

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

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

Of certain residents of Saskatchewan praying that the Legislative Assembly may be pleased to urge the provincial government to stop the privatization of SaskPower.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Mitchell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you, and to members of the Assembly, a group of 45 students from Confederation Park School in my constituency in Saskatoon. They're in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and they're from the grade 8 class at that school. They're accompanied by Mr. Mantyka, Mr. Colson, Mrs. Dyck, Mr. Schultz, and their driver, Mr. Johanson. I'll be meeting them later for pictures and drinks, but I'd ask all members of the legislature to welcome these students to the Assembly today.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure today that I introduce to you, and through you to the other members of the legislature, 26 kindergarten students from Lindale School in Moose Jaw. This is a special class to me, Mr. Speaker, as my oldest son is a member of the class. They're sitting in the west gallery, and they're accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Linda Tweet, chaperons Marquita Neufeld, Brenda Morrow, Kevin Anderson, Rosemarie Moggey, Cecile Waldenberger, and Corinne Seman. Their bus driver, Wendy Semard is also with them. We've had the opportunity to meet out on the lawn and talk about the legislature. Unfortunately they have to leave in a few minutes and I won't be able to discuss what they've seen here today. But I'm glad they're here, and I hope they've enjoyed their trip to the science centre, and have a safe trip home.

I would like all members to join me in welcoming the kindergarten class from Lindale.

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

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to other members of this House, a group of 42 students from my home town of Hague, Saskatchewan, and their teacher, Margi Corbett, who is a former colleague of mine, and another teacher, Grant Elke, and a former student who is now a bus driver, Darryl Giesbrecht. I have taught in this school myself for 15 years, I believe it was, in my 22 years as a teacher, and I know the Hague School quite well.

I'd like to take this opportunity to particularly point out

one individual, a cute little blonde sitting off in the corner there. Her name is Cheryl. She is going to be graduating this year, and she is my daughter. I also want to indicate to the members present that it is a tradition in the Hague High School to come to Regina, to the big city of Regina, for a two-day stint. They have lots to learn here and I'm sure they'll enjoy their trip.

I offer my condolences to the teacher-chaperons for tonight, but I certainly trust that all you boys and girls, you young adults here, will have a great time tonight and tomorrow. Have fun, but take care — do you hear?

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Grant to Game Farm

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I took notice of several questions yesterday and the day before, and I would like to briefly respond, if I might. I have about eight points to make; that should only take three or four minutes, maybe not that long.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am convinced, with the information made available to me, that the Minister of Public Participation is not in a conflict of interest relating to Northern Lights ranch for several reasons. One is that our government has been exploring the whole area of game farming for many, many years. Secondly, the minister has pursued government policies in game farming since the 1970s, so it's nothing new to the minister as well.

The minister lobbied for game farming regulations long before anybody in his family, particularly his son, was ever involved in the industry. The minister's son did not receive any money from the government. The minister had no opportunity to use his position to influence SEDCO, as the loans to the company were not big enough to require cabinet approval, Mr. Speaker, nor were they even big enough to require SEDCO approval at the board level.

The minister has said that he asked the minister responsible for western diversification, WDO (western diversification office), to meet with the principals of Northern Lights ranch to explore their request. As the minister's son was not a principal of the company but rather only an employee, pasture manager, worth 1 per cent share, I see nothing wrong with this request.

There are about 60 game farms in Saskatchewan now, Mr. Speaker. SEDCO's involved in some of them. There are game farms across Canada, and the western diversification office is involved with them across Canada.

As well, the minister's wife has nothing to do with this case as she has made it a practice never to involve herself, Mr. Speaker, with the Farm Debt Review Board cases from the constituency of Indian Head-Wolseley.

As the minister lobbied for changes to game farming

regulations long before his son ever became involved in the company as pasture manager, and has had no involvement with the SEDCO loan, and as both the SEDCO loan and the WDO grant were benefits to the company and not to the minister's son, and finally, since there's no impact on this case by the minister's wife, I believe, Mr. Speaker, to best of my ability, and with the information that I have before me, that there is no conflict of interest.

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

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — My question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, by your minister's own admission he telephoned the federal minister of the western diversification office to set up a meeting with a business partner of his son in order to discuss a grant from which his own son stood to benefit financially. Is it still your contention that it's perfectly in order for a cabinet minister to do that? And do you believe, Mr. Premier, that it's proper for one of your ministers to influence a federal minister to ensure material gain for his own son?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I can repeat this information, Mr. Speaker, that I've gone over. And I acknowledge that the minister's son has been hired as the pasture manager in the Northern Lights ranch and that he has invested 1 per cent in that game farm. Now I see no benefit to the minister's son as a result of SEDCO money or as a result of WDO money, with the minister long before this — even before his son was a pasture manager — being involved in developing this industry.

We have been anxious to develop the industry for some time because of the competition that goes on between provinces, and we see a very exciting possibility for diversification in agriculture in rural Saskatchewan. The minister's been involved in that.

Now his son has been hired as a pasture manager in one of these game farms, but I cannot see any benefit that went to his son. He's paid as a pasture manager, and certainly has 1 per cent of . . . He's not a principal or a major shareholder in the game farm with that kind of an investment, which is extremely modest, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — New question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I'm glad today we're able to get you on record, and I have another question for you. I'd like you to tell this House what limits you would place on how far the minister of privatization and those who work with him could go in assisting his son to establish the game farm.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, we develop, and as I'm sure governments all over develop policies to allow people to build industries, and we've been doing it in the game farming business for some time, and obviously the cabinet has to do that.

Now if one of those industries that is being developed, whether it's in the paper business or whether it's in fertilizer or whether it's in game farming, hires somebody's relative as a pasture manager or as an employee, that's pretty much normal because we're all from Saskatchewan, all of us on both sides of the House. We have families and relatives across the province and

they work at various kinds of things.

In this case, it seems to me you're saying that because the minister's son is employed as a pasture manager in an industry they've been trying to develop for some time, that it's something that's out of place. And I don't see that. I think, to be fair to people who have worked in an industry for a fair number of years, it's not unreasonable at all.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — New question to the Premier again. Mr. Premier, we're going to help you with this. We're going to walk you through this during question period today.

On Tuesday in this House your minister of privatization said that you were made fully aware of all of the dealings entailed in the set-up of the Northern Lights game farm. On July 28, 1987, cabinet approved a directive changing the regulations of The Animal Products Act which benefitted that minister's son. Had the minister told you of his son's interest in the Northern Lights game farm prior to that meeting?

Mr. Premier, I'm sending across a copy of that cabinet directive for you to have a look at.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, my information that I have received is that Mr. Taylor's son, the minister's son was employed as the pasture manager in February of 1988. Now these rules and regulations I believe were brought forward in 1987.

And as I mentioned earlier, the minister, and I can tell you, as all ministers have been working on this for some time, the Minister of Agriculture has been involved in public participation, and other ministers.

Now I don't see a difficulty, Mr. Speaker, if after the regulations are changed and the industry is developed and one of the farms developed, that the minister's son is hired as a pasture manager after this. He was not involved as a pasture manager before February 1988. And after February 1988 he's got 1 per cent that he's invested in this farm.

And I don't see that as a particular or significant problem, particularly when the minister has been working at it for years to have the industry developed. And his family or his son might have some specific expertise, and I think people in the industry would tell you that.

**Mr. Anguish:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. A new question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, herein lies the problem: did your minister of privatization inform you that 583867 Saskatchewan Ltd., a firm in which the minister's son is a partner — and I'll give that document to you; a page can take it across — is a partner, received a mortgage from SEDCO in the amount of \$120,000 — just wait, please — in the amount of \$120,000 on April 11, 1988, and later on June 10, 1988, that same company received a further mortgage of \$100,000 from SEDCO?

And did he point out to you that on April 11, 1988, one Larry Kyle, a solicitor, witnessed the mortgage and he signed the affidavit of execution as a solicitor? And that

Mr. Kyle on June 10, 1988, after affirming he was solicitor for both the numbered company and the Northern Lights game farm — I'm sending these documents across to you because I want you to know Mr. Premier, that also that Northern Lights game farm owns 70 per cent of the numbered company, 583867 Saskatchewan Ltd. And you'll find it further strange in those documents, sir, that the mortgage was signed to the numbered company of which this minister's son is a shareholder, and that the money didn't go directly to them; it went to the Northern Lights game farm, sir. Did he inform you of all this information before you responded to the House this afternoon?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I can go back over this again. You raised the point, and I responded to it. And you raised it yesterday, that the minister has been lobbying whoever to have this industry developed and regulations developed so that, in fact, game farming could take place. And that took place in 1987.

