



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS

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[The committee met at 09:30.]

The Chair: — Good morning committee members, guests here today. This morning we have before us the business of the Private Bills Committee, and the committee will deal with Bill No. 903, The Ancient Order of Melchizedeq.

And before I go forward, I would like to make notice that there are a few substitutions here today. Substituting for Ms. Wilson is Mr. Hart. Substituting for Ms. Ross is Mr. Weekes, and substituting for Ms. Schriemer is Mr. Chisholm.

Bill No. 903 — *The Ancient Order of Melchizedeq, Inc. Act*

The Chair: — I want to welcome all committee members here, and I would ask Ms. Wilson, the sponsor of the Bill, to introduce her guests.

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, committee members, for being here. I would like to introduce James Regehr. I'm bringing forth, on behalf of Dr. Regehr, his Hidden Land Institute, a private member's Bill in support of Dr. Regehr's goal which is ultimately to attain degree granting status for his institution. It's The Ancient Order of Melchizedeq. So without further ado, I'll have Dr. James Regehr talk and discuss this Bill.

The Chair: — Excuse me. Before you go ahead, Mr. Regehr, I'd like to table a letter from the University of Saskatchewan, and a copy will be delegated to all members of the committee and to you, Mr. Regehr.

Mr. Regehr: — I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you this morning. I think you each have a copy of my comments that I'd like to share with you. And we'll just go over them together, and I'll make a couple of additional comments at the end.

The Chair: — Excuse me, Mr. Regehr. Could I get the copy tabled to all members then, Mr. Regehr? It has been done? Okay, pardon me. Sorry, Mr. Regehr, you can continue.

Mr. Regehr: — Thank you. The Ancient Order of Melchizedeq — pronounced Mel-key-zed-ek, okay — is a charitable corporation registered in Saskatchewan whose purposes include conducting religious services and post-secondary religious education.

The Chair: — Sorry for interrupting you again. I made a mistake. Before you make your comments, I would ask that the Law Clerk, Mr. Ring, make his report first, and then I'll allow you to address his response and your response at that time. So I'll now ask Mr. Ring for his report on the Bill.

Mr. Ring: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, committee members. I'm pleased to comment on Bill 903 pursuant to the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly*. I've examined this private Bill and am pleased to report that Bill 903 is drawn in accordance with the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly* respecting private Bills.

With respect to the provision of the Act, I am able to report that

the provision contained in section 2 of the Act is slightly different than what has been the standard provision for similar institutions which are incorporated by way of private Act of the Legislative Assembly. The Ancient Order of Melchizedeq is not incorporated by way of private Act of the Assembly but is incorporated pursuant to *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995* which establishes its legal identity. This is similar to the Fountain of Life School of Ministry Inc. and the Faith Alive Ministries World Outreach Centre Inc., each with a private Act from 2004 and 2006 respectively. Bill 903 is similar to those two institutions as the proposed Bill consists of only one provision related to education.

I also understand that there may be some other issues that deal with policy matters on which I would not and could not report, pursuant to the rules of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Ring. I would now ask Mr. Regehr to do his presentation.

Mr. Regehr: — Thank you. Hidden Land Institute, the last sentence on the first paragraph, is the educational branch of this charitable corporation.

According to the book of Genesis in the Bible, Melchizedeq was a priest of God most high and was the King of Salem — Jerusalem — roughly 4,000 years ago. According to other ancient Jewish sources, Melchizedeq also founded the very first yeshiva or Bible college or religious training institute. Shem, the son of Noah, ran the school, and three of the most famous students were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the three patriarchs of the Jewish people. Ishmael, the patriarch of the Arab people and the religion of Islam, was also a student in Shem's yeshiva.

The religion taught in Shem's yeshiva has come to be called the religion of Noah. The foundation of Noahide religion consists of seven laws: prohibition against idolatry, blasphemy, murder, theft, sexual immorality, eating blood, and the commandment to establish courts of justice. These seven laws form the common foundation for Judaism, Christianity, Islam, as well as many other monotheistic faith traditions including North American First Nations traditions and teachings.

