



SECOND SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

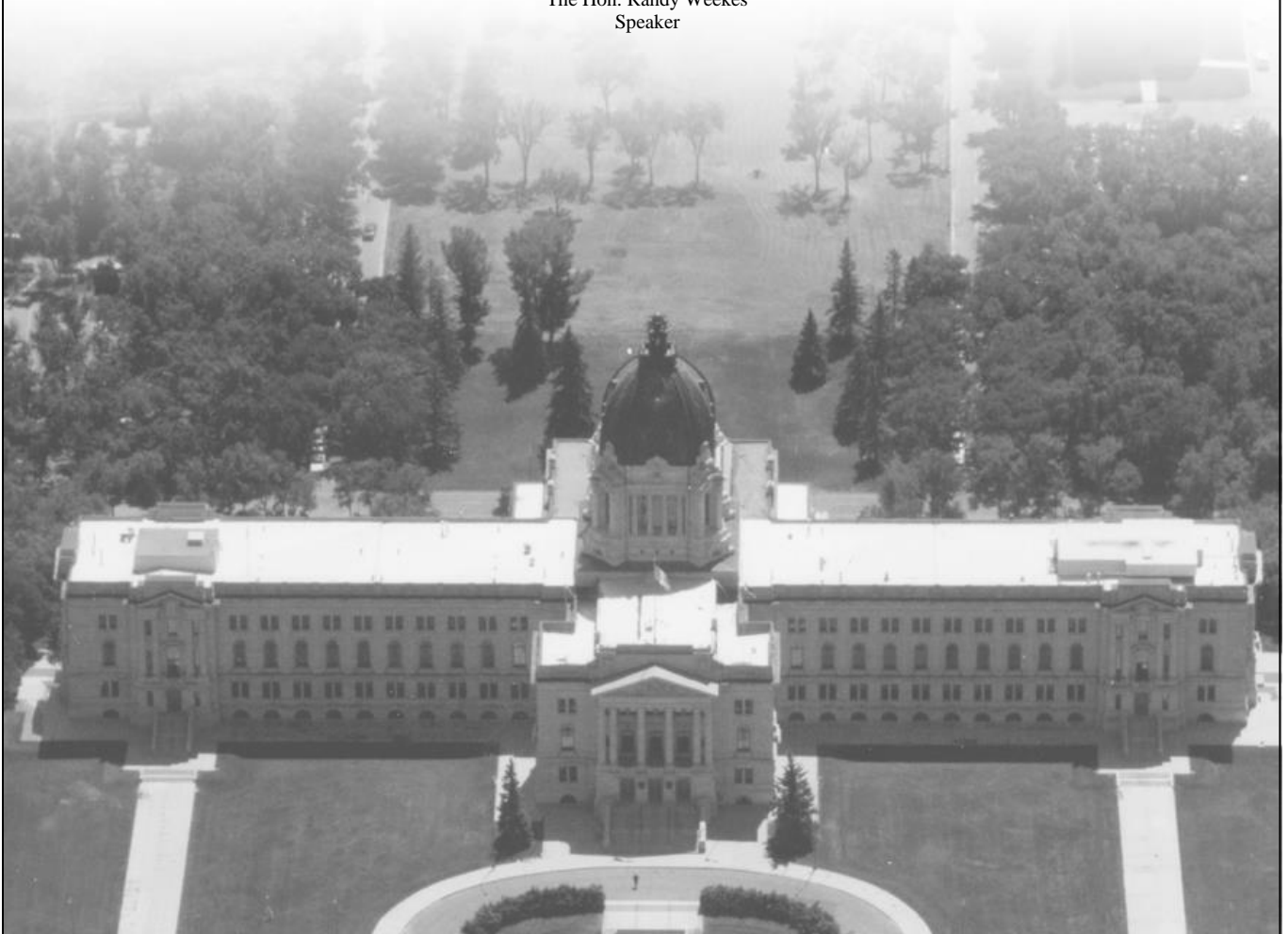
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
2nd Session — 29th Legislature

Lieutenant Governor — His Honour the Honourable Russ Mirasty, S.O.M., M.S.M.

Speaker — Hon. Randy Weekes
Premier — Hon. Scott Moe
Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

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Grewal, Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)	Skoropad, Dana — Arm River (SP)
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Harpauer, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	Stewart, Hon. Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
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Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)	Weekes, Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
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Kaeding, Hon. Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)	Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Keisig, Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)	Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
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Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)
Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	
Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)	Vacant — Athabasca

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 47; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Independent (Ind.) — 1; Vacant — 1

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Gregory A. Putz

Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.

Deputy Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

Sergeant-at-Arms — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING

The Speaker: — We are back in session.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 70

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 70 — *The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2021/Loi modificative de 2021 sur l'Assemblée législative*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet here this evening, and appreciate all those who have come and are sitting here this evening to further the debate on Bill No. 70, *The Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 2021*.

And I'm just going to pick up where I left off before we adjourned earlier this afternoon to talk about my concerns with the precedent that this bill is breaking, the traditions that it is unfolding, and the trust that it is breaking amongst the members of the legislature, the good staff, and in particular those of the Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff as well.

And what we see here is long-standing parliamentary procedure that's being disrespected while there has been no justification. And we on this side of the House remain unconvinced of the need for the wholesale changes that are being proposed with this legislation. We regard it and . . . Well maybe I'll just speak for myself. I regard it as a reckless attempt to centralize power and further, is a distraction, an attempt at overreach at a time when there are many serious matters before the legislature that need to be addressed.

And our very great disappointment of the lack of straightforward answers to legitimate questions of why these changes were necessary, and our deep concern about the added uncertainty and an increased risk that these changes will put us under. And when I say "us," I mean all of us — members in the legislature, all of the staff who work as part of the Legislative Assembly Service staff, the guests that come to witness the proceedings, those that come to peacefully protest — how it puts all of us at risk.

And I acknowledge that we live in a time of increasing polarization. And I think it's incumbent upon the members opposite to provide a full account of why they are proceeding in the manner that they are in the cases of security breaches that have come forward. We need an account of why there has been a lack of consultation through the Board of Internal Economy, and also what other options might have been contemplated instead of this very far-reaching piece of legislation. In all of those deliberations, it is important that the autonomy and

independence of this role be upheld.

And we see even through the media that they are neither convinced of the reasons that have been offered up by the Minister for Corrections, and that this indeed is an attempt to shut down peaceful protest brought about in particular by the peaceful protest that was undertaken by Tristen Durocher on the west lawn the summer of 2020, and the government's dissatisfaction with the decision that came down from the Queen's Bench around the constitutionality of Mr. Tristen Durocher to undertake that form of expression.

I'll get into that in a moment. I'll have much more to say on that. Overall, I remain deeply, deeply concerned for the lack of respect, for the manner in which this bill was brought forward, towards this institution. The lack of respect for the role of the Speaker of this House, our Sergeant-at-Arms, and that this bill is threatening to dismantle the very structures that uphold our great traditions here in the Assembly with the flimsiest of justifications or indeed an entire lack thereof.

I want to move next into another article that is discussing this legislation and raises a number of very important questions in relation to this bill. And in this article it is stated that proposing this legislation ". . . essentially fires Saskatchewan Sergeant-at-Arms Terry Quinn . . . or at least reduces his job to nothing more than a ceremonial one."

The article goes on to say, also clarifying that what's been done in Alberta and BC [British Columbia] with respect to their legislative protective services is untrue. And that in those jurisdictions, their Sergeant-at-Arms is still responsible for the legislative building and grounds security. It's also my understanding that it's not even a fair comparison based on the layout of those Assemblies and legislative buildings compared to our own. And so, it's doubly concerning that such a comparison would be so incorrectly made.

Also highlighted in this article was the fact that not even a ballpark figure of the costs could be provided and that this would be of special interest to people in rural Saskatchewan who have been long clamouring for more policing. And ". . . some of them might be wondering why is it that the governing politicians are getting enhanced policing." Or I suppose at least that might be the perception.

So I'm not sure even how this might play out in constituencies across the province. And I'm also concerned that it could really contribute to the cynicism that already exists to the elected office that we all so proudly serve in. I suppose, also most critically, the article goes on to say is, why the Minister for Corrections:

. . . has not explained why Quinn and his highly regarded staff of professionals that are largely former RCMP officers suddenly aren't doing their job at the Saskatchewan legislature.

What [indeed] should security be doing better?

These things have not been elucidated. I'll have more to say about that point too in a moment. Because as the article goes on to say:

But don't people have the right to peaceful protest?

The reality is that some are simply more welcomed by the government to the legislature and its grounds than others as we saw with the Tristen Durocher and Colten Boushie/Justice for Our Stolen Children teepee protests.

I think that's a valid point, a very valid point. And so while we have a minister for Corrections who is talking about this bill being a proactive response, there is very little that I have heard from the minister or seen in the legislation that would suggest anything proactive is being undertaken with these wholesale changes.

And when asked by reporters to come to the rotunda and talk about it on Wednesday, the Government House Leader, who had tabled this legislation in the Assembly, declined. And that to me is inexcusable.