After the industry had been allowed to operate, then his son is hired as a pasture manager with this company, and he has 1 per cent in the . . . 1 per cent, 1 per cent of the game farm, Mr. Speaker, and he's employed by them as a pasture manager. And you're asking me whether, in fact, he should be able to do this.

Now I think . . . I don't see why you could deny anybody's family member from participating in a game farm after the rules and regulations have taken place. Now you ask about SEDCO, or WDO (western diversification office). SEDCO has people involved in game farming across the province, okay? They participate in these; they come to them.

**An Hon. Member:** — Not the only one.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — There are more than this one. And they say, will you participate and help us get this industry going. And SEDCO looks at it and says, yes. They don't come to cabinet because they're not very big loans, and they have not gone to the board of directors because they're not very big loans.

So you say in April, or May, or June of 1988, that this company received a loan from SEDCO. Well yes, they did. Yes, they did. And they employ the minister's son as a pasture manager, and he has 1 per cent. Now I don't find that a particular problem, Mr. Speaker, because you may find family members across the province investing in game farms. And I think there's about 60 in the province now, as a result of the efforts of this government, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Anguish:** — I repeat to you, Mr. Premier . . . There's another question here that you did not address.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Do you have a new question or a supplement?

**Mr. Anguish:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. I ask you, Mr. Premier, to look at those documents. You'll find that there are two loans within two months of each other that would in fact exceed the limit of SEDCO and would have had to go to the board. You will find, Mr. Premier, that the

numbered company of which Mr. Taylor's son is a shareholder has one out of ten shares.

Mr. Minister, the money went to the Northern Lights game farm. I ask you, Mr. Premier, can we assume that your minister pointed out to you on October 14, 1987, while he was witnessing this mortgage on behalf of the numbered company, and while serving as solicitor of the numbered company and of the Northern Lights game farm, Mr. Kyle was also serving as the chairman of the board of directors of SEDCO, a position he was confirmed to by the minister of privatization by a cabinet directive dated October 14, 1987?

Mr. Premier, I'm sending this cabinet directive over to you, signed by the minister of privatization, at that time minister in charge of the economic development corporation, and by you, sir. I want you to tell us whether or not the minister has informed you of these facts as well, sir.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that I caught all of that. I'll look at this. If you send me this . . . send me over several documents, I will just say to the hon. member, I will receive any documents you have, and I've asked for the last couple of days to give me anything that you believe that is relevant. I've made a statement and you've sent me over some more material. On the surface, looking at it, I don't see how it's changed at all, Mr. Speaker, but I will take and respectfully go through these, and certainly report back to the hon. member if I see anything in here that would have me change my mind.

Again I come back and say that once the regulations and the rules are allowed for the industry and people then participate, they're all going to apply to SEDCO. They've almost all applied, as far as I know, and there's 60-some operations. There may be half of them that have SEDCO loans; it's not unusual. And certainly for somebody to be involved in the pasture, as pasture manager, and having 1 per cent of the farm, is not any big benefit from any loan or anything else.

So I will certainly look at this information and respond accordingly, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Anguish:** — New question. Mr. Premier, 1 per cent is not the issue. Mr. Premier, can we assume that the minister pointed out to you that on April 11, 1988 when Mr. Kyle acted as witness to the mortgage for the numbered company, it was for a SEDCO mortgage of \$120,000, and he was the government agency for which Mr. Kyle was the chairman; and on June 10 of 1988, the same day that Mr. Kyle signed documents affirming he was the solicitor for the two companies, the numbered company and the Northern Lights game farm, they received another SEDCO mortgage in the amount of \$100,000 with no increase in collateral. Can we assume, Mr. Premier, that the minister of privatization fully informed you of all of these issues?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I've said before, and I will respectfully say to the hon. member — and I was just given this information — the senior officials in SEDCO can approve loans up to \$250,000. The CEO (chief executive officer) can approve loans up to \$250,000. The

CEO can approve loans up to \$500,000. Up to two and a half million it's board approval, and over two and a half million it comes to cabinet.

So I wasn't and nor was cabinet involved in any of these — none of them. Because it's at senior official level, frankly, it isn't even at the board level. It's a pretty long bow to say that a hundred-and-some-thousand-dollar loan . . . and there's nothing magical about a numbered company prior to having a game farm set up so that you can in fact do it.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's a long bow to say that some young fellow that is hired as a pasture manager in this and has 1 per cent of the final operation, receiving something that only an official needs to ratify, because it's not large enough, is some sort of conflict that the minister or the cabinet's been involved in.

And in greatest respect, I'll look at all these documents and I'll certainly reply. But on the surface, I don't see anything that would cause me to change my mind, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Anguish:** — Mr. Minister, there are two different companies involved here. It's a new question to the Premier. There are two different companies involved here. One is the numbered company to which the minister of privatization's son is a shareholder. That company received the loan from SEDCO. The money didn't go to the numbered company even though that numbered company was filed on the mortgage. The money went to the Northern Lights game farm corporation. Sir, there are two companies involved here, and you're either not listening or someone has not given you the proper information.

Mr. Premier, I would think that any fair minded individual would say that the chairman of SEDCO, acting for a firm which received SEDCO money, was in a clear conflict of interest. And that the chairman of SEDCO, in representing these firms, was working for the direct interest of the son of the Crown minister who confirmed his appointment to that post. If your minister told you of these facts, then you must have taken one of two courses of action: either, sir, you condone the situation, or you turned a blind eye to it. Which course, Mr. Premier, did you take?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well I said, Mr. Speaker, that I will review any additional information here, and there's nothing unusual about setting up a numbered company and then forming a game farm. And as far as I know, Mr. Speaker, and I will confirm it, there is no numbered company. It's been completely bought out by the game farm, and it was used to initiate and start it up. And with respect to allegations about the chairman of SEDCO, I would certainly review that and respond to the hon. member.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — New question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, perhaps I can put this in perspective for you. So let me take you through it so that you can read it in *Hansard* tomorrow and understand exactly what's going on. Number one, the minister's son receives \$220,000 in SEDCO loans. Number two, the lawyer for his firm is the chairman of SEDCO, confirmed by his father, the

minister. Number three, . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. I'd ask hon. members to refrain from unparliamentary language. And I would like to ask the member not to make a long, long preamble, but to get to the question. I've been quite lenient today, as you well know, because it's an issue, it's an issue, and I've given both sides quite a lot of latitude, but I don't think you should make what would amount to a speech before you get to your question.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly not my intention to make a speech. I just want to summarize what we've been doing and address my question. Number three, Mr. Premier, the minister participated in a cabinet decision which changed the laws to benefit his son's game ranch, game farm. Number four, the minister phoned a federal cabinet minister to influence a federal grant to his son's company. And number five, Mr. Premier, you knew all this and still maintain that the minister acted in a reasonable and responsible fashion.

I ask you this, Mr. Premier: is it your contention that Robert Taylor received absolutely no special treatment, and that any Saskatchewan resident who asks will receive exactly the same level of involvement and use of ministerial influence? Is that your contention, Mr. Premier?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, for the record so that hon. members don't take certain segments out of *Hansard* and spread them around certain constituencies, I think for the record I hope that he . . . he also says and records that I don't agree with his statements that the minister's son received \$200,000 in a loan. That's not accurate; that's not true, Mr. Speaker.

And the fact that the rules were changed to help a particular individual — that's not true, Mr. Speaker, because we've been working at these for a long time, and the minister's son became the pasture manager and put his 1 per cent down on this game farm after those rules were changed.

And with respect to lobbying the federal government, the WDO, to help game ranching and farming, we do it all the time and there's nothing irregular about that, and they've put funds, as does SEDCO, into game farming across Saskatchewan and across Canada, Western Canada at least.

So I just hope the hon. member . . . you know, if he's trying to put something on the record, that he at least gets it as accurate as possible and publishes both sides before he makes allegations that, frankly, from the information that I've seen, Mr. Speaker, are not fair and are unfounded. And from the information that I have he's stretching a long bow to say the least.

