



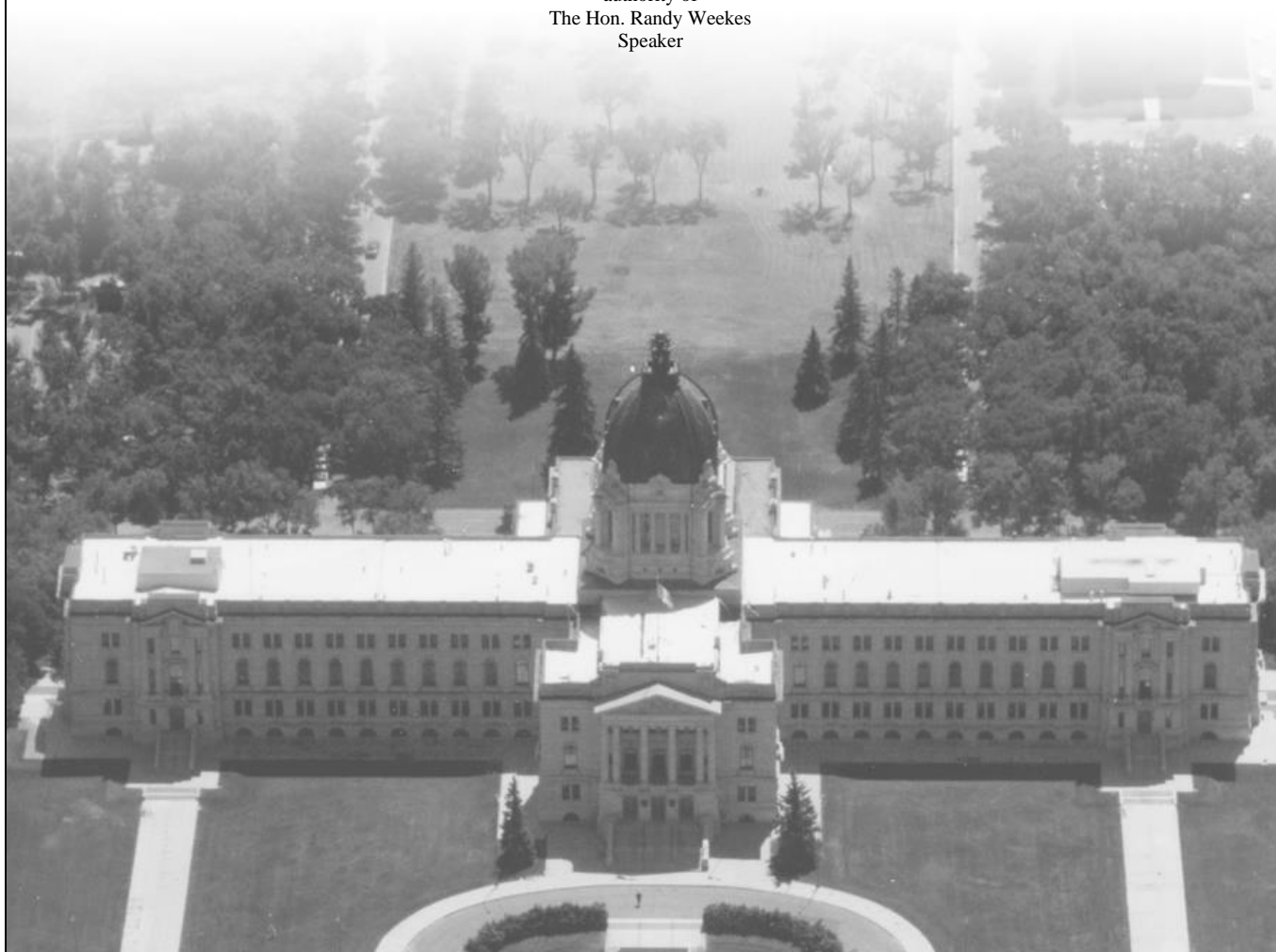
THIRD SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
3rd Session — 29th Legislature

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

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Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 48; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Independent (Ind.) — 1

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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING

The Deputy Speaker: — It now being 7 o'clock, it's time to resume debate on the government motion.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

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

Federal Firearms Legislation

Mr. Friesen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if I can carry the floor as good as my colleague from Walsh Acres, but I'll do my best.

It is my pleasure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to enter into debate today and speak to this motion. I will begin by saying that I am supporting the motion put forward by the Minister of Policing, Corrections, and Public Safety:

That this House condemns and denounces the most recent attack on lawful firearms owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government through amendments to Bill C-21, which the Chief Firearms Officer of Saskatchewan estimates will instantly criminalize approximately 75,000 Saskatchewan residents; and further,

That this House calls on the Government of Saskatchewan to explore all options to protect the rights of law-abiding firearms owners.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, just that number alone — 75,000 residents of Saskatchewan, hundreds of thousands of guns, Mr. Deputy Speaker — it's an astonishing number. And even the member from Rosemont should be astonished by this number and actually saddened. And maybe even talk to your colleague there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our gun ranges have already gone through a tough period, as did many and most business owners over the last few years. This may be the straw that finally breaks them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the weapons that they train people on proper handling and usage are now at risk.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick have called on the federal government to halt plans to use our already limited RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] and municipal police forces to confiscate the legally acquired firearms from our residents.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can't help but think of the carbon tax collecting money to reduce pollution and then giving this money back, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as federal overreach. This bill has done nothing to address the actual illegal guns that are involved in the crimes.

I had the opportunity to join with the Regina Wildlife Federation with a few of my colleagues in fall and shoot some really cool guns in a responsible and safe environment. Mr. Deputy Speaker, our current regulations and laws on guns are so restrictive

already. For example, a handgun owner who wants to go take his handgun just to the firing range, and only one of the restrictions is he or she has to attain a point-A-to-point-B permit. You cannot stop to get fuel on the way. You can't stop to get a coffee from point A to point B to actually shoot the weapon. And this is not really even the complaint, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

As I've already mentioned, our already struggling gun clubs, wildlife federations, who very much conform to the laws so they can enjoy their collections . . . and they cannot under this new law. In fact, when they can't even . . . As the member from Carrot River mentioned, he can't even leave his guns to his children, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Many of the weapons listed, as they appear to be assault weapons, are not allowed. Not only, as my colleague has mentioned earlier, is the federal government and this bill trying to shut down paintball and airsoft businesses, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but also the suppliers of ammunition, the safe, controlled environments of gun ranges, and on and on.

I am a car collector, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as one of my colleagues mentioned earlier, and I can't imagine them coming after my cars. But I can't help but think, what's next? What is next? These are very responsible gun owners and they have a right to their collections as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

When I was a kid we learned what having a firearm was all about: proper use, proper storage, proper handling, and just overall safe use of weapons. It all started back with my dad and pellet guns, Mr. Speaker, when we lived on a farm. I grew up on a farm for a couple of years. And then I was able to experience hunting with my uncle, just out of Saskatoon near Hague on his farm, and again always very responsible use of a firearm: how to handle a firearm, carry it, not to go with a loaded firearm, and proper storage.

I also owned an acreage for over 25 years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and having a gun to protect our farm — for animals, for kids — from pests, there's been multiple times that I've had to use a gun on the acreage, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I'm really worried about what happens when these guns are also look at being confiscated.

I can't get over why we want to take much-needed resources from our RCMP and our policing networks when as a province with all the good work of our minister and ministry trying to catch actual criminals, instead we are now under the Trudeau-Jagmeet government trying to go after law-abiding citizens, over 75,000 of them. This is ridiculous.

The main objective for firearm controls is public safety, so let's look at that a little bit. Violation of Canadian bill of rights and freedoms, as section 1 states, human and fundamental freedoms; Canadians have the rights to life, liberty, and security of the person; the right to enjoyment of property that cannot be deprived except with due process of law.

Bill C-21, as been mentioned earlier by the Minister of Trade and Export Development, has moved the amendment to committee stage to move restricted semi-automatic rifles, legitimate hunting rifles, was unable to be debated in parliament. I have a quote, Mr. Speaker, from the MP [Member of Parliament] from Kootenay-Columbia:

This ban is sneaky and underhanded. By moving this significant change to legislation at the committee amendments stage, the Liberals did not allow a democratic debate or experts to weigh in on the ban.

Rob Morrison, Conservative MP for Kootenay-Columbia.

And it's absolutely right. This is ridiculous and it is sneaky. This is not the way government is supposed to work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Here are some of the real issues: increased crime, illegal transfer over the border or smuggling of firearms, not stiff-enough penalties. Certainly not our hunters, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Hunters are trained, tested, vetted.

Semi-automatic hunting rifles have a clip of three shells which enable the gun to house four shells at a time, one in the chamber and three in the magazine. In actuality a well-trained, good shooter can fire off just as many rounds in the same amount of time with a bolt-action rifle.

In the firearms reference case in 1991, it was known that good government would not go after hunting rifles. They are taking the lowest classified firearms — non-restricted — and placing them on the highest category of prohibited.

The bill amendment does not address public safety, rather than create obstacles as they circumvent the bill of rights to make lawful property illegal. Ninety-two per cent increase in gang-related homicide, 32 per cent increase in violent crimes since Trudeau took office. This is from Stats Canada.

These firearms can be seized and no compensation given for individuals' property. This is the largest attack on Canadian hunters and legal gun owners. Planned confiscations are unacceptable approach at reducing violence, unwarranted infringement on property owners and law-abiding citizens.

This amendment proposes to ban a firearm that is a rifle or a shotgun that is capable of discharging centrefire ammunition in a semi-automatic manner that is designed to accept a detachable cartridge magazine with a greater than capacity of five cartridges of the type for which the firearm was originally designed.

This is a blanket ban on semi-automatic firearms, basically any gun configured to load a new round after each pull of the trigger. The majority of Canada's 2.2 million licensed gun owners will now be criminalized should this amendment go through. From now on, people cannot buy, sell, or transfer handguns within Canada. They cannot bring newly acquired handguns into the country. A national handgun freeze was first announced alongside Bill C-21, the strongest gun control measures in over 40 years.

So it makes me think. It just takes me back to this fall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where we were out with the Regina wildlife society, I believe it was.

An Hon. Member: — Federation.

Mr. Friesen: — Wildlife Federation. Thank you. We were out there, and there is several handgun owners out there, actually very responsible handgun owners. And actually saw some, as I said earlier, some very cool handguns.

They are very, very worried about what is coming down with the federal government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because they are very careful, and they abide by every law that is already in place which one might say already are some of the strictest laws with handguns around. And they are very law-abiding people, and we are looking at threatening their way of life, their enjoyment, and their personal collections, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

A Saskatchewan hunter stated:

This is a personal attack on law-abiding citizens. We learn and take tradition from our fathers and grandfathers on how to continue hunting through generations. We are being attacked more than criminals. All we want is to keep doing things we love. The Liberals are wanting us all to assimilate their way of life. This will have no impact on crime by taking firearms away from owners. This will not stop at this level. This is a progressive way of disarming all Canadians.

Clause 1 of the bill would deem unregulated firearms that exactly resemble regulated firearms to be prohibited devices.

I do want to speak a little bit about some of the enforcement on this gun. This is something, I guess. With this bill we are telling our law enforcement officers resources to catch lawful gun owners.

Again, just a little bit about what I already mentioned, but going and taking resources that are much needed. I know certainly in the areas that I represent, we actually need more resources. And now we are going to take those resources away and chase after actual law-abiding citizens. It makes no sense.

And legally obtained handguns in the possession of law-abiding citizens have never been the problem anyways, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our Prairie provinces have — and I may have mentioned this already — have already instructed RCMP divisions not to use provincial funding for that purpose. And I really hope that it ends up in that way.

I really appreciate the time to talk tonight, but I'm going to leave some of my colleagues some opportunity here. So thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

Mr. Steele: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be supporting the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety and the motion that's on the floor.

Mr. Speaker, as a young, rural individual growing up on a farm in rural Saskatchewan a number of years ago, you know, there wasn't a lot to be done, and part of your youth and growing up was hunting, fishing, enjoying the outdoors. You went out and had the opportunity. And you know, I remember the day I received a single-shot Winchester block system .22 and I went out and did a little hunting and stuff.

You go back in history in Saskatchewan and you talk about what firearms mean to Canada, North America, and overall. They're part of our history and where it started.

[19:15]

And the people, you know, law-abiding citizens that have these firearms in their possession right now today, you know, we're coming at them with the situation, accusing and pointing fingers where, you know, these folks are trained, educated, understand.

And I know some of the members across the way, one individual there from Regina Rosemont, he enjoys the outdoors and hunting and all that, and has a passion for it. And I know he takes his son out. He was down in the Southwest, South Central. And he enjoyed the outdoors and had that opportunity because possibly the restrictions aren't what are being thrown at us today.

I had an uncle that was an avid gun collector in the days. And I seen from the Southwest and the guns that were collected and all of these types of things. They were single-action Cooeys, bolt-actions, carbines, single-action Cooeys and Savages and different things that these homesteaders brought with them to access food. They didn't have a lot of food what they brought in with them. But they had to have something to eat. So these .22s or possibly other arms that they had with them, they used it for accessing food. And it wasn't out there to hurt the environment or harm it. They used everything that they hunted.

And some of these arms, when you went back in history — we have a few as collectors on our own farm — they had no serial numbers. When they come out in 1995 with the registration Act, we applied for serial numbers that they manufactured for them and they were put on there. And I feel kind of proud. These come in their backpacks and on the wagons with the folks that come out here and opened up the country that we have today. And to have those in our possession, that's a pretty amazing thing.

