

June 15, 1988

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING, SELECT, AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Communications

Clerk Assistant: — Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Standing Committee on Communication, presents the second report of the said committee which is as follows:

Your committee has considered the reference of the Assembly of March 22, 1988 and as referred on May 19, 1988, namely the recommendation of the Public Documents Committee under The Archives Act contained in the retention and disposal schedules comprising sessional paper no. 84 of the second session of the twentieth legislature.

Your committee recommends to the Assembly that the recommendations of the Public Documents Committee on schedules nos. 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, and 283 be accepted.

Mr. Gerich: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move a motion at this time:

That the second report of the Standing Committee on Communications be now concurred in.

Seconded by the member from Yorkton.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mrs. Smith: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're honoured today to have a very large group of students from Swift Current. There are 40 seated in the east gallery, Mr. Speaker, and they come from two schools in Swift Current — grades 4 and 5 from Dickson School and from St. Pats.

They are accompanied today by two teachers, Mr. Delmar Wagner and Mr. Tim Romanow. I don't know if it's some relative or not, but perhaps when I meet with them I can find out.

They also are accompanied, Mr. Speaker, by three chaperons: Glenda Elliot, Lorna Spencer and Mildred Martins. I hope the students today enjoy question period, and I look forward to meeting them at 3:30. I would ask all members to please welcome them.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take pleasure in informing you that I have the opportunity of a double introduction this afternoon of two different schools. Firstly the school that is here in the west gallery, grades 11

and 12 from town of Hepburn; 28 students accompanied by their teacher Bob McDougall; chaperons Mrs. Schroeder, Mrs. Dirks, Mrs. Goertzen, and Mr. Schroeder as bus driver.

The school of Hepburn and the community of Hepburn has a special place in my life, Mr. Speaker. That is where my teaching career began back in the '50s and I remember teaching grade 7 and 8 classes in a brown, old brick building, and I have many pleasant memories from those days, Mr. Speaker. I appreciated the royal manner in which the citizens of Hepburn treated me back in the teaching days and as they are treating me now in my political life as well.

So it gives me a great deal of pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to ask the members in the House to give them the usual welcome.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery, on behalf of my sister constituency to the east of mine and the member of the constituency of Kinistino, I would like to introduce 10 grade 11 and 12 students from the St. Benedict School. They are accompanied by their teacher Dan Cooke, and chaperon Joan Martin.

I trust that these students will find the proceedings in the Legislative Assembly this afternoon both informative and interesting, and I wish all students a safe trip home. Would you please welcome the students from St. Benedict.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Regulation of Store Hours

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to address my question to the Premier and it deals with a matter of government policy, and therefore I think it is appropriate that he respond.

Mr. Premier, the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers has written a letter to all MLAs in the Legislative Assembly and has expressed deep concern about your proposal to abdicate provincial responsibility for store closing or a common pause day throughout the province.

I quote from the letter, Mr. Premier, because I think it is relative and extremely important. They say that:

... what is at issue is much greater than mere commerce, but the very essence of the Saskatchewan society that we wish to live in and pass on to our children.

Now, Mr. Premier, this group and a large coalition of community people, church people, and business people have asked that you put aside the proposed legislation to abdicate provincial responsibility for regulating store hours and the common pause day, and that there be an all-party committee that will hold hearings throughout

the province to get public input.

I ask you, Mr. Premier, have you considered this suggestion, and are you prepared to agree that there should be an all-party committee and that you will stand this legislation until those hearing have been held around the province?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, the issue of store hours has been around not only Saskatchewan but Canada for an awful long time, and everybody in every jurisdiction has been looking at it. And it's a very difficult thing to process properly, I suppose, but the consumer is saying hold it now; there's a whole lot of moms and dads out there, double-working families, that find it very convenient to shop on Sundays. There's a whole lot of single-parent families now that find it convenient to shop on Sundays.

And as a result of changing times that were not with us a decade ago, something had to be done to accommodate what we believe is going to be the best of several worlds, Mr. Speaker. Number one, the consumer — we're certainly thinking about them. Number two, the local autonomy at the local level. We believe we're taking a leadership role, hardly an abdication. We're saying that if some local community wants to uphold their tradition in their community, then so be it. By virtue of the legislation that we've presented, the autonomy of the smaller communities is protected, and they can uphold their traditions or in fact do what their local community dictates to them.

The matter of the all-party committee has been tried unsuccessfully in other provinces, and why should it work here?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Premier, I'm going to ask . . . Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask the Premier again the question which he would not answer the first time, and I'm going to ask him a question that is somewhat different, but related, because I think this matter of such importance is of such importance that the Premier ought to be able to speak for the government.

Mr. Premier, the Reverend Bill Portman, who's the chairman of this coalition which is growing throughout Saskatchewan, very rapidly, has said that we believe that the Minister of Urban Affairs has misread public opinion and particularly misread business opinion. Now, Mr. Premier, your shopping hour legislation is not serving Saskatchewan small business, it is not serving Saskatchewan families. It is only serving the interest of large out-of-province chain stores. I ask you, therefore, Mr. Premier: instead of serving those interest, why doesn't your government serve the interest of Saskatchewan people, and why don't you pull this Bill and do what's right and hold public hearings so that those people can tell you what it is that they wish to have?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to hear the members of the opposition. I believe that the public have

spoken, certainly in Regina, by virtue of the plebiscite that was held last fall. And it's interesting to note that in their travels to the SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) conferences that they attend as opposition, they say to SUMA, yes, we're going to have a common day of pause, But I believe that they say other things in the cities.

And when they start talking about small business, Mr. Speaker, the NDP, you know, hardly represents small business. They never have; they never will. Why are they trying to fool people now into thinking that they're the saviours of small business. The *Regina Manifesto* hasn't been changed. Right there, clearly it says that they're not in favour of business; they want to nationalize everything, so to stand up here and say that they represent small business is not accurate.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know, time after time we see articles as this editorial that says, "Is Saskatchewan open for business?" And granted, Sunday opening takes a bit of getting used to at first, but once in place, the people of Saskatchewan would never go back. And it closes and it says — here's the key, Mr. Speaker:

If anyone does not want to shop on Sundays, they don't have to. If businesses don't want to open on Sunday, they don't have to. But if they should do, shouldn't they be allowed to? The churches have not emptied in Alberta, the stores are still operating, the people are still working, and possibly it's time Saskatchewan did the same.

That's an editorial taken out of a large paper close to the Alberta border.

And I had a very good meeting with the Reverend Bill Portman, as the member ascribed to in his question, Mr. Speaker, and I'm just responding to that meeting. And we had a good, frank discussion. That coalition, which was just recently formed, which is not huge, but which they would like to gather some support of, they're going about their work. Some of the ideas that we discussed in this frank, open discussion were good, and those ideas are being transferred to the municipalities.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, to the minister. This is . . . The insensitivity of this minister has now grown beyond the point of being believable. The minister stands up and tries to make a political argument about an issue that is of such importance that it will literally undermine the existence of many rural communities in Saskatchewan and reads some letter from next to the Alberta border.