**Mr. Anguish:** — Mr. Speaker, supplementary, or new question, sorry. To provide you with even more information, sir, so that you are completely accurate to this House, I want to give to you a copy of an annual return for the numbered company, 583867 Saskatchewan Ltd., which shows on it, Robert Taylor and

two other individuals having one share each. The other share that shows the tie-in between these two companies is seven shares that are held by the Northern Lights Big Game (farm) Corporation. That's not 1 per cent, sir; it works out different.

I suggest, Mr. Minister, that you look through all the documents and you have close conversations with the minister of privatization so that you are prepared in this House. Mr. Minister, can we be assured that you will have all documentation for us in this Legislative Assembly on what could be a very serious situation, sir?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I'll review these records, but my information says there is no numbered company, Mr. Speaker, in existence today with that number on it, and the entire thing is owned by the Northern Lights game farm which is a game farm, and that the pasture manager has 1 per cent. So, Mr. Speaker, I will confirm that.

I still . . . I've a great deal of difficulty, Mr. Speaker, with the hon. member's whole line of questioning with respect to the fact that we have developed an exciting industry here, and the ministers have been involved in developing an exciting industry. And, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't surprise me, as in several of the initiatives that we've taken to build jobs and diversify, that the opposition against it.

Now I will say that not in an antagonistic way, Mr. Speaker, but our objective is to build new industries and diversify, Mr. Speaker. The opposition hasn't had a real good record on that, and I know they're a little sensitive in that whole area.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**The Speaker:** — Order. We are on introduction of Bills. The Clerk rose. Order, order, order. Order, order, order. Order, order. We are on introduction of Bills. We have dealt with item number one. We are now on item number two, which I haven't heard dealt with.

**An Hon. Member:** — Stand.

**The Speaker:** — Item number two is stand.

## PRIORITY OF DEBATE

### Report of the Provincial Auditor

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I rise pursuant to rule 17 of the *Rules and Procedures* of the Assembly to seek leave that a matter of urgent public importance now be given priority of debate.

In accordance with the rules, I provided written notice of my intention to the Clerk of the Assembly this morning. I understand that the government members opposite were also advised.

I will take just a moment, Mr. Speaker, to state the issue briefly. It is the refusal of the provincial government to provide full information and full co-operation to the Provincial Auditor, thereby preventing the auditor from effectively fulfilling his responsibilities to this Legislative Assembly.

The government's undermining of the Provincial Auditor has been consistent, arrogant, and unjustifiable. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, and more alarmingly, the government's actions in this regard constitute an assault on this Legislative Assembly and a grave threat to the traditions of parliamentary democracy under which we are privileged to live as free men and women.

One of the absolutely central principles of our parliamentary form of government, Mr. Speaker . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. This is not the opportunity to enter long debate on the description of the matter the hon. member from Saskatoon South wishes to raise. As is the custom, the issue is stated very briefly, the question put, and then the matter dealt with.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Speaker, I respect your comments and I will come directly to the procedure. In short, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move a motion this afternoon:

That the provincial government's refusal to provide full information and co-operation to the Provincial Auditor with respect to the expenditure of public money, thereby preventing the auditor from effectively fulfilling his responsibilities to the Legislative Assembly, now be given priority of debate.

Under rule 17, I so move.

**The Speaker:** — I have received the hon. member's statement two hours ago, and I'm prepared to make the ruling on the statement.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, before you make your ruling I would ask that I be given the opportunity to raise a point of order on this issue . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order, order. Order, order. I'm prepared to make the ruling and I'm going to do so now. A notice regarding this matter proposed for priority of debate was received in the Clerk's office at 11:30 a.m. today, for which I thank the hon. member.

I refer all hon. members to rule 17(6) which states that the matter proposed for an urgent debate must be in order and of urgent public importance. I have no doubt in judging this matter to be serious and important, since the subject raised by the hon. member involves the ability of an officer of this Assembly to perform his duties adequately.

The first question which must be answered, however, is whether it is urgent for the Assembly to set aside its regular business to discuss this matter now. It has been frequently ruled in this Assembly that, and I quote:

The fundamental principle underlying rule 17 was to provide an opportunity within a proper framework of parliamentary procedure, where none otherwise existed for the immediate discussion of any matter deemed to be of such urgency and importance that all of the normal or special business of the Assembly should be put to

one side in order to provide complete right of way to a discussion of one specific, particular subject.

I refer all members to previous rulings in the *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*. Rulings on priority of debates have always considered whether an ordinary parliamentary opportunity to debate the matter will occur shortly or in time. The notice for priority of debate has not satisfactorily demonstrated the urgency of setting aside the usual business of the Assembly in order to debate this matter today rather than placing it on the order paper in the usual fashion. As well, in this particular case the Standing Committee on Public Accounts could at this time debate this matter within its normal terms of reference.

Furthermore, furthermore, I have examined the request in view of the restrictions outlined in rule 17(10). Since the matter raised deals with the ability of an officer of the House to fulfil his duties, a subject which could involve a question of privilege, I find that under rule 17(10)(e) the question ought not to be considered under priority of debate, rule 17(10) . . . I'm sorry, the question ought not to be considered under the priority of debate rule.

Rule 17(10)(e) states:

- (e) The motion must not raise a question of privilege.

For the above reasons, I am unable to grant the hon. member's request for a priority of debate.

I will not accept point of orders on my ruling. If you have a new point of order, then I'll accept that.

### POINT OF PRIVILEGE

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, question of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, under rule 6(2) of the rules of the Assembly, I rise under an order of privilege. Given the document and the report that was tabled in the Assembly yesterday, the *Report of the Provincial Auditor*, I would like the Speaker to refer to page 4 of that document under the summary of current issues of importance.

Mr. Speaker, we have here an individual who works for the Assembly, who is a servant of the Assembly, not unlike the Speaker of the Assembly, who clearly indicates on page 4 of his report, and I want to quote:

I cannot effectively carry out my role to watch over the public purse for my client, the Legislative Assembly. I recommend the process be repaired to require that the appointed auditors and the Provincial Auditor work together on crown corporation audits as joint auditors or with some similar arrangement.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when you have here an individual who works for the Assembly, similar to yourself, issuing, not in discussion but in his annual report, a statement that condemns the government of the day, and you go through here and he indicates in many areas the interference of the government in the working of his management and

reporting to this Assembly, how he's been interfered with . . . He says in his report that . . . The *Leader-Post* today: "Auditor slams secrecy."

In every way we have the auditor telling us that he's being impaired in checking hundreds of thousands of dollars of spending that this government does, that he can't do his job. He says that clearly in his report. I say to you, I say to you that in this report, and I refer to the Minister of Justice, the member from Kindersley, and I want to quote:

"He's a hard guy to complain about working together," Andrew told reporters Wednesday. "Jesus Christ, he can't work with anybody."

I say to you, when you have a minister of the Crown condemning an officer of this Assembly in those words outside of the Assembly, talking about a report outside of the Assembly, we certainly have a question of privilege, and I ask you to waive the rule which would require unanimity of the rule in order for it to proceed, section . . . or the 6(2):

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Speaker shall have the right to waive notice (the two-hour requirement).

I ask you to now do that, given the seriousness of the issue that stands before us in terms of a servant of the Assembly.

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

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Mr. Speaker, speaking to the . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. I think that this is a serious matter, and I would simply ask for the co-operation of the members not to immediately interrupt members. If you don't agree with their point, give members the opportunity to express their views.

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of privilege, I would point out to the speaker that the point of privilege, rule 6, indicates that at least two hours prior to the regular daily sitting a notice should be given. You look, Mr. Speaker, at the fact that the hon. members in the motion prior to this gave notice, why would they not then seek to give notice on this? That is point number one, Mr. Speaker.

Point number two to the point of privilege that I wish to make the following observations, Mr. Speaker, the following observations. The hon. member refers to the *Regina Leader-Post* in which it says the power corporation and now SaskEnergy refuse to release details on the sale of property to Saskoil. In considering your ruling, Mr. Speaker, I refer you to page 94 of the Provincial Auditor's report that says:

My officials were able to examine the agreement at the Office of the Executive Council. Upon examining that agreement, I found SaskOil is not subject to an audit under The Provincial Auditor Act.