And you know, down in the Southwest and in a lot of other parts of Saskatchewan, like hunting and fishing is very important and even the safety factor, for example, protection. You get down into the Cypress Hills and down through there you have a few, you know, predators. For example, there's cougars up there. Actually a month ago we were down visiting a rancher, and there was a wolf there amongst his herd. And it didn't pay any attention to him, but it wandered through and moved on his way.

So you know, it's not everywhere, like, that you shouldn't . . . Like, guns have a need to a certain extent for protection of families and other things that happen. A few years back I had a constituent there, for example, that they had lost their farm or their ranch dog. It was due to a cougar, I mean, for example, that was in the area. They took it and dragged it into an old log cabin, a shack out there in the hills, and he found the carcass over back there.

And these types of things being, you know . . . If we're not really allowed to have the possession and the means to carry arms or have access to arms can affect us in rural areas very seriously.

Let me see here. And you know, like hunting — if you go pre-pandemic — is a \$2.3 billion industry within our province alone. It was \$1.2 billion of this year . . . last year. And down in the Southwest also like I say, and there's like the other parts, we have out-of-province, out-of-country hunters that come in. But now with these restrictions and stuff, it puts this industry at risk.

We don't know if they're going to be able to come up here and do a lot of hunting. So you know, are we taking into consideration all the effects in these bills, C-21 here, and how it can affect our economy and affect our people?

You know, as a young guy I took firearm safety training as a young guy, and there was gals that were there too, to understand how firearms work safely and storage and all these types of things. It was comparable to like a 4-H, for example, and you knew how to operate and manage these weapons. And you know, we'd come out here . . . And like, you know, there's all types of carbines out there. And we've got to be clear on what we're asking of the general public and what restrictions we're going to put on them.

You know we, when I was part of the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] organization, we went down . . . We had an outbreak, a pandemic of gophers in the Southwest and Southcentral. And you know, we went down there and . . . They're trying. They spent \$1.4 million dollars on trying to find a control mechanism that was effective back then.

We had a university professor come out of Edmonton and some students. And they spent three years consecutively down in that area, and you take a look at . . . If it hadn't been for the ammunition that some of the ranchers had supplied. They were testing all types of control systems, but still back to the old .22s. And went out there, and you know, they invited people to come out and practise what they understand, how to shoot and hunt, and it got some of that under control.

So you know, just to randomly come out with all these regulations that say oh, we're going to stop and we're going to not, you know, take this into consideration. And you know, it's just like, for example, with the harvesting of animals and keeping them healthy and the species and stuff like that, deer, antelope, and otherwise.

I had hunters stay at my farm this fall. Three different groups come and they were hunting. One group was hunting black powder. They went out; they were shooting the antelope. And that's a tough one to get with black powder. You've got to be fairly well trained or pretty, you know, capable. And then there was, you know, mule deer and flagtail.

And the one group, they caught one that wasn't healthy. They had shot it. It looked from a distance . . . and they shot it. And they turned it in for chronic wasting disease. And that harvesting helps deal with things in the sport hunting and moving through the whole system.

And you know, out of the States and you come along the South Saskatchewan River — going back to the economy side of hunting, what hunting means to our economy here in Saskatchewan — we used to have a lot of goose hunters come and stay along in Cabri, the 32 Highway area across the river there on the north side, and they would shoot geese and ducks. And Ducks Unlimited spent millions of dollars in different habitat creation and all that stuff. Well these things don't exist if we don't have firearms. What do we do? There's still habitat, but sport hunting is not there. And you know, we have to take this all into consideration.

And like, you know, I have a vast, a long history of family that's into policing and been many years. I had a brother, 30-some-plus years in the force. I have a son and daughter-in-law. I have a niece and nephew. And you know, some of them are very well trained in handling firearms and these types of things. And it's not . . . You know, they grew up understanding and using firearms, but they've taken it to a level where it's their training and their expertise and specializing in the services to protect us as a public against these criminals that are bringing these black market handguns and stuff into the system.

You know, as gun owners we take great pride in our . . . My colleague here mentioned cars. There's tens of thousands of dollars spent on, I mean, you take some of these older guns, for example, the fine tooling and the expertise that's gone into these things. And these things are a hundred-plus years old. You know, you've got your three-barrelled shotgun, your Damascus barrels. You've got things that come from the old country, and they pass them down generational. Of course, you go back, they're registered of course.

But we seen in the South in 1995 when the registration come out, you go along south end down there along Highway 18 and through there and you get into Bracken and Climax and south there, just north of the US [United States] border. There was a small museum made out of a train station in Bracken, Saskatchewan and people from around the area with pride donated revolvers and different types of guns that helped open up the country.

Because back in the days, the outlaws come from the United States and they hid along the Frenchman River Valley and dug in and hid in that area. And you know, some stayed, some passed away, and different things happened.

An Hon. Member: — A lot of outlaws there.

Mr. Steele: — Yeah, odd one. But anyways these firearms — like the history and part of what, like I say, that's opened up our country — this whole museum, it was just something to be seen. It wasn't on, you know, billboards saying go down there and see what was in that museum.

Well this registration system come in and . . . Is it the curator, they call at the museum, the person that takes care of it? They panicked. And all those firearms that were there — like they could have been Billy the Kid's for example type thing because this is the type of individuals were down along through that type of area — destroyed in history.

So you know, as we're putting these things together, like it's not totally . . . And I know for example at the same time, officers that when they come out of training in the force they were presented with their revolvers, carried this on their hip day after day, policing, protecting the public. They wanted to take that and maybe encase it and put it on the mantle, decommission so it wasn't usable again. Wasn't allowed. The 9mm come in. They had to turn them in. And these types of things happened.

Well to me, a lot of thought wasn't put to that. You carried that with you for your protection and to protect others for possibly the biggest part of your life, and it just was taken away that simply with politics and decisions.

You know, so as we move through these . . . [inaudible] . . . today and talk about this Bill 21 and how it's going to affect us, do we really know on the impact what's going to happen? Do we really know? There's things that, you know, when they sit down in their decision-making places, did they put a whole lot of thought into it? Just to get back . . . and they think they got to point it out.

You know, a gun doesn't do anything; it's the person behind that firearm is the one that has control over it. It's like a car, same with a car. If I'm driving a car, I have control over it. And if I don't drive it properly, I could hurt someone. Not just myself or my family, others and the public out there.

So let's look at this open-mindedly and see, you know, as we move forward. You know, there's been a lot of discussion here through the afternoon and this evening and all that. But let's put some common sense into this.

And I think we all here today, both the opposition and ourselves, seems like we agree upon, on this journey moving forward, where we want to end up at the end of the day. And you know, sometimes it's a real honour to come to have a common ground and a common goal that we can say, hey look, this is for our people. And you know, sometimes I think we need to speak a little louder because it doesn't seem to be heard elsewhere.

So you know, I just got to grab a couple of my notes here and maybe a drink of water here. Just getting through a cold.

But you know, like you have gun and hobby shows that are part of Saskatchewan through the fall and that type of thing too. So it's not just for the guns. It gathers people together in the communities, and people trade, you know.

Like I say myself, I used to hunt. I've black-powdered hunt. I've hunted elk. I've hunted moose. I've hunted deer. I've hunted partridge, prairie chicken, gophers, pheasant. Never hunted bear. I got up a tree once and he never even come in there. But I was a way up there and waited for hours. It was cold.

An Hon. Member: — You or the bear?

Mr. Steele: — The bear. But he didn't come in. I think I could've hit him. I won't say I could have got him. But maybe the member opposite, he maybe's had that opportunity.

It's an interesting thing, you know. And it's not necessarily — and it's not against firearms — but it's not necessarily always getting your animal. It's the enjoyment of being out there. But the gun's part of getting you out there, to be part of it. It could be a camera, but guns have been there for decades and that's, you know, something that we have to remember.

And you know, I worked in an elevator, a small elevator locally at home in the years. And the veterans, there were still a lot of veterans around. And they come back from war and — like we all know a lot of these veterans — you know, they called it shell shock. But there's some veterans would talk about what they experienced and some wouldn't talk about it. But you know, if we can just think back, what they gave up. And you know, they went over, and it's unfortunate but this is reality, to protect us and give us the freedoms we have today.

And I remember sitting there and talking with them, and they were the most interesting group of fellows you ever wanted to hear. It's too bad I wouldn't have had a recorder or wrote some of this stuff down. But they would come in the morning, some of those folks, and they'd start the coffee. I'd be loading cars and buying grain and they'd be in there. They'd leave at lunch, come back after dinner . . . [inaudible] . . . you know, but just listen to them. And they come back. Some of them were avid hunters. Out in the Great Sand Hills west of home, they'd go out and shoot and enjoy the great outdoors.

And you know, here today, it's just another example of how firearms are part of our history and not in the best of way a lot of times, but they are part of our history. And not forgetting that. And you know, like I said earlier, I have family that's been in law enforcement for a few generations now. And you know, we sit down and have chats and different things. And you know, listening to them, and you know, it's not the firearm.

And like these black market revolvers, all that stuff, I think, you know, some of the ideas and thoughts are in the right direction, but let's concentrate on that. Let's not just blanket say, this is what we're going to do and take. And then like the definition of a gun. Well you can have a multi-bullet and then you got your cylinder type. You've got your single shot. You know, we could go on for days and days.

And you go back to the origin of like a revolver back I think it was 1836, I think was when the first one that was a pin something . . . well it don't matter, but . . .

An Hon. Member: — Ask Don Morgan.

Mr. Steele: — [Inaudible] . . . Is Don here? But it was a centrefire and those type of things.

[19:30]

And so I don't know if I have much more to ramble on here. There's a lot of other speakers too and there's been a lot said. But I feel that, you know, in anything, you walk before you run. There should be more thought put toward this, and as an elected representative of the province of Saskatchewan and this type of thing, I think you know, in conjunction with our fellow members across the way, I think we're on the right track.

And we have to stand up for what's right and how it affects our province and our people too. So like I said earlier, I support the motion moved by the minister of corrections and policies and public safety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've heard a lot of speeches today, some very impassioned, some very knowledgeable about firearms, some about the laws behind it. The opposition members talk about how they feel the same way as us, and that's fantastic when we can move forward and we vote on this and it will be presented unanimously.

I know back in the past — I've been here for a while — when there was another government in Ottawa and they'd say to us,

text our buddies in Ottawa; we've got to get this changed. So I would. So we're asking them the same way, text your buddies in Ottawa and say, please don't vote for this.

It's a pretty simple thing. I, unfortunately, don't have any federal NDP [New Democratic Party] friends or . . . no, I don't even have any federal Liberal friends, so real hard for me to reach out and text one of those guys; I don't have them in there. I've talked to some of my friends that are MPs about this particular piece of legislation and they're not very happy with the way it was rolled out.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure about your town. I've got a lot of friends that are into hunting and have firearms, and I've got lots of friends that aren't into it. However I haven't had one person give me a call and say, please take my firearms. Not one call on that. I have a gentleman that's been contacting my office now for about three weeks in a complete panic because he has a well-established collection of handguns. And contrary to what some of my colleagues have said, this is going to increase the crime rate. As soon as this becomes a bill — and we're not talking about Manitoba or Alberta, just Saskatchewan — 75,000 people, if they haven't turned in their firearms, become criminals.

So have the federal Liberals and NDP thought through of what that's going to do to our court system? How about our prison system? We already have an overburdened court system where sometimes some people don't get to trial for years and it's kicked out of court because it wasn't tried in a timely manner.

Now are they going to force these ones through ahead of our people that are drug dealers or our people that are using firearms for robbing people or businesses? Are they going to force common farmers, teachers, law-abiding citizens in every other way except with stroke of a pen or flip of the switch, they are now criminals?

And as some of my colleagues have pointed out, it's an automatic jail sentence. Now they've taken away automatic jail sentences on some of the other offences out there which I personally find more heinous than somebody owning a firearm.

I personally have taken my kids out, taught them how to hunt, clean a deer, be able to take care of themselves. Now I don't even know if I'll be able to pass down a family heirloom, which is an old Lee-Enfield. But it's a sniper rifle from World War I and it's a .303. So am I going to become a criminal now because that's a family heirloom and I'm going to pass it on to my kids? So it is stuff like that that we need to worry about.

We've got Alberta and Manitoba in complete agreement with us on this. Now that doesn't happen on legislation all the time, but when it comes to something that hits us right in the gut, right where it counts the most, where people stand up and say look, enough is enough.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm worried. And I'm not only worried about all the people that become criminals. I take a look at the past. And I'm not going to mention the other countries that I'm sure we're all of . . . that they started down the road of protecting their citizens by removing their firearms. And we know the direction some of those countries went after that. I'm not going to fearmonger and say that's going to happen here.

However we have a federal government propped up by the Liberal-NDP coalition that absolutely refuses to listen to all of Canada. It is Eastern Canada-centric. It is not any different than it was when his dad was in power and he give everybody the one-finger salute back in the '70s leaving Calgary. Well this is pretty much doing the same thing to the people here of the province of Saskatchewan.

My constituents that are worried and scared and good, law-abiding, taxpaying citizens that are productive members of society that don't want to give up their firearms and they go hunt. They go hunt, and when they get enough meat they turn over the extra meat to the food bank. And well they share it with me too, but they bring some over to the food bank. And I'm not above turning down some homemade deer sausage. It's fantastic.

