

June 1/90

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Toth: -- Mr. Speaker, allow me to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, a group of 32 students from the community of Whitewood and Whitewood School. They're grade 8 students, Mr. Speaker. They've come to the Legislative Assembly this morning to view the proceedings.

I've also had the privilege of already meeting with the students and we've had an interesting discussion. They're accompanied today by their teacher, Mrs. Wright, and by chaperons, Mrs. Theresa Domres, Mrs. Wendy Domres, Mrs. Samida, Miss Tucker, Mrs. Houtman, and Mr. LaRocque.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to welcome the students to the Assembly this morning. I would like to thank them for coming and I trust they'll have an enjoyable time in the Assembly, in viewing the proceedings and, as well, enjoy your weekend in the city. I'd ask the members to welcome the students in the usual manner.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Britton: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, Mr. Speaker, would like to introduce some guests to the Assembly through you and to the rest of the members assembled.

Mr. Speaker, we have in the east gallery 15 grade 8 students from the Eaton High School in Eatonia, Saskatchewan. And they are accompanied by their teacher, Karon Guttormson; chaperons, Craig Bens and Bob Quinney; and their bus driver, Mr. Speaker, is Karen McDonald.

Mr. Speaker, I will be meeting with these students a little later on and we'll have some refreshments and probably some questions and get an idea of what they think of the procedure here. I would like to ask all the members to welcome them here and wish them a safe journey home.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure that I introduce to you and to members of the Assembly some 60 grade 5 students from the Lumsden Elementary School. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery, Mr. Speaker. They are accompanied by teachers Ray Tourney, Judy Starkes, and Peter Wiebe, and bus driver Bill Klein.

Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure last week of attending the high school graduation in Lumsden and a ceremony that was very impressive. I know that these young students aspire to the high school one of these days, and I would like all hon. members to help me welcome our guests from Lumsden and

to make them welcome to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hardy: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to introduce to you and to the members of the Legislative Assembly 30 grade 8 students from the Porcupine School in Porcupine Plain, Saskatchewan.

It was interesting to note that they have come in here from I think one of the prettiest parts of the province, and I make mention of that because it's the gateway to the Greenwater Provincial Park. And also it's a . . . my colleague here says it's the best place to be because he comes up there every summer to spend the summer there and I agree with him.

Certainly it's a pleasure for me, Mr. Speaker, to welcome these students to our Assembly. They'll have the opportunity today to hear a debate on the future of Canada as it continues on from yesterday, the future of what Canada can be and will be for them, because they are our future. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to join with me to in welcoming our future generation, our future Canada generation to this Assembly today.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the distinct pleasure this morning of introducing to you and other members of the legislature an international guest from Los Angeles, California, Sister Jennie Lechtenberg, who has been one of the keynote speakers at the Spotlight on Literacy conference. I had the opportunity the other night to listen to her presentation -- very impressed by it. She's very involved with working with people in the Los Angeles area, that they have literacy problems and doing a tremendous job down there, and I think was a real inspiration to the conference that's going on here in Regina.

We are very pleased that she is able to join us this morning. She's accompanied by Joan Berntson, who is the co-ordinator of the conference, and I would like all members to join with me in giving Sister Jennie a very warm welcome. I hope that she enjoys the proceedings this morning and has enjoyed her visit here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: -- Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you, to all members of the legislature a guest seated in the Speaker's gallery, Valerie Clowater. Valerie is also involved in the Spotlight on Literacy conference that's taking place here, and has taken place this past week.

She is a person, a young person, Mr. Speaker, who in 1986 decided to learn how to read and to improve her own writing and spelling skills, and this past January she completed her grade 12, Mr. Speaker. But more than that, she has served on the outset . . . from the outset on the Saskatchewan Literacy Council, and she has become, I would say, Mr. Speaker, a symbol for all that Saskatchewan people can be given a little help and a little

hope, and today maybe she's best known across Saskatchewan airways as that person with her young family on television, who is promoting to others the advantages of becoming literate in this knowledge economy that we all grow up in. And she, by that, has become a symbol of offering help and hope to others just as she has had that same help and hope offered to her. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask her to stand and for all members of the Assembly to welcome her here today.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Instructor Lay-offs at Wascana Institute

Mr. Rolfes: -- Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education. Mr. Minister, my question refers to another decision made by SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology). Can the minister confirm that SIAST plans to lay off approximately 40 or 50 instructors at the Wascana institute either today or in the very near future? And can the minister also confirm that these instructors, for the most part, are in the agricultural extension area and agriculture-related training programs?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, again we see the member opposite acting on information that has not been put forward at this time. I do not have any information.

When he talks, Mr. Speaker, when the member opposite talks about some 40 or 50 people being laid off at the Wascana Campus, any information that I have is that there could be some changes over there, maybe affecting about 20 people. Again that's about half of what he is indicating, but I think that any announcements may be forthcoming today, and I would suggest to the member and to others that they will have to wait until that announcement has been officially made.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- Mr. Speaker, a further question. New question to the minister. It's interesting to note that when the minister began to answer his question he said I have no knowledge of the situation and then goes on to say that at this time only 20, as far as he knows, are going to be laid off.

Mr. Minister, at this time, 20; tomorrow or next week it'll be 40. And it is, Mr. Minister, appalling that when you have \$700,000 for refurbishing of Cadillac offices, \$740,000 for eight top executives, and another \$130,000 for perks and per diems for your appointed members, that at this time, Mr. Minister, you will accept the lay-off of 20 -- you say 20, we say 40 to 50 instructors in the area of agriculture and distance education for rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, this is appalling and I'm asking you again, what are you going to do to stop this lay-off of instructors so that the SIAST can be run for the students and not for your appointed members?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, I should point out to the member opposite again that SIAST is an autonomous body that runs their own operation. I wonder why the member isn't asking, you know, about lay-offs at the universities of Regina and Saskatchewan, if that is also the case. But you know he's only interested in one thing. He's not interested in the students or what's happening at SIAST. He's only interested in politics.

Now he makes comments again about \$700,000 for elaborate corporate offices. Now, Mr. Speaker, in the first case we have to consider that the majority of that money, or half of that money probably, is for the leasing costs -- the leasing costs, Mr. Speaker. He indicated in this House some days ago that some \$350,000 had been spent on renovating offices. Pointed out to him quite clearly that some \$60,000 was spent here in Regina and around \$200,000 in Saskatoon, not 360 or \$370,000. Now that's one thing.

The next thing, he talks about the salaries. I would point out to him that the top nine SIAST corporate executives -- the average salary is some \$68,000. And I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that is well in line with what other people in other similar institutions would be earning considering the qualifications and the experiences that they have.

And when he talks about lay-offs at SIAST at Wascana Campus, there has not been any announcement to this point. There has been no announcement at this point, Mr. Speaker, about lay-offs at Wascana Campus. But the information that I have is that there will be some announcement later today affecting the agricultural division. And the majority of these positions are involved on a part-time basis. They're involved on a part-time basis and they are based on the need that has been expressed out in the communities.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- Mr. Speaker, further question to the minister. It's interesting that the minister is confirming what we have said, that if you include the perks and all the other things, that they are spending that kind of money on their top salaries and top executives.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- I want to say to the minister, if his top executives are his priorities, they are not the priorities of the people of Saskatchewan. The priorities of the people of Saskatchewan, of SIAST, are the students that attend those programs, Mr. Minister. And you should keep that in mind in your discussions with your board of directors.

Mr. Minister, I want to point out to you that rural Saskatchewan can ill afford to pay more for agricultural programs at this particular time. They

can ill afford to pay more. And I'm asking you, Mr. Minister, in your discussions with SIAST, will you please keep in mind the agricultural crisis that exists out there, and not deny rural people today and in the near future, the education opportunities that you promised them in the budget through distance education. Would you please keep that in mind and make that a priority in your discussions.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know why the member is suggesting opposite, that there are going to be people in rural Saskatchewan that are going to suffer as a result of this. We are increasing. We've announced this. We are going to be increasing the number of opportunities that will exist through our regional colleges. We're making more opportunities available for students, graduates from grade 12. We've just announced, not that long ago, changes and expanded program with the Saskatchewan Communications Network.

So for him to stand in his place and suggest that rural Saskatchewan is going to suffer as a result of any changes that are being made here is just totally inaccurate. Wascana Campus and SIAST campuses across this province, along with the regional colleges, will continue to respond to the demand that is out there in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Federal Immigration Investment Program

Mr. Mitchell: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Economic Diversification and Trade and it has to do with another of his immigrant investor deals. And I say his deal, his government's deal, by quoting the letter sent by the federal Department of Employment and Immigration to the principals of Omnivest Capital Limited, and I quote:

Please also ensure that all promotional materials, including those used by your agents, truly reflect the substance of the Offering Memorandum as accepted by both the Saskatchewan government and Employment and Immigration Canada.

Now this firm has set out a proposal to raise \$4.05 million by immigrant investment capital, and the offering memorandum states on page 9, and again I quote:

The Developer has obtained a firm mortgage commitment from SEDCO to provide the balance of the required financing should gross proceeds of less than \$4,050,000 be raised at the Closing.

Minister, my question is why has SEDCO guaranteed this program?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, let us go back to the issue at hand here as raised by the members opposite yesterday. Yesterday they alleged that

there was some sort of political undue influence or favouritism with respect to the approval of these funds in Saskatchewan. And I said as far as I knew there couldn't be because we hadn't rejected any. The information that I have confirmed by my department is that the province did not reject any up until now. So therefore anybody who applied was forwarded to the federal government. I am not saying that we won't reject any in the future because we're going to target these matters a little closer. But there certainly were wild allegations yesterday with the object of slandering and libelling people in Saskatchewan. That was their object yesterday.

Now today there is another wild allegation that to the best of my information is exactly that, a wild allegation. I know of no instance where SEDCO is guaranteeing these funds. And the minister responsible for SEDCO will look into this matter and will confirm what the facts are, but I know of nothing of that nature.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: -- Mr. Speaker, a new question to the same minister. Minister, I'm quoting from documents filed with your department. I want to quote further from this offering memorandum at page 11.

The Developer will refinance Phase One of Omni Business Park at the end of three and one half years following the Closing and has obtained a firm mortgage commitment from SEDCO in this regard. The proceeds of this refinancing will be sufficient, and will be used by the Developer at such time, to retire the entire principal amount then outstanding of the funds advanced to it by way of loan by the Partnership together with all interest remaining payable thereon.

Now SEDCO is in these documents, Minister, guaranteeing the full return of principle and interest by the immigrant investors. Now since this program is supposed to be risk capital, how do you justify SEDCO making such a guarantee as they obviously have by the documents that I've quoted to you?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is correct. This program is supposed to be risk capital. It's not to be guaranteed, except under special categories with respect to investors that are unknown in this province, and that is, people who are prepared to invest \$500,000 rather than \$150,000 and have a net worth of 750,000. Those kind of entrepreneur investors do not exist, as far as I know, with respect to Saskatchewan immigration fund and the immigration investments.

With respect to SEDCO, SEDCO is involved in various business dealings, have properties that they may wish to sell, and they will not restrict themselves in who they will sell these properties to if they have them available for sale. I can say this: that there is no policy of having SEDCO guaranteeing any of the funds. That does not say that SEDCO would not be involved in business deals involving funds, involving community bond corporations, involving existing buildings and existing entrepreneurs.

SEDCO is involved in joint ventures so that SEDCO is involved in economic development in Saskatchewan. It's possible that it could be joint ventures. But there is a policy that says there will be no guarantees of any of these funds by the government.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: -- A rather faint round of applause, Mr. Minister, and I certainly understand it. I would suggest, Minister, that you go back and take a long look at these documents that I am referring you to, because I think you're in some difficulty here.

The rules of the federal program are quite straightforward about third party guarantees. Section 8 states:

Third-party guarantees, whether of interest payments or principle repayment, are prohibited for all investment options under tiers 1 and 2 .
. .

And the minister will know that Saskatchewan is classed as tier 1 for the purposes of immigrant investment. Clearly this kind of guarantee violates the terms of the immigrant investment program. And my question is: why have you allowed it?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, the member opposite hasn't given us the courtesy of sending the document over that he's quoting from. There's \$700 million dollars worth of these funds. I recall reading some of them yesterday. I saw some of them were withdrawn. Some of them have been commented upon by the federal government and are being amended where the federal government won't allow them under their existing circumstances. It's hard to tell which one he's referring to.

