

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Acting Clerk: — It is my duty to advise the Assembly that Mr. Speaker will not be present to open this sitting.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Acting Clerk: — Pursuant to rule 11(7), I have examined the petitions presented yesterday and find them to be in order.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much. My colleague, the member from Quill Lakes, is unavoidably and somewhat unexpectedly absent in connection with his work as an MLA; therefore, on his behalf I take pleasure in introducing to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the members of the Assembly, 16 students from grade 6, 7, and 8 classes, plus, I'm told, nine adults from St. Gregor School in St. Gregor, Saskatchewan. They're accompanied by John Pearce.

This indicates that they have already met with Mr. Koskie, and I know he would want all members to join with me in welcoming them here to the Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Also on behalf of the member from Quill Lakes, I want to introduce eight students from the grade 10 class, again accompanied by two adults. This is from Muenster School in Muenster, Saskatchewan. The name of the contact in this case is Paul Reist.

This note indicates that the member from Quill Lakes was to meet with you at 3:05. If that's still the case and if he hasn't already had a chance to meet with you, one of the members from this side will find a few moments to sit down with you and discuss what you've seen. I know all members will want to join me again.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour and privilege today to introduce to you, and through you to all members of this Assembly, 28 grade 8 students from St. Bernadette School, seated in the opposition east gallery.

There are with them, Mr. Speaker, their teacher, Mr. Len Kleisinger, as well as four chaperons who are parents: Mrs. Duran, Mrs. Huber, Mrs. Sitter, and Mrs. Parisone.

I would like to just share with the members that I have already met with the students, and they have asked some very interesting and exciting questions about privatization. I want to hope that your tour is a very successful tour this afternoon, and I wish you a safe journey home.

I ask all members to join with me to welcome these

members. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to introduce three people that are visiting our province from British Columbia, through you, and to the Assembly. They are visiting from Delta, B.C., and they've had a chance to tour the legislature with a group of school children, and they're sitting up in your gallery.

We have Donna and Frank Fahie, and they're actually from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. In the last year they've moved to British Columbia and, interestingly enough, they're cooking in the North, in camps. And they feed people, from 150 to 1,000 workers, when they're in doing their cooking up in the North country. And along with them is Mona Gray, and she's also from Delta, B.C. And I'd just like to wish them a safe journey back to British Columbia, and come back and see us again. I hope you enjoyed the tour of the legislature, and you'll enjoy question period. And please help me welcome them and wish them a safe journey back to Regina.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and to all members of the legislature, His Excellency, Mr. Karl Bertil Eriksson, and Mrs. Eriksson. Mr. Eriksson is Consul-General of Sweden, and he's here visiting our province for a couple of days.

I understand that Mrs. Eriksson in fact is a Norwegian, and that's not all bad, Mr. Speaker. And that's why I have decided that I'm going to take some time and visit with both of them right after question period, because on my father's side of the family they came from Norway, and on my mother's side of the family they came from Sweden. So I want all of you to join with me in a nice warm Saskatchewan welcome for them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I want to join with my colleague from Souris-Cannington in welcoming you to Saskatchewan. Present company excepted, Swedish people have made a great contribution to Saskatchewan, and I know that many Saskatchewan people of Swedish descent will be interested in your visit.

We hope you find the province enjoyable. We wished you would have brought with you a little of the rains which fall on Sweden; we're a little short of them now, but we welcome you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Population Loss in April

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I have a question for the Premier, and it concerns the statistics by the department of statistics, the Premier's

own Bureau of (Saskatchewan) Statistics, pertaining to the population loss for the month of April where, according to the government's own figures, approximately 1,500 people net out-migration have left the province in April, making a total of about 10,700 or nearly 11,000 people net out-migration this year thus far.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to put this question into perspective, the loss thus far this year, if my figures are correct, is more than the entire population loss for 1987, so indeed it's a very serious situation.

My question to the Premier is this: in the light of these very startling and disconcerting figures, can the Premier tell us now whether or not he would agree that his preoccupation with the privatization economic strategy, which he's been pursuing since 1982 and particularly the last two or three years, really has proven to be in total an abject failure? How else can the massive population loss be accounted for?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, certainly it does not please the government to see our citizens leaving for jobs, primarily in Alberta where they have newly elected Conservative government for years and years . . . re-elected Conservative governments, and where they have diversified Alberta when this province was buying up assets which were primarily holes in the ground.

And I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to agree that what we really need in this province is more diversification, and that the increase in 7,000 new jobs in non-agriculture last year did a lot to assist this province.

Not only do we need more diversification, but quite clearly we need more rain. The member from Moose Jaw North scoffed at the idea that we needed more rain, but we need rain and we need diversification. And I implore the opposition not to hold up diversification any further.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a new question. I guess it's for the member from Melville since the Premier refuses to answer my questions.

I would preface my comments, the minister from Melville, to say that the opposition would endorse any genuine and true program of diversification; what we will not endorse is the massive give-away of Saskatchewan's heritage and background for the privatization of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — My question to you, Mr. Minister, is simply this: are you able to convince your Premier, are you able to convince your colleagues, or are you able to announce government policy today which would put aside your ideologically driven program for privatization, your insistence that the privatization legislation be pursued? Will you put that aside and get on with legislation to provide jobs for our young people, for the

small businesses and the farmers of the province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the reasons I'm answering these questions today is because this is not a new debate. The Leader of the Opposition and I had this debate 13 years ago, and the answers that he had at that time did not work.

They talked about building Saskatchewan and instead they tried to buy Saskatchewan. We are talking about building Saskatchewan in co-operation with the people of Saskatchewan, not with their own money but in a joint venture with the people. That is called diversification and growth of jobs.

I can list examples for hours and hours of the diversification of this province through such things as Buy Saskatchewan, which was so elementary that the Leader of the Opposition, when he was in government, couldn't even think of something so simple as buying at home. Those are the kind of things that did not work. We have a Buy Saskatchewan program. That is a good policy. We have a diversification program. That is a good policy.

And does the Leader of the Opposition tell us now that the new jobs at WESTBRIDGE Computer are bad? Does he tell us that the new jobs at Weyerhaeuser are bad? That the jobs at Meadow Lake in the pulp mill that Ross Thatcher wanted to build 20 years ago, and that his election in 1971 and 1972 stopped, does he tell us that is all bad? Can he tell us what the government should buy to create jobs. We are in the process of diversifying Saskatchewan. I may have lost the debate to the Leader of the Opposition 13 years ago, but the people of Saskatchewan are winning now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm absolutely devastated by that brilliant answer by the member from Melville — so devastated that I'm forced to ask the member from Melville a question which I think that even he would be prepared to answer in very simple terms.

Mr. Minister, surely the acid test of your policies of diversification are the hard economic indicators of whether there are jobs and employment, whether people in the province of Saskatchewan are coming or leaving, whether taxes are going up or down, whether provincial debt is going up or down, and by every economic indicator, Mr. Minister, your Premier and your government has failed the young people and the future of Saskatchewan miserably. Make no mistake about that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — My question to you is simply this: why doesn't this government tend to business? Business is looking after health care — yes, health care — education care, highways, tending to business. Drop your ideological, Maggie Thatcher privatization and introduce Bills for jobs to keep our people here. Do that and we'll co-operate with you fully. Why don't you do that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — There is a clear difference, Mr. Deputy Speaker, between the Progressive Conservative government of the Premier and the old ideas of the New Democrats across the way. And the difference is this: that this government believes in building jobs; we believe in a jobs climate in this province — not a pro-business climate, not a pro-labour climate — a jobs climate where business and workers, the people of Saskatchewan all participate publicly in the diversification of Saskatchewan.

The Leader of the Opposition sent a pamphlet into my constituency and it says he has a vision. I don't doubt that one night he had a vision, but there was a flaw in this dream. He has a vision that is unfunded.

This government has a plan, and the plan is to diversify. And when you diversify you build, and when you build you have tax base, and when you have tax base you can pay for the social services to cover the record spending of this government in health, education, and social services.

Yes we could do more, and we will do more, and we will not be stopped by the opposition and their tactics of anarchy on the streets.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I direct my question to the Premier of the province because clearly, when it comes to the economy and employment in this province, the buck stops at your door, sir.

Your Minister of Labour and Employment talks about jobs. Mr. Premier, yesterday in the media there were reports that the Moosomin Motor Inn is closing its doors, and a large part of the reason given by the owner is that there just aren't enough young people left in town to patronize it any more. They've left to look for work.

And I ask you, Mr. Premier, for our communities, for their people, and for the family business on Main Street, will you please, will you please stop your ideological privatization plans and start working to turn things around for the communities of Saskatchewan? Will you do that for the communities, please?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I forgot to point out to the Leader of the Opposition, who hadn't noticed that there was a gigantic dirt storm yesterday in Saskatchewan. When I drove out of the city yesterday, it rained a little bit of mud. The members opposite have not noticed that there is drought in Saskatchewan, that that is a problem in rural Saskatchewan that also filters into the towns and cities of this province. We are all living in this province together, sharing together, and we also have to share drought and adversity. And surely, as some of the supporters of the NDP allege, this government is not responsible for the drought.

This government has taken action to assist small business. I recently drove through Moosomin, and I saw the increase in tourism was assisting the businesses in Moosomin. I saw the traffic of licence plates coming into Saskatchewan — not out, in — in the lines of tourism. Our policies in having public participation in tourist resorts, in parks, which you have opposed, which are building year-round tourist facilities, help those communities.

Yes, it is difficult in Moosomin and it's difficult in Melville and it's difficult in all of rural Saskatchewan where we still depend on some rain. And if the members opposite do not understand that, then they do not understand small business or nature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I direct my question, again a new question, to the Premier of the province, the man who is most held in accounting for the performance of this government.

Mr. Premier, when I look at your government's statistics, your government's statistics, I see a disturbing continuation of a trend. In April we saw 350 young people, age 15 to 29, move into this province — yes, move in. At the same time 930 left — a net loss of 580 young people last month alone, Mr. Premier. No province can afford this kind of brain drain and that loss of human energy in creativity. The young people of Saskatchewan are voting with their feet.

Your minister says that your government is going to give them more of the cause. Privatization is not a solution; privatization is the cause of the problem. And I ask you, sir: will you get off your privatization mania and start working to build this province again, to build this province with a sense of hope and future for the young people of Saskatchewan? Will you attend to that agenda in Saskatchewan, sir?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, why are the members of the opposition surprised? When they stopped the Rafferty dam and said, oh joy, how many young people had to leave Saskatchewan because their jobs were cancelled on the spot? When they went out and rang the bells for 17 days and stopped diversification of SaskEnergy, how many young people will not be employed for another six months because of the delay?

All of these policies of theirs to disrupt a free-market economy in this province cost us jobs. And when our young people have to go to free-market provinces like Alberta and British Columbia to get jobs, it's time that we changed Saskatchewan. If we do not, if we do not change Saskatchewan, and if we allow the members opposite to ever become government, I'm afraid this will be the first province to be socialist in North America and the last province in the world to be socialist, and we don't want any part of that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Cost of Panel of Inquiry

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the hon. member from Melville won't have a choice about it because people in Saskatchewan will decide, not you, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Public Participation, and I'd like to ask the minister about a question that deals with his committee or panel — the Barber commission, whatever you want to call it, that's going around the province — in terms of the cost.

Yesterday the Minister of Finance revealed to us in this House that just the panel members alone would be drawing about \$1,150 a day for a salary or per diem. And on top of this, you know, there's expenses, advertising. I was wondering if the Minister of Public Participation could tell us today what the total cost is of this panel that you have set up to go around the province, sir.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as my seat mate outlined yesterday in the House, the per diem cost to the members, or the per diem charge of the members, I just want to indicate to you that the cost of running this House is about \$30,000 a day during the strike by the opposition.