But the federal government, just this overreach, this constant overreach of stepping on the people of Western Canada. You know, we've talked about gun collectors and car collectors. Me, I collect grandchildren so I'm neither a gun collector or a car collector. And hopefully they don't go down that road that we can't have grandkids any more.

However people are worried about what this federal government is doing by ignoring the people of Western Canada. It's not just Saskatchewan and it's not just the conservative side of the provinces. We have the current NDP in here standing up and saying yes, they support this; yes, we will text our friends in Ottawa to say, please take away from this. I'm looking forward to seeing that . . . somebody seeing that tweeted out and telling me about it, because I'm no longer on Twitter.

So I'm going to quote the Minister of Justice from Alberta:

If these amendments are allowed to proceed, Bill C-21 will be the most sweeping and arbitrary ban of firearms in Canadian history. The federal Liberals claimed that they were never going after hunters, farmers, and target shooters. They lied.

When a Justice minister calls out the federal government and says they lied, that's something somebody better stand up and pay attention to — more than just people in Western Canada, an attorney general of a province. And if we're all equal in our provinces like we're supposed to be, the federal government should be listening to us as much as they are the people in downtown Toronto.

Now I understand their fear in downtown Toronto where every second day somebody's running around with a handgun that's been smuggled across the border because they don't man the border in Eastern Canada.

But in Western Canada we've got pressure centres and drones and everybody. You know, Western Canada used to be wide open and people would go back and forth. I'm from Estevan, grew up. I had friends with farms on both sides of the border, and they would farm back and forth across because they literally owned farm on both sides of the Canada-US border. Now they're not allowed to do that, so law-abiding citizens, they go around.

But Eastern Canada, well we can basically walk through the border and the RCMP will take you to the hotel room. So like

really, what's going on? How can these illegal arms be coming into Canada? And we're not worried about that — maybe a little bit in here — but what we're really worried about is taking away a firearm that looks like an assault rifle.

I've had members here show me pictures, and they own the hunting rifle and they own the hunting rifle. The difference is one's got a really cool-looking stock; the other one looks like a regular old, like my old .303. And either one of them is the same thing. It is to take down a wild animal. It is not . . . Here in Western Canada we don't target shoot people. We target shoot. We target shoot. We shoot deer. We shoot coyotes. We shoot chickens, prairie chickens with . . . There's where our shotguns are going to be made illegal.

I'm not a big bird hunter but my friends are, and I see how they have their shotguns and they're going, now what are we going to do? Do we have to go back to the old double-barrel and cock it open every time? Now you've probably hunted birds more than me, the member from Rosemont. I'm more of a deer hunter. And I like target shooting. I went through the cadet program and that's where . . . Back when I was in the cadet program we used converted Lee-Enfield .303s, but they were converted to a .22 And that's where we learned our gun safety, through the cadet program.

And I'm trying to think of how they're going to do it with their marksmanship, because I know they use pellet guns now, not .22s. But it's still . . . when it comes to their cross-country where they shoot and do the skiing . . .

An Hon. Member: — Biathlon.

Mr. Lawrence: — Biathlon. And what about our biathletes in the winter Olympics? Okay, what are they going to do? How are they going to train? Are we just going to take that off the map? It is absolutely amazing that this federal government can't think through to the end. Are they going to open up a bunch more courthouses? Are they going to hire a bunch more federal prosecutors? Are they going to appoint a bunch more judges? Because how are we going to deal with . . .

Okay, if there's 75,000 here in Saskatchewan, well Alberta's about four times the size, so that's 300,000 in Alberta. And Manitoba's about the same size, so another 75 . . . So that's half a million people that overnight are going to become criminals. And I'm sure there's lots of hunters in Ontario and Quebec that overnight are going to become criminals.

So what are we going to do with all these people? We don't have enough room in our jails now for our drug dealers and the ones that are doing really serious crimes. So how are we going to do it with somebody who one day, right today is a law-abiding citizen, changing absolutely nothing else except the stroke of a pen, but now they're a criminal?

It reminds me of some of the historic things that have happened across the world and have . . . with the stroke of a pen people become from good people to non-people. So are all our people that are retaining their firearms going to become non-people, become criminals, become just . . .

Where are we going to put them all? We don't have enough room

in the jails now. We don't have enough volume in our courts. We're going to be backed up in our court systems for years. Has the federal government not thought about this? I know the opposition has, I know our side has, and I know the opposition federal government has.

I got one more quote, and I'm going to quote our minister:

The rifles and shotguns that law-abiding Saskatchewan farmers, hunters, and sport shooters will soon be confiscated by the Trudeau-NDP government. These men and women will be criminalized overnight. Saskatchewan will not stand idly by while the federal government yet again attacks law-abiding citizens instead of focusing on crime."

And that's our Minister of Policing, Corrections, and Public Safety.

And I just want to say one more thing on that. I am really worried at where this federal government is going, not just for me and not just for my kids, but for my grandkids. If they can take and turn grandpas and grandmas and schoolteachers and farmers and ranchers into criminals overnight with the stroke of a pen, what's next?

[19:45]

Thank you, mister . . . Oh just a minute. I support the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety, and thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — For the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow, during your speech, the member, you used unparliamentary language when you said, they lied. And I'd like you to stand and withdraw that unparliamentary language please.

An Hon. Member: — Don't resign.

Mr. Lawrence: — I'm not going to resign. I was reading a quote, but I stand and withdraw and apologize.

The Deputy Speaker: — Thank you. I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to begin my remarks by reciting three quotes. Some have been recited already, but there's a common theme that develops from the quotes and I'd like to preface my comments with that theme if I could, Mr. Speaker.

The first quote, of course, was Tyler Shandro, the Minister of Justice for Alberta, who . . . I will amend the quote accordingly. But it starts as follows, Mr. Speaker:

If these amendments are allowed to proceed, Bill C-21 will be the most sweeping and arbitrary ban of firearms in Canadian history. The federal Liberals claimed that they were never going after hunters, farmers, and target shooters . . . This is clearly part of a push to ban legal firearms ownership altogether.

The second quote, Mr. Deputy Speaker, reads as follows:

The rifles and shotguns that law-abiding Saskatchewan farmers, hunters, and sport shooters use will soon be confiscated by the Trudeau-NDP government. These men and women will be criminalized overnight. Saskatchewan will not stand idly by while the federal government yet again attacks law-abiding citizens instead of focusing on crime.

That of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was our very own Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

And the final quote, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is from Kelvin Goertzen, Minister of Justice and Attorney General for Manitoba, where he stated, and I quote:

Manitoba continues to raise significant concerns regarding the proposed measures that will punish law-abiding firearms owners while doing little to address illegal importation of firearms from the United States. The federal government should focus its attention and resources on illegally imported firearms, and those who commit crime with guns, instead of measures that target law-abiding citizens. Manitoba's government stands united with Saskatchewan and Alberta in opposing the federal Liberal government's confiscation plans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the common theme that develops there is pretty simple, and that's that the federal government is criminalizing and punishing law-abiding citizens and it is banning legally obtained property.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not own a firearm. I am not a farmer or a rancher and I don't hunt. But I don't have to be a farmer or a hunter to understand and appreciate the severity of the negative impacts of Bill C-21 and the negative impacts that that bill will have on law-abiding citizens who are responsible firearms owners. Mr. Speaker, I might not be personally impacted by C-21; however when the federal government seeks to impose its ideological and misinformed will upon the people of Saskatchewan and across the nation without a logical or rationally defensible reason to do so, I am offended to my core.

Of course governments of all levels implement various policies and legislation that impacts our daily lives, but what is critical in that exercise, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that they do so with carefully considered reasoning and logic.

With Bill C-21, we have a Liberal-NDP coalition government attempting to ban and confiscate firearms from tens of thousands of responsible, law-abiding Saskatchewan citizens. And their reason, Mr. Speaker? They suggest that doing so will somehow make our communities safer. To put it bluntly, that is a ridiculous and illogical proposition.

I've said it many times in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, I enjoy a good debate. I enjoy rationalizing arguments and applying logical reason to look at all sides of any particular issue, not necessarily to fight about it but to examine it from various perspectives. Mr. Speaker, Bill C-21 and the amendments proposed by the federal government last week — without consultation, by the way — not only lacks logic but it also demonstrates a complete absence of common sense. It's difficult to properly debate such an issue.

It's easy for governments to say we want safer communities. Of course we do; we all do. Of course firearms safety is an important issue; no one is saying otherwise. The real question is, what steps and measures can be taken to actually make our communities safer? I believe Conservative Member of Parliament Glen Motz put it best when he said, "This [federal] government says, 'We believe in making evidence-based decisions.' Well, show us the evidence where licensed firearm owners are the problem." The problem Mr. Motz is referring to is gun crimes.

Our government fully supports initiatives that will meaningfully reduce crime and make our communities safer. For example, initiatives that prevent and combat gang violence are supported by this government, Mr. Speaker. Initiatives addressing gun smuggling and illegally obtained firearms that actually create safer communities, well we fully support those. But Bill C-21 with its proposed amendments don't accomplish these goals. In fact, quite the contrary.

Bill C-21 is a gross overreach of federal authority to confiscate the legally obtained property of law-abiding citizens. Let me say that again, Mr. Speaker. Bill C-21 is the gross overreach of federal authority to confiscate legally obtained property from law-abiding citizens. This NDP-supported federal government is creating a new law that instantly prohibits legally obtained property and suddenly makes those law-abiding citizens criminals. What's particularly offensive is the fact that this Liberal-NDP coalition government attempts to justify their gross overreach by claiming that this new law is somehow making communities safer, Mr. Speaker. Really? How is that?

Our communities are not experiencing crime at the hands of responsible, law-abiding gun owners like our farmers, our ranchers, and our hunters. Yet that is precisely who is being targeted with Bill C-21. The proposed bill does nothing to achieve its stated goal, which is public safety. It's nothing more than an ideological, virtue-signalling exercise by this federal government.

Sadly, this isn't the first time we've seen this Liberal-NDP coalition government do something like this, Mr. Speaker. They've already demonstrated their willingness to reach beyond their constitutional jurisdiction to attack the citizens and businesses of Saskatchewan when they imposed the carbon tax under the guise of protecting the environment. And despite the fact that the carbon tax has demonstrated absolutely zero meaningful effect on the stated goal of reducing emissions, they continue charging it. And what's worse, even drastic inflation, which drives up the cost of nearly everything we need day to day, isn't stopping the federal Liberals from increasing that completely useless tax.

Mr. Speaker, federal Public Safety minister Marco Mendicino has accused those who oppose this bill as fearmongering. Mendicino is the same guy who stated that the federal government will be taking "into careful consideration" a number of factors when deciding what will constitute a prohibited firearm. Yet his list includes commonly used hunting rifles which are not prevalent in the commission of crime. So I struggle to accept his careful consideration will be of much use.

I suppose that's why Mr. Mendicino was also quoted as saying, "We're working very closely with the RCMP, we're working

very closely with provincial police services, local police services, to understand how best to make this work."

Well maybe we in this House can be of assistance to Mr. Mendicino by sending him a clear message. Bill C-21 won't work, Mr. Speaker, nor should it. Because, Mr. Speaker, you can't improve public safety by turning law-abiding citizens into criminals. You don't reduce crime and make communities safer by taking legally obtained firearms away from responsible hunters and farmers, just like you don't protect the environment by taxing the people who are doing the best job at sustaining it. It's that sort of upside-down and backwards thinking that this federal government has been operating with for far too long, Mr. Speaker. It's illogical. It makes no sense.

And let's not forget that those federal Liberals would not be able to impose and maintain their ineffective and senseless policies were it not for the support of the NDP. Now the members across the aisle have suddenly begun claiming that they don't support the carbon tax. But where's their policy on it, Mr. Speaker? Where's their evidence that they've done anything to pressure their federal counterparts to stop supporting the Liberals on that issue?

Mr. Speaker, I've heard the members opposite use the term "word salad" several times in this session. I think that might be what they're referring to when they use that phrase. They keep tossing out words, but there's no substance behind the words. To borrow a fast food slogan, where's the beef in their claims, Mr. Speaker?

They claim they support this motion just like they oppose the carbon tax. But what action have they done to actually demonstrate that? What steps have they taken, Mr. Speaker? The simple fact of the matter, these nonsensical Liberal policies and legislation cannot be imposed upon the citizens of our province if the NDP doesn't support them. Yet here we are, Mr. Speaker, which can mean only one of two things: either those members' voices are completely irrelevant within their own federal party, or they aren't actually using their voices within their own party to stand up for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to believe that the opposition have at least some of degree of relevance within their own ranks, which suggests that the latter option is probably the more likely. So if the NDP members truly don't support the carbon tax and actually oppose the amendments to Bill C-21, they will openly and immediately call upon their federal counterparts to stop these completely illogical laws that do nothing to meaningfully address their stated intent. And if they don't do that, Mr. Speaker? Then I suppose we need to ask ourselves, is this just more word salad from an irrelevant opposition?

Mr. Speaker, I support the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This motion that's been brought forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it reminds me and think about my policing career and how we go after the criminals. Most of the communities that I've policed, there's a

small percentage of people that are the ones that are breaking the law. And sometimes those are the ones that drive the force in policy.