The last thing I'll maybe point out in this article is that the Minister for Corrections is quoted as saying, "This is a government building, so what can I say? We're the government." Well I just want to clarify something here. This actually isn't a government building; this is a legislative building. And there is a difference. Right? So that's I think really what's largely at the heart of the matter here is the confusion that the members opposite have in understanding the difference. It goes back to the false equivalency I talked about earlier, that this is the people's House, the people's Assembly. And the government is running amok and confusing the two. And I think it's important that that be pointed out.

Okay, so as I was saying, I wanted to just point out a couple more things here. And I've got reams and reams of information from which to draw on to make my comments. And I want to go back to, as I was mentioning earlier, you know, the events of 2014. And there's some *Hansard* reports from the Board of Internal Economy that go back to that time. And there's some items there that I would like to point out in terms of how the issue of security was being discussed at that time.

So as you'll all recall, the Hon. Dan D'Autremont was the member for Cannington, was the Chair of that committee at the time. And in his remarks he identifies that he . . . I won't read in what he had said, but what comes next in *Hansard* I will read in. And those are remarks from the Hon. Mr. Harrison, current Government House Leader and member for Meadow Lake . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh, yes. Thank you.

This is October 28th, 2014. Okay? And so the member for Meadow Lake says:

Yes thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree. You know, as we had discussed briefly in our last board meeting that we wanted to, you know, take a serious look at how we do security here in this building. And this report, I just would note for the record, has been under development for a lengthy period of time and is not just a reaction to what happened last week. But I think our decisions can be informed perhaps to some degree by what happened.

So you know we need to do a better job of security in the building and put the appropriate resources in place to make

sure we're able to do that job, and I know the Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff do a great job. The government though is prepared to move forward, and frankly anxious to move forward with putting in place additional resources to ensure the security of those that work and visit the legislature.

[19:15]

There's not much more to say about that, but just making the point that at this particular point in time we're seeing an acknowledgement of the need for resources and to ensure security at that time.

So then if we move to January of 2015, we have some further discussion on the matter. We just have some further discussion on the matter. There's nothing that I want to sort of say in particular on that report. I'll move to December 6th, 2016. And here I would point out that the Chair of the Board of Internal Economy, the former member for Saskatoon Eastview, at that point indicates:

But last but not least, I also want to make special mention of Terry Quinn, the mighty Quinn, our new Sergeant-at-Arms. This is Terry's first budget presentation to the board, and as all of you know, Terry joined us at the end of June this year. Actually in June, he was here a few weeks before taking over formally his appointment as Sergeant-at-Arms. And Terry comes . . . from executive government.

So we have an acknowledgement of Terry in December of 2016. And I think it might be interesting to hear some of the comments and expressions of appreciation and gratitude that we've heard from members of the legislature over the years. I'll just read in a few, sort of going in reverse chronicle order. July 30th, 2020, end-of-session acknowledgements, member for Meadow Lake: "I want to thank, just very briefly, the number of folks who have already been thanked, but I want to do it again: the Clerk; Clerks; Sergeant-at-Arms."

So a thanks there. End-of-session acknowledgements.

May 18th, 2017, the member for Silverspring-Sutherland, in his expression of thanks said:

The Sergeant-at-Arms, I want to thank you for providing, you and your team, for providing security for us. We feel very safe in this building. This is the people's Legislative Assembly, and you certainly make everybody welcome into this. But on behalf of all of the members here, I want to thank you for making us feel safe here and back at our constituency offices. So thank you very much for that.

June 30th, 2016, expression of thanks by the member for Saskatoon Willowgrove. Again here . . . just find my place:

Also a special thank you to our Sergeant-at-Arms. We welcomed him here not too long ago, although he's a very familiar face in other roles that he's had in the Legislative Assembly. And I want to congratulate him on his retirement and assure him that his presence will be missed in this Assembly.

So I guess that must have been the outgoing one.

Here again, the member for Willowgrove, expression of thanks.
Mr. Speaker, this is on March 14th, 2015:

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to thank the Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff for the work that they do. After the tragic events in Ottawa last October, I think all members of the House, colleagues on this side and opposite, both sides of the aisle, as well as building staff, have gained a new insight into the role you play in the protection of democracy and free debate in this great Chamber.

May 15th, 2014, expression of thanks by the member from Meadow Lake:

I wish to thank the Sergeant-at-Arms for the work that he does and his staff, the commissionaires, for the great job they do.

Always brief.

May 16th, 2013, member from Meadow Lake:

Thank you to the Sergeant-at-Arms, the commissionaires for the work that they do as well — it's greatly appreciated.

May 17th, 2012:

I'd also like to thank the Sergeant-at-Arms and the commissionaires.

May 19th, 2011, the former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from Cannington:

I'd also like to thank the Sergeant-at-Arms and the commissionaires for the duties that they perform in the House and the building.

And that's just a small sample.

So it's quite evident that the Sergeant-at-Arms, the role that is played by that official has been greatly appreciated and acknowledged throughout the years, you know, the last 10 or so. And never at any point was there any suggestion that there was a need to overhaul, dramatically change the structure of the way that legislative protective services are being provided by the Sergeant-at-Arms to this Assembly.

I wanted to next move into a further . . . I do have more to say, but at this time I would like to move to adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — I think the nos have it. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — All right. Well, have it your way. Have it your way.

As I was indicating earlier, I wanted to next touch on a very important decision made by Justice Mitchell, a judgment that was rendered on September 11th, 2020, Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan between Her Majesty the Queen in right of Saskatchewan as represented by the Government of Saskatchewan and the Provincial Capital Commission as applicants, and Tristen Durocher, John Doe, Jane Doe, other persons operating as and in support of "Walking With Our Angels" in Regina, Saskatchewan, and the Chief of Police of the Regina Police Service, Evan Bray, respondents.

In introduction to this decision that was tabled, and I will cite 2020 SKQB 224 dated 2020/09/11:

On July 31, 2020, Tristen Durocher, a young Indigenous man of Métis descent from northern Saskatchewan arrived in Regina following a trek of more than 635 kilometres.

His journey began in Air Ronge, Saskatchewan, almost one month earlier, on July 2, 2020. The purpose of his walk was to bring public attention to the alarmingly high rates of suicide, particularly among Indigenous youth, in Northern Saskatchewan. Tristen felt compelled to undertake this trek following the defeat in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly on June 19, 2020, of *An Act respecting a Provincial Strategy for Suicide Prevention* [Bill 618], a private members bill introduced by Cumberland MLA, Doyle Vermette.

Others sympathetic to Tristen's cause, most notably Mr. Christopher Merasty, and members of an organization named "Walking With Our Angels", accompanied him throughout his walk, and assisted him when he reached his final destination.

Upon arriving in Regina, Tristen went to the grounds of the Saskatchewan Legislative Building located within Wascana Centre, more particularly, the parcel of land commonly referred to as the "West Lawn" . . . There, with the assistance of members of "Walking With Our Angels", Tristen erected a tipi. Inside, the tipi contained among other items, an altar to hold sacred objects, and a sacred fire contained within an above-ground pit. Outside, a portrait gallery consisting of photographs of victims of suicide surrounded the tipi. These photographs were displayed on stakes which in turn had been beaten into the ground.

Tristen . . . [had] began a "restricted calorie intake hunger strike": Affidavit of Monique Goffinet Miller sworn August 4, 2020 at para. 27. The Government of Saskatchewan characterizes Tristen as a "protestor" and his hunger strike as a "protest". Tristen's counsel characterizes it as a ceremonial fast, and Tristen as a "sacred advocate". However, one chooses to characterize Tristen and his actions, he has, since July 31, 2020, maintained a quiet vigil

in his tipi on the West Lawn. To date, no encampment has grown up around this lone structure.

Shortly after it began, Tristen announced his fast would end 44 days later, on September 13, 2020. This 44 day period is symbolic of the number of MLAs who opposed the passage of Bill 618.

On August 1, 2020, Commission Special Constable Marvin Taylor posted a Notice of Trespass under *The Trespass to Property Act*, SS 2009, c T-20.2 [*Trespass Act*], and a copy of the Order of Wilkinson J. issued on September 11, 2018, flowing from her reasons for judgment in *Dubois v Saskatchewan* 2018 SKQB 241. These documents eventually were personally served upon Tristen.

[19:30]

On or about August 6, 2020, the Government and the Provincial Capital Commission jointly initiated this application.

The Government applied for relief under s. 3(1) of *The Recovery of Possession of Land Act* . . . c R-7 [1978] seeking two remedies. First, it seeks possession of the West Lawn. Second, it seeks an order compelling Tristen, along with other members of “Walking with Our Angels” who have joined him, to vacate the West Lawn immediately, and to cease their occupation of that parcel of land.

The PCC seeks an order compelling Tristen and Tristen’s supporters to comply with *The Bylaws of Wascana Centre* enacted initially under *The Wascana Centre Act*, RSS 1978, c W-4 which was superseded by *The Provincial Capital Commission Act*, SS 2017 . . . The PCC grounds its particular request in ss. 7-7 and 7-11 of the *PCC Act*.

Together, the Government and the PCC seek an order finding Tristen in contempt of the prohibitory injunction found in Clause 2 of the 2018 Order. The Government and the PCC rely on Rule 11-26 of *The Queen’s Bench Rules* for this relief.