Beyond these seven laws, Noahide religion is the progenitor of many faith- and culture-based traditions for the Jewish people as well as for other peoples, including North American First Nations. The sweetgrass ceremony, the sweat lodge, dream catchers, and the making of tassels on traditional garments and even the flood legend all have their origin in Noahide teachings. In fact in the 18th century, an inscription was found in New Mexico that, if authentic, may date back to between 2,500 and 3,000 years ago and that contains, among other things, these seven laws written in paleo-Hebrew characters.

Today Noahide religion is functionally part of orthodox Judaism. Noahides are non-Jewish people who serve the God of Israel in a manner consistent with Jewish teachings and traditions, the Torah.

The name of our college, Hidden Land Institute, comes from the fact that in ancient Hebrew the term hidden land was how

north regions were described. Even as Canada is known as the “True North strong and free,” Hidden Land Institute reflects our geographical location as being part of the northern land.

Hidden Land Institute offers courses both on site as well as, whenever possible, through correspondence and Internet video conferencing in order to keep people in the geographical locations in which they have been planted. We do not seek to uproot people from their lives but to help them learn how to enrich their lives where they are.

Our courses use orthodox Jewish texts and language helps. We enjoy having orthodox rabbis involved in our faculty and staff, and we operate under the advisership of the Beit Din of the Nascent Sanhedrin in Jerusalem.

Our student demographics include European Christian students, First Nations students, Jewish students, and even a correspondence Muslim student. One of our goals is to help promote understanding and acceptance among all monotheistic faith expressions, fostering personal spirituality and inner well-being while seeking to strengthen and bring healing to interpersonal relationships.

Our primary goal as a college is to train our students to be able to meet the qualifications to be considered for a Sanhedrin recognized rabbinic ordination as Noahide clergy. The National Occupation Classification of Canada lists minister of religion at the website, as included there, as requiring a variety of educational qualifications depending on the religion. These educational prerequisites often range from the completion of a college program to a Master of Divinity degree program specific to that religion. And on the final page, there’s an appendix here with that website you can look at later on, on your own. It therefore pursued that Hidden Land Institute seek the legal means to offer these kinds of degree programs that might qualify Noahide candidates for Sanhedrin-recognized ordination.

The Ancient Order of Melchizedeq, Inc. and the Hidden Land Institute has petitioned the government subject to subsection 6(3), *The University of Saskatchewan Act*. And you have it there, the private member’s Act that we are petitioning.

At present *The University of Saskatchewan Act* of ’95, subsection 6(3) states that “No other educational institution, except The University of Regina, shall grant degrees other than theological degrees.” This statement provides the implicit right for religious colleges to be founded and offer theological degrees in this province through the citation of this Act as providing the legal basis for their degrees. A significant problem arises when religious colleges cite this Act because, to the untrained eye, citation of this legislation provides the appearance of accreditation by the university or at very least association with the university which is typically not in place.

During the petitioning of our Act, I was contacted by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour and was informed that the University of Saskatchewan has certain concerns regarding being cited on the website of certain religious colleges in Saskatchewan as well as in other legislative Acts using this template because no accreditation or affiliation has ever been sought by the religious schools that have previously

and successfully petitioned the government of a private members’ Act, nor any accreditation or affiliation has been extended to them by the university.

Since being contacted by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour, I have sought to ensure that no reference to *The University of Saskatchewan Act* or its legislation appears anywhere in the Hidden Land Institute website or promotional materials. We understand that the private members’ Bill No. 903 allows our college to legally offer academic degrees in theology. It does not accredit us either by the government or by the university.

[09:45]

In academia there are two types of accreditation — peer accreditation and industry accreditation. Peer accreditation is offered by peer institutions offering comparable programs of study, and the primary purpose of peer accreditation are accountability of educational quality assurance and student transfer ability of credit from one institution to another without hindrance to her/his program of study. Because we are the only institution in Canada that offers programs in Noahide Studies, there are no peer institutions with which we may seek to affiliate or by whom we may seek to be accredited.