Mr. Speaker, it goes on to say that SaskTel would not provide information requested by the Provincial Auditor.

I can advise Mr. Speaker and I can advise this Assembly that that information has been undertaken, prior to the filing of this report, to be provided. There was information, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the property management corporation that there was no information filed with regards to ministerial . . .

(1445)

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. Order.

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — In the allegations of the Provincial Auditor there was a suggestion made that information was not provided to the Provincial Auditor with regard to travel on executive air by SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation). I can advise Mr. Speaker and the members of this House that when the *Public Accounts* were filed, they were filed with a document that clearly set out ministerial travel by all members here, Mr. Speaker.

I can further point out, Mr. Speaker, the following: that the rules in place today, at this point in time, with regard to air travel by ministers, is exactly the same rule that was in place in 1982 when the government changed, Mr. Speaker.

With regard to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan request for information, I can advise this Assembly that copies of those minutes were, in fact, provided to the auditor. With regard to the Crown investment corporation, where allegations is made that there were no minutes provided to the Provincial Auditor, I can advise this Assembly that, in fact, those minutes have been provided to the Provincial Auditor.

And when you consider the question of privilege, I would hope that you would take that into consideration as well.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to address this very serious matter of the question of privilege that is being addressed here by this House.

I don't know, Mr. Speaker, and it's hard to know what can be more serious than the interference of the functions of an official of this Legislative Assembly, than the interference of an official of this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, which the member opposite has done, and that government opposite has done time and time again, as is documented in the *Report of the Provincial Auditor* which was tabled in this House yesterday.

There can't be many more things that are more serious than that, because if the function of the officials of this Assembly are interfered with, Mr. Speaker, the complete function of this Assembly does not work, and the interests of the public, which we are here to serve, are not being served.

The interference with the Provincial Auditor, Mr. Speaker, is not in any way different than if a member of this House interfered with you, sir, as a Speaker, because you too are a servant of this House, of this Legislative Assembly. If this had happened with regard to yourself, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is any doubt what the

actions of yourself or this House would be. And in light of that, there should not be any doubt in your mind or the mind of anyone in this legislature what the actions of you should be, or this House should be, with regards to the question of privilege being raised here today.

It's not the first time that that member from Kindersley has been caught in this kind of situation, by saying things out of this Assembly which he didn't have the guts to say in this Assembly, and has had to stand up, Mr. Speaker, and apologize and withdraw. And I don't think that the situation we have here today is any different.

Mr. Speaker, I refer you to the rule, because I think that's important here. The member said that it had to be a two-hour notice. Well I refer you to 6(2) on privilege, in which it states the following:

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Speaker shall have the right to waive notice.

Now I don't suggest that that should be taken lightly, but I do suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this particular situation is so grave and so serious that you really don't have an option if you're acting in the best interests of what this Assembly is all about. We don't have an option. I don't want to put it on your shoulders, sir, because all you are is a servant of this Assembly.

But I think that the ruling that has to be made here is clear and unquestionable, and you have the opportunity to do it because of the rule that is stated in 6(2). There is indeed a question of privilege here, and it is serious enough that it should not take any other time except today to be dealt with, sir.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, the only point I make is under 6(2). As the member opposite has just said, if this is a grave and serious matter now, it was at noon today, and they had ample time to provide the notice for the question of privilege.

It wasn't grave enough, Mr. Speaker, to raise it in question period. It wasn't grave enough, Mr. Speaker, to provide notice as set out in rule 6(1). I doubt very much, Mr. Speaker, if it's grave enough to waive notice. And I invite Mr. Speaker to review the record and make his ruling accordingly.

**The Speaker:** — I'll give the opportunity, perhaps to one or two more people, and then I'll have to make my decision on the member's request.

**Ms. Simard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I simply want to point out when you're deliberating with respect to whether or not it's a question of privilege, that the minister involved had raised a number of arguments which were, quite frankly, irrelevant, in which he was attempting to refute what the Provincial Auditor had said. They were irrelevant, Mr. Speaker, because the privilege, the breach of privilege, lies in his comments to the effect that:

"He (referring to the Provincial Auditor) is a hard guy to complain about working together," Andrew told reporters Wednesday. "Jesus Christ, he can't

work with anybody.” (is what he said, Mr. Speaker).

And I say that that’s an offence against the Provincial Auditor. It tends to intimidate the civil servant, the servant of this Assembly, rather. It’s intimidating, it’s an attack on his credibility, it’s a put-down of the Provincial Auditor, and those comments amount to a breach of privilege regardless of the other facts that he may attempt to dispute, facts that the Provincial Auditor . . . that’s another issue.

The issue is, is he attacked an officer of this Assembly, and that is the breach of privilege. And I think that that is so serious, Mr. Speaker, that it justifies you waiving notice in regard to this matter, Mr. Speaker. That is so serious an attack, and it’s not the first time that this minister has attacked an officer of this Assembly.

You will recall the attack on the Legislative Counsel, Mr. Speaker, and this is a very similar kind of situation. That’s the breach of privilege, and I suggest that it warrants waiver of notice in this matter.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, if I would be allowed just a few short comments on the subject matter, and I would firstly point out, Mr. Speaker, that this is not a new debate. This is a debate that has gone on for a long, long time in the Committee of Public Accounts, and that is the forum where it belongs.

I secondly make the point, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite can stand up in a very sanctimonious way, but the fact of the matter is, it was this administration that opened the Public Accounts Committee to the public. I would invite the public of Saskatchewan today to come in to the Committee on Public Accounts where it is rightfully and duly debated, Mr. Speaker. And it was under this administration that opened it up to the public, and, Mr. Speaker, that is the proper forum.

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

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the question of personal privilege, if I may.

Mr. Speaker, the problem that we have today is that the comments by the Minister of Justice were made yesterday about an officer of this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to you that if I had made those comments yesterday about you, there would be personal privilege motion today by somebody in this House, and rightly so — and rightly so.

The statement made by the member from Kindersley, or the Minister of Justice, this is not the first time, as has been pointed out. He thinks it’s his liberty to go out of this House and make damning statements about an officer of this Legislative Assembly. He does not have that right, Mr. Speaker, and therefore it’s important for you to waive the time and let us have this motion so that we can debate it and have the member opposite come to explain and give his reasons as to why, Mr. Speaker, he feels that he has the right to slander an officer of this Assembly, and with that officer not having an opportunity to defend himself in this Assembly.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that you would rule in favour of the member from Elphinstone.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Labour, and I must inform the House that after I have heard him, we’ve had, I believe, a fair discussion on it and I will make my statement.

**Hon. Mr. Schmidt:** — Mr. Speaker, thank you. There are serious questions and principles of democracy that have to be considered when you consider this matter. First of all, we take very seriously the question of privilege and the status of employees of the Legislative Assembly. We take that very seriously, and we protect them in every way possible.

The members opposite are laughing. I am speaking on behalf of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. We in the Assembly protect those officers, whether they be officials at the Table, whether they be the auditor, the law clerk, or whether they be pages in this Assembly, they are all employees and we all have a duty to them.

In a democracy, Mr. Speaker, we have to weigh also the rights of elected members of the Assembly to practise the freedom of speech and opinion guaranteed in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in this country. And surely when you get to a question of privilege, the rights of all citizens — all citizens — to have freedom of speech and opinion in this country is guaranteed by the charter of rights which follows, which has been enacted since these rules were made, hundreds of years ago and 50 years ago and 40 years ago.

We now have a charter of rights in this country, and every citizen is entitled to freedom of speech and opinion, and that includes members of the Legislative Assembly. And so we have to weigh the rights guaranteed in a democracy against the rights of an officer of this Assembly. That is very seriously has to be weighed.

Now the question of privilege arises, and this is a debate that there is a conflict between those interests, and you have to sort that out. But you have to weigh that very carefully.

This particular public servant has in the past publicly taken a political stand and referred to a political party with respect to the carrying out of his duties. And he was quoted in the *Leader-Post* of January 23, 1989, this individual . . . with the question here we’re discussing, is this a question of privilege. This individual raised political matters as part of his office, and for that is on record having apologized to a committee of this House. So when we consider this privilege . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order, order, order. Order. I have heard arguments on both sides of the House, and I agree that this is a serious issue. Members on both sides of the House, whatever their point of view on it, have indicated that it’s a serious matter. And I agree with that serious matter, that it is a serious matter. And because it is, I believe I need further time to reflect, and I will bring back a decision.



ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTIONS

*Amendments to Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly*

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Andrew.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, this has to be the irony of ironies. This has to be the irony of ironies, that rather than dealing with this government and its minister's comments about a servant of this Assembly, a direct violation of the rules of this Assembly, we find ourselves dealing with a . . .

(1500)

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, please. Mr. Speaker, I don't want to have to belabour this issue all afternoon. But, Mr. Speaker, the very opening statement by the member opposite on an issue of what I believe is of prime public importance, and that is the bell-ringing issue in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, the opening comments of the member opposite totally irrelevant to the subject.

I'd ask, Mr. Speaker, and I'd respectfully request that close consideration be given to the member's comments to ensure that they are indeed relevant to the subject at hand.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order, order. I'll be quite frank with the hon. members, and I think hon. members saw that another member came up to speak to me for a few moments while the hon. member rose, so I didn't hear his opening remarks. However, if he was off the topic, well of course the point of order is relevant.

Order. Order, order, order. Order.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, when I adjourned my remarks yesterday on this motion to change a rule of this Assembly as an indication of this government's legislative knee-jerk reaction to the use of a rule of this Assembly, I was in the midst of pointing out, in response to the comments made by the Minister of Justice when he introduced his motion as the great defender of the principles of democracy, that this government is in no position to stand with any aura of justice and honesty in terms of defending the principles of democracy.

And I was just beginning to give some examples, in the period of time since I have become a member of this Legislative Assembly, how this government has violated the very principles of democracy, and the list is long.

So let me repeat what I said at the beginning of my

comments today. How ironical it is, how cynical it is, how facetious it is that on the very day in which raised in this Assembly are questions about the conduct of this government and its ministers and their relationship and comments about the officers and officer of this Legislative Assembly, in which it is very clearly — very clearly — a proper conclusion for anyone, both within this Assembly and beyond, to conclude that this government and its ministers are clearly not honouring time-long traditions of respecting the independence of officers of this Assembly; and that we then refer to and use the rules of the Assembly to avoid bringing to this Assembly the debate on a very current — the most recent within the last 24 hours — an example of this government's respect for the democratic principles that we now find ourselves not being able to deal with that, so that we come to deal with a rule change and focus on yet another, on a different, on a smoke-screen rule functioning of the Legislative Assembly.

How cynical, Mr. Speaker, how cynical of the government, and how ironical it is that the person who made the comment that was referred to earlier this afternoon about the Provincial Auditor is the very minister, is the very minister who introduced the motion to change this rule. My goodness!

A week ago, that same minister stood in this place, and in a pretentious kind of way, I'd have to say, in light of his conduct since, brought to this Legislative Assembly a rule change which he purported to be in the interest of the functioning of democracy and trust in the Legislative Assembly. And then, within the last 24 hours, that same minister has put on public record in a direct quote in the *Leader-Post*, a comment, and I'll read it into the record again, a comment about the Provincial Auditor when he says:

"He's a hard guy to complain about working together," Andrew told reporters Wednesday. "Jesus Christ, he can't work with anybody."

How are we supposed to come to this Assembly and treat that proposal for a rule change for the conduct of this Assembly by the Minister of Justice who then goes outside of this Assembly and makes that kind of comment about an officer of the Assembly? How are we supposed to come here and deal with this whole process as though it was proposed by the government opposite as an appropriate defence for the process of the democratic function in Legislative Assembly?

Mr. Minister . . . or Mr. Speaker, I find myself, and I must admit, feeling really extremely frustrated with the very legislative process that we're going through in the Assembly now. And I think the public is totally justified, is totally justified to be thinking the worst of the conduct of the Government of Saskatchewan and the way it chooses to conduct its own affairs — totally justified.

I refer back to yesterday's *Hansard*, near the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, when I made reference to the auditor's report on page 9, and let me simply refer to my quote from *Hansard* yesterday, Mr. Speaker. I was speaking and I said:

On page 9, I quote, Mr. Speaker, he says . . . and this is the Provincial Auditor speaking. He says:

The Provincial Auditor can no longer effectively serve the Assembly because:

And, Mr. Speaker, as I reached that word in my comments to this Assembly, one of the members from the other side — I guess, respecting the Minister of Human Resources, Labour and Employment's intervention here today respecting the right to freedom of speech — shouted out, he's biased. And I read into the record yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and I quote:

Interesting, Mr. Speaker. Let's put on the record that it was said by one of the members from government side that he's biased.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when we deal with this rule change here before us in the Legislative Assembly, it's extremely difficult to even believe that the government is sincere in making this proposal. And clearly, clearly the government acts with substantially less than full credibility when it pretends to come to this Legislative Assembly with a proposed rule change, in the defence of protecting the principles of democracy, it says — facetiously — and respecting, most importantly, the rights of Saskatchewan people.

Well, Mr. Speaker, let me also make reference to a couple of media coverages of yesterday's debate on this very issue when it was before this House. And first of all, let me refer to a Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* article of today, which I think accurately, by and large, accurately reflects what has happened in terms of both sides of this House dealing with the whole business of rules as related to this motion brought forth by the Minister of Justice and his statement at that time. He was willing to refer it to a discussion of a committee made up of members of government and opposition to be conducted away from the Chambers of the Assembly.

Let me quote from the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* article. It says:

Debate continued Wednesday on a government motion to limit any future bell-ringing to one hour, after the government abruptly broke off negotiations with the NDP.

I'd say that's an accurate statement, Mr. Speaker.

Let me repeat it for the interest of the members of government who seem to put forth a different interpretation:

Debate continued Wednesday on a government motion to limit any future bell-ringing to one hour, after the government abruptly broke off negotiations with the NDP.

And the article goes on to explain, and I quote again:

Just before the beginning of Wednesday's sitting, the government informed the NDP that it would be resuming debate on Andrew's motion.

Mr. Speaker, and this directly refers back to a very point I was making yesterday regarding an issue that I think needs to have some consideration in order to facilitate the efficient and effective conduct of business in this Assembly by providing some sense of notice from government to the opposition to deal with it in an effective kind of manner. It's kind of ironic that even in raising this whole motion of the rules that that's done with virtually no notice for the opposition by the government, and the *Star-Phoenix* is really quite correct in its reference to it.

The article goes on to say, and I quote:

By backing out of the negotiations, Andrew is proving that his so-called "olive branch" was just a sham, Lingenfelter said.

The government simply wants to ram the rule change through the house and then probably re-introduce the SaskEnergy legislation that sparked the 17-day NDP walkout last month, he said.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it's fair to say that that's a fair and accurate media coverage of what happened yesterday. However, the fact of the matter is that there is one electronic media in this province that seemed to be less than accurate in its coverage of what happened yesterday, and I refer to the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation).

The CBC's coverage of yesterday's events were, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, totally inaccurate. And I would like to comment on them in order to set the record straight in the people's chambers today.

It seems, Mr. Speaker, that yesterday, the Minister of Justice, who introduced the rule change to this Assembly, stated to a CBC reporter that he offered the New Democratic opposition a two-hour bell limit, a change in the motion proposed before us, an extension of question period, and firm dates to table documents. Now, Mr. Speaker, so far that's correct.

But then the minister went on to say that the opposition refused to consider those. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that is totally, 100 per cent wrong. And the minister — let me make this specifically clear — that in making that statement to the media, the minister stated the opposite of the truth. When he said that the opposition refused to consider that, there was not a shred of truth in that comment.

I will not go so far as to use the language that's not admissible in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, but I want to make the point very clear, that when that report was carried on CBC, the CBC was carrying an inaccurate report, in fact, a 100 per cent wrong report in its delivery of the news to the people of Saskatchewan. And I want to clarify that in this Legislative Assembly today.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in reference to the motion before us, calling for limitation on the ringing of the bells to summon the members for a vote, let me just very quickly just

summarize — to put my comments today in context — very quickly summarize what I said yesterday.

Point number one, the time to change the rules is not in the middle of the game. That's contrary to the traditions of . . . I used the example of the sporting arena, but more importantly it contradicts the traditions of legislative assemblies and the House of Commons.