On August 20, 2020, Tristen filed a Notice of Constitutional Question in which he impugned the constitutionality of Bylaw Nos. 3(b); 8(e); 27(a)(i); 27(a)(ii), 27(a)(iii), and 27(c)(ii), as well as the Notice of Trespass under the *Trespass Act*. Tristen asserts that the Bylaws and the Notice of Trespass violate ss. 2(a), 2(b), and 2(c) of the Canadian Charter of Right and Freedoms, Part I of the *Constitution Act*, 1982, being Schedule B to the *Canada Act 1982* . . . c 11 [otherwise known as the Charter]. He further asserts that as none of the impugned Bylaws qualify as reasonable limitations under s. 1 of the Charter, each should be declared of no force and effect under s. 52(1) of the *Canada Act 1982*.

On September 4, 2020, I heard extensive oral submissions from counsel for all parties to this application, save for Chief Evan Bray, Chief of Police of the Regina . . . [public] Service. Counsel for Chief Bray maintained a watching brief. After a full day of argument, I reserved my decision. However, as Tristen has announced he will end his ceremonial fast and vigil, and leave Wascana Centre, and

Regina, on September 13, 2020, I advised I would provide a bottom-line decision prior to [that] date.

This judgment is intended to do exactly that. I will outline my conclusions on many of the issues raised in this matter but will provide little elucidation. Such elucidation and analysis will appear in more complete reasons for judgment which I will prepare, and file shortly.

As I set out below, I have concluded that the application brought by the Government and the PCC should be dismissed. I conclude that the impugned Bylaws offend Tristen’s rights guaranteed by s. 2(a) and 2(b) of the Charter. I conclude further that the impugned Bylaws do not qualify as reasonable limitations upon those rights as they clothe the Wascana Centre Authority and its delegate with unfettered and absolute authority to grant a permit to public lands, and provide no exemption or accommodation for constitutionally protected political and spiritual expression of the kind at issue in this case. Accordingly, in my respectful view, the impugned Bylaws should be declared of no force and effect under s. 52(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982.

And on it goes. There is some further discussion around the applicability of the *Dubois* case in the result of this application, and Justice Mitchell did determine in many ways the facts presented on this application were unique and, accordingly, considered “. . . the issues raised by Tristen’s counsel on this application afresh.”

Further it goes on regarding, in part C of his decision:

Do the Impugned Bylaws Infringe the Charter?

The Notice of Constitutional Question filed on this application impugned the constitutionality of certain Bylaws identified earlier, and the Notice of Trespass. It is asserted that together they impair Tristen’s rights under s. 2(a) (freedom of religion); s. 2(b) (freedom of expression); and s. 2(c) (freedom of assembly) of the Charter. I conclude that these Bylaws, and the Notice of Trespass, violate both s. 2(a) and s. 2(b) of the Charter. Consequently, it is not necessary for me to address arguments under s. 2(c).

I think that those are incredibly important reasons and justifications presented by Justice Mitchell in his decision. I had initially planned to read the full thing, but my throat’s actually getting a little dry so maybe I won’t. But I’ll maybe just summarize some of these other remarks, yeah.

The next part deals with Tristen’s failure to apply prior authorization, but then it goes on to say that Tristen:

“formed the belief that a permit or exception to the Bylaws to allow our activities could not and would not be made” . . . I cannot say that Tristen was being unduly pessimistic. The tenor of those affidavits would appear to support his view.

With respect to freedom of religion, minister . . . Justice indicates that:

... whether the impugned Bylaws, and the Notice of Trespass, interfere with Tristen's sincerely held religious beliefs in a manner which is neither trivial nor insubstantial. I conclude that they do.

This was a sincere effort at freedom of religious expression, and the Justice goes on to provide some case law to uphold that. Regarding freedom of expression, Justice Mitchell indicates in paragraph [35]:

After reviewing those authorities, and particularly the relevant court's s. 2(b) analysis, I am satisfied Tristen has demonstrated an infringement of his rights under s. 2(b). Section 2(b) protects all forms of expression, except violence. See especially the discussion on this point in *Bracken* at paras 49-54.

Paragraph [37], Justice Mitchell goes on to say:

The public square is, paradigmatically, a place which is traditionally used to express public dissent. See: for example: *Montréal* ... at para 61 and *Bracken* at para 33. The West Lawn of the Saskatchewan Legislative grounds, in my view, plainly qualifies as a public square. Indeed, I can think of no space more worthy of such a characterization.

Accordingly, the appropriateness of any restriction placed upon Tristen's ceremonial fast conducted on this space must be assessed under s. 1 of the Charter.

Further to that he goes on to discuss reasonable limitations, minimal impairment, proportionality of effects. And then in conclusion, beginning in paragraph [49]:

For the foregoing reasons, I find the impugned Bylaws and the Notice of Trespass unconstitutional and declare them to be of no force and effect under s. 52(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

As indicated, I have decided to suspend my declaration of invalidity for a period of six months from the date of this judgment to allow the PCC and the Wascana Centre Authority to craft new bylaws. I have also decided to grant Tristen a constitutional exemption pursuant to s. 24(1) of the Charter so that he may complete his ceremonial fast and vigil without further incident. See: *Corbiere*.

Consequently, the Government's and the PCC's application is dismissed.

In conclusion, I thank counsel for their professionalism, civility and respectful treatment of the many issues raised on this application. The written briefs were uniformly excellent, and their oral submissions very helpful. Their assistance is greatly appreciated.

I appreciate your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, as I read into the record the substantive portions of this decision from Justice Mitchell, Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan, on the case of Her Majesty the Queen in right of Saskatchewan as represented by the Government of Saskatchewan and the Provincial Capital Commission, and Tristen Durocher and etc., respondents, to

highlight the point that there is important reason for there to be the ability for that expression to be occurring here in front of the Legislative Assembly.

And it's certainly my hope that in no way that the legislation in Bill 70 that has been proposed is intending to infringe upon that right that we all cherish and hold so sacredly as citizens of Canada, residents of Saskatchewan. I know that my colleagues on this side of the House will have much, much more to say on this very disturbing bill. And so with that I conclude my remarks.

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, I am quite honoured to be here this evening to talk about Bill 70. And there's a big reason for that, Mr. Speaker, and I think we've heard lots of the reasons discussed already this evening and from my colleagues in opposition. But I think I'm going to start with a couple things that I'll lay down as starting points here for why I'm concerned.

Number one, the starting place that I think we have to begin with — we've heard this already — is that the work done by our Sergeant-at-Arms in his office is phenomenal. We have no reason to doubt the professionalism, the expertise, and the track record of that office in this building.

[19:45]

Mr. Speaker, we have yet to hear any evidence, any reason as to why the current system is not something that we can all be proud of and stand behind. And I challenge the members opposite to analyze the track record, analyze, as I've said, the expertise and the integrity that our Sergeant-at-Arms, the entire office carry out their work on a daily basis. And make a very personal decision, each of us, in our support or rejection of this piece of legislation.

That's why we're here. We're here to represent our constituents. We're here to consider carefully every decision that comes before us. We are not here — in fact I think that the people of Saskatchewan would agree with me — we are not here to simply toe party lines. We are here to represent the people who marked an X next to our names on the ballot. That is a sacred duty to the people of this province. And the people ... I will take this moment to say, yeah, we are here to represent all people. But the act of being elected gives us a duty to do that.

And I do challenge the members opposite to consider carefully with this piece of legislation and all legislation. People do not support toeing party lines when there is no evidence to support that action. We have yet to hear any evidence in this Assembly. We have yet to hear it in the rotunda. We have not heard it, and I believe it does not exist.

So our starting place is this, Mr. Speaker: we have a phenomenal Sergeant-at-Arms who runs his office with integrity and deserves our respect and our support every day. And we have a chance to show that in how we respond to this legislation.

The other starting place that I want to begin with is that the people of Saskatchewan are becoming increasingly concerned with this legislation. You know, and I'll be honest, I think that a little bit

has caught us in official opposition a little bit by surprise. People have spoken. People are concerned. Their concerns are valid and legitimate because this government has not provided a single scrap of evidence as to why the changes included in this legislation are warranted. And so the people have responded with their own concerns. We've seen this in the media. We've seen this across the province in our constituency offices, as we've heard from folks around the province who have major concerns about this legislation and what it means for the future of our democracy.

Now I also want to start by talking just a little bit about my experiences as a new MLA. It's been just over a year, and I know there's lots of new members on both sides. And I want to just share a few of my personal interactions with the Sergeant-at-Arms and his office.

Just like all members after getting elected, we're invited to a meeting with the Sergeant-at-Arms in his office. It's where I received my keys and my key fob, got some instructions on how security works in the building. But that was a meaningful meeting for me. It wasn't especially long, but I could tell that this was an office that operated with extreme integrity, expertise, and honour. And honour, Mr. Speaker. I could tell that this was an office that was here to serve, to serve others. What an important value that is, to engage in our work in service to others. That was not spoken during the meeting, but I could tell that from that initial meeting in the Sergeant-at-Arms' office.

And I'll tell you what I did with that feeling. I knew that there was trust, I knew that there was tradition, and I knew that there was expertise, expertise in that office. And I trusted that.

And over the course of the last year there's been a couple times when I've needed to rely on that integrity and that expertise and that trust that was developed. And I won't go into details, but there was a couple opportunities when I had to call or pop in or send an email to the Sergeant-at-Arms.