Industry accreditation in the field of religion involves the recognition of the program of study as acceptable to qualify the graduate to be considered a candidate for ordination. For Hidden Land Institute, our industry accreditation is offered by the Nascent Sanhedrin, but only after we have the explicit legal right to offer academic degree programs in theology. We require the passage of this private members’ Bill in order to qualify us to receive accreditation from the Sanhedrin.

This is the second time that I’ve personally petitioned a Bill with this template. The first time was in 2004, the Fountain of Life School of Ministry Act, and it receive Royal Assent without delay for a religious college in Prince Albert by which I was formerly employed. The Faith Alive Bible College of Saskatoon also used this template, and likewise *The Faith Alive Ministries World Outreach Centre Inc. Act* also received Royal Assent after having consulted with Fountain of Life School of Ministry.

When I recently visited their respective websites, I found the following on their front pages: the Fountain of Life School of Ministry says that it offers undergraduate and graduate schools offering individual credit courses and full accredited degrees — clicking on the blue lines, etc. — by authority of the Crown in accord with the government of the province of Saskatchewan, Bill 302 of 2004, and the Fountain of Life School of Ministry Act, 2004, *The University of Saskatchewan Act* of ’95, accredited and practical training for both Christian pastoral ministry and clinical counselling.

And on the Faith Alive Bible College website, they are pleased to announce that it has been accredited by the Government of Saskatchewan to offer degrees under Faith Alive Ministries World Outreach Centre Inc. and *The University of Saskatchewan Act* subsection 6(3), and the programs they offer are practical theology, school of music, personal development, and school of healing. If I were part of the leadership of the

University of Saskatchewan or part of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, I would be uncomfortable with these kinds of claims. In fact I've been advised by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour that a letter has been received from the University of Saskatchewan regarding the citation of their institution on the websites of certain religious colleges, as well as in the private Acts of legislation pertaining to these institutions.

While our institution's specific programs are not addressed in this letter, it seems that the primary concerns of the university are pertaining to the inappropriate citation regarding accreditation or affiliation by religious schools to the university and the appearance of accreditation by the Government of Saskatchewan, the specific wording of this template used in now this the third Act of legislation which appears to connect religious schools with the university, rather than simply limiting religious schools to the offering of programs that are strictly theological in nature rather than expanding into other arts and social sciences, such as music or clinical counselling.

It also seems apropos based on the written concerns of the University of Saskatchewan that the entire role of religious colleges and their degree-granting status ability be reviewed and evaluated by the Government of Saskatchewan so that changes may be recommended to the Legislative Assembly that might help guarantee the integrity of academia in our province. This however exceeds far beyond the mandate of the private member's Bill committee and involves potentially changing the entire legislative portrait of advanced education in Saskatchewan.

As needed and timely as this may be, it remains the mandate of this committee to keep in mind present legislation and our present system regarding the degree-granting status of religious institutions and to determine the merit of our Bill based on the existing system and legislation. In making this determination, this committee is reminded that many religious colleges exist in the province that have the explicit legal right to offer academic degree programs in theology.

This committee is also reminded of the aforementioned two other institutions that have successfully petitioned their respective Acts of legislation using the same template employed in our Bill. Whatever impropriety may have resulted after the passage of the aforementioned Acts does not negate the legality of the previously passed Acts nor does it call into question the merit of this Act presently being considered by this committee. Please do not hold the impropriety of other institutions against ours.

We recommend that this committee reply to the letter sent by the University of Saskatchewan stating that their letter was received and that their concerns are well founded and that the following steps be taken. Number one, that the Ancient Order of Melchizedeq, Inc., Hidden Land Institute, refrain from any reference to the University of Saskatchewan as either being affiliated with the university or being accredited by the university in any way, based on their Act of legislation.

