

AFTERNOON SITTING

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to the Assembly, through you, sir, some 19 grade 4 students from Balgonie, from the Greenall School. They're in the west gallery. They are conducted by Mrs. Sharon Gudereit, the teacher; chaperons Mrs. Doreen Wagman and Mrs. Heather Entner.

I will be meeting with the students, their chaperons and teachers after 2:30, Mr. Speaker. I would ask all hon. members to join with me in welcoming the students from Greenall School in Balgonie.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've got two special groups to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the legislature today.

First I'd like to start in your Speaker's gallery, in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, to introduce to you Floriano and Ginetta Paluzzi from Italy. They're here visiting Canada for the first time.

Of some interest, Mr. Paluzzi plays in the Pope's band, which is, obviously, a very prestigious thing to do. Accompanying the Paluzzis is Cecilia Diantonio and Maria and Brian Wirth, along with their two-year-old daughter, Alicia.

So please join me in welcoming our guests from Italy.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you. Also, Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery we have a group of 25 grade 6 and 7 students from St. Anne School located in my constituency of Regina North. They are accompanied by R. Rodych and Ms. Obrigewitsch.

I will be visiting with both groups. I'm sure you can appreciate my schedule for the next hour is going to be busy juggling the two groups, but I look forward to meeting with the group from St. Anne's as well as the group from Italy.

Please join me in welcoming the St. Anne's grade 6 and 7 class.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join my colleague, the member from Regina North, in extending greetings to the students from St. Anne School and the adults who are with them — their teacher.

I have had the privilege of substitute teaching at St. Anne School on at least two occasions and have enjoyed it very much. It's good to see the students in the gallery; I also hope that they have an enjoyable and an educational visit here. And hopefully before too long maybe I can come and visit their school again as a substitute teacher.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Sauder:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, the member from Kelsey-Tisdale, I'd like to introduce a group of grade 5 and 6 students from the Archerwill School, I understand 32 students in all; they're in your gallery. They're accompanied by their teacher Barry Neufeld, chaperons Annette Kozak, Susan LeStrat, Maureen Miller, Laurette Bzowy, and I may have the pronunciation of that wrong, Elaine Murias, and their bus driver Gary Peckham.

I would like to ask everybody to help welcome them here. Their member is going to be in a little later, I understand to meet with them at 2:30 for pictures and refreshments and a discussion of the events of the afternoon. I hope you have an enjoyable time here, and it's educational as well here at the legislature. Would everybody please welcome them.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me today to introduce to you and the other members of the Assembly, 38 grade 3, 4, 5 and 6 students in the west gallery from the Eyebrow School. Eyebrow is located in the north-west portion of the Thunder Creek constituency, and it gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome the students and their chaperons here today.

They have with them their teachers Yvonne Cross and Jackie McCarthy, chaperons Sandra Fowler, Darla Brown, Cathy Russel, Glenna Buckmaster and Lorie Fradette; also, I believe, their bus driver Mr. Depper is around somewhere. I don't see him, but I wish him well today.

I hope the students are enjoying the trip to Regina. I hope you particularly enjoy the Legislative Building and the proceedings which you are about to witness now in question period. I look forward to meeting with you and answering any questions that you may have about things that you see here today, outside on the lawn later.

And I would ask all members of the Assembly to please help me welcome the students from Eyebrow.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have some students here from the wonderful constituency of Regina Wascana. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce them to you, and through you to the other members of the House, in the Speaker's gallery, 24 students from the W.F. Ready School from grade 5. They are accompanied by their teacher Joyce Weare. It will be my pleasure at 2:30 to join them for pictures, and then later to be on the front lawn to discuss the proceedings that will be taking place here within a few minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I would invite all members in the House to join me in welcoming these fine young students from Ready School in Regina Wascana. Welcome.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Changes to Ward System

**Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today, in the absence of the Premier, is to the Deputy Premier, and it pertains to the government's Bill with respect to the ward legislation, the elimination of the ward system, and Sunday shopping. I direct it to the Deputy Premier. I would have directed it to the Premier, because it looks as though the Minister of Urban Affairs is so adamant and so dug in on this that we have to appeal — if I may put it that way — to other members in the cabinet and the government.

Mr. Deputy Premier, my question to you is this: in light of the fact that opposition to this legislation is mounting — from SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) on Monday in a very harsh letter to the Minister of Urban Affairs, in Saskatoon City Council on Monday, yesterday in Regina City Council — will the government consider the motion that Regina City Council introduced yesterday that . . . meetings of the municipal law committee of this legislature be convened as soon as possible to hear from the public . . . on this dictatorial Bill — that's not their words, my words about the dictatorial Bill — but to hear representations from the public on this Bill?

My question to you is: will you be prepared to order such a committee of this House, or a variation of it? We're prepared to co-operate right away. We're prepared to give you all the necessary leave of motions to contribute our members. Will you consent to public hearings from everybody in Saskatchewan who's concerned about the ward Bill and Sunday shopping, in order to give the public a chance to be heard?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, on the question of store hours, there have been more consultations go on than you could shake a stick at. As I said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, this is not an easy one to answer. It has been fixed, as it were, more than once before. Both fixes were found wanting. Both of them, as I understand it, ended up in court, Mr. Speaker. So we are going to try another way.

As it relates to the ward system, we have again consulted broadly. And while there is no unanimous agreement on either of these questions, we have an obligation, Mr. Speaker, as government, to lead, and lead we will, Mr. Speaker.

And the short answer to your question is no, we will not strike the committee on municipal law.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Deputy Premier. Needless to say, Mr. Deputy Premier, this is a disappointing response.

Speaking now specifically to the ward system abolition aspect of this Bill, quite frankly, Mr. Deputy Premier, this side can find no responsible organization in support of

what you're trying to do. SUMA's letter to the Minister of Urban Affairs; the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* headline, "City pleads for retention of ward system" — pleads; the Regina letters; the Saskatoon letters on the ward system.

Mr. Deputy Premier, my question to you is this: has this government so grown out of touch with the wishes of the ordinary people; have you decided on such a course of action; have you become so arrogant and fixed in your ways that nothing can be said or done to convince you that this is not what the people or the responsible organizations want? Will you not listen to these cities and the people and do away with this ward abolition legislation?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — I want to talk about arrogance and high-handedness for a minute, Mr. Speaker, because I think it was in that spirit that the ward system was imposed on the people of Saskatchewan in the first place, and imposed in the face of plebiscites in the major centres that were absolutely against such a form of local government.

We have said, Mr. Speaker, that the modified ward system is eminently reasonable and it gives the people a choice, and we believe that that's reasonable, Mr. Speaker.

As it relates to the store hours, Mr. Speaker, I wish members opposite, I wish members opposite would decide where they really are on this because they have one line in rural Saskatchewan and another line in urban Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And I find that quite confusing I don't know, and I listen to these guys every day, I don't know how the rest of the people in Saskatchewan would find that particular approach, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to ask another question on this because my colleagues have important questions on the Sunday hours issue, but I feel obligated, Mr. Speaker, with your consent, to ask a new question of the Deputy Premier.

As a very preliminary remark, Mr. Deputy Premier, if the argument is that the imposition of the ward system in '76 was wrong, and it may very well have been, nevertheless there was a vote subsequently which ratified it, but if the argument was it was wrong in '76, surely it is not your government's argument that it is right today to do that which you accuse us of doing wrongly in '76. If it was wrong then, it's wrong today.

And my question to you therefore, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Premier, is simply this: the plebiscite system has supported the ward mechanism of electing our councillors in the cities; that is popular consent; that is the wish of the public; every responsible organization supports that. Mr. Deputy Premier, will you please get down off the high horse the government is in on this position? Frankly, I think it is the position of the Minister of Urban Affairs who so personally dug in on this and his personal reputation on the line, will you back down . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Romanow:** — Will you back down; will you get a committee meeting of the cabinet, or the cabinet, together and tell this minister that his personal goals simply don't override the interests of the people of the province of Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — Mr. Speaker, my personal reputation and goals have very little to do with this matter. I have said at the outset that my biggest concern is and always has been for the taxpayers of this province. And if we can give a more efficient government to the urban centres to deal with, we will.

And they're talking like we're taking away the ward system totally. It's a modified ward system. They know that. We believe that the taxpayers of the urban centres will now have the best of two worlds, Mr. Speaker. They will have their ward representation and they will have the democratic right to now elect the entire council, which they've never had before. They've elected one out of 10. Now each and every taxpayer will be allowed the privilege of electing six out of 10, Mr. Speaker.

And to say that there is no support, and the member from Saskatoon, you know . . . articles in the paper, "Saskatonians split on the ward changes", articles in the *Prince Albert Daily Herald* supporting the move — so to say that there is no support is not entirely fact, Mr. Speaker. We are doing what we believe is best and it will proceed.

### Sunday Shopping

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. my question is to the Deputy Premier because it's pretty clear that this Minister of the Urban Affairs is dug in on his position, and there's no sense asking him any more questions.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Deputy Premier, the coalition against open Sunday shopping has experienced a ground swell of support against this Bill, which will cause Sunday opening. It's even had to hire extra staff to handle all of the responses that it's had.

The responses are coming from business people, from local government officials, church people, and most of it is coming from rural Saskatchewan. In fact, about the only ones that don't support that coalition are members on that side of the House.

And I ask you, Mr. Deputy Premier, why don't you tell that Minister of Urban Affairs to get on the inside of what's happening and how Saskatchewan people are feeling and support a common day of rest?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake asked that question because I have in front of me a clipping from the

*Prince Albert Daily Herald*, where Prince Albert has been given what it wants by the provincial government in the store hours question — freedom to control its own matters. And it goes on quite lengthily. And it ends up with:

Now is the time for our local government to take up this local control and use it in a manner which represents the best interests of their own community. Certainly this is a heavy kind of a responsibility, but the kind of responsibility elected officials should be happy to shoulder, or should not be elected officials.

And I didn't say that; that's what the editorials are coming out of the member's home town.

Now with regard to the issue of shopping itself, and as I consult with SUMA — and I just came back from an interesting SUMA meeting at Macklin, and we can talk about that, but it would take a rather lengthy response, and I'm not here to do that, Mr. Speaker. But I can tell you this: it's interesting that the members opposite, the NDP, say one thing in rural Saskatchewan, while here in the urban centres they refuse to say that they're going to be closing in Regina, for instance, Superstore and Bi-Rite Drugs. Now maybe one of the members opposite that does his shopping in Superstore is in there explaining to the owners and the workers that it's their intention to close down and put them out of work — I don't know what they're doing — but they don't tell that to the people of Regina.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — New question to the Minister of Urban Affairs, Mr. Speaker. I have never seen a display of arrogance like this in my life, and if you want to . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Minister, if you're interested in the feelings of the business people in Prince Albert, it's an indication to me from them that you're nothing but arrogant, and that you've got not their interests in mind, only your own personal goals and your own vendettas.

I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, in light of the fact that the business people, that the people in rural Saskatchewan, that the working people, and, I would suggest to you, the church people and the vast majority of the people in Saskatchewan strongly and vehemently oppose your vendetta against whatever it is you've got to keep the stores open on Sunday, I want to ask you: will you stand up in this House and indicate to the people of this province that you're willing to pull this Bill that will destroy the ward system and can destroy the fabric of Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — Mr. Speaker, I can refer to a plebiscite in Regina a year ago where the people of Regina have clearly indicated that they would like to continue shopping at Bi-Rite Drugs; they would like to continue shopping at Superstore. Now if the NDP wants to close the Superstore and the Bi-Rites of this world, why don't they say that?

We are providing, and I've met with the coalition of Sunday shopping, those folks that want to close, and I told them that now if they want to close in their local municipalities because of the make-up and the fabric of Saskatchewan, they have every opportunity to do that.

And all they have to do is talk to their municipal officials. And if the local municipal officials, the local municipality wanted to fine their convenience store because Bi-Rite Drugs doesn't happen to be located in Melville or in some other smaller centre . . .

They've obviously got convenience stores that fit their needs and their habits. And I'll refer to Macklin, Saskatchewan, where I was — a vibrant community, Mr. Speaker, 1,200 people, near the Alberta border. Not only are they not concerned with Sunday shopping — I was there on Monday — their whole town was closed tight on Monday as well, and they didn't care about that.

