

EVENING SITTING

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 56 — An Act respecting the Reorganization of the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, my officials are just on the way in, and here they are. Sitting on my right is Bill Gibson, president of CMB (Crown Management Board of Saskatchewan), and sitting on my left soon will be Roy Lloyd, president of SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation), and there he is. And those are the officials dealing with this legislation tonight.

Clause 1

Mr. Goulet: — Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I'll do a quick overview in regards to the Act, and we will be proceeding with comments by other members.

In general, there are three aspects to the Act. Number one, it'll probably go down in history as one of the worst deals for the people of Saskatchewan. Secondly, the gains that were made in the '70s in regards to such topics as the environment and workers' health and safety have not been covered by this new Act — absolutely no mention. The other aspect to the Act, of course, is its lack of any mention whatsoever about jobs — absolutely nothing in the Act that says anything about jobs.

In regards to the first topic, that it's a bad deal for Saskatchewan; I will outline my argument in regards to the positive aspect of SMDC and also in regards to the problems of the deal itself in relation to the Act. One has to look at, therefore, the situation as it exists. The Act in itself . . . the Bill in itself, Bill 56, does not have any justification other than the turnover of the people's of Saskatchewan resources over to large-scale business.

The important point to note here is that it goes against the usual argument of efficiency that has been utilized, whether it's by Thatcher's government or by the proponents of privatization in the province of Saskatchewan and elsewhere in Canada.

And I would state that we have to look at the concept that was brought in historically on SMDC. SMDC came in here in 1974. It was generally an approach, a mixed economy approach, a joint venture approach. And that type of Saskatchewan experience had been started previously in the past where a joint venture system had been utilized, had been talked about for many years. And for many years a lot of people thought it could not be done in the mining industry. What it has proved is that the joint co-operation of the private sector with a public corporation like Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation has been highly successful.

It has been highly successful in many regards. I'll deal with the financial end immediately and an overview. SMDC has gone from nothing to a world-class organization in about a 12-year period. There is 914 million in assets. Last year it made a profit of 60 million. The sales on uranium alone last year were \$186 million;

on gold it was 8 million. The dividends were \$30 million and the royalties and taxes amounted to 22 million. The return on investment was 20 per cent and the average in the past four years had been close to 50 per cent. In regards to the reserves, the uranium reserves were about 304 million pounds and at \$18 a pound, that would be approximately \$6 billion. In other words, what we are doing is turning over in this merger to a privatization scheme \$6 billion, which is twice what the PC government has put us in in the past six years. It's \$6 billion worth of reserves.

The other thing in regards to gold from the known deposits is that there is about \$120 million. So what we are looking at is, on the two key minerals, over \$6 billion. And that's not counting the areas such as copper, zinc, silver, and many other base metals that exist in northern Saskatchewan. In other words, what we are seeing here is the give-away of our . . . what many people might come to think of as the last crown jewels in the province of Saskatchewan. Our Crown gold will be gone to some big private corporation.

In others words, what we are seeing here is patronage — patronage of the highest order, that we have never seen in the province of Saskatchewan. Because basically what it is, is that we already own the resource. We already control the vast amount of the resources whether its gold, zinc or any other minerals, and what we are doing is shifting it to a merger position then fully privatized within a seven-year period.

The only thing that the PC government can say in regards to this is that there are these shares that people can buy. Well I think it's simply to say that the shares can be bought up by three corporations, and they can own 75 per cent of the shares. Three large corporations can own three-quarters of the company; one company can own up to 25 per cent of the shares. So three large corporations can control three-quarters, and three-quarters of the voting as well. In other words, what will be left is a small number of shares for the people of Saskatchewan.

The other aspect to the deal is the question of environment and workers' health and safety. In regards to the Key Lake agreement, in regards to the period of the '70s, one of the things that was very important — and there is absolutely no mention of that in the Bill — is the issue of environment and workers' health and safety.

We had a period of involvement and consultation with people. One of the key things that arose from that is, in fact, the importance of environment and workers' health and safety. We had the Cluff Lake report and Cluff Lake inquiry and the Key Lake inquiry, but the record shows that when I asked the question during committee, to the minister, all he gave me were promises that something, indeed, we would keep up with the standards. But the standards have been brought down since the PCs have been in power. The worst spills occurred after the Department of Environment people had been laid off. The worst spills occurred when the monitoring committee was disbanded by this government when they come into power in '82, so that there was no public scrutiny in regards to the mining. So a lot of things went down in

regards to environmental and workers' health and safety considerations.

Although the record has improved recently, the overall during the middle period after some pressure by the public, the record was starting to be a little bit shaky. And as we look back in history, we were utilizing '77 records, and although they were the best in the world, we were starting to look at the realization that the latest reports today now will now show that the international commission on radiological will now say that the levels need to be improved by five times the international standards, which means about two times the Saskatchewan standards. So that aspect, people are a little bit worried about in regards to privatization, because of the simple record of the PC government.

The other aspect are jobs — absolutely no mention of jobs. I will be talking a lot more about jobs as we go along, so I will leave the topic out for a while.

So the statement is this: how do you see success, Mr. Minister, in the areas, the different areas that I've mentioned, in regards to the returns on the amount of money and the profit that is made by the mining companies, on the long-term reserves which are going to be transferred to some private corporation? How do you see this benefiting the families and the people of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — There's not a great deal that has been changed, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, as a result of this new company taking over the assets of Eldorado and SMDC, except that the sum is greater than the individual existing entities for the purposes of Saskatchewan economic well-being. There will be, for instance, the head office of a very significantly major mining company, primarily uranium company, situated here in the province of Saskatchewan. And I know that you will argue, we already have one. This one will be bigger. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, the research facilities that now exist in Ontario under Eldorado will be located in Saskatchewan as well.

(1915)

Your earlier concern as it relates to the environment and to the jobs in the North, nothing changes there except that there will be an additional or an enhanced emphasis on northern development through the new company. The surface leases that now exist under SMDC and under Eldorado will become part of the obligation that will be there for the new company to take up.

So the short answer, Mr. Speaker, is that in those areas related to the surface lease, nothing changes. In the broader picture, the synergies that come with the merger, if you like, of these two companies, I think bring additional new jobs, head office economic activity to the province of Saskatchewan.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Minister, we've spent some time in Crown Corporations Committee discussing the merger of SMDC and Eldorado Nuclear. We've also spent some time in the legislature discussing the merger, but this is our first

opportunity to specifically discuss the details of the deal.

Now you have said and your Finance minister has said and your Premier has said and your privatization minister has said that those deals will be tabled, that those deals will become public knowledge, that they will not only exist for the benefit of the private sector, but they will soon become the information of the public sector.

Now, Mr. Minister, tonight I'm asking you to table the deal, give us all of the documents, table the evaluation of Saskatchewan assets, SMDC, table the deal between SMDC and Eldorado Nuclear. Would you do that tonight.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, of course, the member's asking the impossible. We had said and we have always said that . . . Back in February, we signed a letter of intent, and there was a media package at that time. It set out the essential elements of the letter of intent. At that time we announced that we were targeting for a closing of the deal, I think, the end of June or the first of July.

The document is still being worked on; it cannot be finalized until this legislation and the federal legislation is passed. So that documentation simply does not exist to be tabled at this time.

We are now targeting for . . . and the wild card in this is the federal legislation, I suspect, because it's now reported back to the House and, I think, at third reading stage, after which it goes to the Senate and so on. But we're now targeting for the last half of July, I think, I think probably late in July to have everything in order so we can, in fact, do the closing of the deal. Following that we would be in a position to table the appropriate documentation.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Minister, when you say you'll table the appropriate documentation, will you outline to us tonight what documentation you're prepared to table whenever this deal is finalized, whenever both the House of Commons and the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly pass the appropriate legislation. What documents will you table? What documents will you make available to the public?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I would say that following the closing of the deal . . . the closing of the deal can't happen before the passage of this legislation and the federal legislation. I would say that similar to the situation with Weyerhaeuser where we tabled virtually all of the closing documents — is that right? — that we could legally be allowed to table, we would be prepared to table following the closing of the deal.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Minister, will you table the evaluation of the assets.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Chairman, the evaluation and evaluation documents are literally volumes and volumes of computer runs, etc., etc., and we are not prepared to table them. We are however prepared — as we were with the sale of the undeveloped gas reserve from SaskPower to Saskoil — we are prepared to deal with letters of fairness from independent financial advisers, and those letters of fairness, after the closing of the deal — after the closing of the deal, Mr. Speaker — we

would be prepared to table it.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, book value of SMDC, according to your annual report or the assets that are stated in here, comes close to \$1 billion. But, Mr. Minister, that doesn't take into consideration all of . . . that does not necessarily take into consideration the potential of all of the gold reserves, the potential of all of the uranium reserves and what that means in terms of development, the potential of copper and silver.

Mr. Minister, you say that we're going to get a good deal for this asset, that we will have a return to the people of Saskatchewan of some \$400 million. Mr. Minister, last year this company — this company that's not very old and is just starting to begin to pay dividends to people of this province, made over \$60 million. It doubled its profit from the year before. It paid out to the people of Saskatchewan in 1987 some \$30 million. That's a return on equity of 20.2 per cent — not bad, Mr. Minister, not bad at all.

Now on the contrary we have Eldorado Nuclear. Eldorado Nuclear has assets in the neighbourhood of 900 million, but it also has a debt of close to 420 million. It's had an accumulated deficit since 1981 of 144 million. And this company lost 57.2 million in 1985 and 64.3 million in 1986. Eldorado Nuclear is not a good example of Crown corporations and involvement in the public sector by the federal government.

Now, Mr. Minister, in Crown Corporations Committee we talked about the implications for the privatization of SMDC with regard to income tax that would accrue to the province of Saskatchewan with regard to royalties and that sort of thing. Mr. Minister, I know that you've had Bennett Jones involved in doing some tax implications on the privatization of SMDC, and I'd be interested in knowing what exactly are the tax implications once Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation is privatized. I'd be interested in knowing what we as taxpayers and as potential government-in-waiting can expect to receive for this asset that you're about to sell off in terms of income tax; and I'm not talking about royalties, I'm strictly talking about income tax.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Chairman, the deal was put together based on relative market values and cash flows of the respective assets, each individual asset. It was also put together without regard for the debt existing at Eldorado, or at SMDC, for that matter.

So based on that, Eldorado showed a hundred million earnings last year. And so . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm sorry . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . So what you're looking at in the annual report, the book values, etc., have no real direct relationship to what we're talking about here as it relates to the final deal.

Your question as it relates to taxes. Like any other company, this new company will be in a tax paying position once all the tax banks that are there at the closing have been used up. And that's the case; that's how it works. It's the case in many other deals as well, and so there is nothing particularly new or different about this one.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, as I understand it from the information that you gave us in Crown Corporations Committee, this is a company that has assets of over . . . close to \$1 billion. This is a company that has long-term debt of some \$318 million, which you say in three years will be paid off. This is a company that last year, even with that debt, returned to Saskatchewan a \$30 million dividend, or 20.2 per cent return on equity, and had net earnings of \$60 million — not bad. I understand from the information you gave us in Crown Corporations Committee that this company, in three years, after the long-term debt is gone, will be very, very lucrative — and we're talking in excess of \$100 million. I suspect it would be closer to 150 million or \$200 million.

Now, Mr. Minister, your government has made a decision to privatize this company. You're going to have some sort of share offer. We have no guarantees that those shares will be held inside of Saskatchewan. We have no guarantees that when this merged company, this new company, goes to pay a dividend to its shareholders, that those shareholders will be Saskatchewan citizens paying Saskatchewan taxes. In fact it's a very real possibility, as we've seen with Saskoil, where those dividends will be paid to people outside of Saskatchewan, and they will pay taxes outside of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Minister, I would think if you are a competent minister, and I presume that you may be or you could be — you're the Deputy Premier of Saskatchewan — that you would have done, you would have done some calculations as to the tax implications in terms of revenue that will accrue to this province through taxes once this company is privatized, and what the province can expect given the present trends of this company. And, Mr. Minister, last year this company made over \$60 million, paid royalties and taxes of over \$6 million. And I'm interested in knowing, once this company is privatized, what can the Saskatchewan taxpayers expect in terms of taxes that will be paid to the province of Saskatchewan to pay for important public services like health and education and social services. What can the people expect?

(1930)

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The benefits to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are as follows, or Mr. Chairman. Number one, the royalties whether it's privately or publicly held will be the same. Okay? Number two, there will be a return, initially, until the share offering at seven years or whenever is completed, from the sale of the asset. Number three, initially Saskatchewan, as a shareholder, owns 60 and a bit per cent of this new asset, of which Eldorado is coming in with a \$100 million earning from 1987. Right? Well 60 per cent of that comes to the Saskatchewan shareholder, Mr. Speaker, and that ain't chicken feed.

So our mathematics is probably something that you and I are going to, you know, come down on different sides on. We spent six hours going through this in Crown Corporations Committee and after six hours we agreed that we weren't going to agree. And I think we could spend at least that much time here again and I think likely

we'll end up agreeing that we're not going to agree.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, this is the way I see it. Here is a company that was developed here in Saskatchewan at a time when other companies weren't prepared to come in here and at a time when Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation was prepared to enter into joint ventures with other hard rock mining companies.

Here is a company that last year alone had net earnings of \$60 million at a time in this province when your government, for some reason, has great difficulty in collecting revenues; at a time, in this province, when you're cutting back on health and education and social services. Three years from now after the long-term debt is gone — because SMDC had done a tremendous job of eliminating its long-term debt in the last couple of years — this company stands to make profits of \$150 million, Mr. Minister. It's quite feasible. That's money that could stay in Saskatchewan to pay for health and education and all of the kinds of public services that the Saskatchewan people have determined are important to them.

Mr. Minister, you haven't been able to tell us here tonight what the implications are once this company is privatized in terms of the kinds of revenues that will accrue to the province of Saskatchewan. You, for some reason, don't have that information.

And, Mr. Minister, I ask you — this will be my last question to you tonight on this particular issue — I ask you: in three years, once Eldorado Nuclear and SMDC are privatized and are distributed throughout Canada in terms of shares, can the province of Saskatchewan expect to receive \$150 million?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Chairman, with all of the activities that we expect to go on around this new, diversified mining company headquartered in Saskatchewan — and I'm just as excited as the hon. member is about the potential successes of this organization — and whether it's privatized in three years or seven years . . . The outer limit, I think, is seven years; I'm sure the member knows that. I would hope that if this company is as successful as she indicates it is — and I'm hopeful that it will be — that through royalties, through taxation, through the spin-offs that will come from the enhanced activity in Saskatoon, in Saskatchewan, in the North, that the benefit will be every bit as great as it is today.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to change the question on to looking at some of the environmental implications of this deal for a moment.

The nuclear industry is one that's been massively subsidized by government for . . . ever since its beginnings in this country, and we're seeing another example of that in this deal, where the federal government is going to, in effect, pick up the huge costs associated with disposing of most of the radioactive waste from the Port Hope refinery operations.

But I want to focus on the Saskatchewan aspect of this.

Mr. Minister, it would be my contention that the real value of your newly merged company is inaccurate, because it fails to take account of the real cost of properly disposing of the tens of millions of tonnes of radioactive tailings from uranium mine operations that the new company will own, and also that it will plan to operate in the future.

And, Mr. Minister, I think that the real cost of disposing of these tailings will be, at least, some \$200 million to properly dispose of them. These tailings have not been properly disposed of in the past and they're not being properly disposed of now. And, Mr. Minister, these tailings piles in the North that Newco will, in effect, now own are like extremely slow atomic bombs. They emit radon gas constantly from these piles that travel long distances and will deposit radioactive fall-out on the vegetation below over very substantive distances. The nuclear regulatory commission in the United States, Mr. Minister, has estimated that U.S. tailings piles there are causing some 100 global deaths a year. And these tailings piles are going to be radioactive, Mr. Minister, for the next 76,000 years.

Now, my question to you, sir, is simply this: why have you not accounted for the massive cost of disposing of these radioactive tailings that SMDC and Eldorado have already created and that will be created in the new mining operations of the newly merged company?

Why have you not accounted for those in this deal, Mr. Minister? I can only conclude that the fact you haven't accounted for them means that you're going to continue to dispose of radioactive tailings in northern Saskatchewan in a highly improper way — that the disposals methods that you're using won't last for more than 50 to 100 years. These tailings will be radioactive for over 100,000 years. They have a half-life of 76,000 years; they're going to be a burden on all future generations in this province. My question to you is: why haven't you accounted for the real costs of disposing of those radioactive tailings in this deal tonight?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The merger, Mr. Chairman, has not created any waste. The waste that is there has been there prior to the merger. And the way the member was opening his remarks, I kind of sensed that he was suggesting that we should take responsibility for the waste at Port Hope and other sites in Ontario. And I'm having difficulty with taking the member's suggestion seriously there. That waste, in our agreement, is the responsibility of the federal government. Naturally the new company will be responsible for waste that is created under the new company.

As it relates to existing waste in the North, at Key Lake for instance, as I recall, it was the member for Saskatoon — I think it was called the Mitchell inquiry, as a matter of fact — that approved . . . I don't know which Mitchell it was. It could have been George Mitchell, it could have been John Mitchell, it could have been any number of Mitchells. But my guess is it was the member from Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, who approved the tailings operation at Key Lake — am I right? — approved that particular concept. It is the state of the art, Mr. Speaker, and I think that that particular member, the fellow that did

that particular report, is a very, very credible person — him along with all of the hordes of scientists and technical people that he had to advise him on that particular project. I think it's a very, very credible report.

As it relates, Mr. Speaker, to radon gas and the concerns that he raises about radon gas being let off to the atmosphere, it is done naturally. It is done naturally, Mr. Speaker, in many, many parts of Canada, in many, many parts of the world, where no uranium mines exist — basements down in the south-east corner of Saskatchewan, where I have never seen an operating uranium mine or anyone to tell me that there was even any uranium anywhere there, where they are regularly monitored for radon gas. Because it's a problem in many, many parts of the world, whether or not uranium is mined.

Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Minister, what you're telling this Assembly is that the people of Saskatchewan are going to pick up the costs of disposing of these radioactive wastes in northern Saskatchewan because Eldorado, SMDC, and now Newco will not be responsible for those costs. That's what you're telling the people of this province. Because the current disposal methods will never do, Mr. Minister.

But I want to ask you another question and that relates to the matter of foreign ownership. You're making provision, Mr. Minister, for 20 per cent of the newly merged company to be foreign owned. It's not hard to guess, Mr. Minister, who the new foreign owners are going to be. Many of them will be companies that have a stake in the nuclear weapons industry. I would hesitate to guess, Mr. Minister, that the new owners from the point of view of foreign investors will be KAPCO (Korea Electric Power Corporation), representing the South Korean military dictatorship, COGEMA, representing the French nuclear weapons industry; probably General Electric or Westinghouse or Union Carbide on behalf of the U.S. nuclear weapons industry will be interested in owning a little share of this new operation to secure their supplies, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, there's absolutely nothing to be said for this loss of Canadian control. Not only have you sold out the ability of people in Saskatchewan to control what happens to this company, but you have now sold out the ability of Canadian people to fully control the company by opening the door to foreign investment.

And I want to ask you a two-part question, Mr. Minister. The first is whether you are prepared to amend this Bill tonight to remove provision for foreign control because that will mean control by nuclear weapons companies outside this country. And second, Mr. Minister, I want to ask you whether you are prepared to modify this Bill to institute a provision that would disallow the new company from selling uranium to nuclear weapons states, which I personally think is a very, very high priority that your government ought to have, that no Canadian and no Saskatchewan uranium ought to go to a nuclear weapons state, Mr. Minister. So my second question to you is whether you're prepared to institute that provision in this Bill.

I want to say in closing, Mr. Minister, that one of my great disappointments about this Bill is that I think it'll make the

phase-out, privatization will make the phase-out of the industry, which I long to see, much more difficult. But given the realities of this Bill, are you at least prepared to disallow foreign ownership, and are you at least prepared, Mr. Minister, to ensure that no uranium from this newly merged company will be sold to a nuclear weapons state?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well the member's suggesting that for one foreign owner with a maximum allowable holding of 5 per cent, somehow can control this organization. And I simply don't accept that, Mr. Chairman; I simply don't accept that. He does not control the company, he cannot control the company. If all of foreign owners got together — assuming they got the aggregate sum allowable — it would only be 20 per cent, and far short of effective control, Mr. Speaker.

(1945)

As it relates to your concern about these mines being more difficult to close or phase out following privatization, all I can say is that the member from Buffalo Narrows and most people on this side of the House, and I'm sure even the member from Cumberland, don't share your concern, because, Mr. Chairman, we see this company as a very powerful force in the continued economic development of northern Saskatchewan, for northern Saskatchewan people, and for all Saskatchewan people and for Canadians, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Mitchell: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I heard my name . . .

An Hon. Member: — That was George Mitchell.

Mr. Mitchell: — My Uncle George's name mentioned tonight, so I thought I would intervene in this debate, Minister, by expressing some of the concerns I have and by asking you some questions.

I first became aware of SMDC in a detailed way during the work of the Key Lake board of inquiry that you mentioned. And that was an inquiry that took a total of 13 months. A good part of that, as at least one of your officials know, was spent in a community-by-community visit of northern Saskatchewan. And I and other members of the board visited every one of those centres and spent as much time in them as we could and gained what I think was a detailed knowledge of the social and economic conditions of northern Saskatchewan as it existed in 1981.

Now my information is a bit dated because of course I've had no opportunity to revisit all of those communities, although I have revisited some of them. And in my view, the problems have not gone away. I couldn't make a nice judgement as to whether the social problems are marginally better or marginally worse, but I dare to say that they continue to exist and they cry out for some type of resolution — I don't say "solution," but some sort of treatment, anyway. And in that connection, the governments of . . . The former government of Mr. Blakeney, and at least to some extent your government, have expressed concern about social conditions in northern Saskatchewan and have tried to address them,

at least to some extent.

The economic problems are linked closely to those social problems. In some of those communities, the effective unemployment rate is 100 per cent. In others, there would be some wage employment, but it remains a very large problem and a perplexing one — and I know you find it so — thinking about how you can bring any significant amount of employment to the people in those communities.

This corporation, Minister, has been a vital player in the social and economic development of northern Saskatchewan during the years that I speak of, during the late '70s and through into the 1980s. And due to the work of people like Mr. Lloyd, who's with you tonight, and others of his officials in SMDC, this company has made a considerable effort to address both the economic problems and the social problems in northern Saskatchewan; the economic problems, by creating a significant amount of employment in the North through the exploration program of the company and through direct employment by SMDC and by companies in which SMDC is a major player — I think particularly of the Key Lake Mining Corporation, but would add Cluff Mining and other companies in which it has an interest to that list.

What I'm . . . (inaudible interjection). . . Yes, the member from Wascana reminds me of the educational efforts, and this company has taken a very broad approach to its mandate in northern and it has extended to support for training, operator's training, for example, and other types of training for people in northern Saskatchewan.

My point is this: what happens next, Minister? What happens now? With SMDC as a Saskatchewan Crown corporation disappearing from the picture, what is the instrument of government policy or government social and economic policy for northern Saskatchewan to take the place of SMDC, given the . . . and acknowledging the role that that company has played in the past, who plays that role in the future? Surely we're not just sort of sitting back hoping that this new merged company, when it has been privatized, will do what we want done. Surely we're not just going to sit back and hope that they will adopt enlightened social and economic policies of the order that SMDC has adopted over the years. And what is to be our instrument of social and economic policy as regards northern Saskatchewan after SMDC disappears from the scene?

I'd like your comments on that, Minister.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Chairman, I agree totally with the member opposite as it relates to the concerns of maximizing the northern benefit from this northern asset, if you like, and education is part of it, employment is part of it — all of those things that both Eldorado and SMDC have done, not only as a matter of government policy but as a matter of conscience and good corporate citizens in the province . . . and Blind River, in the case of Eldorado and other places. I see nothing changing there, and in fact I hope for an enhancement as it relates to the merged company.

It's already been determined and not yet announced that there will be a vice-president in this new company, responsible for northern affairs — to take care of those very matters that you're talking about. And I'm quite sure, as well, that you know the person who will be appointed, but I can't tell you tonight because that will be a corporate announcement at some future time. But I have a high degree of confidence in the kind of management that will be in this company, and the conscience of the management to do exactly the kinds of things that you're talking about.

So I guess, in the broadest sense, that answers your question. In addition to that, there will be all of the obligations that now exist with the company separately on the surface leases, relative to employment and environmental matters and so on. So I hope — and we will be watching it — but I hope that things in this area are even enhanced over what they are today.

Mr. Mitchell: — I thank you for that answer, Minister, but I offer this view: I think it's going to take more than your hopes, our hopes in this Assembly. The problem is huge, as I've indicated and as you agree.

An Hon. Member: — And it's larger than this company can handle.

Mr. Mitchell: — And it's larger than this company can handle, but this company has been a main actor in addressing those problems and has set a standard which other companies are aware of and which to some extent they try and measure up to.

I think it's going to take more than your hopes, Minister. I think it's going to take a very, very aggressive policy on the part of your government to require a privatized Newco, or whatever we're calling this company — a privatized company — it's going to require a very aggressive effort on your part to require that company to pursue these policies over the years because they're expensive. SMDC found them to be very expensive. The Key Lake Mining Corporation has found them to be expensive. We on the inquiry, and we on this side of the House, regard those expenses as part of the cost of doing business in the uranium industry in northern Saskatchewan. And my point to you is that it's going to take a very aggressive effort on the part of your government to ensure that the new company measures up to those very important social obligations to northern Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, we have a high degree of confidence in a management team that will be put together, including the VP of northern affairs that will be responsible for the kinds of things that we're talking about now.

In addition, we will have a board of directors that will represent the very best from the business community from Saskatchewan and other parts of Canada, that know that the cost of doing business, or a part of the cost of doing business, is to take care of those corporate obligations as a matter of good citizenship that we're talking about tonight. And, in addition to that, you can be assured that this government will take an aggressive position as it

relates to those very issues by the new company.

Mr. Mitchell: — Well, that's what worries me, Mr. Minister. Let me give you an example though, just so that you can understand where I'm coming from on this issue. There was, in the Key Lake Mining Corporation surface lease, a monitoring committee set up. It was set up pursuant to recommendations made by the board of inquiry. It was a good idea. The monitoring committee was composed of people from northern Saskatchewan and their mandate was to ensure that employment targets for the training and employment of northern people were laid down and met.

And their mandate also included a monitoring of the activities of the Key Lake Mining Corporation to ensure that all of the business opportunities that spun off from this mine, that could be sited in northern Saskatchewan, were sited there. So this monitoring committee had a double-barrel function — employment and spin-off economic opportunities. And it had just barely got going when the events of April 1982 intervened.

An Hon. Member: — A light came on in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Mitchell: I don't know what happened in Saskatchewan, but we know the result of that event. And one of the things that happened in northern Saskatchewan is that the monitoring committee never met again, and that was a great pity. And if that is any indication at all of how your government will watch the situation as it develops in this new company, if the experience with the monitoring committee is any indication of how you're going to handle this situation, then I am frankly very, very worried. I think that northern Saskatchewan was much better off when it had the direct connection between the government and the Crown corporation, SMDC, and it could then count on SMDC being an instrument of the government's social and economic policies as regards northern Saskatchewan.

My question is quite unrelated to all that presentation, Minister. But I've got a chance to ask one more question and I'm going to ask it now. What is this about Bennett Jones? Someone mentioned the name. My colleague from Nutana mentioned the firm Bennett Jones. Is it that we don't have law firms in Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan law firms competent to handle this kind of a deal, that we have to import the services of Bennett Jones in order to handle your end of the legalities of this transaction?

Minister, I don't ask that question out of any self-interest because I never expected that you would refer the problem to me anyway. But I ask it out of interest to the profession, generally, in the province.

(2000)

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I was wondering why your firm wasn't contracted to do some of this work. The fact of the matter is, Bennett Jones does have an office in Saskatoon. You've maybe noticed the competition; I don't know. They were doing a small part of, as you might appreciate, the vast amount of legal work that has to be done in a deal like this. Specifically, they were doing the tax work.

Do we have that kind of talent in the province? I'm sure that we do. But with all of the things that we're doing in this arena, some of the major firms with that kind of expertise were starting to trip over themselves and that presented a bit of a problem. Did I get any phone calls from lawyers in Saskatchewan when they heard the name Bennett Jones? You bet. Thousands.

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to direct a few questions to the minister who is piloting this legislation through the House this evening. And before I do so, I must preface my remarks, Mr. Chairman — and members of the House, and to those members of the public who may be watching this debate — by emphasizing the fact that we are here considering a very massive piece of legislation with important financial and social and political ramifications to the province of Saskatchewan, and indeed Canada, without the benefit of any of the supporting material or documentation placed before us, so that we can have an opportunity to consider it and base our questions and our positions on that documentation.

Instead, the discussion of the events of the evening are essentially reduced to us asking some questions in the hope that the minister will be specific in response but, being satisfied — or so the minister would have us be satisfied — with the assurances that he is hopeful, the government is hopeful; in due course, some documents will be released, or may be released and so forth.

