, their daughter-in-law, and their two grandchildren. Seated in your gallery are my brother, Ray, and his wife, Joanne, Melissa, and Melissa and Steven's children, Tristen and Teigan. Steven is at work today, so unable to take the day off to join us, but they made the trek in from Govan this morning. And I ask all hon. members to help me in welcoming a very important part of the Trew family to the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I introduce to you and to all members in the House the members of the Regina Catholic school Ukrainian program choir that are seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker. This choir is under the direction of Ms. Katie Nakutny, and also with the choir are Helena Demchuk, Olena Shyian, and Yvonne Sirdar. I'd ask all of the children and the adults to give us a big wave over there. All right. That's the group that took part in the ceremony earlier on today at noon hour.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, also in the same gallery are a number of individuals from Ukraine, from the Ivano-Frankivsk University in Ukraine that are attending the University of Regina. I know all of them aren't there, Mr. Speaker, but I'm going to mention their names because these five students have taken advantage of our exchange program with Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, the students are Mykhailo Skrobach, Natalia Petryshyn, Julia Mykhaylova, Arsenij Stefanov, and a special mention of the fifth student — and I want you to pay attention

to the name — Oleksandra Kravets. Mr. Speaker, these students are with their host families, Bob and Elizabeth Ivanochko, Ed and Janet Lysyk, and Kathy Lloyd.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to introduce Ed Lysyk. Ed is the president of the Ukrainian Canadian Council, Saskatchewan provincial council and is a member of the advisory Saskatchewan Ukraine relations advisory committee. Ed — along with the chairperson who was the master of ceremonies in the rotunda earlier today, Mr. Speaker, Gerald Luciuk — Ed and Gerald accompanied me as part of a delegation to Ukraine to build on what we had started in 2008 and what the advisory committee has done so far.

Tremendous work by the advisory committee in giving recommendations to the Government of Saskatchewan on how we might move forward with improving better relationships. And we saw that this week as evidenced by the signing of an agreement with Zhytomyr oblast in a new agreement to expand on trade with that province. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join with me in showing our appreciation to all of the guests in the west gallery.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to join the Deputy Premier in also welcoming these special guests to our legislature. Mr. Speaker, a thank you to the students from the Regina Catholic Schools Ukrainian program, the choir that attended here. And they sang for us and that was well appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, to the exchange students from the Ukraine, I welcome you here. And as well then to the good work, I think we can't say enough good work that Mr. Lysyk does for all of us in the Ukrainian community. And I thank him for that and to Gerald Luciuk who has joined him. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join me as well in congratulating all of these folks for the fine job they do. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I am honoured to introduce to you today 25 dedicated and professional members of our public service. They're here to take part in the parliamentary program for public servants, and they're in the Speaker's gallery.

The participants are employees from the following ministries: Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration; from Agriculture, Education, Enterprise, Environment, Health, Public Service Commission, Social Services; Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport. And we also have employees here from Legislative Assembly Service.

The program that they're taking part in today will give them an in-depth history and tour of our building. There will be briefings from the Legislative Library, the Office of the Clerk, and Executive Council. They'll observe the proceedings in the House, and they'll meet members from both sides of the Assembly. And they'll meet with the Speaker later.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank them all for their interest in what's going on here in the legislature, and for their work. And I'd ask all members to join with me and welcome some of our public service employees to their legislature.

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

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to join with the minister and welcome the many public servants to their legislature.

Mr. Speaker, it's always an enjoyable time to see members of the public service come and learn about the democratic process and about how the Legislative Assembly works. And I'll be very pleased this afternoon to meet with you about, I believe, about 3:20 this afternoon. And so welcome to your legislature and enjoy yourself today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make reference to some of the introductions that were done earlier. Seated in the west gallery is the mother of my chief of staff, Denise Batters. Her name is Jane Lesiuk. And she is not here to watch the wonders of question period or even to check up on whether Denise is working. She's actually here with another one of her daughters, Yvonne Sirdar, who is one of the teachers with the musical group that was here this morning. And Yvonne is here as well. And we're delighted that they're here, and we really appreciate the musical selection that was done this morning. And if the students are as well-served by Mrs. Sirdar as I am by her sister, they will be well-served in life.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you Kirby Benning, president of the fire fighters association for the province of Saskatchewan and a team of people he has with him today — firefighters from around the province. They're here today, I think, the 14th annual come to the legislature to lobby MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly].

I know these are men and women who put their life at stake defending and protecting families and property in the province of Saskatchewan. I know we have a reception later on today. I'm sure all members are going to take advantage of going and visiting with our firefighters. I just want to welcome you all here to the Assembly today and hope you enjoy the process.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs, the member from Prince Albert Carlton.

Hon. Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I want to join with the Leader of the Opposition in recognizing 12 members today in the Legislative Assembly, members of the Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association. Of course, Mr. Benning's already been introduced, but Vice-president Lloyd Zwack, and the secretary-treasurer, Brian Belitsky, as well. It's great to have them in the Legislative Assembly again this year lobbying for some worthwhile causes.

As a police officer, I had the honour and privilege to work with some members of the Prince Albert firefighters service, various calls throughout my career. And they do a great service. Men and women of this province who serve in firefighting services are there to answer the call day and night, no matter what the conditions or the weather, and will always put their lives first to save others. And we want to thank you on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan for that service, and welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce two individuals seated in the east gallery. One person is Kent Peterson, who's been to the legislature once or twice. He of course has a keen interest in politics and is a student at the U of R [University of Regina] and involved with the campus newspaper.

Also in the east gallery is Jon Petrychyn who is a U of R student in the film studies program, has a real passion for Saskatchewan history and our historic buildings. He's originally from Wolseley and has been involved there the past few summers in endeavouring to preserve the building and secure funding for the historic courthouse in Wolseley. On top of that, Mr. Speaker, he's also a member of the Saskatchewan Youth Parliament. So I'd ask all members to welcome these two individuals to the Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Greystone, the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. To you and through you to all members of the Assembly I'd to join the member opposite in welcoming these two students from the University of Regina to their Assembly. And I hope everyone will certainly continue to support the endeavours of the University of Regina. We know how important this campus is to the future, not just of our students but of our communities, Mr. Speaker. I ask all members to join me in welcoming these students to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join in with the Leader of the Opposition and the Minister of Municipal Affairs in welcoming the firefighters, but two in particular two Yorkton residents, Mr. Neal Matechuk — give me a wave, Neal — and Brian Belitsky, as was formerly introduced. And I'm not here to introduce them because of their . . . Neal was formerly a firefighter model in the calendar in 2005, and apparently Brian is awaiting his turn possibly next year. But I wanted to point out these gentlemen specifically for a purpose.

They are just two faces of the Yorkton firefighters, the emergency services in Yorkton, that did just such an amazing job during the events of July 1st and post-July 1st in the efforts in mitigating the damages and the potential life loss in Yorkton. So I want to acknowledge them publicly, thank them for all the hard work they do, all the sacrifice they put in that very difficult time and thank all firefighters for the sacrifices that they do

make.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce a constituent and a good friend of a number of members of the legislature here today. Tina Friesen, who's seated in your gallery, joins us from time to time. I want to say welcome, Tina, and hope you enjoy today's question period.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of Saskatchewan residents. And it has to do with renters and the difficulties they are facing with the combination of rising rents and low vacancy rates in many communities, and that many of these renters have suffered rent increases in the hundreds of dollars and it is proving to be a strain on their budgets. Many provinces in Saskatchewan, in fact the majority of provinces, have rent control guidelines in place, and that the argument that the private market would deliver sufficient affordable housing in the absence of rent control has proven to be false.

Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to consider enacting some form of rent control with a view to protecting Saskatchewan renters from unreasonable increases in rent.

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

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present petitions on behalf of the undersigned residents of Saskatchewan who want to bring to our attention the following: that many Saskatchewan seniors live on fixed incomes and are victims of physical, emotional, and financial abuse. They also want us to know that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to social and economic security and a right to live free from poverty. And they want us to add that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. And the prayer reads:

We in the prayer that reads as follows respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to enact a Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights, which would provide Saskatchewan seniors with social and economic security and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The over 60 signatures are from the communities of Stenen, Asquith, Shaunavon, Arborfield, Eatonia, Christopher Lake, Prince Albert, Mistatim, and Indian Head. I so present.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition that calls for increased support for hospice and palliative care in Saskatchewan.

We the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that all Saskatchewan people deserve quality end-of-life and bereavement care; that hospice and palliative care is known to help enhance the quality of life for those facing advancing illness, death, and bereavement; that a publicly funded and administered hospice and palliative care system including residential hospices would increase end-of-life care options for Saskatchewan people.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan cause the provincial government to enhance and increase publicly funded and administered hospice and palliative care, including in-home hospice services and residential hospices, in order to ensure that all Saskatchewan people have access to high-quality end-of-life care.

Mr. Speaker, I so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present some petitions from Furdale residents. Government ministry has directed SaskWater cut off supplies of water for domestic use to Furdale customers. The same government ministry has directed that customers may no longer treat non-potable water using methods approved by Sask Health.

These Furdale residents, in dealing in good faith with SaskWater for over 30 years, have paid large amounts for their domestic systems and in-home treatment equipment, as well as for livestock irrigation lines. And that the alternative water supply being referred to by the government ministry is a private operator offering treated, non-pressurized water at great cost with no guarantee of quality, quantity, or availability of water, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

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

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the residents of Saskatoon and Clavet. I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented financial mismanagement by the Sask Party. They allude specifically to the two consecutive deficit budgets put forward by this government and the billions of dollars of debt growth that's accruing under this government — \$4.2 billion alone over the next four years, Mr. Speaker.