They asked me, as a matter of fact, can we retain our own tradition and our own flavour? I said, certainly, the legislation provides you with the opportunity to close the same two days if you like. They said, fine; well then, what's the problem? I said, I don't know what the problem is because in Regina, clearly the consumers, our voters, have said what they would like. And what they would like to do is be able to shop on Sundays because there are a lot of families now, Mr. Speaker, where moms and dads work. And Sunday can be a convenient family day as well where the kids go out and look around and talk to the people that are there, pick out their groceries, help mom, help dad, and do whatever they want to do later.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that for them not to admit that that's what they want to do, they should freely admit that they want to close Superstore.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — New question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, get your head out of the sand.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — On May 4 the coalition of business people asked to meet with the Premier, who refused to meet them. He sent them to you, and that was the same day that you introduced the legislation that will allow Sunday opening.

Mr. Minister, don't you understand what's happening in small town Saskatchewan. This is going to mean Sunday opening in the bigger centres, which is going to mean a polarization of business, which is going to mean that there are going to be a lot of small businesses in rural Saskatchewan affected.

And I want to tell you, Mr. Minister, that I speak with people in rural Saskatchewan, small-business people who are afraid of this legislation because they know it's going to run them out of business. And I'm asking you again to do what's right. Pull this legislation and allow some time for consultation; allow the people to tell you what they want you to do. Will you do that?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Klein:** — Mr. Speaker, I, in my former portfolio as minister of Tourism and Small Business, I had the distinct pleasure of travelling the province, the breadth and depth of it. I talked to perhaps almost the majority of the business community. And it's really interesting as you get into discussion with these people and if you understand the business community, you know, they understand what competition is all about and what freedom is all about and what choice is all about, and they enjoy and respect all of that.

Now in this new portfolio I visit with the urban municipalities, and it's also interesting. And we haven't just come up with this automatically. We have tried before to do our legislation, and it didn't work. There's always challenges. So getting back to the question of protecting small town Saskatchewan, I think it's fair to say that this party and this government represent small town Saskatchewan and is interested in their protection.

Again in Macklin, right next to the Alberta border, Mr. Speaker, where Alberta and B.C. have had this legislation now for several years — and ours is similar — I asked the merchants at Macklin: I said, when Alberta went into this and are open on Sundays, did it force you to open? And they said, it not only didn't force us to open on Sundays, we still don't have to open on Mondays.

Mr. Speaker, there is no way that there will be a domino effect in the province of Saskatchewan by virtue of the make-up of our province. We have miles and miles and miles between our municipalities. It's not like Ontario, where one municipality bordering on another has millions of people and it's separated by one highway.

#### **Rental of Highways Facility in Rosetown**

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Highways, and it is simply this: can you confirm, Mr. Minister, that your department rents a new Highways building in the town of Rosetown from a private developer, this despite the fact that the Department of Highways has an existing building there that is now standing empty, and that building is the same size, roughly, as the new building. And can you confirm that the taxpayers of Saskatchewan are paying to West Central Developments Ltd. some \$320,000 a year for this building?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot confirm nor deny the specifics of the amounts of money that we pay to rent a first-class facility in Rosetown, Saskatchewan. What I can confirm, Mr. Speaker, is that one of the first tasks I had upon my appointment as Minister of Highways and Transportation about two and a half years ago was to travel to the town of Rosetown, with a very large crowd in attendance, and cut the ribbon for a first-class highways facility in Rosetown. I can also tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I had the pleasure of viewing the old facility.

Now the member opposite brings this up as a burning and a pressing issue. I would say, Mr. Speaker, ask the

residents of Rosetown and area if they did not feel that a new building in Rosetown was very much needed. And, Mr. Speaker, I'd love to bring back pictures of the old decrepit building in Rosetown for all members to see. I will indeed bring back to the member — I will write you a letter sending you the specific details of how much we pay for the new building, but let's ask the residents of Rosetown if that's an issue.

**Mr. Trew:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. The minister can neither confirm nor deny the amount of money, but he'll find it on page 477 of *Public Accounts* this year to West Central Development Ltd.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trew:** — The only ribbon that this government has cut is the ribbon to patronage of PC hacks and friends.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trew:** — Mr. Minister, could you confirm that the owner of West Central Developments is one Doug Friend, a personal friend of the Minister of the Environment and a long-time Progressive Conservative Party worker; and can you further confirm that Mr. Friend has moved to Kelowna on the money that you are paying to rent his building in Rosetown?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think for those people — and there are many of them who know the Minister of Environment — I would say the Minister of Environment has a great number of friends. I would say, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite, and I include all of them, are not ones to talk about building buildings in the lap of luxury.

And I remember, Mr. Speaker, campaigning in 1982 on some of the grand and glorious buildings that those people, those people built in the cities of Saskatchewan — the Sturdy Stone super store building in Saskatoon, with a bathtub in it, with a luxurious bathtub in it; the golden arches of the SGI Building here in downtown Regina.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and I invite the public of Saskatchewan to go into rural Saskatchewan and have a look at that much-needed facility in Rosetown, Rosetown, Saskatchewan, rural Saskatchewan, decentralization of some of these facilities, Mr. Speaker. And I'll guarantee you that the people of Rosetown and area look to pride at that new Highways depot in the town of Rosetown.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trew:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. The issue here is one of patronage and favouritism; it's not what happened in '82 or before.

Mr. Minister, is this yet another example of your government's famous business acumen? You allow a building to sit idle while the taxpayers of this province are shelling out nearly \$1,000 each and every day for another

building to replace the one that now sits empty. Meanwhile, a friend of the Progressive Conservative Party is reaping in money for that building. Is that how your business-like approach to government works?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I very sincerely would invite the member opposite to travel to Rosetown to see this building. I would invite the member opposite to have a look at the old building. If the member opposite feels that the price that we are paying for the rental of that building is excessive, I'll certainly examine it, but I don't believe that to be the case.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat amazed that the pressing issue of the day is a new Highways depot in Rosetown that's two and a half years old. And, Mr. Speaker, especially in light of the record of the NDP Party, and I will quickly recap again, Mr. Speaker: the golden gates of the SGI Building here in Regina, the Sturdy Stone Building in Saskatoon, the fact that members opposite concentrated, in their years in government, on building new liquor boards stores throughout the province, but yet have a moratorium on nursing homes. Is that fair, Mr. Speaker? Is that right?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### Removal of Members of Legal Aid Commission

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I point out to the minister opposite that the pressing issue of the day is corruption in the Government of Saskatchewan. That's what the pressing issue of the day is.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — My question is to the Minister of Social Services. Mr. Minister, will you confirm that you recently fire two members of the Legal Aid Commission, Greg Whelan of Saskatoon, and Gus Louison of Prince Albert, despite the fact that Mr. Whelan's term as commissioner will run until next April, and Mr. Louison's until next June?

And will you tell this House, Mr. Minister, how it is that you can fire commissioners appointed to the Legal Aid Commission, not appointed by the government, but appointed by local advisory boards? Mr. Minister, how do you justify that kind of action?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Mr. Speaker, members of the Legal Aid Commission are not hired, they cannot be bought, and they cannot be fired. They are appointed.

And we decided that these two individuals were on an appointment situation that was indefinite, and that while other people are rotated from time to time, that it was time for these two people to be rotated and new people appointed.

Two new people have been appointed — a Saskatoon lawyer and a native woman who happens to reside in my

constituency. I can tell you that she is a leader of her community, she is an acting band manager, she is a leader among the native community and will represent treaty Indians well in Saskatchewan. I do not apologize for the appointment of a Saskatoon lawyer, because you have to have some legal expertise on that commission.

**Mr. Hagel:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you are fully aware, you and I are both aware that your action here is contrary to the Act. But let's talk about appointments for a moment, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Minister, will you confirm that your government has appointed or will appoint one Don Morgan of Saskatoon to the long-vacant position of Legal Aid Commission, the same Don Morgan, Mr. Minister, who ran the PC campaign in the Saskatoon Eastview by-election, the same Eastview by-election, Mr. Minister, in which the PC Party was so soundly rejected by the people of that riding that you lost your deposit?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Minister, will you confirm that Don Morgan is to be new chairman of the Legal Aid Commission, and will you tell this House what his salaries and benefits will be? Will you answer those questions, Mr. Minister?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Mr. Chairman, it is true that the commission has been without a chairperson for some time now. I don't know what the salary of the new chairperson will be. I will look it up, and it will be in the range of the former chairperson who was a civil servant.

And it is also no secret that we should have more Indian representation on that commission. I do not apologize for a woman of Indian ancestry living on an Indian reserve in my constituency being appointed to this commission. She is a graduate of Peacock high school in Moose Jaw, has her grade 12, is a mother, a grandmother, is a band leader, has been elected a band councillor in her own reserve in my constituency. I knew this woman well, and I felt that this particular woman was well qualified for the job.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

### Ruling on a Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** — Prior to government orders, I would like to take this opportunity to respond to a point of order which was raised yesterday by the member for Regina North East in which he alleged that an unparliamentary remark had been by the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden.

I have reviewed the verbatim record and found on page 2237 of the June 20 issue, that the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden did indeed make an unparliamentary remark. And I would like to request the hon. member to withdraw and apologize.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear the ruling. I apologize for any remarks I did make, whatever the particular context was. But I apologize to the hon. member, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I'd like to make just one further . . . I'd just like to make one further comment, that the member in his point of order did indicate that the Chair is quick to call on members who make unparliamentary remarks, and I agree with that assessment. And I know that this happens from time to time, but hon. members will co-operate and we will try to continue to keep the level of debate at a high level, which I believe you have achieved.

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

### Bill No. 50 — An Act respecting the Control of Distribution and the Consumption of Beverage Alcohol in Saskatchewan

**Mr. Chairman:** — I'd like to ask the minister to introduce his officials.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It gives me pleasure to introduce the officials that will be assisting me in moving this Act through the House today. Seated directly beside me is the chairman of the liquor commission, Mr. Ted Umess; behind Ted is Miss Anne Thomson; beside Anne is Barrie Hicks; and seated to my right is the attorney from the Department of Justice, Mr. Tony Koshinsky.

### Clause 1

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few comments to make in respect to Bill 50, the new alcohol Act, The Alcohol Control Act. And I would like to say, in looking through the Bill, Mr. Minister, it appears to me that there are two things that you as minister are trying to accomplish. One is the franchising or the privatization, or piratization, I would refer to it, of the liquor outlets, the liquor stores; and the other is scrapping the old Act.

And I agree, there had to be some revisions and it was time for some updates. But what you've done, Mr. Minister, is you've moved so much into regulation that there is no more accountability, or will be no more accountability, with this piece of legislation in this legislature.

It's not uncommon with the legislation that you've introduced that you move from statute to regulation where decisions can be made behind a closed cabinet door. We on this side of the House are used to that kind of legislation from this government. We're not sure exactly why it is — if it's just the fear of bringing some changes before this legislature and debating them before the people of this province, or if it's merely a power grab.

I would like to ask, Mr. Minister, as one of my questions why are you so hell-bent on moving everything into regulation? Is it the fear, or is it the power that you're after?

And I want to share with you, Mr. Minister, some of the concerns of people involved in the industry. And I would want you to know that there are a number of church groups who are concerned with the kinds of changes that you're making or that the kinds of changes that you, through regulation, may make. And I refer to the accessibility of alcohol for our young people in this province. I refer as well to the number of outlets which at one time was in statute, the number of vendors, but is now in regulation and is open to your whims or whoever may be the minister of this particular department.

And there are some other concerns as well. In terms of how franchising will affect retailing, there's no indication in this Act that I can find as to whether there will be any control on advertising, whether the free enterprise system in retailing of spirits and wine will be in place and there will be price discounting and competition between the retailers. And I want to say that on behalf of a number of church groups and a number of people in this province who I've spoken to, there's some concern.

