

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ORAL QUESTIONS

Sale of Shares in SED Systems

Mr. Koenker: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister for Science and Technology. My question concerns SED Systems, a company started at the University of Saskatchewan that has always been Saskatchewan controlled and has grown into the biggest high-tech company in the province.

A few weeks ago Fleet Aerospace of Ontario announced that it had purchased 30 per cent control of SED Systems, and now Fleet Aerospace is trying to exchange or purchase the SED System shares that are owned by the provincial government, the University of Saskatchewan, company shareholders, and private individuals. If those purchases are concluded, Saskatchewan will clearly lose control of SED Systems to Ontario.

Will the minister give his assurance that the Government of Saskatchewan will not sell its control in SED Systems by way of a share exchange?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I would thank the member opposite for his question. I'm not sure if he's totally aware of the history of Fleet Aerospace as it relates to SED Systems. They have, of course, for some time had an interest in SED, and I think it was the latter part of March that they acquired some of the control that they presently have which is about 33 per cent. That was acquired through the purchase of debentures that became available at that time. We have been given assurance that this industry is going to remain in Saskatoon and in Saskatchewan.

In so far as any proposed offers for the outstanding shares, and there are, as you indicated, several shareholders involved, we, at this point, do not have any written confirmation of this in so far as the government shares are concerned, nor do we have any ideas as to what the other shareholders will do if such an offer should be made to them. So I think it would be unlikely that we would respond at this point in time, not knowing what others are going to do.

Mr. Koenker: — Supplementary. I'm not asking what others are going to do; I'm asking what the Government of Saskatchewan is going to be doing. And I ask the minister: can he tell us what your intentions are to do with the 12 per cent government ownership in the SED company?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Mr. Speaker, I would simply respond to the question in this way: that until such time as the Government of Saskatchewan receives the offer and knows what it is . . . The only indication that we have to

date as to what offer might be made is what has been seen in the newspapers. But until such time as a formal offer is made, there's no way that the government is going to respond.

Mr. Koenker: — Supplementary. Given the fact that the provincial government has just earlier this year invested \$8 million worth of public money — taxpayers' money — in term financing and interest-free loans to SED Systems to move into a new complex at the University of Saskatchewan, Innovation Place, is the minister prepared to surrender this public equity in SED Systems in the new complex to control of an Ontario-owned company?

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Mr. Speaker, I would simply point out to the member opposite that the Government of Saskatchewan is certainly interested in any investment that is going to be made in this province, and we understand that there have been some shortages of cash flow within SED.

Fleet Aerospace, of course, is in the position that they are going to be investing a fairly large amount of money in that company. I don't think that at this point in time that we would have any concerns in view of the fact that this particular company has a very sound record in this province, and they have something in the neighbourhood of 40 to \$50 million worth of orders on the books which they will be doing over the next four years. They will be moving into their new complex north of the university campus some time in February or March, where in the neighbourhood of 350 people will be employed, and that will be expanded to 400 people in the very near future. So I don't think at this point in time, when we consider diversification as being an answer to this province to overcoming some of the problems, that we should be overly concerned with what's happening to SED.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also to the Minister of Science and Technology. The minister will know the details of the offer, Mr. Speaker. The minister will know that Fleet Aerospace is contacting your government and is going to be offering for you to take one non-voting share of Fleet Aerospace at approximately \$11 a share in exchange for \$2.75 worth of SED Systems shares — four shares. One non-voting share for four voting shares.

My question to the minister is . . . The minister will know that the SED shares at \$2.75 are very much undervalued. My question is: why would your government be giving any consideration at all to taking one non-voting share of an Ontario company for four voting shares of a very valuable Saskatchewan company? Will you give us your assurance that you're not prepared to accept such a ridiculous exchange, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — The hon. members should be aware that the ownership of SED is housed in CICI of which I happen to have responsibility. The hon. member, the Minister of Science and Technology, indicated to a

previous question from the member from Saskatoon Sutherland that no offer had yet been received. The reality is that CICI (Crown Investments Corporation Industrial Investments Incorporated) has not received an offer from Fleet Aerospace. That's the reality of the situation.

Now I can advise the hon. member, as did the Minister of Science and Technology, that the Government of Saskatchewan is primarily interested in the survival and the health of SED Systems, that it stay: (a) in Saskatchewan, and it will prosper in Saskatchewan. And we would entertain any negotiations or entertain any offer that would come. But that's far to say that we going to accept any offer just because it's been printed in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, the minister will realize that the central issue here is that the 12 per cent of the shares that the Government of Saskatchewan owns is the key to Fleet Aerospace obtaining majority control of SED Systems. If you sell your shares, then clearly Fleet Aerospace has majority control of SED.

Now my question to the minister is: the minister will be aware that within a matter of two or three days you will have the offer. Fleet Aerospace will want you to reply to that offer during the Christmas recess. And I want your guarantee, Mr. Minister, that you will not be prepared to enter into a share exchange with Fleet Aerospace and give up control of the people of Saskatchewan's shares of SED Systems during the Christmas recess; that you won't try to sneak in that kind of a deal during the Christmas holidays.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I can give the hon. member the following undertaking: is that (a) the Government of Saskatchewan is interested in seeing SED Systems (a) stay in Saskatchewan. We are interested in seeing SED Systems further expand and become a healthier and healthier corporation in the province of Saskatchewan.

I can further indicate to you that it is our intention to use this as a corporation by which we can expand employment in the city of Saskatoon and in the province of Saskatchewan. And I can also give the undertaking that we will deal with the offer, if it is forthcoming, in the normal way.

As you should know, any offer that would be coming would be dealt with by the board of directors of CICI, a process put in place by the previous government, a process that we have followed in the last four years and intend to follow in the future.

Mr. Prebble: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister will know that SED Systems' shares are highly undervalued right now, a fact that would make any kind of a share exchange with Fleet Aerospace very detrimental to the people of Saskatchewan.

Will the minister admit that SED Systems has approximately \$43 million of contracts that it will be filling in the months ahead; that Saskatchewan Power

Corporation and SED Systems are negotiating on a \$15 million contract for a repeater system in Saskatchewan; that between the \$43 million guarantee of contract and the likely \$15 million contract, that SED Systems shares would rise very substantially over the 275.

Therefore, in light of that, Mr. Minister, would you acknowledge that it would be much to the benefit of Fleet Aerospace and much to the disadvantage of Saskatchewan taxpayers if you were to sell your shares in SED Systems at the present time. And therefore will you give this House your guarantee that you will not do that, not jeopardize Saskatchewan control of SED Systems . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — The hon. member from Saskatoon University is standing there advising as to what the proper value of the shares of SED Systems is. I would perhaps take issue whether or not you are the most knowledgeable person of which to take knowledge of that particular piece of information.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please! Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — It seems to me the fundamental question is, and the fundamental question I've answered is this: (1) we wish to have SED Systems remain in Saskatchewan (stated principle); (2) we wish to have SED Systems expand and to grow and to be more prosperous and not lose money like it has over a period of time; and (3) we hope that it would create more jobs and become a better company and a better corporate citizen in the province of Saskatchewan. However we can get to that point, that's the type of options we'll be pursuing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, the minister in charge of CIC Industrial Investments Incorporated. Do you see any danger in the ownership and control of a company like SED Systems passing from Saskatchewan hands and it becoming a ranch plant of a company headquartered in Toronto. Will you concede that the history of Saskatchewan, and indeed of Canada, has been that research and development and much of central planning has been done at head offices, wherever they are, and it has not been done at branch plant locations? Do you not see that as the likely pattern of development of SED Systems if it becomes a branch plant?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member, we are in this province very interested in trying to diversify the economy of the province of Saskatchewan. As we indicated in the throne speech, and as the Premier has indicated on many occasions, if we're going to look at expanding or diversifying the economy, one of the areas by which you have to diversify the economy is the so-called knowledge industries. Now either we are afraid in this province to say: no, we cannot do that, or we must

attempt to do what we can to expand research and development, whether it's in this particular industry, whether it's in heavy oil technology, whether it's in further refinement of paper, whether it's in a whole series of things, pharmaceuticals – whatever it might be. And we believe that the capacity of the province of Saskatchewan is that we can do that.

I believe that the world is changing in the sense that if one puts policies in place that can attract that kind of attention and interest, that we can, in fact, do that here. Now the member opposite would have us believe that any corporation, whether it's outside of Saskatchewan or outside of Canada, would have no interest and no intention of doing any kind of research and development in the province of Saskatchewan. I don't agree with that.

I believe that this company, as I indicated to the hon. member from Saskatoon University and the member from Saskatoon Sutherland, is that we believe this company will (a) stay in Saskatchewan; (b) that this company will continue to expand and prosper. I think it's important, and I think the hon. member would appreciate that it must prosper, and that we will create more jobs, and we will create more new high-tech jobs in the province of Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Minister. Accepting your premise that Saskatchewan people should not be afraid, why, Mr. Minister, are you supporting a policy of being afraid, of selling out control of this company and not supporting a policy of back in our own highly successful researchers and entrepreneurs?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I would indicate to you that in fact we have, over the past four years, backed SED Systems to the tune of a fairly significant amount of money – a fairly significant amount of money; that we hold the view that SED Systems is something that Saskatchewan should be proud of; that we will continue with SED Systems, and that we are comfortable as we approach any type of negotiations that we will preserve that fundamental principle.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the issue is not whether Fleet Aerospace's investment in SED Systems is welcome. The 30 per cent is not a problem. The issue is the question of majority control. Your government's shares in SED Systems are the key to Fleet's majority control.

And my question to you is: you will realize that if in the long term things get going that the situation in the high-tech industry is difficult, that Fleet Aerospace could easily decide to move part of the SED Systems to Ontario. Will you not admit, Mr. Minister, that that's a very real risk if majority control in SED Systems is lost?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I indicated first of all that (a) before you get too heated up, that we haven't even received an offer from Fleet Aerospace other than to hear

it in the Toronto *Globe and Mail*. No formal offer has been advanced. Once that offer has been advanced, the Government of Saskatchewan will look at it, we will make a decision on it, and the decision that we should make on it we would certainly be prepared to share with the public.

Financial Situation of Supercart International

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, and it deals with the status of Supercart International which recently laid off most of its 35 staff in the city of Regina.

Mr. Minister, can you confirm that this troubled company has received a great deal of money from Saskatchewan taxpayers, specifically a \$213,000 grant from the Department of Science and Technology for research and development, a \$400,000 loan from Sedco, and wage subsidies from the Social Services department's employment development program.

Can you provide, Mr. Minister, a full accounting of how much money you have sunk into this company?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well I can indicate, first of all, that Supercart . . . If one was to listen to the member from Regina North East, he wishes to write the obituary to Supercart, and I'm not prepared to give up on Supercart yet. Supercart, we believe, is a good idea, Mr. Speaker. At this point in time . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order, please. Would you please allow the minister to make the answer.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — At this point in time Supercart is obviously experiencing some management problems, and those management problems we hope will be able to be resolved, because I think it's in the interest of the province of Saskatchewan.

With regard to Supercart, there was a payment that Supercart earned which is a joint provincial-federal funding on research and development, which I assume that you're not against that. That's a joint sharing program. They were able to bridge that and use that to develop. I think that was somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$250,000.

I understand as well, Mr. Speaker, that while they have a bulk of their mortgage and their financing arranged with one of the local banks in the province, Sedco is in for a small amount, and I'm not responsible for the details of Sedco loan.

The member opposite, each time he stands up, would have us believe that every time Sedco make a loan to a company in the province of Saskatchewan, somehow you're giving them the money. And one never, ever thought, Mr. Speaker, that when you make a loan from Sedco, somehow it's a give-away program.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier has been quoted as saying that Supercart manufacturing plant in Regina is the perfect example of how the government's

open-for-business attitude since 1982 is succeeding in diversifying our economy. If this is an example of diversification, Mr. Speaker, then I think Saskatchewan's economy may very well be in some great serious difficulty.