This going on, Mr. Speaker, at a time of all-time highs in revenues and asking Saskatchewan people, communities, municipalities, and civil servants to pay the price for their mismanagement, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly condemn the Sask Party government for its damaging financial mismanagement since taking office, a reckless fiscal record that is denying Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses the responsible and trustworthy fiscal management that they so deserve.

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

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

[14:00]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Caring Hearts Camp Fall Retreat

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday the Greystone Bereavement Centre held their Caring Hearts Camp fall retreat at the Dallas Valley Ranch Camp. This is a one-day retreat for children and teens aged 5 to 18 who have lost a loved one. And, Mr. Speaker, there is no charge for this camp so any youth that wanted to attend could attend.

The 64 youth and teens were given an opportunity to participate in activities such as horseback riding, indoor wall rock climbing and snow tubing. The camp also provided age-appropriate therapeutic activities to help these children with their grief.

This camp was made possible, Mr. Speaker, through the hard work of the centre staff and the support of a number of organizations who saw a need and generously supported it. But most importantly, Mr. Speaker, this camp would not have been possible without the dedicated 38 volunteers who gave of themselves to help these young people, Mr. Speaker. These volunteers came from in and around Regina and I know that some of them work in this building.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the success of this one-day event for these young people who have recently lost a loved one

can be best summed up in the words of my granddaughter who said, it was great to be with people who feel what I'm feeling. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association represents 700 professional firefighters in the cities of Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Yorkton, North Battleford, and Weyburn.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud to have members from the association here today with us in the legislature to lobby on behalf of the Saskatchewan firefighters who put themselves at risk to ensure the safety of others. Mr. Speaker, the association does this annually and it's great to see that such an organization takes such command of their members' interest in the community and within the legislature.

The SPFFA [Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association] are active members in our community through the Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association burn fund, as well as countless other activities at local levels supporting other great community causes. With the burn fund, the firefighters take their work a step further by providing assistance to those who need it after they have been rescued. The purpose of this is to raise and distribute funds to help Saskatchewan families and burn patients with treatment, care, and rehabilitations. All funds raised stay in this province.

The Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association are advocating on three key issues they wanted addressed and the association is here to do just that and represent the best interests of their members. These men and women do not have the right to refuse dangerous or life-threatening tasks when on the job. Mr. Speaker, they lobby for the people of Saskatchewan every day. Therefore it is our duty to advocate for them here in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in honouring those with us today and firefighters across this province. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Saskatchewan Order of Merit Recipients

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night the Saskatchewan Order of Merit ceremony was held in Regina. The Order of Merit is the province's highest honour and recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to the well-being of the province and its residents.

This year's recipients are an extraordinary group of individuals. Each honouree exemplifies excellence, determination, and passion and we're all the beneficiaries of their outstanding contributions. This year saw seven recipients. They are Mr. Maurice Bundon, senior vice-president and chief operating officer of Harvard Developments Inc., Regina; Mr. Donald E. Kramer, Chair of Kramer Ltd., Regina; Dr. Janice MacKinnon,

professor of history, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon; Dr. J.D. Mollard, OC [Officer of the Order of Canada], founder, J.D. Mollard and Associates Ltd., Regina; Mrs. Elizabeth Raum, composer, teacher, and professional oboist, Toronto; Dr. Douglas Schmeiser, professor emeritus of law, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon; and Mrs. Myrna F. Yuzicapi, special adviser to SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] on Aboriginal initiatives, Saskatoon.

On behalf of this legislature, I want to congratulate the 2010 recipients of the Saskatchewan Order of Merit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Battlefords Citizen Honoured for Community Service

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize and congratulate Keith Koberinski of The Battlefords, who was recently presented with the Julian Paslawski Meritorious Service Award by the Saskatchewan Catholic School Board Association.

Keith Koberinski is the board Chair of the Light of Christ Catholic School Division. He has served on this board of education for five terms. This included nine years as Vice-Chair of the board and the past two years as the Chair.

A retired provincial highway department employee, Keith Koberinski has devoted himself to his community and his province. As a member of the Light of Christ board, he served as provincial representative on the Canadian Catholic School Trustees Association, and he was a member of the executive committee of the Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association for six years, including three as president.

Together with his wife Linda, the couple has provided mentoring services for couples preparing for marriage. Keith is also a member of the St. Joseph's choir, the parish council, and the Knights of Columbus, and in his spare time he can be found playing golf and acting as a players' representative at the North Battleford golf course.

Herb Sutton, director of education, says, and I quote, "Keith's biggest contribution has been his ability to build relationships with people, particularly in difficult situations."

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Keith Koberinski, this year's recipient of the Julian Paslawski Meritorious Service Award.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Yorkton Manufacturer Heads International Organization

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to bring to the attention of the Legislative Assembly today the prestigious honour that has been bestowed upon Yorkton's John Malinowski. For the first time in its 60-year history, the Farm Equipment Manufacturers Association has elected its first Canadian president.

John has served on the association's board since '01, and has

been the chairman of the international relations and convention committees. He also serves on the association's investment committee.

Currently John is the president and co-owner of Leon's Manufacturing Company in Yorkton. Founded by his uncle Leon and his father Ray, Leon's Manufacturing had very meagre beginnings in Bangor, Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I find it amazing that this company which got its start building dozer blades has grown to reach such international recognition. Leon's Manufacturing is currently headquartered in Yorkton, and the company now manufactures and distributes agriculture and industrial material-handling equipment worldwide.

Like all Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, John is well-rounded as a human being. He is a current member and past president of the Rotary Club of Yorkton and still finds time to actively compete in marathons.

I would like this Assembly to join me in honouring John Malinowski, not only for this historic achievement but also for his and his family's contribution to Yorkton, the province, and this country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Economic Policy

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier and the Sask Party have long desired to model Saskatchewan's economy and finances after Ireland's. With respect to this, the now Justice minister on March 17th, 2006 said, "Ireland is a Celtic tiger that has demonstrated how successful you can be." It goes on. I quote, "It is a lesson that this government should be paying attention to."

The Sask Party and this Premier, while in opposition, lauded the tax cuts, massive spending, and business subsidies — the very policies that have now crippled both the Irish economy and public purse. This Premier and the Sask Party have based much of their financial and economic policy on Ireland's policies. This Premier led these changes, and I will quote from Enterprise Saskatchewan's newsletter in spring 2009:

Enterprise Saskatchewan, conceived by Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall, the agency is loosely modelled on the Enterprise Ireland which is that country's government agency responsible for development and promotion of its business sector.

The country once called the Celtic tiger has become an economic and fiscal basket case. It is in receivership. It is begging for bailouts. And those that have gained the least are being asked to pay the most. And this is the model used by that Premier.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people have been well served by a strong, balanced economy and prudent fiscal management delivered by New Democrats. This Premier is fighting to undo this progress. Ireland serves as but one example of the wrong

direction this Premier is recklessly taking our fine province, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan people deserve better.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Chris Knox Foundation

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In November of 2007, something very special happened. Not the Grey Cup win by the Riders, as special as that was, but the seeds were planted during that Grey Cup for the Chris Knox Foundation. Unfortunately of course, shortly thereafter, we very tragically lost Chris Knox who is the inspiration for this foundation.

But the work has continued, and the compassion of Saskatchewan people and businesses have continued to manifest through the Chris Knox Foundation as it has sent children who are fighting cancer in our province to enjoy special events here in Saskatchewan and outside of the province.

And today as I introduced earlier, we have a very brave and courageous young man named Reyce Ball. He's from Regina. Reyce, you can give us another wave there. Reyce was diagnosed on September 2nd, 2009 with Philadelphia chromosome leukemia. Treatment options include a bone marrow transplant or three years of chemotherapy, and the family has chosen chemotherapy. And he's in the midst of that right now with perhaps the most significant of the treatments over by March of next year; as we chatted earlier today. He's here with his mom, Erin, and his grandma, Jan Fowler. Mr. Speaker, Reyce is one of 12 or maybe more young people that are battling various forms of pediatric cancer who are going to go to the Grey Cup this year.

Mr. Speaker, I'm mindful of the time for members' statements, but I just want to say, these kids are going to enjoy a great Grey Cup game. They're going to be involved in the Grey Cup Parade. They're going to Fantasyland at the West Edmonton Mall. They're going to do it because of the vision of people like Sharla Knox and the foundation itself, people like George, the president, who's joined us.

Corporate sponsors include Cameco, Co-operators, Greystone financial, CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan], SaskTel. Potash Corp of Saskatchewan came on recently with a \$20,000 donation. Mr. Speaker, how about a big hand, not just for the sponsors and the people supporting it, but for these great kids who are going to go to Grey Cup this weekend with the Chris Knox Foundation.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Response to Firefighters' Brief

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question today is in light of the fact that we have a number of firefighters with us today. And in the brief that they gave to the MLAs today they say, and I quote:

Firefighting is a dangerous occupation. Firefighters place themselves in harm's way and do not have the right to refuse unsafe work in carrying out their mandate of protection and life safety.

My question to the minister, Mr. Speaker, is in light of the fact that studies that have been done and carried out in North America, here in Canada, indicate that the minimum number of responders to an emergency is five — in order to protect property and life and also to protect members of the firefighting community, that that number is five — and in light of the fact that some of our communities, Weyburn for example, sends out one responder; North Battleford I believe is three responders; in light of the fact that we're putting at risk property, but more importantly, families' lives and the firefighters themselves, can the minister respond to that fact and indicate that there will be funding available to ensure that five responders are available in emergency situations?