I would say this: he had better not be pulling off the kind of stunt they were pulling off yesterday. And he'd better be accurate, and he'd better show us those documents so that we can debate that point at a public level. He cannot expect me to remember every document that's been filed when I've been the minister for four weeks.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the same minister, but before my question I will indicate that the member will send the documents across to inform the minister.

Mr. Minister, we see here how you're using SEDCO to guarantee, against the rules of the program, the principle and interest in what's supposed to be risk investment. I want to know, Mr. Minister, you did it for this company; how many others have you done it for?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, I'm going to take notice of that

question, and if they are into cheap political stunts, they will pay.

Mr. Lautermilch: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, while he's taking . . . I have another question for the minister, and while the minister is taking notice of that, I'd like to know, Mr. Minister, the Quebec firm of Mercan Capital which is trying to sell this immigrant investment program to potential investors states in a May 6, 1990, letter that this project is unique in that the investors' money is fully secured through a firm mortgage commitment from the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation, a Saskatchewan government-owned corporation.

The guarantee to the investor is for their principal plus interest. Therefore, if for any reason the project would experience financial difficulties the investors would still be paid back their investment plus interest.

Mr. Minister, investors are being told that they should buy into this project because if it should fail, it'll be the people of Saskatchewan, not them, who are on the hook.

I want to know what kind of business sense this makes to you, because it doesn't make any kind of business sense to anybody else in this province.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, that wasn't a question, that was another allegation. I will take notice and I will come back with the answers. And the opposition may be sorry when they hear the answers.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- I have, Mr. Speaker, another question to the same minister. And, Mr. Minister, while you're taking notice of that I would also ask you to take notice of this. And my question is that the same letter states that as of the beginning of May about \$1.7 million of the \$4.05 million has been raised so that SEDCO is on the hook for about 2.5 million now to get the rest of the project up and running.

The Speaker: -- Order. I'm going to interrupt the hon. member. The minister has indicated that he will take notice. The hon. member is raising questions which some members say are not related. They can be construed as related. The hon. member is giving long preambles. If the hon. member wishes further information that is in any way related to the original question, I ask him to simply ask the member to bring that information back, without preambles. That's the normal way things are done.

Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the minister. My question is this. Mr. Minister, apparently the beginning of May about \$1.7 million of the \$4.05 million has been raised. So that means SEDCO will be on the hook for about 2.5 million to get the project up and running, and another 1.7 million, plus interest, in three years to buy out the immigrant investors.

I want to know, and my question is this: how much money are the developers of this project putting up?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, in relation to these questions, the members opposite, in fairness, have just sent over for me the documentation they refer to. It's 69 pages, and they expect me in question period to examine this and give them a reply today.

I will give them a reply. They can write me a letter and ask their specific questions and we will do the research. But if they expect me to read 69 pages in 69 seconds and give them an immediate answer on something that is a complicated legal question, then they are being totally unreasonable, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the minister with respect to the immigrant investors fund, and my question is this. Mr. Minister, yesterday we asked you if you had to be a friend of this government to get your program approved under the investment scheme.

Well I want to say, Mr. Minister, we see the old boys' network at work again. One of the two partners of Omni is Bill Rudichuk, the man that you appointed as the head of STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company), and the other one is Wayne Steadman who's been a substantial contributor to the PC Party.

And also, Mr. Minister, the lawyers of the company are Balfour Moss Milliken and Kyle. Mr. Kyle's is a name that you'll be familiar with; it's been raised in this House many times. And I want to say that that firm . . . Mr. Kyle is also chairman of SEDCO.

I want to ask you this, Mr. Minister. Isn't this just another sweetheart deal that's guaranteed by the people of Saskatchewan, guaranteed for another friend of this government, guaranteed for another friend of the PC Party? Isn't that what this is all about, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, I said yesterday and I confirmed it today that up until now none of the proposals have been rejected by the province but have been forwarded with comments to the federal government for their decision.

Now the members opposite continue bringing garbage to the legislature, slandering everybody from people in the judiciary to people in the oil business to people in the legal business. They are slandering here with the immunity of this Assembly, large parts of Saskatchewan, people who are positive and want to do something in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it's these kind of dirty tricks that are causing dissension in their own party. If that's how they operate their party and they bring that kind of garbage here, then I think Anne Smart was correct.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

The Speaker: -- I wish to bring to the hon. member's attention that members names are not used.

Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, I have one final question and I'll address it to the Premier. Mr. Premier, Dutton, Schoenhals, McMillan, Rudichuk, Steadman. Doesn't that response from this minister embarrass you just a little bit? Would you answer that, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, so what if some people in Saskatchewan have applied? How could there be any government influence when the government forwarded everyone -- our friends, their friends, nobody's friends, people from out of the province, people from in the province -- anybody who was not a criminal was forwarded to Ottawa so how could there be an undue influence?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

SIAST Board of Directors' Expenditures

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On May 17, I took notice of a question put forward by the member from Saskatoon South with regard to the amount of expenditures of the SIAST board of directors, and again we see, Mr. Speaker, how adept the opposition is at distorting facts.

The member opposite was asking why the board of directors had spent some \$133,000 in retainers, honorariums, and expenses. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would point out to you and to everyone else and to the members of the media that in actual fact the board expenditures from July 1, '89 until May 1, 1990 totalled \$70,614, not \$132,000 as indicated by the member opposite.

And I would add to that, Mr. Speaker, that the 16 board members are representatives from all areas of the province. Some of them have to travel a great distance to come to board meetings. But the fact of the matter is that \$70,614 was spent, not 132,000.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- Mr. Chairman, I don't need to take any direction from the former minister of Finance who made a mistake of \$800 million in his budget.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- You're known as the \$800 million man.

My question to the Minister of Education is: Mr. Minister, will you table all those documents that you were referring to and see if they correspond to other government documents that I have here? I want to know whether those dates correspond to the dates that I gave you, and the documents that I refer to are documents, as you said, of the government.

Would you please table those, because I don't believe the figures that you have given me. You have never given the right figures yet, and I want to know whether you are using the correct figures.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, I think in all fairness, in all fairness, if the member opposite will table the documents that he has, I would be happy to table mine. As well, I would like him to also promise me and the members of the House that he will read the documents if in fact they are tabled, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- Further question to the minister. I wish the minister would wake up and smell the coffee. Mr. Minister, I have tabled my documents. I tabled my documents in the House the other day.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- Mr. Minister, I ask you to read the documents that I tabled in the House. I will certainly read your documents. But I can tell you, you won't have the courage, you won't have the courage to table those documents because you know the answers you gave are incorrect.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

The Speaker: -- Order, order.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Saskatchewan Fertilizer Company

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Ministerial statements, Mr. Speaker. I today would like to make several announcements with regard to the Saskatchewan fertilizer company, and in more general terms some announcements with respect to environmental review of major projects in the province of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, I would provide this copy of my remarks to the opposition critic of the environment.

Mr. Speaker, by way of background I would like to point out that the Saskatchewan fertilizer company has abided by the letter and the spirit of all provincial laws and regulations as they currently exist and as they relate to the environment.

The company has previously been advised by my department that its project should not be classified as a development under the current terms and

conditions of The Environmental Assessment Act. Because this plant is not a development under the Act, no environmental impact statement is required. However, the company's project proposal was subjected to extensive scrutiny by my department and other departments of government.

Mr. Speaker, and as I've said before to members of this Assembly and to this press, I have been assured that this plant is safe, that the interests of the people of Saskatchewan have been well protected by the appropriate environmental experts, and, Mr. Speaker, my officials have taken every step which the law requires.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the public of today want access to even more information on Saferco. And even when companies have met every requirement of the Act, as Saferco has done, there is today still perception that more information is required.

To deal with this situation, Mr. Speaker, I propose the following. Under the terms of an agreement concluded with the Saskatchewan fertilizer company, I am announcing that the company will immediately conduct a full environmental impact assessment, and my department will conduct public meetings as a part of an environmental assessment review under the Act. In other words, Mr. Speaker, while there is no requirement for the company to do so, I have decided that additional environmental review is necessary.

The purpose of this review is to satisfy the perceptions that more information on the project's environmental consequences is required. In order to avoid undue hardship on the people employed in this project, the agreement allows construction to continue while the environmental assessment is under way.

But I want to be abundantly clear about this agreement, Mr. Speaker. Under the agreement, Saskatchewan fertilizer company agrees to be bound by this Act. This includes stopping construction if approval is not granted after this additional review, and abiding by any and all terms or conditions which I may attach to any approval that may be issued after this further review process is completed.

In addition to the agreement itself for an additional review, I am tabling today the file of department documents on the Saskatchewan fertilizer company project. I've said in this House before, Mr. Speaker, that I would table whatever documents I could within the limits of confidentiality. And, Mr. Speaker, the public of Saskatchewan I am sure will be very, very accepting of all this bundle of information.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, since I took over this portfolio a few months ago, it has become clear to me that the 10-year-old Environmental Assessment Act no longer provides for the kind of public involvement which the people of Saskatchewan want. Therefore today I am serving notice that during the course of this month I will be announcing a total public review of this Act. A commission reviewing the Act will be launched later this month. In its make-up it will be an independent commission, I believe fairly representing the interests of major stakeholders and most certainly including environmental groups in this province.

The commissioners will conduct public meetings and undertake whatever research they determine necessary. They will prepare a report which recommends changes to the environmental assessment process as well as legislation. That report will be released to the public at the same time that I receive it. The government will then review the recommendations and prepare a set of proposed changes to policy and legislation. Those government proposals will themselves be provided to the public and further public meetings will be held.

At the end of that very thorough process, which I expect will take the better part of a year, I will bring back to this House proposals for new environmental legislation incorporating the principles of openness and thoroughness. I'm convinced the public wants and I'm convinced the public deserves those principles to be adhered to.

In the interim, Mr. Speaker, until this new Act is passed by the Assembly, I will be requiring any major new developments arising in the months ahead to undergo full environmental assessment including public meetings. My responsibility, Mr. Speaker, is environmental protection and I believe that one key to protecting the environment and achieving sustainable development is public participation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

The Speaker: -- Now before I permit a response, I would just like to once more bring to the minister's attention that ministerial statements which are important should be brief and factual. I've allowed the hon. member to finish his statement, which was no doubt inordinately long, and in the future I would like to ask ministers again to co-operate with this rule which has been in effect for certainly decades, parliamentary laws and then ministerial statements and responses will be more smooth.

Mr. Tchorzewski: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to say a few words in response to the minister's statement. Here we have a minister who has just stood up and in the House continues to tell us absolutely nothing about the Cargill project that is being proposed in Saskatchewan which is going to cost the people of Saskatchewan a lot of money.

But he did say one thing, Mr. Speaker. And he made it very clear that the process involved with this project is exactly the same as the process that was involved with the Rafferty-Alameda dam project.

Here is what the government has done. They have committed the money. They have issued the licence. They have begun the work. And now because of public pressure in Canada and outside of Canada and in the province of Saskatchewan and in this legislature, the minister announces some half-hearted, what he calls, public meetings which will be conducted by the Department of the Environment.

Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that the minister speaks of public meetings, not public hearings in which the public will be able to have an opportunity to ask questions directly of this operation and get the

direct answers after having had access, Mr. Speaker, to an environmental impact statement, which has been prepared, from which they can then determine whether, in fact, the environment is being protected or whether it is not being protected.

Mr. Speaker, the minister says that all this has convinced him that there is a need for a review of environmental assessment legislation. I say to this House for the record, Mr. Minister, something which the public of this province already knows and is convinced of: the problem is not the environmental assessment legislation; the problem, Mr. Speaker, is the policy and the administration of this government. I wish the minister had stood up in this House and said, what is it in that environmental assessment legislation which prevented him from having a public hearing and asking for an environmental impact statement from Saferco and Cargill before he approved the licence. There is nothing in the legislation that prevented him to do.

This is, Mr. Speaker, a smoke-screen. It is a smoke-screen on the eve of an election for the government to try to protect itself as it approaches that day of destiny when the voters are going to have to determine whether they're fed up with the kind of ignoring of the environment that they've seen from this government in the Rafferty-Alameda project, in the Millar Western pulp mill, in this Cargill operation, and many others.