Now, Mr. Minister, can you answer the following question. Has the provincial government been asked and have you agreed to provide any additional financial assistance to this company?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — No. For the hon. member, a company like this would earn, or has qualified for and registered for a — what we call our industrial incentives program, which is \$7,500 per job with the proviso that those jobs are full-time jobs and in place for a full period of one year. If the company does not proceed forward, keep those people employed for at least a full one-year period, they would not be entitled to earn any money from the industrial incentives program.

As far as I know, at this point in time Supercart has not addressed or requested any further assistance from the Government of Saskatchewan. As I understand, their negotiations at this point in time are being done between Supercart and the bank in question. Perhaps they've made some overtures to the minister responsible for Sedco that I'm not familiar with or aware of, and I would not be able to answer that.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, when the Premier officially opened the Supercart plant last April 18th, he issued a press release which called Supercart, and I quote to you, "the perfect example of how the government's open-for-business attitude is succeeding," as I said earlier. But he also said, and I quote, "part of a whole team of new industries, weaving into our economic future."

Now, Mr. Minister, Supercart is in trouble. The Regina fertilizer plant is on hold. The Husky upgrader is no longer even mentioned. I ask you: how many more of these projects announced with such fanfare before the election are about to blow up in your face?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I have somewhat of a concern when the member opposite on the one hand speaks about how we should try to create jobs in the province, and then on the other hand takes great delight if some business starts in the province of Saskatchewan, maybe has some problems as to whether it can get it going, or up off the ground, and takes delight in that type of thing.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell the members opposite that this government is proceeding forward with many projects and we're very proud of that diversification, and we look forward to many more in the future.

Financing of School Construction Costs

Mr. Kowalsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker. It deals with proposals now being circulated by his department,

circulated to the school boards across the province. These proposals would require local school boards to pay a higher portion of school construction costs from local property taxes. Mr. Minister, at a time when local property taxes are already a severe burden for many people in Saskatchewan, why are you at this time proposing a shift, a shift of school construction costs to local school boards and off the provincial government?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any such proposal, but I will take notice of the question and confer with my departmental officials to see if, in fact, (a) these proposals exist and, if they do, what the discussions have been.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'm quite surprised that the minister is unaware of his department's proposal. I have here a document entitled "School Facilities consultation," which has been given to school boards at this time around the province . . . school boards across the province at this time. One of the stated purposes of these meetings, and I quote, says: "... potential changes to the financing of the school construction program."

Now could the Minister find out for me please, if — and confirm—if one of the proposals being proposed would see the local boards' share of a \$3 million construction project in a rural, high assessment division jump from \$226,000 to more than \$746,000? That's a jump of from 5.2 per cent to 17 per cent of the total costs. Could you get me that information too, please, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, I would, as I said, I took notice earlier, and I'll take notice of this further question to get any details relative to the consultations that the hon. member was talking about. I was aware of consultations relative to putting in place mechanisms.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please, Order, please. Order.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Weyerhaeuser Awards Contract to Canadian Firm

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, a ministerial statement in my capacity as the minister responsible for Sask Forest Products and formerly responsible for the negotiations with Weyerhaeuser (Canada Ltd.).

In keeping with the agreement reached between this government and Weyerhaeuser when the company bought the Prince Albert pulp mill earlier this year, I'm proud to announce that Weyerhaeuser (Canada Ltd.) has awarded the first major contract for a \$40 million machine for its new paper-mill due to start production in late 1988.

The contract was awarded to a Canadian firm, Valmet Dominion Inc., and I'm pleased to announce that Valmet will build 75 per cent of the machine in Canada. I'm also pleased to note, Mr. Speaker, that Valmet Dominion Ltd.

will be sourcing Saskatchewan suppliers for the machinery components that they will be contracting out – an excellent opportunity for bidders in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

The Valmet machine will produce a continuous sheet of paper, 318 inches wide, running at a designed speed of 3,000 feet per minute. The paper, destined for markets in the United States and Canada, will be shipped in 450 to 900 kilogram rolls. Its primary end uses will include business forms, photocopy paper, and printer stock.

Construction of the paper-mill will begin on schedule in April, and delivery of the machine components will begin in the fall of 1987. The new paper-mill will produce a net increase of 215 new jobs within the Saskatchewan forest operations, Mr. Speaker – another fine example of this government's commitment to job creation through economic diversification. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I will not spend a great deal of time on this statement. This is yet another announcement of an industrial venture by the government opposite. We have had a number of those. We dealt with some of them in question period.

I think the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. And we will see when this paper-mill is constructed, and who pays for it, and who gets the profit from it. I venture to think – I venture to think that when all of the facts are known – and they're not all known yet with respect to Weyerhaeuser – that the financing will once again prove to be primarily at the expense of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, and the profits will once again be primarily for the benefit of some out-of-province, and probably out-of-country corporation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, if I might, just before orders of the day, I have three motions which I'd like to move, which are regular motions to be moved near the beginning of a new session.

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: — Before that, if you don't mind, I would like to present my ruling regarding yesterday's point of order.

Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition raised the point of order regarding an answer by the Minister of Health in the oral question period. I deferred my ruling at that time.

I reviewed the verbatim record and find that the minister did stray from the direct question that was asked in such a way as to promote debate. I ask all members to adhere to the guide-lines of question period in the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, all ministers will make every attempt to adhere to your ruling.

MOTIONS

Continuing Select Committee

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I have three motions which are normally moved near the beginning of a new session, and I would proceed to do those now.

I move, seconded by seat mate, the hon. member from Kindersley, by leave of the Assembly:

that members Sauder, Duncan, Gardner, Gerich, McLaren, McLeod be constituted a continuing select committee with the power to call for persons, papers, and records, and to examine witnesses under oath, and whose duty it shall be to establish from time to time select committees with the power to call for persons.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I've just checked with the Table, and I'm informed that, and as I indicated in my initial remarks, that these are normal motions moved at the beginning of a new legislature. I've just checked with the Table and I find that there was an error in the typing in the Clerk's office, so that will be rectified and that motion is clearly not proper, and I apologize to the members there.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the other two motions that I have, if we could carry on with those – or I'll leave it in your hands whether we carry on with the other two motions and come back to that one, which I would suggest.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, may I make a suggestion to the government House Leader. We have not seen these resolutions. They may very well be proper and order and routine. May I suggest to him that, rather than moving them at the present time, he give us the courtesy to inform us as to what they intend to do, and if there's no problem we'll give leave by consent of the House to bring it on later this day.

But to ask us to give leave in the absence of even a copy of the resolutions, I think, with the greatest of respect, is a little unusual and out of order and improper.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, there is nothing that has been done here which is not in the normal process in the way in which these particular three motions are presented. I would make that point.

But I do agree, Mr. Speaker, given the circumstances of the one motion which I have explained, I do agree, and I would ask the House that we will return to this late this day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No 4 – An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Act

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to move second reading of an Act to amend The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Act. The plan was unveiled earlier this year and is now fully operational.

The plan is the first of its kind in the world, affording unique opportunities for retirement planning to thousands of Saskatchewan residents, especially home-makers, self-employed, part-time and casual workers.

The Saskatchewan Pension Plan builds upon many features of the Canada Pension Plan. The Canada Pension Plan is changing, effective January 1, 1987, to permit early retirement. We have therefore made a change to bring our Act in line with the early retirement option under the Canada Pension Plan.

The Bill before this Assembly contains a provision which will significantly enhance accountability to plan members. The change authorizes the making of regulations which would separate the existing fund into two or more investment funds. This will facilitate the development of different investment strategies for the various components of the fund and will permit a more equitable distribution of the earnings of the fund to plan members.

Finally, we have included a few housekeeping amendments, the most significant of which is the change of the fiscal year of the plan from the government fiscal year to the calendar year. This is required because of the length between the plan and the taxation year. There is also a change to the residency requirement in the year of retirement. Currently a person must be a Saskatchewan resident on December 31 of any year in order to be eligible to contribute for that particular year. The Bill before the Assembly makes an exception to that rule so that a person who is a resident when he makes his last contribution to the plan before retirement is deemed to have satisfied the requirement for that year.

Mr. Speaker, I'm please to move second reading of The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 1986.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with respect to these amendments to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, there's a number of comments that I would like to make with respect to problems pertaining to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan that I understand have been brought up in this House before but have not yet been addressed by the government. So I would like to go through those this afternoon.

The first thing that came to my attention, Mr. Speaker, and I don't believe that this has been rectified by the amendments, is that citizens with lower incomes who receive old age security and are also entitled to the guaranteed income supplement, for example, would not be able to take pension benefits under this plan in addition to the guaranteed income supplement, but in effect it would be deducted from the guaranteed income supplement, Mr. Speaker, that means in effect that Saskatchewan taxpayers are paying this money instead of it being paid by the federal government. In effect it means

that Saskatchewan taxpayers are paying federal taxes and not getting the benefits. Therefore we would recommend, Mr. Speaker, that arrangements be made so that this would top off the guaranteed income supplement for example, as opposed to the province putting forth the money.

There's another aspect with respect to the pension that causes us some concern and that is the lack of portability in the pension, Mr. Speaker. If a person contributes to this plan and moves to another province, for example, where there isn't a corresponding plan, the Saskatchewan plan would cease, in effect. Given the fact we have such a mobile society today, Mr. Speaker, that is a very serious failing of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Another aspect that causes us concern is the voluntary nature of the plan. In other words, because it is voluntary it is not going to be taken up by the people who need it the most.

The NDP, Mr. Speaker, have long said that we need a pension plan for home-makers and small-business people, as well as people who don't have pensions through their employers. But we meant all home-makers, Mr. Speaker, and all small-business people, not just those who can afford to make the monthly contribution. And I'm asking myself what this government is going to do for those people.

To put it mildly, or politely, Mr. Speaker, I believe it's a deception for the government to say that we're going to make \$300 available, in taxpayers' money, to you if you come up with \$300. It's a deception to these people because this government knows full well that many of those people are not going to be able to make that \$300 payment.

On the other hand, the government takes away their property improvement grant and institutes instead a home improvement grant, which they cannot take advantage of also because they can't afford it.

There will be a substantial take-up by some people, Mr. Speaker, because it's a good deal. There's no question it's a good deal. You put in your 300 and you get interest on that, and the province puts in another 300 and you got interest on that, and it is a good deal for those people who can afford it. But it's nothing for those who can't. and that, Mr. Speaker, is a very serious failing with this legislation.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, it does nothing for people aged 60 to 65 or, if you like, 55 to 65, who do not have retirement income now and because of ill health or because of one reason or another they're unable to work but they don't qualify for pensions. This Bill doesn't do anything for them, Mr. Speaker, for this immediate problem that these people are facing. And we think that it's time this government took some action to make sure that these people were looked after. They should be our first priority.

We should also be looking to phasing this plan in with the CPP and including our target groups in a universally portable and federally subsidized plan. A provincially

based plan is a poor second-best to a federal subsidized plan, Mr. Speaker. And it has even been suggested to me that it substantially decreases the likelihood of an effective, federally administered plan in the near future. And I find that very disturbing.

Family income, Mr. Speaker, should be used as a criteria, rather than an individual income in determining eligibility for matching. And it's my understanding what they do now is use an individual income for the purposes of determining eligibility for matching.

And let me just explain to you what the problem may be. For example, if we have a small-business person who's earning \$26,000 a year, there is no matching contribution for that small-business person. And if his or her spouse is earning \$15,000 a year but has a pension with his or her employer, there isn't any matching contribution on the part of the government, yet the combined earnings are in the vicinity of 41,000 a year. On the other hand, if you have a spouse who's earning 80,000 and the other spouse is not working, the government will match that pension. And I say that's unfair, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — I understand that the Saskatchewan income plan was amended to provide additional benefits of some \$15 a month, but I must point out to this House, Mr. Speaker, that the increase is inadequate because those with no retirement income other than old age security and GIS are living \$1,000 below the poverty line. And a \$15 a month increase hardly bridges that gap.