One of those was over a little bit of concern for my family and my own home. It turned out not to be a big thing. But the trust that we had developed very quickly, for me to go to the Sergeant-at-Arms with this concern, to share it, to get advice on steps to take, and to know that that advice was not coming from a partisan perspective, was very important to me. Nothing happened with that situation, Mr. Speaker, but it was significant to me simply that I had a trusted office with decades of history and tradition, as well as individual expertise and law enforcement and public safety that I could go to. That was important for me.

But you know who else it was important to? My wife, Emma. One of her concerns in running for office is, what type of backlash that might generate if folks aren't happy with me or with our party or whatever it is, whenever a misunderstanding comes up. You do have concerns about those things. I think that this is new for any of our families. And we talk in here at length. We talk about that none of us serve alone. None of us serve in this Assembly alone. We have the support of our loved ones. For me, those are the people who live in my home — my wife and my children. I have their support and that means a lot.

And it meant a lot to my wife, Emma, that I had someone I could call, a trusted person who serves others with honour and integrity,

who I could call for advice, for important next steps — and whose advice I could be certain was not being reported to the government — someone who reports to the Speaker. That gave me assurance that the advice would be good advice and also that it wouldn't go any further, that that was a relationship that was confident and secure and trustworthy.

Now I had another situation come up when I had to call the Sergeant-at-Arms office. And it was a concern over security in my constituency office. And, Mr. Speaker, again I won't get into the details, but the same premise applies here: having a Sergeant-at-Arms who is able to give me advice over my constituency office — not the legislative precinct, not the Assembly floor, but my constituency office.

My office is in Market Mall in Eastview. It's next to the minigolf course which recently just opened back up. It was shut down for quite some time. There was a fire in the mall. Wasn't the minigolf course; it was in Dollarama. And the whole . . . a bunch of stuff in the mall was closed down. But that minigolf course was closed for about six months, just opened up. And that's where my office is. Market Mall's an interesting place. And there is security in the mall.

But when some concerns came up, I had to call the Sergeant-at-Arms and I had to talk to him as someone who I'd built trust with quickly, someone who I can recognize and I had assumed had the support of all members in this Assembly — an assumption that I now know is not true. But I was able to go to the Sergeant-at-Arms and I was able to share my concerns without any second thought that those concerns would be shared outside his office, because of the tradition that he applies to his service, because of his decades of expertise in law enforcement, because of the way that our Sergeant-at-Arms conducts his office. I knew that I was safe and that that advice could be trusted.

And I'll say again, I appreciate that. But do you who else appreciated that? My constituency assistant, Katie, who joined us here just a couple weeks ago. She appreciated that because she knew that the advice that I was getting was solid, non-partisan, gave us assurance, and gave us decades of experience in significant steps that we can take to make sure that our office is a safe place for the two of us, for visitors, for my casual CA [constituency assistant]. Having that office to go to with this level of history, tradition, expertise, and integrity was deeply meaningful for me.

And as a new MLA — and let's face it, every election there's going to be new folks in here — that was really important to me. I didn't know all the history of when things changed, when the precinct changed in 2019. I didn't know all the history of the decades of the Sergeant-at-Arms. I knew a little bit as an aware citizen of things that had happened in Ottawa and the action of the Sergeant-at-Arms in the House of Commons. I knew a little bit about what a Sergeant-at-Arms does. But as a new MLA I really got to learn, and again very quickly came to know that this office and this building operates with integrity and honour. And I appreciate that more and more every day when I come to work here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes just to look at some of the content of this bill and raise some of my concerns as I go through. It should come as no surprise to any member in the

Assembly that this bill has some troubling content. Despite objections from the member opposite, even from the minister who has spoken to this bill, or tried to, that this isn't really the content of the bill. And she's been corrected time and time again because it's in here. It's in the legislation. It's there. It's been denied, but here it is. This bill seeks to change the jurisdiction of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Now we know that the area that the Sergeant-at-Arms presides over was changed just a couple of years ago in 2019, to go I think up to the curb to make sure that members are safe as they enter the building, as we move around the building, our caucus offices, our MLA offices, the hallways, and the galleries. And so the Sergeant-at-Arms just two years ago was seen to have an important job, and that that high-quality work provided by his office should be extended to make sure that MLAs were always safe. And all staff, not just MLAs — all staff who work in this building and visitors and guests, dignitaries, whoever comes here that they'll be safe. That was just two years ago.

But this bill is aiming to change all of that. This bill will turn the Sergeant-at-Arms from that high-quality work with decades of tradition into a ceremonial role. This bill will leave the Sergeant-at-Arms presiding over nothing more than the Assembly floor. Now we don't even know yet, Mr. Speaker, if that will include the doors to the Assembly, but we do know it doesn't include the galleries or who will have access to the galleries, which has always been in the hands of the Speaker with the support of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

There's a lot we don't know, but that's a big concern that I'm going to flag right now because without an answer to that, we have a lot of concerns about how the galleries will operate under this legislation when guests are here, in particular when guests are here to speak to the failures of this government. When guests join us during question period to speak about the realities that they're facing because they are being let down by this government, they join us in the galleries or sometimes behind the bar.

And there's no indication in this legislation that this new security force will not put the independence and the ability of our galleries to serve at the discretion of the Speaker, that people will be able to join the galleries at the discretion of the Speaker. And I think that's very important.

[20:00]

The new security force for the building . . . It's very clear in this legislation that that new security force and the director will report to the Minister of Corrections. That is laid out in the legislation. We have heard denials of this fact, but that's what's in the legislation. That's what we have here. That's a big concern. Now I have heard the minister deny this, and I would just simply invite her to reread the legislation that she has spoken to and perhaps to avoid just reading from the page that she's given. She might endeavour to do a little bit more investigating into what is included in those pages, because it absolutely says that the new security force will report to the Minister of Corrections.

This new security force will also control who comes into the building, who lets visitors in, how that information is collected, what is done with it. These are all questions that I think matter to

people in Saskatchewan, likely one of the reasons that we've seen so much public outcry over this legislation — who gets to sit in the gallery, how protests are handled.

I'll maybe just pause there for a minute because I think that's really significant. And I've heard my colleague from Regina Douglas Park talk about this much more eloquently than I can, Mr. Speaker. But this is a big concern. We know that there's a track record here of this government being upset about how certain protests are handled, and that they have wanted to see their wishes for those protests be granted in responding, based on the issue at hand, based on the politics of it. And so here we have it: a security force that reports to the Minister of Corrections and to cabinet — very alarming to the people of Saskatchewan.

And I think most importantly, one thing that I'm very concerned about here, Mr. Speaker, is that this would remove the independence of the office of the Sergeant-at-Arms. As it currently stands, the Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible and reports to the Speaker. And one important thing I want to point out here is that this is the case in every provincial legislature or parliament in the country. This is the case everywhere, another fact that has been denied by the minister as she attempted to point out that Alberta made changes and that this is just like what's happening there.

Our media had to fact-check that statement and came out with a different response than the minister. And they said, no . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The fact that the media has to fact-check statements made by the minister in defence of this bill is alarming. That's alarming. That is something that should not happen. Thank you for getting involved.

The independence of this office is paramount to protecting our democracy. Now while the minister made an incredibly elitist statement that this building is for government — and by the way, we're the government — we get to decide. That's not true. This is the people's House. This is the people's building. This is a democracy. In democracy we need to gather together in opposing parties.

We need to each have the ability to do our job, those in government, those in opposition, and those in a third group. Not a party, I guess. Not a party — you need three for that — the independents, an independent. So this is not a building for government. This is a building for democracy — democracy. And to have a sitting cabinet minister essentially make an argument against democracy is appalling. It's appalling.

So you know, it begs the question, like well why is the government putting forth this legislation? Why now? Two years after expanding the precinct for the Sergeant-at-Arms, why now? You know, I think that we in opposition are of the belief that security is for everyone. Regardless of your political stripe, your background, or any other factor, security is here for everyone. And that is also regardless of who is in government. Security in this building should not be about which party is governing and who sits where. Security should be something that is afforded to all in a non-partisan way.

And that's exactly why we have the systems in place that we currently have. The Board of Internal Economy, this is exactly where questions like this have been dealt with in the past. That

has never let us down, and there is no reason to circumvent the BOIE [Board of Internal Economy] in 2021.

We would show up at a meeting tomorrow if that was requested. We would show up and we would be happy to work with all members of the board, including the Speaker, to find a solution, to make sure that our Sergeant-at-Arms has all of the resources that he needs to do the best job that he can, which by the way is pretty darn good. So this is how these problems have always been dealt with for decades, decades. This is how these issues come up and that is the correct procedure to address them.

You know, we have not been blocking any attempts to increase the budget of the Sergeant-at-Arms. You know, it's very interesting to hear the minister say to the media that she'd be willing to work with the opposition if we so choose. That's just kind of alarmist rhetoric. Of course we're willing to work on this through the proper channels, the BOIE, that it's an undeniable fact that that is the procedure that is in place to address needs of the Sergeant-at-Arms to ensure that everyone who enters this building is safe — MLAs, staff, visitors, guests, dignitaries, whoever it may be. That is the procedure that we have in place.