Number two, that the Ancient Order of Melchizedeq, Inc., Hidden Land Institute, refrain from any reference to being accredited by the Government of Saskatchewan because the

government does not accredit religious programs.

Number three, that the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour send official letters to any and all religious schools that claim affiliation or accreditation with the University of Saskatchewan or accreditation by the Government of Saskatchewan, instructing them to: (a) cease these claims immediately; (b) restrict their academic degree programming to theological programs as restricted by *The University of Saskatchewan Act*; and, (c) immediately discontinue all programs that delve into other arts or social sciences.

And number four, that the private members' committee petition the Legislative Assembly to appoint a task force that will undertake a process that will address the role of religious post-secondary education in the province of Saskatchewan, including the degree-granting ability of religious institutions.

And this is not in your copy, but I would just like to add a couple more comments. We request that this committee recommend Bill 903 to the Legislative Assembly for third and final reading and passage into law. We also offer an amendment suggestion to the Bill, to replace the words "subject to" with the words "restricted by." And if you turn to your copy of the Act of legislation or to the Bill that is before you, you see the heading preamble and then short title and powers. There under the heading of powers, the first two words are "subject to" and we're suggesting an amendment to change those two words to "restricted by."

That will imply that, I think more clearly, that we are not accredited by the university or operating in conjunction with the university, but *The University of Saskatchewan Act* does restrict religious schools to offering theological degrees and not expanding those programs to other courses as well.

Thank you for this opportunity to address you. My comments are respectfully submitted.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Regehr, for your presentation. I would now like to invite questions from the committee members. Ms. Junor.

Ms. Junor: — Are we going to have someone from Advanced Ed speak to the university's concerns — I see the deputy is here — because they're not here to answer questions. I know Mr. Regehr answered a fair amount of them. But I have questions about process and determining how you pass this Bill with its short little paragraphs that would capture the things that Mr. Regehr said in his recommendations because part of them could be attached to our recommendation to the Bill — which I don't know, Mr. Ring would have to tell us — and the other parts would have to be answered by the ministry.

The Chair: — The ministry is scheduled to speak after questions are done here for Mr. Regehr. Now whether they're going to talk on the university, I have no idea.

Ms. Junor: — Okay. So I could save my questions, and if I need to talk to Mr. Regehr he could come back right?

The Chair: — Yes.

Ms. Junor: — Okay. Thank you. I'd actually like to thank Mr. Regehr because we didn't have this material ahead of time, and my reading of the letter from the university raised all kinds of questions and you answered them all. So I really do appreciate your brief. It was very succinct.

And I do have one question because I am attached to a Jewish family, and so when I see the main duties that are performed by any of the ministers under the titles that they have, administering rites of faith such as marriages and funerals, does that include any bris, like the circumcisions?

Mr. Regehr: — No, I don't do that.

Ms. Junor: — Nobody will be able to under this Act?

Mr. Regehr: — That's correct.

Ms. Junor: — Okay.

Mr. Regehr: — The bris is not part of Noahide. That's one of the differences between Noahide and Jewish is that Noahide are non-Jewish and do not conduct the bris.

Ms. Junor: — Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: — Mr. Chisholm.

Mr. Chisholm: — Member opposite, you'd mentioned that you hadn't seen any of this information prior to the meeting . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay. I'm just wondering what happened there. Why does that happen?

A Member: — We didn't get . . .

Mr. Chisholm: — Oh, the written presentation that we got today. Okay, fine. Yes.

The Chair: — Mr. Hart.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Regehr, thank you for your presentation this morning. I have to admit I know nothing about your Hidden Land Institute. I wonder if you could provide us, the committee, with, you know, some facts as to how long you've been in existence, how many students you have, where you're located — those sorts of things — just so that we have a better understanding of what it is you do and so on. If you could provide us with some of that information.