To be effective in providing adequate retirement income for all Canadians, Mr. Speaker, a pension plan needs to be mandatory, and where necessary the contributions should be made from public funds.

The Saskatchewan Pension Plan therefore does not acknowledge the root causes of women's continuing poverty, which is another criticism I have of the plan. It doesn't deal, nor purport to deal, in this legislation or anywhere else, with job ghettos, low minimum wage, and lack of employment and pay equities, and with a pay equity program. It doesn't deal with the lack of effective training programs and inadequate support services for women in the work-force, such as day care, for example, to name only a few. The plan is inadequate because it does not provide for those who need it the most — for the poor, single-parent family.

(1445)

There is no question, Mr. Speaker, that we feel that home-makers should be entitled to a pension. There is no contribution in society that we've failed to recognize as much as the contribution of a home-maker. There's no question that the contribution of a home-maker has been underestimated in society throughout the years, and we are pleased to see that it is being given recognition in this Bill. No question that the contribution of a home-maker is one of the most difficult contributions that a person has to make to this society. And I know, having some experience in that area, and as well in the working force, Mr. Speaker.

But what it doesn't do is it doesn't recognize the contribution by our home-makers who are in the low-income brackets or who are on unemployment or who are on welfare, and it doesn't purport to solve their problems for them or to include them in the plan. And that is a serious and grievous failing with respect to this plan. And I would like to see this government take some positive steps towards including those individuals in this plan, and I hope that this will be forthcoming in the near future. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to say in the beginning, time ran out before I got an opportunity to speak in the throne speech. So I missed an opportunity which would have been relevant to this debate to describe the sort of people who live in my riding. And it is relevant to this.

About two-thirds of the people who live in my riding rent their accommodation. That contains a very large number of single women. There are, Mr. Speaker, a large number of single women in my riding who live below the poverty line. I never cease to be shocked at the way our society treats older people. And among those who are in the most difficult straits are the distaff side of that generation. They have usually enjoyed lower incomes during their lifetimes, often worked at unskilled jobs where there was no pensions, often jobs which were not the subject of a collective agreement. Pensions on the job are almost always found where there's a collective agreement and rarely otherwise.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill does nothing to address the poverty of old women. This Bill is what I describe as socialism for the rich. There are . . . Well, I see the member from Kelvington-Wadena turning up his nose. I tell you that this will do nothing for those who need it most.

Mr. Speaker, this is the best investment in town. I would readily admit that. If you're looking for an investment and you're eligible, this is the best investment in town, but it's not one that's available to women who spend their lives at or below the poverty line, as an embarrassingly large number of women do.

Our society is such today that women who don't work live at either ends of the economic spectrum. Either they're rich or they're poor. Most of the ones in between do, and will therefore not be eligible for the government subsidy. The group of women who live in the middle class will, by and large, not be eligible. The majority of those people work. The majority of those women work. The sort who don't are at the bottom of the spectrum — they're on welfare; or they're at the top of the spectrum — they're of the sort whose family income is sufficient that they don't need to work.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and I ask the members opposite to ask themselves: who do you think will be investing, and who do you think will be coming up with the \$300 to invest in the program? Do you think it will be those on welfare who cannot feed their families? Or do you think it will be those wives of professional people who don't

need to work, for whom the income would be superfluous and would rather have the time at home with their families? The answer is obvious. The type of women who are going to be investing in this and who will be getting the government subsidy will be, by and large, women whose family income is quite high – high enough that they can enjoy the luxury of not going into the work place.

Mr. Speaker, there will be a number of other comments that I want to make, and I'm therefore in a moment going to beg leave to adjourn this matter. Before doing, I will admit that there's some change that this matter may pass on second reading and that we will get to Committee of the Whole. I would ask the minister to be prepared when the matter does come before Committee of the Whole to be prepared to table the forms that are used and be prepared to table any information the government may have with respect to the family income of those women who are eligible for the subsidy. I'm not sure to what extent that information would be available to the government, but I'm going to be asking those questions in Committee of the Whole.

With that, Mr. Minister, I would beg leave of the Assembly to adjourn debate on this Bill.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 6 – An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Act

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to explain the purpose of these amendments to The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Act. There are two specific amendments. Both are of a straightforward and fairly technical in nature, but they are necessary in order for the Medical Care Insurance Commission to carry out certain responsibilities properly and with full legal authority.

The Act provides authority for the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations respecting certain deductions by the commission from payments it makes to physicians. Specifically, these deductions apply to fee-for-service physicians who are not members of the Saskatchewan Medical Association and represent a payment to the SMA in recognition of the costs incurred by the association in acting as a negotiating agent for Saskatchewan physicians.

Mr. Speaker, as part of the overall agreement negotiated between the government and the Saskatchewan Medical Association last summer, the government agreed to pass the necessary regulations to implement a check-off system beginning with the 1986 calendar year. However, it was noted that in order for this to happen it would be necessary for the regulations to be retroactive in effect, and at present the Act provides no authority for such retroactivity. The proposed amendment will simply provide the necessary authority.

The second amendment, Mr. Speaker, is of a similar nature. As hon. members will appreciate, agreements between two parties with respect to amounts in terms of payment of ten include a clause providing for the agreement to be applied retroactively to a specified date.

This situation sometimes occurs with respect to agreements for payments to physicians by the Medical Care Insurance Commission. However the legislature's Special Committee on Regulations has pointed out that the Act provides no authority for regulations defining payment schedules to be made retroactive in effect.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment will authorize the retroactive application of these regulations for a period not to exceed one year.

As I indicated at the beginning of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments are intended simply to ensure that full and proper legal authority exists for the Medical Care Insurance Commission to carry out these aspects of its responsibilities in an appropriate way.

I am therefore pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 6, An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Act.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to respond to some of the minister's remarks. As people in this Assembly will know, we, on this side of the legislature, have long been supporters of medicare in Saskatchewan. And as Mr. Speaker, will know, it was the leadership of Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd that first implemented the first medical care system in North America, here in Saskatchewan.

I do, however, want to pose a few questions to the minister that he may wish to consider when we go into committee of the Whole in third reading.

In particular, Mr. Minister, I'm not quite clear why this Bill is before the Legislative Assembly. I've had an opportunity to review the sections in The Medical Care Insurance (commission) Act, and it appears to me that the cabinet would, by regulation, be mandated to make these amendments that we have in the Bill retroactively. So I'd like some clarification on that.

In addition, Mr. Minister, I've had an opportunity to review the Saskatoon Agreement II. The Saskatoon Agreement II does talk about legislative amendments, but nowhere in the agreement do we have any reference to a compulsory check-off by the SMA on doctors in Saskatchewan.

The minister is probably aware that only 80 per cent of the doctors in Saskatchewan are members of the Saskatchewan Medical Association, and I have had some concerns raised with me by individual doctors what protection they will have from the association. And when I think of protection, Mr. Minister, I'm interested in knowing what assurances do you have that the SMA does represent a majority of doctors in this province when it comes to the Saskatchewan Medical Association acting as the sole bargaining agent for doctors.

I would ask the minister to indicate to the House in third reading: what assurances does he have that doctors are prepared to have a compulsory check-off go through the Saskatchewan Medical Association? I'd also be interested in knowing what individual protections there are legislatively for doctors when it comes to their dealings

with the Saskatchewan Medical Association.

When I review The Trade Union Act, there are individual protections for employees when it comes to employees dealing with their trade union. I'm thinking of, in particular, what rights do individual doctors have when it comes to the principle of natural justice when there is a dispute between the doctor and the Saskatchewan Medical Association?

I'm wondering whether doctors have any individual protection when it comes to matters of grievances or arbitrations that the Saskatchewan Medical Association may want to act on behalf of doctors. I'm wondering if there's reasonable notice given by the Saskatchewan Medical Association to individual doctors.

In addition, if there were to be a dispute with the Medical Care Insurance Commission – and I'm thinking of a dispute between the Saskatchewan Medical Association and the Medical Care Insurance Commission – is there any protection for doctors when it comes to voting on a final offer by the Medical Care Insurance Commission? Would the SMA have to call a vote on that final offer?

I guess I see, Mr. Minister, a move here that would bring the SMA close to acting as a trade union because we're looking at a compulsory check-off system. I'm interested in knowing whether individual doctors have protections that individual employees do when it comes to dealing with their trade union.

I would ask you to consider those questions tomorrow in committee of the Whole. And, Mr. Speaker, I would beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 7 – An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I will give the second reading speech for Bill No. 7. And I would just inform the House and all members of the House that Bill No. 7, An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act is an Act which is purely consequential – purely consequential to Bill No. 5 which is the Act respecting Organization of the Executive Government of Saskatchewan. So it's a consequential amendment, and that is it in a nutshell, Mr. Speaker.

And I move second reading of Bill No. 7, An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act.

(1500)

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to this bill. The minister calls the Bill consequential. That would be my reading as well, that the Bill is very integral to the government's plans as were laid out in Bill No. 5, which has been before the Assembly. This particular Bill seems innocuous enough, but it is not innocuous.

This Bill paves the way for the government to proceed with the reorganization of the Executive Council and the

reorganization of government. And as I read Bill No. 7 and the consequential Bill, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that what the government is doing is seeking to accrue unto itself more power than we have ever given before in the history of this province to the Executive Council. What we are proposing to do, Mr. Speaker, is to take power away from this Assembly and to entrust it to the cabinet, to the Executive Council. As has been suggested, it's a power grab, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'm no constitutional expert, and I would think that others on our side and perhaps on the government side will have more to say about that . . .

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder, on a point of order, if I might just point out to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the hon. member, that the Bill is merely consequential to Bill No. 5, and the debate on Bill No. 5 is something different than the debate on the consequential legislation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Brockelbank: — I was going to say I don't believe it's a point of order, but I am sure you will rule that.

Mr. Speaker: — He was making a point of order so much as an explanation, but I believe the member can continue.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, just by way of explanation, even if the two Bills are different, the intent of the two combined is the same. And that is to take away power from this Legislative Assembly, to take away power from the people of the province and to give it to the cabinet.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — As Bill 7, the Bill before us, proposes to take away, through some minor amendments, Bill 5 proposes to replace, proposes to replace with more power for the cabinet. I think the remarks that I was making, Mr. Speaker, are very much in order.

Mr. Speaker, as I way saying, I'm no constitutional expert, and I've got that right, but there are a few simple rules that I've learned about the exercise of democracy, Mr. Speaker. And if the Assembly will bear with me, I'd like to run through a few of those rules. It's not the rules of a constitutional expert, Mr. Speaker, not the rules of a learned political scientist, Mr. Speaker, but the rules of one member who has some six years experience dealing in a democratic institution. And I'd just like to share those with the members.

Mr. Speaker, my first rule is: the longer the leash, the greater are the chances that your dog will get into trouble.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — What I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is that the greater the distance between the electorate and the servants of the public, the greater the chances these servants will end up delving into matters that harm the

electorate and, under our system, require and deserve debate.

The greater distance that you put between those who make decisions – that is the electorate and those who elect representatives – the greater the distance between that exercise and the absolute exercise of power, the greater are the chances that some of that power which ends up being exercised, will end up being exercised, which is contrary to the interests of the electorate, contrary to the interests of the people of this proven.