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

Hon. Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the member opposite for that question. This government values the service and dedication of all the women and men in the fire services across this province. And on that note, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the staffing issues within our municipalities, this government's proud to say, we've increased revenue sharing like no other time before in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And on that note, Mr. Speaker, talking with the mayors this summer, they all recognize that they have the revenue sharing unconditionally to use for operating or capital costs. And on that note, Mr. Speaker, that funding can be utilized to advance the staffing numbers in fire departments. Thank you.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the attempt to lay this at the feet of the municipal government is simply not on. The fact of the matter is that there needs to be, and should be, direct funding for the proper number of responders in emergencies, that number being five. The minister needs to respond to that.

But the other area of concern to firefighters is the cases of esophageal cancer, a situation that is related very directly to workplace safety. A number of provinces in Canada now cover that, in terms of insurance and in terms of compensation, and identify it as a disease that is directly caused by the career decision to work in that area.

Can the minister guarantee that that change will come into place so that our firefighters are protected? And does it make sense that a firefighter in Brandon is protected and a firefighter in Weyburn is not? Can the minister ensure that these cases of cancer will be in fact insured and compensated when it relates to families who find themselves in this situation?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for

the question. I too would like to echo the sentiments expressed earlier that we thank the firefighters very much for their hard work and dedication and the fact that they routinely and regularly put their lives at risk.

Mr. Speaker, we have an ongoing process that reviews the different types of cancers that are caused and looks for links to the work that's being done. Since forming government, over the last several years a number of different cancers have been added. I'm looking forward to meeting with the firefighters later in the day to have discussions both with regard to esophageal cancer and also with regard to testicular cancer, Mr. Speaker. There are officials that are working on this as an ongoing process. And for the benefit of the members opposite, we will endeavour to put the best science, the best approach to the matter.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, question to the minister. This is now three years that these same requests have been put to members of the legislature, particularly to the government. And every year we hear the same response, that while the government holds firefighters in high esteem, they don't deal with the issue of proper funding for their proper number of responders or for cancer that's directly related to the workplace.

My question to the minister is this: in light of the fact that in order to remedy the situation, the cost, both for the responders for the coverage and also for education and training within the community as to fire safety, the total cost is about \$2.4 million, after three years of requests being put and all of the areas where this government has wasted tens of millions of dollars, how is it that it can't find 2.4 million for this important purpose?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. I've indicated earlier that it is something that we are looking at. Mr. Speaker, this particular issue, I'm pleased to advise the House, is something that was in existence, and the request from the firefighters was there, many years before the change in government.

Mr. Speaker, we are continuing to look at this. Every year more and more things are added to the list of things that are covered through workers' compensation. And, Mr. Speaker, it will be the position of this government, is if there is a factual and a scientific link between their work and the cancers that are caused, those items will be added to the things where coverage is provided. Mr. Speaker, if there is additional information that the firefighters have, I look forward to viewing that information and meeting with them later today, Mr. Speaker.

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

Arrangements for a Long-Term Care Facility

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party's gone out of its way to censor the truth about the Amicus deal in response to my FOI [freedom of information] request. Even the most mundane details, like the names of people who were copied on

emails, are sometimes blacked out. But one name does appear on several emails. That's Rod Donlevy, the lawyer who put this deal together and the brother of the Premier's chief of staff. Another name that's popped up is an individual by the name of Urban Donlevy. So to the minister: who is Urban Donlevy, and what is his role in this Amicus affair?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, day in and day out, I'm amazed at that member standing in the House trying to slander family names, such well-respected family names in the Saskatoon area, Mr. Speaker. Once again she's going after another name, Mr. Speaker.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. The Minister of Health has been asked a question, and there's a couple of members on the opposition side who are not allowing the minister to respond, to at least let the guests hear what the response is. I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I just received a letter later on yesterday afternoon from Paul Ellis who is the chairman of the Catholic Health Ministry of Saskatchewan. He goes on to say that, talking about the opposition day in and day out asking questions, he goes on to say in the letter that "They are inferring that this contract was in some way influenced by the Government of Saskatchewan or by our legal adviser, Rod Donlevy."

At the end he goes on, "Any allegations that there was outside influence on our board to select Miners Construction or any other firm associated with this project is completely false." Mr. Speaker, completely false, from the chairperson of the Catholic Health Ministry.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's really simple for the government to clear this little mess up, and that is release all of the information that they blacked out.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Urban Donlevy is another brother of the Premier's chief of staff, so that's now two brothers of the Premier's chief of staff now directly involved in the deal. And we're told that Urban Donlevy is the Amicus project manager, whose responsibilities include financing, construction, and banking. Perhaps as the project manager, Mr. Donlevy could shed some light on why Miners Construction was collecting bids from subcontractors several months before the Saskatoon Health Region approved this deal.

So to the minister: just how many connections are there between the Sask Party and the Amicus deal? And are these close Sask Party connections the reason it was full steam ahead and contracts were being let months before the Saskatoon Health Region approved this deal?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, that member has again made accusations that are absolutely unfounded and untrue, Mr. Speaker, when she talks about the contract that was given to Miners Construction. I'll explain from, again, Paul Ellis, the chairperson of the Catholic Health Ministry, the process that was selected . . . used to select Miners Construction. The process used to select Miners Construction involved the interview of firms in Saskatoon to identify . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The member from Regina Walsh Acres will allow the minister to respond to the member's question. The Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — It goes on to say that firms in the Saskatoon area . . . to identify a firm prepared to offer a fixed-price contract for the construction of Samaritan Place. Miners Construction was the only firm prepared to offer this price guarantee. Mr. Speaker, given that, that's why this firm was selected. It goes on to say, "Any allegations that there was outside influence on our board or the selection of Miners Construction is completely false, [Mr. Speaker]." She can twist and spin all she wants, Mr. Speaker, but she is completely off base.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health wants Saskatchewan people to believe all of these connections between the government and Amicus are just a coincidence and that we have no cause for concern and that I shouldn't be asking these questions. But there's just too many connections, Mr. Speaker. Now we learn that the Amicus project office is located in the same hallway as the Minister of Justice's constituency office, the same Minister of Justice whose brother got the electrical contract.

So to the minister: does he really expect people to believe that all of these connections are just a coincidence? And just how many coincidences are there? And maybe, Mr. Speaker, we need to ask the Sask Party MLAs to all table their family tree, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, that question was absolutely ridiculous. Down the hallway? Are you kidding me? Mr. Speaker, the member, the Justice minister's brother who owns a electric company, bid on a contract that was tendered by Miners . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The member from Prince Albert Northcote will come to order. Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the firm that was selected to do the electrical work in Samaritan Place went through a tendering process. It was \$140,000 less, cheaper, less than any other electrical firm, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't know if we should have not selected that firm because he had

connections to the Minister of Justice. Maybe we should have spent a couple hundred thousand more just so there was no connection there, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — So, Mr. Speaker, we have the Minister of Health having a little chat about the Amicus deal over a year ago. Then we have the contractor, Miners Construction, letting out contracts in January. And by the way, Miners is untendered. And then we have an MOU [memorandum of understanding] with the Ministry of Health after all of this and then we have the health region approve it in May. But the dirt was already being moved on April 1st.

Now you know, the minister and the government can solve this little problem. All they have to do is lift the blackout. When is the government going to give us all of the material if the government so chooses? And that way we won't be asking as many questions, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the member opposite would do with her time if she wasn't in here asking questions day in and day out and trying to spin this, weave, and a story about insider influence, Mr. Speaker, when nothing could be further from the truth. The chairperson . . .

The Speaker: — Order. The member from Regina Walsh Acres continues to interfere with the ability of the ministers to respond. I ask members to allow the minister to respond.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the chairperson from the Catholic Health Ministry has written and said there's absolutely no influence. They're unfounded, the accusations that the members opposite are making. They're making these accusations against some of the most well-respected families in the Saskatoon area that have done great work for disabled in the area, Mr. Speaker, have done great work around the whole Saskatoon area. It's unbelievable. They continue to try and spin this and spin it to try and make a story out of it, Mr. Speaker. But the accusations are absolutely unfounded.

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

Contract with Information Technology Office

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question is to the Minister Responsible for the Information Technology Office. Mr. Speaker, a senior official in the Information Technology Office, William McMorris, is also the president of a closely held company registered as Common Sense Consulting Ltd. In 2009-2010, Common Sense received over \$216,000 in contracts from the Information Technology Office.

To the minister: can he tell us what services were provided under that contract?

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

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This question is clearly along the same lines of trying to smear the business people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. The specific details of this one contract, Mr. Speaker, I cannot respond to that question so I will take notice.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why the minister can make all these assumptions about allegations that haven't been made when he doesn't know anything about the contract; he has to take notice of it.

When the minister comes back to answer the question about what services are provided under this contract of the office that he's responsible for, could he also provide information to the Assembly on whether the contract has been renewed for 2010-2011 and at what cost?

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

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, again, Mr. Speaker, the detailed nature of this question, I will take notice.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, according to the government directory, Mr. McMorris is the executive director of customer services for the ITO [Information Technology Office]. He's also president of a company under contract with the ITO, and I'm sure the minister and the government will understand why this might give rise to some concerns amongst the public.

To the minister: has Mr. McMorris been hired as an executive director of community services or customer services? And if so, on what date did his employment begin?

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

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Again, Mr. Speaker, I take notice of the question.

[14:30]

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

Mr. Quennell: — When the minister is prepared to advise as to who works in his office and who does the work in his office by contract, the minister can also advise as to one other detail of the contract, if he would be willing. As the Assembly appreciates, the opposition has some concern with untendered contracts. So I'm sure the minister will understand why we have questions about the contract between ITO and Common Sense Consulting. Can the minister advise if that contract was tendered?

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

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, I take notice of the question.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Housing

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, renters across the province are struggling to make ends meet, thanks to the rising rents and low vacancy rates. Many people can't find a place to live or are moving in with friends and family. Some are couch surfing, moving from place to place with no stability and no security.