But here we have an amendment that is targeting the innocent and the people that are law abiding. Seventy-five thousand is not a small number of people that are going to be affected by this amendment, and once again we have a small percentage of people that are affecting a huge number. And I find that to be disturbing for us, for this province, because it's the law-abiding citizens that are following the rules that are in place. And these are the rules that protect us, but the few times things have gone somewhat sideways, that is what's driving this change here. And we have to think about the small percentage that's driving this change.

And when we talk about exploring all options, this blanket approach of making sure that everyone pays, I think it sends the wrong message. When we think about people that use their firearms to gather food, and we think about those that make sure their firearms are locked up, they make sure they follow the rules. I grew up in a household like that. I grew up in a household that respected the firearm because of the purpose that we used it for.

[20:00]

And so now here we have an amendment before us that challenges those citizens just like the household I grew up in, to ensure that we address public safety in that manner. By going after the people that are following the law, how does that make sense? How does that make sense and how does that protect all of us?

The few calls that I've gone to as a police officer that involved firearms, and this person that has taken it upon themselves to use the firearm, that is who we should be after. That is who we need to target on. But here we have an amendment that goes after 75,000 people that made sure that all safety measures are followed.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had a long career in law enforcement. And within that career it's taken me through many communities and dealt with many citizens that we've come across that for some reason firearms became part of the scenario. And these are situations where people weren't following the law. But there are situations where we also responded where people followed the law, people that respected the law, that ensured rules were followed. And I'm finding the imbalance here of how we're dealing with those people quite alarming.

And the people of Saskatchewan should be quite aware what this means. Seventy-five thousand of them could be affected by this. And here we are in a position of, we should do something about it. If we let this go, what does that mean for Saskatchewan? What does that mean for people that use firearms that gather their food? What does it mean for people that use this as a hobby? And what does that mean for people that are taking all the safety measures to ensure that all of us are safe because they're following all the procedures? What does that mean? And so here we have a small percentage driving the change again. And so why are we not going after that small percentage? What does that look like? We are punishing everyone with this change. And how much sense does that make?

All of us in this room who have been exposed to firearms have been taught the safety measures. We've had legislations and rules in place that we follow. Many households in this province have firearms that are secured and locked and looked after and only used when necessary.

So it does not make sense to the people of Saskatchewan and to the people in this room of why are we punishing them. Why are we saying, everything we've laid out for you to be safe . . . All of a sudden we're challenging you and saying and sending a message. What we've told you to do up until now, you'll be punished for.

When we have to make sense of this and we have to realize what it means to our daily function, this amendment is not just for public safety. It's also about our rights and what that means. You can't say in one breath, do everything right, and in the next breath say, because you've done everything right, we're going to do this to you. We can't do that. It doesn't make sense. Seventy-five thousand people could be affected by this, not a small number.

It doesn't matter what side of politics you are on this province, it's going to affect you. So why would we not join together and speak against this because it's affecting all of us. And we have a situation where . . . once again, the imbalance approach. We have a federal government, and I don't need to point out the dynamics of what that looks like . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Thank you, Mr. Premier. And how it's affecting us. We have hunting seasons. We have seasons of competition where firearms are used. All of that comes into play here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, here we have an amendment where the message is, this is not right. This is not right for the citizens of Saskatchewan and everything that it does. When we have an opportunity that's before us, the language that we use is quite critical and quite important and what it looks like and the message that it sends to everyone in this province. This affects every citizen in every constituency in this province.

And now we're asked . . . Now we're going to ask the police force to deal with this. And we've heard for a long time how strained that is. As a province, we've introduced measures to assist. But this is something that is punishing the people that are following the rules. So I think it's critical that we stand firm and speak against this amendment because of who it affects. It affects all of us. It affects every person in this province. And I'll say this again — 75,000 people. And as a province we're taking a stand and we're saying, this is not right.

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

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I support the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections and Policing and Public Safety. Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight regarding the federal Bill C-21 and the proposed amendments from the Liberal-NDP coalition government. I'll be brief with my comments tonight.

Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that I have some grave concerns about this piece of federal legislation and the recent proposed amendments that would widely expand the list of banned firearms in this country. And I think I can really put my concerns in two buckets, Mr. Speaker. I think one bucket's the intention of the bill and then the other bucket is the implication of the bill.

Now when it comes to the intention of the bill, you know, and other members have talked about this, we've been told it's about public safety. And while I do agree with the idea that taking firearms out of the hands of criminals is important, that's not what this bill does, Mr. Speaker. This bill is taking legally purchased and licensed firearms out of the hands of law-abiding Canadians, including many in our province, who use their firearms for legitimate reasons, Mr. Speaker. They use them for hunting, for target shooting, for defending livestock and crops, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the federal government is looking for ways to help with public safety in Saskatchewan, I've got a few ideas for them, Mr. Speaker. If we want to talk about an area of federal jurisdiction, why not step up enforcement at the borders into our country in terms of firearms being illegally smuggled into Canada? You know, when I think when it comes back right here in our communities in this province, Mr. Speaker, I mean our government has made significant investments in the last two years, you know, in the Saskatchewan trafficking response team, in the warrant enforcement and suppression team, in crime reduction teams all across the province. One of which, another one, is coming to The Battlefords very soon.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have little doubt that the real intention of Bill C-21 is it's purely political. The Liberal-NDP coalition are stoking fear about firearms to folks that don't use or own firearms. If the Liberal-NDP government spoke to firearms owners and users, they would quickly learn that there isn't much common sense in this piece of legislation. As I said, Mr. Speaker, this is political. Bill C-21 isn't just a gun grab; it's a vote grab.

Now I'd like to illustrate my concern about the implication of Bill C-21, and I'd like to remind the House about something that happened over the summer. Now over the summer some in this House may remember that it came to light that there were federal employees trespassing on private land to test private water bodies. Now when I heard about this, I was immediately concerned and wrote a letter to Minister Guilbeault, the federal Environment minister. But, Mr. Speaker, the federal Environment minister dismissed my comments as "misinformed rhetoric."

But wouldn't you know it, Mr. Speaker, wouldn't you know it. Just a few days later the federal government admitted that that was happening, that they did have employees testing private water bodies here in Saskatchewan. Now I would say that it seems that Minister Guilbeault is misinformed about what's happening in his own department, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we believed then and still do believe now that the purpose of this water testing was to build a case for the proposed fertilizer emission reduction. And you know, I don't need to tell this House, but I will say it again. That reduction would have devastating impacts on our agricultural sector when

it comes to productivity, which then in turn would lead to negatively impacting the food security here in Canada and around the world.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I bring up this example to show that the Liberal-NDP federal government is ignoring the principles on which this country was founded. We're a confederation. We're a group of unique provinces knit together in a federation where the success of one province is good for the whole group and vice versa. But in that confederation, Mr. Speaker, there is jurisdictional separation. The federal government looks after some things. The provincial government looks after other things. You know, we don't have the right to form a military here in Saskatchewan or sign bilateral free trade agreements with other countries, but we do have jurisdiction over many other areas, one of which is developing our own natural resources.

Now Bill C-21 is another example of an Ottawa-knows-best mentality and the federal government inserting themselves in every area possible. And the passage of Bill C-21 means that the federal government would take another step towards mandating every detail of life here in Saskatchewan.

[20:15]

Now, Mr. Speaker, how this all circles back to this Legislative Assembly here in Regina, it's quite simple in my mind. The fact of the matter is that all 12 members of the NDP opposition are card-carrying members of the federal NDP. That's how the NDP works, Mr. Speaker. There is no difference between membership in the federal party or the provincial wings. And that's the same NDP that is keeping Justin Trudeau as our Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker.

Now our provincial government is standing up for the law-abiding people of Saskatchewan by standing against Bill C-21. The NDP members opposite, they have a chance to do the same thing. They have a chance to speak up, and not just in this House and not just the member for Rosemont, but all 12 of those opposition members have a chance to stand up for the people of this province. But, Mr. Speaker, you know what I worry about? I worry that the loyalty to their federal party is blinding them on this issue, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I personally don't have any membership in any federal political party. My loyalties are to the constituents that I represent in The Battlefords and my loyalty is to this province of Saskatchewan — full stop, Mr. Speaker. So tonight I will be supporting the motion brought forward by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Martensville-Warman.

Mr. Jenson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And for the member from Cumberland across the way, if he has so much to say, maybe he should get to his feet.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we live in a wonderful province. We live in a wonderful province with wonderful people from border to border. Now I'm like the member from Moose Jaw North. I haven't hunted since I was a teenager — that's full disclosure — but I do take umbrage with Bill C-21 and the

amendments that go with it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I was 11 years old I took my hunter safety program in Saskatoon, and I still remember it pretty clearly, and out at the Saskatoon Wildlife Federation. And I did do some hunting with my father after that for a few years. And one of the things that we learned in that hunter safety course, and one of the things that my dad passed down to me, was having respect for the people, the persons, the property, and the wildlife itself.

Now this legislation that's being proposed and the amendments that go along with it affect tens of thousands of others in the province — pretty much everybody in our province — and many more around the country. This legislation that's being proposed by the federal government is completely out of focus, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and does not address the problem of illegal guns entering our country, the gang violence that we see in our urban streets, or the use of firearms in the commission of a crime. Our Chief Firearms Officer estimates over 75,000 residents of our province will become criminals overnight if these amendments are adopted.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who will be confiscating these firearms? Will it be the RCMP? Will it be municipal police forces? Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have had some experience working with the RCMP as an auxiliary constable for about a period of four years, five years. One of the detachments I served in was the Battlefords detachment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I'm sure that the member from The Battlefords is well aware of how busy that detachment is. They don't have time to be running around enforcing confiscation rules on firearms. They have many, many other things to do.

I have lots of friends and family, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who will be in this classification. They're going to unwillingly fall into the classification of being a criminal just for the simple fact that they own firearms. And it's very disturbing that law-abiding gun owners across our province and across our country are being targeted in this legislation. Some of these friends and families are hunters and sport shooters. Some are farmers or a combination of both.

I have a good friend that I grew up with. His name is Kirk Reynolds. Kirk was an Olympic athlete from Outlook. And Kirk joined Rod Boll, the pride of Midale, Saskatchewan . . .

An Hon. Member: — Fillmore.

Mr. Jensen: — Fillmore. Close enough. In Atlanta in 1996 for the Olympic Games. And Kirk and Rod competed together in men's double trap shooting. I was fortunate enough to be able to travel to Atlanta to watch them compete. If we have a law like this in place, Mr. Deputy Speaker, gentlemen like Kirk and Rod would not have that opportunity, and others like me would not have the opportunity to watch them compete.

Taking away lawfully owned and lawfully used firearms, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will be making life on farms much more dangerous. I'm not a farmer, never professed to be — I can barely grow potatoes — but most of my in-laws are farmers, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My brother-in-law, couple of months back, had an incident on his farm, and it was extremely disturbing. It was a

little scary. They had some trespassers in his yard attempting to steal fuel, and they were armed. And those firearms, Mr. Deputy Speaker, were not legally owned, and they certainly were used in the commission of a crime.

So I think it was the member from Melville-Saltcoats that spoke about how this law and the amendments that go with it will affect livestock producers and food security. If there are no firearms in the province, how do farmers protect their herds? How do they protect the animals on the farms? And how do they protect themselves from the criminal element as well?

Predators such as bears, coyotes, cougars, they can all be stopped in their tracks with a firearm, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They won't be, however, stopped from attacking livestock, or people, with platitudes and the emotional advocacy like our Prime Minister is so fond of, or the ineffective legislation and amendments that are being proposed in Bill C-21.

I remember as a kid going hunting with my dad — prairie chickens in the shelterbelts down around the Outlook area, ducks, geese, mule deer south of The Battlefords in the Baljennie area.

I remember as a kid growing up . . . And I think the member from Rosemont has probably been to the Ford Beavis Breakfast. I'm not sure if he has or not. But the Ford Beavis Breakfast is one of the biggest hunters' breakfasts in Saskatchewan, and it's held every October. And for the people that attend that breakfast — and I believe it's been going now for more than 60 years — the people that attend that breakfast are good, upstanding people. This law and these amendments will criminalize each and every one of them, and that is an absolute shame.

My dad was also not only, you know, in business all of his life, but our family also owned a hunting and fishing outfitting operation in northern Saskatchewan, a fly-in operation. This law and these amendments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will eliminate that entire outfitting industry in our province and all the jobs that go with it. It will eliminate them.

So even though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm no longer a hunter, I . . . and I do have some regrets because, you know, I would like to be able to make some memories with my son and teach him. But as he grows older, he may pick up on firearm safety, hunting, maybe sport shooting. But if this legislation passes with the amendments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he's not going to have that opportunity, and neither will thousands of other young people that may develop into that sport.

So I know there's others that want to get in on this debate, so I'm going to leave it at that. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be supporting the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm going to be brief in my comments as we've heard a lot of good commentary on this topic tonight already. And I would normally be happy to speak to any motion put forward in this House, but happiness is not an emotion that comes to mind when speaking about our illustrious federal government and their constant

overreach.

Bill C-21 and subsequent amendments are yet another example of tone-deaf, virtue-signalling politics of their Trudeau-Singh coalition. If passed, this legislation would effectively make almost every hunting and sport gun illegal across the country.

Now I'm desperately trying to understand the methodology here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What is the intended purpose? I fail to find the logic. I guess it boils down to them thinking they're speaking to their base, a base that doesn't understand or care about our Saskatchewan winter climate, a base that doesn't understand where their food or their fuel comes from, their city base that doesn't understand the important role that firearms play for many of us here in this province.