And that is a very simple rule, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't come from any constitutional experts, but that's one rule that I've learned from observing democratic institutions. The greater the distance between the people and those who exercise power, the greater are the chances that power is going to be exercised in such a way that it ends up being to the detriment of the people themselves.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, this particular Bill does not extend the leash, but this particular Bill sets the stage for extending the leash, to giving more power to the uncountable, faceless, political bureaucrats and the power-hungry cabinet ministers, Mr. Speaker, for them to decide what's right – not for the people through their elected representatives.

Mr. Speaker, the second rule that I've developed is that you shouldn't confuse gophers for mice. Mr. Speaker, that great Saskatchewan politician, Tommy Douglas, delivered a fable once and it's called "The Mouse That Roared," and the members on this side of the House are all familiar with the fable of The Mouse That Roared. But now that Tommy Douglas is a hero, not only to this side of the House but also to that side of the House, I would expect that members would also be familiar with that particular story of Mouseland; perhaps they're not.

Just to make sure, Mr. Speaker, because it's very integral to the remarks that I want to make about this rule of politics which I sense is being violated by this Bill, I'd like to just, for a bit of history, to go into this Mouseland story, The Mouse That Roared. And this is delivered by Tommy Douglas, Mr. Speaker, some years ago and it goes:

Mouseland was a place where all the little mice lived and played, were born and died, and they lived much the same way as you and I do. They even had a parliament, Mr. Speaker, and every four years they had an election, used to walk to the polls and cast their ballots. Some of them even got a ride to the polls and got a ride for four years afterwards (just like you and me, Mr. Speaker). And every time on election day all the little mice used to go to the ballot box and they used to elect a government – a government made up of big, fat, black cats. Now if you think it's strange that mice should elect a government made up of cats, just look at the history of Canada for the last 90 years, and you'll see that they weren't any stupider than we are.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I sense the perplexion on the government side about this fable, but again I want to reiterate that this particular story is integral to the points

that I want to make about gophers and mice, to the points that I want to make in relation to this particular Bill.

And Tommy Douglas went on:

Now I'm not saying anything against the cats; they were nice fellows. They conducted their government with dignity; they passed good laws – that is laws that were good for the cats. But the laws that were good for the cats weren't very good for mice. One of the laws said that mouse holes had to be big enough so that a cat could get his paw in. Another law said that mice could only travel at certain speeds so that a cat could get his breakfast without too much effort. All the laws were good laws – for cats. But, oh, they were hard on the mice, and life was getting harder and harder. And when the mice couldn't put up with it any more, they decided something had to be done with them so they were *en masse* to polls. They voted the black cats out; they put in the white cats.

Now the white cats had put up a terrific campaign. They said that all that Mouseland needs is more vision. They said the trouble with Mouseland is those round mouse holes we got. If you put us in, we'll establish square mouse holes. And they did. And the square mouse holes were twice as big as the round mouse holes, and now the cat could get both paws in, and life was tougher than ever. And when they couldn't take that any more, they voted the white cats out and put the black ones in again. Then they went back to the white cats, then to the black cats. They even tried half black cats and half white cats, and they called that a coalition. They even got one government made up of cats with spots on them. They were cats that tried to make a noise like a mouse, but ate like a cat. You see, my friends, the trouble wasn't with a colour of the cat; the trouble was that they were cats. And because they were cats, they naturally looked after cats instead of mice.

Presently, there came along one little mouse who had an idea. My friends, watch out for the little fellow with an idea. And he said to the other mice: look fellows, why do we keep electing a government made up of cats? Why don't we elect a government made up of mice? Oh, they said, he's a Bolshevik; lock him up. So they put him in jail. But I want to remind you that you can lock up a mouse or a man, but you can't lock up an idea.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, that's Mouseland and Mouseland is a bit of political folklore in this province. It's very important folklore and history for the members on this side. And I know that, given the Premier's comment in the preceding months about the place that Tommy Douglas has in our province, Mouseland is now also, I would hope, required reading for the members on the government side.

Mr. Speaker, what Tommy Douglas did was essentially tell a story of a society of mice – went through their process of learning that it was in their best interests to elect a government made up of mice. What happened, of course, in our society is that the mice went on to elect a government. They elected a government made up of mice, and the mice passed laws, Mr. Speaker, that

benefited them. They reduced the size of mouse holes, Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order, order, order. The member has just read the fable. Now he's going over it again. Please relate the fable to the Bill being discussed.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, if I can just continue the fable for just a few minutes to point out that one of the things the mice had to do in running a government was to employ people to help them. What they did, they employed gophers to help them. And they employed gophers because gophers were very well organized and very industrious people, much the same as a government employs civil servants to help it, Mr. Speaker, to run its government. And I just want to touch on that.

One of the problems that happened with the mice, Mr. Speaker, carrying on with the fable, is that the gophers became indispensable. Their word became the plan for government. And it seems to me in this particular situation that the back-benchers opposite are letting the gophers tell them what to think, what to do, what to say — and in this case, say very little, Mr. Speaker, about government reorganization. And they're trusting the gophers, Mr. Speaker, that are to be employed by a government of mice, run for mice, to tell them what to do. They're allowing their government to get away by taking even more power unto themselves.

And I think the members opposite know who they are — that group of faceless bureaucrats, political bureaucrats, anonymous bureaucrats. They're so indispensable; they're so bright; they're so full of great ideas. You know who they are. You see them in your caucus meetings, and you see them in your ministers' offices, and you see them in the Premier's office. And it seems to me that what the government opposite wants to do is to give these people even more power in the running of the affairs of this province.

And I ask the members opposite whether it's in the best interests of their constituents to take power from this Legislative Assembly to give that power to a group of faceless, anonymous people who are not elected, but simply appointed. And the question is: are their interests your interests, and are their interests the interests of your constituents?

(1515)

Mr. Speaker, if all of the advice, if all of the machinations of those appointed people were in fact in the best interests of government members and of the people of this province, then I ask you, Mr. Speaker, how did the used vehicle tax get through?

Mr. Speaker, just to illustrate a point. Every year the senior bureaucrats would come to the Minister of Finance, would come to the Premier and say, we have a great idea for a new tax, Mr. Speaker. And we'll call this tax a used vehicle tax. And it's a very good tax because they do it in every other province and nobody could possibly argue against it. No one could possibly be upset by something that's done everywhere else. And this tax will raise you so many millions of dollars.

Now some governments are wiser than others, and some governments will say, well, we don't want this kind of tax because in the process of collecting what, in retrospect, is simply a limited number of dollars, you'll have to process more paper, you'll have to hire more people — all those kinds of things, so we won't be any further ahead. We'll collect a few more dollars; we'll have to spend more, but in the process you've created a tremendous nuisance to the people of this province.

But the bureaucrats persist. Every year they would come back. Every year, Mr. Speaker, they would come back to the government and say, Mr. Minister, Mr. Premier, we have this wonderful idea how you can get more revenue. And that's the advice from the bright boys, the wise boys in the political back rooms, the boys in the government finance offices who are charged with coming up with ideas.

And there is one instance of where you finally give them their head. And you let them get away with it, and in the process you put in one of the most politically unpopular taxes in this province. And you've done away with it because its so politically unpopular.

We've only seen . . . Another example of this very recently, Mr. Speaker, of where a number of bureaucrats, and supposedly at no one's direction, coming forward with an idea for toll roads. Now again this is a collective wisdom of all those bright boys in the back rooms, not the people who were elected, but the people who have been appointed. And those are some of their ideas about how this province should be run: used vehicle taxes, toll roads, and I shudder to think what else they might have been discussing and looking at that hasn't yet seen the light of day.

And I ask the members opposite, and especially those that are not in the Executive Council, I ask you: do you really want to give more power to those people? Do you really want to give those people a greater say in the running of the affairs of this province? Do you really want to take responsibilities that you have now and to turn them over to those people? Is this what you really want to do?

Mr. Speaker, my sense is that the back-benchers and those that are not in the Executive Council would say no to that because they recognize that the interests of those people are not the interests necessarily, at all times, of their constituents — are not the interests that they would have a selected members.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is, on occasion, a difference between bureaucratic logic and what is in the best interests of ordinary people. There is a difference between the mental machinations of the appointed and unelected and those that are elected to serve, Mr. Speaker. And I ask you again, by giving those people more power, how does it improve the interests of your constituents?

You know seven times out of ten they might be right. Seven times out of ten their ideas might make sense. Seven times out of ten the ideas that they come up with flush out the ideas that you have about how this province

should be run. But I tell you my friends, when I look at the used vehicle tax, and when I look at the proposal for toll roads, and I look, you know, at the three out of the 10 that don't make sense, what kind of trouble are you getting into by giving these people even more power in the overall scheme of things.

And I really wonder, Mr. Speaker, how the position of all elected representatives in this House is enhanced, and how the people's interests are enhanced by this particular Bill. And just closing on rule number two, Mr. Speaker, I would say: be careful. Be careful. Don't confuse the interests of the back room boys with those of your constituents. Don't confuse gophers for mice.

Mr. Speaker, a third rule that I've developed, and again it's based on observation of democratic institutions. As an indirect observer of this House, and working at one period of time for a member of parliament, and direct participation in another level of government, namely municipal government, the third rule that I've developed is, that closing the barn door after the cows are gone won't get the cows back.

Mr. Speaker, our democratic rights are precious. Our rich heritage has entrusted us with a society that is based on ensuring fundamental rights for all. Freedom and opportunity to exercise our political and other rights, and the rule of law to ensure none is above the law, that is what a rich heritage has entrusted us with, Mr. Speaker. And we're the envy of many people throughout the world who would wish for such freedom, who would wish for such rights, who would wish for such liberty.

And I think that no matter what our beliefs might be on issues of the day, I think we're united as one to fend off attacks on our fundamental rights, on our fundamental freedoms. And essential to our exercise of democracy is our system of parliamentary representation. The people of this country and of this province place their trust in their elected representatives to govern, and to govern wisely. As elected representatives, we are accountable to those who elect us. It becomes increasingly difficult to be accountable when, as elected representatives, we entrust increasingly our responsibilities to those who are not directly accountable, to those who have not been elected, to those who are simply appointed. There is a big difference, Mr. Speaker.

And I would say that it is next to impossible that once you have given it way, it's next to impossible to take back what was once your responsibility. And that's what I say, Mr. Speaker, that once the cows are gone, closing the barn door won't bring those cows back.

And in that respect, I would ask the members opposite if they're aware, Mr. Speaker, of aspects of government operations, which used to be the responsibility of the Assembly, have over the years been entrusted to the Executive Council or to other boards and commissions, and which have now been turned back to the Assembly. That is to say, has the power sharing, Mr. Speaker, gone the other way? I ask him to think of one example, one good example of some aspect of government operations that we used to control in this House, has been delegated out – whether it's to Executive Council, some board or

commission or other – but has come back. I can't think of one example, Mr. Speaker, and neither can they.

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, is not about, let's try to see how it works. The point is, even if it does not work in the best interests of those you represent and serve, the system is such you are not likely to turn that around. If you find in a year's time that the decisions that you make today with respect to this Bill are not in the best interests of your people, you won't get that power back. You won't get it back.

And just by way of example, Mr. Speaker, I ask the members opposite. I ask them how turning over the responsibility for something like utility rate increases to an appointed body has always been in the best interests of their constituents.

You know, that responsibility used to rest with this House. It used to be up to the members here to say, well, we favour this increase, or we're opposed to this increase. And it used to be in this House where members had some influence that we used to make those kinds of decisions. Now of course we've given it to something called the Public Utilities Review Commission, PURC, and it's that board, that body, that basically decides – based on legislation, again, which set it up – that you could make the decisions about what the utility rate increases can be.

And even when the government opposite disagrees with some of the rulings because it's not in the best interests of the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, the only alternative they have is to come back to the House to change the legislation and accomplishing in a very roundabout way something that we used to be able to do very directly, Mr. Speaker – very directly.