(1045)

I say, Mr. Speaker, we will be watching this with care. We are not convinced that this is going to do what is required because they are only public relations meetings which will provide an opportunity for the government and Cargill to sell the project rather than a legitimate and full and credible public inquiry which in fact is needed if the government is really sincere about what it is saying it is intending to do, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 33 -- An Act respecting the Administration of Young Offenders' Services

Hon. Mr. Neudorf: -- Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting the Administration of the Young Offenders' Services.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 34 -- An Act to amend The Child and Family Services Act

Hon. Mr. Neudorf: -- Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Child and Family Services Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next

sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTIONS

Canadian Unity and Reaffirmation of Meech Lake Accord

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Hon. Mr. Lane.

Mr. Goulet: -- Mr. Speaker, I would like to review my comments of yesterday and maybe lay out to the public the essence of the debate that is with us this morning in this legislature. Of course the topic on the agenda right now is on Meech Lake. The government had introduced a resolution which basically states that they reaffirm their

position on Meech Lake, that they are not planning to make any changes whatsoever in regards to Meech Lake and that they intend to then keep with their original position of back in '87.

The opposition from this side of the House felt that we need to move more in a period of greater compromise with all the peoples of Canada. And that in that sense, we introduced an amendment to the original motion, and I will read only a part of it, that we:

defer further consideration of the Meech Lake accord at this time, because it would be premature to do so in view of the continuing delicate federal-provincial negotiations, and until the Premier has reported to the legislature on the final outcome of those negotiations.

I think it's very important to say that right now all over Canada the provincial leaders and the Prime Minister and many of the expertise who have been involved in the debate on this are meeting together this weekend to discuss whether or not there will be a position of compromise that comes out, or whether or not they will stick with the same agenda that was outlined back in '87 which states clearly that they will stick with Meech Lake.

When the Premier introduced this in the legislature, I was very, very surprised. I was very surprised because I felt that this decision had already been carried out in this legislature, and bringing in an emergency-type resolution to deal with the situation when we have other items such as the farm crisis, such as high unemployment rates, and many other issues in the province, was very, very questionable. And when I stood up in the House yesterday I more or less mentioned that these types of issues of questioning Meech will be the ones that I'll be raising, you know, today.

The other thing that I mentioned yesterday was the fact that on a personal

basis my own background puts me in a fairly contradictory situation as far as the debate goes, basically because I myself are of French background and also of the English cultural heritage of the province of Saskatchewan and also Cree from northern Saskatchewan. And in that sense then, being a Cree-Metis puts me in a more or less unique position in the debate as we come upon the unique stage of . . . another unique stage in Canadian history.

One of the things I might say as an individual is this: when Meech Lake was introduced in '87, I was one of the three people who voted against Meech Lake at that time. I might state that in view of the fact that many things are happening in the political sphere today with political members resigning and political members, you know, being hired after they leave office and so on, that it was very important for me to say very proudly that as a member of the NDP caucus that I was able to express my view, although the vast majority of Canada, Canada's leaders at that time had said, yes, we will go with Meech Lake. It's very important to state, Mr. Minister, that I wasn't kicked out of my caucus; that my caucus allowed me to go ahead and said, okay, you have a strong position and you can voice that position.

And I'm very proud to state here at this legislature that that is what happened. It is also very important to say that in light of the fact that a couple of members, for example, from Alberta challenged the Prime Minister in regards to a recent debate on the GST (goods and services tax), that they were kicked out of their caucus, that I was not kicked out of my own caucus, that I'm still an important part of the NDP caucus here in the province of Saskatchewan.

I think it's very important to say that in light also of the fact that we've had in this legislature people who have left the other side of the House, you know, for their own personal reasons, were able to get severance pay from this legislature and also were able to, I suppose, benefit from the fact that they would leave their own caucus. You know, yesterday when I was listening to the Premier mention the privatization aspect in his speech, it's very interesting that these ministers weren't able to go to the private sector, that they needed provincial funding to keep them going in the future because the private sector probably would not have hired them.

So when we're debating Meech, we are looking at a very unique aspect of the politics of Canada and its relationship to provincial legislatures and also at the parliamentary level in Ottawa.

The first thing I would like to do, Mr. Speaker, is maybe review the comments made by the Premier yesterday. I'd like to put across my own views as to the presentation by the Premier. And yesterday I mentioned that I found some of his comments that were questionable in my viewpoint and that I would like to challenge today.

First of all, the Premier's position is one of course of supporting Meech Lake, which in my estimation goes against many of the people who challenged Meech in this province and also in Canada. Not to do with away with

necessarily the five points or the distinct society in most instances, but I think because of the extras that were put into Meech -- there are many extras which I will discuss later on -- that provide problems in how a government operates in the history of Canada.

I think it's important to look at these in a generalized, introductory form. There is important themes such as the fact that the Premier tends to have a more absolutist, confrontational position rather than one of compromise. And I think the Leader of the Opposition made that point very clearly yesterday. I would also say that it's one of looking at things from a private, elitist sphere in the setting up of governments versus public involvement, and paying due regards and respects to the people of Canada.

The other thing that's very important is that we have a Premier that is unwilling to listen and that it's very important at this stage in the Canadian history for people to be able to listen to the people of Saskatchewan. And such is not the case in this one.

One of the points made, of course, is the first point I would like to bring about then is a major point that the Premier did not address in his speech yesterday. There was this aspect of historical analysis which was lacking in his speech. I thought that for a Premier who has been involved in the constitutional process since 1982, and for a Premier who knows very well the importance of the constitution and economic issues such as agriculture and forestry and mining, that he would have a better handle in regards to the historical analysis of not only Saskatchewan but of Canada.

So what I would like to do first is provide a short sketch in regards to my own understanding of the historical overview of Canada as it relates to the constitution. And I would like to start, Mr. Speaker, by going back to the more headier days of constitutional formation.

We know that the new constitution recognizes the proclamation of 1763. It recognizes it through the clauses of section 25 in the charter. And I might add that, when I say the headier days of constitutional building, one has to recognize that that proclamation came out after the Seven Years' War in regards to the period of colonization by English and France and their competition in the North American sphere.

So what we were looking at is a constitution which starts even prior to that time but that's where, in regards to the context of today on the English, French, and aboriginal rights questions and the multiculturalism of today, that this provides as an important starting point in regards to focus in on the debate.

I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that one of the things that's forgotten in regards to the constitution, and this occurs both in the United States and also in Canada, that the constitution, to a certain extent, takes some important points from its interaction with aboriginal peoples in North America.

To a very great extent the democratic principles, in regards to the

constitution of the United States, were formulated after the five nations confederacy which later became the six nations, you know, confederacy of the Iroquois. I think that's very important that so many of the democratic principles and practices were taken from there.

I might add also that in regards to the proclamation, one of the important points was the aspect of making the forums public. In these days of secrecy in regards to this whole process of Meech Lake where a lot of the public still don't have a thorough understanding of Meech Lake, we had a system where aboriginal peoples, when they discussed important matters, did them in public gatherings.

(1100)

So the early phase prior to 1763 in regards to the constitutional formulations of this country, many of the negotiations were taking place in privatized settings with joint stock companies and so on. And many of the Indian people at that time said, look, a lot of our land is being taken away from us unjustly, and that we should abide by the principles of aboriginal peoples wherein these things are done in more public forums.

So one of the things that come out as a result of the basis of the proclamation of 1763 between the English and French question in Canada, and which also has an aboriginal rights section in there, was this aspect of public forums.

I noticed a movie a little while ago called Divided Loyalties about Joseph Brant, and this was shown on Canadian TV. And I noticed a little sketch of a leader at that time which was not done in a good historical fashion because I felt that the leader that was presented at that case by the name of Pontiac was unjustly treated in that presentation. It was the same, more or less stereotypical type of presentation of an Indian leader that I saw in this movie a little while back through the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation). And I might state that Pontiac was one of the people who united many of the Indian nations to be able to make a strong stand in regards to their land and self-government rights of the day, and that indeed it was his position to make the things more public, that the essence of treaty-making which later on took place across Canada became to be public. And these were based on the aboriginal concepts of governing -- that things couldn't be kept in secret but you had to talk about them in the wide open context. So that's the point I'd like to make on the proclamation of 1763.

The other thing that's very important is that the crisis mentality of this government -- and they introduce this as one of the great crises of Canada -- is not recognizing the history of Canada. In many cases the Quebec Act of 1774 was a response to the . . . not only the demands and the wishes of many of the peoples of Quebec, but because the 1763 proclamation was not enough, that many of the people at that time wanted to make sure that their civil law and their language and institutions were protected.

But at the same time it was recognized back in 1774 that the Americans were on the verge of a revolution. They were having a revolution against

Britain because of a lack of proper democratic representative government during that time in the New England states. So that when 1774 was around, many of the New England states were already talking about some form of rebellion against Great Britain.

And it was in this context that the Quebec Act was created. Many of the people of the day felt that they didn't want Quebec to join in with the American new formulations that were taking place and that the Quebec Act would be very important, not only to deal with the French issue in Canada at that time, but also their fear that they might join with the new revolution that was taking place in the United States.

I'm saying this because the aspect of the United States becomes a very important position, not only back in 1763 and the Quebec Act of 1774, but also later on during the formation of Canada in 1867 because the United States deliberately wanted to annex Canada.

We also know that in their annexation attempt back in the War of 1812 and 1814 when one of the great Indian leaders, Tecumseh, helped Canada at that time and prevented them from American take-over. And I think it's very important to look at it in the modern era that we look at Meech Lake not only in regards to the French and English question in Canada but also in regards to the U.S.A.

Last year it was very ironic that when we were debating free trade, the Premier was not very nationalistic about Canada. Yesterday when I heard him talk, he was one of the biggest nationalists -- Canadian nationalists -- that I have ever seen in this legislature. The love of Canada came out of his mouth I don't know how many times during his speech. But we didn't hear that when we were debating free trade. There was not once did he talk about Canada. All he talked about was providing the big dollars for the large-scale American corporations which would have easier access to our resources in Canada.

So when I look at the constitutional history, there is always an American presence. And yesterday I thought it was very, very ironic for the Premier to say there was a threat from the Americans, and that indeed this threat from the Americans was so severe that it would create a problem for the unity of Canada. And I thought it was very, very strange for the Premier to come out and all of a sudden be anti-American. And I thought that was a very interesting position for him to take. So I thought well, you know, I wonder where the genuineness of the Premier is.

And as I go on, there is many aspects of the constitution I would like to talk about. Not only the 1774 Quebec Act but also the Constitutional Act which created Upper and Lower Canada but also the revolutions, I mean, the rebellions which took place in 1837, 1838, which ended up with the parliament buildings being burnt down and villages being burnt down and so on.

And on to the Act of Union in 1841 which culminated from the Durham Report. And we well know that the basic issue of the day during this colonial period was a lack of a proper representative government, and that it was a

real question of democracy that people were looking at as well as the cultural and language rights of the day.

It's very interesting on the Durham Report, a lot of people talk about it and fail to recognize one aspect of it. Because in that process, the Durham Report wanted to have an assimilationist strategy as far as the French were concerned in Canada. So they wanted to have a monolingual Canada which was English at that time. But it is interesting because the debate then focused on with Lord Elgin and in that regard, back in 1847 that English as a school language was repealed at Westminster. So back in 1847 we saw this debate taking place, which had taken place back in 1763 and 1774, 1791, 1837, and all through 1841. So this was not a fairly new debate.

I might add, during this colonial period we find, as I mentioned, the unique debate of free trade taking place. Well free trade, again, is not a new phenomena. We debated it in the First World War, and we debated it also in the Canadian context in western Canada here during 1840s.

At that time of course during the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company back in 1821, the Hudson's Bay Company had a monopoly then in the fur trade. A lot of the people did not like the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company, and they wanted to have access to trade elsewhere during that time. When I have an analogy, it would be the like the analogy of having only one monopoly owner control you versus multilateral negotiations of the day when we're dealing with free trade. So at that time, it's very important to take a look at the aboriginal context again.