Mr. Regehr: — The Hidden Land Institute was registered with corporations branch; I think it was 2006 when we registered the name. The religious teaching had been going on already prior to that. Since 2006, we've had seven or eight volunteer faculty. Everybody is volunteer including myself. We've had about 25 full-time, part-time since 2006. And right now we have five part-time that are doing primarily by correspondence. Some are local Saskatchewan. Some are from other places, the States. And our faculty is also . . . There's myself. There's another gentleman in Saskatchewan. There's a gentleman in Manitoba. There's rabbis in Israel.

The kinds of teachings that we do are very Torah-centric. We use the ArtScroll Chumash. You might be familiar of that,

member. It's a Jewish translation of the first five books of the Bible. And we use a lot of the rabbinic sources regarding how to interpret and apply these things.

Many of the teachings of the rabbis resonate very strongly with First Nation's traditions and teachings. When I've sat down with various pipe carriers and elders and medicine men and women and talked to them about our Jewish sources and Jewish lessons, they have been amazed, wondering where I learned their ways. And so working through and helping even to train some of these people in helping others through spiritual healing and emphasis on inner wholeness, inner healing, spirituality, strong emphasis. Did I answer what you're asking or are there some other questions?

Mr. Hart: — Yes, you have and I guess I'm, you know, more looking for, I mean, you certainly answered how long, you know, you've been registered as an institution and so on, and the number of students that you've had.

But do you have a set curriculum? And if so how long, you know, what's the duration of the curriculum? You know within the post-secondary education there is, you know, courses that are three weeks to seven years and that sort of thing. If you could just give us a sense of your curriculum and length of study.

Mr. Regehr: — Sure. The programs that we've drafted are . . . We haven't had anybody actually graduate with a degree yet, but we have offered certificate and diplomas so far. The programs for the degrees of bachelor's level degrees are based on 120 credit hours, four years of education, like universities. A master level would be 60 credit hours at a master's level study, roughly two years. Doctoral programs vary in their scope, depending on the nature of the project, but they're typically a two year minimum window. Each program is allowed up to seven years to complete once the student has begun.

[10:00]

We have students that have gone as far as third year in toward a bachelor's program and as far as a year and a little bit in a master's program. And we have one student who is just beginning a doctoral program pursuant to the passage of this Bill. And in good faith, they wanted to get started. Did that answer what you're asking, or is there a little bit more?

Mr. Hart: — Just to clarify, currently how many students do you have within your institute?

Mr. Regehr: — Some of them have not taken a course recently, but there are 25 registered — 26, 25. I didn't bring that with me.

Mr. Hart: — No. That's fine. That's fine.

Mr. Regehr: — But that's the neighbourhood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you. That's most helpful. Thank you.

The Chair: — I recognize Mr. Chisholm.

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a quick question

just for my own. The tie with the First Nations is interesting. Your kind of story goes back 4,000 years, and ours doesn't go back quite that far over here. And like, could you kind of tell me how that tie, maybe how the First Nations spiritual beliefs or background, how that may have tied in with where your group . . . Like it seems like . . .

Mr. Regehr: — First of all, I did not study First Nations teachings or traditions. My focus was on the Noahide studies. And it was in conversation with traditional elders and leaders and pipe carriers, medicine men, talking to them about my research that they commented on the similarities and . . .

Now my theory is that going back all the way to Noah, everybody descended from Noah. And somehow the North American First Nations people were inspired by those traditions. And as their traditions evolved over the years, they have changed, but that there is a common traditional route with the Noahide, and so many of the values, many of the practices are very similar. They've just evolved in a slightly different path. Does that answer what you were asking?

Mr. Chisholm: — Yes.

The Chair: — Ms. Junor.

Ms. Junor: — Further to Mr. Hart's question, you didn't touch on location. Do you have a fixed location, or is it all done by correspondence?

Mr. Regehr: — We have office space located at suite number 103, 1112 Central Avenue, Prince Albert. That's our office space right now.

Ms. Junor: — So are classes offered from there?

Mr. Regehr: — Yes, they have been evening classes and weekend classes predominantly because our students are already working. They have careers.