A study by the Conference Board of Canada shows that the problem of overcrowding in housing is particularly bad in northern Saskatchewan where 18 per cent of all homes have six or more people living in them. To the minister: what is her government doing to help northern families to deal with overcrowding in northern Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, our government has put money into locations like Meadow Lake. We put money into Prince Albert. We put money into the northern areas. Mr. Speaker, we have talked about the importance of making sure that people have money to spend in their pockets and so we've made sure that there is . . . Our employment rate is lower and we have more people working in Saskatchewan than ever.

Mr. Speaker, we've also made sure that people have more money after personal income tax deductions. We've spent over \$161 million of provincial and federal money to make sure that there are housing units across Saskatchewan. We have 700 more affordable housing units in Saskatchewan than we did when those members opposite were in power. And if I remember correctly, there was only 58 units of housing built under the NDP [New Democratic Party] in the last year they were in government.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, many people who are couch surfing are people trying to change their lives. Some may be recovering from abuse or addictions. All too often however, they find themselves living in situations that expose them to the very things that they are trying to leave behind. They are put at risk to resume their former lifestyle, all because they can't afford a place to call home.

To the minister: why is her government making it harder for people who are just trying to live their lives, all because she won't take action to adjust the rising rents and the lack of affordable housing in northern Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, we understand that a common thread among some of the, many of the issues we have is housing. We've talked about that and we've addressed the issue in many ways.

Is there more to be done? Yes, there definitely is. But we've increased the money for housing programs since we've become government by 45 per cent — 45 per cent higher than when they were in government. We've helped people receive home ownership. We've helped 2,900 families in low to moderate incomes have the health and safety and efficiency of their home increased. We've increased shelter rates and we've increased the Saskatchewan rental housing supplement four times since we've been government and we've indexed them both to the cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, is there more to do? Yes, there is. Are we working with the members in this province? Yes, we are, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, a lot of these homes are not just overcrowded. The conditions in many of them are simply shocking. The Conference Board of Canada reports that 38 per cent of these homes in northern Saskatchewan suffer from . . . [inaudible] . . . plumbing and wiring or deficiencies of plumbing and wiring, or they need structural repairs to walls, floors, or ceilings.

The report describes the situation as dire, and the people who have called my office would agree. To the minister: why is her government forcing nearly one in two northern families to live in substandard housing?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, to the members opposite and to the people in northern Saskatchewan, we understand that there is an issue and we've been dealing with it. That's why we've made sure that there are 2,900 people who've had their health, safety, and energy efficiency of their homes looked at.

But, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's interesting that the members opposite . . . In fact one of their former members, minister Bob Pringle, said of affordability issues under the NDP, the issue was not addressed. And when the NDP did finally get around to dealing with the issue in 2007, they had a task force. They undertook a task force but they kept the findings of that task force a secret, Mr. Speaker. The NDP didn't bother helping Saskatchewan's struggling citizens get shelter. They built 58 affordable housing units in the last year they were government; we've completed over 700.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, we see such a number of people waiting, just about 1,000 people, residents of our province, but also in northern Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, talk is cheap, and these answers are of no help to northerners. Now will the minister admit that the North is not a priority for the government? And where is her plan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, the plan we have, we presented to the people of the province in 2007 — the election plan that got us in a position of government and left them sitting on the other side of the House, a plan that included

making sure that we could take 80,000 people off the tax rolls, a plan that . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The minister's actually fairly close to the Speaker's Chair and I'm having difficulty catching some of the answer. I'd ask the members to allow the minister to respond to the question.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, there is a plan and the people of the province know it. I think in fact the last polling numbers show that the people of the province know that something was done.

We've more than doubled the numbers of seniors eligible for benefits under the seniors' income plan. We more than doubled the amount available to low-income seniors through their plan. We've increased the amount of money for utilities to the transition employment assistance. We've doubled the caregiver tax credit. We've got infirm dependent tax credit and supplement disability tax credit. Mr. Speaker, is there more to do? Yes, there is. Are we working on the plan? Yes, we are.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 159 — *The University of Regina Amendment Act, 2010*

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 159, *The University of Regina Amendment Act, 2010* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for Advanced Education and Immigration has moved that Bill No. 159, *The University of Regina Amendment Act, 2010* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Again thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table answers to questions 412 through 418.

The Speaker: — Answers to questions 412 through 418 are tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 157

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Boyd that **Bill No. 157 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity today to speak to Bill No. 157. Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 157 is *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*, introduced for second reading on November the 22nd, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 157 is a companion to Bill No. 156, Mr. Speaker; 156 is a companion piece of legislation that has been sent to committee and that we will be studying at greater length in the coming weeks, Mr. Speaker. But I think it's important today that we review the basis for Bill No. 157, the Bill in front of us today, Mr. Speaker, in light of the Bill No. 156, its companion piece.

I want to acknowledge the Minister of Energy and Resources's comments, Mr. Speaker, when he introduced both of these Bills on November 22, Mr. Speaker, because a number of the things that the minister said, I think we will find agreement with, Mr. Speaker. And at the same time, there are a number of things left unsaid that we need to ensure the minister and the government members in the future will review and examine before we complete our work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we all know the oil and gas sector, very important to the province of Saskatchewan. I'll outline some of my thoughts in that regard in a few minutes. The oil and gas sector, Mr. Speaker, has been a part of the revenue base of this province for many, many years, Mr. Speaker, and obviously will continue to be so in the future.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we also know that in addition to oil and gas, the mineral sector generally, Mr. Speaker, whether it's potash, uranium, diamonds, rare earth minerals, Mr. Speaker, these are all matters that are important to the future of this province and our ability as a province to ensure financial support for programs like health care, education, highways, and social services, Mr. Speaker, to name but a few.

In his opening remarks at second reading, the Minister of Energy and Resources said, "... oil and gas and indeed all of Saskatchewan's vast natural resources continue to drive this province forward." He goes on to say, the delivery of important

social programs and infrastructure depend on these revenues, Mr. Speaker, and he indicated:

The province has earned a reputation with industry for creating a positive business environment for resource development. Our royalty and tax regimes have earned praise from the industry for their certainty and for their stability.

Well, Mr. Speaker, a number of things from those short remarks from the minister. Most importantly, when we review this legislation or we review any legislation regarding oil and gas, minerals, or other resources, Mr. Speaker, we know that industry wants certainty and consistency. That certainty, Mr. Speaker, comes out of development that industry can count on — not development from environmental or a land perspective, Mr. Speaker, but development of public policy. They need certainty there, Mr. Speaker. They need certainty of what they're paying for. They need certainty about a time frame. They need certainty about their ability to get things done, Mr. Speaker.

And the oil and gas sector is one that's had a world history and world experience, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with various types of governments, various types of political regimes, Mr. Speaker. And certainly those that have certainty attached to the process are ones that have proven to be the most successful.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that the oil and gas sector which, as I said, has had world experience, knows that there's a huge difference in doing business in Nigeria versus Norway, in doing business in Venezuela or doing business in Canada, Mr. Speaker. And industry will applaud efforts by governments that ensure that there's a regulatory process in place that provides for some certainty.

[14:45]

So, Mr. Speaker, it's not that we need less regulation or less process, Mr. Speaker. We need to have regulation and process that's completely understandable, that's transparent, and that allows for this certainty and, as the minister says, stability. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, governments acting on behalf of the people of their jurisdiction — in our case the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker — the people of the jurisdiction need to have some certainty too that their government is acting in the interests, the long-term interests of the people of the province or the people of the country, Mr. Speaker.

If we look at the history of the oil and gas sector around the world, Mr. Speaker, we know that in countries like Nigeria, the oil and gas industry — where there were few regulations or few rules — are able to go in, do things that ultimately did not help. Rather they hindered, penalized, and in fact hurt the people of Nigeria, Mr. Speaker.

So people want their governments to also ensure there is regulation and process in place that not only provides certainty for the industry but also provides certainty for the public. If there's a fair royalty paid — the resource, after all, belongs to the people, Mr. Speaker — if there's a fair royalty that's paid and it's agreed to and understood, then there's a net benefit, Mr. Speaker, for the public.

And we all know that the Minister of Energy and Resources understands that phrase “net benefit” today better than he did some time ago, Mr. Speaker. And some would argue that in fact the phrase “net benefit” has not been fully defined yet, Mr. Speaker. But regardless of the circumstances, ultimately the public wants to see net benefit applied to the resource sector — the net benefit to the owner of the resource, Mr. Speaker.

So you’ve got two parties, Mr. Speaker: the industry, which this province respects and wants to encourage, and the public, Mr. Speaker, who wants to know that their government is taking their long-term interests to heart.

What do I mean by this, Mr. Speaker? Let’s just have a look for a minute at the budget that this government, the Sask Party government, brought down in March of last year, Mr. Speaker. This is a budget that said the revenues for the province of Saskatchewan would be \$9.9 billion for the 2010-2011 year budget — \$9.9 billion, Mr. Speaker. The taxes collected by this government or expected to collect by this government, add up to \$4.8 billion, Mr. Speaker, or roughly 49 per cent of total revenues.

So if the public expects that there’s going to be funding for health care, i.e., long-term care facilities or ambulance services or doctors in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, or if the public expects that there’ll be funding for education — teachers in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker, educational assistants, program for special-needs students, or even a heating system in a school like in Preeceville, Mr. Speaker — then we need to ensure that there’s funding available to support that. Health care, education, even municipal governments, Mr. Speaker, or for firefighters functioning within our communities, Mr. Speaker, there needs to be funds available for that.