Mr. Minister, if you are so positive that you are getting support for this legislation, then why are you afraid to hold public hearings throughout Saskatchewan? And why won't you get off this stubbornness of yours and hold those public hearings so that the people of Saskatchewan have an opportunity to have some input, so that they can tell you what they want, instead of you ramming it down their throats?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, we've been holding hearings on this issue for the last two years. We go to chamber of commerce meetings throughout this province

— something that the NDP does not do, something that the NDP is not familiar in doing. Something that the NDP does not understand is small business, and certainly the business community is all over the lot on this thing, as you would suspect.

But when you go out and tell rural Saskatchewan one thing, why don't you stand up and tell the people of the city of Regina that you're going to close Superstore, you're going to close Safeway, you're going to close Bi-Rite Drugs? That's the very problem. You can't keep Superstore in Regina open or closed at your whim and create a level playing-field for the small-business community throughout the province. You don't understand business.

The rural business operator will survive very nicely. Do you know that there are communities in this province that are still closed Mondays? And they don't care about the cities. They don't open evenings, and the cities are open in the evenings. You know why they survive? Because we've got an awful lot of faith in the business community, not only in the cities but in rural Saskatchewan. They will survive, and we're trying to give everybody a level playing-field. We're trying to give the communities a playing field, and most of all we're trying to give the people in Saskatchewan a level playing field.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Rafferty Dam Project

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Deputy Premier. Mr. Deputy Premier, a little more than two months ago, on April 12 to be exact, I asked you a question concerning the costs of the coffer-dams that you're constructing at the Rafferty dam sit. At that point in time, you said you would take notice of the question and get back to me as soon as possible.

Now I trust that over two months is sufficient time to be able to find the information. I wonder, sir, would you mind tabling that information in the legislature here today?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, as you know, I've been trying to get recognized in question period for a long time to answer that question, to answer the question that I took notice of on April 12. I remember distinctly taking notice of that question, Mr. Speaker. But having had all that difficulty in getting recognized, I seem to have misplaced the answer, and I will undertake to get it today and present it to the House tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

Cost of Power from New Plant

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the same minister, who chooses to make a joke of providing information to the people of Saskatchewan about a billion dollar project being undertaken by this government.

Mr. Minister, on May 12 another question was asked of you, to which you took notice, promised that you would bring the information back to this House concerning the cost of the power that would be produced at the Shand project.

Mr. Minister, why have you not provided that information to this House, and will you provide it today?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The cost of the power, Mr. Speaker . . . I remember the question. It was on May 12, and it was some convoluted question from members opposite that was dealing with . . . I think it was page 2 of the environmental impact study on the Shand project, or the Rafferty project, where it said that the cost of power was going to be something like 10 cents per kilowatt-hour . . . no, per . . . yes, 10 cents per kilowatt-hour based on the yardstick that was used in what they call a levelized calculation.

Now I think we're going to have to go back to *Hansard* because I remember distinctly answering that question in the House. And I'll look up . . . I'll find the date. I'll find the date and I'll give it to you.

But what levelized costing is, Mr. Speaker, is a yardstick used to compare apples and oranges. The yardstick that you calculate thermal plants on, that have maybe a 30-year life and an insignificant capital cost, in comparison to a hydroplant that might have a 75-year life and a very, very significant capital cost, are different.

So they have this levelized cost — and you were comparing Manitoba to this levelized formula that the engineers use — and it said something like 6 cents compared to 10. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the opposite is true. At the end of a 12-year contract that we negotiated with Manitoba, the cost of Manitoba power would be twice as much as Shand Power.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Dental Services for Gravelbourg

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, On March 25 in this House you told us that an announcement would be made shortly regarding a new dentist for Gravelbourg.

It's almost four months from that date, Mr. Premier. If there's been an announcement, the people of Gravelbourg have not heard it, and we would like to know, Mr. Premier, when you're going to make that announcement.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the question, and I know you will note as well, that the . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, Order, order. The minister is attempting to answer the question but has some competition, so I'd like to ask your co-operation in allowing him to answer.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr.

Speaker. As you will know, Mr. Speaker, and the members of the House will know, the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg asked a similar question the other day, and legitimately, and he received his answer. I will give the answer in a little bit more detail to the hon. Member from Lakeview and for the benefit of the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

I had said in the House on several occasions that we would make arrangements to have a dental service in Gravelbourg, and I had said that before. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, we made those arrangements and we had two dentists. And we still have two dentists, one from Regina and one from Assiniboia, who are prepared to open a satellite office, and the arrangements have been made. But, Mr. Speaker, the people in Gravelbourg, through their economic development committee, and I believe the mayor is somewhat involved in this, have refused both of those dentists coming to their community in the form of a satellite service because they are searching out a full-time dentist. And they have said full-time dentist or no dentist at all.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the arrangements were made. The Department of Health has been involved in making those arrangements with the College of Dental Surgeons. Two dentists — not one, but two dentists — have said that they will go to Gravelbourg on very short notice and be there. But, Mr. Speaker, the ball is clearly in the court of the people of Gravelbourg.

Shortage of Radio-Therapy Technicians

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, on May 4 of this year I brought to your attention the case of Muriel Gustafson, a woman who lives in Elrose and she's a cancer patient. This woman's complaint was one that she had to wait several months in order for her to receive radio-therapy treatment at the Saskatoon Cancer Clinic.

At that time you told me that you would be doing some research on the case and bringing information forward. I'm wondering if you now have that information, now that it's well into June?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — I'm just looking through my notes for the particular case, and I say to the House, Mr. Speaker, I don't have it, but I will undertake to give it to the member tomorrow. Okay.

Child Poverty in Saskatchewan

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, on May 3 you were asked about the shocking information from the National Council on Welfare, which shows that some 64,600 children in Saskatchewan live in poverty today. You wouldn't take the federal government's word for that figure, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Premier. You said you had to review the report and study the situation.

So will you tell us today, Mr. Premier, how many children in Saskatchewan are living in poverty, and can you confirm that we have the second highest rate of child poverty of any province in Canada; that in fact the figure

of 64,600 children living in poverty underestimates the situation in that children living on Indian reserves, children of status Indian families, are not included in that figure.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it should not surprise the members opposite that with the agricultural situation in Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan still being primarily an agricultural province despite the efforts we've made to diversify this province, that incomes in Saskatchewan would be down does not surprise me, Mr. Speaker, that the incomes of my constituents who live on farms are down, and statistically it may show that they are living in poverty. The question is, where do you draw the line on poverty?

Yes, the people of rural Saskatchewan are living without cash in their pockets, and they are trying to survive the best they can through low prices and drought and all of the other things. And it is possible that that kind of economic difficulty may reflect in the economy of small towns and cities, so statistically it is possible that if you take the National Council of Welfare of Canada's calculation, Saskatchewan's rates may be up. But we do pay the highest rates for families with respect to welfare in Canada, so those people that ask for assistance and need assistance get the highest rates in Canada.