So this brings us to the question of, well what sort of problems is the government trying to address with this legislation? What sort of problems is this government trying to address with this new legislation?

I want to pause for a minute here, and I want to reflect a little bit. I think most members of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, know that before being elected here, I served my community in a different fashion. I was a public school teacher. Yeah, I was proud, you know, proud. Still am proud despite, you know, being taunted sometimes by the Education minister about belonging to the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation], like that's a bad thing. That's a badge of honour. I'll put that on the record. That's a badge of honour. Being a teacher is a very proud profession.

And I've got to say, there were definitely times when I had to question that, because when you tell people you're a teacher, I think that there's a lot of instant respect and admiration. When you tell folks you're a politician, you don't get the same response. You've got to come back and earn it, show them what you're made of, show them who you're there to stand up for. But being a teacher is something that I've always been proud of.

But I'll tell you what. Teachers do a great job working to keep their students safe. I've seen teachers do amazing things. And we have heard of teachers . . . Thankfully, we've not had to share these stories of my home community, but we know that Saskatchewan has its history of teachers springing to action when there's a violent act going on in the school, teachers putting themselves in harm's way to protect their students and their community.

Teachers do amazing things, Mr. Speaker. And I want us to imagine for a minute acting on . . . I'm just going to say, one of the things that we do as teachers probably twice a year is we do a drill. I think most of us here probably remember a time in school when you do a fire drill. You can nod with me if you remember the school fire drills. Not seeing a lot of nods, but I know you do. I know you did that. Everyone did.

Well over the last number of years, Mr. Speaker, schools have also had to do drills in the case of a violent threat. Schools have to do . . . We practise drills in the case of an active shooter being in the school. We practise drills in the case of a violent threat outside the school. It's scary. Even for high school kids that I taught, those drills can be a little scary. There's protocols. I know in Saskatoon public schools and probably most school divisions — I'll speak from what I know — our division leaders have gone through extensive training to identify violent threats, to respond to them, to keep students, teachers, and staff safe.

The work that our division leaders have done is challenging. Like this isn't what, in an ideal world, what we should be spending our time on. We should be spending our time on, you know, designing exceptional learning opportunities, thinking about what our students need — physically, emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually — teaching to a whole child, and providing relationships that help that child to grow, belong, and thrive in school. But here in the world today, our division leaders have to take training on violent threat assessment, what to do in the case of an active shooter inside a building or outside a building. It makes me sad to know that that's part of our education system now.

But let's imagine, and I want to ask all members to imagine this. Just imagine that you work in a school, not in a Legislative Assembly. You work in a school. And the principal knows about a violent threat to the school. The principal knows that there's a threat. They've deemed it to be important. But they didn't think that you needed to know about it. Maybe they decided to only tell those staff that they agree with. Maybe they only decided to tell the math department, the history department. Maybe drama gets to know. Maybe phys ed gets to know, but they don't tell you.

They don't tell your department, but they just say, trust us; it's real. And by the way, we're going to change the way that all those drills work. We're going to change the whole security system. We're going to bring in some new folks. We're going to take it out of your hands. We're going to give it to other people that we agree with.

Imagine that you work in that kind of institution. It could be a school. It could be a hospital. It could be a place of worship. No matter what it is, just imagine being in that situation where you're told that there are real identifiable threats but you — because we disagree with you politically — you don't get to know. You would find that alarming. You would have significant questions about the integrity of that decision. You would find that action as an affront to your own personal security, as would your family and loved ones because they care about your well-being too, and they should.

What would you think about that decision? A decision to bring in a whole new . . . Well we'll go back to the school model. I think it works well for this. They're going to bring in a whole new security force for a bunch of threats that they never told you about, but you're told to just trust and believe that they're real. And all the folks in your school that you collaborate with — all those teachers that you maybe share classrooms with, maybe you coach on the football field with them or the basketball court or maybe you do drama or improv or band with them, the folks that you work with — none of them, none of them got to know about those threats that exist. But you're told to believe that they're

real.

Is that a trustworthy move? Would that instill trust in that school principal for you? You have to be honest with yourself. There's no way it would. There's no way that you would trust that the changes to your school security were necessary. And if they were necessary, you would have significant questions about why you were not informed. I might come back to that analogy here in a bit.

But I want to talk a little bit about, you know — inspired by my colleagues who pointed out right away — my colleague from Regina Douglas Park, that she brings her children into this building and that many of my colleagues do. We've got young moms that bring their kids in here.

[20:15]

What does it say that members opposite have been aware of violent threats that would necessitate an overhaul of the entire security system — we don't get to know about those threats? It's dangerous enough, but yet you let us bring our kids in here without saying a word about what those threats really are.

So I want to talk about my kids for a little bit here, Mr. Speaker. My kids are amazing, and you know what? So are your kids. Your kids are amazing too. They are, and your grandkids are amazing too, and they deserve to be safe when they come here. But I'm going to talk about what I know, so I'm going to talk about my kids.

I've got three children, Mr. Speaker. My youngest is Myles, and he's here in Regina with me right now. My mom flew in to help me out because I've got my youngest. Myles is four. Myles is an amazing kid. He is an amazing kid. And he came into the building with me last week. He came in here last Thursday. After proceedings wrapped up, I brought him back in. I don't think he'd ever been in here. He may have been in here for about five minutes one time.

My son came in here. I had to walk him around and introduce him to my colleagues, show him my office, had to get a little bit of work done. He hung out, got some snacks from other folks in our office. They loaded him up with sugar. We borrowed some books. We keep some children's books in our caucus office, and Myles joined me. Myles is an amazing kid. And he deserves to be safe when he comes in this building. And do you know who I trust to keep Myles safe? The Sergeant-at-Arms. I trust the Sergeant-at-Arms. I trust the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Myles, and I've said this before, he doesn't look much like his dad, really at all, because Myles is Indigenous. Myles is Inuk. Myles joined our family through adoption, because his birth mother, who lives in Nunavut, contacted us, reached out through some common friends and asked if we would raise him. And we had to think about that for a long time, but we didn't have too long, because she was five months pregnant. But he's our son, and that adoption was completed about a year ago. It took some time.

And we know that when it comes to Indigenous people interacting with law enforcement, we have room to grow as a province. I take up that work as a father, not as an Indigenous

person — as a settler. I recognize that. But when Myles comes into this building, and I hope that he'll be here on Thursday, I know he'll be welcome by the members opposite. I know that you'll be kind and friendly. But he deserves to be safe here. And I'll say it one more time. The person that I trust to keep him safe is our Sergeant-at-Arms.

Now I want to move on and talk a little bit more about my other kids. My son Tom. Tom and I did pop in the building in the summer. We were here in Regina. We popped in and he got a really quick little look around. Tom's another amazing kid, just like your kids are amazing and your grandkids. They're amazing. Tom and I share a lot of common interests. We went out mountain biking this summer. We love football. We like watching the Huskies together. I think I quoted him in a member's statement.

And just like his brother Myles, when Tom comes in this building, he deserves to be safe. And I deserve as a parent to know if there are any credible threats to my children before I bring them into this building. I deserve to know that. I think that that is something that should be shared with both sides of this House. And the fact that it has not, and that that minister still says that those threats exist is absolutely alarming. And it is the epitome of putting politics ahead of people.

Well my oldest . . . I want to talk about her. And, you know, I've got to be honest. I was hoping that she'd be here tomorrow. My oldest is my daughter. She's 14. And she deserves to be safe when she comes into this building, Mr. Speaker. But I'll tell you what, I'm pretty sure . . .

You know, I had one experience. I was walking out and there was some folks demonstrating out there. And one of the members of the Sergeant-at-Arms' staff said, do you need me to walk you outside? And he took one look at me and he said, you'll probably be okay.

Well I'll tell you who else would be okay is my daughter Etta. My daughter Etta. And some of you won't believe this, but please listen. You won't believe this. This is so wild, I don't think you'll believe this. She is the strongest woman in the history of our province. Okay, I know you see it on Instagram. She is the strongest woman in the history of our province. She's a weightlifter, she's 14, and she competes in Olympic weightlifting. I'm telling you, if I tell you how much weight she can lift over her head, you won't believe it.

An Hon. Member: — How much can she lift?

Mr. Love: — But I'll tell you this. How much can she lift? So Olympic weightlifting, Mr. Speaker, is two lifts: the snatch and the clean and jerk. And the reason I've got my youngest here this week is she was competing in the USA [United States of America] Weightlifting North American Open. She was the youngest person to qualify in North America. The youngest person. And in her competition she snatched in one movement 92 kilos over her head. She was perfect in her set: three for three lifts. Her third one . . . [inaudible] . . . a personal best.

An Hon. Member: — Wow.

Mr. Love: — I know. It's amazing. The clean and jerk came

around. She missed her second lift. I thought it should have counted. She got it up but she had a little flaw in there. It's a very technical sport, very technical. It didn't count. But she came out on her third lift and she clean and jerked over her head 112 kilograms—112 kilograms. She's 14.

And the announcer with USA Weightlifting — he was a British guy — he said, and this just blew me away, that she broke a North American record as the youngest woman ever to have a combined total over 200 kilograms. The youngest woman ever. I'll go through these statistics again when she joins me up in that gallery. I'll say it again. She's an inspiration. Her hard work is incredible.