(1515)

When rules are changed they're generally done at the beginning of a session, having been considered by both parties involved, both the government side and the opposition side. Prior to that, both having had the opportunity to reflect and look at the change of rules with cool and objective minds, considering the impacts on both government and opposition, and then having done that and carried out the negotiations or the debate or the discussion — choose your word — and arrived at a consensus, and bringing that consensus to the Legislative Assembly.

It has been the tradition, therefore, Mr. Speaker, surprisingly to no one when you understand the process, that when rules change in this Assembly as approved by the members of the Assembly, that they are changed by unanimous motion. And that has been the tradition, unanimous motion.

Clearly, the proposal before us here today violates that tradition of sensible, objective negotiations and reference to the rules then being brought to the Assembly, to the peoples' Assembly, with the support of all sides and exemplified by unanimous vote to bring them into existence for the Chamber. Point number one.

Point number two, Mr. Speaker, and I'm summarizing. It is my view that in dealing with rule changes it is most appropriate to deal with them in a context and within a package of rule changes that it doesn't make sense to deal with any one specific item in isolation, but to consider the whole process of effective functioning of the legislature and to bring a number of changes that will either bring the function up to current standards or reflect current values or current procedures, but most importantly, a current identification of fairness.

And so yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I suggested that it's really quite appropriate to bring in rule changes. And I made it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that the opposition is not unwilling to talk about or to consider rule changes having to do with the ringing of the bells to summon members to vote, but that there are a large number of items which also should be dealt with at the same time so as to bring in a sensible package for this Assembly to consider.

Mr. Speaker, without restating them, let me simply list several things that I referred to yesterday.

A schedule or calendar related to the tabling of *Public Accounts* and annual reports certainly would not be inappropriate. It has become a problem lately.

A clearer set of guide-lines for this Assembly regarding responses to both written and oral questions, the time

within which they need to be responded to, questions need to be responded to, and the specificity with which they are responded to.

A schedule or calendar regarding the presentation of a provincial budget so that those thousands upon thousands of entities, legal entities as well as hundreds of thousands of people who are directly impacted by that, can conduct their affairs with some degree of predictability knowing that the government has its act together and is doing some kind of reasoned planning in regarding the spending of public dollars.

A schedule or calendar regarding the calling of sessions to deal with legislative business in the Chamber.

The providing of notice of business by a government, a week in advance. As I said yesterday, it surely is not asking too much of a government to be able to sit down and put on a piece of paper on Friday what it intends to do next week. Surely any government that's got its act together is not lurching along in such an unorganized manner that they're not able to do that, and therefore to facilitate the effective use of time in the Legislative Chamber.

I suggested as well, Mr. Speaker, consistent with some other chambers in our nation, that I believe it's time for this Assembly, for the members of it, to give some thought to the election of Speaker in the Chamber, to either endorse that or to reject it consciously — one or the other.

A couple of other things I would add as well, Mr. Speaker, that I think are worthy of consideration when reviewing rules, that I believe would facilitate again respect for the democratic responsibilities and processes that we are required to defend in these chambers, have to do with the telecasting of proceedings.

Now I recognize, Mr. Speaker, in saying that, that these proceedings are carried over the air waves by cable TV. But I recognize as well that there are a number of people who subscribe to cable television in this province who in fact have no access to the proceedings of the Chamber, and perhaps that's something that should be looked at by members of this Chamber in the interest of providing the arena for an informed public in belief of the principles of democracy.

And I would add to that, Mr. Speaker, in light of the last 24 hours and the release of the auditor's report, and particularly in light of the response of the Minister of Justice — the Minister of Justice, of all people — who publicly slammed the auditor, that very clearly, very, very clearly this Assembly has to attend, not some time, but very, very soon, to this whole business of the rules by which the auditor is allowed to conduct his business.

Clearly in the report, Mr. Speaker, the auditor says that the government isn't following its own laws. And there has to be some way that this Assembly deals with that matter. When you have a government that passes legislation providing privileges and rights for the public auditor, who is there to protect the interest of the public, and is not responsible to the government but is responsible to all of the members of the Legislative Assembly, to the Assembly

itself, there's something wrong when the government is allowed to break its law and refuse to provide information to the auditor that by law the auditor is entitled to receive.

And then, to top it all off, the Minister of Justice is the one to publicly criticize him.

Mr. Speaker, this starts to take on an aura of soap opera to it. I mean, this is the kind of thing that soap operas are made of. It is despicable in my mind that we should even be dealing with that matter at the same as we're dealing with this proposed change in the rules brought to this Assembly by that same Minister of Justice.

And so, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that if we're going to be serious, if we're going to be credible in dealing with the matter of changing of rules in this Assembly, then there's a lot more that needs to be looked at than one simple, legislative knee-jerk reaction by the Minister of Justice and the PC caucus to the ringing of the bells.

And I was just beginning then yesterday, Mr. Speaker, to go through a litany of betrayal of democratic principles by the government opposite, in response to the Minister of Justice's statement that the government was standing for principles of democracy in calling for, in attempting to ram through, a rule change in this Assembly.

Because clearly, Mr. Speaker, if there is any government in recent times that does not have the right to make that statement that they are the defenders of democracy, to make that statement with credibility; if there is any government that does not have that right, it is the PC Government of Saskatchewan today.

We had Bill 5 which was carried in this Legislative Assembly in December of 1986, putting into law the authority for cabinet ministers, the authority for cabinet ministers to create, eliminate, change, and alter government departments without having to come before this Legislative Assembly and express a single word of explanation, contrary to a principle of democracy that had been in existence since the beginning of this province.

One of the first things I saw as a newly elected member to the Legislative Assembly was a government which was determined to act in such a way that it would take power away and influence away, public influence away from the Legislative Assembly and transfer it behind closed cabinet doors — Bill No. 5 in 1986.

And surely we cannot make any reasoned comment about the conduct of this government and their respect for democratic tradition without making some specific reference to the comments of the Provincial Auditor and his report tabled in this Assembly yesterday. And I find it revealing, Mr. Speaker, that under the topic of current issues of importance on page 9, the Provincial Auditor says, and I quote again. I quoted it yesterday:

The Provincial Auditor can no longer effectively serve the Assembly because:

And point number three:

I am being denied access to information.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is not a comment made by an officer of the Assembly that should be taken lightly, and it's not the kind of comment that I'm sure is made lightly. And clearly, any government that is operating their affairs in such a way that the Provincial Auditor finds himself feeling bound to make that statement, is not one which is functioning in a manner that respects democratic traditions and principles.

I refer as well under the same category of current issues of importance and under a sub-category, Mr. Speaker, entitled interference. I note that the auditor raises some 30 — I guess it would be 37 — 37 specific items identifying interference, how he has been interfered with by this government in terms of his ability to function as an officer of this Assembly under the authority of an Act that was approved by this government and this Assembly.

Let me refer, Mr. Speaker, to just some, and I won't refer to all — maybe they should all be referred to, but I'll leave that to other members of the Assembly, if they choose — to have the people of Saskatchewan understand the respect, the respect for democracy by the government of the day. Because that's the issue that's behind this Bill . . . or behind this motion.

I refer to item no. 2.30, and the auditor says he has a concern about interference, and I quote:

Where the Executive limits the Provincial Auditor's ability to carry out his duties the accountability process is broken.

Now let me make that very clear. When the term "executive" is used, executive refers to cabinet. It's the cabinet of the government that the auditor is referring to here. And let the people of Saskatchewan understand that the Provincial Auditor is making a very, very clear statement about the conduct of the cabinet of the PC government of Saskatchewan limiting the Provincial Auditor's ability to carry out his duties and therefore breaking the process of accountability.

And he goes on to say — and you can't say it more clearly than this, Mr. Speaker, item 2.31 — the auditor says, and I quote:

In my opinion, I have been interfered with in the execution of my duties.

The auditor goes on, Mr. Speaker, to make reference to other matters in which he's been interfered with, and let me quote sections 2.34 and 2.35 of his report under the section of interference. And he says:

As reported in my 1987 annual report, on September 17, 1987, the Minutes of the Board of Directors of the Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan (C.I.C.) contained the following:

And here's the motion, Mr. Speaker, from the Crown Investments Corporation:

The Board confirmed their direction to CMB

Management to not release any information to the Provincial Auditor pending further discussions among the Board Members.

To not release any information to the Provincial Auditor.