You take the number of days that they were out on strike from this legislature times \$30,000 and I tell you . . . and you compare that to the cost of the commission; the commission could go around Saskatchewan for two hundred and sixty some days . . .

An Hon. Member: — Nearly a full year.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — . . . nearly a full year, at the cost to the Saskatchewan taxpayers that their strike cost — the same exact figure.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Anybody in Saskatchewan could tell you we saved people in Saskatchewan money to stop you from raping and pillaging the resources of this province.

I'd like the minister to watch my lips: how much will the Barber commission cost the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — I can certainly tell you that it will cost the people of Saskatchewan less than your strike did.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — I can't believe, Mr. Minister, that you would launch an advertising campaign, a commission of three people go around this province, to have no idea what the costs are going to be. It shows the total incompetence with which you govern this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Could you tell us, Mr. Minister — watch my lips again — how much will it cost?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well certainly, I can repeat myself again if I didn't make it clear to them in the first three times, but certainly that is that the cost tag in the wages of the commission is less than the strike that the NDP cost the people of Saskatchewan.

And I get a little annoyed when I see people like you stand in here, that opposed Gainers, you opposed Hunter's, you opposed Rafferty, and you stand as hypocrites, saying that we should be creating more jobs when every one we bring forward, you vote against.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Pretty sensitive, Mr. Minister, pretty sensitive. We've accused no one except you on that side of this House. You're the ones who have ruined the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the minister cannot answer the question, will not answer the question, about the cost. Could you maybe tell us something about the purpose of the committee? We would like to see a committee in the province that would listen to people. If the committees you've set up to date are any example, they don't listen, they go out and try and sell a concept.

Is your commission going to go out there and try and sell a concept that has already been rejected by a hundred thousand names on petitions in the province of Saskatchewan and many, many more that are still waiting to sign petitions? What are you going to do with that commission? Sell-job, or are you going to listen?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Well obviously, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we see again the opposition trying to cast a shadow over a commission of very credible people that are going out to see the people of Saskatchewan. You can criticize them; yes, you can criticize them. You criticize the president of the University of Regina if that's your choice. I think across Canada he would be seen as a very credible individual.

They're going out there to listen to the people of Saskatchewan, discuss with the people of Saskatchewan; the Premier put out the frame of reference. So all I can say to you is, again we see the negative attitude of that member and that government. Would you give the commission a chance? No, you will be against it. You will be against it. The opposition has every opportunity. I charge the Leader of the Opposition to go and state his case before the commission. In most cases, he probably won't show up. I charge you to go forward; put forward your case.

I can tell you that again we see the negative attitude before these credible people can go out and hold their hearings, and we don't know how many hearings they're holding. You are trying to cast aspersions and cast a cloud over the commission before it's even put in place, and I think that's disdainful.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, to the minister again. You held meetings around the province; you've failed. We held meetings around the province; they were successful. Now you're sending out a panel of three people to sell the government's position, not to listen to anything.

And I would have to agree with you that these are credible people in their field. This is not their field. Chairman Barber is a member of the Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise — support privatization. Kathryn Ford — she is a lawyer, credible in her field I'm sure. Her firm does work to privatize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. The other individual — I don't know about him, but if two of those people are any indication, they do not have credibility in terms of privatization in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, you've failed. Will you promise us that those commission meetings around the province will be to listen to Saskatchewan people and not to sell a Tory line at millions of dollars of expense, possibly, to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, again I say to the member opposite . . . He mentions that I have meetings around the province of Saskatchewan. Yes I did. I had about 24 meetings throughout the province, and I can tell you the difference between my meetings and their meetings just for petitions. Like we told the truth, we told the truth to the people of Saskatchewan, and that is a considerable difference than having the Leader of the Opposition go out as he did in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, as he did on this issue, to purposely mislead the people of Saskatchewan. And I can tell you, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, you're going to be hoisted by your petard of that kind of action in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Chairperson of Human Rights Commission

Mr. Pringle: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm sure that the people of Saskatchewan, the residents of Saskatchewan, by the tens of thousands who have signed those petitions, will continue to be totally offended by that minister saying they didn't know what they were doing. When he referred to us as the government, the people of Saskatchewan can't wait to throw that government out.

The minister of privatization is in trouble, so I would like to switch gears and take a bit of heat off the government and direct my question to the Minister of Justice. My question, sir, is that six weeks ago the chief human rights

commissioner left the post to take up another job with your government. Since that time the commission has been left without a chairperson. Mr. Minister, can you advise this House when you are going to rectify that situation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The proposal for the new chairman of the Human Rights Commission is presently about to be placed on the cabinet agenda, I believe at the next cabinet session. If it is dealt with at cabinet, then an announcement will be made very shortly thereafter.

Mr. Pringle: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A new question to the minister . . . Mr. Minister, you told me a month ago that next week there would be some announcement and so it's another broken promise . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, we weren't on strike then.

The cities of Saskatoon and Regina have been calling for inquiries into racist treatment of our native population. In the face of such calls, don't you think now is the time when we should be having a strong Human Rights Commission? Instead of acting, why have you chosen to ignore the needs of the Human Rights Commission?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that we have not ignored that, as I indicate. I understand — correct me if I'm wrong . . . I don't recall the hon. member posing that question to me in the House in the last month or two. Perhaps I'm mistaken, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe that's in fact happened.

I can undertake to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the matter is being placed before cabinet on the cabinet agenda. That announcement will be made very, very shortly, Mr. Speaker. And I hope that the hon. member at that point acknowledges the contribution.

ROYAL ASSENT TO BILLS

At 2:35 p.m. Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took her seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bill:

Bill No. 37 — An Act for Granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year Ending on March 31, 1990.

Her Honour retired from the Chamber at 2:37 p.m.

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

Mr. Thompson: — I would like leave to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy

Speaker. I'd like to introduce for the second time — this group wasn't in here when we started question period — a group of 18 students from the Muenster School. They are in grade 10, and they are here with their teacher, Paul Reist, and a chaperon, Corinne Grace. I am introducing this class, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of my seat mate, the member from Quill Lakes. And I would like to through you ask all members to welcome the guests here today from Muenster.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would also ask leave to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would like to introduce some guests on behalf of my colleague, the member from Humboldt. They are students, 16 students from grade 7, 8, and 9 of Carmel School in Carmel, Saskatchewan, and they are here with their principal, Mr. Glenn Hepp, and chaperon, Tina Colistro.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, someone will be meeting with them from our caucus this afternoon for drinks and pictures. Welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Amendments to Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take my place today to introduce this motion to amend the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly*. Now I have participated in this type of a process and moved these type of motions before, but not under these type of circumstances, Mr. Speaker, and not under this type of process.

At the end of my address today, I will be proposing an alternative perhaps that perhaps all in this House would be able to accept.

Let me divide my brief remarks into three parts, Mr. Speaker: first of all, dealing with what the rules are and how they will work, and what the rules are in other jurisdictions in similar situations; number two, as to why these amendments are being proposed; and number three, why they're being proposed in this fashion.

First of all, let's deal with the question of the rules and what rules are being proposed here and what amendments are being proposed here. We are dealing in these rules, Mr. Speaker, primarily with the question of division or the call of a standing vote.

And as we all know in this Assembly, when a standing vote or a division vote is called, two members stand in their place on either side, the Speaker then instructs the Sergeant-at-Arms to call in the members, the bells are set

in motion. And that historically was the way by which members were called to the House to vote.

And the purpose of that rule, obviously, was to allow members who were not in their place to have an opportunity to come and cast their vote — number one — and number two, be able to come to this Assembly and cast their vote and have that recorded on the journals of this Assembly.

Under this proposed rule change, Mr. Speaker, when those bells are in fact rung, they will be rung for only a period of one hour. At the end of that time, the Speaker will put the vote and call the division. As is the case today, if during that period of one hour the whips from either side give their nod to the Sergeant-at-Arms, the bells will be shut off and the division will be taken.

If, Mr. Speaker, under these proposed rules, during that period of one hour of bell ringing, the House leaders or the whips from the government and the opposition can agree between themselves to have the vote deferred to some future time — now that could be at the end of the sitting day; it could be the next day; it could be any time within a two-day period. In the event, however, that the members from both sides, the government House leaders or the whips cannot agree, either side would be able to approach the Speaker and ask for a deferral, at which time the Speaker would be obligated to defer the vote two days hence at a time just before orders of the day. Now that's how that particular rule would work.

The rule on deferrals would not apply to the vote on the throne speech or the vote on the budget speech as, under our standing orders now, there is a mechanism in place that requires a vote to be taken at a set and specific time. However, the one-hour bell-ringing rule would apply in both of those votes as well.

The final part of the rule, Mr. Speaker, is non-debatable motions. A good example is a motion to adjourn. All non-debatable motions with the exception of the introduction of a Bill or first reading, which is a non-debatable motion, will not be allowed to be deferred. The vote in first reading, however, under these rules could be deferred under the bell-ringing and the deferral process. Again, the one-hour rule on bell-ringing would apply to the non-debatable motions.

These rules, Mr. Speaker, are virtually identical to the standing orders introduced and in existence now in the province of Manitoba. And I might add that those rules in Manitoba, of the deferral and the one-hour restriction, also followed an extensive bell-ringing episode in that province, in that case over the issue of bilingualism.

(1445)

These rules will allow two things, Mr. Speaker, to happen. It allows an accommodation for the member who is not in his place at the time that the division is called to have one hour notice to get from where they are to the Assembly to cast the vote and to have their vote recorded in the *Journals*. Or it allows for those that, because it's an important vote for them, to contact their whip or their House Leader and request them to request a deferral, so

that if they perhaps were in Swift Current or in Saskatoon and one hour was not enough time to get to the Assembly to cast that vote, to have it deferred to two days down the road, at which time they could be present to cast their vote. It also would allow either side to have the particular issue that they want deferred for two days. And if it is deferred, then no more business can be conducted with regard to that motion.

Let me explain. For example, we are currently debating the Bill on the potash corporation. In the event that a division was called, should these rules be accepted — in the event that a division was called, a standing vote was called, the opposition in this particular case would maybe suggest for a deferral of two days, then that particular Bill would be deferred for two days. Debate on that Bill would be deferred for two days. Now these are . . . these deferral votes or motions or rules were first introduced last year on an experimental basis, and I would suggest to all sides it worked reasonably well.

Now then, I think it's important when we look at this question to also canvass the other jurisdictions in Canada and the other jurisdictions in the Commonwealth to determine what the rules are in each of those jurisdictions as well.

The following Canadian jurisdictions: the House of Commons in Ottawa, British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec, and the four maritime provinces, all have rules limiting bell-ringing. Most of those jurisdictions have either adopted or modified those rules over the last 10 years. And if you take all of those jurisdictions, the rules vary on the length of time that the bells can ring — from a minimum of two minutes, which seems extremely short, to a maximum of one hour, which is the case in Manitoba and one of the maritime provinces.

Ontario has limited rules on division votes in certain specific areas in the rules. We are advised that the people in Ontario are presently looking towards coming up with some rules on bell-ringing on all divisions for the province of Ontario.

The province of Alberta has no specific rules on division bells, but there's a long-standing convention in the province of Alberta that basically allows the bells to ring for a maximum of eight minutes. And that process in Alberta has basically been set, the precedent set by Mr. Speaker, who basically, in an event, said eight minutes is lots of time, it's time for you guys to get on with the job; sit down and come into the House and vote.

Australia, New Zealand, and the Mother of Parliaments at Westminster have time limits ranging from two to six minutes with regard to the division bells. The only two jurisdictions then, with no rules whatsoever, are the province of Saskatchewan and that grand democratic institution, the Senate of Canada. These rules changes are then consistent, I would suggest, with the rest of Canada and in fact with the rest of the Commonwealth.

