

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session - Sixteenth Legislature
32nd Day

Friday, March 29, 1968.

The Assembly met at 10:00 o'clock a.m.
On Orders of the Day

QUESTIONS

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

Hon. W.S. Lloyd (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, you will recall, Sir that yesterday the Member for Melfort-Tisdale (Mr. Willis) raised a question of privilege with respect to proceedings of the House being transferred outside of the House. I was wondering if you have a comment, Sir, or if you are going to make a report to the House on this question of privilege raised yesterday?

Mr. Speaker: — Yes. When the question of privilege was raised yesterday, I said that I would have the matter under advisement and under investigation. I can only report that I still have it under advisement and under investigation, and I hope to have something for the House by this afternoon when it sits at 2:30 p.m.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Steuart that Bill No. 43 — **An Act to amend the Fuel Petroleum Products Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. J.E. Brockelbank (Saskatoon Mayfair): — Mr. Speaker, I hadn't intended taking part in this debate, but I feel that I can't sit idly by while this Government continues to betray the farmers of this province. I have a little cartoon here, Mr. Speaker, from a rather reputable newspaper in Saskatchewan and it's dated March 2, 1968. It shows the poor Saskatchewan taxpayer bent over almost double with a huge burden on its back. Little Davey is up on the stepladder and he is loading on another burden of 5 per cent sales tax. In the container he has more to load on, medical care deterrent fee, driver's licence, gas tax, tobacco tax. And he is saying to the poor fellow who is bent over almost double, "Sorry old chap, but you are the only donkey we have." It doesn't say who the chap is that is bent over almost double. I guess it leaves it up to the imagination of the observer.

Mr. E.F. Gardner (Moosomin): — Table the cartoon for the benefit of those who don't get the Commonwealth?

Mr. Speaker: — When a Member quotes from a newspaper or periodical publication it is necessary for him to give the date, the name of the paper and the date of the issue that he is quoting from. He doesn't have to table the material that he is reading from,

because, if Members have the date and the name of the paper, it is available to all of them in the libraries or wherever you wish. The same thing doesn't apply to letters.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, I would be the last one to even bend the rules of this House. And, for the Hon. Member for Moosomin, this is the Saskatoon Star Phoenix, March 2, 1968.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — I'd be delighted to table it, Mr. Speaker.

This tax, Mr. Speaker, is more insidious than it appears even at first glance. This is why I am speaking on this particular tax. With the new tax the Liberal Government will force an increasing number of Saskatchewan farmers to the wall. Then, Mr. Speaker, at the first election campaign that occurs in this province it will attempt to play the new financially desperate farmers off against the working people of Saskatchewan. It has done it in the past and it will do it in the future. Its strategy has been divide and rule. Mr. Speaker, it won't be as easy in the next election campaign as it will take more goodies passed out prior to the campaign, and it will take more public relations applied by MacLaren Agencies of Toronto than it did prior to the last election.

This is a sad betrayal of the Saskatchewan farmers and will long be remembered by the Saskatchewan farmers. The party on your right, Mr. Speaker, bragged about how many farmers they had in their ranks in this Legislature. But this Bill has frightened those farmers down the gopher holes. I would be delighted to hear from the Member for Kelvington (Mr. Bjarnason) and the Member from Nipawin (Mr. Radloff). I realize that they are in a very awkward position, Mr. Speaker, with this Bill and other Bills that are before this House. I would suggest to them a procedure whereby if they are intending to face the electorate of this province in the near future, that they talk it over in their caucus, and they come to a decision with the caucus chairman that those two Members could vote against this Bill. They could stand up and protest this Bill in the House and they could resign and call for an election and take their chances. I think that they would stand more of a chance than if they brazen it through at this time. I realize, Mr. Speaker, this is a bit of deception that they would have to practise on the people of Saskatchewan. But this deception would only be a pimple compared to a mountain of deception that was practised on the people of this province before, during and after.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — I am really quite sorry that this Government again has broken faith with the people of Saskatchewan, and I cannot in good conscience for the people in my constituency or in any constituency in Saskatchewan support this particular Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. B.D. Gallagher (Yorkton): — Mr. Speaker, I only want to say a few words on this Bill. I won't waste the time of the House commenting on the remarks made by the Member for Melfort-Tisdale (Mr. Willis) last night.

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I have never seen a woman, and this is saying a lot, that could say so little and take so much time. In fact, he must bore his own Members with his long, hollow speeches. Last night he didn't repeat his highway speech. It's the one that he usually makes. I won't take up the time of the House commenting on what he said.