I want to say as well, Mr. Minister, that this new Act may not provide the kind of protection that our rural hoteliers need in this province. As you well know, there are many of them, a large percentage of them, in some great financial difficulty. And I don't see in this Act any commitment in terms of the proportion of retail sales for off-sale beer that they will be allowed, or that because of regulation, they may get. I don't see protection from competition to an industry that is having problems already. And I would suggest that a number of hotel people in this province are fearful in that same fashion.

In terms of franchising or privatization, I don't see anything in this Bill that will protect the taxpayer from patronage or give-aways. And I think you will agree with me that there have been, and probably will be again, jurisdictions where the franchises for liquor stores created an awful lot of corruption and an awful lot of patronage and an awful lot of graft.

And I'm not suggesting, and I would hope that that would not be the case with the privatization of Saskatchewan liquor stores, that we would be looking at that kind of a situation. Because if your decision to privatize these liquor outlets is there, and I think you have a strong commitment to privatization as the minister of the department of privatization, I would ask, Mr. Minister, I guess is my first question, along with numbers of questions, and we'll go through them as we go through the Act today — and I would like to ask, Mr. Minister, what in this Act will protect the taxpayers, the people of Saskatchewan from patronage hand-outs. What will protect them from getting an amount for those liquor outlets that is not in tune with what a market value might be? Could you explain, Mr. Minister, if there's anything in here that will protect the taxpayers of Saskatchewan from those particular things.

(1445)

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, the member raises a number of points and I would respond to as many as I can recall. He raised a number of them at this time, and if he'd like to come back over them, that's fine.

Certainly he led off by talking about franchising and was trying to insinuate that perhaps the word franchising was opening the gate for massive public participation or privatization of liquor board stores. Really why the term franchising is being included in the new Act is that on advice of the Department of Justice, that the term really is the correct definition of what is taking place at this time in Saskatchewan, that really special vendors, are they called, would be more adequately named franchises, because that is exactly what they have, is a franchise to market beverage alcohol.

He mentioned about the scrapping of the old Act. Certainly, and I think one can understand that the Act hadn't been touched for about 65 years; therefore I think the very fact that many of the things will be adjusted and dealt with in regulation, is perhaps something that would be beneficial. Of course if people or the opposition was not supportive of a regulation, they have every right to debate that and ask for change of a regulation, and those avenues are open and they're open within any Act. Pretty well any piece of legislation has a large number of regulations that accompany the Act.

He was wondering if this was an attempt to hold power or I think he used the words, power or fear. I would say neither of those. I think it is an opportunity for whomever is the minister in charge of the liquor board, or whatever government may be in charge of the Saskatchewan Liquor Board, to be able to have the vehicles to make the changes necessary as the society changes over the coming years.

So I think really all the regulation does, and moving a number of things to regulation, is allow that flexibility that would be beneficial to bring about change in subsequent years, and we don't know what those changes will necessarily have to be. And certainly, if the regulations that will be established are not ones that are supported, there's the opportunity to certainly debate them and ask for a change in them.

Regarding the hotels, certainly I think the rural hotels . . . I think the member opposite must admit that since coming into the position as chairman in charge, or minister in charge, we have instituted a hotels study, a rural hotels study, which has come about with a number of recommendations. And a good number of those recommendations — there was some long-term objectives and some short-term objectives — a good number of these have been implemented, and I deal a lot with a number of the hotels and the hotels association, and I think I've been well received, well received by the hotels association. In fact, we have had letters of support for the changes that have been brought about.

So to try and indicate or to try and insinuate that there may be some attempt here to in some ways jeopardize the licences for off-sale that exist out there for rural hotels, I think is an exaggeration. I think the action taken by this government will indicate that we are in support of a viable rural hotel industry, that the rural hotel is important to small town Saskatchewan, and that there is no design or no intent within this Act to have a proliferation of off-sale licences that would somehow put the rural hotel

industry into jeopardy.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, I think I have three points from your response. Number one is in the definition of franchising. And I refer to subsection (g) in section 2 of the Act, and:

“franchise” means a franchise for the sale of beverage alcohol granted by the board pursuant to section 105;

Section 105 gives no definition, that I could find. Now perhaps you would want to explain to me what your definition of franchises are. Are they special vendors, alone, nothing else? Or are they publicly owned liquor stores soon to be privatized? Could you perhaps give me an explanation?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well basically it is the renaming of the special vendors.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well as we go through the Act, Mr. Minister, then are you telling me that you have no intention or that this Act disallows you from selling the liquor stores?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — This Act doesn't have anything to do with the sale of liquor stores. I mean, liquor stores could have been sold five years ago, 10 years ago; they can be sold in the future, whether or not this Act ever passes. There is no connection at all between this Act and the selling of liquor stores.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Then can I ask you two things. Number one, is it your intention to privatize the existing liquor stores owned by the people of this province? And number two, how many of these franchises do you intend to allow in the province?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well secondly . . . or first I will deal with the intention to privatize or sell liquor board stores. As I say, with or without the passage of this Act, that may be something that could be considered, or will be considered by the Department of Public Participation. I cannot give you a definitive answer at this point in time if it would be something that would come to fruition or not.

I can tell you, as I travel the province as Minister of Public Participation, I have a number of people discussing this and asking if it is something that we would consider. As far as the number of special vendors or franchises, whatever we end up calling them, certainly we would be looking at perhaps some increase. I'm not saying, throwing it wide open; maybe a modest increase, as has happened in the past since they first started in the early 1960s, I believe.

I think the Act, the present Act had been amended five times to increase the number, and certainly we will take a look at this. But I wouldn't want you to in any ways interpret that that it's going to be thrown wide open, as was the suggestion by the NDP task force in 1973, which I'm not sure if you're aware of. But they recommended that there be additional appointments of special liquor vendors, if required, and that the number of appointments be the responsibility of the liquor board. So that task force

was on record of saying yes, we can enlarge the number. I'm not saying that we will not; I would be very doubtful that it would be in any way thrown wide open.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, I'm having a little difficulty in terms of not only numbers, but locations of franchises or vendors, because I can't see anything in the Act that would prohibit any number, be it 200 or 500 or 1,000 retail outlets. I can see nothing in this Act that would protect the young people of this province from beer in every grocery store, or hard liquor for that matter. And if there is, you might correct me, but I don't see that. And I would ask you, Mr. Minister, why you didn't put a limit.

It's easy enough to come to this legislature and make a change to the Act. I mean, we sit perhaps twice a year, although under your administration, no one knows when we're going to sit or for how long. But it's easy enough to make amendments to what is in statute. But you've moved it to regulation, which brings me to my second point of your response.

You indicated that moving everything out of statute into regulation gives you flexibility, and I agree that it does give you flexibility. But what I don't agree with is that that's the way you govern, because under this system the ministers and your cabinet should be responsible to this legislature, who in turn are responsible to the people of the province. And I would suggest, far better government would come out of it if you were making the decisions, not behind closed doors, but here in this legislature where it should be.

I told you before and indicated that we felt that there should have been some changes and there perhaps was a new need for a liquor Act, and there's no disagreement. But what you've done is taken 146 pages of the legislation; you've stripped it down to 57 pages, which left us with a bare-bones Act here.

And the Act doesn't mean an awful lot any more because you've moved everything into regulation so that you can make the kinds of decisions as to how many liquor outlets there are in this province, so that you can make the decision behind closed doors as to who retails alcohol in this province. That's what you've done. And that's why I say, although you've given yourself flexibility, what you've also done is removed accountability.

And I suggest to you, Mr. Minister, that that's what the British democratic system is all about, or should be all about, and that's what your political party should be about, and that's what the legislation that you introduced in this House should be about. But you haven't done that. You've gone just the opposite way, moved out of statute into regulation, things that should be around for us to discuss in this Chamber.

So it appears to me, clearly, Mr. Minister, that we'll be disagreeing on what you call flexibility. I call it non-accountability as opposed to flexibility. And if there are changes to be made, why would you fear making those changes in this legislature? Why do you have to do everything around a cabinet table where it's not open to public scrutiny?



**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well it's interesting to hear the member opposite ask about corner stores and grocery stores, and I can certainly assure you that there is no intention of expanding into that market.

But again, just for his clarification and for those who may be watching this passage of this Bill, I go back to the same study of 1973, headed by one Dr. Don Faris, with members from the present legislature from Saskatoon being on the committee, and their recommendations were the following: that the NDP government recommend that all licensed beverage rooms, cocktail lounges, and dining rooms be allowed off-sale of wine and spirits. They also recommended that all independent grocers be allowed to sell low alcohol wine and beer.

So I think there's a little bit of contradiction in what you're saying, and perhaps it would have been well to look at your own report before you start trying to accuse this ministry of wanting to put wine and beer in corner stores.

You also were insisting or saying there should be a number on the number of special vendors, and I would again refer to the report of January '83, chaired by Mr. Don Faris, MLA for Arm River, and its section 12 had to deal with special liquor vendors. It says, and I quote:

There are still many areas in the province that do not have the services of either a government operated liquor store or a special liquor vendor. Recommendation that there be additional appointments of liquor vendors if required, and that the number of appointments be the responsibility of the Liquor Board.

No mention of a number, no mention at all. However this gentleman today seems to feel that there should be a limit on them, when his own report of his own party suggested that there be the sale of wine and beer in corner stores and grocery stores, and that there be the flexibility to allow additional number of special vendors as required in the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Act . . . he seems to have some concern about regulation. I just stress to the members here, and to other people in this province, that any piece of legislation that is passed always has a large number of accompanying recommendations. And certainly that will be the situation with the new liquor Act. The recommendations, whether they be in an agriculture Act, in an education Act, in a health Act, or in a liquor Act, or whatever it may well be, are certainly subject to scrutiny and subject to discussion and change if the regulation is something that is not in the best interests of the people of the province.

So to think that there is some plan to do things in secret is simply not correct. I mean it's simply the type of thing that takes place. Legislation encompassing the main ideas of the Act are debated and passed in this Assembly; amendments can be brought forward, and then flowing from that, regulations are written. And those regulations are out there for public scrutiny, are out there for debate — further debate, further change in development, as we move along in our society.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, let's go through the process. If you want to go back to the 1970s, which I would rather not; I would rather deal with what we're dealing with now and this legislation that you've introduced, because I wasn't around then. Well I would assume you were, unfortunately. But let's go back through the process, a task force to bring in recommendations after listening to the people. Then a government introduces a liquor Act which puts in statute the rules by which liquor will be consumed and sold.

(1500)

So we've got you to that step. Now let's look at what you've done. What you've done is without a task force — and I will agree that you've been consulting with some people around the province — but what you do is you get recommendations from wherever you got the, you introduce them to an Act that gives no accountability to this legislature but puts them directly into the hands of your cabinet.

And I mean, that's the difference, because under the old Act there were some rules that people understood, and they were there when the Act was introduced. And it wasn't to the whim of you or some other cabinet minister to make the decision as to what happens to the industry or the consumers or the people that are affected by that industry.

And I take you to section 28 under the powers, and it says, just to make it in short terms, that the cabinet can, under the recommendation of the board:

lease to another person any land or buildings, or purchase, lease, or sell, or otherwise dispose of furnishings and equipment no longer required for the purposes of this Act.

What that tells me is that the cabinet can unload whatever assets they want without coming back:

(g) determine the places in which its stores, franchises and warehouses are to be established . . .

So what does that tell me? It determines the places, the franchises, the warehouses for “. . . the general control, management and supervision of those stores and warehouses in Saskatchewan.” Well I'm not clear yet. Does this mean Superstore or does it mean Safeway? Because we on this side of the House don't know, and maybe you can clarify that for me.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well certainly there's no intent to have Superstore or anything of that nature. I would just quote from you so that you are clear, because there seems to be some confusion. And I'm reading from October 1983, L-18 of the old Act, section 11:

The board shall:

(g) (I'm just going to cite one for example, and this from the old Act) purchase or lease any building or land required for the operation of

this Act or construct any building so required and shall furnish and equip any building so required and may alter and renovate such building in such manner as the board deems necessary or advisable, provided that no such building or land shall be purchased and no such building constructed without the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

So what you're talking about is exactly the same in the new Act as it was in the old Act.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, you can quote selectively, or do as you wish, but what I'm asking you is, then: have you, through regulation — I guess maybe that's the way to ask it — through regulation, can you, sitting around a cabinet table, decide any place that alcohol can be retailed in this province? And can you, sitting around a cabinet table, decide how many retail outlets we're going to have? And as well, can you decide who is going to own them? Can you explain that to me?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well I think in the number of outlets and so on, if you have read the Act and looked at the emphasis in the new Act on local control, I think there is a great deal more emphasis on . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, there is — a lot more emphasis on local control as to the number of outlets, as to special occasion permits, than there was under the old Act.