Let me then turn to the second part of the question: why are we proposing these amendments? The most obvious reason, Mr. Speaker, is as a result of the recent 17-day, bell-ringing episode that we have experienced in this

province.

I think that it is important when you look at this to review the history of bell-ringing in parliaments around the Commonwealth. As I indicated earlier, the prime purpose of the division bells is to call the members to vote, to give them notice that in fact the vote is being held, and give them an opportunity to be there to cast their vote, to record their votes in the *Journals* of the parliament.

The first time the bells and the ringing of the bells was used as a protest or an obstructionist tool was in 1877 in the British parliament. And as I understand, researching that, the case involved the following. There was a group, in the British parliament, of rowdy Irishmen, who had as a stated purpose the disruption of the House by whatever means were available. And in 1877 this group of Irishmen set the bells to ringing in the House of Commons in Great Britain, and a dilemma was created. The dilemma was resolved when the Speaker of the House of Commons took it upon himself and indicated that the vote was going to be taken at a set period of time. And the members therefore were into their place and in fact were required to vote.

The first time in a significant and material way that bell-ringing as an obstructionist tool was used in Canada, in a significant way, was in the House of Commons in Ottawa during the debate on the omnibus trade Bill involved in energy. Primarily what we were dealing with there was the, if you like, the national energy program.

Mr. Speaker, that matter was the bells rang for some period of time. The Speaker in the House of Commons came to the view that — and I quote from a decision by Mr. Speaker in Ottawa at that time, Mr. Francis:

There is nothing in British practice and precedence that could assist us in resolving any problems related to the bells. This problem is uniquely Canadian. I know of no parliamentary jurisdiction outside of Canada where bells can ring for an unlimited period prior to the recorded vote.

At the end of the day, the bells were finally stopped and the parties came back into the House, and on they went with their business. And the rules subsequently were changed in the House of Commons so that they now have a 30-minute time limit on the ringing of the bells.

Manitoba, the province of Manitoba, and Saskatchewan are the only two major provinces that experienced bell-ringing as a protest or obstructionist tool. In the province of Manitoba, during the Pawley government time, the then Conservative opposition were in a rather obstructionist mood during one of their sessions as well, primarily focused around the question of bilingualism and bilingualism policy in the province of Manitoba.

In that particular session, Mr. Speaker, the bells were rung in protest, or in obstruction, 24 separate times, delaying or stalling the House for some 375 hours. And at the end of that session, quite frankly, the government of the day prorogued the House as the only way to basically get around that stalemate. Subsequent, the standing orders of

Manitoba were amended to be exactly the same as the ones that we are proposing here today.

In Saskatchewan, bell-ringing has been used by both major political parties while they sat in the Assembly. And I, Mr. Speaker, have experienced them from both sides of the House. It is my submission, Mr. Speaker, that these rules left unchanged and unchecked, as we have seen, can be used by the opposition as an unrestricted, obstructionist tactic. In can in fact shut down the legislature. It can be forced . . . for the government to prematurely prorogue the House, perhaps prior to the passage of a budget or the legislative agenda.

And I explain to you in this way. As we went through the most recent 17-day bell-ringing incident, we came against the wall as it related to the ability to make payments out without the passage of interim supply. As some might not understand or appreciate, when session is in, when the legislature is in session, government is precluded from using special warrants to make payments that are not otherwise authorized, and only can make payments through the appropriation motion or what we call interim supply.

Had those bells rang, Mr. Speaker, for another week or another two weeks, effectively we found ourselves in a situation with the only option would have been to prorogue this House. And I question, Mr. Speaker, whether that is in fact the right thing.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, this tactic, left unchecked and left unchanged, violates the fundamental principle of the democratic and our democratic parliamentary system, and that being the principle of majority rule — the right of the people to be governed by the party of their choice.

And that principle, Mr. Speaker, is as old as parliament itself, and it's fundamental to our constitution of this country. Our constitution says we shall have elections at least every five years — not every one year — every five years. And the winner, Mr. Speaker, of those elections forms the government, and that's the principle of majority rule.

And the government presents the spending estimates, as only governments can present the spending estimates in a parliamentary system. And the government presents a legislative agenda, and the opposition, through this Assembly and in this Assembly, primary function is grievance before supply. And they have a right to pose questions to the government under that process of grievance before supply.

And the legislature, Mr. Speaker, this institution, is the place where those elected members come to have open and free debate, open and free debate by freely elected free men and women. And that is the basis upon which our system, Mr. Speaker, is based.

If the opposition can shut down this House for 17 days, can they not also shut it down for twice that many days or more? Clearly they can. If the opposition can ring the bells, Mr. Speaker, and walk out and demand that, let's say, that the budget be altered before they will return, what do we have, what do we do, and what have we done

to that principle, Mr. Speaker?

If the opposition can decide through the ringing bells and that tactic, Mr. Speaker, when it is convenient for them to speak in this Assembly and when it is not, and when it would be more convenient to go to the streets and speak and close this place down, Mr. Speaker, have we violated that principle that I refer to? And have we, Mr. Speaker, not denigrated this institution?

Mr. Speaker, some six weeks ago or so in this Assembly, the members offered to Mr. Gordon Barnhart, who had served at the Table in this legislature for some 20 years, the opportunity to address this Assembly. And I think we all in this Assembly remember that. And as he addressed this Assembly, Mr. Barnhart said, among other things, this:

Parliament (and referring to parliament as a debating forum) as that place of speaking works best when members can express opposite points of views on a political and philosophical plane and yet respect the rights of others to hold a differing point of view.

Have the events of the last months, Mr. Speaker, lived up to that view of this institution as a place of speaking, as a place that works best, as a place where we respect each other's rights to have and to state their views strongly as they might wish?

Mr. Speaker, I and anybody else in this House can, I suppose, quote from a variety of sources or from a variety of editorials, pros and cons of this particular motion and this particular amendment. And I do not wish to intend to do that in the interest of time of this Assembly.

(1500)

I would like though, Mr. Speaker, to go back to 1981 when I, not sitting on this side, but sat on that side, and when I as a member of the then opposition participated in a bell-ringing exercise. And I did so, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, and toed the party line, Mr. Speaker, and went with my party in solidarity even though, Mr. Speaker, one questioned how parliamentary that tactic was.

And during that time, Mr. Speaker, when the opposition Conservatives, of which I was a member, walked out of this House for some six hours, the Leader of the Opposition, then government House leader, made the following statements, not in here but into the *Leader-Post* at the time, and he said the following: he said that he was shocked and disappointed by the childish antics. It is without precedence in his 14 years in this legislature. He said, with respect to the politician, that respect for politicians is going to be greatly degraded and the tactics of disruption are a serious threat to the parliamentary democracy. And he went on to describe bell-ringing as parliamentary lawlessness.

Now those are very strong words, Mr. Speaker. And I ask this Assembly, and I ask the hon. member, what has changed in eight years? What has changed in eight years as it relates to bell-ringing, Mr. Speaker, other than the fact that we have traded places on each side of the House?

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition can be, and as often does accuse people of saying one thing and doing something else. And I ask the Leader of the Opposition, and I ask others, to judge the consistency of those statements in '81 and the actions in 1989.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and I say to all members, if it was childish tactics to ring the bells for six hours, is it childish tactics to ring the bells for 17 days? If it was a serious threat to parliamentary democracy to ring the bells for six hours, is it a serious threat to ring the bells for 17 days? And if it was parliamentary lawlessness to ring the bells for six hours, is it parliamentary lawlessness to ring the bells for 17 days, Mr. Speaker? And that, Mr. Speaker, is why I believe it is justified for us to look at changing this rule.

There is another important principle of parliamentary practice, Mr. Speaker, subordinate, I suggest, to the rule of the majority, but it is the right of, Mr. Speaker, members in this House to also respect the rights of the opposition and the minority. And we can all conjure up various cases by which we could come to grips with this one, or examples of it, but let me just give you a couple.

Let's suppose, Mr. Speaker, that a private member, whether he's from the back bench or whether he's from the opposition, wishes to introduce first reading of a private member's Bill. And suppose that the government members who have a majority say no, and it goes to a standing vote or a division, and they vote against that member being able to put his private member Bill on the Table. That clearly, Mr. Speaker, would be a violation of the rights of the members and violation of the rights of the minority. Or government could, Mr. Speaker, through tactical mechanisms, prevent petitions from being presented in this Assembly, or certainly being presented in this Assembly as they have become a custom and tradition to do. And I think that, as well, Mr. Speaker, would become a violation of it.

But the question we ask ourselves with regard to this motion, Mr. Speaker, is does this proposal, and would these rules violate that principle of the majority overriding and overrunning the minority. Mr. Speaker, if we are to say that they would, we would be saying that all jurisdictions in Canada, perhaps with the exception of Ontario, and all jurisdictions in the Commonwealth also have adopted rules that are unfair to the rights of the minority. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that is not in fact the case.

I pose this question to you as well, Mr. Speaker. Has obstructionism become a right? Is it a right in our system to be obstructionist and to use obstructionist tactics? Mr. Speaker, perhaps they work in another forum or in a picket line or on a picket line, but Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you they do not work in this, a forum for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I would again like to quote from Mr. Barnhart, as he addressed this Assembly some six weeks ago. He said:

The parliamentary system is a very delicately balanced and fragile institution, and each member has a role and a responsibility to strengthen and preserve this institution for generations to come.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, by increasing obstructionist tactics, do we strengthen this institution? And I would suggest to you that we do not.

Some members opposite have said that obstructionism and obstruction is okay if the polls and public opinion polls say that it is okay. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, any person elected to public office must be cognizant of what the public opinion is at the time, and take that public opinion into any decisions that they might take or agenda that they might follow.

Mr. Speaker, but should we decide each issue, whether it's a budget or every piece of legislation or every action, according to what the public opinion polls say? Have we arrived at a point, Mr. Speaker, where the pollsters will dictate the agenda of this Assembly? And if we have, we must ask ourselves and justify ourselves: have we not moved dangerously close to government by referendum?

Is it acceptable to ring the bells if a government introduces an unpopular budget? Would it be acceptable to ring the bells on issues like bilingualism where we understand strongly held views by people on both sides? Would it be acceptable to ring the bells on issues like capital punishment and let the pollsters decide what is the proper course? Would it be appropriate to ring the bells in questions like abortion, like immigration policy, like nationalization or privatization policies or strategies to deal with interest rates or monetary policy? Mr. Speaker, I don't really believe that we, with a long view of this institution, should agree to that.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the opposition says, why this way? Why not use a traditional process of the legislative committee to look at the rules? Mr. Speaker, we did that last year. We attempted to find a common ground with regard to limits on bell-ringing, and the committee broke down, and unfortunately the committee broke down on political lines.

So the question then has to be asked, is it realistic then that we could get agreement now? The members opposite, either through themselves directly or some of their surrogate members have vowed to make this province ungovernable. Members opposite have said that they will use every procedure to disrupt this legislature. Ironically, Mr. Speaker, that's the same stated purpose that was used to instigate the first bell-ringing by those Irishmen back in 1877. And the members opposite are using the same proposal now.

Mr. Speaker, in my 11 years in this Chamber I have not witnessed an environment where the distrust, where the rowdiness, where the personal bitterness and the inability of people within this House, Mr. Speaker, to strike gentlemen's agreement have been at such a low ebb.

Mr. Speaker, this Assembly runs not only by the rules but by the gentlemanly understanding that members have for each other. And institutions like parliament, including this institution, has done it that way — the unwritten rules, if you like. Given that environment, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that we wait for rule changes until all parties have agreed is tantamount to delegating to the opposition the

veto power of dealing with rules. It's tantamounting to accept instructionism for the duration of this.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I still am concerned about this concept of the rule changes being introduced this way. And before I take my place, I make this point to the hon. members. If the opposition will stand in their place and say that the major concern they have is the process; the concern that they have with this issue is the process, then I ask them to do that. And if process is what is wrong with this action today, then I invite the hon. member to ask to adjourn this debate, to put together two members or three members from the opposition and two to three members from the government to go and see if we can't collectively come to a resolve to find what would be a fair rule as it relates to bell-ringing.