And to be quite frank with your, Mr. Chairman, I find this quite a way to run a railway — or putting it bluntly, quite a way to get rid of a very successful Crown corporation such as the SMDC was and is. And the minister opposite . . . I know the evening is getting on, and the session is getting on. I suppose we're all anxious to get out, but I think he makes a little bit too light of a very serious situation, at least serious from our point of view.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have in front of me here a copy of a newspaper story in *The Financial Post*, dated in February right after the announcement of the merger. The headline is, "Merger leaves Ottawa with Eldorado's debts." And some aspects of this story are a little bit discouraging, and frightening, I think, for anybody who is watching this deal and will watch it in the weeks and months ahead.

One part of the story says the following, quoting a federal official:

Both companies have too much debt but Eldorado in particular has a very large debt structure related to its capital expansion, a federal official said.

And this, I don't want to make too big an issue out of one quotation, but it is cited by me in support of the proposition, Mr. Chairman, that has been advanced by my colleagues here with respect to the merger of a successful Crown corporation on the one hand, SMDC, with a Crown corporation like Eldorado, which is plagued by a series of difficult and problematic decisions in the past few years. The company has been plagued with a long history of serious problems, and I think that the company's balance sheet — I'm now talking about the Eldorado company that we will be subsuming, or the

new corporation will be subsuming — the balance sheet, I think, clearly demonstrates that.

The arguments have been well articulated by other members of this side of the House, but I think the intent of what the federal government had up its sleeve is stated quite accurately by the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Mazankowski, who, speaking to the federal House of Commons committee considering the federal legislation, the mirror legislation, which is being introduced in the House of Commons, said the following. He said:

Really what we are doing here is the government is facilitating a corporation to help itself get out of the burden of debt and to align itself with another going concern.

And I think no understatement was ever made greater than that statement. It is true. Eldorado, with all of its merger and financial problems and other difficulties that it has experienced, has, in effect, found a willing, compliant partner in the PC government of this province of Saskatchewan in a merger with SMDC. And we have now the spectacle of the people of Saskatchewan, indirectly or directly as the shareholders of SMDC, merging with what really can only be described as a very bad commercial . . . I won't say very bad, but certainly a bad commercial operation, namely Eldorado, with no evidence tendered by the minister this evening, or for that matter at any time since the arrangement has been announced publicly, that we will stand to gain anything — we, being the people of the province of Saskatchewan — other than some mystical, mythical, hopeful view that somewhere down the road we're going to be the capital of a large uranium . . . the centre of a large uranium company.

So this statement, I think, in *The Financial Post*, Mr. Chairman, says it all. Eldorado has a very large debt structure related to its capital expansion. And we're taking on what is indeed a company which has not been a good example of management or operation in the uranium area.

Having made that point, Mr. Chairman, however, what I really want to discuss for a moment is the privatization aspect of this deal. As I understand it, of course, SMDC and Eldorado are going to merge, they're forming a new company. We'll call it Newco. There then is a debt issue by Newco which is distributed as between the Ottawa and the Regina governments. But ultimately the success of the deal or the theology of the deal, the ideology of the deal, is that Newco will divest itself of the shares and that there will be, over a seven-year timetable, a period of share offerings to individuals in the market-place. Now this *Financial Post* story, Mr. Chairman, says that:

Saskatchewan negotiators favoured a slower approach on the share issue than Ottawa, senior federal officials say.

And I'd like to stop at this point and hear what the minister's response is. I want the minister to tell me whether in fact that statement by this unnamed senior federal official, as reported in *The Financial Post*, is correct. Namely, in the negotiations with the federal

people, was it your government's position that with respect to the privatization, the ultimate sale of shares, that the regime and the schedule set out in the contract was not one favoured by this government, that you wanted a go-slower or a go-slower approach than the one that was ultimately agreed to? And if so, why was that the position taken by your government?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I don't know who the federal official is. I'm not sure that the quote as attributed is accurate, but I'm told that when the negotiations began, the federal people wanted a rigid timetable — those are my words; I don't know if they're entirely accurate — but a rigid timetable as it relates to divestiture through public offerings.

We took the view that to maximize the value, that other things other than timetable should be taken into account, like market acceptability and so on. And so the compromise was reached at seven years, that we should all . . . or both shareholders should be out of the company subject to at least one other condition, and that was being market shares. There may have been others, but market conditions were the key element. It was agreed that we ought not to be selling into a dog of a market.

Mr. Romanow: — Well I think, Mr. Chairman, that the minister in charge has really come to the very heart of the point that I'm aiming at, because his argument was — and I commend the provincial government if in fact this was the position that they took — his argument . . . He says the provincial government's argument was that they didn't want to be tied to a rigid timetable.

As I understand this deal, there is a very rigid timetable — a schedule which is, as the minister himself alluded to, not based on market conditions. The agreement, as I understand it, says simply, or at least the essence of the agreement says that:

The two governments have agreed to sell off 30 per cent of their shares in two years, 60 per cent in four years, and 100 per cent in seven years.

Now obviously this is a rigid schedule and obviously it's schedule which is not based on the market conditions. It's not subject to what the stock markets are doing, or what the question of uranium supply is doing, or what the question of prices are doing. And by sticking to this market, I ask the minister in charge, is it not correct that it could very well be that in the timetable set out by this agreement, we could be going to the market on the share offering at a time when in fact there is a considerable loss in the value of the shares and loss of income, therefore revenue, to the people of the province of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — My notes relative to that section of the letter of intent indicate that it has been agreed that CDIC (Canadian Deposit Insurance Corporation) and CMB will meet at least annually to review the progress of the disposition of their interest and at that time take a look at these factors: state of the capital market, state of the uranium industry, the requirements of Newco for capital to be met through treasury offerings, and the implications for the market price of Newco shares of any contemplated secondary offering. Mr. Chairman, that is specifically set

out in the letter of intent, that those considerations are taken into account. The seven-year compromise that I'm talking about, I think can be considered to be a guide-line, a desired end if you like, to the public offerings, but it could go, you know, faster earlier, or slower earlier and faster later, or whatever. But subject to those conditions only would a public offering be made.

Mr. Romanow: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I wonder then if the minister will clarify a little bit further. Is it correct to say, in the light of his last answer, that theoretically and practically it's possible that if the market conditions, any one or all of those, whatever the relevant factors are, dictate that in fact there will not be any share offering, that the Newco, the partners in the new operation, might say conceivably within the seven-year timetable, I'm sorry, it's just unfavourable to sell at low prices?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — We're probably stretching the limits of hypothesis here. Theoretically it's possible, but it is our intent to, subject to market conditions and these other things that we've talked about, for both shareholders to be totally out of the new company at the end of seven years. So theoretically it's possible; highly, highly unlikely.

Mr. Romanow: — I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if I can just ask the minister whether or not . . . Clearly there must have been some documentation, economic forecasts, based on future projections as to supply and demand and price for uranium. Did the government have an economic forecast in developing this seven-year privatization plan? Whose was it? And would the minister undertake tabling it.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Chairman, we are now entering our fourth year as it relates to the discussions that have gone on between the two shareholders, and so projections have been an ongoing thing. And they're even doing them to this very day. The seven years . . . It was agreed by both governments, based on the current data at that particular time in the discussion, seen to be reasonable by both shareholders, and it was agreed that seven years, subject to those conditions that I've already stated, was reasonable.

(2015)

Mr. Romanow: — Well you say it was reasonable, and I guess I have to take your words because it's quite clear that you're not going to table any documents. But it also seems very clear to me that your government was pressured by your PC counterparts in Ottawa to enter into this deal. Because what you indicated to me in response to my very first question was that it was the federal that insisted — I think that was the word you used; if not, that was clearly the message conveyed — to be tied to the seven-year schedule; that you wanted — remember the beginning of my question; I phrased it in the terms of *The Financial Post* article — the slower approach. You rephrased that to describe it in the sense of not slower, necessarily, but more market sensitive oriented, which I would have thought would have made sense.

But at the end of the day, you ended up taking the seven-year schedule — what I described, the rigid

schedule — of the federal government. It's true that there are the provisions of review, which you say theoretically are possible, that there will never be a share offering, but you warn me and the members of the public that that's not likely.

So the bottom line of all of this is that the PC government here in Regina capitulated at the end of the day to a rigid schedule, which schedule is imposed by them by Mr. Mulroney and the PC government in Ottawa. What's the public rationale for doing that? Contrary to all of your advice and your logic, as you've said to me just a few moments ago, the best thing would have been to do, the wiser thing would have been to do, is to have a privatization based on some sensitivity to the market-place. Why did you give in to the Mulroney administration?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The member is taking a little licence. We got exactly what we wanted, exactly what we wanted. If, at the end of seven years, there hasn't been one day when market conditions were right, there will not have been a share sold, or eight or 10 or whatever. What we have said is that we, the two shareholders, will be out 100 per cent, out of this new company at the end of seven years, subject to market conditions, subject to the condition of the industry, subject to capital requirements and so on.

Now we got what we wanted. The federal government moved from their rigid position of going out at a fixed percentage over a fixed timetable. They moved from that to what we now have with a reasonable target of seven years, subject to those conditions I've already talked about.

Mr. Romanow: — Well let's just clarify this for me if you will, Mr. Chairman. Is it correct or not — just a simple yes or no; if you want to elaborate to make it more clear for me, fair enough — is it correct, yes or no, that the two governments in this deal “have agreed to sell off 30 per cent of their shares in two years, 60 per cent in four years and 100 per cent in seven years, subject only to a review of that schedule”? Note the words — a review of that schedule based on some of the market forces and factors that you've described. Is that correct? Is that an agreement between the two actors in this merger and privatization?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: Yes.

Mr. Romanow: — And would the minister agree with me, if that is in fact what has been agreed to, that we have a schedule, and if we have a schedule, this is an obligation? It's an agreement, an obligation that you must fulfil and an obligation which your partner the federal government must fulfil.

That being the case, I want to ask you again: how is it that you capitulated to what clearly was the federal government desire and objective in this agreement as I've described it to you? Why did you do that?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, we came into this deal with a desire to privatize, offer for public participation the combined . . . Certainly that's what it was all about. We thought we could put together this

mining company that would have good market appeal and be a good engine for the development of the North. And we came into it fully with the desire to privatize the new company.

Now, you start talking about timetables. We capitulated nothing; we got everything we wanted out of this deal. We did in no way, shape, or form capitulate. Subject to these conditions, we intend to privatize. We intend to go to a public offering subject to a review of these conditions on at least an annual basis — at least an annual basis. And if we can move faster than 30 per cent, we'll move faster than 30 per cent.

If market conditions or industry conditions, or whatever, dictate that we should move slower, we'll move slower. If at the end of seven years we still have some left and the market conditions are lousy, obviously we will go beyond the seven years. But what I'm telling you, Mr. Chairman, is, we got exactly what we wanted as it relates to the timetable and the conditions for disposition of the assets.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Chairman, the minister doesn't have to convince me about this government's commitment to privatization. It is very, very committed to privatization. I know that all too well, and unfortunately the people of the province of Saskatchewan know that all too well.

You are so committed to privatization that you're prepared to enter into, in my judgement — and I'm exploring whether or not this is another example — into almost any arrangement, no matter what the cost, no matter who carries the burden, the financial burden or the risk, any kind of an arrangement of the sake of privatization.

Here you have a seven-year fixed deal which is not, by agreement, market sensitive or economic sensitive. It is subject to review, which you are trying to portray to me as having some form of ultimate veto power over the agreement, but nowhere is that seen in the documentation that we have. And if I'm proven wrong, send me a copy of the documentation which you have in order to demonstrate it.

You have tied your hands to a rigid seven-year deal of selling off this shareholding offering to the public regardless of what the value of the shares may be, regardless of what the market conditions might be at that time.

And, of course, that's a classic case of what's wrong with privatization and with the PCs in Regina. The public takes all the risk. The private people who end up buying the shares and getting the shareholders get all of the benefits. You say that if that seven-year timetable doesn't work out quite well, then we're not going offer it to the public and if we're not offering it to the public — namely in private shareholdings — who carries the responsibility during that seven-year operation? Of course, we do until there's such a time as deemed by your government, if you're in office that long, to do some share offering and some share selling to the public at large.

I don't think that that makes very much sense. You say

you got everything that you wanted out of this operation. I believe that you did, by your limited political objectives which are privatization at all costs. You've gotten that almost at any cost. There are no guarantees in the legislation, either federally or provincially, that I am aware of that talk about environmental protection; no arrangements that talk about the surface lease commitments; none of the protections with respect to worker obligations. Perhaps I could be pointed out by you or your officials where I'm wrong in this regard. You have none of those commitments. I tell you, I think that you got taken to the cleaners in this deal by the federal government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I think this is the one occasion where Mr. Mulroney has proven himself to be a good negotiator. He ran up against the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan and you and he got rid of a bad company, Eldorado Nuclear. He got that monkey off his back, all right. He's got himself into a seven-year timetable which seems to be more geared to political objectives than economic objectives. Of course, he sees a sucker when he sees one walking down the hall — that's your government and privatization. He's got you people on that hook. You're going to privatize come what may.

And what is left for the people of the province of Saskatchewan? We've got a \$322 million write-down of the debt, which we may recapture initially on the initial Newco redistribution. We've got a terrific amount of public investment by SMDC over the years of building up, of which there is not guarantee — if you go to the market in that share offering in that seven-year period and those share values are down, no guarantee we're going to recapture that. We have no guarantees of jobs for people of the province of Saskatchewan; no environmental considerations, as my colleague from Saskatoon Sutherland points out; no considerations with respect to the surface lease commitments, as my colleague from Saskatoon Fairview points out.

We are being asked to buy a pig in the poke, thanks to your dogmatic, Oliver Letwin, U.K.-styled, U.K.-driven privatization which has absolutely nothing to do with the history and the interests of the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Chairman, that's a bad deal for the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I'll just respond briefly.

An Hon. Member: — No, take your time.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I will take my time, but I'll still be brief. And, Mr. Chairman, it is a very, very highly regulated company. He talks about his . . . or industry I should say, and he talks about his concerns for the environment, his concerns for the surface leases. The obligation of the surface lease, whether it be with SMDC or Eldorado, follows both those organizations into the new company and that's the fact.

It's a very highly regulated industry. The government will

regulate the industry as it relates to the environment, as it relates to the surface leases and the enforcement of the conditions of the surface leases, Mr. Speaker. And yes, we think that we did negotiate a good deal — a very, very large company, headquartered here in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan is a 61.5 per cent shareholder in this very large company. We think that the benefits to Saskatchewan people will be significant, not only in terms of new jobs, new head office jobs, new research jobs, and so on, but as it relates to the development of the North, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Romanow: — Well, Mr. Chairman, this could go on all evening and perhaps all whole month, which I . . .

An Hon. Member: — You've got the last word. This is it. Say whatever you want; I'm not getting up again.

Mr. Romanow: — Well no, this is not a question . . . I know the minister is saying this half joking. It's not a question of adjourning tonight because I find this to be a very important and interesting subject, but I do want to ask, if I can, this question. The minister talked about jobs here, and this is the kind of rhetoric which of course the minister in charge of privatization, or more accurately the minister in charge of privatization, the hon. member from Qu'Appelle Wolseley — is that his constituency? — Indian Head-Wolseley talks about. You people are very glib and very quick to point out that there's job security, but of course we know differently.

When the privatization takes place, there's a certain merging that takes place. Then there's a certain submerging that takes place, to paraphrase an American politician, and then there's a beginning of the end of jobs and security.

You say that there are jobs. You have done, no doubt, studies to give us some indication as to what kind of volume or numbers of jobs, new jobs, we're looking at as a result of this enterprise. Tell us about that. How many new jobs do you expect as a result of this operation and where in Saskatchewan and in what fields?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I should point out first that in both companies, all operating and R & D (research and development) positions that exist today are secure tomorrow and in the foreseeable future. As it relates to new jobs — and this will be at Saskatoon, new jobs in Saskatoon — there will be about 30 research people in Saskatoon and there will be about 15 additional management people in Saskatoon; that's almost immediately following closing.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Chairman, you will note, sirs — I'm sure that you're taking careful notes of this discussion tonight — that I asked the minister to provide us, first of all, to answer whether there was a study about new jobs and how many new jobs. He gets up and refers to 30 new jobs. I presume that's in association with the head office being located in Saskatoon. But there has been no study tabled. I don't think this government's done a study as to the job implications or job possibilities for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

An Hon. Member: — Why don't you file them?

Mr. Romanow: And if, as my colleague from Quill Lakes says — I will rephrase the question — if there are studies and they're so beneficial both politically, if for no other reason, I don't see why this government and this minister wouldn't table those studies to rebut the kinds of criticisms which some people have raised. And I invite the hon. minister to do that if he feels that's the case.

His federal counterpart, Mr. Mazankowski, I think is a little more forthcoming, if I may say so with the greatest of respect to the Deputy Premier, than he is tonight in consideration of this Bill.

Mr. Mazankowski, before the House of Commons, says point blank:

For both companies, administration, exploration functions may be subject to rationalization as a result of the merger. If there is, however, any duplication of employee functions, selection of staff by the new company will give equal consideration to eligible employees of both Eldorado and SMDC.

(2030)

Now the clear implication of that statement suggests that one of the benefits of merger is, of course, rationalization. You're not going to have similar exploration functions; you're not going to have similar administrative functions; you may not even have some similar mining functions in some ways. You might be able to stop the duplication of it. It is in fact one of the arguments for privatization or for merging — you're going to be able to become more efficient. For the life of me I don't know how that spells any new jobs for the miners in the province of Saskatchewan.

I want to close off on this area, Mr. Chairman, by saying that in this task, the government . . . and this is a major area of concern, which quite frankly I'm amazed at not having received as much public consideration by the media and by, I suppose, even the politicians, all of us in this Chamber that it should. We have a major endeavour here of \$1.6 billion, roughly speaking — whatever the figures are — merger, and we have a major philosophical next step after the merger: we have a privatization.

There are some limitations as to the number of shares that can be sold outside the country, but there is no limitation of the number of shares which can flee outside the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Chairman, none. The nature, of course, of being able to trade shares on the open market-place is, of course, fuelled by the question of demand. And if there's a high demand and if there's the ability to pay, there is the danger — in fact, not the danger; I will guarantee it, Mr. Chairman, there will be the loss of control of this company out of Saskatchewan hands.

It can be located here as a head office; I don't diminish the 30 people or the big sign on some building somewhere in downtown Saskatoon, but the effective economic control, if the shareholding change is fleeing from the government and the taxpayers of the province of

Saskatchewan to private shareholders, the effective economic control, if not lost, is greatly diminished.

On top of that, we are merging with essentially a very bad company — Eldorado. I don't think that anything but discounting will take place as a result of the market taking a look at this merger and us assuming the obligations and the bad capital structure of Eldorado that The Financial Post talks about, on top of all of that. And we have no guarantees of job studies, and we have no studies, none whatsoever.

I tell you, Mr. Chairman, in almost any other jurisdiction in Canada, any government that came forward with this kind of legislation, with this kind of proposal, without any documentation, would be roasted and hounded out of office even if the deal was 101 per cent the right thing to do for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

It is scandalous, nothing short of scandalous, Mr. Chairman, to come to this Legislative Assembly, to come to this Legislative Assembly ill-prepared, not prepared to advance any documentation — ask us to base the words on hope and assurance — on a fundamental, major act of privatization, the consequences of which could very well be the loss of economic control, let alone the loss of that guy's job, if he's watching on TV, and affecting his security and his family, which has been the history of this. It is scandalous. In any other jurisdiction, if that kind of situation pertained, these people would be hounded out of office or at least forced to table the documentation.

Now I don't know what more we can say on this issue. I don't know what we can do. The government is obviously not going to table anything; they're not going to give us any answers; they're going to ask us to be assured. Well I want to tell the minister, as I take my place in this Committee of the Whole consideration, I'm not going to be assured by your assurances.

This is why it is important that the public understands that when we assume office in 1990, in 1991, or whenever you and your colleagues screw up the courage to call the election, we will want to look at every act of privatization or privatization carefully to determine whether or not it is being done in conformity with the best interests of the families and the working people and the individual taxpayers of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Not this closed door, behind the doors, closed negotiations, these kinds of discussions and no documentation to back the case by the government at all, simply the bland assurances which are being taken here. No new government could do anything else but, to do the responsible thing, to get some daylight, some sunshine in on those documents so that the members of the press gallery and the public could be apprised as to whether this is a good thing or a bad thing for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Chairman, I'll close on this point, but I do simply want to close by stressing very, very strongly, on the evidence which has been tabled here, you, sir, and the members of this House and the public of the province of

Saskatchewan have every reason to be very leery and sceptical of what is being done by two PC governments, one in Regina and one in Ottawa, motivated more by political determination than by economic and social best interests for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 4 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 5

Mr. Chairman: — House amendment to section 5, moved by the Deputy Premier:

Amend subsection 5(2) of the printed Bill by adding “to the purchaser corporation or to facilitate any sale, assignment, or transfer of all or any part of the assets that are situated in Saskatchewan to a purchaser corporation” after “Saskatchewan.”

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Chairman, what this does: clause 5, without the amendment, could be interpreted to last for ever. And what this amendment does is extinguishes the right of first refusal, but only in relation to this transaction. Once this transaction, the Newco, takes place, that no longer exists.

Clause 5 as amended agreed to.

Clause 6

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you, this is . . . perhaps the minister can give me a brief technical explanation of this power in section 6 which I understand gives the Cabinet the following power to:

direct SMDC or an assignee, whichever at the time of the direction holds securities . . . to sell or otherwise dispose of any or all of the securities of the purchaser corporation . . .

I'm reading this correctly, that Cabinet can direct any assignee at any time that they must sell or dispose of securities under any terms and conditions directed by the Cabinet to that group. What's the reason for this power?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — What that provides for is that SMDC will hold the shares, the 61.5 initially, of the new company. Cabinet may determine to assign those shares to CMB for instance, and that's what that provides for.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Clause 8

Mr. Goulet: — Yes, I would like to amend section 8, and:

Section 8 of the printed Bill is amended:

(a) by renumbering section 8 as subsection 8(1);

and

(b) by adding immediately after subsection 8(1) the following:

(2) The Minister shall, by regulation, develop and implement programs and projects of special assistance to northern Saskatchewan including:

(a) the establishment of a numerical or percentage employment objective of at least 50 per cent in order to maximize the number of people from local northern communities employed by SMDC or any other corporate entity established as a result of the transaction described in subsection 4(1); and

(b) the requirement that SMDC or the purchaser corporation table in the Legislative Assembly, annually, in accordance with The Tabling of Documents Act, employment statistics and information necessary to effectively reflect the degree of achievement of the employment objective.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Chairman, the only thing that I will point out here is that it's a bit of a redundancy by virtue of these conditions being included in the surface lease that exist at the various mining sites now, and so I would urge the members to defeat the motion.

Mr. Goulet: — I was surprised by the minister's comments in the sense that he says that it's redundant. That only place where we have a proper lease agreement in the recent history of SMDC was in relation to Key Lake.

And we well know that we need a law to back up statements in relation to jobs. We recognize in the privatization program that hundreds of jobs have already been lost throughout the province, and especially in northern Saskatchewan, the history where 80, 90 per cent of the employment rate exists, the importance of jobs.

One has to examine the problem of the minister's statement on redundancy when he doesn't even follow the law when it regards to Key Lake. The Key Lake figures that were given to me during committee did not meet up with the law that exists right now in the surface lease agreement. So the minister isn't even following the law in regards to the current lease agreement at Key Lake. And what we want to do in this case is make sure that the minister follows the law in other mining operations by including it within the Bill.

And that's the important reason why people cannot live from the promises of this government. We've lost many jobs in many areas already, and we simply cannot believe. The people cannot believe what you say in regards to promises for jobs, and that's why the inclusion of this aspect for jobs. We know the tremendous importance for jobs for all of us, whether we live in the South or the North, the importance that it has in not only putting food on the table but the fact that it provides a sense of stability for the family; that many, many family

breakdowns occur in times of high unemployment rates. Suicide rates go up 4 per cent for every 1 per cent level of unemployment rise, and when you go into areas where there's high unemployment, it's even of greater significance.

The minister has no compassion and no feeling for people in northern Saskatchewan. If he felt any real concern he would . . . and if he felt that the redundancy was there, then he should accept that redundancy. Just like that he should say, yes, this is a tremendous addition to the law because he knows that all SMDC situations are not covered by the same type of lease agreement that Key Lake is in.

(2045)

We have seen that also in Weyerhaeuser where you cannot even live up to the agreement. The clause says you will encourage people. All you've got to do is put one ad on the paper and you've accomplished your legal requirements to that particular agreement. And there are many other new agreements recently that are that way. The only ones that were good were the ones that put the specific objectives right down on the surface lease. But even those ones you don't follow.

So, Mr. Minister, and especially, you know, I refer to the people in northern Saskatchewan, this type of amendment is a must. We can't live on the promises of this government. We have to be able to say, yes, we agree with you people and workers in northern Saskatchewan; yes, we agree that the opportunity has to be there for you. You cannot just say, yes, it's redundant. You have to be able to follow it up with concrete action, and that's what this amendment does. This amendment — and the minister said he agrees with the goal, but you have to agree with it in law. You have to back it up in law because your record is the worst record in regards to jobs that Saskatchewan has ever seen.

And so with that, Mr. Chairperson, I will get my fellow member from Athabasca to also say a few words in regards to this amendment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I rise today to speak on this House amendment that my colleague from Cumberland has presented here, and I might add, it's a very important amendment, an amendment that provides for the workers in Saskatchewan — especially who are working in SMDC or controlled through SMDC — security in the job place. Not only security in the job place, but, Mr. Chairman, it provides security for individuals and their families who for many, many generations have never had any security.

And for the first time underneath the surface lease agreement that was signed, Northerners now have an opportunity to compete on a fair basis with citizens all over this province and all over Canada who come to work at our mines in northern Saskatchewan.

And I think it's not unfair to ask for a 50 per cent security in those jobs. And this amendment, what it does is

provide that when the amalgamation takes place between SMDC and Eldorado Nuclear that the surface lease agreement is in place and will also be implemented on any new developments that take place in northern Saskatchewan. And I think, Mr. Minister, that you indicate that this amendment is redundant; I say it's an important amendment and that you should take a serious look at that.

My colleague from Saskatoon Fairview indicated that this merger is a major economic and social development in northern Saskatchewan and in Saskatchewan as a whole, and I want to say to you, Mr. Minister, that it is. But as my colleague from Cumberland just indicated, can we trust the government on that side to honour the jobs that we have?

Let's just take a look at the minister of privatization, what he said in the House today. And he was talking about Chaplin, and he indicated that once it was privatized, the government no longer had any control over the jobs that were there. So if the private industry wanted to get rid of jobs, the government had no say in it. And that's what's going to happen in Saskatchewan with SMDC.

And you talk about market conditions dictating how soon you are going to sell the shares. You're going to sell 20 per cent in the first two years, and I just say that if you take a look at what has taken place, and when the Leader of the Opposition indicated that SMDC or the province of Saskatchewan had been taken to the cleaners, he was right. Saskatchewan has really been taken to the cleaners.

What we are doing now, we are taking a strong, healthy company, as SMDC, and we're bringing in a weak sister like Eldorado Nuclear from the federal government, and what is going to happen? We're going to amalgamate all the assets of the strong and healthy company, as SMDC, and you're going to offer it to the private sector. And let me tell you, the private sector is going to gobble this up very fast. And once it's in the private sector's hands then we have no more control; we lose that control. And what are they getting? The amalgamation putting the two, Eldorado Nuclear and SMDC, together is going to take all the assets, and those assets are tremendous. Those assets are just so great compared to the assets that you are going to get from Eldorado Nuclear.

You have the Cigar Lake which is worth \$10 billion Canadian. That is going to go into the amalgamation and that's going to be privatized. You have the biggest operating mine in the world in Key Lake. That is going to go into the amalgamation and that is going to be privatized. And you just take a look at all the other holdings. We're going to lose control of the surface lease; we're going to lose control of our assets. And we have many assets up in northern Saskatchewan. We have gold, silver, graphite, limestone. We're going to lose control of all those, plus we have another one in platinum and that may be a sleeper.

But SMDC is a major shareholder in all of these minerals and we are going to turn that over to a corporation that is going to be privatized. And I tell you it is going to be privatized very fast, and we are going to be the big losers.

So I ask you, Mr. Minister, to look at this and take this serious — this House amendment proposed by my colleague from Cumberland. And I think it's fair to say that it should be there and it's the only way that we're going to have protection for the . . . And we're only talking about 15 per cent of the employees in the industry — 15 per cent go to northerners, but 85 per cent go to southern Saskatchewan.

In Saskatoon and all the industries such as the salt mine at Unity, those people are going to be the big losers. They all go into this here amalgamation and they will all be privatized. And I say that in Saskatoon, with the head offices, when you amalgamate those head offices and you make one big one, there are going to be a lot of individuals who are going to be losing their jobs.

So I say to you, Mr. Minister, and I say to the individuals who are working in the head offices up in Saskatoon that they better be careful when you create this new head office because there's going to be some job losses to the citizens of Saskatchewan and to that industry up in Saskatoon.

And with that, Mr. Minister, I just ask you to seriously consider the amendment that my colleague has proposed, and I'll just leave it at that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Chairman: — Order.