This government has done a lot to diversify the economy, to assist agriculture, to assist with drought, and this government is doing everything possible to assist the people of Saskatchewan. And I don't think that we can accept the statistics of the Welfare Council of Canada as being an accurate reflection of the actual life-styles of the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, your minister has refused to accept the figures of the National Council on Welfare as representing the true poverty picture in this province. And we say, Mr. Premier, that that's a shocking condemnation of the view that your government takes to the terrible plight of children in this province today.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Premier, we have 17,000 children in Saskatchewan depending on the food banks of this province every year. And my question to you, Mr. Premier, is: in light of the fact that your government hasn't increased social assistance rates to families with children on penny since 1982, and in view of the fact that you have, Mr. Premier, only increased the minimum wage of wage earners supporting children by 25 cents an hour in six years, will you now, Mr. Premier, give us your commitment today that you will increase welfare rates immediately to families with children; that you will immediately increase the minimum wage so that earners who are supporting children can make enough to support their families; and that you will, Mr. Premier, immediately implement a policy of a school lunch or a school breakfast program so that the hundreds of children

in this province that are going to school hungry every day can at least get a decent meal in the class-room so that they can pursue their studies and live in some kind of dignity.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Speaker, when the net farm income in Saskatchewan goes down to zero, you would anticipate that there would be difficult times with respect to farms and that the statistics would not be very good. This government has realized that difficulty and has assisted agriculture in every way possible, and that the people in rural Saskatchewan living with zero and negative incomes on their farms are still quite adequately taking care of their children. I am out there, and I see it every day that the people of rural Saskatchewan are feeding their children regularly and are taking care of their children, despite the difficulty of surviving where half of the people in this province survive in an area where the net farm income is zero.

So with respect to the opposition's suggestions of raising the welfare rates, we already have the highest rates in Canada. The people I am referring to, the people that you were referring to as statistics, are not on welfare. They are taking care of themselves as best they can, and the government is helping them as best the government can. We are all in this together, and we cannot single out particular families and say they should get more help than other families.

Hold-back of Fee by SGI

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the minister responsible for SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). Last Thursday in this House you took notice of a question of yet another unfair PC tax, a hold-back charge of \$35 when a person returns their licence plates. You hold back on the gas tax rebates; you hold back on drug rebates. Can you confirm this hold-back fee and tell the people of Saskatchewan how you can justify it?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Yes, most certainly, Mr. Speaker, I can explain the reason for the fee. If someone turns in their licence plate early, prior to the expiry of that plate, there is a fee of \$25 held back for administration and \$10 in the highway fund.

The reason behind this, though, is what I'd like to explain, Mr. Speaker, is that what we found was happening, that there were many people that were looking at the opportunity to make a quick flip; in other words, that they anticipated that there would be an increase, an increase in their licence fee. They would then go and cash them in early so that they could insure at a lower rate.

And, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that's fair to the people of Saskatchewan. That's trying to take advantage of a loophole that was there. So we put this in to try and deter from people using that type of loophole which just causes other people's rates to be higher. And I think that's in the best interests of the drivers of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The piling on of \$35 more is not in the interests of the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — A great many people turn in their licence plates because they choose to license their vehicles for only a portion of the year — seasonal vehicles such as trailers. Why are you penalizing these people because they can't or they won't license their vehicles all the year? Why are you having your hands in the pockets of Saskatchewan people once again?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite failed to understand what I was explaining to him. It was simply that there were people — and if he support this, stand up in this House and say so — but there were people who were taking advantage of the loophole where you could go in a week before there would be a renewal, if you thought your licence rate would be higher, and flip it, and therefore insure your car at a lesser rate than anybody else a week or two after when they would come through. And to deter that, we put in a fee of \$35.

I think that's fair. That has Saskatchewan motorists paying the same amount, and that is plugging loopholes of people who are trying to take advantage of the system.

Answers from Ministers

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, we have seen here the performance of a government this afternoon that has completely lost touch with the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I say in my question to the Premier, first of all you display how you have a complete disregard of Saskatchewan people with regard to store hours, and their opinions matter not at all. Then we ask some seven questions about information that has been asked many, many weeks ago. In almost all cases, your ministers have not been prepared to answer them.

Your government has a complete and blatant disregard for its obligations to this legislature and to the people of Saskatchewan to provide answers. And so I ask you, Mr. Premier: will you stand up for your responsibility as the chief executive officer of Executive Council and instruct your ministers to start giving full answers to this House to the questions which the public has a right to know, and exercise their responsibility as ministers of the Crown, rather than political activists only on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the

people in Saskatchewan, and indeed the people in the gallery, found this question period quite interesting.

We have some very serious questions with respect to drought; serious questions going on at the national level that have an impact on Saskatchewan with respect to free trade and French language. We have all kinds of issues, evidently, that are very serious with respect to public accounts and Provincial Auditor and other. And do they raise one of them, Mr. Speaker? Not one of them.

And each of these ministers has responded to things that they would bring up with respect to specifics that would go back to something that you'd get in Crown corporations. And then they would ask another very specific question.

Mr. Speaker, I can just only say to the hon. Members, if you are concerned about agriculture, if you're concerned about farm income, if you're concerned about families, then you would be concerned about drought, you'd be concerned about trade, you'd be concerned about access to markets.

I stand in here and I talk about other governments that we take on in terms of subsidies, because we have to come with deficiency payments, and they laugh at it; they say it isn't even relevant.

Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you the people of this province know that we trade. We know that we deal with the constitution. We know that we deal with Meech Lake. We know that we deal with jobs and seniors and children, and people all across this province know that; and you stand in here and you say, well, Mr. Speaker, deal with what's relevant — what's relevant are the things that matter to people, not just what matters to the NDP.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ROYAL ASSENT TO BILLS

At 2:37 p.m. His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bills:

Bill No. 7 — An Act to amend The Reciprocal Enforcement of Judgments Act
 Bill No. 8 — An Act to amend The Public Libraries Act, 1984
 Bill No. 16 — An Act respecting the Licensing of Persons who Perform Work of Gas Installation or Sell Gas Equipment
 Bill No. 5 — An Act to declare a Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured in the Course of their Employment/Loi relative à la déclaration d'un jour de deuil en souvenir des travailleurs et travailleuses morts ou blessés au travail
 Bill No. 6 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Regional Colleges Act and The Institute Act
 Bill No. 9 — An Act to amend The Fire Prevention Act, 1980
 Bill No. 10 — An Act respecting the Licensing of Persons who Perform Work of Electrical Installation or Sell

Electrical Equipment

Bill No. 11 — An Act to amend The Ophthalmic Dispensers Act
 Bill No. 12 — An Act to amend The Medical Profession Act, 1981
 Bill No. 13 — An Act to amend The Denturists Act
 Bill No. 14 — An Act to amend The Dental Profession Act, 1978
 Bill No. 15 — An Act to amend The Optometry Act, 1985
 Bill No. 17 — An Act respecting the Inspection of Gas Installations and Gas Equipment for Consumers
 Bill No. 18 — An Act respecting the Inspection of Electrical Equipment, Installation and Material
 Bill No. 40 — An Act to amend The League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents Act
 Bill No. 27 — An Act to adopt the Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration
 Bill No. 28 — An Act to amend The Matrimonial Property Act
 Bill No. 29 — An Act respecting the Convention Between Canada and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland providing for the Reciprocal Recognition and Enforcement of Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters
 Bill No. 01 — An Act to incorporate the Stephen and Micheline Worobetz Foundation
 Bill No. 02 — An Act to amend An Act to incorporate Full Gospel Bible Institute
 Bill No. 30 — An Act to amend The Research Council Act
 Bill No. 34 — An Act to promote Regulatory Reform in Saskatchewan by repealing Certain Obsolete Statutes
 Bill No. 35 — An Act to amend The Jury Act, 1981
 Bill No. 51 — An Act to amend The Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards Act
 Bill No. 52 — An Act to amend The Queen's Bench Act
 Bill No. 57 — An Act to amend The Attachment of Debts Act
 Bill No. 66 — An Act respecting Justices of the Peace / Loi concernant les juges de paix
 Bill No. 67 — An Act respecting a Traffic Safety Court for Saskatchewan/Loi concernant le Tribunal de la sécurité routière de la Saskatchewan
 Bill No. 22 — An Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act
 Bill No. 23 — An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act
 Bill No. 36 — An Act to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move, by leave of the Assembly, that we take a short recess till approximately 4 o'clock, but in any event that we be called by the five minute bell.