And I offer that challenge to the members opposite. If they are interested, Mr. Speaker, in the tradition, primarily, and in the process, Mr. Speaker, they will take up that option. If they reject it, Mr. Speaker, then that is saying to me, no, we want to maintain the vehicle, the vehicle of obstructionism by bell-ringing. Mr. Speaker, I think that is an option that can be dealt with, Mr. Speaker, in fairness by this whole House.

We can get into this battle, Mr. Speaker, but perhaps this is an opportunity by which together we can preserve the tradition of changing the rules, but at the same time bring some discipline to the ringing of bells.

I offer that in the interests of all members of this Assembly, and as I take my seat, Mr. Speaker, and prior to moving this motion, I undertake to listen to the members opposite; to respect their right if they so say that no, this is what I believe, or this is what I believe; they have the right to say that. But I think they should take a long view of this institution, Mr. Speaker, and so should we, in the processing of it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Melfort:

That the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly* be amended.

I so move.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Pickering: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if I could interrupt the proceedings to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

(1515)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Pickering: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me this afternoon to introduce to you, and through you to all members of the legislature, a group of 50 students.

They're in grade 9, 10, 11, and 12; 25 of these students are from Prince Edward Island, 10 of them from Crane Valley, and 15 of them from Spring Valley, which is on the west side of my constituency.

I would like to inform the visitors from Prince Edward Island that yesterday was not a typical Saskatchewan spring day. We do have the odd one, being that we're in the middle of a drought.

I would like to inform the Assembly that I will be meeting with them for drinks and pictures at about 4 o'clock, and I would like all members to join with me in giving them a warm welcome to Saskatchewan and to the legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Amendments to Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a privilege for me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to once again be allowed to rise in this Assembly and to participate in today's debate.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is a privilege that today we are attempting to protect. And that word "privilege," Mr. Deputy Speaker, is important in parliamentary democracy, as you are all too well aware. And I would like for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to dwell on the word privilege itself just for a few moments.

Beauchesne's, in the Fifth Edition, quotes Erskine May, in the 19th Edition stating what privilege is. And I quote, Mr. Speaker:

. . . Privilege is the sum of . . . peculiar rights enjoyed by each House collectively as a constituent part of the High Court of Parliament, and by Members of each House individually, without which they could not discharge their functions . . .

And that reference continues:

The privileges of Parliament are rights which are "absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers." They are enjoyed by individual Members, because the House cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the services of its Members; and by each House for the protection of its Members and the vindication of its own authority and its own dignity.

Now, Mr. Speaker, while I am not today raising a point of privilege, I think all of parliamentary practice and the rules of parliament are exceedingly important to this debate. If one examines the definitions of privilege and the intent of the rules, one can see rather quickly that suspending or adjourning a Legislative Assembly without the agreement of that Assembly is a clear and unequivocal breach of the privileges of that Assembly.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, the origin of the

idea of privilege was to prevent parliament from being closed without the consent of parliament; to prevent the impedence of its legal and proper functioning.

Mr. Speaker, one part of the *Beauchesne's* reference is very important in this regard, and it is the phrase that parliament must have "the unimpeded use of the services of its Members". Well, Mr. Speaker, this legislature has been denied the unimpeded use of the services of its members in this parliament, and this parliament was prohibited from discharging its functions, and this was done without the consent of the Assembly or even without the debate of this Assembly.

The motion before this House, Mr. Speaker, seeks to set out very clear rules to prevent such an attack on the fundamental rights and privileges of the Legislative Assembly from ever happening again.

Usually when there is a proposed rule change, and particularly where there is a division of opinion on that rule change, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is of utmost importance that the reasoning be set out and that consistency with the principles and the purposes of parliamentary procedure be demonstrated. And to do this we must examine what has happened, what has precipitated the need for a rule change. And we have to examine the traditions of the House and the rules themselves as they have evolved over a period of time, even ever since the Magna Carta.

And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I hope you will accept the importance that I attach to the research that I have done into these questions of privilege and of the functioning of the House itself. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, the most fundamental privileges a member of the Assembly enjoys is the right to take his seat in the legislature, to be heard by the Assembly, and to vote on questions before the Assembly.

This privilege, Mr. Speaker, is so clearly fundamental — so clearly fundamental — that the only way it can be abridged is by a vote of the House itself to remove a member from his seat. Yet the bell-ringing issue that we are dealing with today accomplishes precisely the effect of denying members the right to take their seats, denying members the right to be heard by this Assembly, and denying members the right to vote.

Indeed, I believe that it is a gross injustice to the intent of the division bells that a mechanism has been established to assure each member the right to be present and to vote, and that that right is applied to the utterly contrary purpose of denying each member those rights to vote. That fact alone, Mr. Speaker, I believe, is sufficient to compel all hon. members to support the motion that we are debating.

And let me underline this fact, Mr. Speaker, for those who may be unfamiliar with the way this honourable place works and particularly the purpose of the ringing of the bells or the conduct of a division, as it is called. And I quote from *Beauchesne's*, Fifth Edition, page 74:

Should five or more Members rise to request a recorded vote, the Speaker says: "Call in the

Members." The Sergeant-at-Arms ensures that the bells are rung; the Whips take (several) steps to assemble their Members.

And that's the end of the quotation. Those, to me, Mr. Speaker, are quite clear words. The intent and the purpose of those words are clear to me.

If a member wishes to have a recorded vote, he stands here in his place. If five such members stand, then the Speaker says, "Call in the members." He does not say that the House is adjourned. He does not ask the Leader of the Opposition when he might give permission to have the vote taken. He does not announce that the Assembly will be suspended for the purpose of political rallies or petition gathering. Mr. Speaker, he says, "Call in the members."

Then *Beauchesne's* says that the whips take steps to assemble their members. It does not say that politicians disperse their members around the province. It does not say that members should leave the Assembly and portray the undignifying spectacle of leaving the Speaker sitting alone in his chair with one Clerk at the table. It says clearly, Mr. Speaker, without equivocation, that it is the duty of the whips to call in the members to be ready for the vote. Call in the members, assemble your members, get into the Assembly and exercise your duty, Mr. Speaker, to vote. This is what the bells are for. I don't feel that it could be any clearer than what I have just outlined, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice shared with me an article entitled: "Bell-ringing Revisited." This was published in the journal of parliamentary procedure entitled, *The Table*. And I refer all members to that article and for all members to take a little bit of guidance from that article. In reading the article, it directed the attention to the question of adjournment as it relates to the rule that we are debating today. And I quote:

Traditionally following the rules in *Beauchesne*, an unscheduled adjournment could be obtained only by presenting a motion to adjourn, and then by winning the vote. With the precedent of bell-ringing an entirely new method of obtaining an adjournment is created, and it does not include the risk of losing a vote . . . This procedure is a logical consequence of obstructionist bell-ringing, but is completely foreign to *Beauchesne* or the Standing Orders. The procedure seems to destroy the need for the traditional procedure.

If one were to attempt to define obstructionist bell-ringing as it has developed so far, what would be an accurate description? The article supplies the answer to that question, Mr. Speaker, as follows. The bell-ringing we have witnessed over the last while has exactly the same effect as:

. . . either official whip to rise and inform the Speaker and the other Members that the House is adjourned.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, the implications of this because the

House has always operated, first and foremost, by the will of its members to follow the letter and the spirit of the rules and the traditions and practices of parliamentary democracy. This effect has not represented a present danger to our democracy.

But in the last number of weeks, Mr. Speaker, that has changed. It is not enough to say that in some other year, some other opposition rang the bells for six hours. And on that episode, Mr. Speaker, the current Leader of the Opposition was quoted in his own party publication, the NDP *Coffee Row* publication, as saying, the ringing of the bells by the opposition for six hours cost the taxpayers 20,000, and was “unruly and misguided.”

It is not enough to say, Mr. Speaker, that the old opposition did it for six hours, so the current opposition can do it for six months, or some other group in some other Assembly did it for so many days. If you look at the precedents, Mr. Speaker, you will find that, indeed, wherever the members have been unable to maintain their dedication to the intent of the rules and the intent of the traditions in regard to bell-ringing, the legislatures involved have acted quickly to bring the rules of their House explicitly in line with the intended practice.

I cite the House of Commons as an example of extended bell-ringing during the national energy program debate. That only serves to reinforce the evidence of my argument. You will find today, Mr. Speaker, that the rules of the House of Commons do not allow extended bell-ringing. That Assembly, Mr. Speaker, said that it would not, it could not, risk the attack on such a fundamental principle of democracy.

And likewise, Mr. Speaker, in virtually every jurisdiction in the world of parliaments, there are no extended bell-rings. Mr. Speaker, the limits imposed on bell-ringing range from, in the country of Australia, two minutes, to one hour in Nova Scotia. The two remaining parliaments that do not have explicit provisions are now proceeding with rules such as we are debating today. It is my understanding that the province of Ontario is engaged in a very similar review to that which we are undertaking here.

And I'd like, Mr. Speaker, to point out one further thing. In the last session of this very Legislative Assembly, we here in Saskatchewan had in practice virtually the identical rule that we are today debating. We had this rule in full operation and full effect. Clearly, there was no member at that time who felt that the rule was undemocratic, unparliamentary, or an infringement on his or her rights. We operated an entire session under the rule.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it worked to the acceptance of all. There were no protests; there were no great demonstrations over that rule.

I put that forward, Mr. Speaker, because I believe that it is incumbent upon members to clarify the distinctions that they may make between then and now, between our Assembly and other assemblies, between their position last session and today.

As Mr. Tom McMahon says in his article, “Bell-ringing

Revisited,” bell-ringing is a method to prevent the majority of members in the legislature from voting on the legislative program. Mr. McMahon did a detailed review of various obstructionist tactics that are used in legislative assemblies, and he found a number that are legitimate and acceptable, but he says:

A review of assorted methods of obstruction shows that parliamentary history has been guided by one unbreakable rule — the majority must prevail over the minority.

He argues that this is so fundamental that bell-ringing is indeed a serious threat to the very principle of democracy, and he quotes the esteemed historical authority, Josef Redlich, that bell-ringing causes a situation which is:

... no longer argument against argument but force against force. The fundamental principle of British parliamentary government was now at stake, the principle on which its framework rested, that of government by the majority.

And, Mr. Speaker, I feel that there should be no dispute on this motion today. There can be no serious argument that the opposition's ability to engage in legitimate obstruction is diminished. Indeed, as the opposition in this Assembly has made clear, they do have a wide array of tools to hold up the legislature and impede the government.

And the Leader of the Opposition made this very clear the other day in the Regina *Leader-Post* on May 9 when he told reporters he was going to disrupt parliament even more than he had already done with the bell-ringing, in spite of the new rule, so clearly is he of a mind that he has the tools to be obstructive.

Therefore I believe, Mr. Speaker, there can be no acceptance of spurious arguments that this rule would somehow diminish the ability of an opposition to do such things.

(1530)

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to put forward a few other concepts for members to consider. First, Mr. Speaker, this is their sworn constitutional duty. The constitution of our country provides that we have a duty — a duty, Mr. Speaker, to meet in this Assembly and attend to the business of the Assembly. This is not a frivolous concept, but a sworn duty. That the very constitution of the country can be undermined by an abuse of the division bells, itself is enough to demand that explicit provisions be set out for the conduct of a division.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, and I do not say this lightly, world wars have been fought so that freely elected legislative assemblies could remain open, not so that they could be closed by a minority.

Are the opposition going to seriously argue that if one can produce a poll that says public opinion is with them on any given issue, then they have the right to suspend the sitting of the democratically elected legislature? On this

basis, Mr. Speaker, never would there have been passed a Bill to nationalize the potash industry.