So on a budget of \$9.9 billion, taxes account for only 49 per cent of the total revenue that this government expects to collect or 4.8 billion, Mr. Speaker. How much do our non-renewable resources bring in for revenues, Mr. Speaker? Well in this case, in the 2010-11 budget, the government is expecting \$2.1 billion in revenue or roughly 20 per cent of the total funds that this government wants to spend over the course of the year.

Now we all know that this government miscalculated two years ago on potash revenue, Mr. Speaker. They wanted 20 per cent of total revenues two years ago. The Sask Party government wanted 20 per cent of total revenues to come from potash, Mr. Speaker, and they were wrong. They were wrong by \$2 billion. As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, 13 long-term care facilities — replacement beds in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker — announced a year prior, had to be postponed, Mr. Speaker, or effectively cancelled until such time as the government wished to bring them forward again, Mr. Speaker.

The loss of resource revenue, Mr. Speaker, directly affects the ability of governments to deliver education, health care, municipal, or infrastructure services, Mr. Speaker. And non-renewable resources in this province, in this current year’s budget, make up 20 per cent of the total revenues of the government, Mr. Speaker.

So tax revenue at 49 per cent is not enough to run the province of Saskatchewan’s programs, Mr. Speaker. So the oil and gas

sector, the mining sector, the non-renewable resource sector, Mr. Speaker, very important to the people of Saskatchewan, very important to the delivery of services to the people of Saskatchewan.

So government has to recognize and realize why it is therefore that the public wants its government to get this right. It wants to make sure that, on the one hand, industry is able to do what it needs to do because without that industry and the resource . . . or the revenue . . . The ability of the resource companies to provide revenue to the province, Mr. Speaker, is important so that the programs that people rely on can be delivered. Simple things like library services in our community, Mr. Speaker, things like the firefighters, things like keeping a heating system on in a school, Mr. Speaker, or as important as providing doctors in rural Saskatchewan — Mr. Speaker, this all depends on our resource revenues.

Well the last government, Mr. Speaker, between 2003 and 2007, understood this process extraordinarily well. Right across the province, the previous premier of Saskatchewan talked about the importance of getting this formula correct, that without economic progress, there could not be social progress. And, Mr. Speaker, again, it’s that social progress, the programs that government provides to ensure that vulnerable people are cared for, Mr. Speaker, that’s what the public wants their government to do.

So, Mr. Speaker, in 2005, members of the public will remember, there was an economic summit in the province of Saskatchewan — Saskatchewan centennial year — an economic summit that members of the Saskatchewan Party boycotted, Mr. Speaker. They said, this is a useless exercise. Well, Mr. Speaker, that useless exercise was attended to by mostly the non-renewable resource sector. They made presentations to government, Mr. Speaker, presentations that said we need certain things done to improve our ability to provide revenues to the Government of Saskatchewan to deliver its programs to the people of Saskatchewan.

The government between ’05 and ’07, Mr. Speaker, listened very carefully to the presenters from the resource sectors and, Mr. Speaker, promptly, promptly brought about the corporate capital tax changes that in 2007 led to a tremendous amount of new investment in the province of Saskatchewan. Investment, Mr. Speaker, that led to the establishment or creation of a \$2.3 billion surplus and direct deposit into the Fiscal Stabilization Fund — which it was called at that time, Mr. Speaker — a fund that the government was able to use for either rainy day purposes down the road or to finance one-time infrastructure support, Mr. Speaker.

So the industry knows the value of some certainty, and the corporate capital tax program, Mr. Speaker, provided additional certainty. And the industry stepped up to the plate and after that tax benefit was provided by government, they brought their investment into the province of Saskatchewan. They responded quickly and immediately to that call by government: we’re doing something to promote economic progress; let’s see some economic progress. And that is exactly what happened.

So, Mr. Speaker, some things happened in November and government changed. The Minister of Energy and Resources

said some interesting things, Mr. Speaker, in a couple of places after that election. In committee, in committee here in the Legislative Assembly, the Minister of Energy and Resources said, the NDP government from '03 to '07 got something right, Mr. Speaker. They got the regime for oil and gas right, Mr. Speaker.

Also in Lloydminster, at the opening of the Husky oil new office, headquarter office, Mr. Speaker, the representative from Husky Oil from Hong Kong said he was really pleased with the former government's oil and gas regime, Mr. Speaker. And the Minister of Energy and Resources subsequently is quoted as saying, "the NDP got that right."

So, Mr. Speaker, the oil and gas sector has already indicated support for the regime in Saskatchewan that deals with regulation, legislation, and process, Mr. Speaker. But this stuff evolves. It always evolves. As technology changes, which it certainly is, and as matters change in other jurisdictions, Saskatchewan must keep up with that.

So, Mr. Speaker, this evolution of regulation, this evolution that's taking place, Mr. Speaker, in technology, has to be addressed by the Government of Saskatchewan. I wanted to indicate one other thing in this regard, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the minister's comments on this Bill. He talks about . . . I just can't find the quote here quickly, Mr. Speaker, but the minister referred to the fact that the industry was pleased with the way in which the former department of Industry and Resources and now the Ministry of Energy and Resources has managed its communications and activities with the oil and gas sector.

Earlier in this session of the legislature, I had occasion to ask the Minister of Energy and Resources if there had been significant changes in senior staff or in the administrative team over at Energy and Resources after the Industry and Resources transfer took place. And the minister indicated no, there had not been much change.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think this is another significant reason why the oil and gas sector is comfortable with working with the people of Saskatchewan, because the team that they found worked well with them between '03 and '07 under the New Democratic Party government is the same team that they're dealing with now under the Sask Party government since 2007.

So the process has pretty much stayed the same. The people have still pretty much stayed the same, Mr. Speaker, and I think that's part of the consistency that industry is looking for. Remember I said industry was looking for certainty and consistency, and so both of these things bode well.

Now the minister, in introducing Bills 156 and 157, indicated in his remarks that the ministry had consulted with industry, Mr. Speaker. That's the way it should be. That should be happening all of the time. And as they reach consensus on changes, well indeed those changes, that consensus should be moved forward to the political people — the Ministry of Energy and Resources and, Mr. Speaker, ultimately the Legislative Assembly here in the province of Saskatchewan. So, Mr. Speaker, again this process is evolving as it should. The ministry administrative team has met with industry, and this legislation appears to be developed in regards to that consultation.

Now the thing that I'm uncertain about, Mr. Speaker, is how far did that consultation move into the realm of the minister's office? And obviously the opposition parties, Mr. Speaker, have not yet had the opportunity to speak with industry.

Mr. Speaker, are you looking for me to sit? I will do so.

[15:00]

The Speaker: — I'd like to thank the member from The Battlefords, and I ask members if they would allow leave for the Speaker to introduce a group of guests who have joined us.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Toth: — I thank the members for the opportunity of introducing to you a group of students from the grade 4 class in Kipling. They're accompanied by their teacher, Robyn Roy-Hampton. I understand they have spent some time at Agribition today. And there is 19 students, a good number of chaperones, and being at Agribition with that crowd I think you do need a number of chaperones.

Today accompanying the teacher and her students are Murray and Nicole Lyons, Colleen Currie, Carlo Roppel, Kevin Marton, Chris Toth — yes, he's my nephew — Glenn Kuhn, Sarah Dayman, and Sarah Johnson. I'd like you to . . . Oh, and his son, Sam, has joined us as well. I won't go through the rest of the students.

But I'd like the members to help me in welcoming the students to their Assembly. I look forward to joining them for photos and an opportunity just to discuss the process and the procedure in the Assembly.

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

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 157 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010* (continued)

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And a fine looking group too, I must admit.

Back to my discussion on Bill No. 157, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*, Mr. Speaker, just a few more things. Again, based on what we've heard in the past, Saskatchewan has indeed developed a very good working relationship with the natural resource sector, not just the oil and gas but mining. I think members opposite will remember that in 2006 the Fraser Institute did a study and a report indicating that Saskatchewan was the best place in the country in which to do mining, Mr. Speaker.

There's reasons for that. It's because the people in the department respect the industry. The government respects the industry. And more importantly, Mr. Speaker, the industry

respects this process of setting up consultation and developing certainty and consistency over the years.

But now, Mr. Speaker, we have a new Bill that's brought in, a Bill that the minister indicates is going to move us closer to processes that occur in other provinces. And of course as I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, there's nothing wrong with that — as the technology evolves and as processes evolve and people reach agreements on these things, Mr. Speaker, that we move forward.

But there is reason to have some degree of skepticism as we look at this, Mr. Speaker, because the minister makes it very clear in his remarks that this is one of what he calls an early deliverable under the New West Partnership. Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all I think we all know there are concerns about the detail of the New West Partnership in general. We also are aware that there are a number of initiatives that were under way in discussions with the province of Alberta and the province of British Columbia, even before the Premier decided to sign a TILMA-like [Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement] deal that they now call the New West Partnership.

And every member will remember that, prior to the election, the Saskatchewan Party and the now Premier — the then leader of the opposition, the member from Swift Current — indicated that there was no way they were going to sign TILMA, Mr. Speaker. Well without any consultation, this government went ahead and signed a TILMA agreement that they now call the New West Partnership. And the minister has introduced a Bill here that he said is one of the government's early deliverables of the New West Partnership.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I fully expect that because of the complexity of this piece of legislation and the fact that it's following along discussions that were already under way with regards to Saskatchewan becoming a partner in the Petroleum Registry of Alberta, a joint government and industry strategic alliance that enables Canadian upstream oil and gas producers to carry out their complex business and regulatory activities in an efficient and seamless manner, Mr. Speaker, I expect that this process of developing Bills 156 and 157 was in place before the New West Partnership was signed and they're simply rolling it out as one of the early deliverables. It's sort of the low-hanging fruit, Mr. Speaker.