Leave is granted.

Mr. Speaker: — With the agreement of the House we will now take a short recess.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Andrew that Bill No. 37 — **An Act to provide for Security for Saskatchewan Family Farms** be now read a second time.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to get involved in debate on second reading on Bill 27. Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that the Act will be better known to farmers for what it doesn't include, as opposed to what it does include. Obviously the Bill, in dealing with the security of farmers, doesn't deal with the major issue that has been identified not only by farmers but by farm groups and, I suppose more interestingly, by the Conservative caucus itself.

And many of us will remember the dog and pony show last year when members of the Conservative caucus went out at taxpayers' expense and wandered around the province, spending taxpayers' money like drunken sailors, pretending to be interested in the debt crisis.

I have here a copy of the report that they did when they came back to the legislature, back to Regina, called *Farm Finance for the Future*, MLA committee report. And Mr. Deputy Speaker, in that document I have here, that MLA committee on farm financing included the Minister of Rural Development, the member from Kelsey-Tisdale; the Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, the member from Thunder Creek; the member from Wilkie; the member from Rosthern, and the member from Shaunavon.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't think any of those members who claim to be so interested in farmers have even taken the time to rise in their place and speak to this Bill. I don't think any of them have. I may be wrong because I was out for several days with colleagues of mine on a drought tour in southern Saskatchewan and they may have talked and spoken in this second reading debate on Bill 37, but I don't think any of them who claimed to be interested in the farm plight and the debt crisis have taken even a moment of their time — some of them who are in the House now — and I would challenge them, when I sit down, to rise in their place and explain how Bill 37 deals with the problem that even they identified in their tour. And to that point . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Neudorf: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I think the hon. Member just went through the process of identifying the five members who were on that farm finance tour and then proceeded to indicate that some of them were in the House. I do believe that he should be brought to order on that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. Members are not to make reference to the absence or presence of other members in the legislature.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if you were speaking to the member from Rosthern, who just indicated he was in the House, and I would agree with you that that's not the proper procedure.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. The member for

Regina Elphinstone just made reference again to a member that's in the House, and I just said that members are not to make reference to member in or out of the House.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to get hung up on your ruling as to whether people are in their seats or not because I agree with you that's not what the debate is about. If the member from Rosthern would quit interrupting and allow us to continue the debate on Bill 37 which deals with the plight of farmers, the thousands of farmers who are going bankrupt as a direct result of the inactivity of this government, a government that has been in power now for six years, six years, six long, lean years on the farm in Saskatchewan, where we've seen record numbers of farmers biting the dust and going broke.

And I say again that we were not opposed to the dog and pony show that went out and toured the province and went around and spoke to farmers, got opinions about debt financing — we weren't opposed to that. We believed that when the committee went out it should have been an all-party committee; that if you're going to pay for it out of the taxpayer's dollar that you then should include opposition members. And this has been done in the past; it's been done a number of times out of this legislature — all-party committees.

We would have argued that the Conservative Party should have paid for the dog and pony show when they went out because it included only Conservative caucus members, but I do believe that having spent the taxpayers money and delivered a report to the legislature, that you would have thought that some of those members who were on the committee would have had the courage of their conviction to stand up and say that Bill 37 is good, if they believed it. I don't know how they could, and that's probably why they're not getting involved in making speeches defending Bill 37, but not one of them is taking the time or the effort to stand in their place and offer up solutions to the farm crises in this province.

And I say to you that when we were doing our tour of the south and west side of the province where the drought is the worst and where farmers are facing debt the same as they are in the rest of the country, that one of the things we heard loud and clear was that when the Conservative members came out to the area, if it wasn't in an orchestrated fashion where they controlled the meeting and question period, they simply haven't been out talking to the farmers. They simply haven't been out there.

In fact, in one of the communities we were in, the people of the council told us they hadn't seen the Conservative member since he was elected, and that they were very disappointed and also very pleased with the fact that the now Agriculture critic of the New Democratic Party had organized a tour of that part of the province and were listening to their concerns.

And I think if you look at the front page of the *Ponteix Tribune*, and if you look at the *Swift Current Sun*, you'll find that even the press people are beginning to wonder about this Conservative government and their lack of support for farmers. And they're beginning to say that the promises made in 1982 to support the farm community,

the business community, and then again in 1986, simply isn't working any more; that the promises were nothing more than that — they were idle promises, and farmers continue to go broke and go bankrupt at record numbers.

And I think the record, as put in the *Hansard* by member from Quill Lakes last day on this very issue, in terms of farm bankruptcy, clearly indicates that. And he said that there were 2,251 foreclosures filed, and that of those, the farm security board had allowed only 106 of them, that they should not be foreclosed. This is what the Conservative government has done to protect the farmers.

And I say to you, while we're not opposed to Bill 37, it simply doesn't do the job, and nor will it do the job, even with the amendments that have been made. And I indicate clearly, Mr. Speaker, that it's not that we're opposed to the Bill. And we'll be making amendments to it when we get to the committee stage to try to strengthen the Bill to protect farmers, but in its present form it simply doesn't go far enough.

Now saving 106 farmers out of 2,200 is a start in the right direction, we agree with that, and therefore we'll be supporting the Bill. But it simply does not allow for the protection of farmers and the headlines that the Tories are trying to grab by introducing Bill 37.

(1615)

And I say to these five members — and I want to go through them again: the member from Kelsey-Tisdale, who was on the tour, and the member from Thunder Creek, the member from Wilkie, and Rosthern, and the member from Shaunavon — I challenge them to stand in their place and give a speech about defending the farmers in Saskatchewan. Not one of them has spoken on Bill 37.

Now you can see that there have been a large number of New Democratic MLAs who have spoken to and expressed concern about the lack of debt protection for farmers. And I say again, in many ways we agree with the concerns that you people identified when you were out talking to farmers. But I guess what I can hardly believe is the weakness of this group of members who went out on the tour, identified the debt crises, and then didn't have any power within their caucus to implement their recommendations to deal with the debt of farmers.

Because I say to you: protect the farmers for three years, even those that you don't repossess and foreclose on. If you don't deal with the debt problem, as they identified in their report, how can those farmers possibly survive? And I think it's clear that if a farmer today has 2 or \$300,000 in debt and they can't afford to make their payments on that debt and you protect them for the next three-year period and they end up with \$400,000 in debt, because the government failed to come forward with a program, what is the solution? What have you solved? You haven't solved anything.