And maybe like me if she ever has to walk out these doors, maybe the Sergeant-at-Arms will stop and look at her and say, do you need to be escorted out? And they might look at her and say, no, you'll be fine. The strongest woman ever in the history of this province.

It's incredible. It's incredible. But she's my first-born. She's my baby. And just like Tom and just like Myles she deserves to be safe when she comes to this building. And as her father I deserve to know if threats exist that might prevent me from ever bringing her back into this building.

She's been here before. She's been here to watch a friend's mother who was an MLA. She's been in the building. She had been in the building before I had ever been in the building, which is kind of neat. She knew more of what was going on than I did probably before I first sat down in this seat. But you know she deserves to be safe here, Mr. Speaker. And you know who I trust to keep her safe? Say it with me: the Sergeant-at-Arms. The Sergeant-at-Arms, that's who I trust to keep my baby girl safe, the strongest woman in the history of this province. I trust the Sergeant-at-Arms.

I might come back to that, but the theme right now is Festus for the rest of us because Festus goes from feats of strength to airing of grievances. So Festus for the rest of us. We've been through feats of strength; let's move into airing of grievances.

Airing of grievances, okay. Oh, there are many, and I've already gone into some of them. But this bill is so problematic, this bill is so problematic that the minister couldn't even begin to explain, provide any ounce of evidence about why it's even needed other than speculating that the world has changed. Of course the world has changed. Of course the world has changed. 2019 was two years ago. It's been almost exclusively pandemic since then, but at that time, at that time the members of the Board of Internal Economy agreed that the person best suited to keep this building safe was the Sergeant-at-Arms and that his duties needed to be expanded.

At this point I think that we need to put this bill to rest. We need to all agree that the best thing to do is to resource the Sergeant-at-Arms office to do everything he can to keep all staff members, all MLAs, all visitors who enter this building safe. He's done that for decades, and that's what we should continue to do.

Now one thing that I want to maybe talk about just for a minute is that there's kind of two options, I suppose. There's kind of two options out there. You know, either all of these vague security

concerns are real, and we should have known, or they don't exist. Those are the only two options. They're either very real and this government has chosen to put politics ahead of people's lives, including our children and our babies, or they don't exist. Neither of those are a good option. Those are bad options.

So this is my airing of a grievance: which one is it? We need to see the receipts. Let's get the details on that. Where are these threats? Yes, the world has changed. No one, no one disagrees with that. The world will be different tomorrow than it was today. You can't simply rely on being vague as a way to introduce a new security force to the legislature of our great province. So that is a big grievance.

You know, I think the fact that we've heard nothing and yet the minister says that she's willing to work with opposition is a major alarm bell for this province. How can you say, "we're willing to work with you" if there are threats against your person and your children and your babies that we won't tell you about? That's not someone who appears that they want to work with us. And if they did, they should take it to the Board of Internal Economy, as I've already said. So that's a big grievance.

Let's see, I'm going to have to flip through, but I've got lots of them. I'm going to keep an eye on the clock here . . . I'm doing what I can. I'm doing my part. I'm doing my part. Okay.

You know, I think that one of the things that we often see from this government, and it comes from the House Leader a lot is this reliance on tradition. I broke one of those traditions today. I did. I think it was an honest mistake. I was unaware of words that I shouldn't have been allowed to use in here. But you know what? I apologized and I moved on. I think I did the right thing and I think that the Government House Leader would agree. I had to do the right thing. I had to apologize, step back, and do the right thing.

What is stopping this government right now from doing the right thing? To back up, say we're sorry. We take responsibility for this dumpster fire of a mistake. And we're going to back up, apologize, essentially sit down and let things move on the way that they are going, which is perfectly fine with zero evidence to argue otherwise.

Because I think history is important, and I think that the history of this office, the Sergeant-at-Arms is something that we can rely on. And so I want to take a minute right now just to read the news. I'd like to read the news from today.

Today we had a really interesting story on CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] News this morning, and I've got it with me. I'm going to read from it directly. Here it is. CBC story is written by Alexander Quon, published this morning at 6:45 a.m. Central Standard Time. That's early.

And the title is "Former sergeant-at-arms puzzled by need for change to security at Saskatchewan legislative assembly." So this history that the government likes to stand on and sometimes stomp their feet and get upset when it isn't observed and lauded is exactly what the former Sergeant-at-Arms decided it was his job to speak out on. And I'm going to read this and I will interject with some of my own comments from time to time.

And this isn't good news. I'm sorry, this isn't . . . I'll just start with that. This is not, this is not . . . This is airing grievances. This is not about happy, happy good times. Following feats of strength, there's airing of grievances. It's Festivus for the rest of us.

[20:30]

Okay, let's get started. I feel like this is storytime as a teacher, and maybe later I can turn and show the pictures. But it's just the building. We've all seen it. We're inside of it right now. Okay:

A man who spent over 20 years as sergeant-at-arms at the Saskatchewan legislature is confused by the recent decision of the provincial government to effectively end the independence of security at the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

I'll pause for a minute. I'm going to just interject and say that this guy worked here for 20 years, and the word he chose to use is "confused." Confused. Yeah, that is polite, but it's not a good signal for how things are going. Back to the story. This is a quote:

"I personally don't see what is to be gained by changing it," Patrick Shaw told Stefani Langenegger, the host of CBC's *The Morning Edition*.

For more than 20 years — between 1995 [when I was in grade 10] and 2015 [when I was 35 years old] — Shaw was the sergeant-at-arms, and he said the role is multi-faceted.

I agree. And I've already talked about that this evening, all the different ways that I've received support through the Sergeant-at-Arms office and how appreciated that is. Multi-faceted is an understatement. Back to the story:

When the legislature is sitting, the sergeant-at-arms is responsible for bringing in the ceremonial mace that remains in front of the Speaker of the legislature for as long as they preside over the assembly.

The other role of the sergeant-at-arms is to maintain security in the chamber, the legislative building, and the legislative grounds.

But after decades of that position operating without issue that soon may change.

Let's pause for a little interjection here. After decades, decades of that position operating — and here's the key words — "without issue." Without issue. There's no problem with the current situation, and I'm positing today that the Sergeant-at-Arms does a phenomenal job. Without issue? How fortunate are we? How fortunate are we that we have a professional that keeps this building safe for decades without issue? We are lucky.

I'll keep going. I'm going to keep reading. Next page:

Bill 70, introduced by the provincial government last month, would remove nearly all of the position's security-related duties and put them in the hands of a security director appointed by the Minister of Corrections, Policing, and Public Safety.

Okay, another interjection. This is something that that minister has denied, but no one outside of this building denies this fact. None of us do. This is clearly putting the security out of the hands of the Speaker and into the hands of the minister, a partisan police force for the legislature.

Back to the story:

The sergeant-at-arms would only be responsible for security within the legislative chamber.

Another interjection. And we don't even really how that will work. I've mentioned this already. Who will be controlling the doors? We know it won't be the galleries. There are so many questions about what is considered the floor of the Legislative Assembly and the legislative precinct that have not been explained by this minister of this government, and that is very alarming.

This next section has a subheading:

Few answers, more questions

There have been few answers from the government on what the new force would look like . . .

Christine Tell, the minister of Corrections, Policing, and Public Safety, has been unable to answer how many officers are expected to make up the force, whether it would be armed and whether its members would be in uniform.

The lack of answers only raise more questions for Shaw.

Let's pause here for an interjection. And you might have guessed, I'm going to point out the language here: "unable to answer." This is a red flag, Mr. Speaker. This is a really, really big red flag that we are waving. And the Sergeant-at-Arms, who served here for 20 years, I think it's safe to say is waving that flag too. How could a minister who presents a bill for consideration in this legislature be unable — maybe unwilling, but the words here are "unable to answer" — very, very basic questions about how that bill will be implemented?

Back to the story:

The lack of answers only raise more questions for Shaw.

"I think it's very, very important that there's an independent body there that serves all parties in the non-partisan way," Shaw said.

"And if that doesn't happen, what's going to happen when there is, and there will be at some point, a change of government?"

This is exactly what I have spoken about tonight, that implementing a partisan police force that reports to the government. Governments change, and this government will fall too. It happens. This is a democracy. And whether the minister doesn't want to acknowledge that this is the people's House — this is not just a House for government — this is a House for democracy. And implementing these changes now, I believe them to be undemocratic.

Back to the story:

The proposed changes have drawn criticism from the opposition [that's an understatement] who contend that it will move a non-partisan security operation into a partisan security force.

In the current structure, the security team answers to the Speaker. Under the proposed legislation, the security director would only answer to Tell, the minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

Tell has said the changes were necessary as a result of escalating protests and security threats from inside and outside the building.

I'm going to pause for an interjection here, Mr. Speaker. Again these are facts that the minister has not admitted or included in the bill. They so clearly are. But to say that these changes are necessitated by threats inside and outside the building without telling members that you disagree with is, I think, wrong. The word that I would use is "wrong," morally wrong. This is a wrong thing to do. There's not a shred of evidence that has been delivered to us. That's wrong. That's wrong, Mr. Speaker.