Just because this legislation or this process might work as a joint provincial initiative doesn't mean that every joint provincial, interprovincial initiative under the New West Partnership would be equally supportable, Mr. Speaker, or equally beneficial to the people of Saskatchewan. We already know that in some cases we have professionals indicating that the New West Partnership leads to a downgrading of certification in the province of Saskatchewan. We know, Mr. Speaker, that there were concerns raised under TILMA about municipal government policies, about the ability of Crown corporations to operate, Mr. Speaker, tendering processes between governments, Mr. Speaker. All of these things now fall under this New West Partnership Agreement.

And, Mr. Speaker, while the government may want to use this legislation or this new agreement with industry to tout the New West Partnership, Mr. Speaker, I don't think Saskatchewan

people should be fooled into believing that this means that everything under the New West Partnership is going to work, Mr. Speaker.

This government is notorious for its lack of consultation and therefore, Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure that we also consult with all of those affected by this legislation, Mr. Speaker — all of those affected either in industry or in the public. Because let's remember my earlier remarks, Mr. Speaker, in that there are two parties here that government has to be responsive to. Number one, I repeat, is industry because we need them to operate, invest, create jobs, and create revenue for the people of Saskatchewan. And two, there's the public of the province who wants to ensure that we're getting a fair return and that the companies that are extracting resources from the land — resources that belong to the people — that they're doing so in a way that respects the people, respects the environment, respects the custom, culture, and heritage of the land under our feet and the resource that is underneath that land, Mr. Speaker.

So despite the fact that the government indicates there's been consultation on this Bill, consultation with department officials in any case, Mr. Speaker, we need to have further consultation. We need to ask a number of questions.

And, Mr. Speaker, secondly — and I think this is very important because the minister did not address this aspect of the legislation in his second reading remarks — we need to understand the total impact of the provisions in this legislation, the impact, Mr. Speaker, not only on the resource revenues for the province but on all of the other activities that take place when there is extraction of a resource from our lands, Mr. Speaker, and that there could be an impact on the environment. There could be an impact on local culture and tradition.

We do have laws in this province, Mr. Speaker, that were there to protect certain areas of the province, for example the Great Sand Hills in the southwest part of the province, Mr. Speaker. And we know that there are already restrictions, because of that legislation, on the extraction of any oil, gas, or minerals. It doesn't prevent the extraction of resources, Mr. Speaker, but it ensures that there are protections there in any case.

If this legislation expedites any process or facilitates a process and it detracts from some other process, Mr. Speaker, then we've got to know that in advance and prepare mitigation measures if required.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think as we look at this legislation, we have to ensure that all of the things that I've talked about — respect for the industry and what the industry does for our province, respect for the people of Saskatchewan who own the resource and want a fair return, and respect from both parties, respect on government — that must ensure that we put together a regime that will allow both those things to function in balance for the people of Saskatchewan and for the industry.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think I've indicated there's more work to do on this Bill. I know that some of my colleagues will wish to speak on this Bill before we send it to committee. I know that we need to consult further with industry and with the public. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move adjournment of debate on this Bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from The Battlefords has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 157, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 158

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert that **Bill No. 158** — *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak to *An Act to amend The Correctional Services Act*, Bill No. 158. And as I understand this Bill, what this piece of legislation does is gives the Corrections and Public Safety the authority to establish communication systems within correctional facilities that basically monitors inmates' communication with people outside the institution. As well, I understand that there are also communication monitoring systems to monitor inmates' communication with each other.

And the minister gave some fairly compelling arguments in his introduction, second reading speech, about why it was necessary to basically listen in on suspicious phone calls, the argument being that there are times within the correctional centre when inmates may be conducting business that's not legal, and that there have been examples of ongoing gang activity and drug dealing that's gone on within our four provincial institutions.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that it's fair to say that in many respects the opposition doesn't have a difficulty with this particular piece of legislation, but there's some what-ifs that I think we need to be aware of. Now I understand from the Bill that was introduced in the House by the minister that there will be some organizations or agencies that inmates will be able to communicate with that won't have this ongoing monitoring by the correctional officials and that, as I understand it, this will be put into regulations.

And I just want to make some suggestions about who inmates should be able to communicate with without the state listening in on their conversations. Obviously legal council would be one area that inmates should be able to have a private discussion with and not have Big Brother listening in.

The other group or other area where people may want to have counsel is with a religious person who is providing them with some ongoing support. And I'm thinking of a priest, a minister, a reverend — that kind of person — a spiritual advisor, an elder. There may be times when an inmate for whatever reason needs to talk to their spiritual advisor, and I don't think the state should be monitoring that conversation.

Mr. Speaker, there are also times . . .

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

Mr. Trew: — To ask leave to introduce guests.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Coronation Park has asked leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Trew: — I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for Saskatoon Nutana for yielding momentarily. Earlier this day I had the joy of introducing some Trews from Govan: my older brother, Ray, and his wife, Joanne. Ray left to get the vehicle, but he didn't get younger. That's in fact his son, Steven, or their son, Steven, who has been able to join us now. So joining Teigan, Melissa, Tristen, and Joanne is my nephew, Steven.

And it's indeed an honour, a treat for me to have Steven come and see the legislature and see some of the work that we've done. I know that in visiting briefly with the rest of the Trew clan came here, they really enjoyed their tour of the Chamber and enjoyed to watch the proceedings. So, Mr. Speaker, through you I want to ask all members to join me in welcoming my nephew, Steven, for his visit to the legislature.

[15:15]

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

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 158 — *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010* (continued)

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So there may be other people that an inmate may want to speak to. And I think that we need to have guarantees that those conversations won't be listened in upon — lawyers obviously, spiritual advisors. I'm also thinking of ombudsmen, child advocate, independent officers of this legislature, as well as perhaps there have been times when inmates in the local correctional facility have contacted members of the legislature in their office. I think that those conversations that they may have with a member of the legislature shouldn't be monitored.

As well as I know that there have been many times when inmates have been trying to make arrangements with an addiction centre to take treatment. I don't think those conversations should be monitored, as well as conversations perhaps with a psychologist that an inmate might be having ongoing discussions with.

I think that there are many, many times in an inmate's life that

they should be able to have private, confidential conversations without some official at Corrections and Public Safety being able to monitor those conversations, Mr. Speaker. So we will want to be assured and we will want to know, you know, who exactly can an inmate have a conversation with without having the state monitor that conversation. Which then brings me to another area that I think we need to address.

There's no question that this legislation raises a lot of questions which I'm not sure are adequately addressed and answered. One of those conversations . . . Will outside parties with whom inmates may want to have a conversation with, are they going to be aware that their conversations are being recorded? I think people will want to know that.

Another question is, will this legislation withstand a court challenge? Now I know the government has indicated that this type of monitoring system is available in British Columbia and I think Alberta. But I would be interested knowing whether anyone, the civil liberties league, whether any of those organizations have launched any kind of court action.

And I think the other compelling question is, who exactly is going to determine that an inmate's conversation is going to be monitored? I think that will be an important question to have addressed by the minister. And we all know that there was a pharmacist recently that accessed personal health information of a former client inappropriately, and I guess an important question is what safeguards are going to be in place to prevent Corrections officials from monitoring conversations just for simple curiosity. And we all know that citizens, we can be curious at times.

Now the other question that needs to be addressed are the fees and costs of this monitoring system. Because as I understand it, all outgoing telephone calls pay between \$1.35 or \$1.85 plus long distance calls to pay for this Texas company's system that's going to be put in or has been put into our facilities. And of course we know that inmates, when they do phone their family members, often those charges are reversed. But perhaps, Mr. Speaker, there are some people that inmates should be able to speak to. I'm thinking of a spiritual advisor, government ministries where they may need to access services as they're leaving the correctional facilities. There may be some institutions that an inmate should be able to talk to, phone, and they don't necessarily have to bear the cost of that telephone call, particularly if they're calling locally.

Mr. Speaker, there's no question that the government has led people to believe that this fee is being put in place, this telephone fee is being put in place to operate this system, and it's being done to enhance public safety. I think that it's pretty clear that the fee is being put in place to pay for the government's initiative, where they brought in this telephone system from Texas. And they're expecting the users of that system to pay for it, and that would be the inmates, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of questions as I said that I think we'll want to address when we get into the heart of the legislation. I know some of my other colleagues want to put their comments on this Bill on the public record. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would move that we adjourn the debate on this Bill

at the present time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 158, *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 144

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 144 — *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak this afternoon to *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*. As the minister remarked in his second reading speech commencing this debate, the original Act was passed in 1973, Mr. Speaker. Those of us who can cast our minds back that far and remember the politics and the culture of the day — and I think I can to a certain extent do that, Mr. Speaker — will note that the environment has come a long way. I know many people are frustrated, and I think I share that frustration personally with the lack of political will to make significant changes in the way our economy functions and the way our society works so as to avoid environmental detriment, if not perhaps disaster in some areas, Mr. Speaker.

And I think we look to what's happening in Haiti today. Well yes, it's partly an earthquake; it's partly a governance issue. But look at the country that they share the island with and the difference between those two countries, and you see the importance of caring for and being stewards for the environment, maintaining your forests and all they support. And whatever the cause or effect, the interconnection between the relative affluence, prosperity, and good governance and the Dominican Republic, compared to those circumstances in Haiti, there is a relationship with the environment and the care that is taken care of the environment, which I think can even be seen when one flies over that island, Mr. Speaker.

But in 1970, 1973, environment was not a word that a person on the street used in conversation. The environment was a term that might be used by certain scientists. It might be used by engineers. It might be used by others as part of the jargon of their profession and occupation, but the environment was taken for granted. The environment, to people earlier in the 20th century, was like water to a fish. It was just there and not considered. It was lived in but not considered.