Mr. Speaker, the system used to be that if you weren't happy, if you weren't satisfied with the proposed rate increases of Sask Power, if you weren't satisfied with the proposed rate increases of SaskTel, if you weren't satisfied with the rate increases of any public utility owned by the province, you could talk about it in this legislature. Well, I qualify that; you could talk about it in your caucus. You could sit in those caucus meetings and say to the minister responsible: Mr. Minister, I know that the corporation that you're looking after wants to make those kinds of increases but, you know, the feedback I get from the boys back on the farm is that they don't want that increase at this point in time, or at least it should be lowered. It shouldn't be that high. It's politically unpopular; it's not a wise thing to do; it's something that should be stopped. And I ask you – I ask you, who do you make those arguments to now? Where do you exert that influence now?

The point that I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a case of where the government opposite thought it was in the best interests of the people of this province to pass power from this body onto an appointed board commission, and that board is in a position to make rulings that may or may not be in the best interests of the people of this province. And when they make rulings that are not in the best interests of the people of this province, we've got very little to say about it – very little to say about it, whether we're on the opposition side, whether

we're on the government side.

And I think that's wrong, Mr. Speaker. I think that's very wrong. I think that the more decisions that are made by this House, the more decisions that are made by the elected representatives, the greater are the chances that those decisions will in fact be in the best interests of the people of this province.

Governments say, well if you give the House too much power, they'll end up making decisions like the United States Congress, which is simply in the interests of their constituents and doesn't deal with the broader questions, doesn't deal with the really tough questions that we have to face. I don't think that the political experience, political history in this province will show that, Mr. Speaker. It'll show that governments and oppositions are prepared to take the tough, hard decisions, to take the tough, hard stands to get the job done on a range of issues.

We don't have to delegate out the powers that we have to someone else. I mean, that's what we're elected to do. We're elected to make the tough, hard decisions. We're not elected to sit here and to vote for Bill after Bill which would divest us of power, which would divest us of responsibility. We're not here to get elected or to sit in the House and then to go back to a constituent with a concern or problem and say, well we don't have control over that any more, you know, so you're talking to the wrong guy.

(1530)

What you should be able to say in every instance is, you are talking to the right guy; you are talking to the right representative. I am responsible, and I am listening to your point of view, and I do plan to raise it; I do plan to make a decision on that. Not to say that, well, we've given it to someone else here. We've given it to a PURC (Public Utilities Review Commission) and, golly, I know that you don't think that that particular agency should be in that department, but I don't have any control over that any more. We used to, you know. We used to have control over those things but, you know, over the years these things have just slipped away from us.

Again, Mr. Speaker, once the cows are gone, closing the barn door won't bring them back.

Mr. Speaker, elected representatives especially have to be vigilant about the people's business. The more they entrust this business to others who are not directly accountable to the people, the more they rob the people of their democratic rights. We should be mindful of a strong heritage which over time increased people's rights and abilities to have a say in the events that affect their lives. Our objectives should always be to make our democratic system stronger, to give the electorate a greater say in how they are governed.

We should be leaving our children and their children with a democratic system that is stronger than the one we have now. How ironic it is, Mr. Speaker, that in the centuries since the Magna Carta, and throughout history, our forefathers in generations past have fought hard through tradition, through the passage of wise laws, to establish a democratic system that is the envy of the

world. And they even went to wars to defend against attacks on that system, Mr. Speaker, or what they perceived to be attacks.

And we have, I think, the epitome of that joint labour, joint effort, and joint love for democracy. We have the epitome of those cumulative efforts, Mr. Speaker. How ironic it is that we now see a government —and not just with this Bill, Mr. Speaker — that we now see a government that is intent on turning things around, and that is to say to take power away from the people, to take power away from the elected representatives and to turn it over in this case to something called the Executive Council.

Now the Executive Council indirectly is responsible to the people of this province. But it certainly is not as responsible, or as directly responsible, as the elected representatives of this House. The closest relationship, Mr. Speaker, between people and government is their elected representative.

I think those are the principles that underlie our democratic traditions. That's the principle, Mr. Speaker, that had led us to the system we have today. People, their representative — a close, direct relationship. Yet what we see now, by virtue of this Bill, what we see is taking that relationship and breaking it up. It's to take the business of the people and the interests of the people and concerns of the people and to say to the elected representatives: you will have less power, less influence in dealing with those, but trust us. Trust us in the Executive Council, in this instance, to make the right decision to do the right thing. We'll look after your affairs for you. And I ask the back-benchers, and I ask the members opposite if this is what you really want to do?

Again, there used to be a time . . . For example, there's some farmer looking at the power rate increases, could call you up and say, I don't really agree with that power rate increase. Here's what it's going to do to my farming operations for the year. Here's the kind of impact it'll have on my profit and loss statements. Here's the kind of impact it'll have on our family farm. And I want you to take those concerns to Regina, and I want you to raise hell about them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I would ask the member to retract that statement. It's unparliamentary language. I find that language unparliamentary.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I certainly will apologize and withdraw that.

Mr. Speaker, no longer are those constituents able to call their member and say, I want you to go to Regina and raise heck about that. I want you to talk to that cabinet minister, and I want you to do something about that. Can't do that any more.

Now the only opportunity you've got is to go before the Public Utilities Review Commission. Have you ever heard of anything more silly in your life? Here you are, you are elected by the people to look after their interests. One of their interests is Saskatchewan Power Corporation. In order to influence what Sask Power does,

you can't do it in the House any more. You've got to go before some appointed board, people who weren't elected, but appointed. And you've got to explain to them why these power rate increases are too high. You know, you used to be able to say to those constituents, I'm going to fight for you. Can't do that any more.

Mr. Speaker, again our objectives should always be to make our democratic system stronger, to give the electorate a greater say in the running of this province. We shouldn't be looking for ways to take power from this Assembly and to give it to appointed boards of commissions or, in this case, to give it to the Executive Council. What we should be doing is looking for ways to take the power that we have in this Assembly and giving it back to people so that they have a more direct say in the running of their own affairs, so that they have a greater opportunity to say something about the events that impact on their daily lives.

You know one of the ways we do that, Mr. Speaker, one of the ways we've done that in this province is that we give responsibilities through law, through municipalities – urban municipalities, rural municipalities. And we have a law that enables local administrative units, which are municipal councils, both rural and urban, we give them enabling legislations to do a number of things. But that's one example of how power, affairs of government which needs to be handled . . . And rather than entrust those affairs, as they do in a number of other jurisdictions, to appointed people, we say no, people can run those things themselves. We'll set up some enabling legislation to allow them to do that. We'll set up structures and so on to enable them to do that. And we'll make sure that they even have a say in how those services are delivered and how those programs are delivered.

And we do that through The Urban Municipalities Act and other Acts, Mr. Minister. We say to local people: these are things that you can do for yourselves; here is an Act; here is enabling legislation; go to it. We have certain requirements. We want you to elect a democratic government – city council, rural council, or whatever it might be – to make sure that the services and programs and how those are delivered will, in fact, be accountable to the people that they are intended to be delivered to. That's, Mr. Speaker, how this legislature has in the past taken power which resides with the province, which resides with the Legislative Assembly, and have given that back to people.

My feeling, Mr. Speaker, and I think the feeling of many people, is that we should be looking for greater opportunities to do that, unlike the Bill before us, Mr. Speaker, which goes in the opposite direction. We need to be looking for more ways to take the services and programs that government has, and which are the mandate and responsibility of the provincial government, to turn those over to the people of this province and to say to them: these are the services and programs that affect you; these are the services and programs that are intended to meet your needs; here is some enabling legislation to allow you and to enable you and to encourage you to become more involved in running those services and programs so that you have a greater say in those services and programs, because we believe, as

elected representatives, that the closer that people are to the affairs of government, the greater are the chances that the affairs of government will be well run and well handled.

But the greater distance that you put between the people and the affairs of government and how power is exercised, the greater are the chances, Mr. Speaker, that power is going to be exercised, power is going to be brokerage, services and programs will be run in such a way that it might be antithetical to what it is that the people want.

Mr. Speaker, I really urge the members opposite, especially those who are not in the Executive Council, and I think who have a strong love of democracy, and they have a strong love of freedom, and have a very strong sense that the people of this province the ordinary people of this province — and I don't use that term in any political sense at all – but that the everyday people, the people on the street, the people on main street, I think that they have a very strong sense that those people should be more involved in governing our own affairs. And I ask them to think about that and how we might achieve that particular objective; how we might take the heritage that has been given to us by previous generations, a heritage that has left us with a very strong parliamentary tradition; how we might add to that to make that stronger to pass on to our children and our grandchildren an even stronger system of democracy that provides for even more involvement on the part of people in running their own affairs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Surely you can see that the Bill before us paves the way for something that goes in a complete opposite direction. It's a wrong-headed Bill. It's not the kind of Bill that your constituents would want you to pass.

Mr. Speaker, I said before that I'm not a constitutional expert or a political scientists, but I am a passionate believer in our system of democracy, and know the need to protect that. But I recognize that others are better versed and more knowledgeable and can put words or can deal with these questions in a much more articulate form than I can. And I think it's instructive, Mr. Speaker, to recognize our own limitations and to turn to the words of others, and to read what others might have to say about questions such as the one that we are posed with.

And the question that we are posed with, Mr. Speaker, is very clearly a question of to what extent should power, legislative power, be in fact limited and turned over to the Executive Council so that the Executive Council has greater responsibilities and greater power. That, very simply put, is the question before us. Should the decisions be made here? Should they be made by Executive Council? And I think that it's illustrative to turn to the words of others, Mr. Speaker, in this context.

(1545)

Now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to read to the members of the House, a very brief passage from a book entitled *The*

Revised Canadian Constitution: Politics as Law by R.I. Cheffins and P.A. Johnson. These are noted authorities, political scientists and lawyers, Mr. Speaker, on our system of government.

Mr. Speaker, on page 88 of their book, *The Revised Canadian Constitution*, Cheffins and Johnson say that

It is important, however, to recognize that another major source of cabinet authority is the delegation of rule-making power from parliament to the Governor in Council. This, in effect, means that power is delegated to a small group of ministers whose decisions are then approved by the governor general, as most orders in council are not discussed by the cabinet as a whole. No order in council can be passed unless the authority has been delegated by parliament. However, this authority is so wide, and often so vague, that it allows tremendous scope for law-making by the Governor in Council. It must be remembered that an order in council has the same legal effect as if it was contained in the statute itself. Thus, not only do the cabinet and Prime Minister control the legislative process, but they also can decide whether parliament itself delegates power back to the Governor in Council, thereby, to all intents and purposes, bypassing parliament in the making of law. Since provincial constitutional systems are in essence identical to the federal system, the same points apply.

Surely in the review of Canada's constitutional structure, nothing calls out more for reform than the excessive dominance of the system by the cabinet. Mr. Speaker, Cheffins & Johnson illustrate their point, I think, in a very clear way by relating this following text.

A very high proportion of federal and provincial statutes delegate authority to the Governor in Council or the lieutenant governor in council. The troublesome aspect of this delegation is that, as already indicated, it forces parliament to deal with what is often virtually skeletal legislation and then to let the details be filled in by the executive.

I might just pause, Mr. Minister, and ask if this sounds familiar.

What is particularly alarming is the fact that, at the federal level, an order in council requires the signature of only four cabinet ministers and later the signature of the Governor General. There is, accordingly, no requirement for extensive debate with respect to the merit of the order in council under consideration.

The Hon. Perrin Beatty states:

But it often happened, when I was in the cabinet, that a messenger would come from the Privy Council and say, 'We need your signature on this. We need signatures from four ministers.' 'What's it about?' you would ask, and the messenger would say, 'Don't ask me.'

So you would find ministers being asked to sign orders in council, creating law without the benefit of any full discussion or briefing. And the minister assumes that his colleagues know what he is doing, so he goes ahead and signs it.