I'll continue. We've got lots more to go: "When repeatedly pressed for an example of the threats, Tell has declined, citing privacy." I'm just going to let that one go. I mean that doesn't make any sense to me. If they are real threats, why are they private? They should be shared with the Sergeant-at-Arms office. They should be communicated to members of opposition. They should be shared, so that everyone who enters this building, including our babies, are able to be safe.

Back to the story:

It's a decision that has not just baffled Shaw and current members of the Opposition but also a former Justice minister.

"There has to be a much better explanation for why it's being introduced, and what we've heard so far is not, you know, any explanation at all," John Nilson, who was appointed to the role in 1995, said on Monday.

No explanation at all. I think that's a fair assessment of what the people of Saskatchewan have been given. No explanation at all.

Nilson has a special appreciation for the role of sergeant-at-arms.

In 1997, a man attempted to perform a citizen's arrest on the then-Justice minister. Shaw was one of the men who stopped it.

"I always felt as if he had protection for all of us, premier and cabinet ministers and members of the legislature," Nilson said.

The Opposition has theorized that the provincial government wants a new security force that would be able to crack down on protests it didn't like.

That could include instances like the protest carried out in

September 2020 by Tristen Durocher.

Durocher had camped in a teepee across from the legislative building as part of a 44-day ceremonial fast, which he called Walking With Our Angels.

Durocher said it was a response to a suicide prevention bill put forward by the NDP [by my friend] . . . [but] voted down by the provincial government.

I will pause there for a minute. The fact that this government took significant actions to limit democratic expression of rights that are protected in this country on the legislative lawn. We all know how this government felt about that protest. They didn't hide their disdain for Tristen and all those photos that were up there. They didn't hide their disdain for that.

We know about the court battle. We know about their attempts to get that protest taken down. We know that despite 44 days, that our Premier did not go and talk to Tristen or other members of this camp. None of this is secret. I don't have to, like, wonder about any of this. We know that the government was against that. I think that it's fair to say that had the government and cabinet and minister been in charge of security, the outcome for that ceremonial fast would have been different. How scary is that?

Mr. Speaker, I lost a student to suicide that year. His mother came down here and sat in that tipi. His grieving mother. Ethan's mother, Amanda, came and she sat in that tipi. She found healing. She found hope for the future of our province in that tipi. Can you imagine if that had been taken down because security for the Legislative Building and grounds had been taken out of the Speaker's control, given to a partisan police force to rule these grounds? This is wrong. This is wrong.

Back to the news story from 6:45 this morning, Central Standard Time.

The provincial government and the Provincial Capital Commission sought a court order for Durocher's removal in August, saying he was in violation of bylaws. A Regina judge allowed Durocher to complete his fast and vigil without further incident.

Shaw says that, as the Sergeant-at-Arms, he has always worked closely with Regina police and the RCMP, as it was necessary to be able to call in backup if needed.

I'm going to interject here again. This is a key part of our problems with this bill. The minister has talked about siloing and surveillance, and that's scary on its own, but maybe I'll have time for that. I think I do have time. I think I'm in control of that. And the minister has made public comments saying that, you know, the world's changing and we need like surveillance and we need to gather information and we don't have all these things.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, our Sergeant-at-Arms, who works with integrity and expertise and decades in law enforcement, already works with Regina Police Service. They already work with the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police]. They already do this work admirably and without issue for decades. We are so fortunate to have this service here as members, to be safe in this building without issue for decades. They already do that work.

They already know when they need to call in backup. They already know when there are potentially things to be aware of when protests do happen. I am going to use this as a chance to say, this is where protests should happen. I mean, we have agreed unanimously that they should not be happening in front of hospitals or schools. They should be happening here where decisions are made. And they have happened here without issue for decades. We are so fortunate that that is the case. How could we possibly consider dismantling a system that has worked flawlessly for decades based on reasons that have not been provided?

I'm going to get back to the story here. I just want to make sure I'm not repeating something.

[20:45]

Okay. So getting back to the former Sergeant-at-Arms: "He said there were plenty of protestors in his time overseeing the legislature. Shaw said during that time there were never any issues that he felt his office could not handle."

Now I don't expect our current Sergeant-at-Arms to weigh in on this, but I suspect that he would likely say the same thing, that the protests and the events that happen . . . And we saw on Throne Speech day just an impressive job done by our Sergeant-at-Arms. I think, and I don't want to put words in his mouth, but I would venture to guess that they would say that there's nothing here that they're not able to handle internally or by working collaboratively in co-operation with the Regina Police Service and the RCMP. I don't think that there's anything outside of their reach that they can't handle, and that's why I will continue to support our Sergeant-at-Arms, the work that he does here.

That's the end of that. That's the end of that story. That's the end of that one. Let's see if I have time for another one here, but I do need to just grab a quick drink and then I am going to move on to another story. A lot of stories, yeah. There are a lot of stories because this has been getting so much media attention, because as I started off talking about tonight, people are angry. People are really mad. And that's why, following feats of strength, we have airing of grievances. And there's many grievances.

I'm going to just have a quick look at . . . oh, you know what? No, I'm going to go to this one. And I'm not going to quote this one the whole way through, but you know, there was an interesting story in the *Leader-Post* on November 29th. I don't have the time of day it was published. And the story is entitled, "Opposition says it's still seeking clarity on what prompted Bill 70."

But you know, the thing that caught my attention in this is the bill has one name on it. It's the name of the Government House Leader. And this had already been at the top of the news cycle for about a week. For about a week it had been the minister up in question period, despite questions posed to the Government House Leader. He stayed seated and the minister responded. And the media in this province waited in the rotunda. They wanted to know. His name's on the bill. What does he have to say about it? Not a word. So they waited day after day. They couldn't get him up in scrums. They were looking for him. And I mean, I didn't see it, but I kind of know they're like hiding behind pillars. They're waiting to catch him on his way out to try and get

something on the record because his name's on the bill.

Well maybe just a word of caution. When you put your name on something, that's important. If someone came to me and they said, hey I've got this dumpster that's on fire. Can I put your name on it? I'd say no. I'd say no.

Now let's say somebody came along and said, hey that dumpster's on fire. Your name's on it. I would probably explain how it got there or why it shouldn't be there or how I don't agree with setting dumpsters on fire. I would probably fix that situation because my name is my reputation. It has value. I don't want to put it on a dumpster, whether it's on fire or not. This one is.

So interesting that in this story, we do get something on the record from the Government House Leader. We get what I believe my colleague called the nothingburger. Does he speak up to the bill? Does he give it a glowing endorsement? Does he say, yeah my name's on that and I'm proud? I'm proud of that. No, he says nothing. He doesn't say a thing. He says, not my bill. You'll have to ask somebody else.

Literally couldn't say a single positive thing, not a single word about what's in the legislation. He completely throws his own minister under the bus. It's her bill. Talk to her. Holy moly. That's a concern. The dumpster fire has his name on it and he won't even address what's inside the bill or why his name is on the front page.

Ten minutes to go. I just want to say that I've used all of my A material and that it's going to go downhill from here. You know, I think I'm maybe going to go to just one more, one more story here. And again it's in the piece.

There's a difference between a news article and an opinion or analysis piece. That's an important distinction. Professional media outlets, they always distinguish between the two. And this one comes from the *Leader-Post*, from Murray Mandryk. Right? I know that's going to . . . I've got some eyes rolling. But I just want to make sure, because I think that transparency is important. So I'm going to let you know where it comes from. Okay, Murray writes:

On the morning of October 22, 2014, it becomes obvious to every Canadian that a Sergeant-at-Arms isn't just someone dressed up in an antiquated costume to partake in outdated legislative rituals.

On that morning in the Centre Block of the House of Commons in Ottawa, Sergeant-at-Arms Kevin Vickers fired four slugs from his nine millimetre semi-automatic pistol into Michael Zehaf-Bibeau.

Zehaf-Bibeau had just fatally shot War Memorial sentry Cpl. Nathan Cirillo in what has been the only terrorist attack on Parliament Hill. Vickers — a decorated former RCMP officer — dove from behind a column in Parliament Hill's Centre Block, shooting upward at Zehaf-Bibeau, who was fatally wounded.

Don't let his funny hat fool you. The Sergeant-at-Arms saved the lives of Members of Parliament and others that day. He was rightly feted around the globe. No one was

talking about taking away his security responsibilities . . .

Fast forward seven years to Saskatchewan where Policing and Corrections Minister Christine Tell — a former city police officer, herself — is proposing legislation that essentially fires Saskatchewan Sergeant-at-Arms Terry Quinn . . . or at least reduces his job to nothing more than a ceremonial one.

Tell explained “a number of incidents” have brought legislative security “into question.” Citing privacy, she couldn’t name even one.

The number of security threats is zero. The amount of evidence provided by the minister is nothing. Well my esteemed colleague, we have on our hands a nothingburger. Back to the opinion piece:

She further said Wednesday this is what’s already been done in Alberta and B.C. Untrue. The Sergeants-at-Arms in those jurisdictions are still responsible for legislative building and grounds security.

Now I know I said this before, but I’ll repeat again, the very fact that we require journalists, media, columnists in this province to fact-check statements made by cabinet members is alarming.