Mr. Speaker, I think that some of the comments that came from the Member from Prince Albert East (Mr. Berezowsky) were comments that were worth making. I am, as a farmer, quite aware of the cost-price squeeze of the farmers. I don't think from what I heard from the Member from Melville (Mr. Kowalchuk) that if he is left to solve the farmer's problems many of them will be solved. I want to remind him that he made the usual kind of Socialist speech we hear when they are talking about the farmer's cost-price squeeze, that the corporations are making too much profits, and that this is causing the farmer's cost-price squeeze. I don't suggest for one moment that the corporations are not making too much profits. But let me remind Members of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, that their bedfellows in the Seafarers International Union, in the Union of the Steelworkers of America, in the coal unions, in the railway unions and all the other unions, are also helping to cause the farmer's cost-price squeeze. When you consider, Mr. Speaker, that the fellow, who pushes the broom in the John Deere Plant in Racine Wisconsin and used to get \$1.50 an hour 20 years ago when we were getting \$2.00 a bushel for wheat, today gets \$6.00 an hour, surely even the Member for Melville (Mr. Kowalchuk) must admit that his labor union buddies are helping to cause the farmer's cost-price squeeze.

Mr. Speaker, I am just as concerned about the cost-price squeeze of the farmers as my Socialist friends. I don't like this tax as many Members don't like this tax. I must say, Mr. Speaker, when we imposed this tax, at least the farmers of this province are going to get more from the Government than they got in the past. One thing I can say, Mr. Speaker, as a farmer, I estimate that I probably save \$120 to \$150 a year by being able to use tax-free gas in my farm truck. It is going to cost me about \$100 extra because I am going to have to pay two cents a gallon more on farm fuel, diesel and gas. So I am still ahead of where I would have been under a CCF Government. Besides this, Mr. Speaker, the amount of money that we are collecting in this tax is going back to the farmers of this province. During the years that the CCF were the Government of this Province, they had no program to help the municipalities other than the grid-road program, which is a program which we still continue. They had no program for equalization grants that would substantially help the municipality. They had a bit of slush fund for their political friends out in the municipalities. We have increased by almost \$2 million the amount of money that is being paid out to rural municipalities of this province to help them build roads; besides our equalization grant we are giving a grid-road grant. So there is some justification in us imposing this tax. We are losing the revenues that we would have collected had we not taken off the tax on farm truck fuel.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to make a comment on something that the Member for Regina North West (Mr. Whelan) suggested yesterday. I believe that in speaking in the debate he suggested that the city of Regina is not getting its equitable share of the gas tax. Well, Mr. Speaker, this Government instituted a program to help the urban areas and it is spending a lot of

money on this program. From under \$1 million (I shouldn't say that it instituted this program), we increased the money that we are spending under this program over \$4 million today. I want to advise my friends in the Opposition that the city of Saskatoon took advantage of this expanded program. They have taken advantage of it to the tune of about \$2 million. Mr. Speaker, I don't think that the Member for Regina North West should be crying to the Government. He should be crying to the Member for Regina South East (Mr. Baker), the Mayor of the city of Regina. He was sitting on his hands, shaking hands with the voters and kissing babies, instead of looking after the needs of the city of Regina. If he had done his job, he would have done the same as the city council did in the city of Saskatoon.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. A. Thibault (Kinistino): — Mr. Speaker, I was a bit disappointed in the remarks by the Member for Yorkton (Mr. Gallagher) regarding the Member for Melfort (Mr. Willis) about the reference he has made to the women. I know that we had women in this House before, and we certainly appreciated their presence. I can see where the Member for Yorkton doesn't seem to have too much use for the talk of women.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Thibault: — Now if he has saved \$150 by using purple gas in his farm truck, I believe that he must have used it a great deal for campaigning. If he went into the old Liberal pitch about farmer and labor, they still have hopes of keeping them apart, but the thing is finished. It's kaput alright! He starts talking about the labor bosses. I want to repeat what I have said before, I am glad that our party is getting some help from the labor unions. But why don't you talk about Hal Banks if you want to talk about labor leaders? If you want to talk about campaign funds and so on, study the Dorian Inquiry and that will settle the whole issue for you boys. Now I won't say any more.

I want to say a few words and I hope that the farm Members across the way are going to vote against this Bill. I hope they won't do like some did yesterday and run out while the bell was ringing, I will refrain from naming the Members not to embarrass them too much. But this happened yesterday.

Mr. R. Romanow (Saskatoon Riversdale): — I just can't believe that, Art!

Mr. Thibault: — We talk about helping the municipalities. This tax has come right onto the farms, taxing farm fuel. This should bring some \$4 million perhaps to the Treasury. Look at your Estimates. Last year you gave the Municipal Road Assistance Authority, \$11,589,280; this year in the Estimates \$11,605,270, an increase of \$15,990. Big deal! \$4 million bucks! That's what they are getting in return. You talk about extra programs, snow removal. You know very well that the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Estey) at the SARM convention said to tighten up on the amount of grid road mileage, on the access roads.