The opposition of the day, led by Senator Davey Steuart, could have withdrawn from the Assembly, based on the polls that were taken at that time, and refused to allow the Assembly to consider the legislative agenda of the majority. Senator Steuart, who was not a member of our party, has said that they did not do so because it would be alien to parliamentary democracy, and even in the strength and depth of the opposition that he felt to the government's action, he had to maintain respect for this Assembly. He chose the course of a leader and protested vigorously. He fought hard, but he did not close down the legislature.

And, Mr. Speaker, I remember those days. People in especially north-east Saskatchewan who were familiar, very familiar, with Davey Steuart — his home was in Prince Albert — remembered Davey Steuart and respected him. And they respected his vigorous fight, but they also respected that he did not close down the legislature.

I believe that it is somewhat sad, Mr. Speaker, that our Assembly has sunk so low that the course of leadership seems closed to those who feel they must oppose at any cost, at any price, even at the expense of the very institution that makes our democracy work. The history books will show, Mr. Speaker, who showed the courage and who chose the easy, softer way out.

And I would put into this debate just one more quote from that article on bell-ringing. It argues that bell-ringing is the coward's way out, the weakling's first option, because:

. . . it does not take ingenuity nor hard work. It only requires one to walk out; it only requires one to boycott.

Well, Mr. Speaker, no member of this Assembly should ever allow that charge to be laid on their account. And to avoid such a disgrace to this Assembly and its members, we must ensure that the rules are explicit and the rules are enforced.

Our fathers and our grandfathers did not go off to die on foreign soil so that we might be subject to the whim of obstructionism. They fought so hard that our children might have a parliamentary system ensuring that members have the access to the Assembly and that the Assembly would legislate by votes of the majority.

Our parents did not come here, Mr. Speaker, to substitute a mild form of tyranny for a stronger form; they came to banish tyranny. And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that a provision that turns a call to come to vote, into a barrier to vote, is the first tentative step on the road to tyranny, however mild it may seem.

I therefore, Mr. Speaker, implore all members of the Assembly on all sides to put away their disputes for the time being and to support this motion with a resolute determination to support our Assembly and ensure that it prospers in the environment of dignity and democracy, which, for many centuries and millions of lives, have

bought for us at a tremendous cost.

It is my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to second this motion, and I thank you for your time today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise to join into this debate, and I do so first with some remarks about the new-found attachment to democracy that the member from Melfort and the member from Kindersley have expressed here in this legislature.

The new-found democracy, Mr. Speaker, which resulted in an election in October of 1986 . . .

An Hon. Member: — 1981.

Mr. Romanow: — And from 1986 election — I'll come to 1981 right away — October of 1986 to June of 1987, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for that period of nearly a year, these great democrats opposite denied the elected representatives of the people of the province of Saskatchewan to come to this legislature to ask questions and to debate Bills and to make them to account for their billion dollar boondoggles that they've instituted since that period of being elected. That's what these great democrats have done.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, under this government since 1982, the record will show that there has been no government in the history of this province which has refused — I underline the word refused — to answer orders of this legislature for a longer period of time than this government opposite, the new-found democrats from Melfort and Kindersley.

I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that these new-found democrats are so profound in their respect for democracy that it took them a year before they called a by-election in Saskatoon Eastview, and a year to deny the voices of the people of Saskatoon Eastview on the fundamental rights to speak in this legislature, these new-found democrats did.

These new-found democrats, Mr. Speaker, who believe in this great institution of parliament, who have introduced, by the way, Bill No. 1, an omnibus Bill giving to them the power, the unrestricted power to privatize any department, any agency, any Crown corporation of government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, without ever coming back to this legislature again, that's what these new-found new democrats are trying to put through this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — These new-found democrats, Mr. Speaker, have come to this legislature and they have spent at least \$46 million in the last four years — \$46 million on privatization they have done, these new democrats, Mr. Speaker, trying to sell their concepts of privatization. And they will not even tell the opposition, these new-found democrats, what it costs to fund the Barber review panel.

Mr. Speaker, I can make a speech about democracy and how this government in the debate on Bill No. 1 . . . I repeat to you, sir, and I repeat to the public out there and to the journalists, take a look at Bill No. 1. This gives the government the right to privatize anything in the province of Saskatchewan without ever coming back to this legislature once in defence. That's the democrats. Those are the new democrats, the Minister of Justice and the Premier and the Progressive Conservatives opposite. Is that democracy, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

And I want to tell you something else about democracy. Yes, they applaud; they say it's democracy. They want us to agree. They want to cut off the legislative right of this legislature to agree with the introduction of a legislative Bill which would for ever put behind the secrecy of the cabinet walls the rights for them to make any kind of a deal on privatization with their friends or with anybody else without ever again coming before the legislative session. That's democracy? That's democracy? That's exactly what they do.

That Bill, that Bill No. 1 I've mentioned, tabling of *Public Accounts*. I invite the journalists to take a look at this. Take a look at Bill No. 1 and take a look at the record. They say you should be debating in the hallowed chambers of this Assembly, these issues. How many Conservatives have debated Bill No. 1? You know how many, Mr. Deputy Speaker? One — the introducer. That one . . . maybe two at the most. Nobody else has.

We've carried on the debate. We've been trying to alert the legislature; we've been trying to alert the public; we've been trying to alert the journalists about how aggressive and how Draconian this Bill is. We've made speech after speech, and I want to tell you, the journalists, they won't even cover what we say any more on Bill No. 1. Yes. That's right.

The hon. member from Rosthern applauds that because this brand-new democrat, this brand-new democrat, this new-found democrat, the member from Rosthern, the man who personalizes attacks, who is in a mudslinging mode; the mudslinger for the Conservatives opposite, this new-found democrat wants it that way, because if the people of the province of Saskatchewan found out what was in Bill No. 1, they would want us to stay out, not for 17 days, they'd want this Bill to be stopped . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — What new-found democrats are these, Mr. Deputy Speaker? What new-found democracy is this? What kind of charade is this? What kind of an unprecedented action it is for these people to bring forward a motion for rules change without consultation — I will say a word about the Minister of Justice's, what I would describe, olive branch, at the end — without any consultation from us; out of pique, out of pique.

They know that the people of Saskatchewan oppose what they have done and oppose it vigorously, and they wanted the opposition to do what was being done, and they've gotten beaten up. I don't mean beaten up politically; I don't care about the politics. They got beaten

up on this fundamental policy of theirs, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They got beaten up and now they're coming in and they're going to show us who the bosses are. Again, what kind of democrats are these?

I'll show you who the boss is, is what the Minister of Justice and the Premier says. Without consultation and for the first time in the record of the province of Saskatchewan, although the olive branch of the Minister of Justice is an important consideration, they come forward to change the rules of this House in the name of democracy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What kind of a double standard is this?

These are the people who say they're the defenders. If they're the defenders, why didn't they approach us in this kind of a fashion — traditionally — of trying to define the rules in a way that we could all accept and agree, these self-proclaimed, new-found democrats? I say, Mr. Speaker . . .

An Hon. Member: — Not the New Democrats.

Mr. Romanow: — No. The Deputy Premier says, not New Democrats; I can tell you for sure not New Democrats.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — That's the context in which this motion is to be done, and let's not fool ourselves as to what's happening here. This government, if it was really genuinely committed to democracy, would have, as much as it hurt the Minister of Justice, as much as he opposed what we did, they would have done it in the traditional and normal democratic way. Let's not be fooled about what's being planned here.

I could say more about the democracy of these shouter-downs over there and these name-callers and personal attackers — personal attackers. I could say more about the democracy of this, but I think that there are members of back-bench in the Conservative side who are genuinely ashamed of some of their colleagues, and I don't think they're all in that same boat, but I'm not going to, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to make a point about the question of why the opposition did what it did. Now this may be, Mr. Speaker, a foreign concept to the government, and if I may say so, it may be a foreign concept to all now, unfortunately — journalists who cover us and the democratic system — but I still firmly believe, Mr. Speaker, in the idea that governments get elected with a general and specific mandate of what they can and cannot do by the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

I still believe that governments enter elections, and political parties in opposition enter elections, and they say, if you elect us we're going to do this, or we're not going to do that, and there is a general mandate. I don't mean so general that it means nothing; statements like diversification, in which we all believe, statements about the future in which we all believe. I mean programs which tell specifically, as much as you can in an election campaign, what you're going to do with taxation policy; what the state of the budget is; what you're going to do for

economic diversification; what are you going to do for the farmers who are undergoing their most severe crisis right now.

I believe that elections are the time when the people who vote for us give us a mandate in general and specific terms. Is that such a foreign concept of democracy to advocate? I believe that that's what it's all about.

And if you take a look at the SaskEnergy debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say the record shows that at no time in 1986, by any stretch of the words used by the members opposite, was the privatization of SaskEnergy on the debate before the public. It was never a mandate, either in general terms or specific terms. And I say that even after the 1986 general election the government promised — promised faithfully — that they would never privatize SaskEnergy; they would never privatize a public utility.

They made those promises in this House, these democrats did, in this legislature, on the record, in the face of all of the journalists. We ask them the questions and they say, no, they're not going to privatize. I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you look at the entire record, this government, either in the election of 1986 or subsequently, had no mandate to what it attempted to do, and has no mandate of doing what it attempted to do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1545)

Mr. Romanow: — Because these new-found democrats think that you can answer any question you want to answer. Just get it on out of the way; answer it deceptively; sneak it under here; don't answer it; give the old speech about 1982 and how interest rates are going back to 1982. You buffalo the journalists for the last seven years. You're going to buffalo them for the next seven years if you do that. You can buffalo the people of Saskatchewan. That's what these new-found democrats opposite believe is the mandate, and that's what's deteriorated this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker — what's deteriorated this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — There used to be a time in this legislature prior to 1982 where members opposite, by the way, were contributing in a positive way on this debate. I didn't agree with him where the debate was meaningful. Of course, when a member of the opposition gets up and asks a question during question period, you don't expect a government minister to get up and say, yes I'm guilty. I mean, he's going to try to answer the question in a defensive way, but there was some attempt to at least meet honestly the question posed and the answer given in a way which would count; to respect not only this institution but to respect the people who put us all here. I came back in 1986 — I can't get an answer from the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan on any issues — none.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — You know, the name of the game is, I

can ask him that whether or not today is Thursday, May 10 — not him, but the government opposite — today is Thursday, May 10, and they'll get up and tell me about what we did prior to 1982. And they'll do that over and over again until I take my place, because they know that when the journalists have to report, the journalists will report what I say, but they also know the journalists have to report what the government says — and it's a government line. Forget about the fact that it doesn't respect democracy and there's no meeting of the minds; forgetting about the fact that there's no attempt to answer, even in a sophisticated or subtle way — is there any wonder that the opposition says, look, they're not covering, they're not answering, they've got \$46 million of advertising. What can we do?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — We are a lonely band of 26 members here, Mr. Speaker, 26 members. We have \$46 million of advertising of taxpayers' bucks, my bucks, on privatization, without a mandate. We've got the Barber commission set up without a mandate. We've got the Barber commission set up without a budget defined, and they simply refuse to tell us. Now they want to introduce the bell-ringing motion to come back and to say to us that on top of all of this artillery that they're going to use to submerge the opposition — forget about the opposition — and submerge the people of the province of Saskatchewan. On top of all of that they say, we are going to muzzle you for ever on this issue. That is what their new democracy under the Progressive Conservatives in Saskatchewan is all about. That's what the new democracy is all about.

Now look, Mr. Speaker, I say that I am still old fashioned enough to believe that when you come into an election, you come with a general and specific mandate, that you seek the approval or the rejection of the public at large. And on SaskEnergy they had not.