(2106)

Amendment negatived on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 25

Romanow	Atkinson
Prebble	Anguish
Rolfes	Goulet
Shillington	Hagel
Tchorzewski	Pringle
Koskie	Lyons
Thompson	Calvert
Brockelbank	Lautermilch
Mitchell	Trew
Upshall	Smart
Simard	Van Mulligen
Kowalsky	Koenker
Solomon	

Nays — 29

Duncan	Meiklejohn
McLeod	Pickering
Andrew	Martin
Berntson	Toth
Lane	Johnson
Taylor	McLaren
Smith	Hopfner
Swan	Petersen
Muirhead	Swenson
Maxwell	Martens
Hodgins	Gleim

Gerich
Hepworth
Hardy
Klein

Neudorf
Kopelchuk
Britton

little by the land titles office, but I happen to know that it's used a great deal by law offices where clients come to . . . and where a lot of the transactions are handled by legal advisers. This is not going to help them at all, Mr. Minister.

Clause 8 agreed to.

Clauses 9 and 10 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill as amended.

Bill No. 64 — An Act to amend The Tax Enforcement Act

Clause 1

Mr. Chairman: — Would the minister introduce his officials.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Mr. Chairman, on my left is Walt Manley for the Department of Rural Development; on my right is Rita Vogeli of the Department of Justice.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Just to inform you, Mr. Chairman, and the minister, that we have not got any difficulty with this Bill. I will ask a question on clause 5 and on clause 13, and when we get to them, I will then ask the questions of the minister.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 4 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 5

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I note in this clause 5, that there is a striking out of the need to print in the *Saskatchewan Gazette*, or publish in the *Saskatchewan Gazette*. I wonder, Mr. Minister, what the reason for that is. If the only requirement for . . . (inaudible) . . . printing of notices is in the weekly newspaper, in the particular community where this event takes place, there are many other people throughout the province who need this kind of information, and use it from time to time, who will not have access to that.

It seems to me that the gazette was one in which, for example, most legal offices or law offices, and not all of them, will subscribe to, and therefore have readily accessible information. Now I may be wrong in this, and if I am I would appreciate the explanation. But I am wondering whether you're zeal for trying to reduce the amount of notification that has to be given by eliminating the gazette is not going to cause more problems than you're trying to solve.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Well, Mr. Chairman, my officials say that one reason it was done was that, as the member said, it's posted in the local weekly or daily newspaper. The second part is that, if I understand from the land titles office, it's used very little, if any, and it was just a way of streamlining the way that it's been done. So really that's the two reasons it was done.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Minister, it may be used very

In fact, I'm deeply concerned that it's going to go the other way. And a law firm handling an affair for a client in Swift Current, dealing with property in Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan, very unlikely is going to be getting the Hudson Bay *Post-Review*. And I just really wonder, Mr. Minister, whether you have seriously considered this from the point of view of the service that is necessary, and the information that is required, by the people who have to process some of these transactions.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Well my officials say that one of the reasons is that, first of all, those who would be affected by any changes are properly notified anyway, if there is any transfer of land. And the other part, is that it's just a way of streamlining the system. It's used very little even by others and those who are transferring land and those who are already notified.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — My final comment, Mr. Minister: I still want to put on record my reservations about this elimination. The *Saskatchewan Gazette* is published for a particular purpose. It serves that purpose well. I think your so-called desire for streamlining is ill-placed in this case. I think that you're going to find that there are going to be difficulties created by it. I wish you would consider changing it. I know you don't . . . you have a House amendment, but it has nothing to do with this one. And I just want to put on the record our reservations that yours or your officials' desire to streamline for the sake of saying you streamlined something in the legislation is not an adequate explanation for what I suggest to you is going to cause some difficulties to the point where you may have to, or somebody else may have to, reconsider this provision at another time.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Mr. Chairman, the other reason — and I know the member is probably aware of it — is that the municipalities can, if they want, put it in the *Gazette*. They don't really have to. It's a cost saving to the municipality so it would be an option they still have. They can still gazette it if they so desire.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, in order to assist you and the committee, may I suggest that we do it by page. When we get to page 4, I will ask questions on clause 13, and then we can do it by page.

Mr. Chairman: I have two House amendments that I have to deal with as I go through the Bill, so . . .

Clause 6 agreed to.

(2115)

Clause 7

Mr. Chairman: — House amendment to clause 7, moved by the Minister of Rural Development:

Amend section 7 of the printed Bill by striking out “November 15” where it appears in subsection 10(3) as being enacted therein and substituting “September 1”.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I’m sorry, Mr. Chairman. I would like the minister to explain that, because as I look through the explanatory notes, there seemed to be quite a definitive statement of why this date that’s in the Bill now is such an important date; either there’s a typographical error or there must be a reason. Just for the record I would like the minister to point out what that is.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Mr. Chairman, in answer to the member’s question, the city of Regina requested it because they do their tax notice on September 1 and they needed those extra days to get it through. So that’s one of the reasons it was done that way.

Clause 7 as amended agreed to.

Page 3 agreed to.

Page 4

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I have a question on clause 13. I’m not arguing with it, but I just . . . I want to point out that here is another example of the kind of numbers we’re dealing with when this government decides to increase fees or penalties or registrations or whatever. We have here an increase of 600 per cent, and it seems to me that that is a fairly astronomical increase in numbers. I know that the argument is going to be, well it hasn’t been increased for a long time, but surely, Mr. Minister, one way to do that might have been to phase it in over time.

I’m not saying that because I want to encourage people who don’t keep up with their taxes to not keep up with them, but I just think it’s important to point out, because it is so common with the government opposite, that this is an increase of 600 per cent.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Mr. Chairman, I believe that was drafted about 40 years ago or so, and that was at \$25, the fees at that time, and I think the fees are more appropriate now to what it is.

Page 4 agreed to.

Clause 16

Mr. Chairman: — House amendment, moved by the Minister of Rural Development, to amend section 16 of the printed Bill. Will you take the amendment as read?

Clause 16 as amended agreed to.

Pages 5 to 14 inclusive agreed to.

Forms after section 22 to section 23 agreed to.

Clause 23 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill as amended.

Bill No. 83 — An Act respecting the Operation of All Terrain Vehicles

Clause 1

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Chairman, I’d like to introduce my officials. Seated right beside me is Bill McLaren, chairman of the Highway Traffic Board; behind me are Mr. Dave Stewart and Dave Abbey.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My comments will be very brief on this Bill, Mr. Minister.

I congratulate you on bringing this Bill in. We are dealing in this serious matter with carnage and even death of many young people in Saskatchewan, and this Bill does go some considerable distance in, hopefully, stemming that problem; so I congratulate you for that.

If I have a major complaint with it, it’s that you didn’t bring the Bill in two years ago when it was first a problem; however, leaving that aside, I have literally seen no major problems. There’s some wording I might quibble a bit. If I were wording the legislation, I might have worded it a little different, but essentially I’m in favour of the Bill, and as such we will be supporting the Bill.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Chairman, I would suggest, with leave of the Assembly, that we go page by page on this Bill.

Leave granted.

Pages 4 to 15 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 37 agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Chairman, just before reporting the Bill I would like to thank the hon. member and the entire opposition for their co-operativeness in making haste to pass this legislation through the Assembly.

I know that many groups in Saskatchewan — many people in Saskatchewan — have been waiting for this Bill, and I do trust that in the interests of safety that all owners and operators of all-terrain vehicles will respect the legalities of this Bill and we shall have a much safer environment for the youth and adults who use all-terrain vehicles.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 93 — An Act to amend The Ambulance Act

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have Jim Simmons with me, who is the head of the ambulance services division.

Clause 1

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Minister, I just want to advise you that we have contacted some of the chairs of the boards of various ambulance boards across Saskatchewan, and they did not know about the Act, or if they knew something, they knew about the Act, they knew something was coming, but they weren't quite sure what was coming.

And, Mr. Minister, I'd like you to explain to the House tonight why you believe it's so important to amend The Ambulance Act to such an extent that boards across this province can no longer refuse to renew contracts, because if they do, Mr. Minister, they have to go through a mediation process, an arbitration process, and they may well end up before a Court of Queen's Bench judge. So can you explain to me why you believe it's necessary to have this legislation, because we believe that it's taking away rights from the boards of various ambulance jurisdictions across Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Well I'd be glad to explain it, just to put this into the scenario. The Ambulance Act, 1986, has not been proclaimed. These are amendments to an Act which has not been proclaimed. When that Act was passed in '86, there was a commitment at the time, throughout the process of developing that Ambulance Act, and afterward there was a commitment for consultation across the piece and the whole of that industry.

And the ambulance advisory committee, which is made up of representation from boards, from the SMA (Saskatchewan Medical Association), from the SHA (Saskatchewan Health-Care Association), from the ambulance operators, the SRNA (Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association). All of those have representation on the ambulance advisory committee.

And it's that committee that has gone through an extensive process of development of, first of all, the Act in 1986, and then these amendments which were deemed by the committee to be necessary, and to be in the best interests of that industry prior to proclamation of the Act. And so that's what these amendments are now about.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, yes, I understand that you've gone through some sort of consultation process. But, Mr. Minister, you still haven't explained to me why you believe it's necessary to amend The ambulance Act to such an extent that ambulance boards can no longer refuse to renew a contract. And if they do refuse to renew a contract, they have to go through a process, if there is a dispute, where they have to send the dispute to a mediator, and if that's not satisfactory, then to an arbitrator and then to a Court of Queen's Bench judge. Now I'm not quite clear what problem there was with the ambulance industry that has led you to change the legislation so that you now take away rights from the boards that they used to have.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — I don't believe boards see this as a taking away of their rights, as the member would suggest it. First of all, you speak of mediation/arbitration and the potential for going to court, and so on. I think, in effect, what's happening here is that with the process of

mediation, which can be a fairly simple process and really not a very costly process for both parties if there is some type of dispute, what we have to recognize here, I think, is — and I'm sure you do recognize that — but what we must recognize that we have ambulance operators around the province who are under contract to boards and who have tremendous investment. And they have an investment and that investment is recognized by this legislation, basically, that they have this investment and that obviously boards aren't tied to the operator if there's some cause for them to change the agreement that they have. And that's what's being recognized in the Act. And that's, like I say, that has gone through a whole series of a consultative process with the ambulance advisory committee.

So it's not something that . . . I think in your earliest statements you mentioned that there were some board chairpersons out there around the province who, in your words I think, were surprised or whatever. I'm surprised to hear that because I know that they have representation on the ambulance advisory committee, and I know that they do a . . . that the ambulance advisory committee represents the whole spectrum of all of those bodies in health care that would have a specific interest in this pre-hospital care area.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, the legislation says that a board shall not unreasonably refuse to renew a contract. Now, Mr. Minister, I'm asking you: what was it that was happening in the ambulance industry that caused you to introduce this legislation? What problem did the ambulance industry have with the previous legislation that has caused you to introduce legislation that takes away rights from boards across this province, and really in essence, Mr. Minister, no longer allows them to refuse to renew a contract?

(2130)

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Well, the only thing is in 1986 when the Act was passed, the intention we had was to put these provisions in regulation. And through that consultative process the ambulance industry — through the operators of ambulances, the boards, and so on — they came to the agreement that said, look, put that process in mediation, the kind of contractual process, put that into legislation rather than in regulation. And that's the change that's been made in these amendments.

And as far as what's happening in the . . . nothing specifically in the industry, but remember that the Act, the very specific Ambulance Act did not exist before. I mean, we are operating without that Act now. That Act was done and everybody agrees with it, and it was not proclaimed. And everybody has a tremendous expectation out there in this whole sector for that Act to be proclaimed. And it's two years basically, or almost two years now, so it was time to come to an agreement on all of this and finally come with amendments before proclamation.

And there's nothing specific, you know, out there in the industry that says this must take place. But it was our intention for the mediation-arbitration process, that process which you refer to, to be in regulation rather than in legislation, but we've now chosen, through

consultation, to make it into legislation.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, it's my understanding that this is close to the original proposal of the ambulance industry. I understand, Mr. Minister, that the shakedown has already occurred in the ambulance industry, and we now have a fairly stable situation in regards to boards of directors or ambulance boards across the province and the ambulance industry.

So, Mr. Minister, you have said that you believe that that's taken place, that the shakedown has occurred and things have stabilized, and I'm wondering what alternatives did you pursue besides your decision to introduce this legislation? And perhaps, Mr. Minister, instead of having a three-year term, perhaps you could have gone to a five-year term and that could have taken care of ambulance operators' concerns that they are spending a great deal of money on capital equipment and that sort of thing, and that that could have been amortized over a longer period of time, and therefore, Mr. Minister, we wouldn't have needed this legislation.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — No, I don't agree because all sides of the boards, everyone believed that the legislation was needed and the amendments are needed for the legislation. I mean, everybody in the industry believes that.

As far as whether or not we would, you know, in terms of alternatives we might have pursued in terms of should it be three years, we've said it shall be not less than three years. But the option of five years, as you suggest, or five years or more, is still available to boards and to operators. That's still available — more than three years is still available to them.

And I frankly believe that some of those will take place. But what we've done is a minimum of three years, and what it's basically done is recognize the investment of the operators out there, and as you say, and I believe that you've characterized it pretty well in the sense that there's a pretty stable industry out there, and that's happened over a period of a few years now. And I think that that's probably right.

But the legislation is there and it's recognition of the tremendous investment of these operators. And I know that you'll acknowledge, everyone here will acknowledge, that there is a significant investment by operators, and a continuing investment as they upgrade their equipment to maintain the standards that are required and the increasingly more stringent standards that are required.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well my opinion, Mr. Minister, if you read the legislation, what this can do, in essence, is lock in minimal service. That's what it can do.

An Hon. Member: — No.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well I say that it can do that, Mr. Minister, because the legislation is very clear — an ambulance board cannot unreasonably refuse to renew a contract. They can't unreasonably refuse to do that.

Mr. Minister, I'm curious to know why a government that seems to be committed to a Conservative ideology, a privatization ideology, free market ideology, free enterprise, Mr. Minister, why would you feel the need to have such a massive intervention by the provincial government, by a Conservative government, into an industry that has stabilized over the last few years and we don't really see a number of problems? Why the massive government intervention?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Well first of all, I don't believe it's massive intervention; and secondly, what this legislation, the whole process of this legislation and the clauses and the provisions of this legislation were requested by both operators and boards across Saskatchewan, and that's the case.

And so when the ambulance advisory committee, made up of representation of all of those that I've outlined, says this is the kind of legislation we want — going back to the original legislation and then now these amendments which will finalize this legislation, which frankly, and I know that if you look at all of it, and I believe you have, that The Ambulance Act, when proclaimed with these amendments, will be without question the best — the best and the most forward looking in the country.

Now in the terms of the kinds of standards and so on that you referred to earlier, there is no provision here which will, as you say, lock in minimums, because what we have here is obviously the provincial government, through the Department of Health, has the right and the responsibility, frankly, of setting standards. And those standards will change as time goes on and the kind of standards that are required. People will maintain their licence as long as they live up to those standards, but they certainly will not if they don't live up to those standards as they're set by the department in a responsible manner over time.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, once again I have to reiterate, with this legislation all an ambulance operator has to do is live up to the bare minimum and an ambulance board can not refuse to renew the contract. Mr. Minister, where is the incentive in this legislation for ambulance boards to improve the quality and quantity of their service? I'm sorry, not ambulance boards but ambulance operators. Where is the incentive for the ambulance operators to improve the quality and quantity of their service? Where is it in this legislation, because my interpretation of the legislation is, live up to the bare minimum, don't do much beyond the bare minimum, and an ambulance board can't refuse to renew my contract.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — No, I couldn't disagree with you more. I couldn't disagree with you more, the way in which you portray this legislation. You have said just a while ago that the ambulance industry is pretty stable out there — that we have some excellent operators. I believe I heard you say — we have good operators around the province, and so on. We have ambulance boards who take their responsibility seriously and there's no question that that's the case, and there's no question, as well, that they are, on a continuing basis, on a continuing basis, upgrading their standards to the latest types of equipment,

the latest kind of units and all the rest of that stuff that has continued and will continue in the province, and that's to the credit of both the boards and the operators in the province.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, just so we're clear, just so we're clear, up until now ambulance boards and ambulance operators have not had this legislation. Ambulance operators have realized that a board could refuse to renew a contract. Such is contract law in this country and in this province. We now have a piece of legislation, Mr. Minister, that could change that situation, or will change that situation significantly.

All I'm saying, Mr. Minister — and I'm not saying that ambulance operators are going to do this, I'm simply saying to you that it is possible that all an ambulance operator has to do is meet the bare minimum, meet the bare minimum, and an ambulance board cannot refuse to renew the contract. An ambulance board cannot decide to go and contract that service with some other ambulance operator. That's what I'm saying.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — And I disagree with you. First of all, let's not suggest, because the minimums that you talk about, the bare minimum, and portray it as though they're just very, very low minimums here — the minimums as set by the . . . The standards for ambulance services in this province are very high, there's no question about that, and by comparison and by using anyone's yardstick. That's number one.

And secondly, I believe that these ambulance operators are more likely, more likely to . . . There is more incentive for them to upgrade their equipment, their units, all of their operation, when they have this stability that's offered by this legislation, stability which goes beyond a single year contract. So I believe that that stability in itself will be incentive for them to upgrade and for them, you know, to carry on upgrading their units because they have some planning horizons which are beyond one year.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, this is my . . . I just want to outline it this way: if an ambulance board decides that they want to get an emergency medical technician instead of having a technician, and a technician is the minimum standard, and if that ambulance operator doesn't want to provide that emergency medical technician, Mr. Minister, that's it. The board can't force the ambulance operator to provide the better service because the board's not in the position to refuse to renew the contract because they can't unreasonably refuse to renew contracts if that ambulance operator is meeting the minimum standards.

So I'm simply arguing, Mr. Minister, that it's possible that your legislation that you're introducing here tonight will lead to mediocrity in the industry. It is not going to increase the standards of the industry because you have locked ambulance boards into contracts with operators, and all they have to do is meet the minimum standards.

Now, Mr. Minister, this legislation prevents the boards from setting up their own services or going to some other ambulance operator who may be able to provide a better service, as long as that ambulance operator is meeting

minimum standards. And all I'm saying, Mr. Minister, is that I'm very surprised that a government that believes in the free-market system, a government that believes in free enterprise would introduce a piece of legislation which would be such a massive intervention in the system. I find that a contradiction, Mr. Minister, and all I'm saying is that I'm very surprised.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 18 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Mr. Chairman: I would like to thank the minister then.

Bill No. 75 — An Act to amend the Income Tax Act

Mr. Chairman: — I would ask the minister to introduce his officials.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me is Art Wakabayashi, deputy minister of Finance; behind me — immediately behind me is John Wright, executive director, taxation, economic policy division; beside Mr. Wright, Mr. Kirk McGregor, associate director of taxation policy; and Mr. Randy Simpson, tax analyst, taxation and economic policy division.

Clause 1

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to make a couple of comments in respect to this Bill. And I want at the outset to say that it provides, essentially, two policy amendments as is indicated by the notes provided by the minister. The proposed amendment prescribes an increase to the Saskatchewan flat tax rate from 1.5 per cent to 2 per cent, or a 33 and a third per cent increase in net income tax. And section 7(1) of the proposed amendment provides for extension of a two-year corporate tax holiday for new small business through to April 1, 1990.

I want at the outset to indicate to the minister and to the House that we are not opposing the proposed amendment that provides an extension of a two-year corporate tax holiday to new small businesses, but what we are objecting to, Mr. Minister, is the oppressive tax that you have levied against the people of Saskatchewan.

We've been through this in the Department of Finance estimates, and I don't think that we have to take a long time to reiterate the massiveness of the tax increase on the ordinary Saskatchewan citizens.

And I want to say that we oppose the amendments in respect to the flat tax because it represents a thirty-three and one-third per cent increase. And as I have indicated, that this tax alone, besides the regular income tax we pay, on a 25,000 net income, people of Saskatchewan are now paying \$500.

I have talked to teachers and other people in the labour force, in the professions, and they have indicated that while their income has increased, because of the excessive taxes that their net take-home pay has been

reduced over two years ago. We now have here in Saskatchewan, and I don't think the minister can deny, the second highest personal income tax in the country at a level of \$35,000 gross income, and second only to Quebec.

And the minister very conveniently — because we used that figure last time that was included in his budget — excluded it this year, and he raised it up to 40,000 rather than use the 35,000. So our suspicions is that at 35,000, that we may well be the highest personal income tax in all of the nation. Last year on the budget alone, in the figures provided by the Minister of Finance on personal income tax, we were second only to Quebec.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan are concerned; they're concerned about the priorities of this government and its taxation policies. And for every \$1 that we pay in income tax, corporations pay a miserable 16 cents. Yet this government has indicated in this budget that it has intentions of decreasing the corporate income tax by 2 per cent, from 17 to 15 per cent. The reason given by the minister is that we have to create a level playing-field for the corporations. You know, the people of Saskatchewan are asking, we'd like to have a level playing-field as well with respect to the rest of Canada.

You know, Mr. Minister, the irony of it all is that this government proposed major tax cuts to the people of this province. You indicated that there would be a cut, net cut in income tax by 10 per cent across the board, and here in the last — in the 1985-86 budget, and subsequently in the '87-88 and again this year, you've imposed a massive 2 per cent surtax, or flat tax — a 200 per cent increase on the flat tax rate.

You indicated and you promised the people of Saskatchewan that you would reduce the E & H tax. You reneged on that promise, Mr. Minister. You indicated that in the first term of office that the E & H tax would be reduced. And I heard the Premier shortly after being elected, and he said: no problem, the E & H tax would go. And what has the people of Saskatchewan been faced with? They've been faced with a 40 per cent increase in the E & H tax.

The income tax, the E & H tax, those are the taxes that hit the average income person in Saskatchewan. And if we take a look at the scheme of taxation in this province and we look at from '83-84 to '88-89, extra revenue from corporate income tax and corporate capital tax add up to an additional \$63 million. But the extra revenue that is garnered by the personal income tax and the sales tax is an additional \$402 million on the backs of ordinary Saskatchewan people. And what is more, this government, your government, excluded from the tax break to the people of this province some \$80 million eliminated in the property improvement grant.

Yes, you indicated that you would also eliminate the fuel tax, and this has been reimposed, and I went through it this afternoon where you admitted yourself that some \$13 million would be confiscated from the people of Saskatchewan. You estimated \$39; you intend to pay out only \$26 million. Moreover, what you have done is taken

that money on the fuel tax and you have used it for a year, gained interest on it, interest-free money. And what you have racked up in the administration, the most inefficient administration of any program in the history of this province, somewhere around \$ million just to administer that program and to send out your publicity to the people of this province.

You know, Mr. Chairman, this government seeks to increase the property improvement tax, and at the same time in this very budget it indicates a corporate income tax reduction. And more than that, it indicates that there will be a resource royalty reduction. That is estimated at \$20 million handed over to the resource industry.

And I want to say, the thing that is most scandalous of all is while this government stands forward and taxes ordinary Saskatchewan people with excessive personal income tax, the minister, the other night in the estimates of Finance, indicates, yes, of course, we're hoarding money. He called it a stabilization fund. And there he has packed away for future use by the Tory party several hundreds of millions of dollars tucked away into a Tory slush fund. And at the same time he stands up here and he is taxing ordinary people again on the flat tax.

An Hon. Member: — If he doesn't find it there, he just goes to Dome.

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, people of Saskatchewan are fair. The people were prepared and are prepared to pay more taxes for maintaining services, improving programs, but they're not getting the value out of the dollar.

There's underfunding, Mr. Minister, of education, and I talked about it this afternoon. For the first time there is quota on students that can enter the University of Saskatchewan, the first time that the doors of higher learning have been closed by your underfunding.

We have seen the massive cuts in health care where the callousness of this government would deny our children a proper dental program. We have seen the callousness of a government that would destroy the best drug program in Saskatchewan and deny our senior citizens needed drugs.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, on top of all of this the people of Saskatchewan see a increase in taxation on them, a decrease on the corporations, cut in services, and an ever increasing burden of debt imposed upon them — \$11.7 billion, \$3.9 billion in the Consolidated Fund alone. Debt, deficits, higher taxes, cut in programs, and sell off of our assets, the like of which we have never seen. And we asked in the Committee of Finance, the minister, whether he could advise what amounts have accumulated to the government of this province in the sale off of assets of this province — the highway equipment, the coal mines, the Saskoil, and the list goes on, and Sask Minerals.

Where is this money? That's what the people of this province are asking. All they're getting is less services and more taxation. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan are sick and tired of more taxes. They're sick and tired of the arrogance of this government

as demonstrated by the Minister of Urban Affairs. There is undoubtedly the . . . This is undoubtedly the most inefficient, the most incompetent government that this province has ever witnessed.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — And you know, Mr. Chairman, what is so ironic is that they have the audacity to go out and to advise city councils how to run efficient operation. I want to say, the people of Saskatchewan are facing a massive increase in taxation under this government. But more than that, they have seen the cost of services increasing; they have seen power rates go up; they have seen telephone rates increase; they have seen this government, which said they would remove taxation against services to the people of Saskatchewan, they have seen this government impose a tax upon a tax imposed by the federal government. Insurance rates are up. Fees and licences: we did an analysis of 234 individual licences. Licences and fee schedules have been massively increased. And I want to say what is happening is that the burden of taxation is being transferred onto the local property owners throughout Saskatchewan.

I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that if this government wasn't supported by the press and the media, it would have been run out of office by now. Can you imagine asking people to pay more flat tax at the same time that this government spends \$8.4 million on empty office space? Can you imagine any government being allowed to stay in office, when at the time that they're imposing more taxes on the people of the province they have an advertising budget last year estimated at \$25 million? Can you imagine the people of Saskatchewan wanting to put up with tax increases on them at the same time they're cutting corporate income tax? Can you imagine the people of Saskatchewan wanting to pay more income tax while \$21 million is paid to Peter Pocklington? Can you imagine the people of Saskatchewan wanting to pay more taxes when \$1 million grant was given to Canada Packers?

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, can you imagine the people of Saskatchewan being pleased with this Minister of Finance asking them to pay more taxes when the air transportation of the government officials and cabinet ministers outside of Saskatchewan cost over \$2 million? I want to say, Mr. Speaker, can you imagine the people of Saskatchewan being willing to pay more flat tax when one of their Tory organizers, a Bruce Cameron, uses a tax-supported institution to do PC government work? can you imagine asking ordinary Saskatchewan taxpayers to pay more taxes when this government authorizes contracts to the likes of Paul Schoenhals in excess of \$200,000? Can you imagine Saskatchewan people wanting to pay more taxes when they pay to George Hill in excess of \$300,000? I ask you, can you expect the people of Saskatchewan to want to pay more taxes when Louis Domotor, the defeated cabinet minister, is paid excess of \$40,000 and may be doing nothing?

I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that the people of the province are sick and tired of paying more and receiving less. The people of this province are sick and tired of the deceit, the mismanagement, the waste, the

incompetence of this government. The people of the province are watching, and they're waiting, and they're poised to turf this government out of office.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — And I want to say that as the preliminary round, what was evidence in the constituency of Saskatoon Eastview and in Elphinstone clearly demonstrated to the people of Saskatchewan how they feel about this government.

I want to say, Mr. Chairman, the main issue in respect to the tax increase is the massive cut in services to the people of Saskatchewan. The people are saying: why do we have more debt, more deficits, more taxes, and less services? And that's the question the people of Saskatchewan are asking, and that's the question of the people of Saskatchewan are going to decide come the next election.

(2200)

I can only say that your political future will in large be decided by what you do with this Bill. And for the people of those who have worked and built this province, we ask, Mr. Minister, that you withdraw this massive tax increase — to withdraw it and be fair to the people of Saskatchewan that have built it.

I want to say, Mr. Minister, obviously we'll be voting against this Bill, and I say to you, Mr. Minister, we're not against the tax holiday in respect to the tax holiday for new businesses being started.

In respect to the Bill, having completed my remarks, Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the minister if he wants to comment; I may have a rebuttal. But I want to ask him that in respect to the notes that you have provided, Mr. Minister, there are two parts to it that you have provided. There are what you term the technical amendments and those policy amendments. And what I want to ask you first of all is: in respect to the technical amendments, can you indicate and guarantee to this House that as a result of co-ordinating with the federal income tax — that's the parent technical amendments — can you indicate to the House that as a result of co-ordinating those technical amendments with the income tax of the federal government, whether or not the people of Saskatchewan will in fact be paying more taxes as a result of those technical amendments?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — No. There would be no change in the tax position as a result of the technical amendments and no change in the assessments. Let me respond though to the hon. members . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . don't feel I have to; I feel that that's not the general consensus, to the hon. member.

I will indicate to the hon. member because I know that many of the people watching will be interested to know that three days from now virtually every taxpayer in this province will have more take-home pay. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, effective July 1 of this year over 90 per

cent of the taxpayers in Saskatchewan will have higher take-home pay.

I'm going to tell you effective July 1 — I'm going to tell the hon. member at the back row that in fact there is one category out of all the taxpayers, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection). . . Now I'm going to ask the hon. member to calm down back there. She's a little wound up, it's getting near the end of the session and she's had a pretty exciting time down here in Regina, and I know that she wants to get back to Saskatoon. And I just ask her to calm down and settle down because we are winding up here tonight and we could have a rational debate.

I'll tell the hon. member opposite which category, which category of taxpayer, and I'm referring to the following categories: the single tax filer; the single with two children; married with two children; married; single tax filer. Every single taxpayer, Mr. Speaker, except those earning \$50,000 a year will receive more take-home pay effective this July 1.