And the Metis of the day challenged the Hudson Bay monopoly, in the same way that we in the NDP challenged the monopoly of the American multinational corporations which have already an excessive amount of control on Canada -- and that indeed a greater control, according to the members from the government side, which say it would be beneficial.

And so what we are doing is attacking the monopoly control of the large-scale corporations in today's extent. So when I look at Meech Lake, I look at the combined effect of free trade and say that free trade and Meech are very similar to what was taking place during the early 1840s.

So the Metis people of the day challenged the Hudson Bay law at that time, which was the government in western Canada according to the Rupert's Land agreement. And it came to be, you know, very clear that the Hudson's Bay Company and with their police could not withstand the pressure of the Metis. And the Metis provided the first pressure in releasing a greater openness on trade at that time. And they were not to be stuck with only one entity, the Hudson's Bay Company.

It's the same debate we have today on free trade, because we know that we are challenging the American large-scale corporations on simply a bilateral agreement to make sure that we deal not only with the American large-scale corporations. We want to deal with Japanese corporations, German corporations. We want to deal with all kinds of corporations in the whole

world so that we're not stuck with only a continental mentality, which the free trade agreement is.

So when we're debating this constitution, it was broadly defined because in many cases when this was introduced yesterday, when it was brought back in and talked about yesterday, it said that it threatened our socio-economic existence. So I'm relating some of this stuff in regards to the socio-economic history of Canada.

When we look at the 1867, a lot of the questions that were raised during the 1840s period in regards to English and French Canada were brought about and many of the people felt that the combination of four provinces and the possibilities for future provinces provided a great chance for federal Confederation, and I sense Confederation was born, and that the Act of the Union of 1841 proved to be not as useful as a lot of people had speculated in the 1840s period.

The other thing I might add is this: there are many things during that time that a lot of people don't understand, especially as I relate to the history of aboriginal peoples later on. During that time the first reservations in Canada in regards to land being allotted to people was taking place just after the constitution of 1791. And a lot of the land were given to the government of the day because they did not have the right of land because land was still

controlled from Britain because of the colonial nature of the situation at that time. But one-seventh of the land was provided for a lot of the people at that time, and one-seventh also went to the church.

So there was a combination of church and state during that period in time, and one-seventh of the land was provided for the clergy, and these were called clergy reserves. They were abandoned of course later on in the 1850s when a more new order came into being in Canada.

(1115)

So this provides a bit of a glimpse of the Canadian history, and I would like provide now a little bit of a constitutional overview. In regards to the constitution of course, this was the BNA (British North America) Act of 1867 and no real changes took place till a discussion on an amending formula took place in 1927. And we know that a lot of the talk about amending formula also talked about the independence of Canada. Everybody talked about the importance of the connection with Britain, but also of an independent Canada that could govern itself on a democratic basis.

So the Statute of Westminster finally gave legal recognition for Canadian independence, and we had our flag in '62. And it's very interesting that although for quite a few years we tried to get amending formulas, which was a drawback in the whole constitutional debate, the amending formulas were brought forth and many types of formulas were proposed but never really brought into place until 1982. I would just cite that we tried to get the amending formula, it's called the Fulton formula back in 1961, you know, just prior to the debate on the flag.

We also have the '64 formula, called the Favreau-Fulton formula. And during the '68 to '71 period, we talked about the Victoria Charter. So there were different formulas that were proposed, but for some reason or another, the leaders did not agree across Canada.

It was until 1982, until we come out with an amending formula which generally states that we require two-thirds of the provinces which now means seven plus 50 per cent of the population of Canada. So if we have enough provinces which constitute two-thirds plus 50 per cent of the population, we will then get an amendment to the constitution which we did back in 1982. So that was an amending formula that was put in in 1982. This was, for the record, section 38(1)(d).

It's interesting at that time too, that there was a right dissent on section 38(3) because then people could opt out. If they felt they didn't agree with the amending formula, they could opt out of a situation, and I think that's what happened with Quebec in regards to opting out. Although they still deal with the notwithstanding clause in their judgements and are still part of the Canadian context, you know, through 1763 and the history of all this constitutional history that I've mentioned, that the fact that they were not signatories to the '82 agreement is really the point at hand, although the laws of Canada still apply.

When I listened to the Premier yesterday, I thought it really lacked a lot of historical knowledge. So what I wanted to do today, Mr. Speaker, was at least present some of that historical knowledge about the crisis situation that we've been involved in, which is really nothing new about Saskatchewan.

But the fact that we're improving all the time, that all through the years we've learned to compromise -- we've never come out with a perfect solution, but we learned to compromise. We've always tried to get the best agreement of the day. We listen to both sides, and we balance the agreement. And we looked at this historical knowledge and experience, and that's what I learned, Mr. Speaker. I learned that people learn to compromise, and I learned that things were never perfect in those days.

And so when I looked at the 1967 constitutional agreement on affirming Meech, I thought the process of gaining knowledge through what we've seen in the past was not really being followed. It was not in the context of compromise that we saw people -- traditionally in the history of Canada -- that we saw, as we heard the Premier speak yesterday.

So I was very disappointed that he did not present an historical overview of our constitutional history in Canada and the important contributions made, not only by the English and French of Canada, but by aboriginal peoples and also people of Ukranian, German, and our multicultural essence in Canada. And today when we're having the Mosaic in Regina, it's very important that we recognize that aspect of our Canadian history.

The other point I would like to make in that regard is that no democracy in the world, no democracy, whether it's in any continent of this world, can survive unless it provides the knowledge to the people.

One of the things that's really been lacking in Meech Lake is a public debate on the discussions to gain that knowledge. We did not go to the people. We went back to an elitist old style governing where an executive aspect of government, the leadership, creates all the decisions and we have to abide by their ruling after meeting two days.

So the building of historical knowledge context and its relationship to democracy was not really being followed. It is my opinion that it's highly undemocratic for a person to stand up in the legislature and say that, look we can go ahead and pass something without the people having an understanding and a knowledge base of this document.

And this is something that we have to live with in the future. It is something that requires input by people. The people's knowledge of their history and their background has to be imbedded on the constitutional document. Constitutions are created in this aspect of Canadian history, and I think that is extremely important. So in regards to knowledge and democracy, I thought that the Premier sadly lacked, you know, a strong basis in his argumentation to reaffirm Meech.

The other aspect that I saw in regards to the Premier's presentation, Mr. Speaker, is this: I thought that in this day and age, when we're talking about freedom of information, that in order to be free in the world we need to have informational access. We could no longer live in a society of secrecy. That we need to be able to say yes, provide the information so that people can provide us the feedback. That the important people of the province of Saskatchewan, whether they be farmers, can provide us feedback, whether they be workers, whether they be small business, whether they be the unemployed of Saskatchewan, that we have to pay the respects to their knowledge in regards to the situation that arises of a particular aspect of constitutional formation.

So I think it's very important to be able to look at the fact that freedom in itself is not a simple obstruction. It's got to be public know-how that goes along with it, Mr. Speaker. People need public information. People can't go on with secrecy. People can't go on with executive style governing. We need public input in regards to decision making on constitutions.

And the only time in this process that we've got any amount of public hearings, Mr. Speaker, was as a result of public pressure. And the only thing they did was they brought in public hearings during the summer months, the summer months when people are having a holiday in many situations, and people just don't have time to present their full view. And it was done quickly.

So everybody said that that small process was a bit of a sham, that it wasn't real public participation. That it was only there to provide a veil in regards to the underlying absolutist view of the governments that they weren't going to make any changes in the first place. And it was just done to appease the people at that time in Canadian history.

But of course that appeasement doesn't work. The people recognize that no changes were made. And when I see the Premier still protecting his secrecy, when I see the Premier not being open to freedom of information and freedom of access and knowledge in regards to Meech Lake, it disappoints me as a member of this legislature.

I would like to also state that the Premier mentions the socio-economic reality and how this socio-economic reality is endangered by Meech Lake. I would like to remind the Premier that the taxpayers' money that is spent in the province of Saskatchewan is made because of his decisions and his cabinet's decisions.

The privatization decisions that he makes are the decisions of his Canada and not some radical in Quebec. The radicals in Quebec did not give Cargill grain \$370 million, which puts a lot of taxpayers in a terrible situation in Saskatchewan. It was not the radicals in Quebec who created the situation relating to GigaText, where we spent 6 million of our taxpayers' money. It was not the radicals who paid Chuck Childers \$740,000.

Mr. Speaker, he raises an opinion . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And I would like to say that, for the opposite member who appears to be raising some objections, that he should read his original proposed motions and says that this could result in economic uncertainty and that it may . . . the ". . . further constitutional reform . . . as long-term economic and social policies for the future prosperity of Canada."

So what we're talking about here is an integration of constitution on the socio-economic arguments. So what I am doing for the member who appears to be disappointed with my comments is that these issues are small examples of the situation, that we can't blame the radicals of Quebec for the \$4.4 billion deficit in this province. I think that that is very important. And we can't blame them because the secrecy that is tied in with the Premier's comments showed through also in regards to the auditor last year when over 50 per cent of the information of a socio-economic nature in Saskatchewan could not be accessed by the auditor. So these are examples.

The latest example I have is this, and it's a specific one because I'm from northern Saskatchewan. Yesterday I asked the minister to get some information on jobs in the North, to tell me about the real people in the North so that I can find out who was working from what community. And he couldn't provide me with the information, and there was another example of secrecy. So one of the major points that I have a disagreement with the Premier yesterday was his concept of protecting the secret decision that he made with the other leaders, you know, across Canada.

I might state that the other thing that I thought that was very suspicious in regards to the comments of the Premier was what I would call, for lack of a better word, the big-shot mentality. I think that the Premier may be trying to have this father-of-Confederation syndrome a little bit because in his speech he mentioned, you know, leaders such as Gorbachev and others in his speech, and elevating himself to the same level as other leaders of the world; that he wanted to be a famous leader to be recognized for his

statements. So I thought a little bit that maybe the process may have been getting to his head a little bit, and if it's not, well, it is a very harsh statement for me to make.

I think we can only look to the future and find out whether or not that's the case. Because I think it's very important to not only listen to ourselves as leaders in this legislature, we also have to be able to say as leaders, yes, we can listen to the people of Saskatchewan; yes, we can listen to the people of Canada. We don't only listen to our own egos about where we intend to go on whether or not we are recognized as the new fathers of a modern day of Confederation. So that was one little point that I had to make in regards to some of his presentation yesterday.

(1130)

The other one that I would like to mention is this: when I listened to the Premier, he talked a lot about the crisis mentality and the emotionalism. I have seen him perform quite well in this legislature many times before, and I know he is very, very skilled from a technical level at doing performance in this legislature. I have learned to appreciate his skill in that regard. So when I saw him yesterday, he provided me with one of a "love your country" type speech, and of course, everybody in Canada loves their country and everybody in this province loves their country. So that's not the issue.

The other thing that is important is whether or not there is also love for the people of Saskatchewan, so that there is indeed a feeling that you have for the people of Saskatchewan, that you will listen to them, that you will be able to talk to them and say yes, there are possibilities for compromise; yes, there are possibilities for changes. But to close off the people of Saskatchewan under the context of loving Canada is not, to me, the best way to approach the situation.

I know that the nationalities issue across Canada is a very emotional issue and I know that that's the way it is throughout the world. I also know that we have to be tolerant about each other whether it is French, English, Cree, whether it is German, whether it is Ukrainian; whether it is whatever nationality, we have to respect each other and our cultures and our languages. I think that's very important to recognize.

But I think it's important that loving Canada has to be looked at in the context of not only providing input by the people in Quebec, but also by all other provinces, but also by all nationalities, you know, across Canada. I think that's very important.

The other thing that I would add in regards to the crisis mentality that was being presented yesterday is that it isn't very, very different from the crisis management of the Devine government. We've seen . . .

The Deputy Speaker: -- Members are not to use other member's names in the legislature. I'd ask the member to refrain from that.

Mr. Goulet: -- I'm sorry I mentioned a member's name.

Now I would say that in regards to the crisis mentality, one of the insinuations of this lack of an agreement is blaming our socio-economic ills on Meech Lake, and that shows through in the resolution.

We can't blame Meech Lake on the unemployment rates of the province of Saskatchewan and the fact that 65,000 of our people have left this province since '85. We can't blame Meech of the cut-backs in many of our services in the province of Saskatchewan. We have to lay the blame where it counts -- on the Premier and the cabinet of this province.