The belief that cabinet gives adequate scrutiny to delegated legislation is false. The extent to which a bureaucrat is able to write law is very great.

For example, in July of 1981 by order in council, the cabinet ordered cuts in railway service to large parts of the country, affecting 1,200,000 passengers. All of this was done without public debate, reference to parliament, or to the Canadian Transport Commission.

Mr. Speaker, those are not my words and those are the words of learned constitutional experts and political scientists. And those are also the words of the Hon. Perrin Beatty, minister of the federal government.

And again I would ask the members opposite to reflect on those words and to reflect on examples such as the case with Via Rail where, by order in council, decisions are made which affect many people but yet are made without any recourse to debate, and in this case without any debate in cabinet, but certainly there was no debate in federal parliament.

And I ask you again: is that the kind of system that you want? Is that the kind of system that we're headed towards? Because we've seen examples now, not just with this particular Bill, but in the past, of that's the direction that we're taking. And I ask you to reflect upon the fact: is that a wise course of events? Does that put power in the hands of the people? Or does that put power in the hands of bureaucrats, and does that put power in the hands of cabinet ministers? Reflect upon those things.

Mr. Speaker, Cheffins and Johnson go on to state, and I quote:

Provincial cabinets have benefited similarly from the technique of delegation, as provincial statutes are replete with examples of widespread powers delegated to the lieutenant governor in council of the province. Each of these provincial operations is considerably smaller than that of the federal government. There is more likelihood that orders in council will be considered and debated by the appropriate provincial cabinet. Nevertheless, at least in British Columbia, the discussion of orders in council takes place after the general consideration of cabinet business and is, like all other cabinet business, conducted in private and protected by the oath of secrecy.

And if I might just stop right there with the quote, Mr. Minister. And I ask you again now, on the government side, that this particular Bill paves the way for cabinet, Executive Council, to make decisions about government departments and how those government departments should be restructured etc., etc. Yet cabinet and Executive Council is bounded by oaths of secrecy not to divulge. And I ask you, if some constituent or another is

not satisfied that the husbandry branch of the Department of Agriculture or some other branch was in fact shifted to a different department – who knows, Social Services, family planning, what have you – and a constituent asked you to check into that because they weren't happy about that; they found it much more convenient to deal through the other department, just how are you going to deal with that? Cabinet minister can't tell you anything – he's bound by an oath of secrecy. Well, we're sorry about that, Bob. We can't tell you about those things. You know, you've got to trust us here in cabinet to make the right decisions.

And again, Mr. Minister, I'd ask the back-benchers, and especially the new ones . . . And you might get some advice from those that have been around for a while about how forthcoming your colleagues in the cabinet will be about any and all government business; whether or not it affects you, and how that might affect your constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I've indicated before that this particular Bill is not the only example of where power as vested in the elected representatives of the people ends up being turned over to those who are appointed or to those who do not have a direct relationship with the people.

And again in this context, in the context of this Bill, I think it's important to look at other examples of how we divest ourselves of our joint power and of the people's joint power as represented in this Legislative Assembly.

And I'd like to in that context, Mr. Speaker, just highlight that with further brief quotations from Cheffins and Johnson in *The Revised Canadian Constitution*. And they say:

Other important recipients of delegated authority are boards, commissions and Crown corporations. These bodies exist at the federal and provincial level and have all been established by legislation, and are invariably recipients of delegated legislative authority. Sometimes the delegation involves merely the discharge of responsibilities assigned by statutes, but usually there is delegation of rule-making power. The rules made by these bodies are usually referred to as regulations, and once made by the boards or commission s have the same authority as if enacted by the legislature. It is perhaps important to note that the nomenclature for various rules passed by delegates varies: orders in council, regulations, or in the case of cities, bylaws; nevertheless, from a legal perspective the nomenclature merely describes the source of the rule rather than the nature of its legal impact. Irrespective of how the rule is named, the effect is identical. Namely the delegate acting on authority from the delegating legislature has the power to pass rules having the same effect as if those rules were contained in the statute itself.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not a major source of concern when one looks at municipal government in this province. And the Minister of Urban Affairs and the Minister of Rural Development I think will attest to what I

say – that municipalities have basically conducted themselves excellently throughout the years in discharging their responsibilities. And of course we make a very important distinction. We also give those delegates the power and the responsibility. In fact we demand that they set up democratic structures themselves so that people are involved in the discharge of those powers that have been vested in them. And that's not a bad system.

But in this particular case, Mr. Speaker, or it was the case in . . . or at least in the case of the Public Utilities Review Commission, we give that to an appointed board and they start to make their own rule and regulations about what should or shouldn't happen, and we give that to other boards and commissions in this province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in this particular case the Bill before us would make an amendment to Bill which paves the way for more of those rules and regulations and governing to be done by the Executive Council. And again, that's a group that's bounded by the oaths of secrecy and therefore not directly accountable to the people of this province, unlike the elected representatives, Mr. Speaker, the members of the Legislative Assembly.

So, Mr. Speaker, again, I'm not a constitutional expert. And I think there may well be members on this side of the House who can make that claim and make it rightfully, and there may well be members on that side of the House who can make that claim and make it rightfully. But again my own sense, and that's very much based on experience, is that we're moving in the wrong direction.

And certainly it would seem from the quotes that I've provided from Cheffins and Johnson who are learned people in this area, learned people, Mr. Speaker, that we also have something to be concerned about in that one of the troublesome aspects of the Canadian constitution and the way we run ourselves is the inordinate amount of power that cabinets have accrued unto themselves over the years. And they're speaking generally of the federal system and other provincial legislatures, and not of this one particularly. But certainly there are plenty of examples to back up the claim that they make, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I can understand power-hungry cabinet ministers moving in the direction of more power for themselves and less for the Legislative Assembly, because the more that they can do outside those doors, Mr. Speaker, the less accountable they have to be to the opposition members or to any of the members in the House, and the more they can conduct their business without any regard for the people of the province.

But I don't understand why others on the government side would stand for this, Mr. Speaker. I have great difficulty in figuring out why the government is moving in this direction. Why is it seeking to widen the gap between those who legislate and those who have executive responsibilities? Why is it proposing to give greater responsibilities to the executive branch of government as opposed to ensuring that that power, in the interim at least, resides here with the legislative branch? And if that power is to go anywhere, it goes more directly back to

people as it might in the case of municipalities or as it might in the case of school boards, Mr. Speaker, or as it might in the case of hospital boards.

Surely if we're to pass on power from this particular Assembly to anyone, Mr. Speaker, we should give it to the people themselves. We should not be giving it to appointed bodies. We should not be giving it to those people who are protected by the oath of secrecy. It seems to me again that is a wrong approach; it's a wrong-headed approach. It is not in the best interests of constituents that you represent.

(1600)

Mr. Speaker, the more I look at the legislation and the basic theory that's behind this Bill, and that is to give more power to the executive branch and to take it away from the legislative branch, the more I'm reminded of the American system of government, Mr. Speaker. I almost think, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps there was more to a trip to the United States by the Premier's people, Mr. Tkachuk in particular, in December of '84 in a simple discussion about free trade. Perhaps these people, Mr. Speaker, were also down there to learn more about how the American government works and how an executive branch can get more power for itself and to limit the amount of power and to limit the amount of debate that might go on in the Legislative Assembly as is the case in the Congress of the United States, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — Creeping Republicanism. You can see it.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And one member says that this is an example of creeping Republicanism. I'm not sure it's that, Mr. Speaker, but I'm disturbed at what I see as essentially a step in the direction of the American system of how we govern ourselves. And we're very different, Mr. Speaker, quite different than the Americans. And I would refer members of the House to an article or a book, Mr. Speaker, by Peter W. Hogg, Q.C., LL.B., LL.M, Ph.D., Professor of Law, Osgoode Hall Law School, York University, Toronto, a very eminent, qualified member of the bar and a legal person, to comment on these matters in his book, the second edition of *Constitutional Law of Canada*. And Dr. Hogg, Mr. Speaker, points out that:

The difference between the Canadian and American systems resides not only in the different language of the two constitutional instruments, but in Canada's retention of the British system of responsible government. The close link between the executive and legislative branches which is entailed by the British system is utterly inconsistent with any separation of the executive and legislative functions.

Utterly consistent, Mr. Speaker, is what that learned authority has to say on this particular subject — utterly inconsistent. He also states on page 203 of his book, Mr. Speaker, that:

It will now be obvious that in a system of responsible government there is no "separation of powers" between the executive and legislative

branches of government.

And again I want the members opposite to reflect on those words — there is no "separation of powers" between the executive and legislative branches of government in a system of responsible government.

And I think that what he's getting at, what Dr. Hogg is getting at is that if government is responsible — and surely it is responsible to the people that elect a government; is responsible to those that it purports to govern — it is responsible to all the men and women and children that make up our society; that if we have a responsible government we will not separate the powers between the legislative and executive functions. Those powers should in fact reside in the Legislative Assembly. Those powers should reside in the legislative branch of government, Mr. Speaker.

And that's one quotation, Mr. Speaker, from a learned authority. But it's again interesting to point out that we have completely different systems than the American system.

In the American system, Mr. Speaker — and it seems to me that the Bill is moving in this direction — the American system, Mr. Speaker, provides for very clear distinctions between the legislative branches and executive branches. And the legislative branches are found in the Congress, in the Senate, and the House of Representatives. And those legislative branches have certain kinds of authority, as outlined in the American Constitution.

But there's also an executive branch of government headed by the President, Mr. Speaker. Now the President is directly elected, but all those others in the executive branch are not. His cabinet are not elected members. His cabinets are not at some point directly responsible to people who elect them, but his cabinet ministers are appointed — or cabinet secretaries, if you want — are appointed by him to discharge their duties.

There's a very clear difference between the two systems, Mr. Speaker. Yet again I wonder if the trip in 1984 by Mr. Tkachuk to Washington was in fact perhaps the first attempt by this government to understand more about the American form of government so that they could put into place changes to government here that more closely resembles the American system, to move us in the direction of the American form of government.

Because surely this Bill is intended in that direction, because this Bill proposes to take power from the legislature, to take power from those who are directly responsible to the people, and to place it in the hands of the Executive Council, to place it in the hands of the executive branch, just like the American system, Mr. Speaker, — just like the American system.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke of a Mr. Tkachuk, who is no longer, I understand, employed by the government, and is employed by private industry. But anyway, at that point Mr. Tkachuk was in the employ of the government. And Mr. Tkachuk . . . I refer to the proceedings and debates from June 4th of '85, and the Premier's own words, Mr.

Speaker:

The next day, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Tkachuk left Ottawa for Washington, that evening. Mr. Tkachuk met with Mr. John Zagame, former New York Assembly man, presently employed by Deputy White House Liaison.

Now what's he doing at the White House if it wasn't to learn more about how the executive functions, to learn more about the executive branch of government?

And I'm wondering if this perhaps too, Mr. Speaker, might not be one of those unwritten agenda items in the free trade discussions. I can appreciate how our American friends south of the border don't understand our form of government, and perhaps through asking through the free trade negotiations, that can't you make some sort of changes to your system here so that we can understand how it works a little bit better, because then we can co-operate much more fully in free trade and other items. I wonder, Mr. Speaker.

But it certainly appears that Mr. Tkachuk . . . that one of the things on the agenda at the White House that day in Washington might well have been a discussion on how we govern ourselves, the various successes of the executive branch, not having to rely on the legislative branch to do what it wants to do, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I worry about that – that we would be moving in the direction of the American model and that cabinet ministers opposite would emulate the American model. I'm very concerned about that. Because surely it's an American system, the executive branch system, which allows for secretive arms deals to be made. Surely it's the American system in executive branch that allows for decisions to be made which subsidize wheat in the United States and undercut our Saskatchewan farmers. And yet there are cabinet ministers who see to be taken by the American example and want to go in that direction.