And for me it was just a part of growing up. Now to be transparent, I do not currently own any firearms. I have nothing to lose from a personal property perspective, but I fully understand the implications of this legislation. We were introduced to guns at a very young age. We were taught they are not toys, starting with pump-action BB guns, advancing to CO₂ cartridge pellet guns from our young years up into .22s and rifles, always with safe training and handling top of mind.

I as others received firearm training as a young 11- or 12-year-old, as many did in this room. And as I stated before, safe firearms use was simply part of growing up in rural Saskatchewan. As kids on the farm we had strict instructions on gun safety. There was no jacking around, you guys.

We had cousins out from the city. They had to come out during summer holidays, and they could simply not get enough gopher hunting in. Now not necessarily a novelty to us kids who are on the farm all the time, but Dad said he didn't mind buying dozens and dozens of boxes of shells if we promised to eventually hit something.

With the restricted use of strychnine, as we heard from the member from Cypress Hills, it becomes a situation where these rodents overrun our native grasslands specifically, and hunting becomes an even more important activity.

Now on the farm we had a couple of .22 calibre rifles, a single-shot bolt-action Remington, and the favourite, especially for the city cousins, was the Marlin semi-automatic. The semi-automatic was obviously a far more efficient gun for any type of hunting.

Now many summers of gopher hunting, Mr. Speaker, with zero incidents, unless you count our one cousin who, as a rule, he never liked guns. He did follow us out to the pasture one day. And I can't remember whether he wore flip-flops or bare feet, but as I recall — it's about 40 or 45 years ago — it was a very traumatic incident, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My dad heard the crying from the yard, went out to find my cousin with a cactus stuck in on the top of his foot, thinking that someone was shot. It was just a city cousin having a little cry fest.

We also had a couple of shotguns, an old double-barrel 12-gauge and a newer pump-action 12-gauge, but there wasn't a lot of bird hunting in our family. But our favourite gun was certainly the Winchester .38-55 lever-action. Yeah, every cowboy movie ever made was with a gun like that. It was our coyote gun, Mr. Deputy

Speaker, and we used it sparingly.

We never had cougars in our area, but my dad did shoot an adult lynx on one occasion. He didn't know what it was in the tree at dark, but the dogs had treed something and he didn't know it was a lynx until he shot it and it fell out of the tree.

My point is, Mr. Speaker, while sport hunting and shooting are a part of gun ownership, the main function of firearms on a farm and ranch is born from necessity. From gopher hunting to predator control, protecting livestock, guns are an absolute necessity and will continue to be, whether the federal Liberals and NDP wish to acknowledge that fact or not.

Now in fairness I fully understand someone living in metro Toronto or Montreal would not have a clue about how to put an animal down. Whether it's a dog hit by a school bus, a horse with a broken leg, or simply butchering a beef or a hog, things need to be done. And while single shotguns do have their place, semi-automatic weapons are an absolute essential necessity for predator control, not to mention the large, large sport hunting industry we rely on in this province.

Mr. Speaker, game hunting is a huge industry here in the province. Outfitting alone brings millions of dollars to revenue to our northern communities. Once again this federal government refuses to take specific jurisdictional impacts and results those impacts are of their de-flawed policies, very much reminding me of the carbon tax implementation, Mr. Deputy Speaker: clean fuel standard, fertilizer emissions, reduction targets, little or no consultation on any of it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[20:30]

Now we know the federal government has exclusive jurisdiction on firearms legislation and regulation. We acknowledge that. That alone does not make it right. There is no doubt that taking illegal guns out of the hands of criminals is a good idea. The problem is criminalizing, seizing, and destroying property of law-abiding firearms owners of this province does nothing to solve the supposed root problem. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we find it very confusing that our federal government chooses to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences on several firearms offences. It seems very counterintuitive, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which should not really be much of a surprise to us.

Instead of taking real action on gun crime or climate action, they choose to make 75,000 law-abiding gun owners in this province criminals — 2 million nationwide, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Ridiculous. It seems that the folks in law enforcement aren't even supportive of this either, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That in itself is very telling. The issue is simply more virtue-signalling, as I said before, by Liberals, again backed by NDP members of parliament.

Now the members opposite are supposedly supporting this motion. We'll see how that goes. And that's all fine and good in theory, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They even claim that they've contacted their federal counterparts expressing their opposition to this legislation. I, for one, would like to see that correspondence. I really don't want to take their word for anything. And frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like the members opposite for once to actually make a difference. Please call and

email every single NDP Member of Parliament. Get them to break from the claws of Justin and Jagmeet and vote against this ridiculous legislation. This is the only way it can be stopped and it needs to be stopped now, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We will soon find out if the NDP will finally be impactful for once. Or will they again be all smoke and no lead, Mr. Speaker, just as the position they continue to maintain on the carbon tax?

We as a government will certainly do all we can to protect law-abiding firearms owners in the province. We will encourage and incentivize safe firearms education, firearms use, and firearms storage — actual measures that reduce criminals' ability to obtain and ultimately commit crimes with stolen guns. Criminals and gangs are the problem, Mr. Speaker, not the 75,000 law-abiding citizens here in Saskatchewan.

One fact that boggles my mind is the extensive list of prohibited weapons, from paintball guns to tasers. They only have to look like a gun for them to qualify — over 300 pages of firearms, many of which are not actually firearms, as I mentioned. It seems this federal government will stop at nothing to negatively impact our economy and our way of life here in Saskatchewan. This government overreach has only support from one entity, and that is the NDP. They can single-handedly stop it. Will they? Will we see the members opposite openly lobby their federal counterparts? I would like to have a new-found respect for them if they did, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I'm not holding my breath.

I fully support the motion put forward by my esteemed colleague, the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Northcote.

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to rise today in support of the motion put forth by the Hon. Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety denouncing the most recent attack on lawful firearm owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government through the amendment of Bill C-21. Mr. Speaker, the Chief Firearms Officer of Saskatchewan estimates these amendments will instantly criminalize 75,000 gun owners in Saskatchewan alone, effectively making these 75 Saskatchewan law-abiding citizens criminals overnight.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really don't know a lot about guns. I'm not a gun owner, nor do I intend to ever be one. But many of my constituents, my friends, and my family members are gun owners and will be negatively impacted by this bill. These are responsible gun owners, Mr. Deputy Speaker, people who purchase their guns legally, store them safely, take the necessary training to operate these guns, and follow the regulations.

I have two sons who love hunting, and they have a lot of guns that they keep safely stored in a safe. Their hunting activities they do . . . They love to get out in nature. They do all their hunting on horseback. They go in and their philosophy is, when they hunt, they leave the land as good or better than they found it when they went in. I feel I'm so lucky to have kids who were raised with the opportunity to do that, Mr. Speaker. I've had no problem with drugs or anything like that with my sons, and I believe this connection that they have with nature has had a lot to do with

that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bill C-21 directly impacts law-abiding hunters, sport shooters, ranchers, all who use firearms, making them criminals. But does Bill C-21 impact the criminals? No, of course it doesn't. Do these amendments prevent illegal arms from crossing into Canada? Absolutely not. Does Bill C-21 stop organized crime? Does it stop the drug trade? Does this bill prevent the gangs from carrying illegal weapons? Does it make our communities safe? No, it does not.

All illegal activities that currently are going on will remain a threat to the innocent citizens of this province. The gang members will continue to carry arms, and I can almost guarantee you that they will not be legal weapons. There will still be drug dealers, human traffickers, armed robberies.

So what really does Bill C-21 do? It targets a select population in this country and our province who collect guns, are sport shooters, are hunters, who are ranchers — all contributing, law-abiding citizens of this country. Livelihoods will be impacted. Those who sell guns, outfitters, small independent meat processors will all be impacted by this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I have a friend, my best friend actually and her husband own a small meat-processing business. Make the best sausage in the province, in my opinion. They employ four people full-time besides themselves in their business. And these families rely on this business to feed their families. And, Mr. Speaker, a major part of this business is processing wild meat, and they will lose that with this bill. And there are many other small plants like this in our province. Some hunters like to hunt game just for sport. And they take the meat that they hunt and they take it in to the food banks. So the food banks will also be impacted.

Mr. Speaker, farmers and ranchers from across Western Canada carry arms to protect their livestock from predators. Livestock producers graze tens of thousands of acres, and many check their herds on horseback. And they all carry rifles. They have wildcats, wolves, bears — those are all dangerous creatures. They're not at all like the Disney characters that people see on TV. Mr. Speaker, my son was very fortunate in an encounter in his life, my youngest son, when he was attacked by a cougar, Mr. Speaker. Had it not been for having a modern semi-automatic weapon, he probably would have been killed in that conflict.

Mr. Speaker, this underhanded amendment put forward by the federal Liberal government bans almost all semi-automatic rifles and shotguns, instantly making hard-working, law-abiding, contributing members of this country criminals. These amendments do absolutely nothing to protect the citizens of this province and country from crimes committed by criminals. It doesn't stop the escalating drug trade rampant in this country. This bill does nothing but further create an even larger wedge between the West and the out-of-touch Liberal-NDP coalition.

I strongly encourage the members opposite to call and keep calling their colleagues in Ottawa to prevent this discriminatory bill from passing. Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion put forward by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social

Services.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, well a pleasure and honour to join the debate this evening. Certainly there's way more people qualified to speak on this matter here tonight, but I represent a lot of people that this is an important issue for. And I've heard from them and they're very passionate about any sort of control on firearms they use for sport and target and hunting and all the rest of it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess in my past . . . And you know, the older I get, the longer the past is of course, obviously. But memory fades a little bit, but over my lifetime I've had a few incidents where I've had experience with rifles and firearms, Mr. Speaker. I think back to my younger days. I spent quite a bit of time on my dad's family farm one mile south of Mazeppa church just northeast of Yorkton, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and certainly fond memories of that.

I remember a story my baba telling myself about how my deda at one time . . . Of course everybody has some sort of rifle on the farm back in those days, that's probably 60, 70, 80 years ago now, but stories of needing to protect what were my dad and my uncles many years ago from — and it's been said many times here — from cougars and bears. That was a real threat.

And actually my grandfather had to kill some of those animals. He wasn't much of a hunter himself. I mean, if they needed food there was, of course, cows and . . . [inaudible] . . . and chickens and livestock on the farm that they used to feed themselves. But obviously a real serious safety threat, those animals can, those wild animals can show or be part of on the . . . They can show up on the farm and it's sometimes difficult to get rid of if they find a food source, etc., Mr. Speaker.

So when I heard that, I heard that later on in my life. And I guess my first thought was, there's actually cougars and bears around. I wish I knew that; I might have been more careful in my wandering around the farm and subsequent lands around in the area. But, Mr. Speaker, that was certainly part of life growing up. Just strictly a safety matter on so many farms and ranches back then. And I'm sure that's the case today. I can't speak eloquently on that part.

I have many cousins I spent time with and once in a while we'd do . . . I think the member from Walsh Acres mentioned just target shooting with small-calibre whatever they were. I can't remember; that was so long ago. But I do remember my cousins, they took safety seriously. Like that was the first thing that was talked about the whole time.

If we accidentally did something untowards, I'd definitely hear about it. And if my cousins, if I wouldn't listen to my cousins, I knew my uncles were right behind them on ensuring that I listened, and why I listened to them for sure. There was no room for any sort of fooling around or goofing around when guns were present, no matter how small the calibre might be, Mr. Speaker. So that's sort of where you learn that respect and how to deal that aspect of it, that safety. I'll talk about the safety part in just a sec, Mr. Speaker.

I remember growing up. I grew up in Saskatoon and my dad had a rifle from when he was on the farm. It was a nice-looking rifle,

I thought. It was hardly ever used; I'm not sure if he ever used it for that matter. And the coolest part, I thought when I was a little kid, was there was a scope on it. You could, you know, look through it and see things closer obviously. And so it was essentially a wall hanger though, Mr. Speaker. I don't think we had, my dad had any ammunition in the house at all or anything. But it was something from what he had when he was younger on the farm, like many, many have spoken about here this evening, Mr. Speaker. Sat there for years and decades.

[20:45]

When I came back at some time after I'd left home, I noticed it was gone. And that was kind of a strange thing. It was one of those things. My parents aren't really into big change, Mr. Speaker. They lived in the same house since 1975 and going strong there, Mr. Speaker. But not a lot of change in some aspects, but I did notice the gun was gone.

And I asked my dad about it. I remember it being there for years and years. And he just decided that rather than, you know, having to fill out forms and lock it and all the other things, he just said, I'll just give it in. And I thought, you know, that's kind of too bad. He had it since he was a kid. And the hassle and the rules and those things were too much of, you know, sort of a hill to climb for . . . He'd likely never use it again. So again I thought that was kind of too bad that that was the case that that was on that particular firearm that had been in my family for a long time.

And I guess most recently, Mr. Speaker, I've had a chance over the years to learn from the Regina SWAT [special weapons and tactics] team and all the work they do and all their tactical things they do, Mr. Speaker. And you know, there's a lot of technical side to what they do, and there's a lot of expertise and a lot of professionalism with that team, Mr. Speaker.

It's been a few years since I've been with that outfit, but more recently Regina Wildlife Federation, Mr. Speaker. And again I've had a chance in my time to try some of the different weapons that may be out there, Mr. Speaker. And trap shooting, I've tried that, very bad at that. It sort of annoys me a little bit how bad I am at that but, Mr. Speaker, I might try that again, Mr. Speaker.