I mentioned how much we have made already in regards to Cargill and Pocklington and GigaText, so I will not bother mentioning them again. So I will go onto another aspect.

We saw the aspect of symbolism by the Premier. And I would say that he was talking about learning to keep our word. And I thought to myself, when you keep your word, it's also very important to be able to learn to change it at important times in the historical Canadian context, especially when you know that hard-line positions are not the way to go; that hard-line confrontation and the absolutist recognition of Meech in an unchanging sense is very, very problematic; that I think it's more important to take the position of greater compromise.

So I would like to have a summary statement in regards to the Premier's address yesterday. What I would like to say is this: let's get away from a lack of an historical context. Let's respect the history of Canada and the history of Saskatchewan in regards to creating a better understanding and knowledge of Meech Lake. Let's move into that type of situation. Let's also move into a greater freedom of information. True freedom and democracy does not arise without freedom of information. The secrecy is something that negates democracy and we cannot move ahead in a democratic sense unless we are open to our own people.

The other thing is -- ego may be important to a certain extent. But the visions of grandeur are simply something that should not take the place of the importance of involving people in the Canadian context. Let's not blame the people of Saskatchewan. Let's not show a lack of trust in the people of Saskatchewan and the people of Canada.

Let's trust some of the opinions that are out there and learn to move, not only to a pure symbolism of love for Canada, but into real action that leads to compromise that will move us to a position where we can say, yes, we can have a give and take in Canada. Yes, we have learned to provide the world with a sense of compromise and consensus that has never been experienced elsewhere. And we have to be able to move into that direction.

I might add, Mr. Chairperson, that the politics of the situation reminds me a little bit of 1986. At that time I heard the Premier talk about listening to the people, and we see ConSask in that sense today in 1990.

Just prior to the election, the Premier talks a lot about listening and going back to the people. That's why I was really surprised when he

brought something to the legislature this time to show that he was not listening to the people, that what was decided was going to be the absolutist decision.

So there must be something more to it than some of the points that I made in the past. So I raise this as a question. The Premier has to . . . the reason why he doesn't want to listen to the people of Saskatchewan is because he has to listen to the Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, and also to the Premier of Quebec, Robert Bourassa. And I think it's very important to be able to state that, while he listens to Bourassa and Mulroney, he is not listening to the people of Saskatchewan. And I ask the question, why?

Back in 1986, the Premier was able to get approximately \$400 million in farm aid, just prior to the election, so that the Prime Minister could buy the election of \$1 billion at that time. So the deal was made to move into that situation back in '86, that he then had to listen to whatever Brian Mulroney had to say. So he had to listen to the Prime Minister.

And again, when I look at prior to an election year, the Premier of Saskatchewan wants some money from the Prime Minister. He wants some money so that he may try and win an election in the agricultural area. He's been trying to get the money for some time and we don't know whether he's got it yet so far.

But the point of the matter is this: is that the real reason why the Premier today will agree to Meech Lake, is because he's hoping that the Prime Minister will buy him another election this time in 1990 or '91?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: -- So I sense that . . . I'd like to drop my comments then in regards to the Premier's presentation and look at the other aspect of his talk that was very important and that's the issue of tolerance and a lot of compassion. There was a lot of speech making in regards to compassion and tolerance.

I would like to state this much, and I'll go to my presentation now on aboriginal peoples and the constitution. The Prime Minister was well involved, along with the Premier of Saskatchewan, in the constitutional process relating to aboriginal peoples between '82 and '87. And it's very important to be able to contrast the two processes in relation, not only to what was finally agreed, but in relation to how it was agreed upon.

So I would like to look at this issue because I think it's very important. I raised the issue already in regards to the importance of aboriginal peoples -- Indian and Metis people -- in regards to the constitutional building of Canada. So I would like to bring it up to date on today's context.

And the real issues that I'm presenting are not only one of compassion and tolerance but of fairness and justice. And I will look at, number one, the agreement on the distinct society clause. The distinct society clause was of course accepted in principle with no definition by the Premier of

Saskatchewan and the other leaders in Canada. They agreed to accept the principle of distinct society with no definition whatsoever. Many people asked about how it was going to be defined in the process of negotiations, but the decision was to accept the principle of distinct society with no definition.

When we had just gone through a process of negotiations with Indian, Metis, and Inuit people of Canada, that was very, very hypocritical. Many people said it was not only hypocritical, but discriminatory. It was discriminatory in the sense that while the concept of distinct society was accepted in principle, the concept of self-government was completely denied by the leaders of Canada during that five-year period. In two nights they accepted the principle of distinct society; in a five-year period they could not come out with an agreement on a principle of self-government for the Indian, Metis, and Inuit of Canada. And I think that shows the tremendous hypocrisy in the Canadian context.

And I might add that it was the Premier of this province who was very adamant in getting a definition for self-government when he simply didn't do the same thing for distinct society. This is the same Premier who in the year, in '86, also had an agreement with Weyerhaeuser; Weyerhaeuser with over 300 definitions -- 300 legal definitions for Weyerhaeuser in a short period of time, and a \$500 million agreement that really forced a lot of debate in this province.

And we saw the ability to get a definition just like that overnight for Weyerhaeuser and the big corporations in this province, and they couldn't get one for Indian, Metis, and Inuit in Canada in a five-year period. I think that is a shameful part of our heritage. And when we talk about tolerance and compassion in this legislature, I would like to bring that out very clearly.

(1145)

The other aspect in regards to the aboriginal peoples of Canada was a relationship of the fundamental characteristic. And I think it's very important to say that we recognize that the fundamental characteristic of French- and English-speaking Canada is affirmed in our Canadian constitution and also in Meech Lake. I think a correction on that . . . on Meech Lake.

I think it's very important to say that many of the aboriginal leaders in Canada have said the issue of the formulation of constitutional building, even prior to the 1763, shows very clearly that aboriginal peoples form a fundamental characteristic of Canada, and leaving them out is a sin of omission. It's a discriminatory act. And in this day and age, there is discrimination by commission and discrimination by omission. And I think it's very important that aboriginal people were left out when we talked about the fundamental characteristic.

I might add that the debate has also focused on that other nationalities in Canada also form a fundamental characteristic of Canada, and that has not been debated enough in the Canadian context today. And it has not been,

you know, properly put into the sphere as part of a new compromise in regards to the Meech Lake debate.

I would like also to mention the opting out clause. One of the things as I listened to the throne speech this year in relation to aboriginal people, was that the Premier was very, very strong against the off-loading from the federal government to the provinces. And here one of the greatest off-loading in the history of Saskatchewan, I mean in the history of Canada, is Meech Lake. Meech Lake provides one of the historical . . . you know, other than the resources transfer agreement of 1930, Meech Lake provides one of the greatest off-loading that we've seen.

And when the Premier said, (a), I'm against off-loading, how can he be against off-loading and accept Meech Lake which is one of the strongest forms of off-loading that we've seen as it relates to aboriginal peoples in Canada, because a lot of the programming at the federal level can be off-loaded. And the treaty rights specifically state that the bilateral agreements between the treaties and the Government of Canada is to be respected. And what this agreement does is provide a basis of supporting off-loading. So the Premier's own position is very, very contradictory and suspect.

I would also like to say that one of the things that was discussed in Meech Lake is the fact that we can deal in future conferences with certain issues. We were able to deal in a particular section in Meech Lake with new constitutional conferences related to economic development.

We're also there to be able to deal with fisheries. On two counts I think it's very problematic for Indian, Metis, and Inuit. On the one hand, the first ministers agreed to be able to deal with fish. And the thing that struck me right away was this: how can they put in the clause in Meech Lake that they can deal with fish when after a five-year process they needed to be able to further continue a process with aboriginal peoples.

In other words, they could deal with fish but they could not deal with the aboriginal peoples of Canada. They would not put them as an important item for future discussion. Therefore, one can conclude that the first ministers must feel that fish are more important than aboriginal peoples in Canada. I mean, that's the implication of that decision.

That's one of the other things that I saw in relation to this, is this: that fishing -- I was watching TV last night, and there was a Supreme Court decision that came down. And the Supreme Court decision, of course, under section 35 said that the Supreme Court ruling has to recognize the aboriginal rights of aboriginal peoples, and that the fishing rights must be respected and that they must be treated in a more liberal fashion than they have been in the past. So we had an historic agreement last night in relation to fisheries and aboriginal peoples in Canada.

And here the first ministers can deal with fisheries and not deal with the aboriginal rights of fisheries in the same context when we well know now, after last night's decision, that is clearly an aboriginal right. So that type of thing has to be, I think, reconsidered in light of the decision

last night.

The other aspect is, while we deal with economics in regards to Meech Lake and the future agenda items, we are forgetting that economics requires a land base. Land settlement has been a very important part of our constitution of Canada. We saw that in the clergy reserves. We saw in the Homestead Acts. We saw that also in regards to corporate decision-making in Canada. We well know that at the signing of the treaties in western Canada that the land that was left for aboriginal peoples, for Indian peoples, during the treaty formation was 1.5 million acres of land. And at the same time during that period, another PC government was providing 23 million acres of land to the CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway) and 7 million acres of land to Hudson's Bay Company.

And here I'm mentioning only two corporate entities -- 30 million acres of land for two corporations, and one and a half million acres of land for the original owners of the soil in the province of Saskatchewan. Is that fairness and justice in constitutional building?

I would add that the land question in the modern day has not been aided much by the Premier's own policies of the day, and also the Prime Minister's, because right now everybody relies on day-to-day aspect of decision making, of providing grants on today's population figures. We go with 1990 population figures. But when they want to deal with Indian people on land entitlement, they say: date of first survey. They want to go back to 1876. There is no fairness and justice in that.

I think it is very important to recognize that, as we debate Meech, that the Premier will provide 12 million acres of our best lands, our best forests in northern Saskatchewan, to an American giant, Weyerhaeuser. And he will not go on to settle the outstanding 1.3 million acres of land according to the '76 formula that was agreed to in between the federal level, the provincial level back in that year I quoted.

So I would like to also mention that, as a summary aspect, aboriginal peoples in this Canadian context are wishing to be a strong part of Canada. And they have been a very strong part of Canada. But they also want to be in a modern context.

Many times people have said, as we were debating Meech, and while we've debating different aspects of the constitution in the past over 100 years, they said, wait, next time we will deal with your issue. But in the modern context we've been waiting for many, many years. We waited for the self-government definition which was denied by the Premier and the leaders of Canada. We were told there'll be another day.

Yesterday, when I heard the Premier speaking, he said, yes, there will be something for the aboriginal populations. But I must remind the Premier that he made the same promise back in '87. He said after the failure of the constitutional process, he said he would roll up his sleeves to come and work with aboriginal peoples in Saskatchewan. But when we look at the record, Mr. Speaker, it was a sad record because I didn't see any compassion. I didn't see any tolerance. What I saw was a Premier

responding to a tongue-lashing he received at the constitutional table.

What he did was he proceeded to cut back the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan over \$700,000 from the provincial budget right after that. He also cut back Indian economic development from 3 billion to 1 million. When he said that he was going to roll up his sleeves and come back to Saskatchewan, many of them said, well, maybe he rolled up his sleeves to come back and beat up on us.

But when I heard many comments -- and I won't mention some other derogatory comments that were made; I think we have heard about them in the past -- but I think it's very important when we want to be positive about Canada, we also have to be positive of Saskatchewan. We also have to be positive of all the peoples in Saskatchewan, which includes aboriginal peoples, and that includes Indian and Metis of this province. We have to show our compassion. We have to show our tolerance with the people that live right here in this province.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: -- Many Indian and Metis people are saying, we have been told that you are going to be . . . we have been told too many times to wait. We have been told many times to stay outside the door; that next time it'll be your turn. We've heard a lot of these promises, but even the Premier and his promises turned out to be negative circumstances for Indian and Metis people.

DSO I think it's very important to state that when we're talking about compassion and about love, these are not abstract concepts. These are real concepts that have to be shown, not only for Indian and Metis people, but the French, the German, the Ukrainian, the English, and everybody else in Canada. I think that's very important. I think it's very important to look at the new immigrants, people from Chile, people from Japan, people from Hong Kong, people from all over have to be respected in the context that the real compassion has to be shown to real people that live in this province. I think as I want to make my concluding comments, there are many things that I would like to speak about, and these are the extras that are problematic so I'll just outline them.