(1530)

And then in his next item the auditor states, and I quote again:

In my opinion, this action by the Executive . . .

The executive is the cabinet of the government, the cabinet of the PC government. The auditor says:

In my opinion, this action by the Executive is an interference with an Officer of the Assembly.

Can you state it more clearly than that, Mr. Speaker?

Let me quote again from section 2.41 of the interference section of the auditor's report, and again I quote:

It does not seem reasonable to me that by avoiding the letter of the law the Executive (the cabinet) can determine what I can or cannot see, by saying I have not followed . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order.

**Mr. Martens:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to raise a point of order. I've been sitting listening to the member from Moose Jaw North address this Assembly on the basis of the motion, and I've listened for the last five, 10 minutes, and I have not heard him anywhere particularly address the motion.

He has been speaking about the auditor's report, and I believe that yesterday you ruled that that was not in order, and I believe that that is accurate, and I hold to that today. I don't believe that he has the freedom to wander from that, and I'd like to have you rule on that point of order please, sir.

**The Speaker:** — I have listened to the hon. member's point of order. The member from Moose Jaw has been discussing a report; perhaps it's not clear to the members his intent to relate it to the topic under discussion. And if the hon. member can . . . is relating it to the motion under discussion, then his comments are in order. If not, perhaps there's a question there, but perhaps the hon. member, to clear up any doubts, should make his points, perhaps, more relevant and clear.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to do that, and for the member from Morse, I'm glad he's taking interest in the debate today and listening carefully. And so let me, just for the member from Morse, and perhaps if there's others who didn't understand, simply reiterate that, Mr. Speaker.

I point out to members of the Assembly that I am responding to the Minister of Justice's statements when he introduced the motion purporting that the Government of Saskatchewan was needing to ram through this motion in

the middle of a session as a defence of democracy. In response to that, Mr. Speaker, I make the point that I do not believe that to be a credible statement made by that minister or that government because of the actions of the government. And actions speak louder than words. And I simply make the case that this government has no ethical or moral justification to make that claim that they are defenders of democracy and therefore have the right to ram this rule change through in a manner that is totally contradictory to any way the rule changes have ever been made before.

And in order to make my case and respond to that, it's necessary not to just engage in rhetoric but, I believe, to substantiate to the people of Saskatchewan just how this government has violated the principles of democracy. I refer to Bill No. 5 as a violation, in my opinion, of a principle of democracy that people can decide whether they think it's enhancing or detracting from democracy to take the change of government departments out of the Assembly and do it behind closed cabinet doors.

I point, as well, to this government's dealing with the Provincial Auditor who exists as an officer of this Assembly, by authority of law, and this government's refusal to respond to information requested by that auditor, not at the bureaucratic level but at the Executive Council, at the cabinet level.

Those who hold the highest posts of government in Saskatchewan are the ones who are coming under criticism by an officer of this Assembly. That strikes me as being the kind of action that's inconsistent with some government that claims that it's a defender of democracy and therefore has a right to ram a rule change through in an extraordinary kind of way.

And so I'm sure the member of Morse understands the logic that I'm following, and therefore will welcome the information to consider how he's going to move on this motion.

And let me continue then for the member from Morse and others to point out what the Provincial Auditor has to say about the conduct of the cabinet of the PC government of Saskatchewan today. And I quote section 2.41, under the "Interference" category of current issues of importance in the auditor's report submitted yesterday, and I quote:

It does not seem reasonable to me that by avoiding the letter of the law the Executive (the cabinet) can determine what I can or cannot see, by saying I have not followed a "proper procedure" which the Executive (the cabinet) alone defines. If the Executive (the cabinet) can decide what and how I can examine (and let's underline this point), if the executive can decide what and how I can examine, the Assembly does not have a watchdog over government spending.

The statement of the Provincial Auditor about the conduct of the cabinet of the government of the PC Government of Saskatchewan today.

Mr. Speaker, this does not strike me as the great defenders of the principles of democracy who, with any

justification, come to this Assembly intent on ramming through a rule change in an extraordinary manner.

As I said before, I'm not going to read all of these. I could. If the member from Morse remains unconvinced, I am quite pleased, I would be quite pleased to read these item by item into the record.

Section 2.51, in reference to a Crown corporation created, Mr. Speaker, interesting enough, created, according to rule number five, without coming before the Assembly; created behind closed cabinet doors, the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. It used to be the department of government services, changed, without coming before the Assembly because this government had put through rule five, to the Property Management Corporation.

So how is this property management corporation, formerly department of government services, changed behind closed cabinet doors according to rules brought in by this government in December 1986 — how is this corporation responding to requests for information from the auditor?

And the plot thickens, Mr. Speaker. And the auditor says, and I quote:

In my opinion, this action by SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) is an interference with an officer of the Assembly in the discharge of his duties.

That's his conclusion. If the member from Morse likes, I can read the items before that that substantiate that in the mind of the Provincial Auditor.

And then finally, Mr. Speaker, let me refer to item 2.55 of the auditor in the same section, in which he says, and I quote, and again if the member from Morse wants the substantiating preceding items, I'm happy to read those into the record. He can just give me a wave and I'm happy to do that.

The Provincial Auditor says, and I quote:

In addition to my inability to get information from C.I.C. (the Crown investments corporation), S.P.C. (the Saskatchewan Power Corporation), SPMC (the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation), SaskTel and P.C.S. (the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan), I was refused access to the accounts of a crown controlled corporation, Westbridge Computer Corporation.

And so on it goes, Mr. Speaker. Very, very clearly we have a government that is not at all committed to the principles of preservation of democracy.

I can give you a quick list of other examples that are less current but certainly very clear. One has to question the respect for democracy when this government took until June of 1987 to call its first legislative session after receiving a new mandate in October of 1986, conducting government's financial affairs by special warrant in the interim, and releasing announcement after

announcement after announcement for two or three months that just literally devastated, psychologically devastated, the people of Saskatchewan. Finally called its session, finally called the House to session, the people's Assembly to order to do business after there had been a threat of going to court in order to force them to bring the government to the people's chambers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, does it strike anybody in Saskatchewan — normally the history in this province has been to call the Legislative Assembly to do its business in February, at the latest March, most frequently February — when the government of the day two years ago waited until June, mid-June, to call the Assembly to begin its business at a time in which normally it's concluding?

We've seen this government's respect for democracy and the principles of democracy when a year ago it passed its Bill bringing into existence the gerrymander of the electoral boundaries. Because it simply does not believe, it simply does not believe if the principle that had previously existed of no more than 15 per cent variation from the norm, larger or smaller, of electoral boundaries and constituencies — if that was honoured, it doesn't believe that it would have as effective a chance of getting elected. And so again they changed the rules for elections.

It had changed the rules for government departments. It had changed the rules . . . it didn't change the rules, it just didn't honour the rules regarding the auditor.

It violated the tradition in calling the session of June '87. It then went to bring through this Assembly a change of the rules regarding boundaries and affecting elections. Last year we saw them ram through a change in the ward system, affecting elections in municipalities contrary to the wishes of the municipalities of this province.

We've seen this government intentionally misleading the people of Saskatchewan in the financial affairs. We saw the Minister of Finance saying before the election of 1986, the deficit was not a problem, and then after the election saying, whoops, we've made an \$800 million mistake. What do you expect? We're politicians. He should have said, if he was being honest, what do you expect? We're Tory politicians.

We see this government time after time, year after year, failing to release *Public Accounts* in a timely manner. In February of this year the Public Accounts Committee started its review of the year that ended two years before. And that's certainly not my definition of a timely manner.

We see before us now Bill 1 in this Assembly on the agenda, giving the authority to the minister of privatization the right to privatize whatever he wants, whenever he wants, however he wants, to whomever he wants — a dangerous piece of legislation.

We've seen this government unable to carry a quorum. Within the last four weeks of the function of this Assembly, this government twice, on two occasions, has not been able to even keep a quorum, to keep a sufficient number of members here; when this is the government that brings the business before the people of

Saskatchewan, doesn't even have enough people present in the Assembly to legally carry on the business of the Assembly.

And now we see this ramming of this motion coming before us. And we've seen repeatedly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the refusal of government members to enter into debate. I think the most explicit statement of the purpose of this Legislative Assembly was given by Allan Blakeney just before he retired from the Assembly when he referred to it as a talking place, a place in which all of us, as elected members, have both the right and the responsibility to stand and state where we stand, but just as importantly, why we stand where we stand.