Mr. E. Whelan (Regina North West): — Raise the taxes.

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Mr. Thibault: — Raise the taxes to the farmers by \$4 million and give them \$16,000. I never saw such a skin game in my life. Now what are the farmers going to have to do to get money to build roads? The municipal council will have to go right back and tax the farmer over again. If you went out and gave a couple million dollars to their municipalities to help them with their roads, maybe the argument wouldn't be so great. I ask the Government to look at their Estimates. It's a dirty shame!

What about farm expenses? I'll go back to the Farmers' Union's brief presented to the Government. I am beginning to wonder if it ever looked at this thing. What about the costs of operation? Table three on page four.

Cash operating expenses in 1962 — \$7.51 per acre (I am referring to cultivated acreage). The cost in 1966 is up to \$9.31. We could go on and talk about depreciation on farm per cultivated acreage at \$1.84 in 1962, \$3.14 in 1966. Investment costs — \$3.29 in 1962, \$5.16 in 1966. Operating and family labor — these people that try to put farmer against labor — what did the cost of labor do? From 1962 to 1966, \$5.31 in 1962 and \$5.87 in 1966 — an increase of 56 cents an acre. And these people have the audacity to come up and try to drive a wedge between farm and labor. That's all they know. Promote hatred. When you total the cost of farm machinery, \$4.78 per acre in 1962, \$6.77 per acre in 1966. Now what is being done about farm machinery? We hear very little about it from the other side. The total farm cost of operation from 1962 went up from \$17.95 an acre to \$23.48. I cannot understand how farmers can keep on going the way they are. We hear a lot about the big payment that is coming now. The big payment is being swallowed up by the interest that these farmers have to pay at the bank and on their loans. It is the wrong time to slap on another 10 per cent on the farm fuel.

Let's have a look at the increase in the price of wheat in all this time. You take the price of wheat in 1950-51 in Fort William and Port Arthur — \$1.85 a bushel, as compared to somewhere near \$2.00 a bushel for the last crop that we are being paid for. An increase of about 15 cents. And here in one year, you are going to increase the cost of farm fuel to the farmers by 10 per cent. A few years ago I was one of the only Members that got up in this House and voted against purple gas. Now they were very sure that I'd be defeated in my own constituency. The Liberal candidate had literature floating from one end to the other of the constituency saying, "Remember now that Art Thibault voted against purple gas." I never hid it. I said it was getting the farmer's head into the guillotine to get chopped off because it would open the door to taxation on farm fuel. Many farmers went out and bought trucks to try and take advantage, only to take advantage of the purple tax. I know of one farmer who had six quarters of land and sold his car, a Cadillac, and bought himself a half-ton truck. Now I don't quarrel with that. Some bought trucks to campaign with in the election campaign. This added another cost to the farmers. I would have gone along with three months of purple gas during harvest. I am speaking for myself and not for the party, because I had some mad boys on this side when I voted against purple gas, with the instruction of the people in my constituency who could see a little further and say, "We've got a pretty good deal now. Let's not open the door to taxation on farm fuel."

And that's what it did because it was said in this House, "Well you know the farmers are using their trucks on the road and we've got to get a little money for it." It's two cents now, 10 per cent now, what is it going to be next time? They have been suckered in, that's what has happened to them. Promises! Oh, remember, look what we have given you. Yes, that was just the bait in the mouse-trap, that's all it was.

I would certainly hope that the farm Members across the way will stay in the House as there will be a standing vote. I can assure you of that.

Mr. F. Larochelle (Shaunavon): — I'll be here, Arthur.

Mr. Thibault: — And we'll see how things turn out. I think that the farmer is going to think a great deal. For the Member for Shaunavon (Mr. Larochelle) that Frenchman, I still feel a little more for them too, you know. I feel sorry for them. But when the farmer is going to fill that 500-gallon tank, it's \$10 every time and believe you me, these 500-gallon tanks get filled up pretty often during the summer. I think that we are going to see some of these tanks with 'Vote CCF' written across them this summer.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Thibault: — I think you are going to see some reminders right on the farmer's fuel tanks right across Saskatchewan.

I don't want to take too much time of the House. I usually make my remarks very short. But we talk about mineral rights. We heard that, oh, the farmer got his mineral rights, but in our country we never hear about them. Whether there is a mineral tax or not we are not concerned. What we are worried about is the crop, if it rains, and how much municipal taxes are we going to pay. As I said a moment ago, this is going to be a double shot on the farmers because you have let the municipalities down. At the same time you have taxed the farm fuel. Don't kid yourselves. This is going to hit home pretty hard. And just talking about the municipalities building roads, where is it going to end?