And in the 1960s still and into the 1970s, the world was our garbage can in every way. Now I know sometimes we see a driver in front of us empty their ashtray onto the street, and for some people, the world still is their garbage can. But that was the common sense that we lived in a very large place. The globe was a big place; earth was a big place. Its resources could not be depleted. Its air could not be polluted. And pollution was a

new concept in the early 1970s.

These are sort of sea changes in how we think when the world in which, the cultural world and how we think culturally about the environment, about where we live as humanity, the world we share with other species of life, the way we think about that, the way my children think about that from the earliest days of their lives is dramatically different than the way that I would have thought about the world, growing up. And I was part of the generation that, among other changes about the way we viewed women's role in society, the civil rights movement, even how, the willingness to question the wisdom of a government going to war, all significantly changed in the years that we call the '60s but maybe go actually from '63-64 to 1973-1974.

And it's in this new world that governments first started to think about pollution, about environment, about conservation of resources. And so in the '80s, we had the wildlife protection legislation come from a Conservative government — the legislation that protected millions of acres of wildlife habitat in the province of Saskatchewan, which this Sask Party repealed in the last sitting of the legislature over the objections of numerous conservation and nature groups, First Nations in the province of Saskatchewan.

And I just want to say in passing, Mr. Speaker, because I do want to return immediately to the Bill that's before the House today on the environment. I want to say in passing that I consider it — and it's only my personal opinion; it doesn't really matter but I want to express this opinion because I spoke at length, I think a couple of speeches on the wildlife protection amendment Act, or at least spoke on a couple of occasions during debate of the day one day and spoke again at some length on the Bill — that the removal of the minister responsible for that Bill from cabinet was an unjust and wrong response.

This is a government that was going to pass that Bill, and did pass that Bill — over the objections not only of the opposition but of conservation groups, including a group led by the Conservative minister of the Environment who brought in the Bill — would not withdraw the Bill, stubbornly, pig-headedly, obstinately pushed for that Bill and then blamed the minister.

Well, Mr. Speaker, some of us on this side of the House were ministers and were responsible, and sometimes current ministers like to pretend that we're still responsible because they don't want to take responsibility for the current situation in the province of Saskatchewan.

So some of us can speak to ministerial responsibility. And we know that the wildlife protection amendment Act that repealed the protection of millions of acres of wildlife habitat was not the Bill of the minister of the Environment of the day, just like this is not the Bill of the Minister of the Environment of the day. It was a government Bill, Mr. Speaker. It was a government Bill.

Now it may have been the minister's responsibility to explain the legislation to the public and to her department. That was her responsibility. But the Bill, the responsibility for the Bill, rests with the entire government. But the government doesn't take

responsibility for its legislation even though it insisted that it pass, even though it turned down every opportunity offered to it by the opposition to withdraw the Bill and deal with the concerns that the public had raised with the Bill.

And, Mr. Speaker, instead the government insisted on passing that legislation, ill-advised legislation, in the view of — well not just this opposition, but — editorial writers, First Nations quoted in *Hansard* by members of the opposition, leaders of the environmental movements of the province of Saskatchewan; and to, instead of protecting wildlife habitat, move the minister responsible for introducing the Bill into the legislature back to the fourth row of the government benches, Mr. Speaker.

[15:30]

That is not the . . . It's a bit of an injustice, Mr. Speaker. And there's a bit of a very small sport, you know, I think, you know, there's the MLAs in the legislature, and there's a few pundits in the press gallery, but you know, there is a very small circle of people who participate in the sport of handicapping ministers of the Crown. You know, this person, good minister? Or did that person step in for that minister and do such a good job you kind of wonder why that minister still has that job? Why isn't that person in that job?

And when you do that handicapping, at least on our side, the minister of the Environment was far, the former minister of the Environment was far from, far, far from the least competent member of the front benches of the Saskatchewan Party government, far, far from that, you know. Whether she would argue that, whether we would argue that she was the best minister in the Sask Party government, I don't know. But she was far, far, far from the worst, Mr. Speaker. But she had, as far as I can tell, she had the job of carrying forward legislation that the government was ill-advised to introduce in the first place, obstinately pushed through. And then, and then we don't lose the legislation, we don't protect the wildlife habitat; we lose the minister.

Mr. Speaker, that doesn't seem to be right to me. I wish the government had done it the other way around. I wish the former minister of the Environment was still answering questions in question period and we didn't have the repeal of the protection of wildlife habitat in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I wish that was the case.

Anyways, you'd think that it would be a line of progress, Mr. Speaker, from the 1970s, early 1970s. I think the current Minister of the Environment might take an offence. I'm not saying that he would do badly in that handicapping process, Mr. Speaker. I didn't mean to suggest that at all. I didn't mean to suggest that at all. I don't think we had to choose between those two, Mr. Speaker. That's my point. That's my point.

Anyways, Mr. Speaker, you would think it would be a continual line of progress from the 1970s when the awareness first started to dawn about the environment and pollution — new concepts really at the time, Mr. Speaker — a continual line of progress from the '70s to the '80s to today. But it's not been a continual line of progress.

Matter of fact, and I just talked about steps back, steps back

from where we were in the 1980s. This government decided to take an enormous step back and repeal legislation that had been brought in, not by our predecessors so much, Mr. Speaker, but by predecessors of the Sask Party government, Sask Party members, many of whom, I understand, still card-carrying Conservatives, go on to the federal Conservative Party. It's the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan that brought in this legislation protecting this land and it is their inheritors that gave up this inheritance, this protection, Mr. Speaker. So the line is not a continual line of protection.

And on another environmental topic, Mr. Speaker, because I do not want to wander very far away from the Bill, the matter of greenhouse emissions, Mr. Speaker, and the targets. I won't speak to the targets set by the NDP government. That government was defeated. We know, Mr. Speaker, the current government likes to remind us of that on occasion.

And I don't want to speak to the climate change fund established by the NDP government. That government was defeated, Mr. Speaker, and this government has found other things to spend that money on. I'm not quite sure what they are, Mr. Speaker, but they have found other places to spend that money.

But I do want to speak to the promise that was made by the Sask Party on their greenhouse gas emissions, Mr. Speaker, because it's not a continual line of progress. It's not a continual line of progress, Mr. Speaker, because they broke their own promise and said, well no, that was just for the election, Mr. Speaker. That was just for the election that we set those targets. Those aren't our targets. Matter of fact, what are their targets, Mr. Speaker?

But to return from the environment, staying on the questions of the environment but return to the Bill, Mr. Speaker, the Bill is a successor, like the wildlife protection amendment Bill, an amendment to current legislation that starts back in 1973, is amended again in 1988 by a government that, whatever its problems with conserving the finances of the province, seemed to have some understanding about the conservation of nature, Mr. Speaker, because they did not repeal the 1970 legislation, Mr. Speaker. They amended it and arguably expanded it to allow for container collection and recycling of other containers than were provided for in the original 1973 legislation.

That money . . . And I think it's the member from Cannington this is making this comment, and I think it needs to be put on the record. The minister did put it on the record. But if the member from Cannington wants me to refer to it as well, that money has been at least recently used as a funding source for beverage container collection recycling programs operated by Sarcan.

Now the minister makes the point that amendments to *The Environmental Management and Protection Act* — also made by the previous minister of the Environment that the government is so proud of that she has been moved to the backbenches — have not been incorporated or have not been proclaimed. They incorporate the liquor control Act, the previous legislation to this Bill, current legislation. But the amendments have not been proclaimed, and it is the wisdom of the government that it would be easier to bring in a new Bill

into this legislature and pass new legislation than to proceed with the proclamation of the amendments, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure why that's the case, Mr. Speaker, and I expect we will not find out until this matter gets to committee, but that may be some time down the road because although I don't really have a lot of comments or remarks to make this afternoon, I know other members may have more to say.

But the primary reason, the primary motive for this Bill seems to be, Mr. Speaker, to retroactively change property and civil rights of residents of the province of Saskatchewan.

That is certainly the power of the legislature. That is the principle of parliamentary sovereignty. As long as it's constitutional, Mr. Speaker, as long as it doesn't violate the Charter of Rights or some other aspect of the constitution of the country, as long as it's constitutional, this legislature, within its constitutional jurisdiction, is supreme. And if this legislature decides that the rights of certain citizens to redress and to compensation through the courts are to be expunged, expropriated, taken away with or without compensation, this Legislative Assembly can do that, Mr. Speaker.

And I can't remember if it was Will Rogers or Mark Twain that said that no man's life or property is safe when the legislature's in session. And I think that's a bit of an exaggeration, and certainly not a phrase that I would adopt, Mr. Speaker. But this is the type of legislation, I think, that the humorist was referring to, the type of legislation that says, well, yes, these were the rules — these were the rules. But we didn't understand the rules that we passed, and now we don't like the rules.

And we don't like the way the rules have operated for a number of years because we have certain obligations, perhaps, under those rules. And well we don't want to live with those obligations. We don't want to . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the member from Cannington is trying to drag a senator's spouse into the debate. I don't know why.

But we don't want to live under those rules any more, and so we're going to change them. And we're not going to just change them going forward, Mr. Speaker. We do that all the time. That's what we do here, to a certain extent. Certainly in the fall, Mr. Speaker, when we're not dealing with the budget, that's what we're doing, is we're changing the rules going forward. And that of course raises debate about what should the rules be, Mr. Speaker? What should they be at all?