So that one of the emphases, and if you read it and understand it, is that there is a lot more emphasis on communities having a say as to who should have the licences to provide alcohol and also when and how many special occasions. So that's . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, that's absolutely correct. Obviously you don't understand. And you can see that there's a lot more emphasis on local community control.

You may oppose that. It wouldn't surprise me a bit if you opposed that, because it's rather foreign to your philosophy to let people at the local level decide things that impact upon their lives, but however, that is the intent of this Act.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, let me take you back to my question. My question is: can you as minister make the decision as to who does the retailing in an area; can you, as minister, decide how many areas that are going to be served by franchises, or whatever it is? I haven't had an answer to those questions, and I'm going to sit down and wait for your response.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well there's really no change because at this point in time, let's take an example of an existing business that is sold and the new person doesn't want to have a special vendor. Someone makes application; there's an investigation of the application by the Liquor Licensing Commission. A recommendation comes forward which comes to cabinet and is approved and signed, and that person does have that licence to become a special vendor. So there's no difference in the power. That is there at this point in time.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Minister, you seem to be stuck

on special vendors, but I don't see that referred to. Why didn't you refer to it in this Act as a special vendor, because all through sections 102, 105 and 106 you keep talking about franchises. In other words, what that says to me is privatization of liquor stores and privately owned and operated liquor stores.

Well, why did you change the term from special vendors to franchise? Perhaps you can . . . and explain to me what a franchise means in your eyes, because we don't know on this side of the House, and I don't believe the people of the province know. Maybe you can explain that.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Let me explain to you once again that if it is the decision to sell liquor stores, that can take place without this Act or with this Act. It could have taken place five years ago, ten years ago; it can take place five years in the future, whether or not this Act is ever passed. You seem to have a hang-up or a great concern about the word franchise.

Now a franchise, as the legal people indicate to me, best describes the arrangement that exists between the Liquor Board and what we have called "special vendors." Now there may be something that you like about the word special vendor, I don't know. And if there's something that you want to suggest other than a franchise, suggest it. But to try and indicate that franchise is some way guising the movement to sell a liquor store, there's no connection at all. Because whether we bring in the word franchise, we call it a special agent, call it a special vendor, call it something else, has no connection whatsoever. If the decision is made, or was made under the old Act, you can go ahead and you can sell these — the government assets; you can certainly sell them with or without the passage of this Act.

So once again, there is no connection, no connection at all between the word franchise and the possibility to sell an existing liquor store.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well then, Mr. Minister, perhaps you would accept a recommendation to return to the term "special vendor." Would you accept that today?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I would like to know what you see is better in the term. You know, McDonald's, car dealerships, businesses all over — where they give that ability to sell, to sell their product, to the terminology that I best understand are called franchises. You buy a franchise.

I had the Business Opportunities show last year when minister of small business and Tourism . . . we had some 6,000 people there, Saskatchewan people, that came to buy franchises. They wanted to buy a franchise, whether it be a doughnut shop or whether it be a pizza shop or whether it be hair-styling, whatever it was, they all understood that term franchise; they knew what they were purchasing.

Now I believe that this is more adequately describing the action that takes place with someone who, in the past, was called a special vendor. I don't know why we use that term special vendor. I can understand the "vendor," but I don't know what's special about it. You know, a franchise

is easily understood, and I think it's a common term used in our society, and that's why we brought it in, in the new Act.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, let me tell you first of all, you're dealing with alcohol; you're not dealing with hamburgers, and you're not selling hamburgers here. You're dealing with an item that deeply affects a lot of communities and a lot of young people and older people alike. And I want to tell you that you're not selling hamburgers.

And through this whole Act, when you read it, what it tells me is that you as a government want to sell franchises to retail alcohol the same as McDonald's want to sell franchises to sell hamburgers. And I mean, McDonald's might have a hamburger store on every corner, and I'm asking you: is that what you want to see with retail liquor outlets in this province?

And you still haven't answered my question: is there any limit to the number of outlets or franchises that you can allow?

And I ask you another question: is it your intent to privatize the liquor stores in this province? because I haven't had an answer to that either.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Yes, I did answer that about 10 minutes ago. I told you that as I travelled the province in public participation, there are a number of people that say, would you, Mr. Minister, look at the possibilities of looking at — is it feasible to privatize and to sell liquor stores? And I have said, and I've said openly, that yes, we are exploring that. But that doesn't mean it's going to be done.

People are wanting to know: if it were, how would it take place? It has to be at arm's length and free, open bids, and all of these things.

But the word franchise has no connection to that. I think the word franchise describes the relationship between the Liquor Board and those authorized to sell their products, and I think it's a current terminology. And certainly it is not as you indicate, that perhaps one is looking at going around and selling a bunch of franchises. Not at all. And I use only McDonald's as an example to show you that that is a very popular franchise.

Now we can spend more time in this House deciding which word it should be, but I believe that franchise better describes the relationship between what was called a special vendor and the liquor board store.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, you haven't given the people of this province any guarantee, because you haven't answered the question in terms of limiting numbers, or a willingness to limit numbers; you've given no commitment in terms of how you're going to unload existing liquor stores if you privatize them; you refer to liquor outlets as franchises, like hamburger stands. And that's what scares the people of this province, and that's what's scary about this legislation, because you've got so much in regulation and nothing in statute accountable to this legislature. And that's the fear. And that's the fear with

privatization because there's fear that as you go on your little move to privatize them, it's nothing but a set-up for some of your friends, a very lucrative industry.

And you haven't answered as well: are you going to be allowing price competition with these franchises? Are you going to be allowing advertising? And is there anything in this Act that would stop you from doing that?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well certainly there's a certain amount of advertising allowed at this time. There's advertising within some of the liquor board stores. There's advertising within beverage rooms. Price wars and so on, we're not looking at allowing that or bringing that type of thing in.

And as far as the sale of liquor board stores, if that did come about, as I said to you previously, it would be done at arm's length, it would be done with open tender proposals and calls, and certainly there would be some people who would be able to get them. But to insinuate that somehow it would be friends of mine is simply erroneous and not true. The bidding process would be one in which all people of Saskatchewan who were interested would be able to participate.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Minister, so you're giving us a guarantee of open, honest tendering, unlike what's been going on in this province since 1982. And you're telling me if there are any franchises or any sale of any liquor stores — is that the commitment you're giving me in this House today? — that the tenders will be advertised well beforehand; they will be publicly opened; and the tenders will . . . the people who are tendering will be able to be there and watch those bids open; and that there will be no back room dealing before those tenders are opened?

(1515)

Because I'll tell you, that hasn't happened in a lot of government contracts in this province. And all I've got to do is talk to some of the business people in Prince Albert in the plumbing industry and in the electrical industry, in the construction industry, who know full well that you tend to favour your PC friends.

And that's the concern we have here, that you're willing to unload public assets to friends of the PC Party behind closed doors, and in a lot of cases for a lot less than what the assets were probably worth. And that's the concern, that's the concern we have with franchising or privatization or whatever you care to call it.

I tell you, Mr. Minister, your government has less and less credibility every time you make a move and introduce this kind of legislation before the people of this province.

**An Hon. Member:** — Can't be trusted.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Because you can't be trusted. The Premier, the cabinet, and your back-benchers can't be trusted. Your credibility is slipping down a slippery old hill, and this is just another indication that you're setting it up to fill the pockets of your friends.

Mr. Minister, you're giving us a guarantee today that there will be fair, open tendering with no back-room dealing, and that these liquor stores aren't going to fall into the hands of your friends. I believe I understand that, and I'd like you to give me a yes or no answer on that.

You're giving me . . . you're leading me to believe that through privatization or franchising that there won't be any competition, price-wise, that they won't be competing for market share. Are you telling me that again? And I'd like a yes or no on that.

And are you telling me that the franchises will not be allowed to do any advertising outside of perhaps inside advertising in their stores as is the case in the liquor stores right now? Is that what you're telling me, that there won't be a competition for market share?

Because I have a hard time to believe that business men in this province who are going to invest in a liquor store aren't going to be competing for market share. I have a hard time to believe that because you see, Mr. Minister, I've been in business for 20 years, and I understand that to stay in business you've got to keep your share of market. And if you want to make more money, you go after a bigger market share.

And I'm asking you: are you leading us to believe that that isn't going to happen through privatization of these liquor stores?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I'll go back to my earlier statement for the member again. Certainly there is no detailed plan as to whether there would be sale of liquor board stores; no detailed plan as to how that would take place, if it were to take place. I've said that in travelling the province. There are people saying, would you investigate and look at that? And it is at a very preliminary stage. I can give you the assurance that if there was any type of sale or tendering, it would be done in the most fair manner possible.

And as far as advertising, again I refer you to the Act . . . well I'll refer you to the Act, if you would give me the attention, to indicate to you what might help expedite some of the . . . expedite the discussion here.

Under section 137, page 43, section 1:

No person shall, for the purpose of promoting the sale or consumption of beverage alcohol, make any representation to the public:

(a) by means of a newspaper publication or a radio or television broadcast; or

(b) by any other means;

without the approval of the commission.

And that's in the new Act, so I think that covers off what you were concerned about.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well let me carry you a little further in section 137, Mr. Minister. It ends off by saying, "without approval of the commission."

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Maybe you don't understand what the commission is. The commission is the regulatory body. It's set up there, and it has to have the permission of the commission — there wouldn't be any advertising that isn't approved by the commission.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — And who sets up the commission?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — The commission is appointed. Mr. Urness is the chairman — a very popular choice, I should say. As I travelled the province of Saskatchewan, a very, very . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . He was appointed by myself, and a very, very popular . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . If it is your intention to criticize, go right ahead, because I talked to a lot of people that are in the sale of beverage alcohol and they are very . . . they are very pleased with the selection of the chairman of the Liquor Board.

If you want to go ahead and criticize, you please do that. But let me tell you, I would be careful if I were you, because it's a very popular appointment.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, the point is not who you appointed or for what reason you appointed nor how popular your commissioner is. The question is: do you or do you not appoint him? And you indicated, I believe, that you do. He nods his head and says he did. What that tells me is then you, in the end result, have the power to allow or disallow advertising. Is that not the case?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I don't know if you understand how various commissions and boards are appointed. There's the board appointed for the SaskPower; there's one for SaskTel; there's one for the Liquor Board; there's one for the General Hospital. I mean, obviously you don't understand the appointment of boards.

Good people are searched out throughout this province and are appointed to these boards, take it very, very . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well you can laugh; go right ahead and laugh at the people that are on the boards appointed to the major Crown corporations in this province, because I differ with you, and I differ strongly because I've dealt with many of those people.

I spent five years in this province dealing with the people on the major base hospital boards, and you can laugh at them, and you can think that they're puppets and so on, because I know that's your attitude. But I can tell you that they're a bunch of dedicated people, a bunch of people very, very proud of the mandate they've been given, and a bunch of people that are dedicated to make that aspect of the delivery of service in Saskatchewan, whether it be utility, whether it be a hospital, or whether it be the liquor commission, function well in the interest of the people of Saskatchewan. Now if you don't agree with that, you stand up and you criticize and you ridicule all you want all day long, because I'll stand here and I'll defend the board appointments on the major corporations and on

the hospital boards in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Minister, you made . . . after a question period and an answer that the Minister of Social Services gave today, you may not want to be talking about how you appoint commissions, because when the campaign manager for the candidate who lost his deposit in Saskatoon Eastview gets hired by the Minister of Social Services and he's afraid to give the answer in this House, it tells me you've got a problem with how you appoint commissions.