I think the Members across the way should do some serious thinking. There isn't such a thing as never making a mistake. But I am convinced that this is one mistake, and I am sure that the Members across the way in caucus are telling you that it is a mistake.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Thibault: — I am sure that if the Members across the way could have a secret ballot that you would lose it right on your own side. One thing I don't like about party politics is that everybody has to go like a bunch of sheep. This is why once in a while I break ranks, because I don't agree. I think that this is one case where maybe we should have a free vote on it and see who the friend of the farmer is.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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Mr. Thibault: — This little game of putting the labor against the farmer is up. It is worn out! You can't even overhaul it. With this, Mr. Speaker, you can see by my remarks that I am not going to support this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. D.G. Stuart (Provincial Treasurer): — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I started to make some notes last night to reply as I wound up this debate. I started to make some notes on the Hon. Member for Melfort (Mr. Willis) and I made some on the Member for Melville (Mr. Kowalchuk) too but I lost track after his first complaint. The Hon. Member for Melville said first that he was complaining because his farmers only had a four-bushel quota and then in the next breath he complained they didn't have any grain to sell. I must say that he lost me somewhere along the line. The Member for Melfort, well he lost me early in the day. He was a little confused. When it was the gas tax, he spoke about health, and when it was about the health tax, he spoke about gas. I think he really got a little gas off his stomach or something off his brain and it isn't really worth commenting on.

You know I noticed all the time that they were talking about what the Liberals had or hadn't done for the farmers. Not one of them mentioned that we had just been given the very welcome news of the highest final wheat payment in the history of this nation, of which \$210 million will accrue to Saskatchewan farmers.

An Hon. Member: — The Wheat Board.

Mr. Steuart: — Oh it's the Wheat Board when anything good happens. If anything bad happens it's the Liberal Government. You can't have it both ways. You know, Arthur Thibault was talking about farmers trading Cadillacs. I am sure it must be his brother-in-law or somebody, as I think he has a couple of relatives who voted Liberal, and I think that they are fairly well off. I hope they are anyway. I would like to say seriously, Mr. Speaker, that when we decided to put this 2-cent tax on the base of the gas tax, we recognized that it would place a tax for the first time on farm fuels. At the same time I think that Members should recognize that by placing 2 cents on the base, we are also collecting a tremendous amount of money from industry, from aviation fuel, from the pipe line companies, from the many industries that were formerly either not paying any tax on the fuel they burn, or were paying merely 5 per cent. This will give us revenue from industry which will be in excess of \$1 million, we estimate.

Now it is true that the 2 cents will be paid, as I say, for the first time on farm fuels, but at the same time 2 cents on the base is the equivalent of 4 cents at the other end. In other words, to raise the same amount of money which will be a little over \$8 million we would have to put 4 cents on the present basis of gasoline tax. The money we will raise from this 2 cents on the base will be about \$8 million.

Mr. Lloyd: — The whole thing?

Mr. Steuart: — We'll raise \$8 million. The 2 cents increase on the gas tax at the base will raise about \$8 million in the next year. I'm told there are 80,000 commercial farmers in this province. We calculate this will cost them about \$3 million, which works out to about \$38 or \$40 per farmer per year. Now I recognize that large farmers will pay more than this and hopefully large farmers have the ability to pay more than the smaller farmers. Our records indicate that purple gas saves them about \$4.5 million. As Mr. Gallagher pointed out, they will still be \$1.5 million better off than they would have been under the Socialists besides the extra money that we are spending in rural parts of this province. Make no mistake, this money will be used on highways for grid roads and for municipalities. Every dollar of it will be spent in rural Saskatchewan and then some. Let's just take a look at the records.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — We all know that this year we will spend on highways alone, \$58 million. Most of this will be spent in rural Saskatchewan. The last year of the CCF Government they spent \$24 million on highways and they also spent most of it in rural Saskatchewan as well.

Mr. Dewhurst: — They did a better job.

Mr. Steuart: — A better job — I don't think so, I remember the roads. \$6.8 million was spent the last year of the CCF, that was the most they ever spent for municipal road assistance and direct assistance to municipalities. This year we will spend \$11.6 million.