And I'm going to tell you how much the tax increase is on those at \$50,000 a year, Mr. Speaker. They will pay \$14 a year more in tax. That's a little better than a dollar a month more, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want the people of Saskatchewan to realize that when they have more take-home, effective July 1, that the NDP opposed it, Mr. Speaker. They have fought the tax reform, they've opposed the tax reform, and we just heard the hon. member from the Quill Lakes tonight tell the people of this province that he's opposed to the tax reform, Mr. Speaker, and he made that abundantly clear — he made that abundantly clear to everybody in Saskatchewan.

So when the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, effective July 1, have more take-home, have more take-home, not only do they refute what the hon. member said tonight, but they will remember, and remember in spades, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it was the New Democratic Party that had opposed the tax reform.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to reiterate what we had talked about the other day in estimates. And we went through that debate, Mr. Speaker. But the hon. member opposite either wasn't listening or did not want to hear, because we now have, we now have, Mr. Speaker, the results of all the other provincial budgets.

And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, for those earning \$20,000 a year, Saskatchewan — on taxes and charges — has the second lowest taxes and charges in Canada. For those earning \$30,000 a year, the taxes and charges, Saskatchewan are the third lowest. For those earning \$40,000 a year, Mr. Speaker, taxes and charges by the provincial Government of Saskatchewan, it's the second lowest. And for those earning 50,000, Saskatchewan is the second lowest. And for those earning more than 60,000, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is the third lowest in taxes and charges in the province.

And I find the arguments a little interesting, Mr. Speaker, because we did debate the other day, and I know that there was silence as I reminded the NDP members

opposite, who were so opposed and who said in this House, who said in this House — and we will be communicating this with the people who submitted gas rebates — that the NDP in this House said specifically, get rid of the gas rebates. And that's what they said. The fuel tax rebates, they said they're going to get rid of them; they don't want them; they don't like them.

And all I say, Mr. Chairman, and to the people of this province, is that when the people are reminded that the NDP are going to take away the rebate, we will watch NDP candidates around this province say — as the member from Humboldt did the other night when he tries to deny any participation in the potash nationalization — the NDP will run around and say, oh, that's not me, that's not me that's against the rebate. oh no, Mr. Speaker, that's what they'll tell them. That's what they'll tell them, Mr. Speaker.

But the *Hansard* of this House, the record of this House shows in no uncertain terms that the NDP during this session, Mr. Speaker, said they'll do away with the rebate. So again, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about taxes — and we've had a lengthy debate this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the expenditures, and the various expenditures, the record expenditures in health and education and others, Mr. Speaker — the debate will go on, but I have little doubt, Mr. Speaker, that we will be debating some other issues. As the hon. member indicated, he didn't want to talk about them, Mr. Speaker. And I say to the hon. member that we know you're opposed to tax reform. And we know you're opposed to the public participating in the ownership of this economy. And we know you're opposed to the fuel rebate.

And, Mr. Speaker, whether you like it or not, you can't have it both ways on this bill. You can't stand up on the one hand and say, oh, you're in favour of the tax holiday for small business. It doesn't work that way. The people affected on that will know, and we will tell them that you voted against the tax holiday for new small businesses. You can't have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. That's not the way the system works.

So the hon. member stands up and says you're taxing business . . . you're not taxing business enough; you're giving them a corporate holiday — we're in favour of that, but we're against the other. All I say to the hon. member is that we have gone through this debate several times now, and I suggest to the hon. member that certainly in the public he's not having much success.

And again I've reiterated now, on numerous occasions, the actual tax position. but I would like to take the opportunity, and I'm sure the hon. member will join with me in urging the people of Saskatchewan to recognize that on July 1 they will have higher take-home; and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that all — particularly the wage-earners in this province — will note on July 1 that the take-home should be higher.

If the take-home's not higher, I'd certainly like to be told about it, Mr. Speaker, because I'll be glad to get in contact with the employers because all the tax tables are to be adjusted July 1, Mr. Speaker, which gets more take-home

pay for the average worker in this province — more take-home pay for well over 90 per cent of the taxpayers of this province, Mr. Speaker. And I'm sure the hon. member will, as I say, join with me in making sure people read, read after the July 1 tables are into effect, their pay cheques to make sure that they are getting the full benefit of tax reform, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Chairman, I want to say that this minister has a credibility problem.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Can you feature this, this man getting up and telling people anything about statistics or financing or deficit? This is the guy that stood in this House in 1986-87 and said to the people of Saskatchewan, we're going to have a reduction in the deficit. It's going to be \$389 million. And when it turned out, it was \$1.4 billion. And he stands up and he wants to say, listen to me, people of Saskatchewan, I got credibility. Well what a joke — what a farce.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — And here is the Houdini of the Tory Party. He says, I've increased taxes but you're going to pay less. Well isn't that something remarkable. Only a Tory, only an ex-Liberal, running Tory, could come up with a statement like that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — He increases the taxation and he says he reduced them. Can you feature it? Now that is a remarkable feat — credibility, I say.

I want to ask the minister a simple question. Can you indicate . . .

An Hon. Member: — I wouldn't expect anything else, Murray.

Mr. Koskie: — Well it would have to be simple for you to answer, so I'm going to keep it simple, And I'm going to ask you, Mr. Minister, can you indicate, with the one thirty-three and a third per cent increase in the surtax, what is the additional revenue, gross revenue to the province of Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — The effect of the increase in conjunction with the . . .

An Hon. Member: — Oh, no.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Oh, no. That's because this is the way the Bill is introduced, is \$22 million. Oh yes, the Hon. member . . . We lose a substantial amount of money because of the effect of federal tax reform. We've indicated that. So we get an increase in revenue of \$22 million.

I can throw out to the hon. member, as well, that the effect of tax reform, Mr. Speaker, nets out in tax reductions for the people of this province, effective — really effective July 1, about \$40 million.

Mr. Koskie: — I'm sure you missed the question. I just ask you, on the basis of the gross amount to be collected by the half a percentage increase in the flat tax. In your 1987-88 budget, Mr. Minister, in your tax revenue, you indicated that a 1 per cent increase yielded in excess of \$100 million — \$107 million, to be exact. And that's the figure that has been produced. And what I'm asking to you, Mr. Minister: what is the gross amount that the province of Saskatchewan gets in respect to that imposition of a half a percentage, a thirty-three and a third per cent increase in the flat tax?

(2215)

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I've indicated to the hon. member that with the conjunction of federal tax reform, the increase is \$22 million. So I've indicated to the hon. member on numerous occasions that it's about \$52 million a half point, less the \$30 million that federal tax reform comes into play . . .

An Hon. Member: — It has nothing to do with it.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Oh, the hon. member says nothing to do with it. First of all you're opposed to it, so we should keep that on record. But secondly, Mr. Speaker, the way the legislation before us is designed is that it tracks the federal tax reform, and the tables are adjusted July 1 as they are with federal tax reform so that the net increase straight on the income tax is roughly 22 when we add the other tax benefits of tax reform — and the biggest beneficiary in Saskatchewan will be seniors — it will be in the range of \$40 million.

Mr. Koskie: — Fifty-two million dollars, thank you very much. That's what the people of Saskatchewan will be paying, an extra thirty-three and a third per cent increase in the surtax, in the flat tax. And you call it a tax reduction. The people of Saskatchewan will well appreciate your tax reduction.

I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, you also indicated at the time that you threw on the backs of the people of Saskatchewan an increase of \$52 million in the flat tax at the same time you reduced the corporate income tax rate from 17 to 15 per cent, and you wanted a . . . (inaudible interjection). . . Yes, you aren't doing it in here, but in your budget you indicated that you will be doing it. And you didn't have the gall to stand up here at the same time while you increased the personal income tax on ordinary citizens, to include in The Income Tax Act the reduction in respect to the corporate income tax which you intend to introduce.

And so I want to ask you: can you indicate what amount of money will be lost to the province of Saskatchewan per a percentage reduction in the corporate income tax?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — The hon. member asks, I believe, why it's not in the Bill. It's not . . . with regard to the corporate tax, it doesn't take place until 1989, so we'll get another chance to debate it.

But I've indicated to the hon. member and in the tax reform paper that all of the corporate taxes are part of a

package. And let me tell you why they are part of a package. Corporate tax revenues . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, corporate tax revenues had remained relatively flat over the last several years, notwithstanding some rather significant increases on corporate capital tax, etc., and on corporate income tax. By levelling the playing field with Alberta we will recapture some of that.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the corporate capital surcharge will also assist in recovery of more money, so that the result of the corporate tax reforms that we have proposed, the increase in tax revenue on the corporate side in 1988-89 will be \$39.6 million.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Minister, I asked you a specific question. You have indicated in your budget that you intend to decrease — not at the same time, but within your budget — a decrease in the corporate income tax from 17 to 15 per cent. That's 2 percentage points, I ask you: what revenue are you giving up to the province of Saskatchewan, to the people of Saskatchewan, per percentage of reduction in personal . . . corporate income tax?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well the effect of the corporate tax reduction to 15 per cent will be \$1.1 million.

Mr. Koskie: — Is that within a . . . I want to be specific here. I don't think that's accurate, Mr. Minister, because if you look . . . I want to ask, if that for an entire full year, or is it in respect to a part of a year.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — The balance of '88-89, what the hon. member has to realize is that there is some broadening of the base as a result of federal tax reform on the corporate side.

Mr. Koskie: — I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, while at the same time that you're increasing the personal income tax on the people of this province, is it true that in your budget you're also indicating a resource royalty reduction? And would you indicate the amount of the resource, the estimated amount of the resource royalty reduction that you are contemplating.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well on the royalty credit, 1 per cent is \$20 million. The increase on uranium royalty is \$11 million. Increase in . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, it's about \$9 million.

But only the opposition does not grasp, because everybody else does, that the corporate tax reform in fact generates an additional nearly \$40 million this year. And it does it, and I'm going to have to explain again. I'm going to have to explain to the hon. member over and over again, I think, that the additional uranium royalty increase, Crown corporations on the corporate capital tax, federal tax reform, and the corporate surcharge and all of the changes being made on the corporate side are designed to increase revenue but also capture revenue that has been flowing out of the province because of our tax system, and that's what it's designed to do, and that's how we fundamentally get a rather significant increase in corporate taxes.

Mr. Koskie: — I want to ask one more question,

Mr. Minister, in respect to your budget and in respect to your taxation, because while you have no hesitation in imposing it on the ordinary people of Saskatchewan, I want to know why you have included, at a time when the manufacturing and processing is under some stress in the province, the repeal of the manufacturing and processing tax reduction. You indicated that, in the budget, and I want to know, if you're repealing it, what is the savings to the province? And I'd like also to know your rationale at a time when the manufacturing and processing is under some strain.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — The difficulty with that manufacturing and processing tax reduction . . . And the loss for '88-89 is about 400,000; for '89-90 it would be 5.5 . I'm sorry, increase. The reason that we took away the reduction is that the definition of manufacturing and processing is, by virtue of our involvement with the national tax system, that we use the federal definition of manufacturing and processing. And included in the federal definition are restaurants, taverns, hotels, bakeries, drug stores, and food stores. And so the biggest beneficiary by use of the federal definition were these activities — and wholesalers I might add — so that it really wasn't, although it was attempted, it really was not going as tax advantage or an advantage to actual Saskatchewan manufacturers and processors. The federal definition is just extremely wide.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, you seem to be indicating that you are tying yourself to the federal tax proposals and the tax reform, and I'm wanting to ask you one more question: have you any agreement with the federal government in respect to their proposed after-the-election value added tax, and whether or not the province of Saskatchewan will be further adding to the burden of the ordinary taxpayer by a commitment or an agreement with the federal government to the adherence of that policy.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well I think, with respect, the idea of a value added tax was rejected and several exclusions have already been announced by the federal government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, but what's being considered now is the national sales tax, and I've indicated . . .

An Hon. Member: — Same thing.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well unfortunately it's not. I'm not trying to prolong the debate, but they are fundamentally different taxes. So a national sales tax is being considered. I've made it clear to the Assembly and the public before that we will take a look at the proposals for a national sales tax. Many small businesses, for example, have urged the government to join a national sales tax so that there is only one sales tax that they are responsible for collecting. And certainly business organizations have also expressed that view.

We have not committed to any position. We will take a look at the proposals when they come from the federal government. And if they're in the best interests of the people of this province and acceptable to the people of this province, then I think it would only be fair that we give them due consideration. But we're, I believe, a long way away from that, and I suggest to the hon. member

that there maybe some support in much of the small business community for only have one tax.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Minister, I want to ask one specific question, if I may, and then we can proceed with the approval of the Act. And that refers, if it's for your convenience, to section 6, subsection 2. And I just look at the explanatory notes, Mr. Minister, and it indicates that subsection 6(5) provides for:

a 10 per cent provincial tax for the first 200,000 of taxable income earned by a credit union; taxable income in excess of 200,000 is tax n the general corporate tax rate.

And I just want to ask you: is there any change in the rate or the amount that would be collected in respect to the credit unions.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — There's no change in the effect. The federal government changed . . . made amendments to its Act which resulted in a change in the . . .

An Hon. Member: — Numbers?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — . . . primarily. But there's no change on the effect on credit unions or anyone else affected by that provision.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 9 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

(2230)

Bill No. 79 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Act

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce to the Assembly, Theresa Holizki, chairperson, general manager of Saskatchewan Pension Plan, and Pat Moleski, acting manager of counselling of Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Clause 1

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have any questions as such about the particular provisions in the Bill. I think that they're generally satisfied that they're intended to do what the minister has outlined, and that is to make some modifications to the plan.

I do want to ask the minister, however, if he can tell us just what the actuarial impact will be of the various changes that he proposes. I suppose, more particularly, if he can tell us what the budgetary implications will be of the changes that are posed by this legislation.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — We estimate the costs of the changes will be probably less than \$50,000. There is one item that we estimate will be the largest one, about \$20,000.

We're changing the eligibility rules so that members can

continue to contribute to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, even though they may be receiving benefits from the Canada Pension Plan or the Quebec Pension Plan or death benefits from SPP (Saskatchewan Pension Plan). That is the one particular item you're probably familiar, changes made to the Canada Pension Plan, and this is brought in in conjunction with that.

But that's . . . we estimate roughly about \$20,000, so the actual costs of all the amendments are really quite modest.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Minister, for that information. I just have one further concern that I'd like to share with you, and that's the question of tax deductibility. The last reference guide I have, or kit for new members for 1987 with respect to the pension plan, indicates that, and I quote:

Your personal contribution is deductible when you file your income tax return subject to the annual contribution limits for registered retirement saving plans.

I've had a couple, now three, cases brought to my attention within the last number of weeks, where people have received communications from Revenue Canada and these people had originally thought or were under the impression, subject to the information contained in this kit, that they would in fact be eligible, that their contributions would be eligible for an income tax deduction.

They were surprised to find out that, in fact, the contributions were not eligible. And I wonder if you and your officials have given any thoughts to clarifying the information that you provide to people that are interested in enrolling in the plan so as to make it quite clear that when you talk about annual contribution limits, that you're not just talking about dollar amounts, but that you're also talking about interpretations from Revenue Canada. And that people, in fact, need to be very clear before they enter into an obligation with respect to this plan; they need to be very clear as to the interpretation from Revenue Canada, lest they be under some misunderstanding as to whether or not their contributions will be eligible for income tax deduction.

And I wonder if the minister might comment on that.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — What I would like to do, if the hon. member would agree, is there are really two questions that come about. But basically, the Saskatchewan Pension Plan follows the eligibility for RRSPs (registered retirement savings plans).

The question of investment income and the deductibility from investment income, that's prohibited under the federal income tax.

And the other question is the spousal deduction ability to the RRSPs. And I wonder . . . I can get some rather complex statements from the . . . answers for the hon. member. I wonder if he would accept me forwarding the technical aspects of those two areas, which I think are the matters of concern, to give a full explanation to the

member. All I can give him is the assurance that the same rules apply with regard to an RRSP deduction as apply to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Minister, I appreciate you sending over the information. I don't want to get into the details of Revenue Canada rulings, but I guess the . . . and I would agree with you that it would appear — and although there is an exception that my colleague may raise here, it appears that the rules that apply with respect to RRSPs and income tax deductions also apply to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. And excepting that, the fact remains, the fact remains — at least from two cases that have been brought to my attention — that this is not clear to the people that are enrolling in the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, and that there's inadequate information, that it's not being made clear to people that certain kinds of income, certain kinds, of income, will in fact will not be eligible for the income tax deduction.

The information he puts out talks about annual contribution limits. I think most people understand that there are limits within the RRSP, but they do not understand that certain kinds of incomes might be eligible for a income tax deduction as opposed to certain other kinds of income not being eligible.

There is some confusion out there. I have had the case of one person who entered into the plan on the assumption that their contributions would be tax deductible, found out that in fact they were not tax deductible, and has simply withdrawn from the plan because they feel the RRSPs are a better alternative in that situation. I don't know why they draw that conclusion, but that's the conclusion that they've drawn.

In any event, they've withdrawn from the plan. And their feeling is, their feeling is that there has been a lack of information at the outset, or a lack of clear interpretation for them to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether or not this particular plan is in their best interests.

And I wonder if I might get your comments on that?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — When the information went out we obviously wanted to keep it as understandable as possible, and relating it to the RRSP was the objective.

I agree with the hon. member that there are some technical rulings from national revenue which have some impact. I'm advised that the new application forms will make that more clear as to the specific Revenue Canada rules which have caused some concern. We get — as I mentioned, the question of investment income is another example, so I can give you assurance that the new forms will be more specific.

Secondly, I might advise that there are ongoing discussions with Department of National Revenue with regard to modifications and adjustments, without giving any assurances — because we don't have any — that there would be modifications in those areas. I can assure the hon. member that there are discussions with National Revenue as to the effect of those provisions. But the new forms will, because I accept your criticism, will be more

specific that way to try and make sure that the people have the accurate information.

Mr. Koenker: — Could the minister just briefly comment why, if there is correspondence between the Saskatchewan plan and the RRSPs, why there is not transferral of spousal deduction for contributions.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — We've indicated that that's the problem. There are ongoing discussions. We are trying to get the spousal deduction. The matching grant is a concern for the national government and its effect on the system. But there are discussions to try and get that resolved.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the minister can tell us just how many contributors there are to the plan at this time.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — As of May 31 there were 41,997.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Pages 1 to 4 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 70 — An Act to amend The Corporation Capital Tax Act

Clause 1

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, I want to ask only a few questions in respect to the general principles of the Bill, and let it go.

First of all, I want to ask you: in respect to the amendments that you have outlined here in The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, can you indicate what degree of consultation took place before the amendments to this Act was brought in? What degree of consultation, if any, were brought about?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I'm advised that most of the representatives of the resource industries, be it IPAC (Independent Petroleum Association of Canada), or Canadian Petroleum Association, Saskatchewan Mining Association, and others dealing with the resource companies, and I gather some of the smaller resource companies — but I don't have a list, but certainly the organizations were consulted.

Mr. Koskie: — Obviously the big boys were talked to, but one other question. I wonder whether you could indicate whether these amendments in respect to the corporate capital tax, whether they're similar to enactments by adjacent provinces like Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia? I'm wondering whether you're creating what is termed by your party as a level playing-field for this type of tax?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well we should keep in mind that Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, for example, do levy a corporate capital tax on federal commercial Crown corporations, so that that is similar. What was the other question, I'm sorry, about the surcharge? No other

jurisdiction has the corporate surcharge similar to this.

Mr. Koskie: — And that's my other question in respect to the Crown corporations. Is this restricted primarily or exclusively, I guess, as the question should be, to resource-based Crown corporations, or perhaps you answered it in the previous question, to all federal commercial Crown corporations.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — As I indicated, it's commercial Crowns. It would apply to Air Canada, CNR (Canadian National Railway), Eldorado in conjunction with the uranium royalty matter as well, VIA Rail, Petro-Canada, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Mr. Koskie: — What is the projected revenue from all of the federal Crown corporations? I notice that you have some sizeable Crown corporations included in what you are apparently taxing. Is it correct that somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$2.4 million — is that all that you raised with respect to the Crown corporations?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Point three (0.3) in '88-89, and 3 million in '89-90. We do expect that to continue to increase.

Mr. Koskie: — One final question then, I'm advised. Can you indicate, Mr. Minister, you have no definition of resource corporations. "It shall be defined" means a resource corporation is defined by regulations, so we don't know what we're specifically talking about until we see the regulations. And I wonder whether the regulations are available and whether they could be filed, so that we know what you're talking about. And specifically, does it apply just to non-renewable resources, or does it also apply to renewable resource companies like the Weyerhaeusers of Tacoma, Washington?

(2245)

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I'm advised non-renewable resources: oil, natural gas, uranium, potash and coal, if I can indicate to the definitions, the hon. member. Resource corporation and the further definition of value of resource sales will be defined in the regulations and will be based on the definitions provided in the petroleum and natural gas regulations, the freehold oil and gas production tax regulations, mineral disposition regulations, and the coal disposition regulations.

Mr. Koskie: — So I guess, specifically, I don't know; you may have answered it, and I haven't heard it, but does it apply to renewable resource companies vis-a-vis Weyerhaeuser?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Resource, can I run through the list again for the hon. member? Non-renewable: oil, natural gas, uranium, potash and coal.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Pages 1 to 4 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 88 — An Act to make Certain Changes in the

Statute Law with respect to the Investment of Moneys Held pursuant to Certain Acts

Clause 1

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I just want to begin by making a few comments, and you may correct me if I'm wrong, and my comments are based in large part on a document that came to our attention. It was prepared, we understand, for your office by James P. Marshall Inc. James P. Marshall was engaged by your office to consider the matter of alternative investment management structures to handle the investment management for a number of pension plans which are in the public domain, and they examined three alternatives.

And one of the alternatives was the existing arrangement in terms of the Finance department. There was some recognition that, given the size of the funds now, given the growth in the funds into the future, that the investment management function in the Department of Finance would need to be upgraded to be able to handle the additional demand.

The other alternatives were what they call, I believe, a free-standing Crown corporation, another alternative which I understand you are pursuing, and I'll get into that — is for a separate business corporation, that is to say, a private corporation.

I want to ask you first of all what your concerns were about the ability of the Department of Finance to continue to handle the investment management of Saskatchewan pension plans as they had in the past? Was there some evidence that the Finance department was not doing its job in terms of investing the pension plan funds adequately and well?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — As a matter of fact the department, I think, by all standards had done an excellent job.

The situation, as our studies indicate, that by about 1990-91 the amount of moneys under management will be in the range of 7 to \$9 billion, and the degree of expertise needed to manage that we would certainly would have to have certainly a significant increase in personnel.

The complexity of the funds under management will grow. For example, all government pension plans are investing, for example, in realty across Canada, and the ability to monitor that is going to have to be increased dramatically as this amount of money under management increases.

Thirdly, there is for the client's point of view, in my view, an opportunity for them to perhaps do a little better. We have been approached from time to time by Saskatchewan companies asking the Department of Finance to manage their pension funds. That's not really a proper role. So that there is that perhaps opportunity which will accrue to the benefit of the clients.

You indicated that there were three options were really considered; there were really four. There's the *status quo*;

there is a free-standing Crown corporation, if I can use that phrase; treasury board Crown corporation or the client-owned corporation. The client-owned public corporation or business corporation was the one chosen by the clients themselves. And I gather, while discussions did go on among the clients for a number of months, certainly there were differences of opinion.

I have indicated in this Assembly before, I happen to favour personally the Crown corporation, but the majority of clients, and certainly the bigger funds, including the teachers, wanted the business corporation. So it's the choice of the clients. It was a choice left up to the very client funds, and that's the choice they made.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — I have a concern, Mr. Minister, that in fact two alternatives were presented, as I understand it, from the Marshall document. They raise key questions to be discussed, and they say, the second question is:

If you were to consider a change, which of the following two alternatives do you feel would best satisfy your accounts' needs: the investment objectives ... (and they state) The two alternative investment management structures being considered are an independent Crown corporation and a client-owned private corporation.

I wonder how assiduously the people from James P. Marshall, and by definition, your office, in fact pursued the question of an independent Crown corporation, recognizing that they might have been able to give assurances to the various funds about their involvement on a Crown corporation board, on the board of an independent Crown corporation, so as to assure them about their role in terms of decision making, but also to ensure some accountability, some accountability to this Legislative Assembly.

And you will know that one of the unique features, one of the unique features of an independent Crown corporation would be the reporting relationship to the Legislative Assembly. In fact the Marshall report points out the corporation's board of directors would be accountable to the legislature through a minister. And I wonder if that type of unique set-up in corporate structure for a Crown corporation had been offered to the various pension funds as an alternative, if that had been explained to them.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Very much so. And I've indicated my personal preference was to go that route of the Crown corporations. It was the clients themselves who over — and understand, given the complexity of the issue, these discussions have been going on for many, many months — that it was the clients themselves that ultimately chose the business corporations.

I think we should keep in mind one thing when we talk about accountability, that as we have the fully funded pension plans, we should remember that we're no longer accounting for public moneys, we're accounting for clients' moneys, and the accounting has to be back to the pension fund members because it is their money. And that's really where the accountability has to lie.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Minister, the information we have in the Marshall report is very sketchy and incomplete. And I wonder if you would undertake to provide to this Assembly, to the House, the full details of your, what I understand will be called a Saskatchewan investment corporation, so that it's clear for all of the public to see just what it is that you're proposing to undertake.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Let me indicate what I'm prepared to give with only one condition, and it may be an important one. I am prepared ... we do have ... all pension funds have signed unanimous shareholders agreements, so they've all done that voluntarily and all of them have signed. I am prepared, if it's agreed by the funds, and I can't see an objection, to supply to the opposition a copy of the unanimous shareholders agreement. I have no difficulty with that myself. I'm more than prepared to put the request to the funds if that can be made, be made public. And the same — well, you've got a copy of the Marshall report — so I think realistically what would be helpful to the hon. member is the copy of the unanimous shareholders' agreement. We should keep in mind that it's not my shareholders' agreement; it's the client shareholders' agreement, but I am prepared to put that request, and I certainly have no difficulty tabling that, or giving it to the opposition.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Let me make a further request to the minister then. As we understand it — and you can correct me if I'm wrong — there is to be a two-year transition period, roughly. During this transition period you, in fact, will own 100 per cent of class A shares in that particular corporation, and the class A shares carry the right to vote, but carry no right to participate in the distribution of the profits or assets. The funds will own class B shares, which carries no right to vote, but which participate as to dividends and other distributions of profit or assets.

So for a period of two years, even though the Government of Saskatchewan, through you, will not benefit in any way — and neither should it, the pension fund should — you, in fact, have all the voting power when it comes to that particular corporation. And given the fact that you have the voting power and are, in fact, not answerable to anyone, would you undertake to enter into discussions with the various pensions funds to the effect that during this two-year transition period you will report to this Legislative Assembly as to the affairs of that corporation, so that you are, in effect, accountable to someone, because as it stands you have 100 per cent of the votes?

It's your vote that carries the day. You are, in effect, answerable to no one and I'm asking you: can you at least, during this interim period and until such a time as the participating pension funds take over control and the voting power in that particular corporation — can you undertake to report to the Legislative Assembly as to your activities in that particular investment corporation?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I understand, with all respect to the hon. member, I don't have that sole voting power. Under the provisions, the clients themselves are the only ones having the vote.

For a period of two years, and it could be less than that, the Minister of Finance only has the final say on the board of directors for a period of two years; and secondly, on the CEO, in conjunction with the funds themselves. So it's not a blanket two-years operation.

It was felt two things: one, that we have so many funds that we couldn't have committees doing much of the leg work and the actual detailed start-up of the funds, so we are undertaking that. And so all I can say to the hon. member, we do not have the voting authority that you've indicated; we do not have that voting authority.

Secondly, with regard to the board of directors, everybody wants to be on the board of directors, and so we've had a rather complex arrangement negotiated amongst the funds with revolving members and what not, and we want to talk to them and spend time with them, trying to encourage them — although we will not impose this — encourage them to try and appoint people who will bring something to the table in terms of advantage to the plan.

(2300)

Some, for example, and I say it with respect, want to appoint actuaries. Well it would strike me that any pension fund would hire the actuaries and not have that as a board position. So we've got a period of time here of a maximum of two years where we're trying to get it up and running. I do not have that voting power.

With regard to the tabling, we should remember that none of the legislation takes away requirements of the various statutory funds, whatever, to report to this Assembly through the various ministers, as they have been doing for a long period of time. That continues. And the ability of the opposition to question on that is still there. So again, I can't say much more than that, except that I don't have the voting power that's imputed to me.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Well, Mr. Minister, again I think that you're pointing out the reason for my request. I'm going by reports that were provided to you and supposedly set out the framework for this corporation by James P. Marshall Inc. I guess it points out the dilemma that we're in, that we're talking here about massive changes in the way that the pension funds . . . how their investments will be managed. yet this side of the House has no information, no clear information as to exactly what the government is doing. And that is the concern that we have, and that is why we're asking for these types of reports and at least some accountability to this Legislative Assembly.

And I would just simply say that if your government and if you had undertaken to provide all of this information to the Legislative Assembly as it came available, that we would be in a better position to judge just whether or not the Bill before us is, in fact, the way to go.