But I want to say to you, Mr. Minister, is what we were talking about here was that the end result of this piece of legislation is that you have control over advertising, because it's you who appoints the commission, and the commissioner is responsible to you, and that's the chain of events, and the buck stops with the minister. There ain't no more. That's how it works, and you know that yourself.

I think, Mr. Minister, in terms of getting an answer out of you regarding the control of who sells alcohol in this province, and how many places we have that are going to be retailing, and what kind of protection the young people of this province have, I think we have absolutely no more answers than we did before we came and started this committee. And it's unfortunate, because when you've taken all this power on your shoulders, you should at least answer some questions and tell us what direction you're going.

I want to spend a couple of minutes before we wrap up, Mr. Minister, talking about the rural hotels. And I'd like to know why you have eliminated the room . . . or the population ratios; why you've gotten rid of the guest room requirements; why you've removed the limit on the number of licences issued from the Act into the regulation where they can be changed at the whim of your government; what kind of guarantee have you given the Saskatchewan hotel association; and what kind of guarantee have you given those hoteliers who aren't a member of that association that they won't have yet more competition in their communities where they're already struggling to maintain their livelihoods?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, going back to commissions and using his analogy, because I, as a cabinet minister, appoint the liquor commission, saying that I then control advertising is rather a long bow. Because if you take that and extrapolate it further, then what he is saying is when I was minister of Health and I appointed, with my cabinet colleagues, the hospital boards, then I controlled appendectomies and tonsillectomies and all the things in hospitals. Same kind of reasoning. I mean, does that make sense? It doesn't to me — not at all.

So I think this is a foolish exercise to say that I would control the advertising. I mean, anybody understands if you put a commission in place that that commission is there to run that function. So I mean, that is rather a silly analogy that you indicate.

Getting back to the rural hotels, I think if you would look at the very fact that I brought in a rural hotel study which came in with a number of recommendations — short-term objectives and long-term ones — and you can talk to the hotels association, members and non-members, and they will indicate to you that a large number of those have been implemented. And I have indicated, and I have brought about changes, and the hoteliers will tell you that, that it's benefiting their cash flow, and that there is no intention, there is no intention by this minister to have a proliferation of off-sale licences that would in any way hurt rural hotels. I've give that assurance.

You said, what assurance have we given them? I've met with them many times. Their executive know that. So you also say, why did I not keep the necessity to have rooms? Well I really think that's a retrograde step, because I think many of the hotels, as I understand, are having trouble with their liability insurance and so on, perhaps because of the fact that they have rooms. The day of the rooms in the rural hotel, I think, in many cases has somewhat passed, and therefore it may be an advantage to hoteliers to not have it tied entirely to rooms.

And I've explained this with their association, met it on many, many times — met with them many times. So that was the consultation. There are the reasons. And if you have more questions, please continue.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, then I ask why you wouldn't have put those things in statute so that the hotel association had a guarantee, other than your word. I have to compliment you because I know that people in the hotel industry respect you, Mr. Minister, as a person. But I want to tell you that they don't necessarily trust you because of the government that you're sitting with.

And I would tell you as well that a lot of hoteliers in this province would have far sooner have you put regulations in statute so that they're guaranteed of some protection, because if you're no longer the minister and another minister comes in that maybe wouldn't agree with that hotel association, they've got no protection. But you've moved everything into regulation and they no longer have the protection, and that's what the problem is. And I can't understand why you wouldn't understand that.

Having sat in government for as many, many years as you have, and many more, I would suggest than members on that opposition should have sat, you should understand that you're offering them less protection than what they had. And you may have a personal commitment that they aren't going to face unbridled competition in rural Saskatchewan, but there is nothing in this Act that guarantees those small rural hotels that they're not going to have wide-open competition. That, sir, is the problem.

And that is the problem with this legislation. And that is the problem with putting as much as you have put into regulation as opposed to statute, because there is no long-term stability for that industry right now. And I don't understand that you can't understand that, after being in this legislature and dealing with as many pieces of legislation as you probably have.

I don't understand that you can't understand that the small hotels in a lot of cases are the hub of their communities. And if they go, it may mean that those small towns are going to be dying. And they need some kind of protection in statute. They need more revenue; they don't need more competition, and unless this Act will guarantee that, they don't have any commitment.

And they may get a commitment from you. They may have had a commitment in writing from you that they're not going to be facing more competition. But you may not be the minister for ever, and there may a government in this legislature some day that doesn't want hotels to exist, as some of your colleagues don't. And one of your colleagues may, in fact, be the head of the liquor board and may not want to see unbridled competition as you would have allowed in here. And they may want to see six hotels in rural Saskatchewan, period, or none.

And the hotel association, because you've moved everything into regulation, has absolutely no more protection. That's the problem, Mr. Minister. And I ask you, don't you understand that you don't give them a long-term commitment by moving things to regulation? And these people have to plan their incomes and their businesses over a period of years, not over months. And don't you understand what you've done?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Yes, I certainly understand what I've done. I, as I said, brought in a rural hotel study that came with some recommendations that would help the viability of rural hotels — well accepted by the rural hoteliers. I think, if you've been talking to them, activities over the last four or five months have been very well supported by rural hotels, initiatives brought in by this government and this ministry.

Certainly, as I said previously, there is no intention, no intention at all, to have proliferation of licences that would in any way affect their earnings and their operations. And furthermore, and furthermore, I have given the commitment to the hotels association that we would be consulting and working together as we establish the regulations pertaining to this Act.

Now they have told me they support that. The only thing they told me they were a little worried about and that was — and Heaven forbid, and I don't think anyone has to worry about it because it'll never come about — but the only worry they did have was that if the member opposite ever became the minister, they were a little worried about that.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Minister, you've been consistently referring to the rural hotel study, and you know as well as I know that the basic thrust of that study was that the rural hoteliers should be garnering a bigger share of the tourist industry. And all the time you're raising camp rates, you're raising gas rates, the roads are going to pot in this province. You have to bring them here first. Initially those people have to be brought to this province by the business people. But I tell you, the rural hoteliers can't do it with the study you gave them. And you know that as well as I know it.

Mr. Minister, I don't believe that you feel moving all of

this to regulation — I can't believe that you feel moving all of these things to regulation are good for the industry. And I can't believe that you can stand up here and say moving it into regulation gives them a long-term commitment so that they can plan their businesses.

And I ask you: does this give them any kind of long-term commitment? If the hotel association feels — as you say they feel — fear if I was to become minister in charge of the Liquor Board, why wouldn't you protect them from me? Why wouldn't you put it in statute if I was to make some wild change that would affect their businesses or bankrupt them? Why would you leave it in regulation where some other elected official could damage, without coming to the legislature, the future of their businesses? Why wouldn't you do that, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I think, as I said previously, ad I'm sure you're well aware of some of the initiatives that have been brought in, with the flexibility in hours, the expanded family dining on Sundays, the canned beer, and these initiatives have certainly helped the viability of the rural hotel.

Mr. Chairman, I would refer again to this report because it's very interesting what the government of the day in the 1970s were planning to do regarding what they call obsolescent hotels. And in this report, the Faris report, it has on page 70, a heading, heading 44, that says, Obsolescent Hotels. And I'd like to just cite a couple of the recommendations so we know exactly from whence those people were coming, and I think it shows again a contradiction in the member opposite.

Recommendation number one of this NDP report was:

That progressive replacement of obsolescent hotels should be implemented where practical in localities in which there is virtually no demand for guest room accommodation by building a new structure in which the proprietor or operator would be licensed to sell beer, wine, and spirits by the glass for consumption on the premises with off-sale privileges.

So there they were in '73 — the NDP were going to say, yes, we should not require the necessity to have rooms.

The third recommendation:

That the new licensed outlet envisaged should eliminate the qualification of having to operate a hotel in order to qualify for a beverage room licence.

So you didn't even have to have a hotel and you could get a beverage room licence under the recommendation of the NDP report.

And section 5 is very interesting.

That section 63(4) of The Liquor Licensing Act be amended to allow the Liquor Licensing Commission, at its discretion, (they were their commissioners appointed, appointed by the NDP government), that the Liquor Licensing

Commission, at its discretion, to issue additional licences for licensed premises over and above the present population quota.

That was the recommendation of the NDP report.

And I hear . . . see this . . . hear this member here stand up, as a hypocritical, and try and condemn that we're putting things to regulation. And as I said previously, and those regulations . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, those regulations.

If the member from Regina Centre would be quiet, I will explain to him that those regulations will be worked on in consultation, in consultation with the Hotels Association of Saskatchewan. Now I think that's a heck of a lot more input than what was envisaged in the famous NDP Don Faris report.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Minister, you're playing politics today, and I think a ridiculous level of politics.

You full well know the difference between a report, when you send people out to gather ideas, and what actually turns up in legislation. And you know full well that there was a liquor Act introduced after that, and you know which of the recommendations, if you'll read through *Hansard* tomorrow, were adopted and which weren't. And the people of this province clearly understand which were and which weren't. So, I mean, let's not play silly games.

Mr. Minister, I am going to defer for a couple of moments to my colleague.

**Mr. Koenker:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Minister, I'd like to ask with respect to this legislation, and the liberalization of liquor franchising across the province, how you square this with your Premier's commitment to fight alcohol abuse?

I refer specifically to a press release, communiqué number nine, which came from the Parksville western premiers conference, May 18 to 21, in which he was certainly a party to this premiers conference, that reads:

The rapid pace of change in family and working lives is placing particularly intense pressures on today's youth and their families. These pressures have resulted in an alarming increase in drug and alcohol abuse.

And it goes on to talk about the premiers directing their ministers:

to identify specific actions which can be taken co-operatively in the provision of services to assist these young people and their families. Ministers will review existing services, programs and facilities in the west.

I'm wondering how you can square this kind of communiqué, with its self-professed concern for young people and for family life, with the kind of legislation that you're proposing now which will see the franchising of liquor stores on every street corner in Saskatchewan.

I further want to know, Mr. Minister, how you square your Premier's self-professed concern for alcohol and drug treatment when you can introduce this legislation yourself on Monday, May 30, and then on Wednesday, June 1, have the Premier go to Whitespruce to open a drug and alcohol treatment centre? Isn't this rather hypocritical to introduce legislation like this and then to preach the virtues of alcohol restraint? How do you square that?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well once again, Mr. Speaker, I think it's quite easy to indicate the degree of support that our Premier has for the control and treatment of young people with drug and alcohol problems. I think the very fact that the Whitespruce centre, the only one of its type in Canada, has been opened in Yorkton — an initiative of this government — and I think one can look back on the initiatives and the money put towards SADAC (Saskatchewan Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission) by this government is unprecedented, and certainly the Premier's commitment to the treatment of drugs and alcohol, especially for our young people, is one that he is very strong on, and I'm very proud to be part of the government that supports that type of action.

The member opposite again tries to deliberately mislead. I heard him say, in the last line, the proliferation of stores on every corner and every street corner. If he had been paying attention previously, he would have understood, he would have understood . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order. Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I recognize the member from Prince Albert.

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — I wonder if you could check with the records, Mr. chairman. The hon. member used unparliamentary language; same term that was, I think, just this last day declared unparliamentary and should be withdrawn.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I'd just like to ask the member from Prince Albert to phrase his . . . just reword it; I was talking to the Clerk here and I missed, totally, what his point of order was.

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — The minister used the words "deliberately misleading" which is definitely a term that is unparliamentary and has been ruled, even within the last two days in this House, that has been . . . as being unparliamentary.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Okay, I hear the point of order brought forward by the member of Prince Albert. I did hear the minister say the words, use the word, "misleading"; unfortunately, I missed the "deliberately misleading". But I also am aware that the Speaker of the House has ruled the "misleading" referring to a member misleading the House as being unparliamentary. And if the . . . ask the minister to withdraw that remark, we'll continue with the procedure.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well, if that's what it takes to move things along, I'll withdraw it, but I get a little annoyed when I see people getting up and changing statements that had been made previously . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Changing statements, yes, because, Mr. Chairman, in discussion with the previous member, I had made it very, very clear — very clear . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — I'll just ask the minister just to withdraw the one remark and proceed with the response to the question without . . .