Ms. Junor: — Now my next question may be best to the ministry. But I'm wondering about the question of course transfers, if you can speak to that from the point of view of the institute — I was going to say college — institute. Are the courses that these students are taking now, do they have any ability to transfer them into a program in the mainstream universities or colleges?

Mr. Regehr: — We have not sought any negotiations that way.

But I will tell you that in, I think it was 2004 or 2005, one of the courses that I am licensed to teach on Hebrew language has been recognized by the Southern Baptist Seminary in Cochrane, Alberta. Somebody was a couple of credits shy of graduating there and wanted to take an elective course. And I sent them a copy of the syllabus and course goals, etc., an outline of this Hebrew language course, and it was recognized by this Baptist seminary as qualifying for a transfer credit.

But we have not sought any transfer of credit agreement with any other post-secondary institution. That's not our primary goal. Our primary goal is working with the Sanhedrin to look at qualifying people for potential ordination.

Ms. Junor: — Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, Ms. Junor. Any more questions of the presenter?

Seeing none, I want to thank the member, and I want to thank Mr. Regehr for your presentation. I also advise them that, if required, they could be asked for further questions.

At this time now, I would like to ask the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour to come forth and speak on it. Thank you. I would ask the member introduce herself and her other officials to the committee.

Ms. Young: — Good morning. Thank you, Chair. My name is Wynne Young. I'm the deputy minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour. And with me this morning is Dr. Reg Urbanowski who is the assistant deputy minister of post-secondary and student services within the ministry. Thank you for asking us to speak to the proposed Bill 903 that is before this committee now.

If I may, Chair, just a little background around Bills. As I know that legislators would know, most Bills that are developed, they are done so through the ministry and the government. And within that, we have a number of processes and steps prior to coming forward, and these include assessment of things like legal, financial, policy, and system implications, as well as consideration of the impact of others. There is also normally, prior to the Bill being passed — and sometimes after the Bill is introduced, or before — some consultation with others around the impact of the Bill.

So while this Bill is slightly different, we do believe it is our responsibility around the due diligence for this Bill. And so we have taken it to undertake that task and apply the same type of considerations and due diligence we do to the other Bills.

It is both our mandate, and I believe responsibility, to do that under *The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act*, that the minister has this responsibility and through him, ourselves, to ensure that all matters related to post-secondary education and also due consideration is taken on anything that may affect the system.

With response to the Bill, we would be looking at all aspects of the Bill including: again legal, policy, fiscal, and system considerations; how this Bill may impact other post-secondary institutes; how the Bill may impact the broader post-secondary system; and also — although not statutory — whether the Bill is consistent with the 2007 Council of Ministers of Education *Ministerial Statement on Quality Assurance of Degree Education in Canada*, and a statement that Saskatchewan did agree to in 2007.

We do also consider process questions about the consultation around the Bill — what took place or what needs to take place, and what were the responses. These considerations are part of our due diligence that we would carry out with any Bill, both a ministry Bill or a private member Bill, prior to consideration.

As initial steps in this review, we did request our Justice adviser to look at the Bill for legal implications. At this point, we have

simply got back a number of questions from him. And so those need to be, they need to be answered and the implications need to be assessed.

A normal part of our process is also to consult with other stakeholders that may be impacted by the Bill. In this case, we have had some initial consultation with the University of Saskatchewan by sharing a copy of the Bill and requesting feedback. Now I believe that the committee has noted that they are aware that the provost of the university did have a written . . . He wrote to us with concerns about both process and substance of the Bill and how it might impact University of Saskatchewan. And like any other stakeholder, we take the concerns seriously, and we think they need to be fully considered.

We also want to consult with U of S's [University of Saskatchewan] federated and affiliated colleges to understand their views on the Bill.

Finally, I would also note that the minister and ministry have recently launched a broad review of the post-secondary system for the purpose of creating an overall framework for the post-secondary system in the province, with goals of, of course, meeting the various and diverse needs of Saskatchewan learners and employers, and to ensure the effectiveness of the system itself.