And the simple fact is that what they've done with Bill 37 is to freeze a lot of credit that would be allowed to farmers through the lending institutions in Saskatchewan. And I think the clearest example of that was their own federal

lending agency, the Farm Credit Corporation, who last week announced that they were no longer going to be lending up to 100 per cent of the value on the home quarter; that in fact they would be reducing the lending power of the home quarter to a maximum of 25 per cent.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will know that in many cases the Farm Credit Corporation will probably be looking at ceasing any kind of lending power on the home quarter.

And I say again that this has sent a clear message to the credit unions and the banks in the province, that farm credit is going to be drying up. And this is bad news not only for farmers, many of them who up to this point have had solvent operations, have been making their payments but used their home quarter to finance their farming operation year by year — these people depend on that kind of financing, interim financing, operating loans, in order to buy their fuel and buy needed equipment for harvest and that sort of thing. If they can't go to their credit union and use their home quarter as security, many of them will then fall into the 20 or 30 per cent and raise that number of those farmers who have become insolvent.

And I say to the members opposite that you should consider the implication and the problems that this has caused for many local credit unions and many banks in the province of Saskatchewan in terms of their lending policy and indirectly caused for the farmers, who will no longer be able to use that portion of their farm as security when they go for operation loans.

We have had many phone calls from farmers who are telling us that this Bill is not solving their problem but is causing a problem for them.

So I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I suppose you, yourself, and the other members when you're dealing with this Bill in caucus — and I know it's not going to be passed today; we'll go through second reading, and I would challenge the members opposite to get involved and give speeches saying how the Bill is inadequate — but that when you come to committee, that you have a caucus meeting to discuss how this Bill could be strengthened.

And I would imagine that the member from Shaunavon and the member from Morse, who have a good number of people who are facing bankruptcy, and I think they are, I think that it's important that you stand up in caucus and defend the position of farmers in your community, because you simply haven't done it with Bill 37.

I find it hard to believe, that having been out on the tour, that the member from Shaunavon would then go ahead and write up a Bill like Bill 37 that simply doesn't deal with the debt problem of farmers, when he clearly identified in the report that the biggest single issue was the massive \$6 billion debt that farmers hold in this province. And then to bring in a Bill that doesn't include one cent of help for farmers, seems to be a strange solution.

And I think what has happened here is that once again the members who sit in the front benches of the government have hoodwinked the back-benchers. And this has

happened a great number of times with this government, where the members in the back rows simply don't understand the process of government and how Bills are brought forward, or they don't believe in protecting the farmers of their constituencies.

And I say to you, that even in the crassest political terms, you really should look at what you're doing because the farmers in your areas are watching, and watching very closely what you are going to be doing to solve that debt problem. Any polling that has been done in rural Saskatchewan clearly indicates that the debt issue is what farmers are concerned about.

Now you can talk to them about a million dollars or \$12 million for digging dug-outs, but that isn't what concerns farmers out in rural Saskatchewan today. I have yet to have one farmer phone me and say the problem on their farm is that they don't have a dug-out. I have yet to have that expressed to me, and I would be surprised if the critic or other rural members on this side of the House have had one constituent who has raised the issue of the lack of dug-outs.

But yet this is what the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture, and the caucus members come forward with as solution to the problem that farmers are having this spring. In fact what they're saying is that the problem isn't the lack of dug-outs or the lack of wells; it's simply that there's no water in the dug-outs. And digging more of them isn't going to solve that problem.

So I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I think this Bill, while it is a bit of a loaf, simply doesn't even look at the fundamental problem facing the farm community — it doesn't even touch it; that the \$6 billion debt that is there today, after Bill 37 is passed and we all go away from this legislature, that the simple fact is that the problem will still be there, in spades. The \$6 billion debt will still be there; farmers will still be there with no means to pay their debt. And you may have saved 106 out of 2,000 who were facing foreclosure, but your political problem in rural Saskatchewan is very much still there, and you're going to have to deal with it.

I want to say as well that, when we look beyond, when we look beyond the debt of the farmer and to the farm family, some of the things that this Bill doesn't deal with and some of the things that this government isn't dealing with — in fact, are ignoring totally — one of them is the social fabric of rural Saskatchewan that is being destroyed by the lack of a program.

We've been through literally hundreds of towns in rural Saskatchewan over the last couple of years, where Main Street, Saskatchewan is literally falling apart because of a lack of effort to protect the farm families and, indirectly, the small-business people.

I know in my home town of Shaunavon, and I know in the town of Eastend, a number of businesses that have closed their doors and left those towns because the farm economy is basically collapsing, and this at a time when the government says that they're doing all that they can. Well you're going to have to convince the farmers and the business people of rural Saskatchewan that this

government is doing anything to protect the rural community.

I use the example in the Shaunavon constituency of the number of people who left that constituency between 1982 and 1986 — between 1982 and 1986. There were 800 less voters, 800 fewer voters in the Shaunavon constituency in that period of time. A full 10 per cent of the people in that rural constituency had moved out over that four-year period, and I would be surprised if that trend hasn't accelerated over the last two years, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I say to you that the problem has to be dealt with — the problem of farm debt, because if it isn't, we're going to see that kind of an exodus from rural Saskatchewan the likes of which we haven't seen since the last time we had a Conservative government provincially, that back in the 1930s.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will probably not remember that era, but you will have read the history of how the Conservative government in Ottawa, during the period from '29 to '34, and in Saskatchewan during the same period, ignored rural Saskatchewan during the Depression — totally ignored rural Saskatchewan.

Again that is happening. The only difference now is the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan can afford more media — 12, \$20 million a year to put out propaganda about all the things that are happening for rural Saskatchewan.

But anyone who looks at the fabric of rural Saskatchewan will know that there's nothing more that advertising that is going on, that the number of farm families is decreasing at record numbers, the number of small-business people is decreasing and what we're looking at is a problem of a \$6 billion debt that hangs over the heads of farmers and this government hasn't got a cent in Bill 37 to deal with that crisis.

I want to turn to on other aspect of the Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is the section that deals with foreign ownership of Saskatchewan farm land. You'll know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the limitations on ownership of . . . foreign ownership of farm land is very strict at the present time in Saskatchewan. And I think that there would be very few farm groups or farm families who would be pushing the sections of this Bill to open up large tracts of farm land in Saskatchewan to foreign ownership.

We saw what happened in the 1970s and we know why the farm ownership Bill was brought in, to restrict the number of acres that were owned by non-residents. And when we come to this section in the Bill, we will want to look at putting forward constructive ideas that will change the Bill so that we don't move back to a position of having large numbers of acres owned by people who live outside the province.

And you will know that part 6 of the Bill, the farm ownership section, Mr. Deputy Speaker, allows for a drastic increase in the number of acres that can be owned by non-residents of the province, in fact increases to 320 acres the amount that can be owned by individuals from

outside the province. Now you can see small companies of 15 or 20 people getting together and each of the owning 320 acres, how very quickly we will see large tracts of land once again bought up by foreign landlords.

And I say to you, I can't understand where the pressure for this is coming from. And when we get to clause by clause discussion of the Bill, we'll be asking the minister who will be bringing the Bill through, where the pressure has come from — whether it's come from the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, from the wheat pool, from Credit Union Central, who is demanding that we have more foreign ownership of our farm land in the province. Maybe the member from Yorkton has the answers, or maybe the member from Morse. Maybe they have friends in some foreign country who want to come here and purchase farm land. But there are provisions already within the Act that allow for special circumstances. And to have a blanket policy that allows every foreign resident to hold 320 acres seems to be inappropriate at this time.