I just have one other brief question that I want to . . . or a couple of brief questions that I want to ask . . . make some closing comments. But with respect to custodial services, have you sorted out yet who will provide these and how the costs will be determined for that?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — It's by agreement that the custodial function will remain with Department of Finance till December 31, and then, by mutual agreement thereafter, it can be terminated by either party after that period of time of 90 days.

I'd just like to go back to the previous point made by the hon. member about disclosure. Again, I've made the commitment to the hon. member that I have no problems myself with filing the unanimous shareholders' agreement. It is signed by each of the funds independently. I mean, it's their document, and I think the hon. member would agree with me that I have to get permission to do that.

I think the member can take some comfort and, I believe, satisfaction in that all of the funds have signed. And again, I can give that assurance to the hon. member. They've virtually all had independent council. I mean, the lawyers have done very well out there on this. They've had independent legal advice. They've had their own council — some have shared; others have hired their own. So the independent advice they've had is quite significant, and they've had access to whoever they wanted, so I can say that to try and give some comfort to the hon. member, with the assurance again, I will ask for permission to supply him and the opposition with a copy of the unanimous shareholder's agreement.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — I have no further questions. I just want to close by indicating again our concerns with respect to this legislation. We feel that the government, if it had been truly concerned about accountability to the Legislative Assembly, might have taken a different course in this matter, might have come up with something that might have gone some way to meet the concerns of the respective pension funds.

And I can respect their concerns about wanting to divorce themselves at times, or to sever the relationship with this present Minister of Finance, given his record. But we feel that some alternative might have been arrived at that would have satisfied those funds, but also would've satisfied this Legislative Assembly's right to know, and the whole question of accountability.

We feel that that question is there. We feel that it's not a question of the individual funds themselves, the individual funds themselves simply contracting for service, with this investment corporation. You know and I know that as time goes on, that those who perform the investment service function will take on more and more of a role as an adviser to the various pension funds.

And we feel that, given the magnitude of the dollars involved, given the fact that in most instances there are public taxpayers' dollars involved, that this Legislative Assembly should continue to have some relationship with those funds. However tenuous that relationship might be, we feel that relationship should continue to exist, and we're not satisfied with the proposals that have come before us. And it is for those reasons, Mr. Chairman, that we will be indicating our opposition to this Bill.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 16 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 17

Mr. Chairman: — Clause 17 has a house amendment moved by the Minister of Finance:

Section 17 of the printed Bill:

strike out section 17 of the printed Bill and substitute the following:

17 This Act comes into force on a day to be fixed by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor, but is retroactive and, on the day this Act is proclaimed, it is deemed to have been in force on and from June 1, 1988.

Clause 17 as amended agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill as amended.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Before the officials leave, Mr. Chairman, if I may, I did not get a chance to introduce them. Immediately behind me, Mr. Keith Laxdal, associate deputy minister; David McCaslin, associate director investment branch; and Tony Koshinsky from the civil law division, Department of Justice.

And I would just like to indicate that the officials — this has been a rather complex, long process, and they have served the government and the people of this province extremely ably as we've gone through the development of the investment corporation of Saskatchewan, and I would like to thank them.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Chairman, it's not often that I find myself concurring in the remarks of the Minister of Finance, but in this particular instance, I want to be associated with his remarks.

Bill No. 45 — An Act to amend The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Act

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Joining with Mr. Wakabayashi is Brian Smith, executive director of PEBA (Public Employees Benefit Agency), and Gerry Kraus, provincial comptroller.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — I just simply want to indicate that we would have no questions at this time. I think the questions that we had were gone over in the last Bill, and our position with respect to this Bill would be the same as the previous Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 46 — An Act respecting Certain Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Act, 1988

Clauses 1 to 9 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill 101 — An Act to amend The Revenue and Financial Services Act

Hon. Mr. Lane: — If I may, Mr. Chairman, introduce to the Assembly, Mr. Russ Moore, director of revenue operations branch of the revenue division, Department of Finance.

Clause 1

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I intend not to take a great deal of time on this short one-page Bill, but I do have one or two questions.

Mr. Chairman, this short bit of legislation is the legislation necessary to establish the environmental handling charge and the deposit on the — to this point — the aluminum cans that are now for sale in the province, so in that sense it's a very straightforward piece of legislation, but I have one or two questions for the minister.

Mr. Minister, once this is legislation, could you explain to myself and the House then what process is in place for the setting of the exact charges. Who, in fact, determines what the environmental handling charge will be and what the deposit will be? How does that happen?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — It's in The Litter Control Act. It's established in The Litter Control Act.

Mr. Calvert: — I understand that, Mr. Minister, but I'm talking about the value. Currently now we're working with a 2 cent environmental handling and a 5 cent deposit. How are those figures arrived at? In which department? Who does it? How does it happen?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Department of the Environment.

Mr. Calvert: — So, Mr. Minister, the Department of the Environment sets those and they apply, and revenue and finance have nothing . . .

An Hon. Member: — No, we just collect.

Mr. Calvert: — You collect.

Mr. Minister, this piece of legislation does nothing, and I'm sure as the minister responsible for the finances of our province you must have some concern in this. If the fears that have been expressed by the brewing industry in this province with the introduction of aluminum cans, and if the worst fears come true, we may in fact see the demise of the brewing industry in this province.

As the Minister of Finance, concerned about revenue and finance, have you undertaken any estimates about the loss of revenues to the province if that industry, in fact, does disappear from our province?

(2315)

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I'm perhaps not as well informed as I would like to be, but I would indicate I'm advised that the

industry average is roughly 20 per cent going to cans. Obviously in Saskatchewan, I suppose we were held back for whatever reasons for years in the public demand. It's a new product. It obviously has met public acceptance. Where that will be when the novelty wears off, I don't know whether we would be different from the rest of the country in that roughly 20 per cent usage range. If that's the case, then the advice I have is that there would be minimal adjustment in the brewing industry in this province.

We should also keep in mind, when we look at the brewing industry, other components, and that's the ability of small breweries to now set up specialized breweries which are starting to function in other parts of Canada and the United States — the ability of hotels to brew their own, which is creating and will create some opportunity.

So I think in fairness to the hon. member, we will certainly . . . we are going through a transition and we are going through a change. When it settles down, the general view is that perhaps there will be more opportunity than there was before.

Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Minister, I just want to take this opportunity once again to lobby you as a member of the Executive Council and your other colleagues present, to give serious consideration to steps that can protect and will protect the brewing industry in the province and the jobs that are associated with that industry.

And if I may also, Mr. Minister, in terms of the environmental handling charge, it's been reported publicly that the Cosmo Industries in Saskatoon had to, from their point of view, turn down the opportunity to be part of the collection system on the basis that the 2 cent charge, that would accrue to them, they didn't feel was enough to involve them in the project and to support them in the project. And so I would lobby you to be with your colleagues to be looking at that fee and to ensure that it will be sufficient in future to keep people involved.

With that, Mr. Minister, I have no further questions.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I move the committee report the Bill, Mr. Chairman, and take the opportunity to thank my officials for assisting the Assembly this evening.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 39 — An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act

Clause 1

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right, Mr. Dave Innes, my deputy minister, and behind me, Ron Davis, the executive director of municipal finance.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, thank you. This is the

Bill that authorizes the revenue-sharing grants for municipalities, and as I pointed out in the committee on estimates, the Committee of Finance, it is totally and completely inadequate. The minister knows that.

I want to say simply that if the minister had spent as much time arguing in his cabinet and in his caucus for the funding that municipalities must have, and need to have, to provide the services that they have to provide, as he has in trying to push unpopular an unnecessary legislation to abolish the ward system and force rural family businesses to struggle under seven days a week opening, then the municipalities of Saskatchewan would have been a lot better served.

Instead of that, Mr. Chairman, the priorities have been all wrong. And so we have here, where in 1967 The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act provided \$67,126,000 to municipalities, and in 1989, two years later, provides only \$67,040,000.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that is simply not good enough. That is simply an example of failure by this minister and by this government. We had a minister who has been too busy worrying about his personal agenda and trying to get even with people — who knows who they are out there somewhere — on municipal councils, and neglected totally what should be a very fundamental and important role of any minister of Urban Affairs, and that is to argue for the necessary funding.

I want to give you an example, Mr. Chairman, of how bad it has been. In the last four years of an NDP government between 1978 and 1981, revenue-sharing grants increased by 109.5 per cent, and at the same time inflation increased by only 45.2 per cent — I shouldn't say only, but that's what it was — a net increase of 64.3 per cent in real dollars.

What's happened in the last four years of this Conservative government, Mr. Chairman . . .

An Hon. Member: — A disaster.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — My colleague says it's a disaster, and I say it's a cruel disaster. Between 1986 and 1989, which is what this Bill finally ends up with in 1989, revenue sharing has increased by 2.9 per cent. Inflation during that same period has roughly been 18.5 per cent, and that means a net decline in real dollars of 15.6 per cent. And the minister will stand up and say he's proud of that.

I say, Mr. Chairman, if this government, and particularly this minister, had spent any amount of time at all listening to the people in Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, arguing in the cabinet about the need for funding so that property taxes don't have to go up over and over and over again to the point where there's many people out there can't afford to pay them, we wouldn't find this kind of sad and sorry statistic which I have just indicated to you.

I want to say one more thing, Mr. Chairman. Back in . . . I'm reading here a very important press release which was made some time ago, and it was made under the name of

the present Minister of Finance when he was, I believe, the president of the Conservative Party, dated in August 28, I believe, 1982. And here is what that minister said that the Premier said. He said:

Progressive Conservative leader Grant Devine today summed up his summer tour saying:

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Yes, I'm sorry, the Premier.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — In those days he was not yet the Premier, you see, Mr. Chairman. He was just hoping. But here is what in his press statement he issued:

Major towns and cities throughout the province are concerned about the lack of provincial funding for necessities like water and sewer systems. The provincial government is perceived to be spending money foolishly on government offices and not on development.

Now, Mr. Chairman, what a joke that was, and what a reality it is today. Here we have a provincial government which in four years has reduced, has reduced the amount of funding for municipalities in real dollars by 15.6 per cent after inflation, and is spending \$34,000 a day on empty office space so that it can reward its friends who are more interested in taking advantage of their so-called privatization at the expense of the Saskatchewan taxpayer, Mr. Chairman.

That's the kind of hypocrisy — maybe that's unparliamentary, I won't use that word. But that's the kind of misleading approach that this Conservative government has taken, and it has resulted in a devastating increase in property taxes on Saskatchewan citizens year after year under this government's administration, as it has deliberately pushed or shifted the tax load from the load of the provincial government and resource industries to that of the property taxpayers who are barely finding it possible to keep up with that kind of a tax load.

Mr. Speaker, I simply conclude by saying, before I let this Bill go by, so I don't repeat many of the things I said in Committee of Finance, that this funding is inadequate. Everybody in the municipal world has told the minister and this government that it's inadequate. It's the basis of the problem that has caused the deterioration of infrastructure in our municipalities to the point where, in some cases, it's reaching crisis proportions.

And we have, instead of the minister addressing it, the minister saying, we're going to force the legislation through which will not allow you to choose a ward system. We're going to force legislation through which is going to cause a devastating attack on rural businesses and in rural communities, which every one of those rural members knows about because every one of them has been getting letters, copies of some of which I have received and which, when we get on to another Bill later tonight, will be read into the record so that it is clear what is happening over there when you have a government

that is so arrogant that it refuses to listen to anybody.

Mr. Chairman, we're not going to oppose the Bill as such, because it does provide the funding to municipalities, but we want to put it on the record very clearly that it is inadequate, it comes as a result of an incompetent government, it comes as the result of a government that has chosen to transfer the tax burden to property taxpayers off the rightful place where it ought to be, and that's from places like the resource industries and the resource companies of this province. Example of which, in the oil industry, this government has rewarded them for their political support by over \$2 billion in oil royalty holidays, and instead has said to taxpayers who own property, pay more.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 6 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 72 — An Act respecting the Saskatchewan Municipal Board

Mr. Chairman: — Is the minister going to have the same officials, or . . .

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, we're joined by John Edwards, the assistant director of municipal finance.

Page 1

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I will spare the speech on this one — I gave it in second reading — but I have some specific questions I want to ask of the minister. And as we proceed with the Bill, Mr. Chairman, I think you would probably . . . because it's a long Bill and pages . . . proceed by page and then when we see a page where I have some questions, I will so indicate.

Mr. Chairman: — The member has requested that we go by page. Is that agreed?

Leave granted.

Page 1 agreed to.

Page 2

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I'm looking here at clause . . . We agree to clause 3. I'm looking at clause 4 where it refers to the appointment of the members of the board, the municipal board, and I want to ask the minister what his intentions are here. What is the process of appointment, Mr. Minister? Are you going to simply name people that you wish, or are you going to ask for recommendations from the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association? There's SSTA (Saskatchewan School Trustees Association), other bodies that are involved here. What do you intend to do here? We want that on the record so they can be somewhat assured and can hold you to that, to what you state here in this committee.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Well, Mr. Chairman, we're certainly

going to appoint the people that will probably have the necessary background, as best that can be described in accordance with what their duties will be. And it probably won't be unlike the appointments that were made at the Local Government Board level and the other levels. We will look for the expertise that's necessary and create the functions, and I don't see anything wrong with that.

(2330)

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Minister, will you be consulting with SUMA and other organizations of such kind and allow them to have some input in this, or are you going to ignore them?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, I think it's fair to say that we'll consult with various organizations so long as it doesn't involve any kind of a conflict or a perceived conflict that could exist as a result of certain appointments.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Minister, I can recall reading clippings and attending a SUMA convention where you pretended to consult with SUMA about store hours legislation and about the ward system and then ignored everything they said.

As well as your consulting, Mr. Minister, can you make a commitment that you will also listen to the recommendations that are being given to you and hopefully do some follow-up on them?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I think that consultation is perhaps something that this government is very good at; listening is something that this government is very good at. We have done that for six years, but there's a difference, Mr. Chairman, between listening and always agreeing with what everybody else says. Certainly at some point in time you have to agree to disagree.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The wonderful thing would be that if once you would agree, Mr. Minister, rather than ignoring all of the advice you get. The one legacy you will leave behind when you are no longer in this place or no longer in the cabinet, is that . . . which is the universal opinion will be that you are probably the minister, of even this government, that cared the least about what the opinions of the public or concerned citizens or organization s have been out there. Now even with all the competition you've got from some of your other colleagues, Mr. Minister, you lead the way in that category, I'm afraid.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, when you appoint these board members, what will be the pay levels, and what will be their per diems?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, the salaries will be set by cabinet and done by order in council.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Sorry . . . Maybe I missed it, Mr. Chairman, but did I hear the minister say the amount of the per diem and the amount of the pay levels? Obviously he must know because this is legislation going through and he's had months to look at it, or is he saying that he still doesn't know.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, what I said is, it's going to be established by cabinet. It will be done by order in council, and certainly we're going to look at the existing fee structure and use that.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Well I'm certainly quite aware of the fact that it has been established in cabinet and will be provided in the order in council. That wasn't my question. My question is: what is the fee range, what is the per diem, and what is the pay levels?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, because we are combining three board and the work-loads will be slightly different, and the challenges and everything else that they're going to be looking at will be a little bit different than the existing boards that are in place, it may be necessary to establish a new rate. And if that is what will happen, we're looking at all kinds of figures right now. Then we'll have to do that accordingly.

Page 2 agreed to.

Pages 3 to 15 inclusive agreed to.

Page 16

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Could I ask, Mr. Minister, on page 16, subclause (7):

In any hearing, appeal, investigation or other proceeding before the board, the board is not bound by the technical rules of legal evidence.

Why do you want, why do you need this provision in there to give this kind of protection to the board? Does this now not give the board certain privileges that may be out of line?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, that's an existing provision in the LGB (Local Government Board) Act and it's . . . and we've carried it forward. It's a good provision and we've left it there.

Page 16 agreed to.

Pages 17 to 85 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

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

Clauses 1 to 17 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 60 — An Act to Amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1984

Mr. Chairman: — Would the minister please introduce the rest of his officials.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Behind my deputy minister is the assistant deputy minister, Keith Schneider; and behind

me, Jim Anderson, policy analyst.

Clause 1

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I can assure you, Mr. Chairman that this Bill 60 is going to take considerably longer than all of the other Bills that the minister has had to deal with here this evening.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — And he's going to have to answer a few more questions and justify what he is doing, Mr. Chairman, because I think that the public has a right to have his justification for what is happening here, on the record.

I want to begin by saying, Mr. Chairman, that one of the points that needs to be made about this Bill is that it's just another example of this government's legacy as being one of perpetrating one of the cruellest attacks on family life in the history of this province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — We have here a government and a minister that is so preoccupied with his own self-interest that the interest of the public is no longer concerned; it's not a consideration for this government. Patronage is the guiding hand.

Everything that is seen, and you notice in the question periods in the House and you notice in the news reports and you notice in the appointments that are made of former cabinet ministers and former MLAs, that the basic rule, the basic rule that guides this government is the one thing of patronage. Reward your friends and punish everybody else in the process because there's nothing, or very little left for them.

Mr. Chairman, let me just give you some examples of the price that the people of Saskatchewan have had to pay because of this kind of an approach. We have had a children's dental plan in this province that has been destroyed because the government had to find enough money that would reward its friends and patronage — to pay \$34,000 a day in empty office space, space which is not being used.

We've had the Premier talk about alcohol and drug abuse, about the marvellous things that this government intends to do about curing the problem, and then almost on the same day introducing a liquor control Act in here that's going to provide the wider sales of alcohol and the marketing of alcohol products so that it'll encourage even more drinking. Now that's an attack on a family, Mr. Chairman, that's a serious attack on a family.

Now in this legislation, we see legislation that will even further create an attack on family life with the legislation that's going to cause a domino effect which will eventually cause seven-day openings throughout all of

Saskatchewan. Small business people and family businesses, who now can at least get a Sunday off so that they can do the things that families enjoy doing and must do, are not going to have that opportunity.

And the minister is going to stand up and he'll say, oh, but that's not going to be true. He's going to say that the spaces in Saskatchewan are so wide that if one community stays open the other one won't be affected. Well the minister obviously is not very knowledgeable.

Well he must . . . we talk about and people talk about the Tories being 50 years behind. It's obvious by that statement that this minister can remember only the days of the horse and wagon. It's not the horse and wagon day any more. There are roads in Saskatchewan — even still after six years of this government -0- that cars can travel on, and so the communication is such that people can travel very easily.

And so if you have a larger community that's going to open seven days a week, the smaller communities around it are going to suffer, and family businesses are going to suffer, and the time that they used to have for family living is going to be gone. Now that action, Mr. Chairman, from a government who talks about families day in and day out, well that rhetoric, Mr. Member from Melfort, is not good enough any more. And all the letters and the concerns expressed throughout the province of Saskatchewan on this issue are showing that people no longer believe you when you say that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I want to say another thing, Mr. Chairman. I was here in this House when the Leader of the Opposition was debating the Premier in Executive Council estimates — you know, those estimates that some of the media forgot existed. And I can recall on e thing that the Premier said, because I wrote it down on this paper that night, Mr. Chairman. The Premier said, "put power in the hands of the people" — put power in the hands of the people. Well I wish he would say that to his Minister of Urban Affairs who is going to take away the power from the hands of the people.

The Premier says, put power in the hands of the people. And the minister of Urban Affairs says urban municipalities will no longer have the right to chose the way they're going to elect their councillors and their aldermen. They're going to take away that power from the people who live in our cities.

And the Premier says, yes, yes, bless you, go ahead. Now this is a Premier who says one thing in one situation and says another thing by his actions in another one. And I say, Mr. Chairman, that that's just not good enough.

But there's something else here that undermine the credibility of the whole government, and that is that no longer can this minister and this government be believed by anything they say.

(2345)

I want to refer you, Mr. Chairman, to a letter written to the

Minister of Urban Affairs by the Tisdale and district chamber of commerce. And this letter was written on December 4, 1987, when this debate was beginning. And here is what they said:

We are writing to express our displeasure and concern over the way the extended store hours issue, i.e., Sunday shopping, has been handled by the provincial government. It seems to us as though the provincial government has taken the easy way out by dumping this issue into the hands of local municipal governments who really don't have the authority to handle this issue without the backing of the government in regards to enforcing The Urban Municipality Act.

And then he went on to say, and this is a very telling comment, and I quote:

What concerns us the most is the complete turn-around in opinion (the complete turn-around in opinion) that we have seen come out of your office since September. At that time you expressed that you were definitely for small business and shared its concerns. Our opinion has not changed. Sunday opening will kill a lot of small businesses and very much affect the way of life in our community.

Now what kind of change in opinion were they talking about, Mr. Chairman? Let me demonstrate what they're saying, because I want to quote, in order to demonstrate that, from comments that this minister made in September 9 of 1987 in this House, Hansard, page 2390, on another amendment to The Urban Municipality Act. I want you to listen with care, Mr. Chairman, what the minister said. Here's what he said:

... I'm pleased to move second reading of this Bill. It's a Bill intended to preserve Sunday as a secular day of rest for families and communities in Saskatchewan. It's also intended to ensure religious freedom for merchants and observe an alternate day of rest, for those that do observe an alternate day of rest.

Then he went to say:

... this Act is to strengthen the principle of a common pause day.

Then he went on further to say:

... a second important purpose of this amendment is to provide for a religious exemption clause to satisfy the religious freedom guarantees of the charter of rights.

It went on:

And I will add a personal note here (this is a personal note of the minister) ... I've been a business man in this province for many years, and many of the members present know that I feel strongly and support small business strongly. But I want to say, however, that I have always

supported the principle of a weekly day of rest ...

Now, Mr. Chairman, what do we have here? What do we have here? A minister who in September of 1987 said one thing, makes a complete turn-around and betrays all of those people he had given assurance to and brings a Bill into this House and rams it down their throat, even though they have protested and pleaded and asked that it be deferred so that they can have their opinions expressed and that the public can be heard.

And is it any wonder that in light of that, Mr. Chairman, we have the district 1 meeting of Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association yesterday demanding of the Premier by letter that they get the Minister of Urban Affairs to resign and appoint a minister who's going to be sensitive to their concerns.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, credibility — credibility out of touch; a government that has lost complete touch with the public of Saskatchewan; that has become so preoccupied with its self-interest and its determination to do whatever it wants, in spite of what anybody thinks, is the issue.

I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, that kind of arrogance is not soon forgotten. That kind of arrogance will not be forgotten even when this minister is finally, unceremoniously dumped from his position whenever that cabinet shuffle comes, because ...

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Because, Mr. Chairman, in all of this the Premier himself is implicated, because the Premier himself has received letters from numerous organizations to which he has never responded; from organizations who have asked to meet with this Premier, the coalition of church leaders, and business people, and working people, who on May 4 asked to meet with the Premier and he refused to meet with them; and he sent them to meet with the Minister of Urban Affairs who refused to meet with them until the day he tabled the Bill. And the first thing he said to them when they came into his office is: doesn't matter what you say, I am going to go with the Bill anyway. Too bad, folks.

Now that's the kind of arrogance, Mr. Chairman, that will not be forgotten, and because the Premier has defended it and promoted it, it doesn't matter who he puts in that portfolio, the Premier's own credibility is shattered and destroyed.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Now I ask you, Mr. Minister, I ask you to tell this House and to tell the public, in light of what you said on September of 1987, why have you now made a complete reversal and introduced this Bill which contradicts all of those assurances which you gave to the people of Saskatchewan which prompted the chamber of commerce of Tisdale to write you that letter indicating how disappointed that they were?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, I'm really disappointed in the weak arguments presented by the opposition regarding this very important Bill, Bill 60. And the issues, they're of grave concern to taxpayers and the public, and I was hoping that the opposition could come up with a better argument, certainly, than personal vendettas, or arrogance, or that's simply not an acceptable argument to either condemn myself, as the minister, or the Premier. I was hoping that it could be a factual debate. The taxpayers are my concern, Mr. Chairman.

The member opposite talked about protection of families, and yet we saw the NDP in 1982 allow interest rates to soar — people losing their homes; 22 per cent — they did nothing. We see them laugh at the dangerous dog legislation contained in Bill 60 — they think it's humorous; I don't.

And with the matter of store hours, they talk about representing families, and do they care one bit about the families where moms and dads work; the single parent families. Obviously they don't.

I too, Mr. Chairman, could read letters of support for the Chamber. And with regard to the question . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . well, by golly, I will read one because the member from Moose Jaw — I'll read it later — the member from Moose Jaw . . .

Mr. Chairman, to answer the question directly, Mr. Chairman, it's obvious to all but the NDP that the continual court challenges — and we had one on Monday, Mr. Chairman, another court rejection. Obviously, as much as we tried to legislate the existing legislation and change the legislation, we found that we simply couldn't do it.

With regard to the regional meetings at Carnduff, there was one at Macklin where my resignation was not asked for, so it tells you that there's a little bit of a problem there, Mr. Chairman, and I don't believe that region 1 represents SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association).

And finally, Mr. Chairman, with respect to the unfair comments that the member made concerning the Premier, you are simply not factual, and I wish that you would, if you refer to the Premier . . . you can refer to me any way you like, that's fine, but when you refer to the Premier, please have your facts right. What you say is simply not fact.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Now isn't that a telling narration, Mr. Chairman. I asked the minister a question, and in all of his little dissertation, he never addressed it once.

Now, Mr. Minister, I ask you again: in view of the fact that in September of 1987 you made a firm commitment in this House to the public of Saskatchewan that you were in favour of a common pause day, why have you now turned around totally and betrayed that assurance, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, I did address it. I indicated that continual court challenges, continual court decisions put us in a position where obviously one piece

of provincial legislation by us, changing it and changing it and changing it, leads to more unfairness. Because as we change it, Mr. Chairman, the very thing that they're worried about is occurring, and the stores are operating.

So now Regina, as a result of that decision, and by the admittance of the city solicitor — I mean, you saw it, same way everybody saw it — the city solicitor, with this new legislation, will be able to put by-laws in place that will give them what the people of Regina want.

Now if the people of Regina want Superstore, and the NDP doesn't want Superstore or Safeways or Bi-Rite, I challenge the member from Regina North East, let's go to your constituency; knock on the doors; you tell them that the NDP are going to close Superstore and Bi-Rite and Safeways. You go and tell them that, and I'll go to the doors with you while we tell them that.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Minister, if the courts are the problem, how in the Heaven's name do you expect that passing it on to the municipality makes a lot more sense with their less resources than handling it at the provincial level?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — If that's the best argument you can bring, Mr. Minister, then you shouldn't bring an argument at all. The fact is that there is legislation, that if you would take the appropriate time and give people an opportunity to make some input which works at the provincial level, there is legislation in other provinces.

And the coalition which I referred to earlier has pointed out to you, as we have in this House, that there is legislation in Manitoba that provides a common pause day. It also provides freedom for merchants to choose. Your Bill doesn't provide freedom for merchants to choose. It leaves it to municipal option.

That legislation works, Mr. Minister. It has not been challenged in the courts. It has not been challenged in the courts because the business, the big corporate chain store business in Manitoba know that they can't win. And I simply ask you: why wouldn't you consider that to be an alternative so that it's done right, instead of frittering it away the way you have done, leaving it to local option, which is no option?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — There we are, Mr. Chairman, we've heard it from my supposed critic, and I'm just surprised. Manitoba doesn't have a common pause day, boys. Don't you understand that? — and ladies. Manitoba is open Sundays. Don't you know that? Manitoba is wide open on Sundays, so don't go telling anybody that they've got a common pause day — you're wrong.

Mr. Chairman, the member from Moose Jaw, hollering from his seat. Go back to the letter, right here, the Moose Jaw Chamber of Commerce. Let's go.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — And, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to quote, because it, you know . . . Well I'll quote, you'll see why:

The Moose Jaw Chamber of Commerce would like to commend you on your recent performance in your portfolios. It is time that businesses and cities decided on their own how to run their bailiwicks. To this end, the Moose Jaw chamber has reiterated its stand on business operating hours. The individual operator of any business, no matter the type, size, product . . .

And it goes on. So if you want to read letters of support, I can read them.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Minister, your comment on the Manitoba legislation clearly shows that you haven't even taken the time to take a look at what it says, because I have it here in my hand. And not only does it provide, Mr. Chairman, a common pause day . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order. Order. It's difficult to hear, for the minister to hear the questions and for the members to hear the answers. I'd ask members to have a bit of decorum in the House and allow the member to ask his question and allow the minister to answer.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have here, as I indicated before I was interrupted, that I have the Manitoba legislation. I have taken the time to study it, and it's a real alternative because one of the main things that it does is it provides what the members opposite like to use a term all the time — it provides at least a level playing field. It provides a level playing field so that the small-and independent-business community, who is the backbone of the economy in Manitoba as they are in Saskatchewan, are able to be on equal footing with the superstores and the huge chain stores and department store operations, which they won't be in this province if this legislation this minister is forcing through the House passes. Because the Manitoba legislation provides that a store, a business outlet, with some exceptions, can stay open, but it has to have only a certain amount of — something like five or fewer employees.

(2400)

Now, that puts — that puts the small-business man on an equal footing. Without that kind of protection, Mr. Chairman, the small-business person, the family business in Saskatchewan, is going to be under threat by the decisions which are not going to be made in municipalities, but they're going to be made in the corporate board rooms of Toronto and Montreal and New York.