We believe it is best to complete that review and adopt the framework prior to considering further legislative changes that may be required or changes, other changes that may be appropriate.

The next step in this review is under way, and we are hopeful that the review will be completed by the end of this calendar year 2009.

So I will stop there around the points that we wanted to put forward, and thank you for asking us, and be pleased to take any questions.

The Chair: — Okay. Thank you, Ms. Young. Is there questions from the committee members? Ms. Junor.

Ms. Junor: — The ministerial statement in '07 about quality assurance, is there parts of that or all of that you could share with the committee.

Ms. Young: — Of course. I don't have it with me, but we will get it right over. It is actually on the CMEC [Council of Ministers of Education] website also.

Ms. Junor: — It seems to me from your comments that we are not prepared to continue to do this on an ad hoc basis. We don't have a good template any more for granting these types of individual requests and are running into trouble with the two we've already done. And I understand Mr. Regehr's comments, at the end of his presentation, about what could be done and that his organization should not be penalized for the mistakes of the other two.

But with the things that you have mentioned, Ms. Young, about Justice questions unanswered, consultations still unfinished, and

the post-secondary review under way, it certainly leads me, as a committee member, to think that we should not be moving forward on this Bill or any others that come to the committee before we have these things finished — in particular, in this Bill, your Justice questions and your consultations. But before we allow anybody else to bring a Bill such as this forward, they should be advised that there are things under review and processes that will likely be changed and should not be coming before the committee until that is done.

Those comments, I think the Justice and the consultation ones definitely speak to this Bill. The post-secondary review speaks to this Bill plus others that would be contemplating doing this. But with the information I have at this moment, given your presentation, I don't see how this committee can pass this in good conscience, even with the conditions attached to it that Mr. Regehr has put in, although I appreciate his efforts in trying to address our concerns.

We seem to be moving forward in, like I said, an ad hoc way every time a request comes. We have concerns raised by the university, we have questions, and we seem to be moving slowly forward in a way that we really don't seem to like. And I think we should stop. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, Ms. Junor. Mr. Weekes.

Mr. Weekes: — Are we going to in camera?

The Chair: — I think we should wait to see if there's any more questions first, and then as soon as questions are all done, then I'll entertain that motion. Is there any more questions from the committee members?

Seeing none, I want to thank the members from the ministry for coming today and making their presentation. I would ask a member now to move a motion that the committee meet in camera to consider this report and ask that anyone except the members on the committee staff leave the room during the in camera deliberations. Mr. Weekes.

Mr. Weekes: — I so move.

[The committee continued in camera.]

The Chair: — Okay, I'll call the committee to order. Mr. Regehr and Ms. Wilson, thank you for appearing again. I would ask members from the committee to make final comments. Ms. Junor.

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Regehr, I'd like to thank you and Ms. Wilson for appearing before the committee. We appreciate your presentation and its intent and the work that you put into addressing many of the concerns that were raised by the university in its letter. Having been a member of the Private Bills Committee for all three, I think, of these presentations — of the other two that received their approval — this third one now has brought to a head certain questions that need to be answered before we can proceed with any more of these.

And the deputy from Advanced Education, Employment and Labour also raised some questions of unfinished business within the department, including a post-secondary review and

some further consultation. The committee has discussed this and really do appreciate what you've done so far and the work you've put into it, and the fact that you've come this far and will be unsuccessful. And I really do apologize for that, but I think that the committee needs to have some questions answered for moving forward with requests such as these on a global look. We're doing ad hoc; every time we have a request, we have the same questions and they remain unanswered.

So we need to move forward. And you have talked about a task force and different things and have set us on a course that we will probably see some changes made to the way we do this and the way further applications come forward before the committee for issues such as these.

But we really do appreciate the work you put in. It has nothing to do with your presentation or your organization. It has to do with the fact that this is the third time we've had this conversation at a committee level, and we need to do more work to make sure that it is done in a different way so we feel more comfortable doing this. Thank you again.

The Chair: — Thank you, Ms. Junor. Mr. Chisholm.