I want to say something else though, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I also understand, because I sat on the treasury benches, that not every government in every election can foresee in every mandate a set of circumstances which would require the government to govern from day to day. I know that. If there are external circumstances, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which arise, which compel the government duly elected to act and to respond, I as the Leader of the Opposition respect that right. This party respects that right. We may disagree as to their response, but they've got to govern.

But there was no external set of circumstances on the privatization of SaskEnergy. There was no international economic set of circumstances changed. There was no Supreme Court of Canada decision which took away the right of the government to govern or to do what it did. In fact there was no external set of circumstances; what there was, pure and simple, was a betrayal of their word to the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Now you put yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in those boots. You put those right here in our

shoes. If you're in the opposition, or out there, if you're a farmer or a labourer or a business person who sees a government that never campaigned on this in '86; who sees a government not only not having campaigned on it, but promised faithfully that they would never privatize; who sees a government spending \$46 million to try to bludgeon us and the public on this approach; who sees a government that does not enter into debate; that sees that the report of the debate is not carried in the print media or in the televised media, because right after question period that's basically it with the television medium.

It doesn't matter that my colleague makes a one-hour long speech. You could disagree with the argument. For the world is concerned, he never was in the legislature to speak about it. You take all of those things and you come to SaskEnergy and then they say that we as the opposition have got to take it. Well I've got news for the government opposite. This government never was elected to do that. It is a rare and occasional thing that any opposition should use bell-ringing — rare and occasional.

I believe I've never used it for the period that I have, never used it for the period that I have except, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this so fundamentally offends mandate, people's power, the right to govern in unforeseen circumstances. It is so unfair. It is the Goliath over there with their millions of dollars and their stacked-deck panel review against the people of Saskatchewan, that we had no other choice but to give democracy full bent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I want to say one thing about potash because I keep on hearing this from the members opposite from time to time — what did you do in potash? Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in potash in 1975 and in 1971 in the *New Deal for People* which I would be pleased to give to every member opposite . . . I don't have a copy with me, but if somebody can get a copy I can read the relevant provisions to you.

An Hon. Member: — You said explore development.

Mr. Romanow: — Look, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was already established in 1974. We campaigned in 1975 on expanding public development on exploration and development of the potash industry. And when we got re-elected there was another set of unforeseen circumstances. The Supreme Court of Canada struck down the right to regulate and to tax the potash industry, and we had to act.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Those were the circumstances. Those were the circumstances.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government opposite has nothing like that for a major policy issue, nothing whatsoever. I mean, and they think they can continue this deception. They think that they can simply say, well, you know, you're not privatizing SaskPower; you know, we're privatizing SaskEnergy. These simplistic deceptions. They can continue to argue that this is all some sort of fabrication.

Look, ladies and gentlemen of the government opposite, come to reality; come to your senses. You cannot win by deception. Face the facts. Get the message. And the message is the people don't want you to privatize SaskEnergy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — You still don't understand what's happened out there to you. You still don't understand what's happened to you, do you? Out of touch.

An Hon. Member: — Tell me about it.

Mr. Romanow: — The member from Assiniboia says, tell him about it. You'd better listen about it because you're not going to be very long to listen to very much. I'll tell you about it exactly; I'll tell you exactly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I tell you exactly what happened. In the SaskEnergy situation . . .

An Hon. Member: — Tell us about the hospitals.

Mr. Romanow: — Yes, you tell us about the hospitals. When is Gravelbourg going to be built? You tell us about that. You tell me about Old Wives Lake. You tell me when Old Wives Lake is going to be fixed up. You tell me about those hospitals you promised out there. I tell you, when you call this election, when your Premier gets the nerve to call this election, you are going to be a one-half term member, sir, because of your deceptions to the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Yes, yes indeed, yes indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker — people who run on deception, people who do not understand the principles of democracy, people who still have not got the message of what the people of Saskatchewan have said to them in this whole dispute. And what they've said to them is you've broken every law and every principle of democracy. You do not have the authority to do this; we want you to stop. And it worked — you stopped. It worked.

This is the best act of participatory democracy that I've seen in Saskatchewan since medicare and it worked. It worked!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — The member opposite, the member from Justice says, well you know, this is akin to a private member who would come in with a private piece of legislation and we wouldn't allow him to read that private legislation on first reading. It's not akin. The private member has a mandate — all private members are elected and mandated to advance these issues on an individual basis.

The member from Melfort says, well you know, what about the abortion issues and capital punishment issues?

These are issues which cut across all party lines. A variety of people from a variety of different views articulate their points of view. There are differences. It's not a matter of public policy necessarily; it's a matter of individual conscience. Privatization of SaskEnergy is a government policy and a betrayal.

There's no parallel here. This a fundamental issue. And I say to the government members opposite, they have missed the boat and have seriously offended the people of this province. They have offended the people in this province by what they did with SaskEnergy. They have offended the people of Saskatchewan in what they've done ever since 1982, in the way they've treated this legislature.

They don't have to . . . we don't have to have any lectures from them about democracy in this area. I want to tell you that what was done here by the opposition was done only after careful consideration. At the end, nobody in this House won, but the people won, and in doing so this institution was strengthened because the people spoke. That's what happened.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Now having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Justice has suggested that a committee of two or three, as I understand it, from each side, be set up, established in the next reasonable while to consider the issues pertained by this motion. I think that that's a suggestion which is worthy of consideration, careful consideration, by this opposition.

I would like to see such a committee of two from each side be expanded to look at other issues if we're talking about democracy. Should the length of question period be expanded to 50 minutes? Should we have rules which compel the tabling of reports on time and the convening of legislature on time?

I don't urge all of that, but we're talking about democracy and the spirit of democracy and improving the love of this institution which we all have, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Perhaps now is the time to take a look at all of these issues.

I'm not suggesting that today. What I am suggesting today is that we should take the suggestion of the Minister of Justice and we should move on to the next phase of seeing how it is that we can strengthen not only this institution, but democracy. And I think we'd be all well-advised — and I will include myself in this — all well-advised if we attempted to play by, as much as we can, the concepts of democracy; namely, questions which are answered, and tabling of reports on time, and of legislative sessions, a legislative session which is vigorous and is reported widely so that the people can get its work done through the government elected. But we should respect always, always, that the people, at the end of the day, are right, through mandates. That's what we should respect.

I think therefore the suggestion of the Minister of Justice bears further, very serious consideration. And I'll undertake to him, as Leader of the Opposition, that we will get back to him within the next . . . I would hope the government would at least give us over the weekend —

tomorrow is Friday . . . to caucus and to consider what he said — I missed part of his remarks; read the written transcript; and to get back to him by, say, Monday at the latest as to what we would suggest in response to his suggestion which, if I may so say so and I don't mean to be argumentative here, I would have liked the government to have done before it introduced the motion unilaterally. But that's water under the bridge. Let's not look at the past; let's look at the future.

I think we'll take up that suggestion and take an example of it for the next two or three days and consider it carefully, and get back to the government proponent of the mover, the Minister of Justice.

With those few remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and in the light of the suggestion made by the Minister of Justice, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the spirit that we're developing in the House, I want to make one correction. Bill No. 1, I think the record that I have here is that there were six Conservatives who spoke in the debate; I said one. I stand to be corrected. Fifteen on this side.

(1600)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lane that **Bill No. 20 — An Act respecting the Reorganization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan** be now read a second time.

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I last had the opportunity to speak on this Bill, Bill 20, An Act respecting the Reorganization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, I had several remarks to deal with some of the members' speeches on the other side of the House, as well as trying to bring some new information into the debate. And I think it's always important when we have debate in this legislature, to provide information to people, not just to have conversation and debate for the sake of having conversation and debate. But hopefully people can learn something from the debates that take place, just as hopefully members can learn something from the debates that take place in this Chamber.

In the potash Bill itself we find a number of things, Mr. Speaker. Some of the major points dealing with the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Bill point out that up to 45 per cent of the potash corporation will be open for sale to foreign investors.

Foreign investors in the case of this Bill, Bill 20, mean people from outside of Canada. The other 55 per cent,

Mr. Speaker, is an amount of the share offering which people could buy outside of the province of Saskatchewan. It doesn't necessarily have to be within the province; it could be those investors from Bay Street or from Montreal or Vancouver — any place in Canada — not necessarily to the benefit of Saskatchewan people.

And a number of Saskatchewan people have a hard time understanding what the government is doing, because currently the people of the province of Saskatchewan are 100 per cent shareholders of the potash corporation. And with this Bill we said, as I said, we find 45 per cent of the shares will leave not only the province of Saskatchewan, but are assured of leaving this country altogether. And therefore people from Zürich or people from New York or people from Tokyo or people from Beijing, as far as that goes, could end up having 45 per cent of the shares. And we all know very well, Mr. Speaker, that 45 per cent of the shares in a corporation that's valued with assets over \$1 billion — some estimates might go as high as \$2 billion — you certainly don't need 45 per cent to control the actual company.

The corporate elite throughout the world have many instances where they can control companies with 10 per cent of the shares. And the reason that is, Mr. Speaker, is because when the shares get out on the stock exchange, you have very little control as to where they go. The only thing you can be assured of is the people with the most wealth will buy most of the shares, and therefore the ordinary Saskatchewan resident very soon will own nothing at all of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. And that is not a good situation for this government to put our fine province into.

The potash corporation has made very handsome returns to the province, revenues into the coffers of the province of Saskatchewan to deliver health care programs, education programs, programs and services that are of benefit to the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

And as I pointed out in my remarks last Monday evening, the Crown investment corporation, which is the banker for Crown corporations in the province of Saskatchewan, are putting in \$200 million this year into general revenue to help the Devine Conservatives balance their budget. And even with the \$200 million, Mr. Speaker, we find that this government again, for every year since 1982, has not been able to balance the budget. Even with \$200 million coming from Crown investment corporation, they're still going to run a deficit this year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this 45 per cent foreign ownership, let no one be deceived. If any foreign investor buys up 20 per cent or 25 per cent or 30 or 35, 40, 45 per cent of the shares of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, it will be that corporation or that individual or that investor that all of a sudden becomes the controlling interest in the potash corporation.

And people throughout the province of Saskatchewan are very concerned about that. We heard that when we were out of this legislature allowing the bells to ring in a very democratic way so that we could go out and talk to people about what the government was doing, get their reaction.

And they told us, we're concerned that the government has gone too far. And where they've gone too far is on the public utilities that they promised that they would not privatize. They promised they would not sell those off. But we are also concerned about just the general thrust of the Progressive Conservative government in the province of Saskatchewan. We're concerned about the privatization moves, because when they're done with their privatization obsession, there'll be nothing left for people in the province of Saskatchewan.

Governments will have to rely on personal income tax, they'll have to rely on tobacco tax, sales tax, and liquor tax, and I don't advocate people drinking more and smoking more, and I certainly don't advocate an increase in the sales tax or personal income tax in the province of Saskatchewan. People say that this government has gone too far, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill does not ensure or require that a majority of the ownership shall remain in the province of Saskatchewan. I pointed that out already.

Forty-five per cent to foreign investors — that means outside of this country. The other 55 per cent is to residents, but the Bill doesn't say residents of the province of Saskatchewan; residents are Canadian residents. And that causes me a great deal of concern as an individual member of this legislature. And I think that it must cause a great deal of concern to some of the back-bench members.

I'm sure they can't all be obsessed the way the cabinet, the Executive Council are, on their move to selling off one of the most valuable Crown corporations in the history of the province of Saskatchewan, which has literally turned over hundreds of millions of dollars to the provincial treasury in the province of Saskatchewan. In fact, this Bill does not ensure that any portion of ownership of the potash corporation remain in this fine province of ours.