Let's just look at the records. Assistance for grid roads, the last year of the CCF, they spent \$4.3 million; we will spend \$5.4 million, an increase of \$1 million. Grants for re-gravelling, they spent \$480,000; we will spend \$600,000. Grants for the maintenance of grid roads, they spent \$380,000; we will spend \$1 million. Financial assistance for snow removal on rural municipal roads, they spent zero; we will spend \$300,000. Municipal assistance equalization grants, they spent \$580,000; this year we will spend \$2,400,000. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, on all forms of roads, grid roads, clearing, highways, assistance to municipalities, they spent \$30.8 million, and that was the most they ever spent in their 20 years of office, the last year they held office. This next year we are coming into, we will spend \$69.6 million, more than double the amount of money.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — There is no question that this money will be raised all over the province by almost every taxpayer, and it will be in rural Saskatchewan. I agree, I don't expect the farm Members would like this tax on either side of the House or any part of the province. No one likes to pay taxes. At the same time, I think most of us recognize and it was recognized under the former Administration, I'm sure that there should be some relation between the tax paid on gasoline and fuel burned in trucks and tractors and the amount of money spent on highways and grid roads.

What about the working people? When I listen to the Hon. Members on the other side challenging some of our Members to stand up on this side and say where they stand, I never heard any of the Members on that side of the House that represent the cities standing up and say, "Well, we think that it should have been 4 cents and it should have all been put on the ordinary car driver; it should have been put on the working people, it should have been put on the small business man," I never heard one of them. They'd get up and they would cry for the farmer. I don't blame them. Agriculture is the backbone of this province. At the same time there is such a thing, Mr. Speaker, as equity in the taxation, and this was an effort to spread the gas tax on a more equitable basis across all the people. I don't think it is fair or reasonable to continue to charge all the gas tax on working people and the small business man, I think an attempt should be made to equalize the payment of this tax. Certainly the opportunities and the programs that are developed from the revenue that's brought in by this tax are spread in a way that I think is very fair to the rural people of this province. This is a necessary tax and again I urge the Members, the responsible Members in this House, to support this Act.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division:

YEAS — 32

Thatcher	Coderre	Weatherald
Howes	Bjarnason	Mitchell
McFarlane	MacDonald	Larochelle
Boldt	Estey	Gardner
Cameron	Hooker	Coupland
Steuart	Gallagher	McPherson
Heald	MacLennan	Charlebois
McIsaac	Heggie	Forsyth
Guy	Breker	McIvor
Loken	Leith	Schmeiser
Grant	Radloff	

NAYS — 21

Lloyd	Meakes	Michayluk
Wooff	Berezowsky	Brockelbank
Willis	Romanow	Pepper
Wood	Smishek	Bowerman
Blakeney	Thibault	Matsalla
Davies	Whelan	Messer
Dewhurst	Snyder	Kowalchuk

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. A. Matsalla (Canora): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg leave to draw the attention of all Hon. Members to a fine group of students in the Speaker's gallery. They are the boys and girls from the Spalding high school under the direction of their teachers, Miss Nelson and Mr. Buten. I'm sure that all Members will wish to join with me in extending to them a very warm welcome to this Legislature of our province. And may your visit to Regina be one of the highlights in your educational endeavor.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Matsalla: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the absence of Mr. Kowalchuk, the Hon. Member for the Melville constituency and in his behalf, Mr. Kowalchuk is in Melville this afternoon assisting in the sod-turning ceremonies for Melville's Provincial public building. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to extend greetings to you, Sir, from this Assembly to a group of 70 grade 7 and 8 students from Balcarres. This school is the only high school in the Balcarres consolidated school district. They are seated in the east gallery. You will see among these a group of fine students, many of Indian ancestry. These students come from three Indian reservations, Star Blanket, Okeneese, Peepeekeesis, a joint effort by the native people of these three reserves and the Board of Balcarres Consolidated School District that has resulted in one of the finest integrated schools in Saskatchewan. The public school students from Little Black Bear Reserve immediately north of these reserves mentioned, attend Goodeve school and were welcomed in these Chambers about a week ago. The two teachers supervising this group of 70 students are Mrs. Onrait and Mr. Barlizen. The bus drivers chosen to get these students safely here and back home are Mr. Ward Dixon and Mr. Potter. May I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that all of us here wish them a delightful and instructive day. It is our hope that they have a safe trip back home.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. F. Laroche (Shaunavon): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to introduce through you to this Legislature today a fine group of 28 young boys and girls seated in the Speaker's gallery. This group is part of the Cadillac 4-H Club, one of the most active clubs in the Shaunavon constituency. Some of these young people, gentlemen, are our future farmers which will form part of our agricultural industry in this province, which is the largest industry. Last night these young people had the pleasure to attend the Winter Fair which they tell me was very educational to them and very amusing. They are accompanied here today by their organizer, Mr. and Mrs. Kyle, Mr. and Mrs. Bradley and Mr. and Mrs. Oliver and Mrs. Legros. I wish them a very, very safe journey home and a very, very nice day here today in the Legislature. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. B.D. Gallagher (Yorkton): — And I just want to serve notice that a little bit later on this afternoon I'll be interrupting proceedings to introduce to the Legislature a group from my own constituency of Yorkton.