She couldn’t offer a ballpark figure for how much all this might cost — something that should be of special interest to rural Saskatchewan residents long-clamouring for more policing. Some of them may be wondering why it is that governing politicians are getting enhanced policing. (Taxpayers are already paying an undisclosed amount for an ever-present RCMP security detail around Premier Scott Moe.)

But, most critically, Tell has not explained why Quinn and his highly regarded staff of professionals that are largely former RCMP officers suddenly aren’t doing their job at the Saskatchewan legislature.

What should security be doing better? Were concerns brought to the all-party Board of Internal Economy at the legislature? Exactly how would we be better off with a separate policing unit answerable to the policing ministry? (Tell denies that’s the case but that’s how the legislation reads.)

There you have it, folks. Tell denies that that’s the case, but it’s exactly what’s in the legislation that she’s here to defend with the House Leader’s name on it, but no evidence to back up what’s inside that bill.

Now further on:

Sure, there are still loud and obnoxious protests in front of the building on COVID-19 restrictions with people who can be a bit verbally aggressive, as Tell suggested Wednesday. (Although she conveniently had no recollection Wednesday of the hundreds [of protesters who] . . . stormed the legislature 30 years ago over Fair Share, Saskatchewan.)

But don’t have people have the right to peaceful protest?

Solid question, Murray.

The reality is that some are simply more welcomed by the government to the legislature and its grounds than others as we saw with the Tristen Durocher and Colten Boushie/Justice for Our Stolen Children teepee protests. It’s no secret the Regina Police Service’s unwillingness to follow government orders to tear down the teepees didn’t sit well with the Sask. Party government.

That the policing minister says Bill 70 is about “proactive response” doesn’t exactly do much to enhance faith in our new legislative rent-a-cops. Nor does the barking in the assembly from government house leader Jeremy Harrison (who, strangely, was supposed to be the minister carrying the bill through the House) about the NDP being only interested in its own protestors.

Asked by reporters to come to the rotunda and talk about it . . . Harrison declined.

And here we go. When he did show up to talk about the dumpster fire with his name on it, he pointed the finger at somebody else. What a disappointment.

We have no answers or at least no answers that aren’t completely bizarre.

“This is a government building,” Tell told reporters, “So what can I say? We’re the government.”

Well I think I’ve already eviscerated that statement as being undemocratic. This is not simply a building for government; this is the people’s House.

And I’ll tell you what. A couple days ago I had a chance to meet with some people in Saskatchewan — a school group from Rosthern, represented by our Premier. He took time to meet with them too. They had a good experience with him, I think, spoke well of it. And they came in with some really good questions. First question that they asked me, Mr. Speaker, they asked me about leadership. They asked me about what qualities does a good leader need to possess. I wasn’t prepared. I had to think on my toes.

And I challenge all members to think about that right now. What three qualities does a good leader need to possess? We’re all leaders. We’re all leaders in this Assembly. We might have a different response to that question. I think that there’s a lot of possible answers, but I’ll tell you what I told those students, here in the people’s House, protected by the Sergeant-at-Arms.

I told them the first quality is integrity — doing what’s right even when no one is watching, doing the right thing even when you don’t get credit for it, doing the right thing even when no one notices that you’re doing it. Do you know who embodies integrity? The Sergeant-at-Arms.

Second quality of a leader that I brought up is service to others. I believe in servant leadership. I believe that if any of us, if any of us supposed to be leaders, that we need to look around and ask the question, how can I use my position as a leader to serve others, make their life better? Call me old-fashioned, but I believe

in loving your neighbour. In this Assembly we are neighbours. We do need to look out for each other. We deserve to know if our security, the security of our families, our children, our babies is threatened. Do you know who I think embodies service to others? Sergeant-at-Arms. Sergeant-at-Arms. I believe in that

[21:00]

Do you know who I think embodies service to others? Sergeant-at-Arms. Sergeant-at-Arms. I believe in that.

The last quality that I told this group of students that good leaders need to have is empathy. Empathy is the ability to consider somebody else's experiences, to think about how it feels to be in their position. And it can't just be a fleeting emotion; it's a bit of a commitment. I'm not saying I'm great at it. I probably need to work at that too. Empathy is the ability to consider someone else's experiences in life.

I've challenged members tonight to consider how you would respond in that school analogy that I shared earlier. If your principal knew of a threat and told the math department, history, drama, phys ed, but they didn't tell you, they disregarded your safety, but said trust us. This is really important. We're going to change everything.

I think we've got to consider each other a little bit more in here. And I have heard the entries from my colleagues in opposition on this bill, and I think our arguments have merit. Our arguments have substance. And I would implore the members opposite to continue to listen with both ears.

Mr. Speaker: integrity, service, and empathy, I believe, are qualities embodied by our Sergeant-at-Arms. We have had decades of service from that office without issue. And for that reason, I will not be supporting Bill 70. I will continue to listen to my colleagues in opposition. But at this time, I seek leave to move adjournment.

The Speaker: — The member has asked for leave to adjourn debate. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, with leave I move to adjourn debate on this bill.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the House to accept the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 71

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 71 — *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2021*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter into debate on Bill No. 71 today, *The Insurance Amendment Act* of 2021. I see that this is a bill that is amending an existing piece of legislation, *The Insurance Act*. I understand that these amendments are related to a recent Court of Appeal decision. It might surprise you to know, Mr. Speaker, that I am not diligently following the Court of Appeal decisions, although I appreciate that there are many fine folks across our province that are.

This one is about life insurance policies. And specifically this bill seeks to codify a recent decision respecting the limit of the amount of funds that can be held in side accounts for life insurance policies, although I was looking through for a definition of "side accounts" but I haven't found that. So perhaps our critic is more knowledgeable about the particulars here.

I know that this particular bill is talking about limiting the amount of money that can be deposited into these side accounts that are associated with life insurance contracts, and the intent is to protect both insurers and consumers here. It certainly makes sense that we would want to bring into law these decisions in a meaningful way. We know that our courts are an essential part of the legislative process, and changes that we see to legislation, and it certainly makes sense that limiting the amount of money that could be deposited would protect both consumers and insurers in this way.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there are not a huge amount of amendments that are being made here. We are going to be looking through them quite closely though, and I know that several of my colleagues will want to weigh in, and the critic as well. But with that, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 71.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 72

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 72 — *The Life Leases Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet again, enter into debate on Bill No. 72, *The Life Leases Act*, 2021. This new legislation is requiring a life lease operator . . . Sorry, my tongue's a little bit twisted up after many long debates here this evening. But it's requiring life lease operators " . . . to disclose entrance fees and other financial obligations to potential leaseholders before a life lease is executed . . . [It] will require that terms be set out in each life lease respecting whether the life lease can be assigned to a subsequent leaseholder."

Leaseholders will have 10 days after the life lease is assigned to cancel for any reason and "... will require lease operators to establish a reserve fund which will be used for repairs to ... [a] complex." It also establishes that an annual general meeting be established to ensure engagement and transparency and creates offences and penalties for contraventions of the Act.

We're happy to see this legislation come forward, as it has been recommended by the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan and will allow leaseholders the opportunity to understand their financial obligations before they sign a life lease agreement. And ensuring that leaseholders and lease operators are protected is equally important. It's an area that previously was not regulated. And as we see this becoming a more common practice, it's certainly welcome to see the legislation as recommended by the Law Reform Commission.

I know that my colleagues and the critic for this area will have much more to say about this bill. But for now I propose to adjourn debate on Bill No 72.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 73

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Marit that **Bill No. 73 — *The Animal Production Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate on Bill No. 73 tonight, *The Animal Production Act*. We haven't had this bill in front of us for very long, so there haven't been very many folks who have had the opportunity to speak to it. But I understand that it seeks to replace other pieces of legislation, including *The Animal Identification Act*, *The Animal Products Act*, *The Line Fence Act*, and *The Stray Animals Act*. We're talking about a wide swath of animals here, Mr. Speaker.

It is proposing that this one new Act will bring together what was covered in the other pieces of legislation, which presumably makes things easier when it comes time to amend that legislation as well. And it covers livestock and animal product inspections; related licences; rules for administrative agreements; the authority for the handling of stray animals, which I must admit, I did not know that there were stringent rules about handling of stray animals, although I have never really attempted to handle very many stray animals in my time; fencing cost-sharing rules, which I think many of us have experienced; and an arbitration process for settling disputes.

There is mention here in the minister's second reading speech that government plans to consult with stakeholders and then bring forward regulations in 2022. I understand that this set of legislation hasn't received a full review since 1970. And a lot has

changed in livestock production since 1970, so it seems appropriate that it's time to make some changes here.

We will be watching and chatting with stakeholders to make sure that the right moves are being made here. We know that our ag sector is a priority for this province and for the opposition here, and engaging with them is of critical importance on this front. And any way that we can help to support our producers is a welcome change in legislation, so that's what we will be watching for, making sure that these proper consultations have happened and will happen into the future.

We know that the government should be looking for ways to support this sector rather than placing blame on them for the state of our provincial finances, Mr. Speaker, as we have seen recently with the completely disrespectful APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] letter. And I think there's a lot of work to do to repair these relationships, and I do hope that that work takes place here as the government goes about this consultation business.

So I know many of my colleagues will want to weigh in, and we will have some questions for committee. But with that, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 73 for today.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

The 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 Speaker: — Carried. This House now stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 21:12.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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