It's no accident, Mr. Speaker, that we see in the United States today a great deal of debate and discussion and committees and so on, dealing with actions of the executive branch. And in this case the action of the executive branch had to do with secret arms deals.

And it's no secret or it's no mystery to me that these things come up. Because their system of government, Mr. Speaker, depends on an executive branch, and executive branch that discharges its responsibilities, goes ahead and does things, but in the process they make many mistakes and they do things away from the eyes of the people. They do them, not in some open session in a congress or in a Legislative Assembly, but they're done behind closed doors, just the same as this Bill would allow the cabinet here to do – to conduct more of the business of this province behind closed doors.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I worry about that – that we're moving in that direction. And again, it's no mystery that the Americans from time to time had their Watergates, had their secret arms deals, and have no end of messes coming from the executive branch. Because again, that

branch doesn't have to deal with public scrutiny. They can do all their business behind closed doors.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, and I know, that the more we take the affairs of government away from the direct eyes of the people, the greater are the chances that there be corruption; the greater are the chances that there'll be mistakes made, which they'll then try to cover up; the greater are the chances that decision will be made which aren't in the interests of the people.

You know that and I know that – that the more things are removed from people's eyesight, the greater are the chances that somebody's going to try and hide something. And certainly that's one of the weaknesses, that's one of the very strong failings in the American system. And I shudder to think that the members opposite, through sending their people to the States to look at their form of government, through actions such as this Bill before us, would have us move in that direction. I'm very concerned about that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that's not to say that I'm against everything and anything that the Americans might do. I think that the Americans have their own system. It's a worthy system; it's a good system. But it's not the system that we've developed over the years, Mr. Speaker. And it may be the system that's right for them, but it's not the system for us.

We like to deal with things in a more open way; we like to deal with things in a more open fashion. I think that made for a stronger system of government; it made for a better system of government. And I think, in a very real way, the reason that it's a better system of government, the reason that it's more responsive, and the reason that it works better, is because far more power in our system of government resides in the legislative branch – resides with the direct representatives of the people.

And those people that are elected are accountable to those that elect them. And they're not want, especially in an open setting, in a setting like we have today, and we've made advances on that . . . There used to be a time, you know, Mr. Speaker, when a House might not have a record of debates and proceedings that people could read up on. There used to be a time, Mr. Speaker, when we didn't necessarily have a free press to report on the proceedings of the elected representatives.

Today, Mr. Speaker, not only do we have a record of debates and proceedings that people can read up on to find out what it is their members are saying, but I think, very importantly, we have a free press that is able to describe to the population every day, continuously – and I think sometimes we feel a little bit too much, especially if you're a cabinet minister who's getting heat – but nevertheless they're able to describe every day to the people what's happening in this House and what are the important items for consideration. So therefore people are informed.

We've even gone a step beyond that, Mr. Speaker. We now broadcast live into the homes of the people in this province that have a cable television system, so that people directly can see what is happening in the elected . . . you know, what their elected representatives are doing

and what it is that they're saying.

And Mr. Speaker, the point that I'm making is that we've made great strides in the workings of legislative assemblies to get to a point where there's complete openness, and that is the very thing that's made for a strong form of government in our country. That's made for a very strong form of government in this province. Anything that would threaten that, as this Bill does, is not a step in the direction of the interests of the people; it's not a step in the direction of sound democracy, but surely is a step in the wrong direction, Mr. Speaker.

(1615)

Mr. Speaker, in summing up, I would again caution members to give some second thought to the Bill before us and to ask themselves some very simple questions, questions such as: does this Bill benefit the people that I represent; does this Bill take away any of the power that's vested in me as a result of the relationship that we have; does the Bill make it more difficult for me to do my job in the Assembly; does it make it more difficult for me to act on behalf of the interests of my constituents?

And they should be asking themselves all those question, and if they're not satisfied with the answers – as they see it in this Bill – I would strongly encourage them, in caucus or in other ways, to talk to the sponsors of the Bill and to draw to their attention their concerns; to draw to their attention concerns such as moves in the past, in this Assembly, to divest the Assembly of some of its joint power, such as the Public Utilities Review Commission, which makes it more difficult for the elected representatives to have some . . . to bring some influence to bear on the events in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think at this point I would not make any further contribution. I would want to, when the opportunity arises when we deal with Bill 5, to take the opportunity at that time to make some comments and to really speak at length, Mr. Speaker, on this important topic. But at this point, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Berntson that Bill No. 5 – **An Act respecting the Organization of the Executive Government of Saskatchewan** be now read a second time.

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to make several comments in respect to this Bill, and as our learned House Leader the other night, when the Bill was first presented to the House without our knowledge of it being presented . . . I think indeed he defeated their purpose of trying to get headlines in respect to the Bill and that we were unable to analyze it. But let there be no

mistake, that the former attorney general, the House Leader on this side, said the other day, I think I'm going to not only agree with, but further enhance the reasons that he gave and some of the further implications.

I want to say in respect to this Bill No. 5 which is, I may say . . . the Act may be cited as the government organizational Act. And we want to take a look first of all and clearly set out what has been the precedent before. How did we get reorganization of government previously? How did we create departments? How did we get their objects, their purposes, in the past?

And I'll tell you that if you look in the Bills that have been passed in this House, you will find legislation which enacted the various departments – the Department of Health, Department of Education, and on it goes. But each and every time when a reorganization took place, the government of the day had to bring before this legislature, the Act. And within that legislation there are certain provisions and many of my colleague will be talking about it. In those legislation establishing departments there are certainly provisions which give significant protection to the general public.

Now what they are contemplating here in the reorganization, done under the disguise of efficiency, may I say, is to change that. And what they want to do now, Mr. Speaker, is not to bring in a Bill for this House so that the opposition can examine it. For the opposition can look at the objects and purposes of that Bill or of that department in order that the public can in fact see what is being structured. They're deciding that that is too cumbersome – too cumbersome for this government. This government which said it was going to consult with people; this government who said they would not be secretive, is now grabbing power and pulling it into the back rooms to make the major decisions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — How are we to know who will be in the back rooms? Will it be George Hill? Or will it be Sid Dutchak who was defeated and turned out by the voters of Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

I say to you here, they have an obligation to bring it before this legislature. And I say, as an opposition, that we have an obligation to examine it, review it, and to add constructive amendments if it's deemed necessary. And we can't do it in the back rooms of some cabinet office . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . They don't do it, that's how ill-informed. . . The member from Kelsey-Tisdale, imagine him starting to talk about constitutional law. He couldn't even talk about post offices yesterday.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, getting back to my synopsis here, and I'm going to be on point. And I'll tell you, you birds better listen, because right here I'm saying they're changing a fundamental practice of this House – a very fundamental practice of this House. And I'll tell you, we're not prepared to stand by and allow you to do it. And we'll be here, Mr. Speaker, debating this – debating it until the government comes to its senses.

And the member from . . . the Deputy House Leader is

chirping. With his record of performance in this House and running it, I think he should be quiet. He should hang his head in shame, I may say. I want to say that there are . . . so that's how departments were formed before, Mr. Speaker. Legislation was brought into this House. The legislature, the opposition, had an opportunity to review it. That is not going to be the case in the future. In the case, it's going to be decided by the cabinet — not here, reviewed by the members of the legislature.

And if you take a look at what they're doing in the Bill 5, it has basically three aspects to it, and I want to go through this. It's somewhat technical, but go through it, and then I want to show the overall implication so what it's doing to this legislature and indeed how it's a grab for power, and how it's taking away the duties that we should be performing here in this legislature.

Bill 5, if it's passed, will first of all transfer powers, duties or functions from one minister or department to another minister or department. That's amendment legislation.

The second purpose what it can do in respect set out in this legislation, is to disestablish departments without transferring powers, duties or functions of the department to another minister or department, and this is really essentially the amendment or the obliteration legislation.

In other words, what I've said there, Mr. Speaker, is that they can disestablish departments without transferring the powers, duties or functions which this legislature, with care, prescribed for various departments of government. And that is a tremendous transfer of power over into the hands of cabinet, to the Premier and to the Tory henchmen that may be lurking in the back rooms, drawing up the reorganization to suit their needs but not the needs of the people of this province.

And I say to you that when you take a look at the Bill, by the combined operations of section 5 and 22, the cabinet is authorized to transfer some powers, duties and functions from the minister or department designated in existing legislation to some other minister. In a sense, 5 and 22 taken together does not change, really, the powers, the duties or the functions which are existing in legislation. It simply means that what the legislature has said can be amended to change the names in actual legislation. What happens now is, in effect, that those powers can be transferred over to the executive council.

But when you get into the substantive clause in the Bill, and I'm not going into the particular details of it on second reading, but what really is the general scope of what they intend to do within the purview of the principle of this Bill, cabinet has given power to, as I said, to disestablish a department with no corresponding obligation on the part of cabinet to transfer various powers, duties and functions of the disestablished department to another minister or department. Now that is significant because as I've said, you know, the purposes, the powers, the duties, the functions of a department that were carefully analysed and in fact some of those powers include, as I said before, protection to the general public, will be emasculated if this Bill goes through.

I want also to say that a very significant other principle that is established here is that nowhere does Bill 5 say that in determining the objects — the purposes of a department — that cabinet is limited in assigning objects and purposes to picking them out of the objects and purposes that exist within the range presently set by the existing departmental legislation, and so they can change completely—reorganize. And they can destroy all the various objects and purposes that were established under the legislation.

In this regard I want to essentially say that if we pass this legislation, it seems in the analysis of it that cabinet thereby appears free to set its own agenda. One, to obliterate existing departments; two, neglect to transfer mandates of obliterated departments elsewhere; create new departments with objects and purposes as defined by cabinet; and approve ministerial delegation of powers and ministerial spending.

If one takes a look at what I have said, this is a tremendous departure from what has been practised in the past. And the minister comes in here under the disguise of efficiency and he says, we have to have this. Well I'll tell you, democracy is not always efficient. But I'll tell you, good debate that is the foundation of democracy, is essential. And I'll tell you, the review of what the government is doing is the duty of the opposition, and what you're doing is taking it out of this legislature into the back rooms to make the decisions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — As I said, Mr. Speaker, when the Deputy Premier, their constitutional expert on the other side, introduced the Bill last Monday night, he claimed weakly — the weakest argument I've ever seen — he claimed it was to permit efficiency within government.

(1630)

And no one is saying that seeking greater efficiency within the government operation is not a noble goal and one which all governments seek. But I want to say that this government should not talk about efficiency, because I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, as I've said in this House for four and a half years — this province has been the victim of the greatest amount of mismanagement and waste in the history of Canada, of a provincial government. I'll tell you it was scandalous, the amount of waste and patronage and hand-outs during the last four and a half years.

And what they have given to this province, the legacy that they have given, is a \$3 billion deficit to pass on to our children and their children. And now these same people, these hypocrites, come into this House and have the audacity to start preaching efficiency.

I want to say . . .

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Swan: — The member on his feet is calling the members on this side of the House hypocrites. That's not

parliamentary language and I ask that the comment be withdrawn.

Mr. Speaker: — I've heard the point of order, and I have noted in the past that that term, unfortunately, has been used in this Assembly from time to time. And while I wouldn't necessarily say it is unparliamentary at this time, I think in the total context of the Legislative Assembly, I think all members who resort to the use of that term are speaking in a manner which is not in keeping with the decorum of this Assembly. And that applies to all who use that terminology.

Mr. Koskie: — All I want to say, any government that would have the degree of waste and mismanagement of the government opposite and who would come in here and start to disclose that they're talking about efficiency, I'll tell you, you don't have a right to do it because you've left to the people of this province and their children billions of dollars of debt because of your waste and mismanagement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — You like that any better? I'll give it to you And I'll tell the hon. member from Rosetown-Elrose, you can't wear a halo around your head any more because the facts are getting out to the public. They know where you're going — that you're misrepresenting them with facts; that you've driven this province into debt and now your try to start to talk about efficiency. In fact, they're afraid to come before this legislature because we have a large and powerful opposition here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — They want to go into the back rooms and try to slip it through. That's their problem; you must agree with that.