Mr. F.A. Dewhurst (Wadena): — Under what Standing Order?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gallagher: — They are a little late, Mr. Chairman, but they are a real good group of students, and I want all Members to pound their desks when they come into the Speaker's gallery later on.

Mr. D.W. Michayluk (Redberry): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, since the Member for Yorkton is forming a precedent, I think I may also utilize the privilege for the same reason.

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Hon. C.L.B. Estey (Saskatoon Nutana Centre): — Mr. Speaker, I find I am in the same position.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gallagher: — We will proceed to introduce to Members of the Legislature a group of grade 7 and 8 students from St. Alfonsus school in Yorkton. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Schumay. I'm sure all Members will want to welcome them to the Legislature this afternoon and hope that they have a most enjoyable and entertaining and educational day in this capital city.

Mr. Estey: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I now see that the students from St. Joseph school in Saskatoon are now in the Assembly. They are accompanied here today by their teacher, Mr. Oliver and on behalf of all Members of the House, I welcome these students with us this afternoon together with Mr. Oliver, and I hope that they enjoy their stay in Regina and that the stay with us in this House will be very instructive.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

LOUDSPEAKER IN MEMBERS' LOUNGE

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

During the sitting of the House yesterday, the Hon. Member from Melfort-Tisdale (Mr. Willis) raised a question of privilege with respect to a loudspeaker allegedly connected to the sound reinforcement system in the Chamber and installed in one of the Members' Lounges. I have investigated the matter and found that this is in fact the case.

I wish to advise the Assembly that I have made a careful search of the authorities on Parliamentary Procedure and I have been unable to find any citation which would sustain a ruling to the effect that an installation of this nature was an abuse of the privileges of the House. Therefore, I cannot rule that a prima facie case of breach of privilege has been established.

However, I am of the opinion that an important question of propriety does arise in this case upon which the House could very well expect the Chair to express an opinion. It seems to me that the Legislative Chamber is the only proper place for Members to participate in the process of parliamentary debate which participation involves both the expression of a Member's own views and opinions and also that of listening to those expressed by others.

If the House is prepared to provide one installation to transmit debates outside the Chamber it must be prepared to provide fifty-nine, for the principle involved is the same in both cases. Such a practice would in my opinion seriously detract from the process of parliamentary debate and tend to weaken the very foundations of parliamentary self-government.

I have therefore suggested that the installation be dismantled pending a decision of the House by a substantive motion.

An Hon. Member: — What about the loudspeaker in the Clerk's office?

Mr. Speaker: — I had intended to say that the loudspeaker in the Clerk's office is in my opinion necessary in order to facilitate proceedings in that office. It is not there for any Member of the House to listen to but solely for the assistance of the office staff. That settles that part of the argument. As far as the loudspeaker is concerned in my office, there has been a speaker there for some considerable time and I listen to it when I am out of the Chair. I am out of the Chair because the House has moved that I do leave the Chair in order for the House to go into Committee. The reason for the Speaker leaving the Chair is because the Members want him out of the Chair so that he can't hear what they are saying. Now this is the reason for this ancient procedure. At one time before the Speaker left the Chair, the House on each occasion proposed a motion that he do leave the Chair. Now we dispense with the formal motion and the Speaker merely states, "I do now leave the Chair." Now that is the ancient custom and the reason for it was the Members wanted him out of the Chair so that he couldn't hear what was being said in the House. For that reason my loudspeaker will go out of my office this evening.

Hon. W.S. Lloyd (Leader of the Opposition): — Mrs. Speaker, I'm sorry but I failed to catch the last comment you made about this evening.

Mr. Speaker: — I said that for that reason the speaker that I have in my office will be disconnected and it will be removed from there. This evening is about the quickest time I can get around to doing it.

Mr. Lloyd: — Mr. Speaker, we are in a somewhat difficult position with the Lieutenant Governor here. Do we have an opportunity to discuss this further with you, Sir, in the House this evening?

Mr. Speaker: — What you have right now has been an informal discussion at the tail end of the ruling. Now the ruling is a formal ruling and certainly its discussion is being interrupted by the presence of the Lieutenant Governor and obviously we have to give way to him, but as soon as I resume the Chair this can again be a matter for discussion.

Mr. Lloyd: — Mr. Speaker, may I just say while we are discussing this, I think it would be somewhat a pity if you were to interpret the present situation, the situation raised the other day as meaning or suggesting that you ought to remove the speaker from your office. To me these are quite different categories. May I say speaking on behalf of this group, Sir, we see no reason for you to take that action insofar as we are concerned.