Although the Bill specifies, Mr. Speaker, that three directors shall be Saskatchewan residents, it does not specify the total number of directors. Therefore, if some foreign investor acquires 45 per cent of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, they may in fact, hypothetically, be able to put into place 12 directors of their choosing — don't even have to be Canadian residents, let alone Saskatchewan residents. And this government seems to be offering what they would want people think was an olive branch or some great grandeur measure by allowing three Saskatchewan residents to be directors of the privatized Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Well we say, Mr. Speaker, that this is not good enough. This is not good enough for people in this province who have enjoyed the prosperity of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan since its inception in 1976, when there was a great and a strong debate in this provincial legislature where members opposite criticized the government of the day. There was good debate from both sides of the House.

And now we find a government that wants to remove the

ability to debate this and other important issues by the introduction of Bill 1, which is an omnibus kind of privatization Bill allowing the cabinet, the Executive Council, to make all these decisions behind closed doors without ever having to come before this legislature. And I think that that is an atrocity, it's a downgrading of our democratic system. And we want to ensure that not only does this Bill be stopped, we want to ensure that the privatization Bill for SaskPower and the privatization Bill 1, the omnibus Bill, are all stopped, because people in this province do not want these Bills to pass. People, in fact the majority of people in the province of Saskatchewan want the government to call an election on the very important issue of privatization, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Now, Mr. Speaker, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is reported to have made more than \$100 million in 1988. When this privatization proceeds, the profits will flow outside of the province of Saskatchewan; they'll flow outside of Canada. In many instances the profits will flow outside of Canada.

Right now, Mr. Speaker, when a dividend is declared by the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, that dividend is declared to the people of the province of Saskatchewan, and the money is used on the services, the programs provided by the government. Well after privatization would take place — heaven help us if it ever does — these dividends would be declared to the shareholders. And again I point out, Mr. Speaker, that these dividends would go to the shareholders outside the province of Saskatchewan — 45 per cent outside of this country of ours, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know where the rationale and where the common sense is in giving money to other countries that was previously money used by this province to run the programs and services of the Government of Saskatchewan, whether it was a Liberal or a Conservative or a New Democrat government, Mr. Speaker. And I think that probably the Government of Saskatchewan should be ashamed, ashamed of what they're doing to the heritage and the future of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Now we'll all know about the Orient express by this point in time, where the Premier of this province went to Pacific Rim countries and promised a number of those countries that he'd sell them a share in the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. In fact, in some of the news articles that I have read, you can see that if he was held to the offers that he made while he was on his Orient express, he offered 25 per cent of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to five different countries. Now as an economist, I would have thought our Premier would have known better than to do that, because most people would understand even with basic elementary math, Mr. Speaker, that 25 per cent five times makes 125 per cent.

And I doubt if he could succeed in selling 125 per cent of the shares of the potash corporation because investors would be a little more prudent than that. They would only

buy 100 per cent of the shares, because they're not about to give the people of Saskatchewan any bonus. What they want is the resources and the wealth from the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, 125 per cent can't sell.

Mr. Speaker, I didn't want to use only the things that have been said in this legislature and to use the *Public Accounts* and the records that are audited by the Provincial Auditor. Incidentally, when we talk about figures on the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, we're talking about figures that are on record — not rhetoric like the government is using; we're talking about record. They're on record in this building — financial statements audited, looked at by the Provincial Auditor who has been through three different administrations. He served the Liberals, he served the New Democrats, he served the Progressive Conservatives.

Now, Mr. Speaker, how can anyone question the audited — sometimes by private auditors, all the time accessed to the Provincial Auditor — how can members on the government side say that those figures are not correct? They are deceiving the people in the province of Saskatchewan.

So I didn't want to use only the records here as a source, Mr. Speaker, so I took the opportunity of going and finding a few copies of *The Financial Post 500*. Now, Mr. Speaker, *The Financial Post 500* is not a publication that's sympathetic to New Democrats. It's a publication that's independent and serves the business community across Canada. And once every year, in the spring or summer, usually the summer, *The Financial Post* puts out an article in what's called *The Financial Post 500*.

And what *The Financial Post 500* does, Mr. Speaker, is that it lays out the top 500 companies in Canada, either foreign owned or Canadian owned or a combination of those two. So, Mr. Speaker, what I did is that I looked at the years '78-79, '79-80; I looked at 1982; and then I looked at '83, '84, '85, '86, and '87, the years where the Progressive Conservatives were the government in the province of Saskatchewan. And the record is not good. The Conservative record is not good, Mr. Speaker.

(1615)

Now, Mr. Speaker, if you look back to 1980, in the fiscal year ending 1980, Mr. Speaker, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was ranked by sales — the amount of sales — in *The Financial Post 500* as the 142nd of the top 500 companies in Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's look at 1983, '84, '85, '86, and '87, ranked by sales. In 1982 . . . pardon me, in 1983, the first full year that the Conservative administration was in Saskatchewan, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan ranked in sales 285th. In 1984 the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was ranked by sales 259th.

Now here it gets more interesting, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like you to listen to this. In 1985 the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan ranked by sales — know what happened, Mr. Speaker? It didn't even make the top 500 companies in Canada; didn't even make the top 500 companies in Canada, ranked by sales.

Well let's look at 1986, Mr. Speaker. In 1986 in *The Financial Post* 500, for that year, they didn't make the list again. They weren't ranked by sales to even make the top 500 companies in Canada. Well that's very interesting. And then after 1986, the government gets the idea that they're going to sell the potash corporation, so what do they do? They start marketing potash from the potash corporation again.

During the years where the company was run down, the reason it didn't have sales that ranked at the top 500 companies in Canada is because they put the emphasis only on private sector companies and did not allow the potash that needed to be marketed from the potash corporation to be marketed. They squashed the company so that the private sector would have the upper hand. Private sector companies did quite well, thank you. There was no glut on the world market. Lots of countries were increasing their production of potash in the very years that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan did not even rank in the top 500 companies.

But 1987 comes along, after they've made the decision to sell the potash corporation, and said, well, we can't sell this unless we boost the sales. Any investor in their right mind, if they looked at the financial statements, wouldn't buy this company because it would appear to be a dud; it wasn't making money all of a sudden.

So they started increasing the sales of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and in 1987, in 1987, Mr. Speaker, the company again got into the top 500. The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan ranked by sales in 1987 as being 311.

Mr. Speaker, I find this a shameful performance by a Conservative government who's bent on their ideology of privatizing everything that moves in this province. If it moves, privatize it; if it loses money, let's keep it because we're going to be thrown out of government next time and let the taxpayers of Saskatchewan pay. But we say, Mr. Speaker, that's not good enough.

Mr. Speaker, what were some of those sales of potash in terms of dollars? 1980, the sales for potash through the potash corporation were \$392,490,000; 1983, first year Conservatives came in, what were their value of sales? It had dropped by over \$175 million. In 1983, sales in dollar terms of the potash corporation were \$215,737,000. In 1984 the dollar sales, \$272,353,000.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is not a good performance. In fact they're playing some games with the figures in the potash corporation. And my leader, when he spoke at the initial stage of the second reading of the debate on the potash corporation, pointed out the statistics he had at that time. And they are accurate statistics. But what it pointed out more than anything was that the government was trying to ruin the potash corporation just because they didn't believe in it.

In 1987, Mr. Speaker, the sales were actually less than they were in 1984, but they got back on to the top 500 companies in Canada with sales of \$256,198,000. So something else that you have to look at, Mr. Speaker, is the ranking by assets of the Potash Corporation of

Saskatchewan.

In 1980, Mr. Speaker, ranked by assets in *The Financial Post* 500, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was 67th in Canada. Only 66 companies in Canada had more assets than the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan — only 66 companies. Well we find the assets depleting here somewhere. I don't know what's happened. There was supposed to be an expansion that this government went ahead with at Lanigan. They had a chance to stop the Lanigan expansion, but still went ahead. And they went ahead at a time when they were saying there was a glut on the market, and then trying to blame it to the NDP prior to 1982.

Mr. Speaker, let's deal with facts, not rhetoric and despise of a government that doesn't care about people in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — In 1983, Mr. Speaker, the first year the Conservatives had full control of the government in Saskatchewan, the ranking dropped by assets to 77th. We lost 10 places in assets. Although they had a great expansion, assets of the company were dropping. Mr. Speaker, in 1984, ranked by assets, 73rd. So they picked up a little bit, a little glitch in there.

But let's go to 1987, Mr. Speaker. In 1987 the ranking by assets of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is 87th — dropped 20 places since New Democrats were operating the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan in 1980. Now that's not very good, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing it points out is that they've continually depleted the number of employees working in the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Every year since Conservatives have come into government, less people work for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

They can find money to pay their defeated candidates and defeated MLAs and defeated cabinet ministers, but they can't find money to pay employees to give adequate operating capability to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. They can't market our potash that's owned by the people of Saskatchewan, but they find a way to market potash through Canpotex for International Minerals — International Minerals, a company's head office in Chicago. Is that where our head office for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan will be, Mr. Speaker?

Well they say in the Bill that the potash corporation's head office has to be in Saskatchewan, but it doesn't describe the head office — could be a mail box, it could be a basement suite. We don't know what that means. The head office is only important, Mr. Speaker, if it's the head office where decisions are being made. And if decisions are made in Saskatchewan, that's good.

We maintain and we predict that if we allow this Bill to go through, which I don't want to — we will do everything possible to stop the government — but if this Bill happened to go through, Mr. Speaker, I predict that we will find the decisions made over Saskatchewan potash in

a board room in Chicago or New York or somewhere on the North American continent outside the province of Saskatchewan and outside of our country, Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to look at one last thing that I drew from *The Financial Post*, and that is the ranking of the top 500 companies by net income — net income, Mr. Speaker. In 1980, under the management of a New Democrat government, an able board of directors, good employees, sound chief executive officers and upper management. They rank by net income 17th in the entire country. Now this is a more telling story, Mr. Speaker. The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan ranked 17th out of all the companies in Canada according to *The Financial Post* 500.

Mr. Speaker, in 1983, first full year of Conservatives were the government in the province of Saskatchewan, do you know the ranking by net income for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan? Does anybody want to guess? Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you: it ranked 393rd — 393rd. In three short years, from 17th rank by highest net income, from 17th to 393rd. That's shameful, Mr. Speaker.

In fact, in the last year reported in *The Financial Post* that I had the opportunity to look at, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was ranked, by net income, 395th — 395th, from 17th in 1980. Your government should be ashamed of that dismal, dismal record.

Two of those years, in 1986 and 1985, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan did not even appear in *The Financial Post* 500 — did not even appear. That's how bad the ranking by net income was — didn't even show up in one of the most prestigious financial magazines in our country. Shame on you. Shame on this Progressive Conservative government that is ruining the resource base, ruining the history and the future of this province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

From 17th in 1980, by net income, to 395th in 1987. What a sorry, sorry, dismal performance, Mr. Speaker. That is a performance that I'm sure, I'm sure that back-bench members of the government have to be ashamed of. They cannot take pride in their record of resource management in the province of Saskatchewan.

They should ask themselves these questions. Where is money going to come from to conduct the affairs of this province? Are you going to tax the potash companies like Ross Thatcher tried to in the 1960s? Ross Thatcher was unsuccessful in taxation to the potash companies in Saskatchewan, but he tried, Mr. Speaker, he tried. This government won't try. If anything, the corporate tax base has gone down in the province of Saskatchewan while personal income tax has gone up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite don't have a mandate to do what they're doing. You know that, they know that, we know that, the public know that. You cannot find in any campaign literature of the Progressive Conservative Party any mention of privatization of assets of the province of Saskatchewan. You can't find it anywhere in any campaign literature of the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan. In fact, when we look at

campaign literature — my colleagues and I have looked at it — we find that the government promised to reduce income tax; they promised free phones for senior citizens; they promised to remove the gas tax; they promised, they promised. All the promises are broken. All the promises are broken. We're not into that debate here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, but I can tell you that it is a legacy of broken promises that this government has left people in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Now I remember a day, not too long ago, in this legislature that a member opposite hollered out: well you didn't tell people you were going to buy the potash mines in Saskatchewan; you didn't tell the people that. Well that's just one more broken . . . You can't say the word I wanted to say because it's unparliamentary, but that is inaccurate, Mr. Speaker.