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you for the opportunity. I would just like to thank you for being here today, thank the member for bringing this forward, and congratulations on your good work. And the decision of this committee certainly is not reflective of the fact that what you're doing is very worthwhile. I think it's reflective of what we have to have a really hard look at in our education system as to where we move in the future. So I'd just like to thank you very much for coming.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Chisholm. Mr. Regehr, for some final comments.

Mr. Regehr: — I'm very let down, disappointed. On a practical level, I understand that *The University of Saskatchewan Act* provides the implicit right for theological degrees to be offered. Is that changed?

Bottom line, is Hidden Land Institute able to still offer degrees without specific legislation based on the implication of *The University of Saskatchewan Act*? Or does this mean that, because this Bill is not proceeding at this time, that we need to inform our presently enrolled students that these programs will be discontinued? Do you understand my question?

The Chair: — Mr. Weekes.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't think we're in a position to be able to answer that type of question. But you should take that to the ministry and feel free to do that and ask those questions.

Again I just want to echo my other colleagues in their statements about our support of . . . This process is about due diligence and just getting things right as far as process. And I'm sure, with your discussions with the ministry and the university, you'll have an opportunity to come forward again. But I would just take those types of questions to the ministry and have that clarified.

Mr. Regehr: — Was that part of this discussion about the implicit right to offer degrees? Was that part of . . . That wasn't addressed here right now. I'm just wondering what this means for us right now, today.

Mr. Chisholm: — Well we certainly did not discuss going back in time and changing anything at this meeting. We were dealing specifically with this, the particular Bill today, now. So there was nothing discussed about the relevance of other legislation that is in place. So that's my comment.

The Chair: — Mr. Ring.

Mr. Ring: — I was just going to make the comment that I don't think anything has changed for your institution. You're still incorporated pursuant to *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995*, so you have that legal identity. You have work that you are doing, and I don't know that that needs to stop necessarily.

However, going forward I think committee members are trying to indicate that if and when you plan on bringing another private member's Bill forward, that if you were to start working with the ministry now, you'll be able to figure out how, you know, how best these types of private Bills should be going forward.

So if you work with the ministry in that way, I think that will help you to clarify what you think you can do now and what they think you can do now. It will also help clear a path for the way forward so that the committee knows how to proceed in the future when Bills like this come forward.

Mr. Regehr: — Would there be any other amendments that could be made to this Bill that could possibly change your mind?

The Chair: — Not at this time, Mr. Regehr. I'm taking from the committee members that the answer is no.

Mr. Regehr: — Okay. Thank you for the opportunity to share.

The Chair: — Okay, thank you. Any more comments from the committee members? Then I would like a committee member to move report Bill No. 903, *The Ancient Order of Melchizedek, Inc. Act* to not be further proceeded with. Ms. Junor. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Agreed. And I have another motion and would wish a member to move it that the fees representing Bill 903 be remitted to the petitioners.

Mr. Chisholm: — I would like to, if we can change the motion just to insert that the full fees respecting Bill No. 903 be remitted to the petitioner, just to indicate that.

The Chair: — Mr. Chisholm. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Mr. Wotherspoon.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I'd like to make the motion, our third motion here:

That the draft fifth report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be further revised and approved by the steering committee before presentation to the Assembly.

The Chair: — Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Okay. I think that wraps it up. I want to thank Ms. Wilson and Mr. Regehr for appearing before the committee this morning. As the committee members have said, I hope this doesn't stop your efforts in what you're pursuing, and I hope that you work with the ministries and the officials there to further your goals and what you're trying to do. So on behalf of the committee, I want to thank you for appearing, and have a safe trip home. Thank you.

Can I entertain a motion for adjournment? Ms. Wilson.

Ms. Wilson: — I just want to thank the committee and the chairperson for the great job and effort you've put through for this Bill. Thank you very much for your time.

The Chair: — Thank you, Ms. Wilson. I now will entertain a motion for adjournment. Mr. Hart. This committee is now adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 10:46.]