Mr. Speaker: — Well, in reply to that and again I speak informally I had never given this matter any consideration before the question was raised. But after the question was raised, I not only gave consideration to what speakers there might be elsewhere, but also to the one in my own office. I had cause to consider the matter, and in consideration I had to go back into the reasons as to why I was in that office and in the Chair in the House. Those are the reasons as I stated and therefore I

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consider it proper that I should follow the course that I have just outlined. I consider it the proper thing to do.

Mr. Lloyd: — Mr. Speaker, again, we are all in a very difficult position, and I appreciate the opportunity of having a chance to talk in this way, but I take it that it will be possible for us in a formal sort of way to discuss the matter at 7:30 when you return to the Chair.

Mr. Speaker: — . . . if I ever get back here.

Hon. A.C. Cameron (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, may I comment, if it is your ruling and your desire that these speakers not be permitted outside of this Chamber, except in the Clerk's office, I don't think we require any form of motion or discussion. I think we are prepared on this side to accede to the Speaker's wishes in that regard.

Mr. Speaker: — My reference to a formal motion in the ruling if you read it, implies that if Members wanted a speaker then the House itself would have to agree to it by motion. The House will have to make a decision on it.

Mr. G.G. Leith (Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I feel that I ought to just say a word. I asked you about the loudspeaker that is in the Clerk's office just as a matter of interest. On my part I have no wish to suggest that the speaker should come out of your office. I think probably it is serving a very useful function and this will be a matter for your conscience, but as far as I'm concerned the loudspeaker in our Members' lounge will be taken out.

Mr. F.A. Dewhurst (Wadena): — Mr. Speaker, before you make a final decision on your speaker I would like to have a chance to say a few words sometime on that matter. I know you don't have the time now, so I hope we can arrange it at 7:30 because I have a comment I'd like to add.

Mr. Speaker: — Well I think we can have a proper discussion on this at 7:30.

The Assembly recessed until 7:30 o'clock p.m.

ADJOURNMENT PROPOSED TO DISCUSS MATTER OF URGENT IMPORTANCE

Mr. Lloyd: — Mr. Speaker, when it was called 5:30 I suggested that because of the importance of your statement and some ramifications of it we ought to have some time at this very moment to discuss it further. As a result, Mr. Speaker, I ask leave under Standing Order 20 to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent importance. The matter of urgent importance which I bring to your attention and to that of the House, Mr. Speaker, is couched in these words:

Mr. Speaker has brought to the attention of the

Legislature a matter which he has described to be ‘an important question of propriety.’ In concluding that proceedings in the Chamber are being transmitted to ‘one of the Members’ lounges’ he has stated an opinion that such a practice would ‘seriously detract from the process of parliamentary debate and tend to weaken the very foundation of parliamentary self-government.’

Mr. Speaker, lest a dangerous precedent be set, it is important I suggest that all Members act and that we act now to expunge the dangerous implications of this action and that we do so by formal record. It is equally important that by formal record we support Mr. Speaker’s wish in his statement that the matter be formally clarified. In order that we may do that, Mr. Speaker, I ask leave under Standing Order 20 to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent and public importance.

I know the Provincial Treasurer doesn’t consider these matters important but perhaps some people do, and we have a right to do so.

Mr. Speaker: — I listened with care to what the Leader of the Opposition had to say in presenting his motion for the adjournment of the House.

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

Standing Order 20(1) (Adjournment of special purpose) reads as follows:

Leave to make a motion for the adjournment of the Assembly (when made for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance) must be asked after the ordinary daily routine of business has been concluded and before Orders of the Day are entered upon.

The citations in Beauchesne’s Parliamentary Rules and Forms must be read in the context of the Standing Orders of the House of Commons of Canada which are analogous to our own, and therefore also sustain my ruling that a motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 20 cannot be entertained at this time.

The Motion is therefore out of order.

Mr. Lloyd: — On the point, I draw attention of the House to and ask your further guidance with respect to two matters which, it seems to me, established some precedent in the matter. I could refer, Sir, to Debates in the House of Commons which took place in 1958, as I recall it, at which time during discussion of the Estimates of the Supply of the Department of Trade and Commerce, I believe, such a similar matter with respect to the Federal House was introduced and was discussed at that time. I further quote . . .

Mr. Steuart: — On a point of order . . .

Mr. Lloyd: — I am speaking to a point of order.

Mr. Steuart: — Well, are you appealing the

Speaker's ruling? The Speaker has ruled your motion out of order. Are you appealing his ruling?

Mr. Lloyd: — I am asking the Speaker for some further clarification and guidance because of a ruling which I want to quote.