So with those few comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say to you that while we will be supporting the Bill, the little bit that there is here, I want to say very clearly that the main problem facing farmers — the \$6 billion in debt — simply isn't in the Bill. There's not 1 cent to help alleviate that problem.

And instead there's an attempt to dump on the backs of credit union members and farm families, the responsibility that — when the tour was taking place of the Tory caucus — they said they would solve. And I believe that they are simply neglecting their duty, even that they identified while they were out on tour last year.

So with that I want to say that I look forward to members of the Conservative caucus getting up and going through the Bill and telling us why there is no substance and why there is no money for Saskatchewan farmers.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Berntson that Bill No. 56 — **An Act respecting the Reorganization of the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation** be now read a second time.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. First let me say that I appreciate the opportunity to respond to this particular piece of legislation, Bill No. 56. And let's be clear on what this Bill is.

This Bill is not an Act to reorganize SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation), this Act is an Act to privatize the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation.

(1630)

Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation, for the interest of those who may not know, is a company that is actively involved in the mining of Saskatchewan uranium. It's involved in the mining of Saskatchewan

gold, and it's involved in the mining of a number of other hard rock metals, in particular copper and silver, Mr. Speaker.

Now the minister responsible for this Bill, the member from Moosomin, made it clear the other day that the purpose of this legislation was to roll Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation in with Eldorado Nuclear, which is a federal Crown corporation, and the purpose was to make these two particular companies stronger than either corporation could have ever imagined before. That's to quote the minister.

He also said that he wanted to ensure that the head office of this world-scale resource company was headquartered in Saskatchewan, and he also wanted to make sure that the government no longer had ownership in this particular new company.

Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation was a company set up by the provincial government in the early 1970s. Over the years this company has become a world-class leader in the mining of uranium. This is a company that has over \$1 billion in assets; it's a company that returned to the people of Saskatchewan, in this year alone, \$60 million. It paid a dividend to the provincial treasury of \$30 million, and the return on equity for this particular company was 20.2 per cent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in previous years this company has netted for the people of Saskatchewan \$15 million in 1986, \$15 million in 1985, and lesser amounts in the three years prior to that. This is a very profitable company.

Now I want to talk about Eldorado Nuclear. This is the company that, a federal Crown corporation, that SMDC is being merged with. Here is a company that has assets in the neighbourhood of \$915.9 million, but its long-term debt, Mr. Speaker, its long-term debt is close to \$420 million. This is a company that has had an accumulated deficit since 1981 of \$144 million. This is a company that lost \$57.2 million in 1985 and \$64.3 million in 1986. This company, Eldorado Nuclear, is not a good example of public ownership. Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation is. Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation is because it has returned to the people of this province a significant amount of money to pay for important public programs like health and education.

Now why does this government want to privatize the Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation? This government is ideologically committed to the right-wing philosophy of people like Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. They are committed to the philosophy of privatization and privatize at all costs. That's what this government's committed to. This government will privatize at any cost regardless of whether there are jobs lost for Saskatchewan people, regardless of whether revenues are lost to the provincial treasury, and regardless if Saskatchewan people lose control and ownership over vital Saskatchewan resources.

Now I want to talk about what this deal means. This deal allows for the following: Saskatchewan Mining and

Development Corporation up until now has been a wholly-owned corporation of the people of this province. This is a Saskatchewan corporation. Profits that are paid out of that company do not go to shareholders outside of Saskatchewan; they go to the people inside of Saskatchewan; they go to the provincial treasury to pay for important programs like health and education.

This government, along with its federal counterpart, the Mulroney government, has decided that they want to privatize this particular company. And this is what they've agreed to do. They've agreed to limit the foreign ownership, apparently, once this thing is placed on the stock-market, to 5 per cent for any one particular shareholder to an aggregate of 20 per cent. They've agreed to limit the ownership of any particular stock of one particular group to 25 per cent. That's what they've said. Conceivable, we could see in the future, four institutions or four individuals owning this particular company with a 25 per cent ownership figure, or we could see a major portion of this company owned by foreign interests — 20 per cent, as they say.

We have no guarantees after the seven-year period that these kinds of provisions will apply. There are no guarantees in the legislation that has been presented in the House of Commons and no guarantee in the legislation that has been presented here. So it is possible, Mr. Speaker, that after the seven-year period, Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation and Eldorado Nuclear could be owned by one particular company, or two or three particular companies. There are no guarantees that it won't be owned by people outside of Canada, and there are no guarantees that it won't be owned by people outside of Saskatchewan.

Well the minister of privatization has trotted out a little poll the other day, a poll that was done by Decima Research. Decima Research, of course, is the Conservative Party polling organization. Here is a poll that was done for approximately, I would suspect, at least 80 or \$90,000. There are 120 questions asked to over 1,000 people.

Now this polling was not done at the expense of the Progressive Conservative Party. This polling was done at the expense of the Saskatchewan taxpayers. And the Saskatchewan taxpayers have not yet seen the wording of the poll, and they have not yet been told or informed how much that particular poll cost. Now this poll was done to further the ideological agenda of the Progressive Conservative Party. That's why that poll was done. That poll was not done in the interest of Saskatchewan people.

But we've had to decipher through the media exactly what the content or the results of this polling was. And there seems to be three things that have become clear. Saskatchewan people are opposed to privatization when it means job loss; Saskatchewan people are opposed to privatization when it means loss of revenue to the provincial treasury; and Saskatchewan people are opposed to privatization when it means loss of control over our own industries here in Saskatchewan.

And privatization by this particular Progressive Conservative Party, up until now has meant either job

loss, it has meant the loss of revenues, and it has meant loss of control over our own particular provincial economy.

Now what we see here with this privatization of SMDC, here is a company that is a major player in the North, a major mining player in the North. It has over \$1 billion in assets. It's a company that has returned over \$60 million in this year alone, to the provincial treasury — \$60 million, a 20.2 per cent return on equity.

When this company is privatized, when this company is privatized members opposite, and if this company should pay dividends, those dividends will not be paid to Saskatchewan people. Those dividends will be paid to people outside of Saskatchewan and even outside of Canada. That is loss of control over our own provincial economy by having this particular privatization deal.

This particular privatization deal, in the legislation, has no guarantees in terms of environmental safety requirements. There are no guarantees whatsoever. Bill C-121 in the federal House of Commons does not refer to the environment, and neither does this Bill. There's no reference, we have no guarantees that this privatized company which will be owned and controlled by people outside of Saskatchewan, will protect our environment. And the environment in the North is sensitive and requires protection, particularly when we're dealing with uranium.

There are no guarantees in this particular piece of legislation that workers' occupational health and safety will be protected. There is no reference to workers' safety in either Bill C-121 or this particular piece of legislation.

My question is, how will the surface lease agreements be affected? How will affirmative action be affected by this particular privatization and merger of SMDC and Eldorado Nuclear? We have no guarantees that research and development investment will be made here in Saskatchewan for Saskatchewan people.

In short, there are a number of important public policy questions that have not been dealt with in this legislation. We have nuclear development questions. We have environmental questions. We have public policy questions that are not addressed in this legislation.