Changing the rules, going backwards, is unusual for us, Mr. Speaker, and I don't know if this government's done this before. I wouldn't say that there haven't been governments of every stripe in the history of the province of Saskatchewan who have done this. And I'm not arguing that, in principle, that it's wrong, Mr. Speaker. But I think it needs to be noted more than just in passing when it's done.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know, we can — and I think this maybe was the member of Cannington's point — we can blame lawyers for figuring out how the rules actually read, Mr. Speaker, and . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member of Cannington is right and the rules actually read the way that successive governments have thought they have read, then there's no need for the legislation, Mr. Speaker.

I think the concern about the legislation is that the rules are going to be interpreted by a court, or there's a good probability that the rules are going to be interpreted by a court contrary to the way the government believes the legislature intended. But that, Mr. Speaker, is fine, and as I said, it may be acceptable.

It's certainly principle of parliamentary supremacy that we can just change the rules. But I think the Assembly is reluctant to do that. I think sometimes when the Assembly has done that in the past, it has been fairly controversial, probably more controversial than these suggested amendments.

I think the member from Cannington might rise and enter into this debate. I know it's unusual for a government member to come into a second reading debate, but I think the member of Cannington has a lot to say. Or at least I've inspired him, during my remarks, to make some statements.

The minister in his remarks on the Bill, *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*, refers back to a decision in 1998 by the Supreme Court of Canada. And I think a lot of legislators across the country will remember this decision, Mr. Speaker. It had a radical, if not revolutionary, effect on how governments raise revenues. Because it was the thinking of government prior to that decision that you could have cost recovery and maybe, you know, you didn't have to be too precise about what the costs were compared to the revenues. And the revenues might exceed the actual costs. But that would still be a service fee that would be charged, and that would be something that government could set, you know, as an acceptable fee. No issue about it if you're actually not even recovering your costs.

And then the Supreme Court of Canada said no, well, if actually you're recovering, paying into the general revenues, perhaps, monies beyond what it actually costs to provide that service, well that's not a service charge, not when it's done by government, Mr. Speaker. That's a tax. And so someone with some time on their hands and some incentive to do so now queries whether — and queries in a legal statement of claim, Mr. Speaker — whether the service charges imposed under *The Litter Control Act* may in fact be not a service fee but a tax.

[15:45]

And I think the minister has calculated what the costs of this might be. The surplus charges, the part that isn't cost related, isn't cost recovery, those charges in respect to this litigation referred to by the minister in his remarks is \$2,200. The minister's concerned — and maybe it's because of legal counsel involved; I don't know — that we could be seeing class action in this matter. And if there was such an action, the claim would be over \$1 million, Mr. Speaker.

And it's nice to see actually, just as an aside, this government minding its pennies so well because often we don't see that, Mr. Speaker. Matters that arose today that — in question period — that I wonder whether the pennies are being minded quite as well as they are by this action in respect to introducing this Bill.

The minister said, the potential financial liability going forward. Now this liability is a going-forward liability, Mr. Speaker, and I'll come back to that. A potential financial liability going forward would be \$350,000 per year at risk every

year the legislation's not changed. Well that doesn't require retroactive change, Mr. Speaker, because that's a future liability. So that doesn't justify the retroactive nature of this legislation. In fact this legislation wouldn't have to have a retroactive effect to prevent that evil from occurring.

Now I think that's right, but it seems to me that the minister's remarks conflate the potential loss if the legislation is not retroactive with the potential loss if there is no legislation at all. And if I'm correct about that and a distinction can be drawn here, the cost, the risk . . . Because this claim is not proven. I'm not even sure how far it's advanced. The claim seems to have been reviewed by lawyers in the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General who have recently been reviewing legislation about liquor beverages anyway, Mr. Speaker, and to save the Minister of Justice from breaking the law for even more months.

It's been reviewed by lawyers in the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General. The minister doesn't refer to a statement of defence. So the response to the claim appears to be — and maybe if the member for Cannington joins the debate he can advise otherwise — but it appears to be the government's response to the claim is not a statement of defence. The response to the claim is this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

And that's a little early in the day, unless the lawyers are more than of the opinion, as the minister says, more than of the opinion the actions merit . . . If they actually would go further than that, further than the minister says, and says, well we have no defence. But that's not what the minister said. The minister said, well the action has merit. But so much merit apparently, in the view of the government, that the government's not going to defend and negotiate.

The government is instead going to bring in retroactive legislation, which may avoid the risk of \$1 million being paid to certain Saskatchewan citizens who have been purchasing beverage containers and arguably paying a tax that they are not liable to under the rules. And therefore to save that \$1 million in revenue, the risk of having to pay that, the legislation would retroactively remove that right.

The member from Cannington seemed to suggest that this argument is going around the rules. But if the claim has so much merit that the government will not even file a statement of defence, I think the government is conceding, the government is conceding with this Bill that in fact the rules may very well read as the claimants suggest they read, and that they may very well be entitled to these funds that, as the government says, are used to fund Sarcan recycling and recycling of beverage containers that have a social and environmental value.

There's no question about the value of this program both socially and environmentally, Mr. Speaker, and for the defence of this program, not going forward but retroactively going backwards, that the government has brought in the Bill. Now going forwards of course, yes, the funding for these program is at risk. But going backwards, well we're not going to go back. Surely the government is not going to go back to Sarcan and say, sorry, we paid you money that we weren't entitled to collect and we want \$1 million back. That's not going to happen, Mr. Speaker.

So really what's at risk here is government revenues. And the decision of the government is whether to put at risk that \$1 million that they would have to pay out to the claimants who are business people in the province of Saskatchewan, I understand, or retroactively change the law, Mr. Speaker. And the government has decided to retroactively change the law.

Now when we look at the balance here and we look at the cost spread amongst all the purchasers who might be possible claimants here, there's going to be, I think, with any individual claimant or potential claimant, a relatively small amount. And the \$1 million that . . . I mean I know the government can lose \$1 million pretty quickly, but still it's \$1 million of public money, Mr. Speaker. When we look at that balance, when we look at that balance, I expect that members of the Assembly who are not members of the government, members of the opposition may decide that in this case the reluctance that we have and will always have about retroactivity — and I know I've spoken a little bit at length here on the principle but — I think that reluctance should always be clearly expressed. It's not so clearly expressed in the minister's remarks, perhaps; I think it's there, but I don't think it's very well expressed there. I think that reluctance has to be stated, Mr. Speaker.

It may seem a little ironic to some members of the government benches that the social democratic party in opposition is expressing this concern about retroactive expunging of property and civil rights of small business people in province of Saskatchewan. But it's a genuine concern, Mr. Speaker. And I think it should be a genuine concern to every member of this Assembly, and it should be something that's not done lightly.

And I hope, I hope that the legal opinion that the government has — and I don't expect to see it, Mr. Speaker, so I can only have this faith — I hope that that opinion supports this action, Mr. Speaker. Because it seems to have been the view of the government that there is no defence, that whatever the minister hears or says about the action having merit, that there's more to it than that, Mr. Speaker. Because there doesn't seem to be any suggestion that the government would raise a defence. The only action of the government seems to be . . . to having received that opinion that the minister refers to, having viewed that opinion the minister refers to, is to bring in not unique but unusual legislation in its retroactive nature.

I hope that the opinion that has been delivered to the government — and I can only hope and trust that isn't the case — supports that action, that the government did not have an argument to make in litigation, that the government has not decided to take a . . . to abandon an argument in defence that had merit. Maybe it wasn't a strong argument, maybe wasn't going to be the winning argument, that there was no argument against this claim. Because only that, I think, would justify making the legislation retroactive. You know, Mr. Speaker.

So my concerns perhaps are more the concerns of a lawyer. But I think looking at the remarks and listening to the remarks made by a number of my colleagues, I think across the opposition bench, we are concerned about this matter of retroactivity. I think it's a matter that needs to be discussed more. I know other members will want to address other issues about the legislation, which is of an environmental nature, and not just on its legal aspects. And for that purpose I will move that we adjourn

debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Meewasin has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 144, *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would now move the House adjourn to go to Standing Committee on Human Services.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. This House now stands adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:56.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

International Holodomor Remembrance Week

Krawetz.....	6195
Iwanchuk.....	6196

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Wall.....	6196
Trew.....	6197, 6211
Krawetz.....	6197
Iwanchuk.....	6197
Draude.....	6197
Yates.....	6198
Morgan.....	6198
Lingenfelter.....	6198
Hickie.....	6198
Broten.....	6198
Norris.....	6198
Ottenbreit.....	6198
Toth.....	6209

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Higgins.....	6199
Junor.....	6199
Broten.....	6199
Morin.....	6199
Wotherspoon.....	6200

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Caring Hearts Camp Fall Retreat

Hart.....	6200
-----------	------

Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association

Iwanchuk.....	6200
---------------	------

Saskatchewan Order of Merit Recipients

Kirsch.....	6200
-------------	------

Battlefords Citizen Honoured for Community Service

Taylor.....	6201
-------------	------

Yorkton Manufacturer Heads International Organization

Ottenbreit.....	6201
-----------------	------

Economic Policy

Wotherspoon.....	6201
------------------	------

Chris Knox Foundation

Wall.....	6202
-----------	------

QUESTION PERIOD

Response to Firefighters' Brief

Lingenfelter.....	6202
Hickie.....	6202
Morgan.....	6202

Arrangements for a Long-Term Care Facility

Atkinson.....	6203
McMorris.....	6203

Contract with Information Technology Office

Quennell.....	6204
McMillan.....	6205

Housing

Vermette.....	6205
Draude.....	6205

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 159 — *The University of Regina Amendment Act, 2010*

Norris.....	6206
-------------	------

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Weekes.....	6207
-------------	------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 157 — <i>The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Taylor	6207
Bill No. 158 — <i>The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Atkinson	6211
Bill No. 144 — <i>The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Quennell	6212

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