I want to say that this Bill now before us is not indeed about efficiency at all. It is not even about government reorganization. No, this Bill has only one purpose. It will have only one effect — one purpose, one effect. Its sole purpose is to erode the authority of this legislature and to increase the power of cabinet.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — To undermine the Legislative Assembly; to increase beyond all reason, Mr. Speaker, or proportion, the arbitrary powers of the PC cabinet to act in arbitrary ways. That is its purpose. And I'll tell you, that will be the effect. Unfortunately this is a pattern, I may say, Mr. Speaker, that has been followed by this government from its early election in 1982. And I think it's relevant to the debate to show that this is in fact a power grab and that all previous actions indicate that direction. I'm going to set forth some of the previous forms of power grabbing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Within weeks of being elected in the summer of 1982, Mr. Speaker, and you will well remember, one of the things that they did was to bring in a real notorious Bill 16 shortly after they were elected. I

believe it was some time around July 5, 1982, when we stood in this legislature to debate further infringement of the rights that were set out in the statutes.

And that Bill 16, Mr. Speaker, had this effect when they brought it in. It gave total and absolute control to cabinet, and term appointments to the various boards and commissions where the term appointment had been properly made pursuant to legislation.

And when they came in, they brought in Bill 16, and they wiped out every appointment to any board or any commission, be it Crown corporation or government or otherwise. And you will recall that, I remember with the massive number of government members, and after a regrettable result in 1982, eight of us stood in this legislature, stood up bravely to fight for a democratic cause.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — And I'll tell you that if the eight of us could stand up here and expose the government with respect to Bill 16 — and I'll tell you, many people were aware of the power-grab then — I'll tell you that with 25 members on this side of the New Democratic Party in our caucus, that we'll put up a fight the like of which you have never seen.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — So that was the first power-grab, Bill 16. Take away . . . cancel all the boards appointed. And some of them were appointed through legislation; and appointed, say from the legal society — from the bar would appoint. They just wiped them out. And what they did it for was for political patronage. Disrespect for the very legislation that set up those boards and how they're going to be appointed and which they had voted for in opposition. They came into this House and they destroyed it as soon as they got into government. And I'll tell you, that was the start of the power grab and the political patronage game that they're playing.

The second thing that I want to relate, Mr. Speaker — then in the spring of 1983 they had their Bill 33 regarding the Department of Revenue and Financial Services. And here again they moved to remove their cabinet actions from scrutiny by . . . from the legislature and from the public.

The same was true with Bill 47 in the same session — The Department of Finance Act. There again they moved to undermine the legislature and to give more unilateral control and arbitrary power to the cabinet and to weaken this legislature. We saw something similar last June when the government refused to table in the legislatures, in respect to the Weyerhaeuser agreements — held them back until after the election.

And just two weeks ago, you know, we saw yet another example of this sort of power grab — the PC government's improper attempt to change unilaterally, without even having it in the scope of their power, rules in respect to quorums.

The pattern is clear, long-standing, and it's consistent. And I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that there's more in

this here package that they're bringing forth in this session. Quorum for committees. Now what they're doing here is giving unilateral control of the appointments and the reorganization of departments to the cabinet.

And as has been said in this House before, they're going to electoral boundaries. We have legislation set up which they approved in the past, when they were on this side of the House, but it's not good enough. The victory was too narrow. So what does it matter about fairness with this outfit across the way?

We had it in the independent Electoral Boundary Commission, and it was independent. And they say they need a new Act. And I'll tell you what they need a new Act for. It's to continue to try to hold on to electoral power by a gerrymander and I'll tell you the Minister of Justice will know well how to do it because he worked for the last gerrymander government, the late Ross Thatcher's government, during that period when they brought in the most vicious gerrymander legislation in the history of this province.

And that's what I'm saying here. That is another area in which I say, Mr. Speaker, they're going to be manipulating this House. The very legislation which they adopted, the very legislation which they agreed who would be the composition are not good enough. They're running scared, my friends.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — And I'll tell you, there's one other area that we'll be looking at. That's the rules committee. It's been structured and suddenly they want to change the rules of the legislature. Now they have to be upgraded from time to time, I grant that. But I'll tell you that I think I know what they're going for. They want to change the ours, sittings of this legislature, so that there will be less review, less opportunity by the public to see us in the evening sittings. That's what they'll do — less scrutiny. Keep the public from being able to watch their dismal performance.

There'll be other changes. They may even want to do away with television. Oh, they wanted television when they were in opposition. Yes, going to extent it to Crown corporations and other committees. Look what they have done with it when they got into power. But I'll tell you, there will be many other changes in respect to the rules committee that these people will want to get through. But I'll say that just as the grab for power is being taken over here in Bill No. 5, we'll fight it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — You might in the end win the battle, but I'll tell you the people of Saskatchewan want a government that they can trust.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1645)

Mr. Koskie: — And they want a government that's not afraid of the democratic process. Indeed, they want a

government that will enhance democracy, not destroy it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that what we have here, what the public wants — what the public wants — is open government, not secretive government. The public wants their rights protected, not wiped out by the stroke of a pen by the Premier or the George Hills of the world.

The public voted a strong opposition in during this last campaign. And in fact, just for public interest, we received more votes from the people of Saskatchewan than the members sitting opposite.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — As I say, the public voted in a strong opposition. And I say we have an obligation to review and to examine the actions of the government. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill goes a long ways to abrogating all of those rights.

I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, what does it do to the opposition? I think it makes this legislature less effective. They say it's for efficiency, but I want to reiterate again, I say it's a power grab by the Premier. You know, he said just before this session opened that he was going to centralize — and I'm paraphrasing — centralize the control, take charge of this government. Well we've seen some of the ideas that he has. To circumvent this legislature is his idea of taking control of the government. Well I'll tell you, and I agree with him that he needs to take charge — take charge and give some leadership to this province which he lacked so dismally in the last four and one-half years — but I'll tell him he may be Premier temporarily, but the one thing that we won't allow him to be is a dictator in this government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — We in this legislature, as I say, have an obligation to review the actions of the government. And what you're attempting to do is to prevent that opportunity being given to us. I don't think that it's good for this legislature. I don't think it's in the interests of the people of this province to have that happen.

And I say to all of the back-benchers who are sitting on the edge of their chairs listening to this, that I urge them — I urge them to get a copy of the remarks that I've made today and read them, and then decide to support us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — There is one other fundamental problem that I see in respect to giving this power over to the cabinet. If in fact they go forward and reorganize the complete department, or in fact wipe out a department, I ask you: is there a sinister purpose behind this?

Wipe out a department. And when we get into the clause by clause in committee, I'm going to ask the Deputy Premier to guarantee that in fact what it is, is to ravage the public employees.

Wipe out a department. Are they able to say then: no department, no jobs? And then do they have the power to

take those employees, either let them go because the new department doesn't need that many, and besides we're going to give it to the private enterprise? I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and I ask all members: is this their sinister reason for moving?

The Deputy Premier, the other day he said, and I was reading from the *Leader-Post* of December 18 by the eminent reporter, Dale Eisler. And right down at the bottom here he says: "Naturally the Tories say there is nothing sinister about the reorganization."

Well did he expect them to come forward? I mean, did he really expect him to come forward and say, yes, I've got sinister reasons? Now that's a remarkable statement.

But it gets even more remarkable as you read on. He says: "Romanow give us too much credit. I wish we had that kind of cunning."

Just listen. This farm boy from Souris-Cannington – the Deputy Premier. Imagine. And he goes on and he says: "this will only change structures, and mandates will all remain the same." That's what he says.

Read the Bill, my friend, before you introduce it, because in this legislation, I'll tell you, it goes beyond that. And so I ask you, Mr. Deputy Premier, I was surprised when I saw you bring this legislation forward, because of your lack of . . .

An Hon. Member: — Cunning.

Mr. Koskie: — Cunning. I thought that they would find a different minister with more cunning. But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that in all seriousness this is a sinister, a possible sinister reason for this legislation. I am going to ask the Deputy Premier, and I'm going to give him a chance to inform himself, and that may take another day or so, but I'll give you that length of time.

But what I'm going to say is when we get into the specifics, I want his guarantees that if there is a wipe-out of a department completely and as a consequence, wipe-out of all the objectives and purposes of that, and a wipe-out of all the jobs because there's no department left, I'm going to ask what is going to happen to government employees? Are they going to have the opportunity to go to the private sector perhaps, again? That has to be addressed. And I would have thought when he came in here he would have carefully and properly come into this House and outlined the specifics and the details of what they are trying to achieve. But look at the report that he gave on that Bill in second reading, and about all you can pick out is "efficiency."

Well I'll tell you, when you have a group of people like that, I'll tell you that is not the reason. And I think we're going to be here for some time, Mr. Speaker, because that deputy Premier is going to be drilled on this Bill. And I'll tell you, he better know the reasons for doing and the implications of it. And he better be able to explain to this House why he wants to abrogate the rights of this House to debate change in departments, in the powers and the duties.

I want to refer also to the – what was referred to this afternoon, *The Revised Canadian Constitution: Politics as Law* R.I. Cheffins, P.A. Johnson.

And just a couple of passages that I want to put before this legislature. I'll read it again, and I don't need your interference because you probably won't even get into the debate because you couldn't understand it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Content in source of parliamentary procedure, the principles of parliamentary law:

The principles that lie at the basis of English parliamentary law has always been kept steadily in view by the Canadian parliament. These are, to protect a minority and restrain the improvidence or tyranny of a majority.

"To protect a minority and restrain the improvidence or tyranny of a majority."

To secure the transaction of public business in an orderly manner; to enable every member to express his opinions within the limits necessary to preserve decorum and prevent an unnecessary waste of time to give abundant opportunity for the consideration of every measure, and to prevent any legislative action being taken upon sudden impulse.

Those are the premises under which we operate, Mr. Speaker. And I want just to read one other passage from this article:

Surely (it says), in the review of Canada's constitutional structure nothing calls out more for the reform than the excessive dominance of a system by cabinet.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — "Nothing calls out more for reform than the excessive dominance of a system by cabinet." And that's what we're talking about here, is not giving to cabinet more and more power.

And as I've said to you, Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation as an opposition. Certainly if we did not see the dangers, as some of them which I have outlined – and there are others – but if we didn't, then we would be allowing the legislation to proceed.

But in view of the facts of the power being taken on by the cabinet, by the powers that we are losing as opposition members to review the legislation and the direction of the government, and in view of the fact that, Mr. Speaker, I think there is a sinister aspect to moving this Bill . . .

I think it's the privatization of some departments, and I think it will not bring efficiency. All it will do is transfer it in a patronage manner to some of their friends, and what will happen is possibly many of the public servants will be cut adrift.

But even if they destroy the structure of a department, they wipe out a department, and then they set up say another department – they're talking about one about human resources – does that mean that those in Labour that are employees, and those in Social Services, those departments are no longer functional. What happens to the employees in going over to the new department? Do they have the opportunity then to say, well that job's wiped out; those classifications that you had as a director are wiped out.

Now you can come forward, and George Hill and company, or whoever is on that Tory patronage . . . I'll tell you that's the question that's going to be asked. Are you going to take away some of the rights and privileges that some of the government employees have developed throughout the years. And I'll tell you, you didn't come forward and explain that because you have no sympathy for the working people of this province. You've demonstrated that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Speaker, I have a considerable amount more that I want to say and therefore, being close to 5, I would beg leave to adjourn debate . . . to call it 5 o'clock.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.