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I did withdraw it.

**An Hon. Member:** — No, you did not.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Just one second. The minister has withdrawn the remark and has made the attempt to withdraw the remark; and yes, he . . . and I just ask him to now proceed with the response and not trying to carry more . . . (inaudible) . . . Very good. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — That's all I'm trying to do. I'd like to move things along. I said I withdraw, but I also say I get a little concerned with people trying to make statements that are not factual. And that's exactly what happens — that's exactly what happened.

I explained to the other member not more than three minutes ago that there would not be a proliferation of stores in the corners of the streets of the cities of this province. That member stood in the House and said there would be. That's what he said. And that's why I say that is incorrect — that is a wrong interpretation of what I said, and that's why I get a little upset when I hear that kind of a statement.

So, Mr. Chairman, with that I want to assure the member — assure the member that it isn't the intention of this government — it isn't the intention of this government to allow the sale of beer and wine in street corner stores as it was of the government that you represent when they were in power.

And I want to indicate a couple of more things, Mr. Chairman, a couple of more things that come from that same 1973 report, because I think the people of Saskatchewan would be interested to know what was in that report. He talks about the safeguard of our children and our young people. That Don Faris NDP report of 1973 indicated that minors be allowed . . . or recommended that minors be allowed to consume alcohol with meals in the company of their parents. That's what they thought was right. Let the minors consume alcohol in the company of their parents with meals.

(1545)

Also that individuals of legal age, other than the driver, be allowed to consume alcohol in a vehicle. So the driver could drive and the rest could drink. That was the recommendations of the NDP Faris report.

So, Mr. Chairman, when that member stands up and criticizes our Premier for initiatives like Whitespruce, the best of its type, the only youth treatment centre in Canada

of that nature; when you look at the fines and the penalties in the Act that I'm bringing forward that really crack people who bootleg; that really crack people who serve minors; that really crack people who pull beer for minors, those fines in this Act are extended considerably. And I think those are the kinds of safeguards that will protect our young people.

And when I see a hypocrite, like the member opposite, stand up and in a pious manner, in a pious manner, try and indicate that there's something in this Act that will allow young people greater freedom and access to alcohol, I take exception with him. I take exception with those kinds of remarks because, as I said, read the penalties, read the penalties that are in here. There's no recommendation in here that young people be allowed to drink beer with their parents. There's no recommendation in this Act that the . . . there's no recommendation in this Act that people be able to drink beer in a car.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I really hate to interrupt the proceedings, Mr. Chairman, but the minister, I think, has lost control of himself. And I want to raise a point of order with you, Mr. Chairman, which I'm surprised you didn't call because you clearly heard, as I did, the minister refer to the member on this side of the House, the critic, as a hypocrite, and I say to you that that is unparliamentary, and I think that you should require the minister withdraw that and apologize to the House because it's the second time in the last five minutes that he has been out of order, and he's doing so deliberately and mocking the Chair.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I've listened to the member's point of order, and I did hear the remark you made, but I was also aware of the fact that prior to that I was close to calling the House to order because of some of the accusations and the calls being made on the other side of the House. I guess, as a chairman, I find it difficult sometimes to really control the Assembly when remarks are coming from both sides of the House when a minister . . . when a member is trying to speak. So in light of that, I'll ask the minister to report.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — The point of order; you have not ruled on the point of order. I respect the fact that it is your job to call the order of both sides of the House, as I think certainly members on this side would respect. But in order to be able to do that, Mr. Chairman, you have to be prepared to keep the minister in order as well.

The minister clearly said, and the record will show, that he called a member on this side of the House a hypocrite. Now that is not in order, Mr. Speaker . . . Mr. Chairman. That is unparliamentary, and I ask you to rule on it. Is it unparliamentary or is it not? And if so, the minister should withdraw and apologize.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, please. Order, please. I have listened to the point of order, and has been noted earlier, I asked the minister to withdraw the one remark. And I also acknowledge that the word hypocrite is unparliamentary, and I'll ask the minister to withdraw that remark.



But I'm also aware of the fact that there have been some calls made from the back benches, and it makes it difficult. So I ask all members of the House then to . . . they acknowledge this at this time. Then I'll ask the minister just to withdraw that remark and . . . (inaudible) . . .

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I withdraw. Let's proceed with the Bill.

**Mr. Koenker:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I simply want to make the point, Mr. Minister, that the people of Saskatchewan are entitled to know that there is a flagrant contradiction between what the Premier of this province is doing with respect to alcohol treatment, and what you, as his minister, are doing in this legislation. That's a flagrant contradiction, and I think the public of Saskatchewan will very shortly see, by your own actions as a result of this legislation, that there is a contradiction.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I see no contradiction at all.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, excuse me. I was just . . . Order, please. I was just going to ask if the members wanted to approach this going page by page, that we've got a number of clauses, till we come to the clauses where there is . . . Is everyone agreed we go page by page? Agreed.

Pages 2 to 27 inclusive agreed to.

#### Clause 79

**Mr. Chairman:** — Clause 79, an amendment to clause 79 of the printed Bill:

Amend subsection 79(3) of the printed Bill by striking out "occassion" and substituting "occasion."

I believe it's a spelling error.

Amendment agreed to.

Page 28 agreed to.

Pages 29 to 33 inclusive agreed to.

#### Clause 105

**Mr. Chairman:** — On page 34 we have an amendment to section 105 of the printed Bill, by the opposition.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to at the end of my remarks move an amendment to section 105(2). The nature of the amendment, Mr. Chairman, is that the franchising process be conducted in an open tendering fashion, unlike what this government has been about for the past years.

I just want to say, speaking to this amendment and to the Bill, Mr. Chairman, that the conduct of the minister

clearly shows why he is so sensitive, simply because he hasn't put in place the kind of protection that he knows the people of this province require.

We've seen a surprising display, I would want to say, from the minister, and I think it's because he's uncomfortable with what he's putting before this House.

This amendment, Mr. Chairman, deals with something that's been lacking from this government since 1982 — and I've referred to it before — and that has to do with fair, open tendering, and not just shoving government dollars into the pockets of their friends.

This government's displayed a record, I believe, unparalleled in Saskatchewan, and that's why we're putting this amendment forth. It calls for open tendering. And I think that if they're going to be unloading government assets, that's what should be done. Whether you're selling private or public assets through a tendering process, it should be done fairly and not just to benefit friends of your political party or friends of your particular philosophical beliefs.

So therefore, Mr. Minister, I would like to move that we:

Amend section 105 of the printed Bill by striking out subsection (2) thereof and substituting the following therefor:

(2) The board shall not grant a franchise:

(a) if the municipality in which the franchise is to be located has adopted a by-law pursuant to subsection 100(2); or

(b) if the enfranchisement process has not been conducted through an open tendering process.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, I don't think this amendment really deals with the situation as it is out there. There is really no sale of a franchise at all. The franchises being named in this Act is what previously was the special vendor, and there is no sale or transaction if there would be a change. There is application made by an interested business, and then they go through a rather complicated screening process by the commission and the application . . . there's a selection committee and an application is awarded.

So I don't think section (b) pertains at all to what is taking place.

So it would not . . . What this would mean is that if, let me give you an example, if there was a special vendor in the town and that person changed . . . sold his business and two other businesses wanted a special vendor licence, then by this they would have to go for a public tender. Well there's really nothing to tender. There's no sale of an asset. They would put forth a proposal, as is the case now, and the proposal would be investigated by the commission, both proposals, and a decision would be made. So really section (b) does not pertain to what actually takes place in the Act at this time.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well then, Mr. Speaker, you

wouldn't be arguing with us . . . or Mr. Minister, you wouldn't be arguing with the substance of my amendment if you have no plans to franchise out public assets. Then this particular part . . . this particular amendment wouldn't interfere with any problem, but what it would do would be protecting the people of this province if you decided that a public asset should be franchised out. And that's why I'm asking that you support this amendment, Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — No, Mr. Speaker, the member is wrong. Any sale or change of asset would take place under the powers of the board, as I read out previously when the member had raised those, and I said that they were the same as they were in the old Act, they were lifted from the old Act.

This has to do with the franchise . . . or the changing and special vendors which will be called franchising. And there's no sale, there's no sale of an asset, so there would be nothing to tender, so it doesn't pertain.

Amendment negated on division.

(1600)

Page 34 agreed to.

Pages 35 to 50 inclusive agreed to.

#### Clause 162

**Mr. Chairman:** — Clause 162, amendment to subsection 162(3) of the printed Bill:

by striking out "substance in beverage alcohol" in the sixth line and substituting "substance is beverage alcohol".

Clause 162 as amended agreed to.

Page 51 agreed to.

Pages 52 to 54 inclusive agreed to.

#### Clause 179

**Mr. Chairman:** —

Amend clause 179(b)(xix) of the printed Bill:

by striking out "hospital suite" and substituting "hospitality suite".

Clause 179 as amended agreed to.

Page 55 agreed to.

Pages 56 and 57 agreed to.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of comments as we finish off the clause by clause voting on this particular Bill.

I want it on the record, Mr. Chairman, that I will be very interested to note where some of the members of the

caucus on the government side will be when this vote is taken. And I wonder where the member from Rosetown-Elrose will be and the member from Rosthern and the member from Morse, because I think a lot of people in their riding are very interested in what kind of response they will give to this minister's Bill, this new liquor Act that, I would suggest, has the possibilities of opening up the accessibility to alcohol to young people in this province. A government that on one day opens alcohol and drug abuse treatment centre, and in the same day introduces a piece of legislation that gives the minister the power to do just about whatever he wants, is not the kind of legislation I believe that their constituents are looking for.

And as I said, Mr. Chairman, and I would want you to take close note of what I'm saying, and I would want you to include yourself when you're looking at the passing of this Bill as to what your people and what the people in the respective ridings that I mentioned will be saying about this Act.

**Mr. Chairman:** — I'd like to thank the officials for all their help this afternoon.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the officials for being with me this afternoon. And more than that, though, Mr. Speaker, the very fact that this Bill had never been opened for 65 years, and it combined two very large Bills into one, took a considerable amount of work by my officials over the past number of months. So it wasn't just passage of this Bill today, but all the preparation and the work that went into it. I want to thank them and I want to thank the opposition for his questions.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I too would like to thank the minister and his officials, and I noted the enthusiasm that some of your members support you with. And members on this side of the House certainly appreciate the work that they put into the Bill, and I would just want them to note that their enthusiasm did not go unnoticed, nor will it go unrecognized.

The committee agreed to report the Bill as amended.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 50 — An Act respecting the Control of Distribution and the Consumption of Beverage Alcohol in Saskatchewan

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that the amendments be read now a first and second time.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — I move the Bill, with leave, be now read a third time and be passed under its title.

(1615)

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division

**Yeas — 24**

Andrew	Hardy
Berntson	Klein
Lane	Toth
Taylor	Sauder
Smith	Johnson
Swan	Hopfner
Muirhead	Petersen
Maxwell	Swenson
Schmidt	Martens
Hodgins	Baker
Gerich	Kopelchuk
Hepworth	Britton

### Nays — 18

Romanow	Hagel
Prebble	Pringle
Lingenfelter	Lyons
Shillington	Calvert
Tchorzewski	Lautermilch
Koskie	Trew
Simard	Smart
Kowalsky	Van Mulligen
Atkinson	Koenker

The Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

## SECOND READINGS

### **Bill No. 84 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of Certain Acts and the Passing of Certain Orders and Regulations pursuant to The Government Organization Act**

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, when The Government Organization Act was dealt with by this Assembly in December of '86, I made it clear that the creation of departments or agencies under its provisions be regulations would in no way affect the statutory authority of existing departments and ministers, because this Assembly would have the opportunity to consider any amendments to statutes required as a result of reorganization of government departments.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill reflects the only amendments required as a result of government organization made in the past year and a half. This Act recognizes the changes required to statute because of the creation of the departments of Human Resources, Labour and Employment; Environment and Public Safety; Economic Development and Tourism; and Trade and Investment.

This Act also recognizes changes required from the merger of some departments into now existing Consumer and Commercial Affairs; Finance; Education; and Parks, Recreation and Culture departments, Mr. Speaker.