Now I think, Mr. Chairman, that the minister at least should have given some time and some kind of consideration to this legislation, and that's why this Bill should not be in this House today. It should be out there.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — It should be out there, Mr. Chairman, with an all-party committee so that people who are concerned could make presentations. Community leaders and church leaders and the business community leaders and the consuming public should have an opportunity to have a voice.

But in spite of the process of holding this Bill up in this House for five weeks when that protest has grown and grown and grown, this minister has refused to budget, supported by his Premier.

Now, Mr. Minister, what would have made it so difficult for you to do the reasonable thing and stall this legislation so that the public could have the hearings. And what would have been wrong with having an all-party committee so we would all be able to share in a solution, instead of ramming it through the House and ramming it down the throats of the people out there who say that they don't want it and that you're wrong.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I'll tell you what's wrong with an all-party committee, Mr. Chairman; they can't read legislation. My critic clearly indicated originally: why don't we have the same provisions as Manitoba where they have a common day of pause? They don't have a common day of pause.

Now Manitoba store hours legislation keeps all stores open, Mr. Chairman, and all stores can open, regardless of their size, on any day, subject to having four employees. But there is no common day of pause — there is no common day of pause, which is what you said. So why have an all-party committee if you don't understand that. That's number one.

Number two, they tried an all-party committee in Ontario. It didn't work. They're going to try it again and it's still not going to work, probably. And where are they going to get to? There is no level playing-field while all that is going on. And not only that, not only that, Mr. Chairman, it's ironic that they're hanging their hat on the Manitoba legislation because we are providing the same provision to the municipalities — exactly the same. And if they want to limit it to four people, they can. And if they want to have the same provision as Manitoba, they can. And so what's wrong with that?

And it's not in provincial legislation because, Mr. Chairman, and to the members opposite, one day when that legislation is challenged, and it will be, and the superstores of this world come out with a whole brand-new scheme, their legislation won't stand the test of time again. So where are they going to be? Scrambling around, I suppose, with all-party committees. I don't know.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Tonight, Mr. Chairperson, I want to do something that I wager the minister has not done himself. And that is, I want to share the results of visits I had last Friday in my Sutherland constituency with business people. I spent the day, from

10 o'clock in the morning till 4 o'clock in the evening, going door to door in the Sutherland business community asking people what they thought of this legislation.

In some 13 businesses that had the owner-manager present when I came, 12 of the 13 said that they believe stores should be required to close on Sunday. That was 12 of 13 said that. Twelve of 13 also indicated, interestingly enough, that the cost of goods or services they were providing would increase if they were to stay open on Sunday. And that can only mean one thing — that that cost would be passed on to the consumers eventually.

And low and behold, 13 out of 13 said that Sunday opening would very definitely affect the quality of their family life, or the family life of their employees.

Now, Mr. Chairperson, I want to take just a few brief minutes to read into the record some of the comments of these business people from my visits with them.

One said:

They're practically doing away with Sunday as a day set aside for recreation and worship, Sunday as a family day. Everything is too commercialized and this will make it only more so (he said).

Another said:

There is now way one community can sit beside another without staying open if that other community is open. It's really the very large corporations, the extra-provincial corporations, which will benefit from this legislation, not small-business people such as myself.

This individual also indicated that if he were forced to stay open on Sunday, he would not be able to provide the same knowledge . . . level of knowledgeable service for his customers. It would mean a step down in the service he's providing because he'd have to hire part-time help who wouldn't know the operation as well as he did.

And most damning of all is this individual indicated he had done a survey of retail businesses in his line of business here in the province, a buying group of 59 businesses, and of those 59 businesses surveyed in the buying group on the issue of Sunday opening, all of them — all 59, he said — concurred with the sentiment that Sunday opening should be opposed.

One individual had a slight qualification; he personally opposed Sunday opening for personal, religious reasons, but he felt that the government shouldn't legislate that on everyone. But that was one of 59 people in the buying group. A very telling commentary on this legislation from a person in the business community.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Another said:

My volume won't increase significantly enough to stay open on Sundays, but my costs would increase if I were open on Sundays.

He said:

It's bad enough as is, working six days a week. I have very little time with my family. This legislation will help the big to get more powerful (he said).

Another says, just very simply, "It's a big mistake." A big mistake.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Another said:

I'm a family operation. I can't afford it, (a) in terms of time away from my family, or (b) financially.

Another went on to say — this individual indicated that I could use his name, Mr. Ben Piggelen of Everything's Coming Up Roses florist on 8th Street in Saskatoon — questioned why there . . . He said:

There are 250 million people in Europe, and they close on Saturday along about 2 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon. (and he said) they get along quite well without Sunday opening, and I think we can do without Sunday opening here in Saskatchewan as well (he said).

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — To quote him further, he said, "I'm dead against it."

Another individual — this is very interesting, Mr. Chairperson, very, very interesting — said that he had conducted an hourly sales study with respect to Friday night openings in his store, that he had computerized his hourly sales from March till March right from his sales tapes. And they showed that if he was open Thursday night and served, say 50 customers, that if he was open on Friday night, he served only 30.

The point of the survey was, after a year of this survey, was that sales never increased. The dollar volume never increased with the extra hours he was open. He said:

All we really ended up doing was providing a service for our customers. People, customers allocated their time differently, but they didn't allocate their spending any differently.

I think the implications for Sunday opening are clear: it's a disaster for small business people.

Another said:

I hope that it will never happen (referring to Sunday opening). None of the staff would appreciate it. I'm sure I don't appreciate it.

Another said, "There's no need for it." He would never open — never open on Sunday, even if it became the going thing. He simply does not believe in it.

Another commented:

What they're doing is throwing small business up in the air. Those who can afford it will open, and the rest will be left out.

Now those are comments, not from myself, but from representative business people in the Sutherland constituency. And I think they know far more of what they're talking about than the minister does when he stands up to speak.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — In a word, Mr. Chairperson, this legislation means fundamental changes for small-business people, for rural communities, for our Saskatchewan families, and for Saskatchewan consumers.

For small business it means increased costs, it means inconvenience for the owners of these small businesses in terms of longer hours and less time with their family; it means a decrease in service they can provide. And the bottom line for Saskatchewan people is that it's going to cost them more as well.

For rural communities it means rural communities have no local choice. They have a loss of business to urban centres and a loss of community life that follows on its heels. A loss of population, yes, and a loss of jobs in rural Saskatchewan.

And for Saskatchewan families it means an erosion of family life, recreational life, religious life, from the very Premier who is so concerned, or professes to be so concerned about family life.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Well we've seen him increase taxes for Saskatchewan families. We've seen him cut back on health services for Saskatchewan families, and now we see him going along with his Minister or Urban Affairs on this legislation which will dramatically affect family life. So those are some of my thoughts, Mr. Chairperson, on the Sunday opening dimension of this legislation.

I'd like to conclude by very briefly commenting on the ward section of this legislation. This legislation with respect to wards really means representation. Fair representation is gone for people like senior citizens and people on welfare.

What is at stake with this ward legislation is the ability for people to vote for someone they can relate to, someone who can relate to their problems and knows and understands them firsthand, someone who can represent them and not the interests of the rich and the powerful.

And it's interesting to note in this connection, Mr. Chairperson, that this minister sought no consultation, no consultation whatsoever, with urban municipalities and small-business people on the legislation that he provides tonight. He has only one aim and that is to jackhammer the wards out of Saskatchewan urban municipalities.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — He has only one aim in eliminating the wards, and that is to jackhammer democratic representation out of urban municipalities.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — That is a jackhammer minister, I say, and it is directly calculated to get PC apologists elected in urban areas because they can't get elected provincially.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — The results of the urban by-elections in Regina Elphinstone and Saskatoon Eastview prove that completely and conclusively, if there was ever any doubt after the last provincial election.

And there we see the real reason for this raw power grab. And I ask the minister if he will not reconsider this legislation in the best interests of Saskatchewan people, even at this late hour.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, I'll do battle more on the ward with my critic. I'll just answer with one respect right now to some of the member's remarks. Every alderman now, even in the ward system, can indeed come from one ward, because they don't have to live in their wards. So your argument that you just presented doesn't hold any water. Sorry, but we'll talk more about that.

The member from Saskatoon Sutherland indicated . . . his opening remarks, well I would wager. Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not a betting man — I guess he is, and I'm sorry to hear that, but that's his privilege if he wants to bet. But you're losing. And you're all losing. You're losing with business and you're losing with the consumer. You are going to lose again. I'm sorry to tell you that, but you are.

(0015)

And I'll tell you why. Mr. Chairman, I too visit businesses regularly and I know that they're going to lose with that stand. And not only do I visit, Mr. Chairman, with the businesses in my constituency, I visit with the businesses throughout the province and various chambers. And, you know, I have to agree with the family aspect that the member mentioned, but if you think for a moment, Mr. Chairman, that more liberal shopping hours don't help moms and dads, double income families, total disregard to single parent families, closing of Superstore and Bi-Rite and Safeways . . . You won't say that in the city but you say that out in the country, talking out of the side of your mouth. why, why do you want to regulate people's lives? We don't. We're going to get out of regulating the lives.

Mr. Chairman, the beauty of our amendment — municipalities can close the stores if they wish. Stores can close if they choose not to open, the business community. And they're all over the lot. I've lived with them all my

life. They're all over the lot on this issue, Mr. Chairman. That's not new. Some want to open, some don't want to open. I just read the letter from the Moose Jaw chamber. They recognize that they're divided on the issue, but they still say, get out of regulating our lives.

And finally, Mr. Chairman, people don't have to shop if they don't want to. You're not calling everybody that shops at Superstore a heathen, surely, are you? you don't . . . Some people consider that a family activity; they really do, Mr. Chairman. And he discovered something new. the business community isn't making money Friday night. Whoopee. Read the *Leader-Post*. They're not making money in Regina on Wednesday night — big headline to that effect. So I say, why are they open? Why are they open? Close if you're not making money.

And finally, Mr. Chairman . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well there they go. Businesses don't stay open if they're losing money, don't you know that? We'll give you the first basic lesson in business. If you don't make money, you close your door.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, there is no evidence of increased costs to the consumer. There is no evidence of the so-called domino effect. And we are using a much broader number and a much broader picture than 59 businesses that the member from Saskatoon Sutherland used. We're using the actual results that are garnered from B.C. and Alberta that have had similar legislation — one for eight years, one for three years. None of those have occurred in those two provinces.

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a member of the Legislative Assembly for Regina I am very embarrassed tonight witnessing the performance of the member from Regina South in defending this Bill.

It's one thing, Mr. Chairman, to represent a part of the province as an MLA outside of the cities, and bring in a Bill that is insidious as this Bill is, and as treacherous as this Bill is. But it's mostly embarrassing for me and the colleagues in the New Democratic Party that represent urban areas, and that represent areas outside of the urban areas, to have this member get up in this House tonight and attack our small-business community, to attack families who work in small business, and basically put forward a Bill which is attacking the very fabric of Saskatchewan.

The opposition is really embarrassed with his performance. And I'm sure the Premier of this province is going to have some very important things to say to him come the next cabinet shuffle.

I've heard for a while now, over the last number of weeks in the media and in this House, the member for Regina South to try this Bill, to try and justify the unjustifiable. He stood in this House tonight and on previous occasions, and he has attempted to defend the undefendable. And that's what this Bill 60 is, Mr. Chairman.

He is obviously an insensitive person; he has not consulted with people that have opinions in the community outside of his little circle of Tory caucus

colleagues. He has not consulted with the business people that my colleague from Saskatoon just a few moments ago relayed in terms of his visits with him.

And what really concerns me, Mr. Chairman, is that this Bill is really an attack on democracy itself. We've heard the arguments with respect to the ward system and what he is doing. And what I want to talk to you about tonight is that very briefly, but more importantly, I'd like to report to the Assembly tonight a response and a result of a survey that I have undertaken in the constituency of Regina North West with all of the businesses in the constituency.

A questionnaire was dropped off at their place of business and a phenomenal response has been received. I have received 37 per cent response of all questionnaires dropped off. The normal rate is between 5 per cent and 10 per cent in terms of questionnaires returned. And, Mr. Chairman, I have had 37 per cent response.

And I want to take a few moments tonight to share with you and with the member from Regina South, some of these concerns of these business people; some of the concerns that he has obviously deflected like water off a duck's back by saying, if they can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen, or in his own words, close your doors if you're not making any money.

I want to read some of the comments first on the proposed legislation with regard to store hours. And I quote one:

There should be no Sunday shopping except for convenience stores and grocery stores if they wish. Sunday is a family day. When you're an independent business person who puts in a lot of hours, taking away from family time and life-style. We have two children, also added expenses in hiring more help. They already put in a lot of hours. We don't need extended hours. The money just isn't here, consumer-wise or employer-wise.

Another one, Mr. Chairman:

I don't want to see Sunday openings or any more additional evenings. What we have is enough for our size of a city.

Another quote:

As owners we are still responsible for our business, even if we employ others to work on Sunday. Therefore, that would mean seven days a week of being available. We are totally against it.

Another quote:

I feel if we have this control for our city rather than provincially, it wouldn't end there. I feel it has been too major an issue for too long.

Another quote:

Sunday only gives people more time to shop, not more money to shop with, and requires small-business people to work the extra hours

themselves. We no longer have time that is really busy any more.

Another comment, and I quote:

As being a small business, our expenses would be much greater and services far less than is needed. And the service would be inadequate as indicated in 3(a), which means if you are required to stay open Sundays, will the cost of the goods or services you are providing have to increase? (And they say) yes, they will.

As it stands now, it would wipe out small and independent business which make up a large percentage of the employment in this province. Family unity would no longer exist as there would be no days off together as a whole family. It does not generate more money coming in, just spreading it over seven days instead of six, which eventually costs the business person and consumer more money.

Another quote:

My business would be forced to close its doors. I believe Sunday should be a day of worship and a time to spend with the family, doing things together as a family.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — Another quote, Mr. Chairman:

Overall sales are not increased, just spread over a longer period. A common day off . . . businesses open Sunday have caused mid-week traffic to almost cease to exist, and drain most of the general public's spending income to the point of forcing me to go out of business.

And that's what this person is saying. They're still in business, but this is going to force him out of business, in his opinion. And I have two other comments; they're very short and to the point. And one says, and I quote, "I think it stinks." And the other one says, even in more subtle terms, "It stinks".

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — And one even sent me a . . . it's not really pornographic, but it's a drawing with four or five letters on it. And I quote, Mr. Chairman — this may be unparliamentary, but I'll try and read it into the record and withdraw if it is — and it says, "To hell with Sunday shopping".

And that's what I got from my businesses, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister. And if you think that these people are going to be supporting you if you encourage them to go out of business by allowing Sunday shopping, then you're in for a rude awakening, and I think you're dead wrong.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — I also want to share with you the precise

results of this survey. Do you believe most stores should be required to close on Sunday? Eighty-seven per cent of my respondents said yes; 13 per cent said no. And all of the ones that said no were in the food business.

Two, should that be provincially determined or city determined? yes, provincially, 68 per cent, and city-wide, 32 per cent. If you are required to stay open Sundays, will the cost of the goods or services you are providing have to increase? — 73 per cent said yes. Would Sunday opening mean more full-time employees? — 9 per cent said yes; fewer full-time employees? — 30 per cent said yes; more part-time employees? — 61 per cent; fewer part-time employees? — Mr. Minister, zero per cent.

What this means, if Sunday opening goes ahead under this Bill, it'll also mean a decline in full-time employment and a modest increase in terms of part-time employment. And what we're stuck with is a significant drop in career choices for individuals who like to make the businesses in my community a career. And that's not a very positive thing.

Will Sunday opening affect the quality of life of your family and the families of your employees? — 96 per cent said yes.

And I want to share with you some other startling pieces of information. The number of employees that these respondents employ, or represent, total 707 people, and that's broken down into 338 full time, and 369 part time. And the ones that are opposed to Sunday shopping represent 96 per cent of all those employees — 96 per cent, or 679 employees, Mr. Minister.

Now it's my view, if an ad hoc survey that is undertaken with some scientific element to it as this one was, in one constituency out of 64 in this province, and one that is not heavily laden with businesses, I might add, how do you think the rest of the people of the province view this legislation and view the opportunity, as you call it, to be open on Sunday?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, he calls that a survey — 59 businesses in his constituency. Quotes all kinds of figures. Amazing! I admitted freely, earlier, that businesses are all over the lot on this issue. Some want to open; some don't want to open. You don't have to be a mental giant to figure that out.

But, Mr. Chairman, mine goes beyond the constituency of mine. Mine goes into the entire city and community. Mine goes into other cities. Mine goes into the rural communities. Mine goes into the various chambers. Mine goes into the independent federation of business, and on and on.

And coupled with that goes my own personal experience, having had the distinct privilege of serving as the president of the two major retail merchants associations in Regina, one at the Northgate Mall and one at the Southland Mall. And I know what the small-business people thought about the hours of opening. We discussed it regularly. We discussed how unfair the existing legislation was to the business community — how unfair

it was; how unfair it was to families that chose to do that as an activity if they so chose to do that.

What about the businesses, Mr. Chairman? I had one, and everybody knows that — my amusement park, where on a Sunday we were open. Was that bad? I employed 50 students. I did it without any help from the NDP government. Just hired them on my own — 50 students or so every year, regularly. And on Sundays, if a piece of machinery would break down, I needed service on a Sunday. And did that mean that I had to close down my park because my supplier wasn't available to me? That I couldn't even buy nuts and bolts if I had to fix a piece of machinery?

So along with that issue, we're looking at the other areas — the tourism industry that's open on Sunday, the communications that are open on Sunday, the reporters that work on Sunday, and on and on. Transportation. This is the last area and still, Mr. Chairman, they miss the point. They still don't understand.

There is a municipal option to control that, if they don't want. And all of those businesses that you named, all of those businesses that you named — they can be protected by the municipal legislation because they will have the power, if they so choose, to indicate exactly what stores and the size thereof will be allowed to open, Mr. Chairman. And, you know, if they want to open some and close others, that will be within their power.

(0030)

We can't do that provincially; we can't describe a convenience store in provincial legislation that fits — name a town — Wynyard, Saskatchewan. A convenience store that falls into Wynyard, that falls into the same category in Prince Albert or in Regina or Saskatoon. We can't do that; they're different. But they can do that at the local level.

So no wonder the provincial legislation is always challenged. We can't control the hours where Saskatoon wants their convenience stores to close, while Regina wants their convenience stores to stay open 24 hours a day. We can't control that in provincial legislation.

Or, Mr. Chairman, is the NDP suggesting that now, on top of closing Superstore, on top of closing Bi-Rite or Pinders drug stores, on top of closing Safeway, that now we close every convenience store at night as well? I mean, we can't do that provincially.

Mr. Solomon: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the minister has indicated that he's laughing off the responses that I received from the businesses in the constituency of Regina North West. I just want to add that there's going to be other colleagues standing in this House this evening to indicate what they have found in their research, and I'll bet you a significant amount of investment that they will be finding results from their surveys that are far different than yours.

But I want to just add a couple of other highlights. We've been reviewing some of the newspaper headlines, and I see, "Toronto rejects Sunday shopping." And I quote out

of the June 13 *Star-Phoenix*:

Instead, councillors voted 30 to 2 to tell the Ontario government to shelve its Sunday shopping legislation.

And that's what the city council in Toronto, Ontario is doing, and they're putting it back to the provincial government because they have legislation allowing for Sunday shopping.

"Sunday opening foes told to lobby municipalities." The member has indicated just a few moments ago that it's up to the municipalities. And you've indicated that we should start lobbying the councillors and the city councils with respect to Sunday shopping.

Well, Mr. Minister, how can you tell the people of this province that they should start lobbying under your new ward system where there will likely be 10 councillors at large from Saskatoon and Regina both? How do you direct the people of this city to call 10 councillors and lobby them with respect to Sunday shopping, when if there's no ward system and it only takes one call to talk to your councillor, they've now got to make 10 calls?

How much time do you think people have to do this? How effective is this going to be, to be calling 10 councillors to review or relay your concern with respect to the issue of Sunday shopping? Could you explain that tonight?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, he wants to bet too. Why don't you bet your colleague from Saskatoon Sutherland? I told you, I don't bet.

And don't you ever accuse me of laughing at the business community, and don't mislead the public by making that statement that'll show in *Hansard* that I laughed at the business community. I never laugh at the business community. I'm laughing at you and your statements. More people . . . you're comparing Toronto, three times as many people in Toronto or so, than in all of Saskatchewan — all of Saskatchewan. How are you going to compare that? Next you're going to compare the ward system in Toronto to that in Saskatoon. They've got almost as many people in one ward in Toronto as the entire city of Saskatoon, so let's get the comparison straight.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Chairman, the . . . Mr. Chairman, I gather I have the floor. It's always . . . the purpose of entering a debate of course, Mr. Chairman, is to attempt to rationalize your argument and influence the people on the other side of the debate. Now in this situation we're up against a difficult problem, because we have a Minister of Urban Affairs here who said in the past: you don't like my politics as a Liberal; just a minute, I'll change to a Conservative. He says: you don't like me in Regina North; I'll change to Regina South. You have a minister who says: you didn't like my principles last fall on the day of rest; just wait a few months and I'll change my principles the other way around.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — This minister, this minister, Mr. Chairman, is supported whole-heartedly by his Executive Council, by the Executive Council of this government. They're whole-heartedly behind this minister on this legislation, so it will be impossible to appeal to this minister because he has the obvious support of the Executive Council and the Premier on this issue.

So my remarks, Mr. Chairman, this evening, will be not an attempt to influence the Minister of Urban Affairs or the Executive Council or any members opposite, because it will be impossible. They have dug themselves into the position that they're in now, and they're not going to change their view. That is quite clear from the minister's stand.

So my comments this evening on Bill 60 will not be directed at the minister or the government, but I intend to direct my remarks to any of the public that may be watching. Now it's questionable whether there by many of the public watching this evening when we're discussing Bill. No. 60, which is An Act to amend the Urban Municipality Act.

I find two very objectionable features about this particular Bill, Mr. Chairman. And one of the features is that the small-business people of Saskatchewan, whether they live in large or small urban centres, will suffer under the implications of this Bill if it is enacted. And that's serious enough concern for me.

But I do want to deal with another aspect of the Bill which I find very objectionable, and that has to do with the ward system and the government's attempt in this Bill to do away with the ward system and deny the people a choice that they want.

On television, in the city of Saskatoon, we have a phone-in television opinion poll where people can phone in at a charge of 50 cents by SaskTel. And I understand, Mr. Chairman, that they have the same phone-in system in Regina. People can phone their opinions in. And if there are any people watching this television this evening, I want those people to get a pencil ready, because I'm going to give them some telephone numbers a little later on that they can phone in their opinion if there are any people watching. And it's questionable whether there are at this time of day.

With regard to the issue of the ward system, I did some research in this area, Mr. Chairman, and I know that you'll be interested in this, from your impartial position. And if you can keep, Mr. Chairman, if you can keep the member for Weyburn's mouth shut while I'm on my feet, I promise you, Mr. Chairman . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — I promise you I will keep perfectly quiet when the member for Weyburn gets up to speak on this particular Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — Now I realize, Mr. Chairman, that will be a difficult task because the mouth of the member

for Weyburn has a habit of falling open all the time. I don't know whether it's by accident or by design, but it doesn't make much difference because it doesn't make much difference whether it's design or accident what he says, it's got nothing to do with the debate that's before us at this time.

And I think, Mr. Chairman, you can hear the twaddle coming from the member from Weyburn right now. And the member from Weyburn continues with his irrational twaddle which has no influence on the debate here except to interrupt the proceedings. And Mr. Chairman, when you want to bring that member to order, I can continue with . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order, please. I think maybe both sides should come to order.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Chairman, I am glad that you called for order because it will improve the debate here in the House this evening.

I did some research in preparation for this particular debate on the ward system. And I went back and I checked the records in the city of Saskatoon for 13 years prior to the implementation of the ward system — for 13 years preceding 1973 when the ward system was implemented. And the information I found out was this, Mr. Chairman.

Starting in 1961 going up to 1973, that's 13 years, and there are 10 aldermen occupying the aldermanic positions in the city of Saskatoon, so that's 130 aldermanic years, if I may put it in that form. And in that 130 aldermanic years, on the west side of the river in Saskatoon, 27 aldermanic years were served in that period of time, while on the east side of the river, 103 aldermanic years were served. So that means if you convert a few percentages in that 13 year period preceding the implementation of the ward system in Saskatoon in 1973, 25 per cent of the aldermen were elected from the west side of the river, and 75 per cent of the aldermen were elected from the east side of the river.

Now it is understood in this democratic system, Mr. Chairman, I know you understand this, that the democratic system is a very fragile system. In order to function properly as it should, it's necessary for people to be involved in the democratic system, from all parts of the urban area — in this case, Saskatoon. And in order to encourage that kind of participation from people all over the city of Saskatoon and other cities, the ward system was implemented. Now of course, since that time there have been indications that the ward system has been accepted. Necessary provisions were made in the legislation that allowed people to give their opinion at an appropriate time after the ward system was brought into effect, Mr. Chairman.

And in 1979 the city of Saskatoon, by almost 8,000 votes, voted to retain the ward system — voted to retain the ward system in Saskatoon. In 1982 this was the ward map for the city of Saskatoon. The city of Saskatoon has 10 wards. In 1988 the city of Saskatoon, in February 15, 1988, had produced a new ward map, as was necessary under the legislation. Now the city of Saskatoon was

obviously prepared to go with the ward system that is presently in effect in the city of Saskatoon. They went to the trouble and expense of preparing a new ward system map, which is some trouble and some expense to the city of Saskatoon.

The city of Saskatoon also passed a resolution; the council of Saskatoon passed a resolution. I want to read that resolution into the record, because it is the considered opinion of the aldermanic and mayoralty officers of the city of Saskatoon. And on March 28, 1988, the resolution was passed by city council as follows:

That this city council indicate to the Minister of Urban Affairs and to the Premier its support of the ward system and its disapproval of any change to the present system of voting.

So that was the resolution passed by the city of Saskatoon on March 28, 1988. Thereafter, the city of Saskatoon, on June 21, just a very short while later, apparently observed that the Government of Saskatchewan had not heard what they said in the resolution which they passed and sent to the government and sent to the Minister of Urban Affairs.

(0045)

So they sent another letter and they sent it to the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Minister of Urban Affairs, the Leader of the Liberal party, and a copy to myself. And in this particular letter, which was marked "rush, urgent", June 21, 1988, they had this to say:

Re: The 1988 municipal election ward system at large (and it's got the file number).

The council of the city of Saskatoon at its meeting held on June 20, 1988, resolved that an urgent letter be sent to the Premier of Saskatchewan, the Minister of Urban Affairs, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader of the Liberal Party, and all the MLAs representing the city of Saskatoon concerning the proposed amendments to the legislation dealing with the above matter.

City council wishes to reconfirm its support of the present ward system. In addition, the council of the city of Saskatoon is of the opinion that the people should at least have a local option for the ward system as it presently exists. In the event that the current proposed legislation proceeds, this council recommends that it not come into force for the 1988 municipal election year. It is respectfully requested that the views of the city of Saskatoon be considered when the proposed legislation is reviewed.

And it's signed by the acting city clerk of the city of Saskatoon.

So the city of Saskatoon conveyed its opinion in an urgent manner to the Government of Saskatchewan after they had ignored the first request, a resolution of the city council of Saskatoon. And it's quit clear from the headlines that the media also was impressed by the action

of the city council because they had in the *Star-Phoenix* of June 21, '88: "City pleads for retention of ward system." City pleads for retention of the ward system.

And some of the comments here, I know that the minister has probably read — and I don't expect I'll be able to influence him by reading them again, but I'll put them on the record. In part, it says:

Alderman Donna Birkmaier said the government's decision "flies in the face of democracy."

Now you'll recognize that Alderman Donna Birkmaier was a Progressive Conservative candidate in the city of Saskatoon, the constituency of Mayfair, at one time. Aldermen Kate Waygood, Pat Robertson, Henry Dayday, all called the five-and-five system unworkable — unworkable, Mr. Minister. Now I know you're not impressed by that, but I wanted to put it on the record anyway.

Something else happened in Saskatoon not too long ago, which I know all members are aware of in this House. We had a by-election in Saskatoon Eastview, and I speak from personal experience in that by-election. I thought that we had a good candidate there and that I would give him a hand in trying getting him elected. And I went out and I did some work door to door, as they say, at the grass roots, in Saskatoon Eastview constituency.

And I know that the minister would not be surprised, but other people will be surprised to learn that a great number of people commented to me: what is the government doing with our ward system; why are they proposing this legislation; who's telling the government they should change; we're quite satisfied with the ward system. And interestingly enough, we won that by-election in an overwhelming fashion, Mr. Minister, and Mr. Chairman. As a matter of fact, the Conservative Party was unable to save their deposit in that by-election.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

B: W— hat about in the city of Regina? Just to show that this is not just Saskatoon, the city I come from, but the city of Regina — in 1977 the city of Regina had a vote on the retention of the ward system. By about 9,000 votes the people of Regina voted to retain the ward system. In 1988 the city of Regina passed a resolution, and it's reported in the May 10, 1988 *Leader-Post*:

A resolution from the City of Regina opposing the abolition of the ward system is gaining strong support throughout the province.

And it names the cities and other areas that are supporting the city of Regina in the resolution they passed, which they sent to the provincial government.