(1200)

The North is still being treated in a colonial manner. The North is still being treated that they have to have a unanimity clause. I find that a strange concept for an open, democratic government to have a unanimity clause because it makes it very difficult for future change. You have to have unanimous agreement. There is no boardroom in Canada that could operate in a flexible essence unless they had a certain degree and flexibility for dissent in that system. You can't have a system where you have 100 per cent unanimity. It makes for very great difficulty in regards to change, and I think when we see the Meech Lake process that's becoming to show through. I think it's very important that this unanimity clause which relates to the Senate, the Supreme Court, and the creation of new provinces is something that is very problematic.

Also the other thing that I've found was very interesting. I raised one Supreme Court decision a little while ago in relation to fisheries and on Indian people. I would also like to raise another Supreme Court decision that was passed in Ontario.

It was in relation to the Ontario separate school funding reference. And the decision had implications for section 2 of Meech Lake because in that decision what it basically stated is that certain sections are so vital to the Canadian identity that they are not subject to charter scrutiny. The Supreme Court said that there are certain things that the charter cannot scrutinize. The important question that has been raised by many people which I myself is not really sure about is whether or not section 2 is one where the charter is not subject to scrutinize. So I raise that as a question in light of the separate school funding decision in Ontario.

Many people have raised concerns to me about shared-cost programs and off-loading to the provinces but also . . . from aboriginal peoples. But many people also say how can we create better standards at the national level? We've seen standards such as medicare in the past; we've seen UIC (Unemployment Insurance Commission); we've seen many things that have been created at the national level that are very important for people.

How do we make sure that the standards, you know, are being followed in that regard? So that's a question that has also been raised, and insufficient debate has been the way that it's gone. So I guess, Mr. Speaker, there are many things that I would like to continue to discuss on Meech but in light of the time I wanted to focus in basically on where I saw the problems were in relation to the Premier's own argumentation.

And I wanted to present my position also, being an aboriginal person, the context of aboriginal people as it relates to constitutional building in Canada. But I also wanted to provide some historical overview of constitution building in Canada and seeing it more as a history of compromise, that at times of confrontation we should not draw hard, absolute lines. At times of confrontation we should be listening to people, we should be very open, we should be looking at each other and saying, yes, you the people of Saskatchewan are important in this context. My ears are open to the farmers of Saskatchewan and their opinions. My ears are open to the workers of Saskatchewan, to the unemployed of Saskatchewan, to aboriginal peoples in Saskatchewan, to all the nationalities of Saskatchewan. I think that's very important when we are entering this important historic debate.

I think it's important to be able to say yes, democracy as we see it is in a tremendous developmental level internationally. Yes there are confrontations, yes there are contradictions, but the spirit and intent of people and the consensual nature of people and the learned aspect of compromise in people has to be something that is focused on. We cannot be absolutist in our argumentation which the Premier still abides by. We need to be able to say yes for freedom and democracy. We have to be able to have democratic participation and democratic involvement of the peoples of Canada and Saskatchewan.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I support the amendment that we created to defer the motion that was presented by the Premier which was to affirm Meech Lake. So I think it's very important then, Mr. Speaker, to continue with the debate and provide other members an opportunity. So with that, I thank you.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to take a few more moments this afternoon . . . this morning -- or I guess it is this afternoon -- to discuss this important issue.

There's been an amendment proposed and I want to put in context of where we are today and why we should be stating our position in the province of Saskatchewan very clearly, unequivocally, about this country and about the constitutional amendment that's here. I want to discuss in my remarks why we should be examining this today. There's been some suggestion that we shouldn't be talking about it at all; it's inappropriate that it should be being discussed in this legislature.

Secondly, I want to talk about the whole question of is there room for compromise and conciliation and generosity in this whole process. And I will be presenting several arguments that advance that, Mr. Speaker, and that show that Saskatchewan, and indeed all Canadians, have been able to show that generosity, need to show it now, need to be there in the face of this crisis that's before us in terms of the constitution. And there are many ways to resolve it. If you'll allow me, Mr. Speaker, I'll just take a few moments to touch on those points.

Some have said that we are being pushed right now in this constitutional amendment by the rhetoric of separatists and radicals. I want to make the point, Mr. Speaker, that the Meech Lake accord is a constitutional amendment that brings Quebec into the Canadian constitutional family. The amendment that we're discussing is not a separatist amendment. It is an amendment proposed by a Premier of Quebec, who is a Liberal, believes in Canada, and has suggested this accord is his passport into the Canadian constitution. This is not designed by separatists. This is designed by a Canadian, by a man, a Premier of the province of Quebec in conjunction with premiers all over Canada, that says, I want to be part of your country; I want Canada to be part of my country.

So let there be no mistake about this amendment. This is not driven by separatists; this is driven by Canadians from Quebec, from Saskatchewan, from all parts of the country that want Quebec to be part of Canada.

Now this passport endorsed by a Quebec Premier to have Quebec part of Canada has been signed by every Premier in Canada at one time. We all agreed. The premiers from coast to coast and the Prime Minister signed on the line -- we accept you, Quebec, as part of Canada. And Quebec said I want to be part of Canada; I don't want to be driven or see the success of radicals or separatists; I want to be part of the nation.

Now that's before us today. This passport has been signed. It has been endorsed by people from all political persuasions -- Howard Pawley, who's NDP from Manitoba; Social Credit from British Columbia, Premier Vander Zalm; Liberals in Ontario, Premier David Peterson. Tories, Liberals, NDP, Social Credit, Conservatives all across the country signed this passport for Quebec to be part of Canada and said this is a positive thing to do.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me also make the point that this accord that would make Quebec part of Canada has been attacked by separatists. It's been attacked by radicals. It's been attacked by those who want to break up the country and say oh no, this is not the perfect document, this is not a good document, this would prevent Quebec from separating. And you can go through Quebec and you can find the separatists who attack this passport into the nation.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I defend Quebec in its efforts to be part of Canada. I defend all the premiers who signed and said, I want this country to be whole. Twenty-five per cent of the population of this country has been left out of the constitutional accord -- left out. I want them in. And they said, I will join, I will be there. And here it is, driven by people who want to be part of Canada, want to be.

Now I just make the point one more time, just for historic sense if nothing else, Mr. Speaker. This is driven by people who want the nation to be one -- from Quebec, from Saskatchewan, from Ontario, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. We want it to be one. And this accord and this passport says that.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Now in 1982 and what led up to it, the arguments are, well of course we couldn't let Quebec in because they were headed up by a separatist government, Rene pé Le pévesque. And I have been at constitutional conference with Mr. Le pévesque and Mr. Trudeau in '82. The argument is we couldn't let them in because they were separatists. We wouldn't have Quebec represented by separatists in this Canadian constitution.

Now fair enough, Mr. Speaker, fair enough. I wouldn't have been in any big hurry to bring the constitution home to Canada under those circumstances because I firmly believe if we'd have left out Ontario or Saskatchewan we wouldn't have been in a rush to bring it home and just rub our nose in it. But in any event, they brought it home and they left out Quebec because they said, well they're separatists and we don't want any part of them.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in 1990 a pro-Canada Quebec Premier has signed the constitutional accord to make Quebec finally part of Canada and some people are still saying no. They're still dragging their heels. Some people honestly are saying after all of this -- now here is a pro-Canadian Premier who has said I will join the country, signed by all the Premiers -- and there are still some, in fact some that were involved, to be fair, back in 1981 and '82, are still saying no.

This is not a separatist; this is a Canadian that wants to be part of Canada, who is the Premier of Quebec, and in 1990 there are no more arguments that this is a separatist coming in here. And they're still dragging their heels, still dragging their heels. Now you could have some justification in 1981-82, but no justification today that this is being driven by separatists or we're being rushed into it by separatists. This is led by Canadians who love the country and want it to be one.

Mr. Bourassa is on our side as Canadians. He's a Premier who wants to keep the country together. He's fought separatists all his political life. He was elected as early as the 1970s. He lost the life of a cabinet minister -- lost the life of a cabinet minister over separatists. He wants this nation to be whole and he wants Quebec to be part of it, and he has said now to Saskatchewan people, here I am, I am part of this nation. Don't drag your heels any more. This is not a separatist talking; this is a man who's a Canadian, who has been to the wall politically inside of government and outside of government, saying don't turn your back on me one more time; don't frisk me one more time; take me at my word, I want to be part of the nation.

And yet some are still dragging their heels and saying, well there has to be something else. Well, Mr. Speaker, I say in all sincerity this is not the time to get too cute or to drag your heels or to embarrass them some more or add flames to the radicals, or make it any more difficult for a fellow Canadian who is the Premier of a province that has 25 per cent of the Canadian population, and ask him to crawl one more time. It's not.

DSome Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

(1215)

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- So if there was a reason that you wanted to keep Quebec out, why raise something insignificant now.

Well let me say, Mr. Speaker, you may say that Meech is still not a perfect document. The Meech Lake accord is not perfect. It's not good enough, for example, for Senate reform. Let me say a couple of things about that, Mr. Speaker, so that the members in this legislature and the people of the province know exactly what I'm talking about.

The Meech Lake accord is not about Senate reform. It's not about Senate reform. When we go back to the constitution of 1981-82, and we go all the things that have led up to where we are today, it's been about English and French and the historic parts of Canada and how we're going to be together with the roots -- English roots, French roots, and the two languages, and make us one country. That's what it's about. Make no mistake.

Clyde Wells, Premier Wells said the other day, Meech Lake is not about Senate reform. Meech Lake is about how does Quebec become a part of this country in a fair way. Twenty-five per cent of the country has been left out. We want them in.

We didn't go to all of this trouble for all these last 15 years because of

Senate reform. Now that's the truth. We went to all of this trouble because we wanted all the provinces to be part of the country. And we want to get on with Senate reform, we want to get on with aboriginal rights, we want to get on with new provinces with all of those things, of course. But you can't do that unless you're all in the nation.

So let's go back to the point. You say this is not perfect with respect to Senate reform. Fair enough. This is not about Senate reform. It is about bringing the rest of the country together under one constitution.

Some said here yesterday that maybe the Senate wasn't even worth it. Mr. Speaker, the argument's been put forward, and I think it's fair to say that the Leader of the Opposition said he'd favour the triple A: abolish, abolish, abolish. Senate is really of no significance.

I wouldn't mind if we abolished the Senate. Everybody in the country sees it as rather an impotent second House, wonder what it's all about. It should be reformed. The Prime Minister said to me and all the first ministers, abolish it if you like. I don't mind abolishing the Senate; it doesn't matter that much.

Now, Mr. Speaker, listen to me. If the Senate doesn't matter, if it's so irrelevant to this country, why in the world would you hold us up during a time of crisis over something that doesn't matter? What's your motive? What's the motive, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, we are at point where we are holding this country together. We are just this close to watching us watch the country fall apart as a result of the Senate and the discussion on constitutional reform. Mr. Speaker, if the Senate can be abolished and if it doesn't matter, then why would we be dragging our feet and dragging our heels and asking Quebec for one more compromise, when the Premier of Quebec has said, I want to be part of the country. And we're saying, well we don't have a perfect formula for the Senate yet, for Senate reform. And at the same time saying, well for all I care we could abolish the Senate.

Look at how you're flirting with the history of the country and the future of the nation over something you admit isn't worth the time of day.

I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, history is going to record how Saskatchewan and Canadians looked at this seriously. We have a chance now, and before the whole world, to put this country together and to get on with serious Senate reform. And I favour constitutional reforms and formulas that would allow us to have a modified Senate and make it a reasonable, effective, and, if possible, equal House -- elected, all of the above.

It'll take time. Nobody, Mr. Speaker, will even begin to acknowledge that we can have a Triple E Senate between now and June 23 or that Quebec and Ontario or the federal government would even think about having equal number of senators and resolve this all before June 23, even if you felt really serious about it.

But I make the argument, Mr. Speaker, I make the argument that if the

Senate could be abolished and it's that insignificant, then why would you hold the nation's feet to the fire and watch us even flirt with destruction, pulling ourselves apart, when in fact it doesn't matter?