(1630)

Why is it inaccurate? Because in 1971 the New Democratic Party put out a publication called *New Deal for People*. And in the article, *New Deal for People*, it talks in here about looking at public ownership in the potash industry in the province of Saskatchewan. The government of the day, under Allan Blakeney, had looked at the potash industry. They felt that the taxation was inadequate on that corporate sector, and so they wanted to increase the taxation upon coming into government.

Well they wanted to increase taxation, but the companies wouldn't pay. And when the companies wouldn't pay, the government said: well, we'll be reasonable; open your books and show us how much money you're making on potash in the province of Saskatchewan. How much money are you making?

What was the private sector potash companies' response at that time? Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you what the response was. They say: that's none of your business; it's none of your business how much money we're making or how profitable we are. So how did we know how much to tax them?

So they were taxed. They refused to pay their taxes. There was the Cigol court case, and in the Cigol decision the court ruled against the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And you can't question the ruling of the court, just like we can't question the ruling of your Chair, sir. So the government of the day had no decision other than to have some public ownership in the potash industry in Saskatchewan.

Why? One, so they had a window on the industry so they could see what was going on in the industry to see really how profitable or non-profitable it was. And it was profitable for the private companies, and it was profitable for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, owned by the people of Saskatchewan in this very province, 100 per cent. No 45 per cent foreign ownership, no 55 per cent outside of the province of Saskatchewan — 100 per cent Canadian ownership.

And people were told. Anyone who cared to read,

anyone who followed the campaign in 1971 knew that in the *New Deal for People* we would look as a government under Allan Blakeney's leadership at acquiring an interest in the potash industry in the province of Saskatchewan.

Well during the early 1970s, Mr. Speaker, we did look at public ownership in the potash industry in Saskatchewan, but there was no action taken. There was no actual action taken, Mr. Speaker, because during this period of time we wanted to deal reasonably with the private sector in the province of Saskatchewan. Because we believe in the private sector. It's not only hallowed ground for Tory administrations to say they're the great defenders of the private sector. In fact, when you start talking to small businesses, they feel they've been betrayed as much as the wage earners that work for them.

We believe in the private sector. We believe that the public sector is a very important tool for the economy of the province of Saskatchewan. And thirdly, we believe in co-operatives. And those three sectors of the economy have to work together in some harmony in the province of Saskatchewan. With any one of those sectors depleted and weak and not able to function, the private sector will dominate. And what will we have? We'll have a limited taxation base. We'll have no resource revenue, and we'll have a province that is even deeper in poverty than it is today because of the administration of the government in the province of Saskatchewan.

So the 1975 election came along, Mr. Speaker, and there was *New Deal '75*, put out by the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party. And what did this say? The same thing, Mr. Speaker. This said, in the *New Deal '75*, that we would look at and get into ownership in the public sector for potash in the province of Saskatchewan. So we were up front with people in 1971. We were up front with people in 1975. We're still up front with people in this current year. When is the government opposite going to be up front with people, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to quote from these pamphlets at length a little later on and I'll come back to them, but I don't want to belabour the commitment that we made to the people in the province of Saskatchewan and the commitment that we kept with people in the province of Saskatchewan. But I will come back to that a little bit later in my remarks.

Now as you know, 1976 is the first year of operation of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. And do you know that, Mr. Speaker, in that year, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan paid more than a million dollars in provincial taxes and royalties and made a profit of half a million dollars in the first year, in their start-up time, Mr. Speaker? How can anyone argue with profits like that?

Is this government saying that they would rather tax people in the province of Saskatchewan for, in that particular year it would be a million dollars in taxes and royalties and a half million dollars in profit? Now where else is that money going to come from? I cannot believe that this government is going to tax potash companies. They're going to tax people in the province of

Saskatchewan.

Because if you look at the record from 1982 until 1988, personal income tax goes up all the time; corporate income tax goes down all the time. And so any indication that we have, Mr. Speaker, any rational person that follows the argument knows that this money would have to be picked up from taxpayers in the province of Saskatchewan. We have nowhere else to get it from, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Well the members opposite are clapping, Mr. Speaker. I can't believe that they would agree with increasing the tax burden on people in the province of Saskatchewan. I can hardly believe that. The members on this side of the House are dismayed that some of the members opposite would want to increase still further taxation on the people of the province.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'm only talking about the first start-up year in 1976 of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Let's look at other years. In 1977 taxes and royalties went up to \$16 million. You're going to tax people in the province of Saskatchewan for that extra \$16 million as well? I see the members opposite giggling and laughing about that. But we want them to know that this is serious, deadly serious, Mr. Speaker, because taxpayers in the province don't want to pay another \$16 million in taxes.

In 1977, Mr. Speaker, in 1977 the taxes and royalties not only equalled \$16 million, but profits topped \$1.1 million, Mr. Speaker — \$1.1 million. In 1978 taxes and royalties went up to 35 million, and profits went to \$25 million. In 1979 more than \$58 million on royalties and taxes, and the company's profits went up to \$78 million, Mr. Speaker.

In 1980 the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan paid \$90 million in taxes and royalties, and this money is used for, as I said before, programs and services and all the items that people in the province are used to having at their disposal because of sound management and good government, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker . . . incidentally, I'm happy you're keeping good control of the House here this afternoon. I even appreciate the applause from members opposite when I make good points. It's very good to finally see that some of the back-bench members are listening to the arguments against the privatization moves of the government that they represent — not long, mind you, just when the next election comes. But they can clap because they'll be doing one-handed claps then because the people of Saskatchewan will not be returning them to this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Yes, \$90 million in 1980, and its profits were \$167 million. And the potash corporation on top of that, in 1980 I think, for the first time paid a dividend. On top of taxes and royalties and the profit, they paid a dividend, a bonus of \$50 million to the province of Saskatchewan. That's how successful the Potash

Corporation of Saskatchewan was in 1980, Mr. Speaker. That's how successful the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was, Mr. Speaker.

In 1981 taxes and royalties paid were \$71 million. Its profits were \$141 million, and the company paid a second dividend of \$50 million to the people of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Now that was the record of the potash corporation from its inception in 1976 until 1982, Mr. Speaker, and that's a good record. And this government opposite keeps saying how much money was lost paying for those potash mines they refer to as being empty holes in the ground. Well, Mr. Speaker, empty holes in the ground don't return you hundreds of millions of dollars in profit, in royalties, in taxes, in dividends. If they're empty holes, they wouldn't have paid that.

Now the other argument to show that they are not empty holes in the ground and a bad investment is, if they were empty holes in the ground, what investor would buy a share on the stock exchange or through a stockbroker for an empty hole in the ground? Come on, Mr. Speaker, this government should give investors more credit than to think that they could bamboozle them into buying a share in an empty hole in the ground.

Do you think the 45 per cent ownership that might go to China or Japan or some company in the United States of America, that that 45 per cent foreign ownership would buy empty holes in the ground? Oh come on, Mr. Speaker. The government opposite is in very big trouble, and I think the member from Kelsey-Tisdale should know that. I don't see how you can be proud of your government's record on the potash corporation or the privatization moves.

In fact, instead of having the Barber commission or the Barber panel go around the province, why don't the members of the government go out and talk to people around the province as we did over a period of time when we had to ring the bells in this legislature to preserve democracy and to preserve the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Now the member from . . . so seldom I hear from him, I can't . . . Yorkton, the member from Yorkton leaning back there. Why don't you go out and hold meetings around and explain the privatization moves of the government? Why do you have to spend an estimated \$1,150 a day to three panelists to go around the province with a megabuck advertising campaign to back them up, resources provided by the taxpayers of the province of Saskatchewan, plus their per diem; why doesn't the member from Yorkton just go out himself and go and talk to a few people. Take a petition in your hand.

(1645)

How you get a petition going, I'd like to explain it. How you get a petition going is that you check with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and you get the proper wording. There's possibly someone in the Conservative caucus that

would know how to do this, but if there isn't, just check with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and they will lay out to you the wording for a petition that's acceptable to the rules of the legislature. And you don't want to fill up the whole page with this — it's very important that you don't fill up the whole page, because you have to leave room for signatures. And so then you . . . on the space that's available, you get some lines typed on there and number them. And the reason for numbering them is so you don't have to count how many signatures are on your petition each time.

You just look, and if the petition's full and you numbered it down to 25, you know you got 25 signatures on the petition. And then if you got 100 petitions — but I don't think you'd get that many on your petition anyway — but if you got a hundred, you just take 25 times 100; you got 2,500. And that's how you do a petition.

So I hope that I've informed you somewhat this afternoon, and I challenge the member from Yorkton to go out and . . . even now while I'm speaking, if you want to go and get your petition drawn up, whatever words you want to put on it, as long as it's acceptable. And you want to make sure it's acceptable to the Legislative Assembly, under the rules, otherwise it will be embarrassing for you because when you table your petitions in the legislature, the Clerk might have to stand up the next day and say that the petition is out of order, that it's not in the proper form. So I encourage you to check the accuracy of your petition.

But anyway, I challenge you now, even if you want to do this while I'm speaking, go out and get yourself . . . oh heck, get yourself a dozen petitions drawn up. Say whatever you want on them in the proper form, and go around and get people to sign it. That's how you get communication with people. You don't have to spend \$1,150 a day on per diems, plus megabucks on advertising to try and convince people of something they already know. They know you're no good.

They know the plan on privatization needs to be stopped, and who's going to stop that? New Democrats in the province of Saskatchewan will stop your plan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Well, the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake says, the people will stop it. That's accurate. New Democrats will lead the charge, and the people of Saskatchewan will stop this obsession with privatization. But I would bet that you wouldn't get any signatures on your petition — not very many. We'll have 100,000 names . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Pardon? I beg your pardon? Are you going to speak in this debate? When would you like on? When is he coming on?

Okay, as soon as you have your speech ready, you let me know and I'll sit down as soon as I'm done giving my speech, because I look forward to your speech on the potash corporation in the province of Saskatchewan . . .

An Hon. Member: — Carry on.

Mr. Anguish: — Well, thank you very much. The member from Regina Wascana asked me to carry on. I'm very

happy to be able to enlighten you like this, this afternoon in this Assembly.

I was wondering . . . I know it's not regular procedure, but since there is some dialogue going back and forth, does anybody want any more information on how to draw up a petition and how to get it around to the public? If you do, if you do, just put your hands up and I can meet with you. I can meet with them. Okay, I'll either meet with you after, or the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake, who's here this afternoon doing a very good job himself, will send you over a copy of the petition. And you can change words, change words to put it in your slant.

An Hon. Member: — I want to talk about that petition.

Mr. Anguish: — Which petition did you want to talk about, sir?

An Hon. Member: — The one up in North Battleford that the chamber did on your . . .

Mr. Anguish: — Oh, the one . . . the chamber in North Battleford. Well, the chamber in North Battleford are a fine group of business . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order, order. The Bill before the House is Bill No. 20, the potash Bill, and I'd ask the member to relate his comments to Bill No. 20.

Mr. Anguish: — Well you made me lose my train of thought there, Mr. Speaker. I was so much into the debate with the members opposite, and I know that we've talked about the chamber of commerce many times in the past, and I thought maybe you'd allow us to maybe talk a bit about that again, about the fine business people in North Battleford who make that one of the most buoyant communities in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I understand that there's been some communication between the House leaders. I understand that they've agreed not to sit this evening, and therefore I'd move to adjourn the debate on this Bill 20.

Debate adjourned.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:51 p.m.