And like all the other pieces of privatization that we've seen, this creates a longer term poorness of this province, because we give up our ability and our right to own and control the development of our own natural resources. Natural resources are not infinite, ladies and gentlemen of the members opposite. They are not infinite; they are finite. And it's important that the people of this province own and control those natural resources, and own and control the development of those natural resources.

It's important that Saskatchewan people determine their own economic destiny, and you people seem hell-bent and determined to get rid of our control over our own economic destiny. We have seen it time and time again.

Saskatchewan oil, privatized — 75 per cent of the shares are owned by people outside of Saskatchewan; 25 per

cent of the labour force fired within one year of that particular privatization.

Weyerhaeuser comes in and gets the PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company) pulp and paper plant in northern Saskatchewan for absolutely nothing — absolutely nothing. There is apparently some \$248 million loan guarantee to PAPCO. They have not paid any money, as I understand it, on the . . . they have not paid any money on that loan. Not 1 cent has been paid on that loan, yet PAPCO had a 77 or \$80 billion return last year on our forests. That's what happened.

Had that been in public hands, that 77 or \$80 million of profits could have been turned over to the provincial treasury to pay for the prescription drug plan, to pay for the school-based dental program. That's what could have happened, but they've decided to reward their friends in big business. They've decided to reward their international friends in the United States of America. That's what we've seen with privatization.

Saskatchewan Minerals is another example. It's another example of giving up ownership and control over our own economic destiny. They gave away a plant, two plants, to two companies that are outside of Saskatchewan — one in Quebec and one in Ontario. Here was a company that returned to the people of this province, money to pay for health and education, for instance. It paid to the people of this province over \$50 million, and they sold that Sask Minerals for less than \$16 million. Well how foolish. Why would you sell the best quarter, the best quarter? I think there are some farmers over there, sitting here. You don't sell your best quarter in hard economic times. You don't do that. That quarter is your economic future; that quarter is your economic future.

And you people like to think of yourselves as high financiers and big-business people, and hob-nobbing with the big shots in this country. That's what you like to think of yourself. You like to think of yourself as high-fliers and high financiers, high rollers, but you wouldn't know a good business deal if it looked you straight in the face.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — You don't sell off the best quarter of the family farm in tough economic times. You don't do it. That best quarter is your future, and you know that. You know that.

And I want you to know this, ladies and gentlemen over there, I want you to know this. Weyerhaeuser was a give-away of our forests. Seventy-seven million dollars in profits last year could have been paid into the provincial treasury. Saskoil was a give-away of our oil and natural gas. Seventy-five percent of the people that own that company now live outside of Saskatchewan — outside of Saskatchewan. It paid over \$27 million in profits last year. Did that money stay here in Saskatchewan? No, it did not. Did the people who got the benefits of that profit, did they pay taxes here in Saskatchewan? No, they did not.

So what you are doing by privatizing whatever you see, you are giving away jobs, you are giving away revenues,

and you are giving up ownership and control of our economic destiny. That's what you're doing. You are so blinded by private enterprise that you don't understand the history of this province. You simply don't understand. The history of this province is one of co-operation, it's one of private enterprise, and where necessary, public involvement. That is the history of your province.

You can't tie your wagon to only one engine of the economy. It simply doesn't work. But you are so blinded by your ideology that you're not prepared to be practical.

The Minister of Public Participation has been running around this province having meetings, telling people how necessary to sell out their future and sell off their assets. And he says, public participation, the Saskatchewan way. What nonsense! What nonsense. Public participation, the Saskatchewan way.

(1645)

Privatization, that's what this is — privatization. And it is not the Saskatchewan way, it is the way of the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan. That's what way it is. It certainly is not the way of Saskatchewan men and women. It's not the way of our grandparents; it's not the way of our parents; and it's not the way of our young people.

And you people are prepared to give up whatever is necessary to further your own political agenda to further the means and ends of your own political friends. You're prepared to do whatever is necessary to reward your friends and you're prepared to sacrifice the people of this province on the altar of free enterprise. But it's really not free enterprise, because you don't believe in competitive tendering; you don't believe in the system where people are free to have access to the market-place and not be rewarded just because they happen to be Conservative Party supporters.

There are business people all over this province that are sick and tired of the way you people do business, and we hear from them daily. And they used to be Conservatives. They used to be Conservatives, but they are sick and tired of having to know someone or have a blue card or have access to some cabinet minister in order to get any access to government work. They're sick and tired of that. They're sick and tired of the way you people are handling the affairs of this province.

And it seems to me that you are alienating the very people that you pretend to represent. You do not represent small business in this province; you represent big business, and you represent a few Tory faithfuls. That's who you represent.

Now Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation . . .

An Hon. Member: — Like Weyerhaeuser.

Ms. Atkinson: — Yes, and you represent Weyerhaeuser. Yes, that's true. Yes. We acknowledge that. You represent Peter Pocklington and George Hill and Paul Schoenhals and all of the other defeated Conservative Party members

from the last provincial election. They got jobs; they got jobs. That's who you represent.

And I wouldn't be very proud of it. I wouldn't be very proud of it because the people of Saskatchewan know what you people are all about. They know what you're all about. They know that all you're interested in doing is furthering your own ends. You're not interested in looking after the legitimate needs and concerns of Saskatchewan people. They've caught on to you. They caught on in the by-elections that occurred in Elphinstone in Regina and Eastview in Saskatoon. They know what you folks are all about.

Now, Mr. Speaker, getting back to Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation. As I said earlier, this mining corporation is involved in the mining of uranium in Saskatchewan, but it's also involved in the mining of gold in Saskatchewan. And the gold potential in this province is unbelievable. And as all members know, an ounce of gold is going at over \$500 an ounce.

I just want to talk about one particular find — one particular gold find the SMDC is involved in. It's involved in the Flin Flon area. And if you refer to the annual report, they estimate that at 282,000 tonnes with an average grade of 0.44 ounces per tonne — and we're talking about gold, and a 2.2 ounce per tonne, and we're talking about silver, this particular mine has a tremendous potential; this mine has a potential of close to \$1 billion — \$1 billion. And this government's going to sacrifice it, all in the name of its own particular ideology, all in the name of privatization. That's what this government's prepared to do.

They're prepared to sell off an asset that the people now own and control, that returned over \$60 million to the people of this province last year. With the elimination of the long-term debt of \$300-and-some-odd million by the year 1990, this is the company that has a tremendous potential in terms of providing revenue to the people of this province to pay for the kinds of things that this government doesn't seem to want to pay for.

This government regularly says it doesn't have revenues. It regularly says, oh, we have to cut back on health care spending; we just don't have the revenues we used to have. They say they have to cut back on health and education and social service spending. There are hungry kids in this province, for Heaven's sakes. There are hungry kids in this province, and the government says they don't have revenue.

But they do have revenue. They just have to learn how to find it. They have to learn that you can't give away the very assets that are indeed your future and can return to the people of this province a significant amount of money, because when those assets are gone, those assets are gone. The revenue from those assets will be no longer, and it makes no economic sense.

Let's just think about this for a minute. These people want to sell off SMDC. It has assets of close to \$1 billion. It has a long-term debt of \$318 million. That's SMDC. Eighty-five per cent of the uranium that SMDC is involved in is contracted to the year 1995, I believe — that's what I

understand.