Support for the resolution has already been expressed by councils in Prince Albert, Melville, Weyburn, Moose Jaw, Melfort, Yorkton and Saskatoon.

So here we have another resolution, Mr. Chairman, supported by all of those cities, for the retention of the

ward system.

The city of Prince Albert has accepted the ward system voluntarily on their own, and wish to retain it, because they supported the city of Regina resolution. The city of Moose Jaw has . . . A person in Moose Jaw has sufficient names on a petition to cause a city-wide vote favouring the ward system at the next civic election in the city of Moose Jaw.

Now what about SUMA? We're heard some comments about SUMA organization, and their comments are quite well known in support of the ward system, and in effect telling the Government of Saskatchewan to keep their fingers out of the ward system. If there's any decision to be made, it should be made at the municipal level. And in this particular article in the *Star-Phoenix*, May 27, '88:

SUMA head, Don Abel, said after a meeting that his group expressed quite plainly (and I quote you, "expressed quite plainly") its belief that cities should be allowed to keep the system.

So this is a report on the SUMA organization as well.

Now more recently — and it's been referred to by another member here in the debate this evening — region 1 of SUMA, which represents 28 communities in south-eastern Saskatchewan, approximately 200,000 people, have passed a resolution yesterday directed to exactly the same issue, which the minister and his government have stated they plan to ignore.

What about the newspapers? What are they saying? Well the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* on March 26, 1988 said, "Vote on wards needed." It says:

The Urban Affairs minister should focus his concerns over the effectiveness of the ward system on public opinion. The public vote to put the system in place in Saskatchewan's three largest cities is about nine years ago and the public should be directly involved if it is to be abolished.

And they go on to say:

There is no apparent ground swell of feeling against the wards.

So the minister appears to be simply going by his own view that this system of electing urban governments results in overspending and inefficiencies. Well to that I say to the Minister of Urban Affairs, the credit rating of the city of Saskatoon is far superior to the province of Saskatchewan in which he's a cabinet minister, so he shouldn't make any remarks about the efficiency of the city of Saskatoon.

A little later the *Star-Phoenix* came out with another editorial. It was a little more blunt. Apparently the minister didn't understand the first editorial, or perhaps he doesn't read the *Star-Phoenix*. And on June 2, 1988 the *Star-Phoenix* had this to say: "Re-design or resign." And it says:

This government, author of some of the most

ill-considered legislation in the province's history (and it states) . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — And it lists them:

. . . the gas-tax-refund scheme, a short-lived tax on used cars, abolition of child(ren) dental care, to mention just a few examples — has struck again. This time, it's an assault on the ward system.

Urban Affairs minister . . . anti-ward obsession appears to have boiled over into an impossible stew which leaves urban voters to choose between two equally unworkable systems.

(And it mentions the minister's name) creation of five ward representatives and five at-large council members would give urban voters the worst of all possible systems. But a simple return to an entire at-large system wouldn't be much of an improvement.

And the editorial goes on, but I don't intend to read any more of that particular editorial.

What about business? Well there was a poll taken by the board of trade in Saskatoon, and this was in April, 1988 — fairly recent poll by the board of trade. And what does the board of trade show? Well it shows that 82 per cent voted against the modified system that this minister is proposing — 82 per cent of the board of trade people that voted, voted against what this minister's proposing. Eighteen per cent voted for what the minister is proposing. So here we have the board of trade, what the minister says is his sounding-board in the community, that he says he knows so well, said 82 per cent against his system of electing.

I want to suggest, and I said at the beginning of my remarks, and I want to conclude my remarks at this time, I said if there's anybody phoning, if there is anybody phoning wants to . . . is watching this evening and wants to phone in, I want to give them a couple of numbers to phone. And it won't cost them anything — it won't cost them the 50 cents that SaskTel charges. It's going to be free. All they've got to do is reverse the charges to me on these numbers.

And if those people want to call, they should call 787-6572 or 2287. Let me repeat those numbers, Mr. Chairman. The numbers are 787-6572 or 2287. And I want to encourage anyone who might be watching at this time of night to phone in and tell us what their opinion is. There will be no charge.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Well, Mr. Chairman, that was a pretty . . . I won't be that long, but I have to make just a couple of comments in rebuttal to the member from Westmount. And I can understand — I was making notes as he was speaking, or rambling, whatever — but I really can understand why the NDP fears the coalition. He referred

to my once being a Liberal and now being a Conservative. And I really understand that, and I really understand why the NDP fears the coalition, because the coalition will again keep you in opposition in the next election, for sure. And you're going to lose again. And even your new young leader is struggling in his capacity as being number one. Number two, he might have done a pretty good job, but number one, he's struggling . . . he lacks a lot of confidence in that role. Maybe, as time goes by, he's going to learn how to be a leader, but it'll be following the next election, and he'll lose again.

But you know, Mr. Chairman, let's clarify something one more time for the records. I ran in Regina North in 1982 when Regina North was a new seat. My home ground of Regina South was occupied by an existing Tory member who'd won in 1978. So I waited my time and then I went back to my natural stamping grounds of Regina South where my five kids grew up, where my five kids went to school, where I ran a couple of businesses, where I lived for about 18 years and probably had one of the first homes in Albert Park. And that's not as bad as my critic who moved into Regina North East from Humboldt, I'll tell you that. At least I was still in my home city.

He talked about store hours, and I will too, for a moment. And just to show you a couple of irrational comments that they made: in the Maple Creek area, where it's a tourism industry, they tried to close Mondays. They couldn't do it because it's a resort town, people wanted Mondays open. And yet in Macklin, a little further to the north, along the Alberta border, where Provost, Alberta, who has the opportunity to open Sundays, doesn't even affect Macklin to the tune that they don't worry about Sundays. They don't even open Mondays in Macklin, and it's a thriving, hustling community of 1,250 people, Mr. Chairman, and they're not concerned with that. And it all points out that we really do care about families. And this is again living proof of that.

Now the resolution on the ward system from Saskatoon . . . and I hate to say this all the time but, you know, the member from Westmount did not deal with the facts, Mr. Chairman. We didn't ignore the resolution that came; we acknowledged it. Once you get the resolution, you know the position of the council. I mean, it's there. And obviously you understand the council's position. They were all elected at wards; why would they want to change, you know? But the important thing is, Mr. Chairman, I understand that that resolution was only passed six to five. So to make it sound like there was no support is not right.

(0100)

But, Mr. Chairman, regarding the ward system, the taxpayers are my concern. He mentioned the board of trade survey, which was a pretty small survey. And albeit that that survey from Saskatoon Board of Trade, small as it was, maybe favoured the ward system, but let's acknowledge what happened in Regina. If he wants to compare apples with apples or chambers with chambers, the Regina chamber of commerce clearly wants the ward system gone. So don't accuse me of not listening. I listen, but the taxpayers are my concern.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Chairman, a dramatic change by the *Star-Phoenix*. If you read their articles when the NDP imposed the ward system against plebiscites not wanting it, when they imposed the ward system, the *Star-Phoenix* was right on the other side of the at-large system. And now they've changed. And yes, they haven't been too kind to me. You might say that they've been vicious in carrying the attack. They carried the attack more viciously against me than the NDP did. But I'll accept that.

But if you did search through the *Star-Phoenix*, you do find every now and then, if you look, something that does tell you the truth. Here's a headline: "Saskatonians split on the ward changes." Now these are people. These are not aldermen, Mr. Chairman, these are the people of Saskatoon.

"My initial reaction is it gives you potentially six aldermen to work with instead of one," the president of an association said. And he goes on to compliment this thing. Another who lives in Sutherland and who has locked horns with the city hall says that the compromise, he thinks, is beautiful because the new system will be more democratic. Now I'm quoting Saskatonians, I'm not quoting all of them. I can quote the mayor:

"Not everyone in Saskatoon was disappointed at the announcement I wait with some interest to see how it will work out," Mayor Cliff Wright said. "It tends to give each side of this controversy something that they say they wanted."

Now let's move to another city, an untouched city so far with the ward system comments. One headline, "Ward changes may help, is Spencer's assessment," the mayor of Prince Albert. Okay. That was what the Prince Albert *Daily Herald* said.

And then, interestingly enough, an editorial. They weren't too kind at first, but the opening paragraph and the last paragraph, later on in time as the debate evolved, is very interesting, Mr. Chairman. It starts this way:

When Saskatchewan's city councils stop stamping their feet and holding their breath until they turn blue, they will have to deal with the ward system changes.

Then it concludes by saying this:

Actually, the citizens of Prince Albert should thank Klein for giving us this rare opportunity to see our elected officials make a decision.

Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Chairman, this must be one of the most bizarre performances that any minister has ever put on in this House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — This minister is not being responsive to the questions that are being asked from this side of the Chamber, and he's coming on with explanations that just are absolutely incredible. Maybe it's the hour. But let me try and focus your mind on one simple point with respect

to this ward system, and it refers to Saskatoon.

Now the fact of the matter is that almost everybody in Saskatoon is unanimously of the view that they don't know why you're doing what you're doing. Most of Saskatoon just doesn't have any understanding about why you're doing what you're doing with this ward system. And the reason is that they've had a system that's been in effect for some years now, that everybody is relatively happy with. There's no big outcry in Saskatoon for any changes. There's no complaint that the existing system isn't working well in that city.

It's not that you're amending the legislation as an exercise in amending the legislation by providing some other options, Minister, that has them wondering. What has them wondering is simply this. Why is it that the existing system is not even an option? Why is it that the existing ward system which has served Saskatoon for so long is not even an option? I'd like your answer to that, Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the member made a pretty broad statement, that most of Saskatoon doesn't want a change. Now how does he know that? I mean, you can't say that.

An Hon. Member: — Answer the question.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I will. And to answer the question I'll answer it in the same way that I have answered it time after time after time in this debate, and I'll quote the member from Westmount.

The British North America Act puts the responsibility for creating local government institutions on the provincial government. The provincial government should design and put into effect the best democratic system of local government.

Now, Mr. Chairman, times changes, and right now everybody is demanding efficient governments at our level, at the federal level, and at the municipal level. The taxpayers want efficiency, and the ward system cannot provide the efficiencies that are demanded in this changing time, and even your Saskatonians say that in the article that I just quoted from.

Mr. Mitchell: — The simple answer is to retain the existing system as one of the options and let the citizens of Saskatoon, in an election in Saskatoon, decide what ward system they want.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — Who are you to tell them that that's not even an option? By what right do you stand here and say that that option is out of the question so far as they're concerned? It's the system they have and it's the system they want. Leave it with them.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, it's ironic. The ward system was imposed by the NDP in spite of plebiscites against it, imposed arbitrarily — bang, gone, no option,

no nothing. They just said, here you are. And not a take it or leave it — here you are, take it. Interesting.

Now we have given an option, Mr. Chairman, and they lose sight of that fact. Now what we've done, and what we've done is we've provided a modified ward system. The ward system is still in place, modified and mixed with an at-large.

Now I ask you, what's wrong with that? And following that we have given them an option because if they don't want the modified ward system, they do have the option to go into an at-large vote. So clearly they've got a choice, a choice that the NDP did not give them, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Chairman, I just spoke hurriedly before and I want to make a report from the people that matter. The people that matter are beginning to call in, Mr. Chairman. I walked into the lounge and immediately received 12 calls. I have the numbers here: two from Saskatoon, one from Swift Current, and nine from Regina. Every one of them said, pull that legislation out of there.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — Now, Mr. Chairman . . . Mr. Chairman . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order. Order. I'd ask the member from Moose Jaw North to allow the member from Westmount to make his comments.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Chairman, I don't want to take any more time, however, there's more results coming in. The numbers are 787-6572, 787-2287. I want the people to call in. it doesn't cost them anything. They can reverse the charges to me.

There are three more people called so we're now up to 15 calls, as fast as we can take the numbers in there. And I'll be back to report more, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I guess Connie must have called from Swift Current because the ward system doesn't even bother her out there. So hello Connie, if you're still watching.

But, Mr. Chairman, the debate is . . . in spite of the hour, I have to admit one thing: the debate is getting a little bit better. At least they're off the personal attack and they're struggling to make some sense.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I have to refer in my opening remarks to the fact the minister had indicated that the Regina chamber of commerce had endorsed Sunday opening. It's my understanding, Mr. Chairperson, that the Regina chamber of commerce has taken no position on both the ward issue and the Sunday opening issue. And I want to just set the record straight on that.

It is clear to me, Mr. Chairperson, that the legislation with respect to Sunday opening clearly shows that that minister and the PC government has shown absolutely no

leadership in the area of Sunday opening, and has no political will to do what is right for Saskatchewan people, Mr. Chairperson.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — Instead of standing up and taking a stand against the eastern corporations, Mr. Chairperson, they've chose instead to endorse the decisions of corporations located in Toronto and New York, Mr. Chairperson. They've simply endorsed the neo-Conservative agenda that has been emanating from the East and abroad, which we discussed at some length in the legislature last night, Mr. Chairperson.

Now I want to bring to the minister's attention the fact that I have also talked to many people in my constituency, Regina Lakeview, and I have canvassed the businesses in Regina Lakeview. And, Mr. Minister, you should be listening to this because this constituency is very, very close to yours, Mr. Minister. And in particular, let me just read to you some of the comments, Mr. Minister, from some of those businesses right across the street from you, Mr. Minister, right across the street from you.

For example: "Local choice means no choice . . ." And there's the member from Meadow Lake running off at the mouth again as he usually does, Mr. Chairperson, unable to say anything intelligent with all that fluff between the ears. But nevertheless, Mr. Chairperson, I'll continue with these comments that are coming from businesses right across the street from you, Mr. Minister, right across the street.

Local choice means no choice as I see it. Municipal councils really will have no authority as the large stores do as they please any way to the detriment of small business. Apart from concerns expressed in 3 and 4, I believe that Sunday opening will mean bad news for the smaller centres as people will travel to the cities to shop, taking badly needed money out of the smaller communities. Our society has precious little free time as it is, and I don't want to see our one family day also disappear.

Another individual writes to me, Mr. Chairperson:

Small businesses provide the most employment and contribute the most tax dollars to each community in relation to big business. They are being run out of business and worked to death because all levels of government do not have the guts to stand up and do the right thing.

Another one of my constituents, a small-business person, indicates:

It's the same old story. We are a family business competing against multinationals who give away more than we can make, and most family businesses have a hard time competing against them, but who really cares? The government supports them because they give better discounts.

And it's signed by "A frustrated owner."

And I can go on at length, at length, Mr. Minister. The responses I have been getting in from the small-business communities in Regina Lakeview are 3:1 against Sunday opening, Mr. Minister, 3:1. And let me tell you, Mr. Minister, these businesses are right down Albert Street, right across the street from you, Mr. Minister, right across the street from your constituency.

And therefore, Mr. Minister, as has been demonstrated from the member from Saskatoon Westmount, the phones are ringing off the hook, people are pouring in to tell you and your government, at this late hour, you should pull that Bill, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

(0115)

Ms. Simard: — You should pull that Bill. Once more I'm going to ask you, Mr. Minister: will you consider pulling that Bill? Will you please pull that Bill . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Pardon? Before I sit down I'm going to list off the numbers again for anybody that wants to phone in. They are 787-6572, 787-2287. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Oh, Mr. Chairman. We're getting into . . . it's getting late obviously, because . . . I'll start getting out some more letters, I guess. No, I won't bother.

I freely admit it, that the chambers are all over the place on this issue, including my Regina chamber, of which I've been a member for some, I don't know, 20 years or 25 years, I can't even remember.

But the *Leader-Post* clearly indicates the Regina chamber of commerce position on the ward system, so let's get that clear and let's not have any more inaccuracies. Okay? So accept that, accept that.

And I say this: the member from Fairview, maybe he's out making a call, but I would ask him to take a survey. I would ask the member from Saskatoon Fairview to take a survey, in his home town, of Supervalu on a Sunday. I understand that it's just jammed, you can't even park on their lot. Tell him to take a survey and come back with that. See what consumers say.

And getting back to the member from Regina Lakeview, let's . . . she was talking about my constituency, I guess, right across the street from me. Well I didn't have time to list them all, Mr. Chairman, but I do have a few, I do have a few. I think that they're open on Sundays. We've got D.J.Cinnamons, we've got A & W, we've got Burger King. You're going to say, they're restaurants. Okay, that's fine. We got Greko's, that's another restaurant. We've got the Vagabond and the Landmark. Well they're in the hotel business, that's fair, but we don't regulate them, so they're open.

But interestingly enough, across the street from my constituency office where she's got this raft of letters, who do we have open Sunday? Canadian Tire, Bi-Rite Drugs, and Acme Video.

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, Mr.

Minister, you invited me to get involved in this debate and I'm happy to do that. Let me say, right off the top, Mr. Minister, that in my mind this Bill is a Bill of betrayal and it can be called nothing other than that.

People are calling this, Mr. Minister, they're calling this the Superstore Bill. The Superstore Bill because some months ago when Superstore thumbed its nose at your government and the provincial legislation, you didn't have the jam to say that in Saskatchewan we have a law and we're going to enforce it. You jammed out to big corporate interests, and that's a mark, a black mark, that is consistent with the character of your government in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, I too have had a number of pieces of correspondence from business people in Moose Jaw. And what are some of these family business people saying about your proposed legislation? Let me share with you, Mr. Minister, and those people who are watching these proceedings tonight and read in *Hansard* some of the reactions from small-business, family business people in Moose Jaw. They're saying things like this, and I quote:

Business has declined steadily over the last eight months, approximately 10 per cent. Longer hours for less business is obviously bad business practice.

One question we should all ask is whose idea is this? Personally I don't believe it is the consumer. My idea is it came out of the corporate boardrooms of the East whose population is against it. Why us? And I ask, why us, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Another family business person, Mr. Minister, writes this about your proposed legislation. It starts with these three words, "I hate it":

I hate it. There is no increase in sales with Sunday opening. The weekday business is spread over seven days instead of six. Toronto has just vetoed Sunday opening. What can the Saskatchewan government be thinking of?

And I share that question with this Assembly, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, earlier this evening you said that if businesses are not making money that they can close their doors. And what the small-business people say about that ignorant sentiment, what they say is this, Mr. minister:

We are now open on Sunday. It has not increased our weekly sales nearly enough to offset our increased cost. The consumer has no more money to spend if we're open 24 hours, seven days a week; however, unless all stores close, we cannot.

And that is what people are saying, Mr. Minister. They're saying if they have to close their doors on Sundays, if they have to close when their competition is open, that they'll end up closing their doors, period. And I say that's shame, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, I say that you have no understanding of the realities of family business, and family business across Saskatchewan has come to know with this Bill that the best business minds of the PC Party have gone into atrophy, quite frankly, Mr. Minister.

Your government, in the time that you've been in office, has not known a single balanced budget. Small-business people are saying that if they ran their businesses like you guys run the government, they would have gone out of business a long time ago.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — What's the business reality? What's the business reality? Let me show you what another business person says, a family business person says about your proposed legislation:

There are only X amount of dollars to be spent. By longer hours we increase our overhead with no increased revenue. There is more part-time jobs than full-time jobs, and as a result, less money is being earned, and in return, less spent.

That's the reality. Small-business people understand that and you don't, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — In addition to all of this, Mr. Minister, you've taken a two-faced approach to the service to the public. You say this: Superstore will dictate Sunday shopping practices in Regina. As a result of that, other stores in Regina will have to stay open to survive. As a result of that, Moose Jaw will have to stay open to keep their business from going to Regina. As a result of that, Assiniboia stores will have to keep open to keep their businesses from going to Moose Jaw.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, have you ever considered offering to put the same service delivery demands on government? And let me share you that sentiment with another business person who write this, Mr. Minister:

If retail outlets are all open on Sundays, then I would like to see all government offices open to the public on Sundays as well. I think that is only fair, don't you?

I say yes, that's fair. If you're going to put that demand on small-business people, then why isn't the same principle true for government services to the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, this Bill has been a betrayal of

family business. It is a betrayal of employees who count on just one day a week to spend with their families. It's a betrayal of rural Saskatchewan.

In the end, Mr. Minister, in the end, family business in rural communities, will either burn out or close down. That's the reality. In order to survive in the small villages and towns across the province of Saskatchewan, family businesses, Ma and Pa businesses across this province will end up having to stay open on Sunday. Many of those businesses without employees — they're run totally by Ma and pa — will have to stay open or go out of business. And I say that it is a shame. It is a shame that your rural members, your rural members on your side of the government, Mr. Minister, have allowed you to manipulate their small minds. This is only a catalyst to closing down rural Saskatchewan, and that's a betrayal of rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, come the next election, family business people, employees, and rural people in Saskatchewan will tell you that they're madder than Hades and they're not going to take it any more. They're going to turf you birds out, and you're going to be leading the parade.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Let me summarize my remarks, Mr. Minister, with this comment, yet another comment from a small-business person in Moose Jaw who writes about your proposed legislation:

Legislation to shift this to the municipal level is a cop-out of responsibility by the provincial government. Sunday shopping is needed like more hot, dry weather.

And I share that sentiment, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Let me conclude, Mr. Minister, with this question to you, and I ask you to give a very specific answer to a very specific question. And the question is this — listen very carefully to this question, Mr. Minister, and I ask you to answer it honestly and to follow through on your commitment because this question, Mr. Minister, tests your metal; this question tests how much you really believe in this Bill.

And I ask you sir; if this Bill passes, will you personally, will you personally open your constituency office for service to your constituents on Sundays? Mr. Minister, are you going to run your constituency office like a Saskatchewan family business? Will you make that commitment to your constituents, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: I'll answer that question first, and I don't mean to embarrass my critic. But Sunday, my critic and I were both invited to the YWCA to do some work at a strawberry Sunday social. Now I showed at my appointed

time, 1 o'clock. You were supposed to show at 1:30. I left at 2 and you still weren't there. I don't know if you showed or not. But if you want to know if I work Sundays in my capacity both as an MLA and as a minister, I do.

But, Mr. Chairman . . .

An Hon. Member: — Will you open your office?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — The colleague from Moose Jaw . . . my, my but you're getting excited. Sounds like you're frightened, and you should be frightened. You accuse me of not listening. You're talking about businesses in Moose Jaw. Didn't you pay attention when I read this letter from the Moose Jaw chamber of commerce? And I'll read one more line. The underlying factor for Moose Jaw — and you should hang your head in shame because you probably won't be around after the next election — the one line: frankly, Moose Jaw is open for business.

Now what's wrong with that? That's an old cliché. That's something that this government coined, and Moose Jaw is using it. Shame on you for not representing your city when your chamber, your very chamber . . . who do you listen to out here?

And in the meantime you accuse us of listening to multinationals. What a joke, Mr. Chairman. Bi-Rite Drugs, multinational? I don't think so — local family; I know them. Acme Video, multinational? No, I know them as well. What a weak opponent. What a weak argument. Your best attack was a personal attack against the minister. That's not acceptable out there in the real world.

Talk about a betrayal of rural Saskatchewan; you missed the whole point. Do you not understand that Saskatchewan is an agricultural-based community? Do you not understand that how goes the agricultural community, so goes the business sector out there in agriculture? And the billion and a half dollar deficiency payment that we were able to get from the federal government and shift into the economy last year to assist the small-business community out there in rural Saskatchewan, don't talk to me about betrayal. Don't talk to me about protecting families.

Let the interest rates go up to 22 per cent; let them lose their homes. The NDP don't care about families. Let the vicious dogs run wild, maim the kids. Do you care? Not a bit. And that's in this Bill and that's what you're holding up. Let's get on with it. Let's pass it.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, I am prepared to put my record of listening to business people from Moose Jaw on the line any time, compared to you, sir.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Unlike some others in this Assembly, Mr. Minister, I do not go to meetings and listen to business people tell me that they think this Bill is crap and then walk out and tell the media that they were in support of the Bill.

And I tell you, I tell you, Mr. Minister, I have had in my

office over 100 responses, 100 letters from small-business people, from family business people in Moose Jaw, and by a ratio of 2:1 they say to me that your Bill stinks, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — So I tell you, I am listening to business people in Moose Jaw. Now I notice very carefully, Mr. Minister, that you avoided my question, and I will ask you this question again.

The question again is very simply this: if this Bill passes — listen very carefully, Mr. Minister — if this Bill passes, will you personally open your constituency office every Sunday to be of service to your constituents? Will you run your constituency office in the same way that Saskatchewan family businesses will be forced to operate if this Bill carries? Will you open your constituency office to service your constituents on Sunday, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: Oh, what a joke. If he doesn't understand that MLAs work seven days a week, I don't know who will. And it has nothing to do with opening the office. I mean, don't you accept calls on Sunday at home? I do. Don't you go out . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

You know, you're not even making a point. But, Mr. Chairman, exactly, exactly what I said. Exactly what I said. Even the Moose Jaw chamber, even the Moose Jaw chamber is all over the lot on this. But they support one basic principle, Mr. Chairman. The basic principle is easy: quite regulating our lives.

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chairman, it's been suggested by a number of my colleagues this night in the debate and at other times, that this minister will not listen, is stubborn, and in some ways it's a hopeless debate — that we're not going to change his mind.

Mr. Chairman, I happen to believe there's hope for anybody. I happen to believe that. And I want to offer one more opportunity for this minister, one more opportunity for this minister to respond to what the people of Saskatchewan are saying.

So, Mr. Minister, when I conclude the few remarks that I want to make I'll be asking you once more: will you tonight, even at this late hour, will you tonight delay passage of this legislation? Will you do what people across this province are asking; and they're asking it even tonight on the phones in our caucus lounge. They're phoning at this moment to ask you if you will delay this legislation.

I'm going to ask you that question at the end of my remarks and I'm going to do it primarily on behalf of Saskatchewan families.

(0130)

Mr. Minister, for your information, since we announced the phone numbers here we have had a total of 37 calls to date on two telephones — 37 calls to date. Six of them

opposed to the position we take, 31 of them in favour of the position we take.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — For those who wish to express their opinion to this minister, I remind you that the phone numbers in the New Democratic Party caucus lounge are 787-2287 and 787-6572. And please feel free to phone collect. Express your opinion to this minister and this government.

Mr. Minister, most of those who have expressed their concern with this piece of legislation, if not all of those, have done so on the basis of a concern for Saskatchewan families. Mr. Minister, that's the concern I share, and that's the concern we share on this side of the House.

Now in all of this long debate, I think I have heard members on your side advance two reasons in regard to the store hour question.

An Hon. Member: They used to have amateur hour on CKOM. Phone in; here's the number. That's what you're doing — amateur hour.

Mr. Calvert: — Now there's the Minister of Health, Mr. Chairman. There's the Minister of Health speaking from his seat, waving his arms. Mr. Chairman, could we have some order from the Minister of Health, please.

Mr. Chairman, in the course of this debate, I think I have heard government members advance two positions in defence of the store hours provision of this Bill. The Deputy Premier stands up in this House and says, well it's a difficult issue; it's a difficult issue. Well, agreed, it's a difficult issue. So what's the solution of this government to handle this difficult issue? Well it's just to wash their hands of it; to say, yes it's too difficult for us to handle, and so we'll give it to the municipalities. That's their answer to the difficulty question.

The other response I've heard from the Minister of Urban Affairs again tonight. Now I've heard it said, Mr. Chairman, that the family who prays together, stays together. And I happen to agree with that. I've heard it said, Mr. Chairman, that the family who plays together, stays together. And I happen to agree with that. But tonight, for the very first time, I heard the theory advanced by this minister that the family who shops together, somehow stays together. That's this minister's defence for wide open Sunday shopping across Canada.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, is it too much to ask, is it too much to ask that one day out of seven should be reserved for those who choose to worship? Is it too much to ask that one day out of seven should be reserved for family? Is it too much to ask that one day out of seven should be reserved for friends and neighbours? Is that too much to ask, Mr. Chairman?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — I simply want to say tonight, Mr. Chairman, that the interests of Saskatchewan families are simply too important to sacrifice to the rage of

consumerism, which this government tends to bless. The interests of Saskatchewan families are too important to sacrifice to the interests of their corporate friends from eastern Canada. And, Mr. Deputy Chairman, the interests of Saskatchewan families are too important to sacrifice to the ego of this man and the plan of this government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — And those who may be watching this debate, I invite them, and if they share that point of view, I invite them to call in.

Mr. Minister, my question: will you delay passage of this legislation?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, the night is drawing on, and if he wants to have, or if the opposition indeed want to have serious debate, let's do that. Let's get off that phone kick. I've been passed a message that said that our phone people made 56 calls that you're not reporting. so if we're playing a game, then let's forget it.

Mr. Chairman, a minister, the church, accusing people, accusing moms and dads that both work, accusing single parent families that work, of being non-religious because they want to shop on Sundays. Of all the arrogance that I've ever heard of. Coming from a man of the cloth, you should be embarrassed to stand in your pulpit on a Sunday and call your people that — that they're non-religious because they want to go and do some shopping. And we're talking about double income workers and single parent families — 11 per cent.

Mr. Chairman, municipalities have the right to choose what the people across this province want, except with added powers, and they can do that in keeping with their choice and in keeping with the tradition of their community. Mr. Chairman, I don't believe that this government can be fairer than that.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to join this debate representing my constituent, the member for Regina South, and representing a good number of folks throughout Regina North, and indeed across our great province.