But I think the bottom line is all those experiences, every one of them, I'm amazed. I don't know if amazed is the right word. But it strikes me how responsible the folks are that I've had experience with dealing with any firearms; how proud they are to share their knowledge; how proud they are of, you know, what they've done, what they've accomplished, and how they go about their business with those firearms.

It's such a technical . . . They know the technical pieces of it, and there's a lot to some of the equipment, Mr. Speaker. And they're so proud to represent Saskatchewan. I've heard of stories of . . . It's been talked about here. There was folks that have been to the Olympics from Saskatchewan. There's been people that . . . There's different firearm competitions in terms of target shooting, Mr. Speaker, and again the equipment is so specialized and it's quite expensive, from my understanding, Mr. Speaker. But again they're so proud to be from Saskatchewan and represent Saskatchewan on the regional but as well as the national and international stage. And they do have something to be proud of, absolutely for sure, Mr. Speaker.

Last thing. In terms of when I was minister of Tourism, I know how important that sector is, the outfitting sector, to Saskatchewan and those seasonal businesses, a lot of times seasonal businesses that rely on people coming into Saskatchewan. It's such an asset we have here, our wildlife asset, and we want to be able to use that. I don't know what the impact of this could potentially be on that industry, Mr. Speaker. I imagine it would have some. But also folks coming in from right across Canada but also the United States. I know that's a very big market for Saskatchewan tourist operators and very important to our GDP [gross domestic product] and that sort of thing, Mr. Speaker.

The last thing I'll say, Mr. Speaker, is the people that I've known and have experienced are absolutely the furthest thing from criminals I can think of. Again the men and women who I've learned from in limited experiences I think of my grandfather — my deda — and my dad, you know, great salt-of-the-earth people who are the furthest thing from criminals.

So I think this federal legislation misses the mark here, so to speak, Mr. Speaker. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the chance to get a few words on the record, and I appreciate the motion by the Minister of Corrections and Policing, and I'll be supporting it. Thank you.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Speaker, being belongs to a hunter family, I decided to put some words into this debate and in *Hansard*. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have been hunting since the age of 12 and so has my brother actually been hunting at that age, at the 12, and in Ontario and then in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, in our family that's from fathers to all my seven brothers. We all together sometimes go for hunting, and that's many times in Saskatchewan here. And what we say, that's, you know, if you get something, fine. If you do not get something, you still went out there and you did your part for the hunting activities.

Mr. Speaker, we are the law-abiding gun owners and love this recreation use of guns, doing target shooting, skeet, trap shooting. And I have made many trips to the hunting, Mr. Speaker, and have driven many kilometres. You know, when any hunter and we go for hunting, we spend some money. And all these hunters in Saskatchewan spend millions of dollars from gas station to hotel to the restaurant or where they're living. In fact this matter is not only for the Saskatchewan. All those hunters in all the provinces all over Canada spending billions of dollars in many communities, in the rural communities and in civic communities as well, Mr. Speaker.

Since this is also related to the farming community, Mr. Speaker, technically this is the very important tool for the farmers. It is the protection. And it's a protection for the livestock and it's a protection for their produce, and also the good tool for wildlife control. Mr. Speaker, when it comes for the law-abiding citizen, they follow all the protocol — how to keep the gun, how to use, and how to carry with them.

Federal government basically aiming wrong to target these law-abiding citizens. What they have to do, they have to make good policies or concrete steps to control all those criminal activities related to the guns.

Mr. Speaker, you know, when the member from Regina Rosemont talks about the meat packers and the meat producers in Saskatchewan, and the fairness of the producer and the consumer, here is what they need to be serious about this. They're really very good in a Twitter account. Let's come on and write something to Jagmeet Singh and Justin Trudeau that they are not going to help federal NDP and they're not supporting that Bill C-21, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, with this I would like to say I support the motion moved by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into this motion. I won't speak too long as there's so many eloquent speeches and so many good points that were put on record this afternoon and this evening already.

But as we heard, we know that this is federal government jurisdiction. We recognize that. But also, Mr. Speaker, we know that this Sask Party government has continually stood up for property rights for its citizens, and this is another case where we feel compelled and the need to stand up for the property rights of our citizens of our province.

Mr. Speaker, we know that this isn't just about Saskatchewan. We've talked quite a bit about the impact on our Saskatchewan citizens, our way of life, our culture, our history, whether it's farming or hunting or target shooting or sport shooting, Mr. Speaker. But it's a way of life. It's about fathers and sons, and fathers and daughters, and mothers and daughters that all are very much into the sport shooting and hunting lifestyle, Mr. Speaker. And that's something that we truly believe in, that we want to preserve.

But of course we know only recently Alberta has joined our fight. Manitoba has recently joined. And we've heard from members on this side of the floor where there's many provinces that are speaking up to the federal Liberals and the NDP that are shoring them up, Mr. Speaker, to stop this ill-thought-out plan and this backhanded control grab on the part of the federal Liberals, Mr. Speaker.

So we know it affects many people across the country. We've heard, this evening, speakers referring to the 75,000 — roughly — people in Saskatchewan who will be affected by this ill-thought-out amendment to Bill C-21 and 2 million Canadians countrywide, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that will be affected. So we know there's a lot of people that will be speaking against this.

And we only hope that the ideological Liberals and NDP will come to their senses and see the error of their ways and quit the virtue-signalling and the ideological track that they're on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and do the right thing and back away from this. As well as some other areas, as I know my esteemed colleague from Kindersley talked about some of the other overreach that

they've been extending over the last number of years, Mr. Speaker.

And I don't think it should be any surprise. I think back to 2015 when Justin Trudeau was running to be the Prime Minister of Canada and he used the term, we're going to govern from the heart outwards. I wonder, what does that mean? But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, over and over again we've seen the federal Liberals, now shored up by the federal NDP to hold power, that it's constantly ideology and it's intentions and whatever vague plans that they have without any solid background, any logic, or any real solid plan just to do things because they think it's the right thing to do or they have some other intentions behind it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I guess when you look at a move like this, it's not overly surprising. We've seen them move on handguns. We've seen them restrict some other firearms. And we heard from our House Leader, the Minister of Trade and Export, how it's based on just the looks of a piece of equipment — a tool, an agricultural tool, a hunting tool — that they don't like the look of it, so let's just outlaw it because it's scary, Mr. Speaker. Just ridiculous, ridiculous plans that they have and ridiculous things that they're doing based on, again, virtue-signalling to the masses in Toronto and Vancouver, and you know, some of the other larger cities with no real substance to what they're planning it on, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And we've heard from other members. You know, they've done a good job about talking about the root causes of what's going on, why we have these issues with crime. And it's about illegal guns. It's not about the law-abiding, honest, caring, and very responsible gun owners in this country and this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's about criminals, so let's focus on that.

I've seen even some comments on Facebook and Twitter, some of the naysayers or people in favour of C-21 saying, well all you need is one bullet. Why do you need more than one bullet? We've heard again a lot of different examples here where a semi-automatic weapon is a very efficient tool that needs to be used in a lot of situations. And again, used responsibly, these have got to be allowed to be staying in the hands of those that need them, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, I have to draw attention as well to the questionable process that has been used to get to this point of presenting this amendment. We've heard from different members on the floor here and federal members that have pointed out the illogical and the somewhat backhanded method in which they presented this amendment, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So again as I stated earlier, this isn't just about guns. It's about property rights, Mr. Speaker. And that's something we're going to continually stand up for as members of this Sask Party government in this province for the people that we represent, Mr. Speaker, from different political parties. They are onside with this motion, as we've heard from our colleagues across the floor, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So you know, we've heard again and again, and I'm going to reiterate that the NDP federally hold the balance of power. The colleagues across the floor, the provincial NDP opposition can definitely hold their federal counterparts to task and ask them, demand of them to stand against the Trudeau Liberals and against this ill-thought-out plan, Mr. Speaker.

[21:00]

So with that, I will close my comments. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll be supporting the motion brought forward by our Minister of Corrections and Policing.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion put forward by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Are there any opposed to the motion? Then I do think all of the . . .

An Hon. Member: — For division.

The Deputy Speaker: — For division? Then call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 21:00 to 21:01.]

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is:

That this House condemns and denounces the most recent attack on lawful firearms owners by the Liberal-NDP coalition federal government through amendments to Bill C-21, which the Chief Firearms Officer of Saskatchewan estimates will instantly criminalize approximately 75,000 Saskatchewan residents; and further,

That this House calls on the Government of Saskatchewan to explore all options to protect the rights of lawful-abiding firearms owners.

All in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 42]

Moe	McMorris	Morgan
Duncan	Tell	Makowsky
Docherty	Cheveldayoff	Bradshaw
Cockrill	L. Ross	Eyre
J. Harrison	Carr	Hindley
Fiaz	Dennis	Kirsch
A. Ross	Ottenbreit	Francis
Steele	Lawrence	Kaeding
McLeod	Meyers	Friesen
Grewal	Nerlien	Bonk
Goudy	Keisig	Lemaigre
Jenson	D. Harrison	Domotor
Vermette	Mowat	Wotherspoon
Love	Conway	Bowes

The Deputy Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion, please stand.

[Nays — nil]

Clerk Assistant: — Mr. Speaker, the number is 42 members in favour of the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: — I declare the motion carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask leave to move a motion of transmittal.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked for a motion of transmittal. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt that motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

TRANSMITTAL MOTION

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleagues. I would move:

That the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit copies of the motion as well as verbatim transcripts of the debate and the vote to Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada and Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada.

I so move.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved:

That the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit copies of the motion, as well as verbatim transcripts of the debate and the vote to Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, and Jagmeet Singh, leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 88

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 88** — *The Saskatchewan First Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet to again enter comments into the record on Bill No. 88, *The Saskatchewan First Act*. I will be quite brief, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I've already had an opportunity to provide commentary on this bill, and my colleagues have done so in quite a fulsome fashion. So on behalf of the official opposition, we are

ready at this time to move that this bill go to committee, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion that Bill No. 88 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The member has asked for a division on second reading.

[The division bells rang from 21:08 until 21:13.]

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion of second reading of Bill 88, *The Saskatchewan First Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Those in favour say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Deputy Speaker: — Those opposed say no. I think the ayes have it. All those in favour of the motion, please stand.

[Yeas — 43]

Moe	McMorris	Harpauer
Morgan	Duncan	Tell
Makowsky	Docherty	Cheveldayoff
Bradshaw	Cockrill	L. Ross
Eyre	J. Harrison	Carr
Hindley	Fiaz	Dennis
Kirsch	A. Ross	Ottenbreit
Francis	Steele	Lawrence
Kaeding	McLeod	Meyers
Friesen	Grewal	Nerlien
Bonk	Goudy	Keisig
Lemaigre	Jenson	D. Harrison
Domotor	Vermette	Mowat
Wotherspoon	Love	Conway
Bowes		

[21:15]

The Deputy Speaker: — All those opposed to the motion, please stand.

[Nays — nil]

Clerk Assistant: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, those for the motion, 43; those against, 0.

The Deputy Speaker: — I declare the motion carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed?

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 88, *The Saskatchewan First Act* be committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill now stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 94

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 94 — *The Public Pension and Benefits Administration Corporation Act*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join on the Bill No. 94, *The Public Pension and Benefits Administration Corporation Act*. Initially, many people are fortunate to have a pension. And I'll tell you, from my point the PEPP [public employees pension plan] pension for many employees — for members in this Assembly we have the PEPP pension — it's a good pension. It's run really well and that's a good thing.

We have the MEPP [municipal employees' pension plan] pension as well, you know, the MEPP pension as well. And it does some good work and it gives some good benefits and it makes sure that people . . . And you know, when you think about some families out there, and some are seniors, families don't have a pension. And they struggle at the end of the day with Canada Pension, old age security.

This is a good pension. And sometimes those organizations, you know, are lucky. We're fortunate in here to have a pension. It's a good pension. It's managed well, and that the issue isn't so much how this pension is being managed in any way, in a negative way, that I see it. I know that we want to make sure when you're bringing two pensions together under one corporation . . . I know that the critic will do the work that he needs to do and to make sure that the stakeholders and those that'll be impacted . . . I know I encourage them to reach out to the critic, to ask about it. Let's make sure this is something that is being asked, it's something that's the right thing to do, that it's bringing things together. And if it is, then great.

So on that note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, like I said, I know the critic will be asking some questions. He'll be checking with people if this is the right way to go and see, make sure. And then they'll get a chance in committee to ask some tough questions and make sure it's a clear understanding of what it is and what it ain't.

And you know, individuals who, if they have concerns, whether it's groups, individual, they can reach out to the critic and ask him, you know, to look into it and ask some questions in committee if they're concerned. So I would encourage anyone out there if you're concerned about, you know, the proposed Bill 94, if you have any concerns, if you're with MEPP or PEPP and you have any concerns . . .

Your organization we know it covers a lot, a lot of employees. A lot of different individuals benefit from these pensions. So if you have any concerns and you're wondering, by all means reach out to the critic, share your concerns. And I know he will ask questions, making sure we get the answers to make sure individuals are comfortable with that. So having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm prepared to move adjournment on Bill No. 94.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 95

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 95 — *The Surface Rights Acquisition and Compensation Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to be on my feet again to enter further remarks into the record on Bill No. 95, *The Surface Rights Acquisition and Compensation Amendment Act, 2022*. As I mentioned when I provided remarks on this earlier, this is really a legislative framework that the opposition has been pushing to change for some time. The current Act was originally introduced in 1968, and despite smaller amendments over the years, it's remained largely unchanged despite significant changes in the industry with both oil and gas and in agriculture.