Let me make another point, Mr. Speaker. Some have mentioned that a veto, when it comes to Senate reform, is no good. Well who says it's no good? Show me why each of the provinces shouldn't have fair say and equal say in something supposedly as significant as the Senate. Why shouldn't Saskatchewan have a veto? What's wrong with that? What's wrong with British Columbia having a veto?

Some have said, well we shouldn't have 10 out of 10; we could maybe have seven out of 10. Well doesn't the seventh have a veto? Which three don't you trust, if you could only go seven out of 10? Is it the 10th? Is it the ninth? Is it the eighth?

Mr. Speaker, a veto, Mr. Speaker, is important to the province of Saskatchewan. A veto is important because Saskatchewan should have every single opportunity that is in Quebec and Ontario, in the Maritimes . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. The Premier is speaking on an important issue. Members from both sides are interrupting. I think that of all times, at a time like this when we're discussing the future of our country, members should allow the individual on his feet to speak, and I ask for that co-operation from members.

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, thank you. A veto for each province in dealing with something as important as a new province coming into our confederation or modifying how we govern ourselves is totally reasonable. And to think that you cannot have reasonable debate of what a Senate would look like among all the players because you would have unanimity, is somewhat unreasonable. I don't understand why it's unreasonable that Saskatchewan shouldn't be counted in that debate, or why something like eight out of 10 is better, or 7 or 6 or 5. At any particular point you'd have to have some there that have a veto.

What's wrong with all of us having equal say in designing something as important -- if it is important, and the Leader of the Opposition and others here have said, frankly it isn't even important so what would it matter. But if it did matter, if it really matters, what's wrong with having a veto? And for those that say, well you'd never get a consensus if you give a province like P.E.I. or Saskatchewan or somebody else a veto, I don't buy that argument. Where's the validity to that argument? They say 10 out of 10 is more easy to get than seven out of 10. On what? On something as significant as how we're going to run our country? I think there are valid arguments for a veto.

Under the constitutional accord, this Meech Lake accord, and let me make it very clear, I signed it because Saskatchewan gets a veto over Ontario and Quebec and every other jurisdiction in this country on Senate reform and new provinces. And I believe we should have that right.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- And I am not afraid of negotiating for a few years on what the Senate looks like. Why should I be afraid to sit down and talk with them about a new Senate? Why does a new Senate have to be designed and put all together by June 23, when in fact, just out of respect, we could all design it over the next few years and amend the constitution and amend it?

And let me come back again and say, and if it isn't of any significance, why would you hold us all up in terms of bringing Quebec into the country for something you don't care about? So you can't have it both ways -- logically. Logically, if you think it's significant, give me a crack at it, and everybody that's a province, and logically, if you don't think it's significant, you wouldn't hold up the country for the sake of something you don't care about.

Mr. Speaker, let me put it a different way. I would take Canada with the existing Senate -- Quebec part of the country -- Canada all together with the existing Senate, over a fractured Canada with a fancy formula to modify the Senate in a smaller Canada.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Why would you demand perfection in a constitutional accord in the face of fever-pitched emotion and possible rejection by 25 per cent of our population in this country? Why would you do that?

We don't demand perfection in the face of defeat, Mr. Speaker. In the face of constitutional crisis and the chance of pulling the country apart, we must have perfection in this document? I don't know how many times the fourth amendment in the United States has been before the courts. It's not a perfect document nor a perfect amendment.

The charter of rights, I think many would say, perhaps is not a perfect charter. It's before the courts all the time; it's interpreted every day. Is that something like the Holy Grail of the constitutional arrangements of the world? They're interpreted every day. Why do we demand perfection in this amendment when we've worked for years and literally decades to bring forward a constitutional amendment that would bring Quebec into this country when they want to be part of it, led by a Premier who has been through all the separatist wars that you can imagine?

Mr. Speaker, some say that we shouldn't be debating this because there's no crisis. Here in this legislature some don't want to take a position. Some say they don't want to talk about it. Some say that it's not even worthy of discussion. I sincerely beg to differ.

I believe 10 or more years ago the separatists were running, I would think, maybe 40 per cent in the polls in Quebec. Today I understand to believe that they're somewhere at 60 or 65 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Do you think if this fails, this constitutional accord fails that separatists will all of a sudden just fall away in the polls, that they will all of a sudden be discouraged?

Mr. Speaker, I also ask the question, if this fails, do you think in your lifetime that Quebec would ever accept less than the Meech Lake accord? Do you believe that? If you went back now two years or three years and say, well here's a new deal, half or two-thirds or some formula that is less than it's taken us years and years and years to pull together from a man who wants Quebec to be part of the country, do you think they're going to accept less? Politically do you think the people in Quebec would? I don't, Mr. Speaker, nobody in any political experience would ever think that they would.

Now is the time. Now is the time where we take all of the courage we can muster and all the generosity and all the imagination and make this thing work, Mr. Speaker. Because the political reality, the constitutional reality, is such that we don't have a choice if we really believe in what we can be in this country and we really believe that it faces a fork in the road in the next few hours, in the next few days, in the next few weeks.

If it's because of the wording associated with, is the French part of Canada distinct? -- I don't think people would argue that for the last 2 or 300 years people have looked at Quebec as distinct, their language as distinct, their culture, their law, the way they appoint their Senators. People would know no argument. They've always been distinct. No argument.

Clyde Wells, the Premier (of Newfoundland), says Quebec is distinct. It's a distinct culture. The Premier of Manitoba says Quebec is distinct. No question about it. Within this country it's distinct. Well if that's an accepted fact, what are we arguing about?

We're arguing about -- they speak French and we speak English? That's been going on for hundreds of years. Most of the French-speaking people in North America live in Quebec. They speak French. That's the truth. Most of the English-speaking people live outside Quebec, all over North America. That's a fact.

And in this great country of Canada which is not American, not European, we have the province of Quebec that speaks mostly French with French culture and French law and French custom, and we want that to be part of our family and we have a possibility to do that. And some will say, well I'm not sure that they're distinct; or their distinct is going to be different than . . . I mean it goes around and around.

(1230)

The constitutional experts, Mr. Speaker, can play constitutional scrabble from now until the year 2000 and we'll all be trying to figure as we do it, the charter. How will I interpret this? How will I interpret that? How many people in this legislature stand up and cheer for the charter? I'm not even so sure that the former premier of the province of Saskatchewan, Allan Blakeney, was really all that much in favour of the charter, part of the constitutional accord of 1981-82. Now imperfect, why does this have to be so perfect?

Mr. Speaker, let me also say this accord that we are discussing today and will be discussing at the first ministers' level in the weekend and into next week and for weeks ahead, has been a lengthy, lengthy process and a long process of compromise -- years and years and years of work, years building up to the 1981-82 circumstance when the constitution came home. And years since then, two, three years prior to even looking for an amendment to bring Quebec in, people were studying it and talking about it and going all over it.

I listened to David Peterson, the Premier of Ontario, on television this morning, and the Premier was saying, it is an unfair criticism that this is something that has something that has just happened; it's taken years and years, meetings and meetings.

Even the fact that in 1987 we passed it, in terms of all the premiers agreeing and the Prime Minister. And we said in three years more we will debate it. We'll have it in our legislatures. There's hearings. There's all kinds of parliamentary reviews on it. I don't know what has been discussed more, Mr. Speaker, on and on and on. And it's been a process of compromise, negotiation, flexibility -- all those things that are necessary to keep Canada as a strong, compassionate, tolerant, generous nation.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is this is a process of compromise and has been. And to resolve this, it will take that generosity and compromise. It may take -- and I want to talk about this before I close my remarks -- it may take more, and it may take political accords, and it may take the second round, and it may take bilateral agreements, and it may take unilateral agreements with the federal government -- several combinations, Mr. Speaker. And I proposed those to the first ministers and to the Prime Minister on more than one occasion.

The question that is before this House, that I want to put very seriously, and why I want all members to stand in their place and support the motion that says that we stick up for Canada and we defend this constitutional accord that brings Quebec in as part of Canada. The reason that I want them to defend it and all the country to know that Saskatchewan is on side, doesn't break its word, doesn't vary is that it might boil down to this, Mr. Speaker: if it is the constitutional accord, Meech Lake and Canada or nothing, make no mistake that this Premier is going for the constitutional accord and Canada as one nation.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- I have many proposals on the table and the first ministers know that: proposals about a political accord, things that the federal government can do with the province of New Brunswick, parallel accords, clarification of what the Meech Lake accord means, bringing the second round right up to the first round and doing it simultaneously -- all of these things.

And I search my heart and soul and all of our people do every day to find out how to make this work. But if it gets down to where we must do this constitutional accord that brings all the nation together and get on in the

second round and the third round and the fourth round to deal with the Senate and other things, let there be no mistake in history. This legislature was the first outside of the province of Quebec to welcome them into Canada, and this legislature, this province, will be on record as that we accept them as part of Canada and we honour our word.

And the nation should know that today as we go into these negotiations. It should know that we accept Quebec as part of Canada after years and years and years of negotiation and compromise. When every Premier in the country signed on the line, this province should and will stand in its place and support the accord and support the nation.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, do I have anybody on my side on this? I'll say, Mr. Speaker, I know that the Meech Lake accord has not been the most popular thing that you could find in the province of Saskatchewan or across western Canada. I know that. I also tell the people of Saskatchewan I believe in bringing Quebec into this country and making us whole. And I know that it could be difficult holding that position, but I'm not alone, Mr. Speaker.

You look at the House of Commons and it's almost unanimous that this accord pass. NDP, Liberals, Conservatives in the House of Commons, in parliament of this country saying this should pass. I'm not alone.

You look at the former leader of the NDP Party -- and I was talking to him the other day in Ottawa, Mr. Ed Broadbent -- strongly endorses the accord for all of the right reasons. And I complimented him on his speech to the graduating class in Dalhousie saying, Mr. Broadbent, that was an excellent address. We need to show tolerance and understanding -- not prejudice, not impatience. We

Ddon't want to let the radicals win, the separatists win. We need to reach out and say to Quebec yes, we're going to be one country, and yes, we can be better, and yes, we can reform the Senate; we can do all of those things.

If you look at Liberal Senators and Tory Senators, if you look at people in the House of Commons, if you look at MPs in Saskatchewan from all political persuasions, they're saying yes to this accord. And they know the political consequences of saying that, but they also know, and I give them full credit -- Lorne Nystrom and others -- full credit for knowing that this country is bigger than partisan politics. This country is above that. This country is worth so much to us, we must stand and be counted and say, when a Canadian and a Premier of the province of Quebec comes forward and said I want to be part of Canada, that we welcome him with open arms.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, in wrapping up my remarks today, I believe that the integrity of Saskatchewan people in this legislature is at stake as we go into these negotiations. I don't think we should even look like we'll break our word. I don't even think that we should think about

breaking our word. I don't believe we should leave any implication or any thought that we are wavering at all about Canada or about Quebec as an integral part of our constitutional family. We shouldn't give any thought that they are not significant.

And certainly we shouldn't give any thought to even letting anybody feel that way over things we don't even care about which are acknowledged here: Senate which could be abolished, and French as distinct of course. Is it in the right place in the constitution? I mean they can discuss that for years and years to come.

Our integrity, the people of Saskatchewan's integrity in this legislature, and that's what this legislature's all about. The very best -- representing the very best of what we want for our children and our children's children and this nation -- is represented here.

This House should say, we don't renege. We don't sign on one day and then pull the pin the next. We don't pass it in this legislature and rescind it the next day or the next month or the next year. That isn't what Saskatchewan people are about. We should be solid and tell Quebec we appreciate your contribution to Canada. We want to be equal partners. We get vetoes. We build together.

I publicly thanked the Minister of Agriculture from Ontario, David Ramsay, the Minister of Agriculture from Quebec, Michel Page pé for their thoughtfulness and consideration and compassion in allowing most of the money that was coming out of the federal government to come into the province of Saskatchewan.

David Ramsay from Ontario spoke up, and he said we should have some heart for Saskatchewan farmers. He said, I shouldn't even be here at the table speaking up for Ontario farmers -- I'm paraphrasing -- he says, asking for hand-outs when the people of Saskatchewan are hurting. He says they've had an 87 per cent drop in farm income; they deserve our attention.