What this debate is about is the fundamental future of our province, of our small businesses, their fundamental right to participate and to compete in a market-place. And the minister pokes fun of our plea, our call for some telephone phone-ins. He makes light of that; says we're playing silly games. We are simply taking democracy right to the people.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — What you are saying, Minister . . . I want to deal with the ward system first. You are trying to change the ward system from one that people in the major cities of Saskatchewan favour. We have headlines from Moose Jaw to vote on the ward system where they have a petition calling for the city to adopt a ward system where each alderman represents a specific part of the city. Yet you

ignore that; you do so at your own peril.

We have another headline, "City pleas for retention of ward system," in which:

The Saskatoon council is going to ask the government through an urgent letter, (it says urgent letter,) not to change the ward system for the 1988 municipal election in October. Council will also reconfirm, through the letter to the government and the opposition, its opposition to changes to the present ward system. The letter will state that the public should have the option of voting by the ward system if it so desires.

Then the next headline we've got is . . . Minister for Urban Affairs — it's your name, but I'm substituting Minister for Urban Affairs . . . "rejects aldermen's plea to retain ward system in the fall."

The next thing we have is, "Local autonomy under attack," in an article in the Star-Phoenix, June 22 this year. I'm going to read three paragraphs for the minister. One is:

Proposals to change the ward system are the heaviest and most unfair of the assaults this package of amendments makes on local autonomy. But Urban Affairs minister (yourself) is still settling old scores from the early '70s and he won't listen to reason. And the store hours issue isn't a great deal better.

The article goes on:

It all amounts to an image of an overbearing provincial government arrogantly reaching out and, in the case of the ward system changes in particular, almost vindictively dictating the terms of urban living.

This article ends with a paragraph that states:

That is a far cry from the government, first elected in 1982, promising a new and improved respect for local autonomy. None of this makes a great deal of sense to ordinary urban dwellers, but it's the type of mindless and pointless oppression that won't be forgiven or forgotten.

I happen to agree with that last paragraph totally.

We have some new totals that the minister might be interested in, on our call-in. We've now had a total of 48 calls — 42 in favour of what members of the New Democratic Party opposition have been saying; only six against.

I again will, in an effort to allow people to participate in the fullest manner, in the manner of public participation, I'm going to give the numbers, and I'm going to ask people to call in. Please call in. We want to hear, whether you're for or against it; it doesn't matter which side. Call in. Call collect.

I'm going to give two numbers. Do it, please. Let's . . . This

is the final chance to get the Minister of Urban Affairs to hear your voice. This is the dying hours, obviously, of this legislature. Phone in. The numbers, and you can call collect — 787-6572. That's 787-6572. The second number is 787-2287.

Please call. Feel free to call collect. We want to hear from you. We hope that you, Mr. Minister, want to hear from these folks as well.

An Hon. Member: — Keep the phones ringing; stop that Bill.

Mr. Trew: — Ring those phones. Stop the Bill.

What this ward system debate, where it stems from, Minister . . . You have used the argument that a ward system enables councillors to simply spend money just without regard to where it's coming from. But I want to tell you what the real problem is in cities like Regina. The real problem is you and your government, and let me outline what it is.

There was an original — this is a city of Regina document — an original net provincial transfer to the city. They anticipated revenues of \$24,823,300. Then they found out what you were going to do, and this was in this immediate past budget year, you gave them a \$16,968,500, which was a net loss, Mr. Minister, of \$7,854,800 to the city of Regina alone — never mind Saskatoon, never mind Moose Jaw, never mind Prince Albert, never mind North Battleford, never mind the other cities throughout Saskatchewan — nearly \$8 million, which is a 31.6 per cent decrease last year in the funding that you and your government gave to the city of Regina.

To maintain the current rate of civic services, the city of Regina estimates that to make up that deficit, if they were to simply maintain the status quo of employment and so on, would require a seven mills or eleven and a half per cent — pardon me, an eleven and a half per cent increase in our taxes. Minister, part of that comes from things like transit, where you reduced from \$895,000 the payment to \$688,000, \$207,000 less money. There was no continuation of historical levels of funding for major water and sewage; capital projects, the loss in that area alone was \$1.72 million.

There was expenditure increases that not only the cities have had to deal with, Minister, every individual in Saskatchewan has had to deal with it . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member for Wascana is saying, wrap it up, wrap it up. Resign your seat, let's have a by-election. We'll see how we wrap it up.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

(0145)

Mr. Trew: Your E & H tax increases from 5 per cent to 7 per cent cost the city of Regina, for six months only, \$1.89 million; the gas tax cost them \$165,000; expenditure increase for half a year, \$480,000. That's what this is all about.

Mr. Minister, I want to turn to the shopping issue, where

the headline in this article says, the Minister for Urban Affairs says: "Local communities should decide shopping issues." Well how is it, Mr. Minister, that the local communities, the urban governments, the councils, should be making the decision on shopping hours, and yet when it comes to the ward system, where we've had major votes in Saskatoon, Regina, now a call for the ward system in Moose Jaw — why is it that on the ward system it's the Minister for Urban Affairs who knows all, who can dictate, the little dictator from Regina South, can tell them what's best for them, but in shopping hours, which is a touchy issue, you don't have an opinion, best left to local autonomy.

I just want to remind people, the arguments have been made about Sunday shopping. I want to remind folks of the phone numbers; they're still ringing; we'll have a new total when the next speaker gets up. Looks like it's going to be a very long evening for you, Mr. Minister.

I'm going to give the phone numbers — 787-2287 and 787-6572. And again I plead to the people of Saskatchewan, anyone who's watching at this unholy hour, please call. We're here. We want to hear from you. Give us a call; tell us what you think of this Bill. Ring those phones. Stop the Bill. Simple as that. Ring the phones. Stop the Bill. This is the last chance that we have for that.

The point I'm making, Minister, about Sunday shopping and the ward system — you can't have it both ways. On the ward system, you know it all; and on Sunday shopping, the municipalities know it all. Well which is it? Which is it? It can't be both ways.

I want to commend to the minister and anyone else, an article in the June 23 Star-Phoenix. This is an excellent article that sums up everything I could possibly say. The headline wraps it up even nicer, but it's a fairly short column written by a Verne Clemence. The headline is, "Public relation not Klein's strong suit," and I recommend that to anybody and everybody as a very good article.

Mr. Minister, I feel some benevolence because, as I understand it, unless you've moved recently you're still a constituent of mine. I feel some benevolence, so I ask you — save some face: will you withdraw or stand this Bill? In the name of decency, looking after the people of Saskatchewan, will you stand this Bill?

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, the New Democratic Party supports two very important principles that clearly your PC government does not. We support the principle of a common day of rest, and we support the principle of retaining the ward system.

To permit seven-day-a-week opening in Saskatchewan is to over-commercialize our province and to put commerce on Sundays ahead of family life. And to abolish the ward system is to erode democracy and to cancel a civic election system that has been serving the public very well.

Now, Mr. Minister, as you're well aware, the city of Saskatoon has asked for the retention of the ward system. Dozens of other municipalities have done the same. The

Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association has asked for the retention of the ward system.

My question to you is very simple, Mr. Minister: can you name us one single municipality in the whole province of Saskatchewan that supports your 1988 legislation to abolish the ward system? And will you, Mr. Minister, if there is such a municipality, table that correspondence? And if there's not a municipality, Mr. Minister, then can you tell us what gives you the right to run roughshod over every single municipality in this province on the ward system issue?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Chairman, would the minister answer my question? The minister is sitting in his seat. He's refusing to answer my question. And I think Mr. Chairman, that that clearly indicates that there isn't such a municipality. But if there is one or two or three, we'd like to know which municipalities they are, because to date we haven't heard of a single one.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Oh, Mr. Chairman. You know, we've been debating this thing so long . . . It's interesting that the NDP has been fighting this ward system for so long . . . Don't you realize there's a drought out there? Don't you realize that our agricultural sector is suffering?

They're laughing at the drought, Mr. Chairman, the NDP laughs at the drought that our farmers in Saskatchewan are suffering — laughing at it.

The government's constitutional responsibility, Mr. Chairman . . . I've said this a hundred times. I'll rephrase it. Maybe he didn't understand the quote, the member from Saskatoon Westmount: the provincial government's constitutional responsibility to provide an effective and democratic institutional framework for municipal governments.

As far as a municipality is concerned, if you want an example, the city of Moose Jaw, who had every right to go into a ward system ever since it was imposed on the larger cities, chose not to.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Chairman, I want to report what I have to report to you in the House in a serious manner, because it is a serious matter. I didn't think there would be that many people up watching television at this time of night, 2 o'clock in the morning. And I gave the two telephone numbers out and I asked people to respond.

They responded from Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Mossbank, Swift Current, and other places. Their report to me was 64 in favour of the position that we're taking here on this side of the House, and eight supporting the position the government is taking.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: Now I did it to illustrate a point, Mr. Chairman, that the people of Saskatchewan do not support this government in the action they're taking.

I want to keep this on a serious vein, so I'm going to ask the people that were phoning in to please do not phone any longer. This is a serious matter. We want the government to withdraw this legislation, or at least put it off. We have received enough telephone calls from people that were up watching the legislative broadcast to indicate quite clearly that they were overwhelmingly in support of the position that the members on this side of the House have taken.

So I would thank the people very much that phoned in, many of them paying for the call themselves, from Saskatoon and, as a matter of fact, Swift Current. And as a matter of fact, in order to verify the results, I had several people from the media in the office, and they answered the phones rather than me answering them, and they questioned the people that phoned in.

So if the members across the way think that they're going to say to the people of Saskatchewan, we don't believe you when you called in, they're wrong, because the media was there and they took a number of the calls to verify to themselves that they were legitimate calls, and they talked to the people.

So I want to report, in conclusion, it was 64 to eight out of 72 calls overwhelmingly in favour of the position of the minister withdrawing his legislation on the ward system, and numerous ones also commented that the minister is wrong on his legislation about Sunday shopping.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank the countless thousands that are watching the proceedings and didn't phone in.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that I have witnessed one of the more phenomenal events of the 13 years I've spent in this legislature, this evening. If anyone had told me that an opposition, even one as spirited and as talented as this one, would start a debate and keep it up in a vigorous fashion at this time of night for what is now close to three hours, I would have said it's impossible. What is even . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Has the member called time?

An Hon. Member: — Pardon me?

Mr. Chairman: — Has the member called the clock? Proceed.

Mr. Shillington: — I don't know if that's the chairman's idea of humour or not, but it's not mine.

Moreover, if anyone had said that you could ask for telephone calls at 1 o'clock on a Tuesday night and have the phones ringing off the wall, I would have said that's impossible. And the only reason why there wasn't a lot more phone calls was because people were getting busy signals back there. It was apparent. As soon as one telephone hung up, someone else phoned.

I want to say very quickly, Mr. Minister, I sent out 700 questionnaires in my riding. The businesses in my riding are very different than the businesses in the member from

Regina North West. The businesses in my riding tend to be professional offices, doctors' offices, offices from interprovincial, international companies.

I got results which were not terribly different, I want to tell you. I got results about 2:1, and about 20 per cent of them wrote back. It isn't just small-business people who have to go back and work on Sunday, it's everybody who cares about such people. And that appears to exclude you.

Mr. Minister, your Premier has said that you put God first, the family second, and the PC Party third. Quite frankly, on Sunday shopping, I think you've lost sight of the interest of all three of those parties. I do not know why you're doing what you're doing. You're doing it obviously in opposition to your own best interests.

I want to ask you . . . Mr. Minister, I have just one question. In light of what's happened this evening, are you sure you don't want a 10-minute recess for a caucus meeting?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, this has been an interesting and, I think, enlightening debate. I stand here and I say, with some regret, that from all of the indications from what the minister has said, and in the last three-quarters of an hour or half an hour, his refusal even to answer the questions which have been asked, that it appears that this minister and this government are so determined to ignore all of those people of Saskatchewan who are saying in every way possible, including the phone calls tonight, so determined to impose their legislation against the wishes of the vast majority of Saskatchewan people, that it is unlikely the government is going to bend and stop this Bill at this time.

I say that sincerely in sorrow, because by this stubborn approach by this minister and this government, it is the people of Saskatchewan who are the losers. They are the losers, Mr. Speaker.

A press reporter asked me earlier this evening: with the government proceeding the way it is, is the NDP going to be a winner? I said that I would have to say that if we are, it's in sorrow, because it's the people who are going to be the losers, and they're going to remember for a long time. And in the end, it's going to be this Conservative government and this party that's going to be the loser at the next provincial election.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — This debate has brought forward and exposed some very important facts, Mr. Chairman. We saw here a situation where the Minister of Urban Affairs and his Premier, by allowing him to proceed the way he has, have refused to stand up for the families of Saskatchewan. The Premier has refused to stand up for the families of Saskatchewan. They have been abandoned. They have been abandoned because of a cynical grab for power by this government, power at the municipal level. They're prepared to sacrifice the needs and the interests of the families of Saskatchewan in order to try to attempt to grab power at the municipal level.

(0200)

They have abandoned the family on this issue, as they have on many other issues, because they have decided that they want to cater to the large corporate sector of this country which is going to dominate the business world of this province, when this legislation is in place, to the detriment of the small-business people and the small family businesses of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, this debate has exposed very clearly that this government and this Premier have abandoned the small-business community. They have abandoned the family business. They have abandoned rural business. This is an attack on the very backbone of the Saskatchewan economy.

It is the small-business people, the small-business sector that provides most of the jobs. It is the small-business sector that generates a great portion of the wealth which provides the resources which we then, as a province, can pay for the services such as health care and education which we must have and we must maintain at a high level.

And yet in spite of that, Mr. Chairman, it is these very people, these small and family businesses, who have been singled out for attack by the Premier and by the Minister of Urban Affairs. Inconceivable that that would ever happen by a government that goes around and pretends to be the supporter of the business community, and particularly small business.

What we see here is a government deliberately taking away the rights of urban residents to choose the form of elected council that they wish to have, the form by which they elect that council.

That's not new. This government has introduced legislation in this House that sets them up for a gerrymander of provincial constituencies. They would go that far in order to try to preserve themselves in power so they can continue to hand out their patronage and reward their friends at the expense of Saskatchewan families, at the expense of the small-business community.

And now what they have done, or what they're attempting to do with this legislation, is to set up a gerrymander of municipal elections as well. That's why, Mr. Chairman, that I say what I say in sorrow. Here is a government that attacks the local autonomy of our municipalities.

The public has spoken loudly. Through every means available the public has said that the government should not proceed with this Bill. New organizations have been formed around the province since the government began to talk about this legislation, and these organizations have communicated . . . one of these organizations, the coalition against opening on Sundays, has communicated with over 48,000 businesses in Saskatchewan, and overwhelmingly they have said to the government, don't do it!

Call an all-party committee of the legislature. Hold hearings all across the province. Give the people an opportunity to speak just like they spoke on those telephone calls tonight, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — And no one, no one is more surprised that I, that at this time of night, with this kind of a debate, a comment made by one member of this House for people who phoned would generate well in excess of 50 phone calls. Who would have thought that?

Now if that does not say the strength of the feeling that's out there on this issue, I don't know what can. And you must have a government, Mr. Chairman, that is absolutely blind. Either that, or it's a government that's so determined to tear down the very institutions of this province so that it can satisfy its own private agenda, that it's prepared to ignore that kind of message.

We on this side of the House believe in the rights of people to choose. We believe in the democratic process. We believe that people in municipalities and our cities should be able to decide what kind of electoral system they want. We believe that small-business people should have a right of choice, but they can't have a right of choice if you give it to corporate choice which is going to run roughshod over the small-business sector of this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I say to the minister opposite, Mr. Minister, you are making a mistake. You have been sent a message. In fact, when you consistently refused to listen and to hear that message, your resignation has been demanded. And if you were honourable in any sense of the word, you would have handed your resignation in to the Premier so he could do the right thing.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — For all of those people who made those phone calls, I say to them thank you for taking part in the democratic process.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — That's what democracy is all about. It is giving people an opportunity to be heard. I say to those people who called, and many others who did not call, this government takes away your right to be heard. This government does not deserve to remain in power. This government will not be in power after the next election because it will be booted out of office.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I don't know if there is any more that can be said or needs to be said in this debate. This debate has continued for some five weeks, and even beyond that before the Bill was introduced before that. This debate will not stop with the passage of this Bill because I say to the minister, those organizations

that have been formed to oppose your stubborn legislation will continue.

They will continue and they will do all the work that's necessary to maintain their position on a common pause day. And they will in turn, Mr. Minister, stay in position to defeat you when you go to the polls at the next election.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — And I want to say to you that the New Democratic Party will stand shoulder to shoulder with them and support them in that cause.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Now before I sit down, I'm going to just serve notice to the minister that we will give him one more chance to show that they are not totally rejecting the democratic process. I'm going to move an amendment to section 6 of the Bill dealing with the ward system. And in that amendment I'm going to propose . . . I'm going to give the minister his due. I'm going to allow him to have the two options which he proposes: the choice of the at-large system, or the choice of the dual system, the worst system of all.

But I'm going to ask him, if he really believes, and the House Leader, the Deputy Premier, if they really believe in democracy as it should be, to allow an amendment which will allow a third choice, and that is the choice of the ward system as well and let the municipalities make that decision. And we will see how those members vote on that amendment, Mr. Chairman.

And so I am going to conclude my remarks and allow the Bill to go to clause-by-clause consideration. As I began I will conclude. I do that with regret. The New Democratic Party has put up a great fight on this Bill along with all the people throughout the province who have done the same. But here comes a time when the majority can steamroll over the minority. And in this case, that's what this government is doing, and that, in the end, Mr. Chairman, will defeat this government so it can never do it again.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 6

Mr. Chairman: — House amendment to clause 6 of the printed Bill, moved by the member for Regina North East. Will the members take the amendment as read.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I think I would like to read the amendment. I'm sorry to take further the time of the House, Mr. Chairman, but this amendment is of such importance I think it deserves to be put on the record and explain what the amendment would do.

It would be an amendment to clause 6 and it would allow the right of an urban municipality to be able to choose, by

plebiscite, a ward system or an at-large system or the dual system. I'm not taking away with this amendment anything that the minister already wants in this Bill. I'm simply adding the option of the ward system which good urban municipalities want to have, and they're asking for it, and should have a right to have. And my amendment, Mr. Chairman, is as follows:

Section 6 of the printed Bill:

Amend section 6 of the printed Bill:

(a) by adding immediately before the words "The council of a city" where they appear in the first line of subsection 25(1) being enacted therein, the following: "Subject to a plebiscite resulting in a majority of the eligible electors resident in that municipality voting in the affirmative";

(b) by adding immediately before the words "The council of a city" where they appear in the first line of subsection 25.1(1) being enacted therein the following: "Subject to a plebiscite resulting in a majority of the eligible electors resident in that municipality voting in the affirmative"; and

(c) by adding immediately after 25.1 being enacted therein the following section:

25.2 The council of a city mentioned in section 25 or 25.1 may (and I would note the word "may") by by-law, following a plebiscite resulting in a majority of the eligible electors resident in that municipality voting in the affirmative, establish or continue, as the case may be, a full ward system of representation in that the city shall be divided into that number of wards that equals the number of aldermen to be elected to the council of that city at a general election.

Now, Mr. Chairman, no one should be able to argue against that amendment — no one should be able to argue against that amendment. It is a perfectly reasonable amendment that institutes fairness into what is . at least a small element of fairness, into what is a very undemocratic and unfair Bill.

With that explanation, Mr. Chairman, I urge the members opposite to do the right thing. It is not going to hurt you anywhere; in fact it may do you some good. I urge you to consider what is right on this issue, ignore your Minister of Urban Affairs who has already misled you bad enough, and support this amendment. And I so move the amendment, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

(0220)

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas— 21

Romanow
Prebble
Rolfes
Lingenfelter
Shillington
Tchorzewski
Brockelbank
Mitchell
Simard
Atkinson
Anguish

Goulet
Hagel
Pringle
Lyons
Calvert
Lautermilch
Trew
Smart
Van Mulligen
Koenker

Nays — 30

Duncan
McLeod
Andrew
Berntson
Lane
Taylor
Smith
Swan
Muirhead
Maxwell
Hodgins
Gerich
Hepworth
Hardy
Klein

Meiklejohn
Pickering
Martin
Toth
Johnson
McLaren
Hopfner
Swenson
Martens
Baker
Gleim
Neudorf
Gardner
Kopelchuk
Britton

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 15 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 16

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I don't intend to prolong the House more unduly than it's been already prolonged. I do think that it's important to put on the record the position of the official opposition with respect to the question of Sunday hours. I think the arguments with respect to public input have been put very eloquently by my colleagues on this side of the House, and the fact that this government is apparently unwilling or unable or both with respect to listening to the public on the question of Sunday closing.

And therefore, Mr. Chairman, what I'd like to move, seconded by my colleague, my desk mate, the member from Regina North East, is the following amendment:

That section 16 of the printed Bill be amended by deleting all of the words after the number "16" and substituting the following therefor:

That a selection committee of the legislature be struck to receive the input of the public on the whole matter of Sunday store hours.

I so move.

(0223)

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas

Romanow	Atkinson
Prebble	Anguish
Rolfes	Goulet
Lingenfelter	Pringle
Shillington	Lyons
Tchorzewski	Calvert
Thompson	Lautermilch
Brockelbank	Trew
Mitchell	Smart
Simard	Van Mulligen
Kowalsky	Koenker
Solomon	

— 23

Nays

Duncan	Meiklejohn
McLeod	Pickering
Andrew	Martin
Berntson	Toth
Lane	Johnson
Taylor	McLaren
Smith	Hopfner
Swan	Swenson
Muirhead	Martens
Maxwell	Baker
Hodgins	Gleim
Gerich	Neudorf
Hepworth	Gardner
Hardy	Kopelchuk
Klein	Britton

— 30

Clause 16 agreed to.

Clauses 17 to 20 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 21

Mr. Chairman: — Order. Order. I'd ask the member for Battleford to allow the proceedings to continue. I'd ask the member from Battlefords to allow the proceedings to continue.

House amendment to clause 21 of the printed Bill, moved by the Minister of Urban Affairs that:

Section 21 of the printed Bill is amended in the second line by striking out (1) . . .

Order! I'd ask the member again from Battleford to allow the proceedings to continue.

I'll read the amendment again.

Section 21 of the printed Bill is amended in the second line by striking out "(1) in sections 135.2 to 135.8" and substituting "135.1(1) in sections 135.2 and 135.8."

Clause 21 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 22 to 29 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 30

Mr. Chairman: — House amendment to clause 30 of the printed Bill, moved by the . . . Order! I'd ask the Minister of Finance to let the proceedings proceed.

Order! Order! Would the Minister of Finance allow the proceedings to proceed.

Moved by the Minister of Urban Affairs the amendment to section 30 of the printed Bill:

Strike out section 30 of the printed Bill.

Clause 30 as amended agreed to.

Clause 31

Mr. Chairman: — Order. An amendment to section 31 of the printed Bill. Moved by the Minister of Urban Affairs that sections 31 to 37 of the printed Bill:

Renumber sections 31 to 37 of the printed Bill as sections 30 to 36 respectively.

Clause 31 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 32 to 37 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill as amended, on division.

(0230)

Bill No. 61 — An Act to amend The Local Government Election Act

Clauses 1 to 25 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill on division.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 81 — An Act to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 69 — An Act to amend The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979

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

Motion agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

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

Motion agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 56 — An Act respecting the Reorganization of the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation

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

Motion agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to on division, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 64 — An Act to amend The Tax Enforcement Act

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

Motion agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 83 — An Act respecting the Operation of All Terrain Vehicles

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 93 — An Act to amend The Ambulance Act

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 75 — An Act to amend The Income Tax Act

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

Motion agreed to on division, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 79 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Act

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 70 — An Act to amend The Corporation Capital Tax Act

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 88 — An Act to make Certain Changes in the Statute Law with respect to the Investment of Moneys Held pursuant to Certain Acts

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

Motion agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 45 — An Act to amend The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Act

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 46 — An Act respecting Certain Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Act, 1988

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 101 — An Act to amend The Revenue and Financial Services Act

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 39 — An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue

Sharing Act

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 72 — An Act respecting the Saskatchewan Municipal Board

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

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, I move the Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 60 — An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1984

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

Motion agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to on division, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 61 — An Act to amend The Local Government Election Act

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

(0245)

ROYAL ASSENT TO BILLS

At 2:47 a.m. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bills:

- Bill No. 62 — An Act respecting Securities in Saskatchewan
- Bill No. 50 — An Act respecting the Control of Distribution and the Consumption of Beverage Alcohol in Saskatchewan
- Bill No. 19 — An Act to amend The Statute Law
- Bill No. 53 — An Act to amend The Provincial Mediation Board Act
- Bill No. 63 — An Act to amend The Student Assistance

- and Student Aid Fund Act, 1985
- Bill No. 65 — An Act to amend The Provincial Court Act
- Bill No. 68 — An Act respecting Small Claims in the Provincial Court in Saskatchewan
- Bill No. 77 — An Act to amend The Teachers' Federation Act
- Bill No. 87 — An Act to amend The Municipal Employees' Superannuation Act
- Bill No. 91 — an Act respecting certain Consequential Amendments to certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act
- Bill No. 92 — An Act respecting Provincial Emblems and Honours
- Bill No. 99 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Small Claims Act
- Bill No. 47 — An Act to amend The Critical Wildlife Habitat Protection Act
- Bill No. 71 — An Act to amend The Wildlife Act
- Bill No. 76 — An Act to amend The Teachers' Superannuation Act
- Bill No. 78 — An Act to amend The Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Act
- Bill No. 39 — An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act
- Bill No. 45 — An Act to amend The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Act
- Bill No. 46 — An Act respecting Certain Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Act, 1988
- Bill No. 56 — An Act respecting the Reorganization of the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation
- Bill No. 60 — An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1984
- Bill No. 61 — An Act to amend The Local Government Election Act
- Bill No. 64 — An Act to amend The Tax Enforcement Act
- Bill No. 69 — An Act to amend The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979
- Bill No. 70 — An Act to amend The Corporation Capital Tax Act
- Bill No. 72 — An Act respecting the Saskatchewan Municipal Board
- Bill No. 75 — An Act to amend The Income Tax Act
- Bill No. 79 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Act
- Bill No. 81 — An Act to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act
- Bill No. 83 — An Act respecting the Operation of All Terrain Vehicles
- 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
- Bill No. 88 — An Act to make Certain changes in the Statute Law with respect to the Investment of Moneys Held pursuant to Certain Acts
- Bill No. 89 — An Act respecting the Consequential amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Municipal Board Act
- Bill No. 93 — An Act to amend The Ambulance Act
- Bill No. 101 — An Act to amend The Revenue and Financial Services Act
- Bill No. 104 — An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Years

ending respectively on March 31, 1988 and on March 31, 1989

His Honour retired from the Chamber at 2:52 a.m.

MOTIONS

French Language in Saskatchewan

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a motion here I would like to move. And the motion is as follows, and it is seconded by my good friend and colleague, the member from Redberry:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in recognition that:

(a) the Legislative Assembly recognizes that the presence of English and French speaking Canadians in Saskatchewan constitutes a fundamental characteristic of Canada;

(b) the Legislative Assembly wishes to enhance opportunities for and promote understanding between English and French speaking Canadians;

(c) The Language Act affirms rights in respect of the use and status of the French language in Saskatchewan;

(d) The Legislative Assembly wishes to affirm its commitment to the effective implementation of those rights and in particular to the adoption of statutes and regulations of public importance in both English and French;

(e) section 12 of The Language Act provides that the Legislative Assembly may, by resolution, direct that the rules and procedures of the Assembly shall be made, printed and published in French and English.

Mr. Speaker: — Question before the Assembly is a motion moved by the member from Melfort, seconded by the member for Redberry, with leave.

Leave granted.

Mr. Speaker: — Shall the Assembly take the motion as read? Is the Assembly ready for the question . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Read it?

Motion reads as follows:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, in recognition that:

(a) the Legislative Assembly recognizes that the presence of English and French speaking Canadians in Saskatchewan constitutes a fundamental characteristic of Canada;

(b) the Legislative Assembly wishes to enhance opportunities for and promote understanding between English and French speaking

Canadians;

(c) The Language Act affirms rights in respect of the use and status of the French language in Saskatchewan;

(d) the Legislative Assembly wishes to affirm its commitment to the effective implementation of those rights and in particular to the adoption of statutes and regulations of public importance in both English and French;

(e) section 12 of The Language Act provides that the Legislative Assembly may, by resolution, direct that the rules and procedures of the Assembly shall be made, printed and published in French and English;

I beg to inform the Assembly that if there is an error, the error is on my part. There's a concluding paragraph, which I will read to the Assembly now, and then we will take the vote.

Directs that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly take steps to ensure that, as expeditiously as possible, the Rule and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan are made, printed and published in English and French.

And further directs that steps be taken forthwith to put in place a system where by debates of the Assembly that occur in French are recorded in that language, along with an English translation thereof, in Debates and Proceedings.

Motion agreed to.

House Adjournment

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, and seconded by my colleague the member for Redberry, I move:

That when this Assembly adjourns at the end of this sitting day it shall stand adjourned to a date and time set by Mr. Speaker upon the request of the government and that Mr. Speaker shall give each member seven clear days notice, if possible, by registered mail of such date and time.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: — I trust that you all have a pleasant summer.

The Assembly adjourned at 3 a.m.