The hope of ourselves in opposition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as well as landowners and stakeholders across the province, is that this legislature will continue to serve the needs of property holders, whether surface and/or mineral, but address their rights and the balance of power, Mr. Deputy Speaker. At this stage, however, it appears that this bill does not.

It does very little to change the dynamic in the oil patch. It should be about fairness and transparency and about evening the playing field. Surface rights and the system that supports it should change to reflect the reality experienced by the stakeholders, Mr. Speaker. And unfortunately we're hearing that this legislation misses the mark.

Individual landowners and representative organizations were hoping for changes and accommodation, things like having surface rights revert to the landowner after a defined period of time that is fair, ensuring that landowner rights aren't surrendered in support of contentious exploration and development. Again this legislation appears to fall short of those hopes, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

There is significant concern out in the community around consultation. There are many that are wondering, who are impacted by this legislation, who have wondered who this government actually consulted with. Concern from stakeholders and landowners that there really has been nothing substantive in this legislation, that the changes that were explored back in 2014

of course were walked back, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when prices tanked.

I guess as far as this government is concerned, the questions of access, right of entry, dispute resolution, compensation just weren't that important when prices tanked I guess. I guess we're not really surprised on this side given that, for these guys anyway, money talks.

But there are significant concerns that this legislation, these changes are really a bunch of window dressing and nothing substantive, or at least they don't go far enough in recalibrating the lack of balance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which was really needed given the changes.

One of the biggest issues we're hearing from stakeholders, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is compensation to the landowners, and that has not been addressed by this bill. We're concerned this bill is catering exclusively to industry and ensuring they pay the lowest compensation to landowners. This government seems to think that supporting development is okay at the expense of landowners, their livelihoods, and their rights, Mr. Speaker.

Folks simply want industry to be equitable partners, pay for the roads and everything they use and the impact. It's not about driving investment away but ensuring true partnership for landowners and impacted RMs [rural municipality]. Currently there isn't an equal balance of power, Mr. Speaker.

When we look at a contract for landowners, it's for a loss of use. You know, we're hearing that at \$20 a bushel, that's \$1,000 an acre. For a 4-acre lease for oil and gas, you maybe get 2 to 300 an acre, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it's not just the well site; it's roadways and access. It's flowlines. There are impacts on drainage, shallow water lines, fences, roads, dugouts.

So this legislation really appears to have failed to recalibrate that lack of balance, notwithstanding the spin we're seeing from this government. I had an opportunity to attend the SARM conference, and I did see that spin well in the works, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This legislation does not provide for the scope of loss that landowners experience. It simply doesn't.

So on this side, we are ready to move this bill to the next stage. Our critic has done significant consultation and will continue to do that. Of course she has some questions about the legislation. We're concerned that this government has not provided for a fair process, a transparent process, when really that should be the aim here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So with that, I'm prepared to allow this bill to go on to its next stage.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is that Bill No. 95 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed?

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — To the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill now stands committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Bill No. 97

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Carr that **Bill No. 97 — *The Architects Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Pleased to enter into debate today on Bill No. 97, *The Architects Amendment Act, 2022*. As the minister noted in second reading remarks, this bill enables the issuing of architect licences to people or corporations in trade agreements, allowing the government to identify trade agreements as relevant to the Act. It'll be interesting to see what criteria the government are using to determine trade agreements and what those will be.

I think all of us appreciate the architects in Saskatchewan. We know that we have a lot of talent in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think at one point in my life I wanted to be an architect and had a drafting class, which I think many of us did while we were going through school. But I know that there are all kinds of skills and programs that are associated in the trade.

I would want to ensure . . . I think that the intention here is to follow up on some of the issues that were identified in Bill No. 81, which was from last session and specifically dealt with recognition of foreign credentials. We certainly agree that a lot of people struggle when they move to Canada and want to get their credentials recognized so that they can make a decent living in our country as advertised.

And you know, if this bill serves to make that process a little more smooth, then that is certainly welcomed. But I would want to ensure that, you know, that's not happening at the expense of Saskatchewan architects who are looking for work and, you know, struggling against competition from foreign architects as well. So I think there's a bit of a balance that needs to be struck here and we'll be watching to make sure that that takes place.

I know that the critic and others will have more that they want to engage on here and more questions, Mr. Speaker, but with that I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 97 for today.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

[21:30]

Bill No. 98

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 98 — *The***

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Amendment Act, 2022 be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll enter in here tonight with respect to Bill No. 98, *The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Amendment Act*. The changes here, Mr. Speaker, as I understand them, will make persons and municipalities at fault for an emergency liable for costs incurred by the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency's response. Mr. Speaker, I understand it will also allow the minister to calculate or waive the person or municipality's debt to the Crown.

It's going to be critical. There's a lot of practical reasons why this legislation could make sense, Mr. Speaker. I think the key is how it's going to be applied and ensuring that it's fair and consistent, Mr. Speaker. We'll have questions on what that looks like, you know, throughout this process. We would invite, right now, all stakeholders impacted that may have concerns or ways to improve this piece of legislation to connect with our critic certainly on the official opposition, importantly the minister as well.

The aim of the official opposition will be to make sure that we are in fact making improvements, Mr. Speaker. Important questions around fairness and balance will be important here, Mr. Speaker, making sure that a government's not in a situation with a shoddy process that allows them to pick winners or losers when it comes to cost recovery, Mr. Speaker.

And ultimately, you know, when it comes to things like wildfires, you know, the costs are one aspect of it. We really urge the government to be taking the preventative steps they can on these fronts as well.

As it relates to municipalities, we know this government at times just has a poor record with respect to offloading onto municipalities, Mr. Speaker. We hope that the balance is right here and that municipalities are respected and that they've been fully consulted on these fronts, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank all those folks that are out there on the front lines of the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency and that are out there on the front lines ensuring our safety and security at times of emergencies as well, Mr. Speaker. And at this time I'll move adjournment of debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 99

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 99 — *The Emergency 911 System Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to enter a few remarks briefly tonight on behalf of the official opposition with respect to Bill No. 99, *The Emergency 911 System Amendment Act, 2022*.

The main change that we see here, Mr. Speaker, is modernization of 911 to accept texts, photos, and video calls, which I think we all agree is very important. Really, really important to be as accessible as possible when we're talking about our emergency services here in Saskatchewan. Can't say that's often the case with this government with most of our emergency services, but it is the case with this bill, it would appear. So it's good to see that.

The other change here is that the bill will make the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency, instead of SaskTel, responsible for collecting 911 fees from telecom companies. And my understanding is that this is an effort at creating some efficiencies. On the face of it, it would appear to make sense, but of course we do hope that SaskTel was collaborated on with this change. I noted the minister in her remarks did indicate that SaskTel was on board, and so I hope that's the case.

The bill also allows the SPSA [Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency] to make improvements to the Sask911 system. No flags there so far that I'm aware of, Mr. Speaker. In addition to, as I said, hoping that SaskTel was fully collaborated with for these changes, we do want to note — and a couple colleagues have flagged already — that the fees for 911 that are collected from Saskatchewan people, those fees doubled in 2021, which is concern.

We've talked a lot throughout this session about affordability, and not just the cost of living that's increasing in terms of, you know, the cost of food, cost of fuel, cost of housing, nearly everything we've seen going up all at the same time while this government is kind of piling on and nickel-and-diming with more taxes and fees.

So you know, it's another thing to see these fees doubling. That seems to be a substantial change. Would be interested to know why there was a need for such a substantial increase in the fees being charged. But overall, Mr. Speaker, it is important to modernize our legislation, and especially with respect to accessibility to emergency services, so support that.

Just on a very personal note, brief personal note, I have a neighbour here in Regina, and she's actually a dispatcher for 911. And sometimes we have a chat in the halls of my apartment and chat about work a bit. And she is quite new as a dispatcher, and it's been taxing on her.

I think we don't necessarily take the time to think about the impact that, you know, repeated exposure to traumatic situations can have on people in terms of their mental health in the workplace. And certainly 911 dispatchers would be right at the top of that list of workers in our province who have a lot of challenging situations that they have to deal with and keep their heads about them, be professional, and in a way, learn how to, you know, sort of leave that at the door when they go home. And that can be very difficult to do.

So I guess just put a plug in there for, generally speaking, seeing

more improvements to mental health supports for workers and particularly first responders in our province. Would be great to be seeing some more of that coming from the other side as well.

But I think I'll wrap up my comments on this bill at this time, Mr. Speaker, and I'll move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 99, *The Emergency 911 System Amendment Act, 2022*. Thanks.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 101

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 101 — *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm proud to put a few comments on the record late, late this evening in relation to Bill 101, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act*.

I just want to start by acknowledging that there are some positive changes here in these amendments in particular. I recognize that the folks impacted are children and that we're looking at older youth, teenagers aged 16, 17, 18 that, you know . . . They're predominantly still children, 16- and 17-year-olds, that very significant stage of life that will have major implications in their choices as they become adults and move into young adulthood and making decisions on the path of their life.

That the decisions that we make here really do affect people's lives, and that sometimes there is this sense out there — you know, I'm sure that we all hear it — that politics doesn't affect folks. Well it really does. And what we decide on this bill, it does affect these older teenagers that we're looking at. And so that recognition that these are children who deserve rights, protections, and supports is, I think, significant in these amendments.

I also want to note a little bit that those supports, I don't think they should have such a . . . I know that they have to have an end somewhere. I acknowledge that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But a cut-off for 18-year-olds seems a little bit arbitrary when many of those folks are still working towards graduation and working towards finishing high school. And we know how much of an indicator that can be for future success, that we wouldn't want to see someone cut off who is still working towards that goal.

That being said, there's some other positives in these amendments, in particular really just formalizing that duty to maintain a connection to culture and community for Indigenous children, for First Nations children. I understand that these amendments include stipulations of communities' chief and council being notified about changes for something like a custody change or hearings or arrests or court proceedings for a

parent or guardian. I think that this is just a recognition that there are many caring adults in the lives of kids in Saskatchewan, and that's absolutely true for First Nations and Indigenous children. So to see this formalized I think is a positive step.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude by voicing support for this but will look forward to hearing further comments from my colleagues in opposition as we continue. So at this time, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 101.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 103

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 103 — *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into remarks on Bill No. 103, *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*, Mr. Speaker.

This is a piece of legislation that has been a long time coming for disability advocates across the province. I am looking forward to doing extensive consultation on this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I've already set up a number of meetings across the province to meet with the many disability advocates we have across this province. We're doing really important work.

Several years ago, the Sask Party government made a claim that — you know, a commitment really — to make Saskatchewan the best place to live with a disability in Canada. And unfortunately . . . We have seen some positive movements under this government, most notably the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program brought on in the early days of the Brad Wall government, but we've really seen that commitment to the disability community lag and almost disappear under this government.

I would note that the SAID program, for example, has not seen a significant increase for, I think it's eight or nine years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There's been cuts to some of the entitlements under the SAID program. And you know, we've really seen an abandonment of making sure that folks living with a disability, who have an enduring disability that may interfere with their ability to work, that may limit it or interfere with it altogether, making sure that they aren't, as a result, sentenced to a life in poverty.

But unfortunately what we're seeing, if we really look into the numbers here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that folks living with a disability are far more likely not just to live in poverty but to live in deep poverty, the kind of poverty that it's very difficult to claw yourself out of no matter how hard you might try, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I would also note that this was the government that presided over the shuttering of the STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], which has been absolutely devastating for every individual living with a disability outside of a major city. You have no idea how many families that I've met who've actually had to . . . uprooted their entire life to move into a big city to access the health care they need simply because the STC was shuttered. It's just been absolutely devastating to see that impact on the disability community, and you can bet they have not forgotten, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They have not forgotten.

So I've opted rather to enter comments in a substantive way on the different provisions of this Act. I plan on really delving into this in committee, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I think it's my obligation and incumbent upon me to wait until I've done those consultations with the disability community before I put my comments on the record. This is a new piece of legislation. These aren't just amendments, and it's just so important that we get this right, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Before I do move to adjourn debate on this bill though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is one other topic that I would like to touch on, that we've really seen a truly disappointing track record from the Sask Party government that made the commitment to make Canada the best place in Canada to live with a disability. And that is the crisis we're seeing in our disability support sector.

I cannot emphasize this enough, this crisis in the disability support sector. The retention, the turnover in that sector is over 30 per cent right now, Mr. Speaker. It's up from last year, which was up from the year before, which was up from the year before that. This sector has faced such tremendous challenges, particularly during COVID, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and now with this recent announcement around continuing care aides. And you know, we do support remunerating continuing care aides and that push.

[21:45]

What we're seeing is that this has worsened the mass exodus of folks from the disability support sector. It's very equivalent work. In many ways it can be less challenging, depending on where you're stationed in the disability support sector. And so folks don't see a reason to remain in the disability support sector because the wages are just so low. So I'm speaking with people who . . . They want to stay in this sector. And let's remember that the disability support sector is a huge employer in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, really across the province but particularly in rural Saskatchewan.

And they just cannot stay in this sector. They can't afford to pay their rent, to buy groceries, to cover their utilities as the cost of living rises. And now with this continuing care aide remuneration push they are . . . It's sort of a breaking point, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So they're absolutely leaving this profession in droves. Even those who are passionate about it, even those who love it, who want to stick around, they just simply can't.