Many of the amendments contained in this Act, Mr. Speaker, consist of repeal of provisions now continued in departmental statutes, that are no longer required because they are covered by standard provisions in The Government Organization Act. As a result, a number of statutes are repealed in their entirety, and the provisions in them that are of a substantive nature are moved to other

substantive statutes of similar subject matter.

In other cases, after the removal of departmental provisions, this Bill renames Acts to reflect the substantive provisions now contained in the statute. The best example of this, Mr. Speaker, is the renaming of the Department of Finance Act, 1983, as The Financial Administration Act, to better reflect the prime content of that Act.

The second major purpose of the Act, Mr. Speaker, is to change references to the new names of Acts that are contained in other Acts. For example, amendments contained in 55 of the 116 sections of this Act relate to the renaming of The Department of Finance Act, 1983, as The Financial Administration Act.

A further 17 sections relate to the renaming of The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Act as The Revenue and Financial Services Act. Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate that wherever possible, provisions contained in existing Acts have, whenever they are moved to another statute by this Bill, have been moved unchanged.

Three new provisions are added by this Act, Mr. Speaker. Section 86 permits renumbering of regulations made under an Act that has been named and renumbered under this Act.

Section 115 permits continuation, amendment, and repeal of existing regulations, even though an Act is repealed under this Act. Section 27 of this Bill also adds a new section for point two, to The Human Resources, Labour and Employment Act to provide clear statutory authority, now assigned to the Minister of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, to accommodate the needs of and programs for senior citizens in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of The Government Organization Consequential Amendment Act, 1988, Bill No. 84.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, let me first of all at the outset say that I am going to allow this Bill to proceed to committee. Most of what the minister has said, from my reading of the Bill, is correct. But there are some points I wish to make, because this Bill highlights certain very important fundamental issues that I think deserve comment on and should be put on the record.

I draw to your attention, Mr. Speaker, and I hope through you, to the minister opposite who spoke on the Bill, that the Bill itself has many flaws in it. There are references in the Bill to legislation which is not relevant, and I would hope that the government would have their officials take another look at it. And I raise one example. Sections 57 to 60 seek to amend four liquor laws, but one or more of those is now repealed. One certainly is repealed, and I think a second one is as well, because of the new Bill 50 which was just dealt with today.

That's only one example of several which I think are no longer necessary in the Bill. And the government should consider that and should have considered it, quite frankly, when they were writing the Bill, knowing the

legislation they were going to bring forward.

There is also one other, and I will raise it in committee, one particular example of an amendment that is troublesome, and that is that by repealing certain sections of The Revenue and Financial Services Act, the government has repealed the requirement and the necessity to provide an annual report to the legislature. That has always been the case with the department of revenue, and supply and services.

Now that repeal arbitrarily, with several sections, takes away that requirement and I really will want the minister to explain why that is so when it makes it unnecessary to provide an annual report to the legislature as has always been the case.

Now in the general way, Mr. Speaker, I want to make this point. This Bill, according to the comments we just heard, is consequential to the government reorganization Bill which was dealt with by this legislature at some length last December of 1987. I think everybody in this House is fully aware of the implications of that Bill.

It was simply another attempt, which has been doubled and tripled and quadrupled since that time by the government, to turn this government operation into a centralized government operation, put more central authority into the hands of the cabinet, and take away and remove the authority and the powers of this legislative Assembly.

This Bill relates to that Bill which was done, and I think that that point needs to be made, especially in light of the fact, Mr. Speaker, when one considers what was the result of this terrorization that took place after the introduction and passage of Bill 5. And I use the word terrorization of Saskatchewan very deliberately, because it was terrorization — it was terrorization by a government that has run amok.

Because after the Bill 5 was given, it gave them the power to do all kinds of things. They began to take advantage of it and cut programs and cut services and spend tens of millions of dollars without even a budget, which they proceeded to do between December of 1987 and June 17 of . . . 1986 was when the Bill was introduced, and June 17 of 1987 when finally, under the threat of legal action, the Minister of Finance and the Premier finally decided they had better introduce a budget into this House.

This is just one example of how this particular legislation portrays the kind of attitude that has been displayed by this government, which appears to think that it has to answer to no one, it has to be responsible to no one, it can do whatever it wants without regard for public opinion.

In question period today, the Minister of Urban Affairs made it very clear. Although by a vast majority — in some cases, almost unanimous — there is opposition to changes that he wants to bring in with regard to Urban Municipality Act dealing with wards and dealing with store hours, he's going to do it anyway. That's just another example of what I have been talking about, with what has been taking place in Saskatchewan since Bill 5 was introduced in 1986. I find that quite despicable and

unfortunate, and it's a bad reflection on what we have always known to be the legislative process and the democratic process in Saskatchewan.

The same thing was again exemplified by the fact that the Minister of Finance refused to table the Provincial Auditor's report for months after it was made available. Mr. Speaker, the government's failure and refusal to table in the legislature certain annual reports . . . and I know that the government House Leader has yet to table — and he will be tabling, I'm sure — certain reports which have yet not been tabled from the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Corporation, from the Crown Investment Board corporation, and at least two others which have yet to be tabled in this House; a very unusual practice, because those reports were completed and made available to the government months ago.

So I think we see here, Mr. Speaker, not only an attempt by the government to be able to put itself legislatively in a position to do whatever it wants without being accountable to this legislature, but also an attempt by the government to hide information from the public which it has a right to know.

I suppose if I was in those treasury benches, knowing all of the difficulty they were in, knowing all of the scandal that is obviously hidden by a lot of this information which is not being made available, I guess if I was a Conservative member, I would have the mentality to think that maybe I'd better hide it.

The fact is that what is hidden today, Mr. Speaker, will become available before the next provincial election, and the people of Saskatchewan are going to know. And that's going to be a very significant reason why this government will be lucky if it elects one Conservative member on the other side of the House when that election is completed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking some of those questions which I have indicated in my brief remarks. I think that maybe at that time it will be a better place in which to debate this Bill. And so for now, I am prepared to let it go to the committee.

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

#### **Bill No. 89 — An Act respecting certain Consequential Amendments to certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Municipal Board Act**

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, under rule 87(3), where it says the government may withdraw a Bill from the Committee of Non-Controversial Bills at any time, I would like to indicate that I would like at this time to withdraw Bill. No. 89 from the Non-Controversial Bills Committee and proceed with second reading.

Bill No. 89 is a Bill respecting consequential amendments arising from The Municipal Board Act. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, that that Bill was turned back from the committee because it couldn't properly be passed in advance of the Bill that it is consequential to.

So I just offer that simple explanation, Mr. Speaker, and move second reading of Bill No. 89, An Act respecting consequential amendments arising from The Municipal Board Act.

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

(1630)

### **Bill No. 71 — An Act to amend The Wildlife Act**

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, under the same rule, I would like to withdraw Bill No. 71, An Act to amend The Wildlife Act, and move second reading at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I stand today and move second reading of a Bill to amend The Wildlife Act. This Bill is intended to ensure that Saskatchewan's unique and valuable wildlife resources are maintained and enhanced for the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, wildlife has formed an important part of our heritage. Indeed, a recent Canadian survey clearly established the importance of wildlife to all Canadians, including Saskatchewan residents.

Mr. Speaker, The Wildlife Act provides for the legislative authority for the conservation and management of our wildlife resources. It governs the disposition, as well as the protection, of these resources. Inherent in wise management of these resources is the need for appropriate enforcement. The passage of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms recognized certain fundamental freedoms and democratic rights for all citizens of Canada, and in so doing, established a standard by which all other enforcement legislation must be measured.

However, The Wildlife Act was enacted prior to the passage of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is therefore essential that we ensure the enforcement powers provided to wildlife officers in The Wildlife Act are consistent with the charter, and yet ensure sufficient authority to adequately protect our resources that are so important to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the charter-related amendment, along with a few other housekeeping changes contained in the bill I've introduced, reflect this government's commitment to conserving Saskatchewan wildlife resources.

I move, Mr. Speaker, second reading of a bill No. 71, The Wildlife Amendment Act, 1988.

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

### **ADJOURNED DEBATES**

#### **SECOND READINGS**

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.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a few words about this Bill, Bill No. 56. It appears the legislation is put before this House for the sole purpose of lining SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation) up to be privatized.

And it's not privatization, Mr. Speaker, that concerns members on this side of the House so much, but the fact that the government has spent little time in making any effort to analyse the effects of privatization. Their efforts to privatize the assets of the people of this province have been consuming so much of their time that they're forgetting to properly manage the Crowns so that they can return profits to the people of this province, to deliver health care and education and to build highways, and to plan for the future of this province.

And I would want to say that members on this side are very concerned when we see the massive deficits that are built up by a lot of the Crown corporations that the Premier and his cabinet are managing. But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that SMDC doesn't happen to be one of those. It's been returning consistent profits to the people of Saskatchewan, and I wouldn't want to venture a guess as to whether it's because of management or because the commodities that it markets are as lucrative as they are, but the facts are that in the last couple of years SMDC has been able to return, over the last couple of years, almost a hundred million dollars to the people of this province.

I note in '86 the company has returned 15 million, in '85 it's returned 15 million, and in subsequent years it's . . . in previous years it had returned millions of dollars as well. And I ask why this government would want to put into the hands of outside interests a corporation that has been as lucrative as SMDC clearly has been.

And when I have another look at what the proposal is between this government, the PC government in Saskatchewan, and their counterparts in Ottawa, and the amalgamation, the merging with Eldorado nuclear, it gives me some concern, because we know that that corporation has a long-term debt, a very massive long-term debt, and last year lost \$144 million.

And I would ask why this government would want to merge a Saskatchewan-based, Saskatchewan-controlled — owned and controlled by the people of this province, a corporation that's been returning consistent profits to the people; why they would want to merge that with a federal Crown corporation that's not in that good financial condition as certainly and clearly as SMDC is; why you would want to merge these corporations, and then why you would want to privatize them? And I say it's simply because of this government's inability to use any other tool other than just strictly the private sector in order to run the economy.

And I say it's a sad commentary that a government of any philosophical belief wouldn't want to use the tools that are available in order to deliver the programs, and whether that be public enterprise or private enterprise or the co-operative system, all of these vehicles should be looked at and considered. And clearly, just because

SMDC is a Crown corporation is no reason to unload it.

Its mandate was to preserve the resource revenue for the people of this province, and I believe SMDC has fulfilled that mandate and would continue to fulfil that mandate. But just because it's a Crown corporation, this government introduces an Act to reorganize, to merge, and then to privatize.

And I would want to say that the people of this province — although a lot of them don't believe that government has to own everything, and I would suggest members on both sides of the House in this legislature feel that way as well — people are not going to be satisfied with a government that is determined to privatize for privatization's sake.

And I'd want to say if this government believes in this province and believes in the future of this province, that they would want to make a special effort to broaden their views and to look at the different tools available to them, and I use the Crown corporations as one example. And I say it's a sad commentary on the government, simply because they've got the blinders on and they're not willing to look around them.

The future for this province lies in a mixed economy, and I believe that strongly. The future of this province can't be tied to one sector. I think history has shown that a mixed economy has worked in this province, and that's why, Mr. Speaker, I have some problem in looking at this kind of legislation that is put before this House for no other reason but to privatize the corporation.

SMDC, as I indicated, is in very good financial shape. It's got a debt of some \$318 million, that's true. But looking at the history of the corporation and into the future, it's very possible that the debt may be retired in three years, which would mean we're sitting on a large asset base, a corporation with no debt, a corporation paying no interest, a corporation with the ability to return money to the coffers of this province, so that we can deliver health care, and so that we don't look at the scrapping of the children's dental plan or prescription drug plan fees or 13- or 12- or 11,000 people waiting to get into our hospitals.

And I would want to say, Mr. Speaker, that this government has lost sight of what this province can be, and all because of their narrow-minded philosophical beliefs, the belief that the people of the province haven't got the right to own their own resources.