I appreciate that. The two largest provinces in the country have largely contributed something like \$7 billion into the province of Saskatchewan in the last four, five years. And they've done so with a generous heart. Now imagine if one of them's coming to the table, said well could we please be part of Canada. Would you give us due consideration? And we say, well I don't know.

Integrity, history, future, hope, and honour all wrapped up here as we debate this. No question that this should be discussed on the floor of this legislature as we go through these negotiations. Are we people of honour and integrity, and stand forth for this nation and stand by our word or not? We are. Make no mistake about that, Mr. Speaker, and I don't want anybody in the country to ever doubt it.

Let me close with this. I had a letter that was sent to me by Suzanne Stradecki, and she is concerned obviously about the crisis and about our generosity. And I want to read the first paragraph.

And it says:

Dear Mr. Devine, (and she's speaking on behalf of the French-speaking people) The legislative assembly will likely be invited today to consider an emergency bill to reaffirm our province's support for the 1987 constitutional accord, (and I read this slowly) at a time when Canada faces one of its most serious constitutional crises in its history."

The general public is realizing what's at stake. If this legislature is not capable of helping lead this nation into success, if it's not capable of showing the way towards success, if it's only capable of ducking or only capable of not having a position or only capable after it's all done, saying, well maybe I'll take it, maybe I won't. If this place, of all the places, isn't capable of leadership, then I don't believe I understand Saskatchewan people. I don't think that I have any sense of feeling for the heart and the soul and the destiny of these folks.

Mr. Speaker, there are many proposals on the table. It's been a history of compromise and understanding, but it's also been important to know where the other person stands and when they say something that you can count on it. You can't negotiate any other way. You have to negotiate with somebody with integrity. When I say welcome to Quebec under these conditions, shake hands with the Premier of Quebec, he has to know that I mean it and I'm not going to break my word.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I encourage the members of this legislature, in all sincerity, to vote against the amendment that postpones decisions, postpones arguments, and postpones the integrity of this province and vote for the amendment that says we affirm our motion -- vote for the motion that says we affirm our belief in this great country and we're to be counted.

We gave our word, we said we welcomed Quebec, we signed it with every other Premier in the country and now is the time to be counted when they need us most. Mr. Speaker, I sincerely encourage members of this legislature to stand up for Canada, stand up for the Meech Lake accord, be prepared to show leadership in the province today during this historic debate.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

The Speaker: -- The hon. member is indicating he would like leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

(1245)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for granting leave to introduce guests that are in the

Speaker's gallery today. Mr. Speaker, in your gallery today are a group of 19 grade 6 students from Lakeview School in the town of Meadow Lake. And they're here with their teacher, Mr. Pete Penner; several parents as chaperons, Mrs. Lyn Lehoux, Mrs. Phyllis King, Mrs. Pat Styles, Mrs. Kathy Shkopich; and their bus driver, Mr. Keith Flanagan.

Mr. Speaker, about a couple or three weeks ago I spoke to their teacher and he was expressing some disappointment and rightfully so about the way the scheduling turned out for their tour to Regina -- and as we all know Meadow Lake is a good long distance from Regina -- because as we all know here the time when we encourage students to come is during the question period when there tends to be more action, as we like to say, here in the House. And it was just the way the schedule was and we weren't sure of course what would be on in the legislative agenda today.

Mr. Speaker, I would say today now to Mr. Penner and to his students and maybe especially to the students, to the grade 6's who are there, the debate that you came in here to see today, this debate regarding the constitutional accord in Canada, the very significant debate that's going on all across the country and that is being carried on here in our legislature to reaffirm our support for this nation staying together is a historical debate. This is not the way in which this place operates.

So I would just say to the students, you are very fortunate to have been here to see some history in the making and to hear the Premier make his speech. And I would ask all members to welcome these students, their chaperons and their teacher from Meadow Lake, and welcome them in the usual manner, please.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

The Speaker: -- Would the hon. member also require leave to introduce guests, or does he have a . . .

An Hon. Member: -- Yes, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave.

Leave granted.

Hon. Mr. Kopelchuk: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure on behalf of my colleague and neighbour, the member for Pelly, to introduce some guests to you and to the legislature. We have with us today, I believe on the west side of your gallery, 30 students from the Calder School. They're from grades 3 to 7 and they are accompanied by Mr. Grant Bjornerud and Mrs. Beth Berg.

I would like to inform them that it will be my pleasure to meet with them for a picture and a bit of a question period. I wish them a great stay in Regina and would ask all members to join with me in making them welcome to the legislature.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

MOTIONS

Canadian Unity and Reaffirmation of Meech Lake Accord (continued)

Mr. Lyons: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's indeed an honour to be able to speak in this debate. Unfortunately for the Premier and for the Conservative Party, I don't give the weight to this debate that the members of the government do, because I don't think, Mr. Speaker, as I stand here today, that the crisis facing us as Canadians is not a crisis of reality but it's a crisis of imagery. It is a crisis which has been created, and deliberately so, as part of a political strategy, and I'll get to that to provide the documentation for that in a few moments.

But given the time that we have today, I want to make this point at the very first, that this crisis is not a crisis of Canada; it is a crisis of the Conservative Party here in Saskatchewan. It is a crisis of the Conservative Party in Ottawa. They have made certain commitments to certain people and they don't know whether they're going to be able to carry those commitments out. That's what this crisis is about, Mr. Speaker. It has got nothing to do with the future of Canada.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to say this, I want to say this. It has got everything to do with the future of the Conservative Party here in Saskatchewan and across Canada. And as I stand here, Mr. Speaker -- and I've listened to the Premier twice, twice in the last two days attempt to paint those who have opposed the Meech Lake accord for all kinds of rational reasons, reasoned thoughtful people including Premier Filmon of Manitoba; including Premier Clyde Wells of Newfoundland; including many thoughtful scholars of constitutional law and constitutional history in this country; when I have to sit here and listen to the Premier try to paint those who oppose that particular accord, that particular deal that he was part of, oppose it, and being painted as un-Canadian, I object to it.

Mr. Speaker, it would be easy, it would be easy for me to wrap myself in the flag of Canada and to talk about the generations and generations and generations that my family has been here in Canada. It would be easy to talk about the members of my family and my wife's family who've been killed in World War I and World War II and the Boer war to protect democracy here in Canada. It would be easy to do that. But, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to. Because as Winston Churchill, that famous Conservative, said himself and that sentiment that I agree with most heartily, the last political refuge of a scoundrel is to wrap themselves in the flag. That's what we have seen here today, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: -- The political scoundrel who is the Premier of this province wrapping himself in the Canadian flag. It does a disservice to the people of this country. That was . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. It was quoting and accusing. I know the hon. member used a quote to make a point. He also used a word from the

quote directly speaking to a member of this House. It's unparliamentary, and I ask the hon. member to rise and withdraw his remark.

Mr. Lyons: -- Yes, Mr. Speaker, withdraw the remark.

I think the quote stands. The quote stands, Mr. Speaker, and I would put the quote out before the members but that's not the issue here. That's not the issue here.

The issue here is -- and let me deal, first of all, with the letter that the Premier has quoted from -- Suzanne Stradecki -- because we, too, on this side of the House received a letter from the same Ms. Stradecki. And I'd like to read the opening paragraph of it for you, Mr. Speaker. And I quote:

Dear Mr. Lyons: We want the members of the opposition to know that we are writing to the members of government with respect to Premier Devine's recent impassioned plea for Canadian unity. (This was dated May 31, 1990.) We all realize, of course, that by striking down historic francophone linguistic rights in 1988, the government has made it fashionable to knock down French. Premier Devine is only reaping what the government has been sowing.

Premier Devine is only reaping what the government has sown. That, Mr. Speaker, in essence, is the essence of the kind of . . . and I have no other word that I can use here except to say the kind of political hypocrisy that we have seen once again from the Premier of this province.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: -- And I say that, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, sir, because for the second time as I listened to the Premier of Saskatchewan, I had hoped that he would have brought to this legislature a report on the actualities, the status report of what has actually happened in the negotiations with Meech Lake.

Because as someone, Mr. Speaker, who has a keen interest in the subject and as someone who has lived in all parts of this country and someone who has got connections with various members of various governments and different political parties, I have some access to information, as do other members of this House, on what the status of the Meech Lake accord and the negotiations are.

And I want to begin my remarks, which I won't be able to finish today because of the lateness of the hour, but I want to begin my remarks by pointing out to the members opposite and to the Premier that for all intents and purposes Meech Lake is a done deal. Meech Lake is a done deal.

The only outstanding point in the negotiations on Meech Lake is that the Premier of Manitoba is refusing to accept a formula which would give a veto to Quebec over changes to the powers of the Senate. That's why we had here today a long and lengthy diatribe by the Premier over the meaning of the Senate, over whether the Senate was important or whether the Senate wasn't

important, and how it affected Meech Lake and how it didn't affect Meech Lake.

But fundamentally what we had here today was a political exhibition of the Premier of Saskatchewan attempting to apply pressure on Premier Filmon of Manitoba to cave in on his question and his concerns concerning the Senate. That's all it was. Nothing more and nothing less.

Now he may not have told that to the back-benchers. He may not have told that to the back-benchers of the Conservative caucus. He may not have told that to the front-benchers, or to some of the front-benchers of the Conservative caucus. But for all intents and purposes, Mr. Speaker, when the Premier of this province goes to Ottawa this afternoon and goes and eats supper with the Prime Minister of this country on Sunday, that deal will have been done. That deal will have been done.

Premier Wells has compromised on the issue of distinct society. He has compromised. He has not got into a confrontation with the opposition in Newfoundland. He has not gotten into a confrontation on a political level. He has sought a compromise and he has reached a compromise on the basis of distinct society. That issue is settled.

The other premiers who raise concerns about the division of spending powers have been able to find wording in a formula in what will be termed a political statement. It won't be part of the Meech Lake accord. Not one "t" of the Meech Lake accord will be changed. Not one "i" will be undotted. Not one comma will be moved.

The Meech Lake accord will be approved by, and has been approved, by every legislature in this country, by June 23, 1990. That's the agreement and it will be moved unchanged to meet the demands of Premier Bourassa of Quebec. That's the reality. That's the status of the reality of the negotiations.

But what we have seen today and what we saw yesterday is nothing more than an attempt to crisis-monger, to grandstand, to try to heighten the drama, so that the Premier of this province emerges as . . . somehow emerges before the eyes of the people of Saskatchewan as some great statesperson.

But the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, see through that because they know that when it came to standing up for Saskatchewan, when it came to standing up for the long-term, historic and political interest of the unity of this country, of the diversity and unity of this country, that the Premier of this province was nowhere. He was a bit player. He was a yes-man for Brian Mulroney. He was a cheerleader for nobody but himself and the Conservative Party. That's the reality, Mr. Speaker, and the people of this province and of this country know that that's the reality.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: -- Because, Mr. Speaker, that is the political history of that Premier. As other members have said, he's a good actor. As other members of this Legislative Assembly have said, yes, he can put on a good show. He can look impassioned. He can make the plea. He has -- as my colleague,

the member from Cumberland said -- the technical devices to try to tug at the heart-strings of the people of Saskatchewan.

But after eight long years of seeing the reality on the one hand and the rhetoric on the other, the people of this province will not be taken in by this bit of political gamesmanship, and a dangerous bit of political gamesmanship -- doing nothing to enhance Canadian unity, doing nothing to solve the problems that face us as a nation, doing nothing more than trying to engage in political grandstanding, to save the political skins of his party here in Saskatchewan and his Conservative Party of Brian Mulroney there in Ottawa. That's what this is about today. That's what that performance was about today, Mr. Speaker. Nothing more. Nothing less. Because Meech Lake is a done deal and there is no crisis any more in Canada no matter what the crisis mongers and the spin doctors of Ottawa try to put on the events of this coming weekend. It's a done deal, period, finito.

Now I want you, Mr. Speaker, the other members of the Assembly, through you, Mr. Speaker, to mark my words on that. And, Mr. Speaker, it's not just me as a politician in Saskatchewan putting that analysis on it . . .

The Speaker: -- Order. It being 1 o'clock, the House stands adjourned until Monday at 2 p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 1 p.m.