So shuttering of the STC, no increases to SAID in years despite a generational cost of living, and a crisis in the disability support sector. Does this seem like the action of a government that takes the issues of the disability community seriously?

And so that is why when we go through this legislation, the opposition, we will be going through it with a fine-tooth comb, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because we don't want to hear any more words. We don't want to see any more photo ops. We want to see real action and support for the disability sector across this province.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would move to adjourn on Bill No. 103, *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 104

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 104 — *The Local Improvements Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate today on Bill No. 104, *The Local Improvements Amendment Act*.

As we know, this bill sort of governs how local improvements are made in municipalities. Here we're talking about infrastructure projects that exist in the municipality — things like sidewalks, alleys, lights, parks — those types of endeavours, Mr. Speaker. This Act sort of describes all of the work and services, what this whole process ends up looking like. And it hasn't been significantly amended since 2000, so there's quite a bit of work to reflect the adequate realities for municipalities.

It gives the municipalities the important tool to pay for local works and services, so it helps to set the stage for how all this works. The minister's talked about the fact that there were surveys that went out to municipalities, school divisions, and the Saskatchewan Municipal Board and has indicated that those ideas have been represented in the changes to the Act. I know that we are going to be reaching out to stakeholders to ensure that that is the case, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

They've talked about four main categories of amendments. First, that school properties would be exempt from local improvement levies. This certainly seems like it would be an important move, Mr. Speaker. These levies for local improvement can be quite costly and can sometimes come unexpectedly. And you think about a local school board coming up with their budget for the coming year and not knowing that that levy exists, so it creates a burden in terms of their ability to plan. And considering we've called on the government to increase the funding to local school boards, it would make sense to support this section of the bill.

The bill also talks about streamlining the approval process, but really here the bill removes power from the Saskatchewan Municipal Board by making it so that this entity doesn't need to

approve all the projects now. So there's some significant questions about what this relationship is going to look like now.

And then there's areas where public consultation is . . . when there's no option for property owners to petition against a local improvement, and that also needing to go through the Saskatchewan Municipal Board approval, and looking at where that approval can be removed. So I think this whole relationship with the Saskatchewan Municipal Board is something we need to look at closely.

And then the fourth area is talking about streamlining the Act to better align with petition notice and communication methods.

So we'll be looking at this quite closely, and I know that many members will have a lot of questions on this bill, Mr. Speaker. I certainly want to thank everyone who works in the municipal sector and is putting in that hard work, often without any acknowledgement of the work that they're doing, Mr. Speaker. But with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 104 for today.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 105

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 105 — *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Very honoured to put a few comments on the record here about Bill 105, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act*.

I'll be brief this evening as we are getting late here. But I'll say that, you know, I certainly have appreciated comments from my colleagues in opposition, and I think that members opposite agree with the value that we want to ensure that voter turnout is high. We want folks to engage in democracy. These are not partisan values by any means, certainly nothing that we can claim ownership over as New Democrats any more than members opposite could.

We want folks to have trust in the system, to know that we've done everything we can as legislators to reduce barriers that exist in any form to casting your ballot in any election in this province, in a way that the voters and citizens have trust in the system and feel empowered by engaging in it.

And so I do think that there are a number of items in these amendments that speak to those values that we share, in particular giving certain powers to a returning officer. You know, I think that we can all remember the 2020 election — shortly after the provincial election, the municipal and school board elections

that took place. Those of us in Saskatoon saw a generational storm come in that absolutely disrupted the plans and caused those local officials to have to act very swiftly, and in our case in Saskatoon delaying the voting for a number of days.

So you know, with that learning from a real challenging experience, we see some changes in these amendments that will make a situation like that in the future just a little bit easier to roll with and be flexible in terms of giving more powers to a returning officer to make those decisions to respond to local emergencies and situations that are beyond anyone's control.

And one other area that I want to point out as critic for Seniors that I'm happy to see is giving the returning officer authority over voting in places like hospitals and care homes and homebound voting. And again these are some of the barriers that might exist to someone engaging in our democracy at election time.

It's certainly not the only time to engage in democracy. We know that older adults pay very careful attention to what goes on in here and to the things we discuss. But that opportunity to cast a ballot is such an important one, and we want to ensure that there's no barriers to the ability to do that. So those are things that I'm happy to see.

I think that there have been a lot of concerns raised in this province from a number of municipal stakeholders and school boards on the timing of elections. We have not seen action on that from this government, which is somewhat of a disappointment. I think that there's a lot of very valid concerns out there when it comes to timing of elections, again to reduce that barrier, to reduce the voting fatigue that some folks certainly experience when we have elections that are very close together.

So that hasn't been addressed here, but there are a few things that have which I think are positive steps. But I'll be very interested to hear from my colleagues in opposition as this progresses in the usual way. But at this time I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 105. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 106

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 106 — *The Police Amendment Act, 2022*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll enter in here tonight with respect to Bill No. 106, *The Police Amendment Act, 2022*.

Mr. Speaker, you know, this is but another action from this government that disrespects the important work that police do across Saskatchewan, disrespects the needs in communities and

the needs to ensure that there's better supports, Mr. Speaker.

Of course we see a government now launching their new provincial police force, Mr. Speaker, spending \$20 million to, you know, get new equipment, new uniforms, to write policy and training and administration and go through hiring, Mr. Speaker, and get new cruisers and vehicles and whatnot instead of, you know, investing those dollars in a very common-sense way with the RCMP, for example with our municipal police forces and in community supports at the root of where the issues around crime exist, Mr. Speaker. So this is but another slap in the face of those that protect and serve us across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

We know the criticism has been far reaching of the wasteful way this government's going at the political control with the provincial police force, Mr. Speaker. We know they didn't consult the chiefs of police, Mr. Speaker. We know the municipal police forces have shared their concern. We know the police officers by way of their association, Mr. Speaker, have been very clear in their concern on these fronts. We know Assistant Commissioner Rhonda Blackmore with the RCMP was very clear on this front at SARM last week, Mr. Speaker.

And this is a government that's just not up to the challenges of addressing crime within our communities, addressing those root causes, Mr. Speaker, and not up to the task of deploying provincial dollars, public dollars in the most efficient, effective way. This is, you know, a wasteful, costly slap in the face, Mr. Speaker.

A little bit of history. Of course you know, Saskatchewan's the home of Depot since 1885. It predates our origins as a province, Mr. Speaker, and that is a history that we should be proud of, Mr. Speaker. That's not to say that we shouldn't be working for improved policing response times across Saskatchewan, which is something that certainly is within the purview of this government, Mr. Speaker, in working with police agencies and the RCMP and ensuring funding and ensuring the outcomes that Saskatchewan people and communities need and deserve. But certainly just, you know, another \$20 million to delay the actual investment that's needed, Mr. Speaker, and to deploy those in a way that's disrespectful, to deploy those in a way that's not efficient, Mr. Speaker, is baffling.

What you see in this legislation as well is a whole lot more control of police by that government, Mr. Speaker, political control, if you will, of police. And that's a dangerous thing, Mr. Speaker. That ends up in bad places, Mr. Speaker.

This legislation allows the minister to decide whether or not they think the police in community A, B, or C or across Saskatchewan are doing a good job or bad and to decide whether or not they'll deploy their new provincial police force, for example, Mr. Speaker, with a bill sent to the rate payers of those respective communities, Mr. Speaker.

[22:00]

And you know, like this is really something that this government thinks that they should be the adjudicator of these matters, that they think they should have that kind of command and control, Mr. Speaker, when quite frankly this government struggles to balance a budget, to run a two-house paper route on most days in

here, Mr. Speaker. But now they're going to take over policing in Saskatchewan when they couldn't even organize the sale of some lands out at the GTH [Global Transportation Hub], Mr. Speaker. Like this is fraught with all sorts of risk for taxpayers and for the people of Saskatchewan.

And it's a slap in the face of those that lead, that serve and protect each and every day, Mr. Speaker, responding to some very serious challenges, putting themselves at risk, to not be receiving the support that they rightfully should be seeing from their government to work together towards these challenges, Mr. Speaker.

Now we sometimes hear different elements. Different people talk about funding for police, Mr. Speaker. And I don't know if you would fully consider this a defunding of the police, Mr. Speaker, but I'd certainly say we have an underfunding of police, Mr. Speaker. And we see dollars right now that could be going into our police forces across Saskatchewan and into the needs of communities, to be deployed in a way that could protect lives and protect communities, not happening because we see another political vanity project of this government, another need to have control of these sorts of things, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I wonder, I think back a few years ago when Tristen Durocher hiked all the way to Regina, Mr. Speaker, to call on that government, to plead with that government to pass a suicide strategy. He would have never marched here, Mr. Speaker, had he had proper audience or time, and when I say audience, time on probably even a phone call. But rightfully he should have had face time with that government, Mr. Speaker. He wasn't getting that. He marched here to protect the lives of many others, Mr. Speaker. And then we heard that that government opposite, well we heard the direction they wanted to offer the police. They said, well, toss the tipis out of here, Mr. Speaker. Political control from, you know, that government, Mr. Speaker.

And now we see it in the black and white here, Mr. Speaker, in legislation like this, you know. You know, and we get the member for Riversdale back there guffawing and chuckling. I heard him here today get up to finally speak this session, and he could barely muster his remarks, Mr. Speaker, to enter in on a piece of legislation that we should be all in support of. But he can heckle from the floor here if he wants and chooses, Mr. Speaker.

What I'd say is in all of our communities across Saskatchewan, including his, people need and deserve a better response to crime, Mr. Speaker. They need investments that'll make a difference now when it comes to mental health and addictions and to gangs, Mr. Speaker. And we need to better support our police, Mr. Speaker. And what we see instead is a distracting, disrespectful, wasteful political exercise by this government.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, I will move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 107

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 107 — *The Provincial Protective Services Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to enter into adjourned debate with respect to Bill 107, *The Provincial Protective Services Act*, 2022. This here is a new bill, Mr. Speaker. And I have already had the opportunity to speak to Bill 106, which my colleague just entered remarks on, which as you know paves the way for the bill at hand.

And so I've already entered my critiques on the record, so I'll briefly reiterate the gist of my remarks here, which is that we don't need any more police services in Saskatchewan. No one was calling for this. No one wanted this. It appears to be another pet project on behalf of the minister, perhaps something to keep her entertained.

We've seen that this is becoming a bit of a pattern with this minister, where she's sort of like racking up security and police forces under her watch. We saw this with Bill 70 and, here we go again, another police force. Very gratuitous. And as my colleague had mentioned, the previous bill, there's been wide criticism of this bill from people even in the policing community. So again it appears there was probably no consultation on this. I believe we've also heard remarks from one of my other colleagues that we know of no consultations with the Indigenous communities in our province.

And so I really can't say that I have really any positive remarks to enter in here on this particular bill, Mr. Speaker. It seems to be more squandering of taxpayer dollars. And what is so offensive about that, Mr. Speaker, is this isn't a time of, you know, historic booms, which we have seen under this government, and we certainly have seen them squandering at that time as well.

But this a time where people are tightening their belts, where they're left without any spare disposable income because of the affordability crisis that we find ourselves in, that the majority of Saskatchewan people are suffering under and struggling under, with no help from this government. And in fact with this government worsening the conditions that they're living under with their increases in taxes and fees, 31 new taxes and fees, Mr. Speaker, and jacking energy and power rates on top of it. And then to add insult to injury, adding another police service that no one called for and no one has determined the need for. And honestly we haven't really seen a proper explanation from the minister as to the need for this service.

So again I think we've heard 20 million a year is the cost of what this new service is going to be. Allegedly only 20 million, and we'll see. Again, my colleague had mentioned the GTH. We see these massive cost overruns under this government on their pet projects, and I can't say that I expect this to be any different, Mr. Speaker.

So we certainly do not support this bill as the opposition, and I think I'll leave it at that for tonight. So I'm going to wrap up, and

I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 107, *The Provincial Protective Services Act*, 2022.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 108

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 108 — *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act***, 2022 be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll be fairly brief tonight, not to disappoint all my fans on the other side who are looking for a grand finale to a really fun night in the Saskatchewan legislature. It's been a good time. But I'll put a few comments on the record related to Bill 108, *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act* of 2022.

Now I understand, from reviewing the legislation and the minister's comments, that these changes were brought about or really made necessary due to changes in the federal *Income Tax Act*, and so we're responding to provincial changes that more or less need to be there. So I suppose it's just the responsible thing to do.

But you know, I do see some language in here, when paired with other language coming from, quite frankly, from that same minister, it all sounds a little . . . I think my colleague offered it sounds a little medieval as we've got investigators and warrants and superintendents and investigations and a lot of talk coming from that side about manifestos and tribunals. And it all just has this feeling of being very, you know, kind of archaic and maybe just a little top heavy. But that's the language that we see here.

You know, so on first look there's a little bit to be alarmed at here. It can sound a little, you know, maybe a little over the top at first glance, but I think at the end of the day there's just some fiscal changes here in this legislation that needs to take place, and probably some good ideas that will allow for more flexibility within the system.

That being said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're really going to have to continue to talk to stakeholders on this one and hear their thoughts on quite a complicated bill, and I'm not sure that I'll be able to accomplish much of that here this evening. So at this time, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill 108, *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. The Assembly now stands adjourned till tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 22:10.]

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