And I would want to say, Mr. Speaker, that in committee I believe that this Bill is going to take some time to pass. And I say that because the critic in charge of this particular piece of legislation is going to want to question the minister in depth. And I think not only in terms of the legality of the Bill or what the particular clause might mean, but I think one of the aspects that the critic will want to review is the overall intent and the reasons behind having this Bill before the House.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, if this government had spent as much time trying to develop an economy in this province that would work, using all of the tools available — the

private and the public and the co-operative sector — and if they hadn't squandered half of their time scheming with the Margaret Thatchers of the world and the Fraser Institutes as to how to destroy a public company, that there would be a better Saskatchewan, and there could be and there should be a better Saskatchewan.

But this government has turned in on itself, it's moved the people away, and it's no longer governing with the mandate, that mandate being: deliver decent health care . . . or for the mandate, to deliver decent health care and education. It's dealing with its own agenda, its own philosophical beliefs, and that's why we see this kind of legislation.

Before I close, I would just want to say, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill will indeed take some time to discuss in committee, and for that reason I would beg leave to adjourn the debate . . . I'll let it go.

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. Klein that Bill. No. 60 — **An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1984** be now read a second time.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a few remarks that I wish to make on this Bill, as I know a good number of my colleagues do. And when I spoke on it the day that the minister introduced it, I outlined the reasons why I thought, and we believe, the Bill was ill-advised and wrong. I won't get into some of the same arguments, but I want to make some other points which I think are important to be made on this very fundamental and important issue.

First of all, let me begin by saying that in my opinion this Bill is a clear statement on the style and the ethics of this Premier and this Conservative government. There is no other way to describe it, except that it is a clear statement of those particular aspects of the government.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it portrays a government that is morally and ethically corrupt, a government which has become so preoccupied with its own self-interest that public interest and public policy have become secondary considerations. Patronage has become the guiding hand to decisions on government policy, government programs, and government legislation. Every day in this House we are able to find another example of this blatant patronage that is running rampant under the direction of this particular Premier, and this cabinet, and this government, and the Minister of Urban Affairs, who knowingly smiles in his chair.

Mr. Speaker, I never believed, I never believed that we would ever see such a disregard for democratic principles as has been witnessed in the last several years. While this government took away information, it took away powers of this Legislative Assembly and invested more and more power in the cabinet and in the chief executive officer of this government, the Premier himself. Has this been good, Mr. Speaker? Has there been benefits because of this approach by this government? I say no, and the record

speaks for itself.

(1645)

Bad fiscal policy has led to an accumulated deficit of \$3.7 billion, and it has left a mortgage which will take generations to pay back, a legacy that is costing Saskatchewan people over \$300 million a year in interest and debt charges which we are paying to banks and financial interests and brokerage houses out of this province, mostly out of this country, in New York and throughout the world.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, just think what \$50 million of interest from that interest costs that we're paying in revenue sharing to municipalities would do — just \$50 million of that \$300 million which they are blowing away because of the mismanagement and the corruption and the patronage. Property taxes might have been reduced for a \$50 million injection into the revenue sharing fund. Streets and roads and water and sewer systems would be built and improved, and jobs would be created, job which are so badly and sorely needed. But instead of dealing with the real problems that municipalities face today, this government spends all of its time attacking local governments with this legislation, with its introduction of the ward system, and provincial abdication in the regulation of store hours and providing a common day of rest.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I say, Mr. Speaker, those are misplaced priorities. There are so many children living in poverty in Saskatchewan today that our province has achieved the unenviable status of having the second-highest rate of poverty in Canada. And all that the Premier and the Minister of Urban Affairs can do is spend their time and their energy undermining the democratic right of urban municipal citizens, people who live in our cities, to choose the electoral system that they think is best for them.

All they can do, Mr. Speaker, in light of all these other important things that they ought to be paying attention to, is abandon the small family business and rural communities by turning the control of store hours over to the chain stores and the board of directors of large corporations in Montreal and Toronto and New York.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, this government has lost touch with Saskatchewan. It refuses to listen to them. The minister is out on a personal vendetta. And I really find this very regrettable, because I would think that there is a bigger role for members of the Executive Council to play, and cabinet ministers, and all of us who serve in this Legislative Assembly. But this personal vendetta of the minister's against the ward system is really outrageous. He has become the servant of business from outside of this province, completely ignoring the interests of the people of Saskatchewan as a whole, and completely ignoring the interests of small business in Saskatchewan and particularly rural business in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — And what I find extremely shocking, and maybe most shocking of all, is that the Premier has allowed him to get away with it. The coalition of business people and community leaders and church leaders has asked for a meeting. On May 4 they asked for a meeting with the Premier because they wanted to discuss alternative proposals. And do you know what he did, Mr. Speaker? He refused to meet with them. He refused to meet with them on this very fundamental and important issue, and he said, go and meet with my Minister of Urban Affairs.

Well the minister refused to meet with them too. He refused to meet with them until the day in which he was going to introduce this Bill in this House and the first thing that he indicated to them was that no matter what they told him, he was going to go ahead with the legislation. And I ask, what kind of a consultation process is that?

**An Hon. Member:** — Arrogance.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — That is arrogance at its extremest.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — The whole exercise, Mr. Speaker, by the minister was a fraud, an absolute fraud. From one end of this province to the other, in cities and in rural communities, individual citizens, elected officials of local government, business people and everyone concerned about the quality of family life has said to the minister and to the Premier: this is not the time to do it.

They have said to him and to this government, we want to have some input as it is our democratic right to have the input. And they have been ignored, these people who have vigorously spoken out against this Bill. They spoke out against the government's attack on the right of people in urban centres to choose the electoral system that works best for them. They spoke out against the legislation on store hours, which in reality is a case of the minister and his government running away from their responsibility. And through all of this, Mr. Speaker, the Premier of this province has stood by and not provided the leadership that has been so sorely needed here.

Instead, he has stepped back so that the Minister of Urban Affairs can satisfy his own personal ego. That's not leadership. And I say to the Premier, stand up for what is right, stand up for Saskatchewan families for once instead of simply just talking about it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I say to the Premier, stand up for rural Saskatchewan communities who are going to be critically threatened and hurt by this store hours legislation. Stand up for the small-business people of Saskatchewan who want to enjoy their families, too. They want to enjoy their families just like anyone else in this province — like you do, Mr. Speaker, or I do, or anybody else in this House.

Many of them are struggling now to survive. Don't allow this legislation, I say to the Premier, which will put the chain stores and the corporate businesses from outside of

Saskatchewan in control, and ultimately squeeze many family businesses out of business.

I say to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, stand up for the employees who will be hurt by this legislation. Stand up for our municipal leaders and for SUMA who have petitioned you, Mr. Premier, or that have petitioned the Premier, to stop the legislation which takes away the right of urban residents to have a ward system.

The message that has been sent from all over the province has been overwhelming. In fact I'm even surprised at this power and the extent at which it has taken place. I would say to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, and to the members opposite, don't proceed with this legislation at this time, and allow the public to have a say on this issue.

The Premier should stop his stubborn minister from imposing legislation which no one supports, and by which many will be hurt. And so I urge the Premier — as have other people not at the political level, but other concerned and interested people — to set up an all-party committee of this legislature which can hold hearings around the province and give people an opportunity to say what they think so that all of us collectively in here can then come back and do what's right for them, and do what's right for Saskatchewan. They have a right to have a voice in this important issue, and they should not expect from their government to arbitrarily have this rammed down their throats.

You see, Mr. Speaker, when all of the other important arguments are put aside, one has to recognize that the government is now facing the question of leadership credibility on this issue. And I simply will be interested to know: will the Premier show that leadership that is required here, or will he allow himself to be railroaded by this Minister of Urban Affairs who has a personal agenda not related to the public interest. That's the question that will be answered on the way this Bill proceeds, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier is receiving hundreds of letters on this issue — hundreds of letters. Government MLAs are receiving letters of protest. Opposition members that I know of are receiving letters and phone calls on a daily basis. The only people who seem to be listening are the New Democratic Party caucus here.

And that's why we have taken the position that we have, Mr. Speaker, because we reflect the concerns of the small-business community. We are reflecting the concerns of people who are concerned about their family out there and how many of them will be devastated by this, people who run family businesses. We reflect the concern of people in ... not only in municipal government levels, but the citizens at large who are afraid of this government's attack on their right to choose the electoral system that they want and that they feel will serve them best.

And when you think about it, Mr. Speaker, the next question that comes to mind is: who's next? Is it the divisions in rural municipalities that will be next? Is it the divisions in our school divisions that will be next? With this government, with their record and with this Bill and

the way they have approached this, everything is at risk and everything is being threatened.

Mr. Speaker, I want to put on the record what the message from all of Saskatchewan has been, and I will do it as briefly as I can, to allow other members to be able to say some of the things that need to be said.

Just in case the members opposite have been so blinkered that they have not noticed, there has been a letter that has been sent to every MLA in this House by the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers in Saskatchewan, president Lawrence Lanovaz, who is the chairman of the committee, from Duck Lake, Saskatchewan, and it has urged every member of this House — the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, the members over there, you, Mr. Speaker, the members on this side of the House — that this legislation not proceed. And they state in their letter, Mr. Speaker, the open letter, the announcement that the Sunday opening question would be passed down to the municipalities is certainly not welcomed by independent grocers in this province, nor, we suspect, by the vast majority of municipalities.

They went on to say that:

We firmly believe that it should be the responsibility of the provincial government to draft appropriate legislation which deals with this issue, and we urge all members of the legislature to give careful consideration to the legislation recently enacted in the province of Manitoba, which, in our opinion, strikes the right balance between providing the services required by the population at large without moving to wide open Sunday shopping.

And all that the public wants, and these organizations want, is for the government to consider that fact that there are other alternatives. The Manitoba experience is working. It is a perfectly good model for us to look at. It has not been challenged in courts, as all over the rest of this country other legislation has been. It's working, Mr. Speaker. Why would the government not at least provide an opportunity for others to take a look at it and make some recommendations to see whether we can do the right thing in Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — And I think it's very telling. One other comment that has been made in this letter to the members of this House, when they say 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. That's what we're dealing with here, Mr. Speaker — those kinds of issues. Those kinds of issues.

Not giving Saskatchewan away to the corporate sector out of Toronto and Montreal, not giving Saskatchewan away to the United States of America, but using the talents of our people in this province today to make our decisions here in the best interests of ourselves, who are here now, and the interests of our children who will be here after us, and their children, too.



**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — We don't need the kind of arrogance, we don't need the kind of arrogance that is being displayed by the government which is refusing to recognize the importance of that. And that's why I urge as strongly as I can that the government not proceed with this Bill altogether, and that it take a look at a legislative committee, as has been urged by this letter to all members, which I know members opposite are aware of and I am really quite surprised that they would ignore, particularly since most of them represent rural constituencies, which have rural communities which are going to be particularly hurt by the actions of that minister, who does not seem to care.

Mr. Speaker, there was a letter here to the Premier, written by the Coalition Against (open) Sunday Shopping, signed by the Rev. Bill Portman, the chairman. And that letter, Mr. Speaker, says very clearly that we suggest an all-party committee be struck to allow public opinion to be heard — another example of a group that is saying that what the Tories are doing is not good and is wrong.

As a matter of fact, the protest has become so great that this coalition, Mr. Speaker, has said a couple of days ago in a press conference and a news statement, that they have had to hire extra staff to handle the response. Now why the government wouldn't note that and pay attention to it, I don't know unless they have now developed a death wish.

(1700)

Unless they've now developed the fact, the mentality, that they're gone and therefore it doesn't matter and they're just going to put their mark on the province, as much damage as it might create and torpedoes be damned. And I think it's true. They are gone.

And I've heard the minister argue: well all over the rest of the country, we're having this legislation and therefore it's good for Saskatchewan. I wonder if he noticed that just recently, Toronto, one of our largest cities, if not the largest, rejected Sunday shopping and strongly protested in a vote of 30 to 2 in their council, city council, to the provincial government's proposed legislation which would do similar to what this government is doing here. But at least in Ontario that government is interested in consulting people and is listening. That's not happening here.

And, Mr. Speaker, I draw your attention to another argument that needs to be made and that is . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — It being 5 o'clock, the House stands recessed until 7 p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.