Hon. D.V. Heald (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, in speaking to a point of order, as I understand it, you, Sir, made a ruling. Now as I understand it, the Leader of the Opposition is seeking to argue with that ruling. Now there is a well known procedure. If you don't agree with the ruling of the Speaker, you can appeal the ruling. But I don't think that you can stand up and argue about the ruling or try to appeal it. You appeal it in a proper way under Standing Orders and you appeal it in the normal procedure.

Mr. Lloyd: — If I may, Mr. Speaker, I thought I had made my position clear. I wasn't appealing or quarrelling, I was drawing to the Speaker's attention a citation and asking for his guidance with respect to interpretation of it. The citation I refer to is in Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms found on page . . .

Mr. Heald: — Further to the point of order, the point of order was raised by the Hon. Provincial Treasurer and with deference, Sir, I think we should have a ruling on the point of order.

Mr. Lloyd: — I haven't had a chance to raise my point of order as yet. Just sit quiet and I'll read it.

Mr. Speaker: — I did state in answer to a point of order raised in the House before we rose for supper, say, that I would listen to discussion on the point of order concerning the ruling that I had made, but that the comments must be brief and they must be strictly to the point.

Mr. Lloyd: — Mr. Speaker, all I am trying to find out is the method by which we can make what I consider to be appropriate comments with respect to a very important matter for this Legislature. I was attempting to quote a rule which provides a way I think of doing this and I wanted your guidance as to Forms, page 90 subclause (i) Citation 100 reads this way:

The Speaker's duty with regard to a motion to adjourn the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance under Standing Order 26 is confined to determining as whether, in the first instance, a motion so proposed is in order. There his responsibility ends. There is a further question as to the propriety or desirability of discussing a matter of such great importance. That is for the House to decide. The Speaker having found the motion in order may submit the question: has the honourable member leave to proceed? If objection is taken the Speaker requests those members who support the motion to rise in their places. If more than 20 members support the motion, the Speaker calls upon the honourable member to propose his motion.

Our Standing Order differs from that of the Federal House. We require only 15 members rather 20 to support the motion to adjourn. The Speaker wished the 15 other members to indicate whether they support the proposal or not. I ask his guidance whether this procedure is acceptable.

Mr. Speaker: — . . . The Leader of the Opposition has referred to a Standing Order in the Canadian House of Commons.

I would draw his attention to Standing Order No. 26, of the Canadian House of Commons as follows, quote.

Leave to make a motion for the adjournment of the House, when made for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, must be asked after the start of questions on Wednesdays or other days of the ordinary routine of business.

I would again refer you to Standing Order No. 20 of the Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Leave to make a motion of the adjournment of the Assembly when made for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, must be asked after the ordinary daily routine of business has been concluded and before the orders of the Day are entered into.

On those grounds and on the basis of the citation from the Standing Orders of our Provincial House, I rule the motion out of order. The Standing Orders of the Federal House merely support in full the ruling that I have just made.

Mr. Lloyd: — I take it then, Mr. Speaker, that your direction is and your order, which I respect, Sir, is that the production of 15 supporting members is not sufficient to enable you to warrant the debate to proceed.

Mr. Speaker: — Just at the moment it's not. And if any further clarification may be needed let me draw the attention of all Members of this House to the fact that when a motion is moved for the adjournment of the House in order to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, the Speaker has to rule as to whether or not it is of sufficient public importance to warrant the putting aside of all the routine business of the House in order to give that particular motion complete right-of-way. If there be any ruling that I haven't previously made in the connection with the proper time to make this motion, if that isn't sufficiently binding on the Member who seems determined to argue about the matter, may I also tell him that I don't consider the matter of sufficient importance to warrant putting aside all the business of the House in order to give this motion right-of-way when it can be discussed on a substantive motion in the usual way, in the proper time, and the proper place by giving proper notice. This House has many important things to discuss. While it may be debatable whether or not they are more important than this, in my view, the view of the Chair, the matter is not of sufficient urgency to warrant the interruption of the normal schedule and business of this House.

Mr. Lloyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I was seeking to clarify the . . .

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Mr. Speaker: — Order, now if the Member wishes to go into any further discussion, the correct thing to do is to challenge the ruling of the Chair, otherwise we continue with the normal business of the House.

Mr. Lloyd: — I simply rose to thank you for the clarification as to the procedure. If I may, Sir, make one comment with respect to your ruling which has not to do with the procedure I just mentioned. I want to reiterate what I said earlier this evening, that I trust you will not find what has happened so far to give you reason to interrupt the arrangements which you have made for being able to follow the proceedings of the House in your office. That is the wish of this group.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:00 o'clock p.m.