Here's a company that will no longer have its long-term debt as of 1990 or 1991. We're not sure that they'll ever recover our \$1 billion in assets, because we're not sure how these assets are going to be evaluated. We're not sure what these assets are going to be valued at when they decide to float the shares. So we are taking a tremendous risk; we, as the taxpayers, are taking a tremendous risk.

Let's say we get \$500 million for SMDC — let's say we get that. We'll give them that much. Here is a company that by 1995 could easily return \$500 million to the people of this province in terms of retained earnings, in terms of dividends — easily. Here is a company that's involved in gold mining. It's joint-ventured gold mining all over the northern part of Saskatchewan. Here's one particular mine in Flin Flon that may well bring in close to \$1 billion alone, and these guys are going to give it away; they're going to sell it off.

They regularly talk about how they don't have money — they don't have money. I understand Conservatives somewhat. I understand the privatization agenda. I understand their right-wing philosophy. But it seems to me that if you're a government of the province of Saskatchewan, you have to have a political agenda, and I think they do. But you also have to have some money; you have to have some revenue in order to carry on your political agenda, and this is a government without money. This is a government that is in the problem that it's in because it does not have money.

They have alienated everybody in Saskatchewan because they don't have money, and why don't they? It's because they're incompetent. They sell off Saskoil, which raises money; they sell off Weyerhaeuser, which raises money; they sell off parts of SaskPower that raised money, the natural gas division of SaskPower; they sell off SaskCOMP; they sell off Sask Minerals; and they sell, sell, sell, sell, sell.

And where do they expect to get the money? From the taxpayers? Quite frankly, the taxpayers are sick to death of being taxed. They're sick to death of the flat tax. They feel as though they're overtaxed. I don't think politically you can raise much more money from taxpayers. I know that you're nickel-and-diming them to death . . . I guess it's dollar and five-dollar and ten-dollar and it goes to death, in terms of all of the licences and fees that have been increased. And people have caught on to that little scam. They've caught on that every time you get your birth certificate, it costs you some money, and every time you get a marriage certificate, it costs you some more money, and SGI — and on and on and on it goes. They've caught on to that — the fishing licence, a hunting licence.

Oh, it's more that \$5. If you want to change your name, it's significantly more than it used to be. So you've got a dollar here, a dollar there. They've caught on to that, because this government needs revenue. They need revenue, they say, but the public is . . . I predict that there may soon well be a tax revolt because of the way you people are overtaxing the citizens of Saskatchewan.

But here is a way you can gain some revenue, boys — I

think there are no women over there. Here's some ways you can gain some revenue — \$60 million. That would pay for the prescription drug plan for at least one year; \$60 million would pay for the school-based dental program for about 60 years; \$60 million could create a number of new day-care spaces in this province. And I think the Minister of Social Services understands about the problems that he's having there. We wouldn't have an empty day-care centre that's already been built and paid for at Woodlands in P.A. because the government has no money to open it up.

That's what we're talking about, and you guys don't understand it. It's unbelievable. Even if you're a Conservative, even if you're a right-winger, even if you're ideologically committed to privatization, surely you have to use your head and understand you've got to have some money to do some things, or you'll be turfed out of office.

Surely you want to be re-elected, or is the agenda . . . part of the agenda to absolutely destroy this province? Is that what the agenda is? Just flatten it — have the level playing field, have the level playing field that the member from Regina South talked about. Destroy it at all cost so that when we're re-elected in 1990 and 1991 it'll be very difficult to recover. Well people are also on to that; people are on to that.

Saskatchewan people understand, regardless of what your polls say, that you've got a privatization agenda, that you've got a privatization agenda; that you are prepared to sell everything, lock, stock and barrel; that you're prepared to do away with jobs, the revenue, and the ownership and control of the Saskatchewan economy; that you're prepared to do that.

But Saskatchewan people don't want you to destroy the province of Saskatchewan, and they think that that's what you're doing. They think that you're out to destroy Saskatchewan because you simply don't care about this province, and you simply don't care about the people of our province, and you simply don't care.

You're a government that has lost your vision. You're a government that has lost compassion, if you every had any. You're a government with no heart, and all you're interested in doing is socking it to the public and belying up to the public trough. That's all you're interested in doing.

And you can sit here one by one, every one of you, and you can sit in here until the next provincial election, but I predict that even though you think your privatization strategy may be your election victory come 1990, it simply won't happen. It simply won't happen because Saskatchewan people have caught on to you.

Saskatchewan people want jobs and they want good jobs. They don't want minimum wage jobs; they want good jobs. Good jobs mean that Main Street, Saskatchewan's doing well. That's what good jobs mean. Good jobs mean that people have the ability to buy a home, and in Saskatchewan that's important to people. Good jobs mean that people have food for their family and clothing for their children. That's what good jobs mean.

Good jobs mean that you might think about educating your children and sending them off to a Kelsey institute or Wascana or the University of Regina or the University of Saskatchewan. Good jobs mean that maybe you can think about, when you're 65, taking a trip to Europe because you never had the opportunity to do it when you were working. Good jobs mean that business in Saskatchewan's doing well. Good jobs mean that you have hope for your family and you're hoping for a better life for your family.

This is not Alabama; this is not Georgia; this is Saskatchewan. That's what this province is, Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — If you people think that you can privatize the parks and privatize this and privatize that, and put all of those folks who have had good jobs on to minimum wage or \$5 an hour wages, men and women who spent 20 years working for Saskatchewan, if you think you can do that and get away with it, I don't think you can.

And you can try and appeal to rural Saskatchewan, but people in rural Saskatchewan have kids too. Not everybody can live on the farm and work on the farm. Not everybody can do that. I come from a family of five. There's only one of us that's on the family farm, only one. The rest of us are in the city, working in the city. And so, rural people want good jobs for their kids. They don't want minimum wage jobs. They want their kids to have hope and have a future.

And if you think privatization means that your rich friends and your buddies in the Conservative Party can make megabucks — and there aren't that many that can make megabucks, when all the rest of us are sitting on minimum wage jobs — and not have some sort of political ramification, you're sadly mistaken. You're sadly mistaken.

You people offer no hope for Saskatchewan people. You've tied your wagon to privatization. You think that privatization is your way out of this economic crisis that we're facing. Do you think privatization will get you elected come 1990? And I want you to know it will not. It will not, because privatization means lost jobs, privatization means jobs that don't have adequate wages and benefits. Privatization means that revenues are lost to the people of Saskatchewan; they go to people outside of Saskatchewan and even outside of Canada. That's what it means. And privatization means that we lose, we lose the control of our own economy. Saskatchewan people want to have control over their own economy.

(1700)

Now, you from Regina . . . whatever it is, Wascana, you from Regina Wascana, you put up the Power Plus bond thing. I'd like to know how much money SaskPower is spending on this mega-advertising campaign, convincing us to invest our money in Saskatchewan. People don't have problems with buying SaskPower bonds. People don't have problems doing that. They want their money

to be in Saskatchewan. But that's only if they have money. That's only if they have money. If you have \$4.25 an hour or \$4.50 an hour jobs, you aren't going to have any money to invest in SaskPower bonds. That is true; that is true. That is true.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move adjournment of this debate. I have many more things that I want to say about SMDC, and so I adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5 o'clock p.m.