And over and over again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've seen this government come forth with legislation and motions presented and then refused to be defended. And clearly again, in my mind, a violation of the principle of democracy where you have both the right, but also a responsibility, to say where you stand and why it is you stand where you stand.

And so I can only conclude, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can only conclude, after considering all the factors involved in bringing forth this motion today, that it is nothing more than a legislative knee-jerk reaction by a government that's hurting, that's demonstrating its hurting on its SaskPower privatization issue in two ways: one, by spending hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of taxpayer dollars, holding meetings and carrying advertising across the province of Saskatchewan and at the same, as an expression of just how hard it's hurting and in spite bringing forth a rule change to this Legislative Assembly.

(1545)

Clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a government that's trying to deflect the agenda from the concerns of the people of Saskatchewan. This whole process of bringing this rule change before the Legislative Assembly is a failed process.

The government's priorities are very clearly out of whack. It's hung up on privatization and rule changes and has lost complete touch with the real issues of the province of Saskatchewan — fails to address the out-migration and unemployment and rising taxes and deficit, cuts in services; fails to address all of those. The protection of the family farm, family businesses around the province of Saskatchewan, rising interest rates — none of those are on the legislative agenda.

Here we are dealing over and over again with privatization and rule changes. This is a government that's out of touch and completely out of whack when it comes to dealing with the issues that are important to Saskatchewan people.

And therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of all of those reasons, and because the very process fails to address the manner in which rules should be changed, and I believe is simply a diversionary tactic to get away from the issues of greatest concern to Saskatchewan people which are the issues about which this government

stands weakest in the minds of the Saskatchewan public, I stand opposed to this motion and will be voting accordingly if it should ever come to a vote in this Legislative Assembly.

In saying that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope, I hope that there may still be an opportunity that the Minister of Justice offer to deal with some discussion of rules outside of the Assembly and involving members of both government and opposition caucus; that there still is a chance for rules to be dealt with in a sensible kind of way; and, therefore, if members opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are giving some serious consideration to what's really going on, it may be that this will not come to a vote because cooler heads have prevailed and this Legislative Assembly has chosen to deal with this matter in a more sensible kind of way.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I make it very, very clear though, that if it does come to a vote, I shall stand opposed.

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

**Mr. Goulet:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to debate the motion and, of course, on the bell-ringing. I want to make it very clear at the outset that I am opposed to the motion as introduced by the government.

At the outset, as I begin my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must point out that the government chooses again not to partake in the parliamentary tradition of debate. They have chosen to hide under their desks and not partake in our great democratic tradition.

And as I look back in the history of my short stay at the legislature, I must state at the outset that I have seen this practice of PC-style democracy which is generally one of not partaking in very important historic debates in this legislature and just hiding their own lack of knowledge in these particular contextual issues surrounding the bell-ringing incident.

And as I look at the overall general question of the bell-ringing, one has to look at the aspect of why it is that bell-ringing is still part of the parliamentary tradition. And many of the people state that there's got to be a balance on the role of the majority, which is the government, and also the important right of the opposition to criticize, oppose, and even obstruct a government measure.

And as we look to the past we know that bell-ringing has simply become, you know, part of our historic tradition of parliamentary democracy.

The question one raises in regards to the bell-ringing motion, where they are trying to limit the bell-ringing to one hour, is precisely because of the context in which this has taken place. In the past week, as we come back into the legislature, and the previous two weeks prior to that when the bell-ringing took place, many of the people looked at the reason why the bell-ringing took place.

It's very important to look at the reasons why the bell-ringing took place in order to gain a full understanding of the debate. It's important therefore not to look at only the process of bell-ringing, it's also

important to look at the historical context in which this debate arose.

And as I look at the historical context, one looks at the reasons why as an opposition member we decided to utilize the strategy. First of all we looked at the issue surrounding the bell-ringing incident. And of course it was specifically related to the privatization of SaskEnergy.

Last year when we had presented the . . . when we had asked the questions about why SaskEnergy was being separated from Saskatchewan Power, we deliberately raised the question because we knew that it was inevitably going to be privatized. But we weren't sure. So at that point in time we had asked the question to the deputy minister whether or not he would be privatizing SaskEnergy, which this bell-ringing rule is connected to.

And we looked at the issue, and of course he said that there would be no privatization of our public utilities. And it was that same type of response that we got from the Premier previous to that, a year before that when he said that none of the public, you know, prior to the election time when that question was raised, that the public utilities would not be touched.

And so the context is one where we look at the issue of privatization. And as we look at it, a person has to look at governmental mandate in parliamentary tradition. Governmental mandate is one where a government sets forth its position to legitimately become a government of a province. And during that time it sets out their positions as to why they are planning to govern in the future.

And in that case then a certain type of mandate is put forth. Questions are raised by opposition and by the public during the period of campaigning to find out whether or not certain types of things are going to take place at a certain point in the government's mandate, as is laid out during the campaign.

And it's become very clear that the mandate of the government was not really being followed, in a sense, that specifically it was mentioned that there would be no privatization of the public utilities. And when we look at that very carefully, one recognizes that this did not only occur in the area of privatization but also the budgeting aspect. We knew that the budget was going to be a certain figure, but that information was not let out at that certain point in time again. We found out that there was an \$800 million difference between what the proposed budget deficit was going to be and what it actually became to be just a couple of months later.

So we know that a promise had deliberately been broken. The Premier and his members knew very clearly that they would not get elected if the issue of the privatization of public utilities was brought out into the open. So there was a deliberate type of not following the facts in this case and trying to present a view that sure, we're not going to sell off the public utilities. So a promise was deliberately broken to the people of the province.

There are countless other promises that are related to the privatization issue that were of course broken, and the

bell-ringing aspect, and the context of which it is tied to, looks also at the promises of privatization and jobs. We knew that the people have been promised since 1982 that there would be a growing number of jobs in the province of Saskatchewan, and that privatization would be a solution after the open-for-business strategy had failed. The open-for-business strategy, which was the glitter and gloss of PC propaganda in 1982, quickly lost its appeal and then shifted off in the latter aspect here to move into a different framework when they got elected back in '86.

So when I look at the bell-ringing incident, I look at the promises in relation to the jobs, you know, prior to this new phase of privatization, although the privatization had in fact started in other areas such as highways, you know, even prior to a general Bill of privatization came in. I might add that there is a connection between the bell-ringing and the privatization and that aspect also basically, you know, as I look back in regards to the jobs issue.

I would like to stick to the jobs aspect though. I look back, and I come from a high unemployment situation in northern Saskatchewan where we have anywhere from 60 to 90 per cent unemployment depending on the community level, and a lot of the people were simply asking for more jobs, and we saw a lot of promises in '82 and '86 in that regard. In both cases there was promise of great jobs if a lot more of the money was turned over to the big corporations. So there was a direct connection between the PC strategy of privatization and open for business and jobs and big corporations and the complete reliance on big corporations.

So the jobs question became to be a central issue.

And as we look back at the historic record on privatization, we know that 400 jobs were lost in Highways; we know that 400 jobs were lost in the dental program. And I might add that, you know, at a time when this government talks about health prevention and so on, that this was probably the best health prevention program in the whole world and that the privatization aspect of the dental plan was an important connection to this overall goal of the context of bell-ringing which we look at, you know, this evening.

(1600)

So I looked at also the privatization of the mining industry in northern Saskatchewan. And I see a direct connection there where we look at the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation and the tremendous amount of profits and over \$1.5 billion worth of assets and about \$60 billion worth of profits a couple years ago. Now it's been changed in name to Cameco, and the privatization effort in that particular case is one where the jobs question was raised with again the minister in charge of SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation), the Deputy Premier, and we raised it at that point and again he brought out the old argument that privatization would indeed create jobs. And as we look back at the record, we know that it took many years to argue with this government on the issue of northern employment and big corporate enterprise.



We used to raise the issue when the levels of employment were about 15 per cent, you know, as opposed to the legal limit. And I'll make a connection here because we are dealing here with a legitimate legal rule and making the connection between the legal obligations of the government in regards to employment and privatization in the North in regards to SMDC. And we made the point — we said, look, there has been a slight improvement in the hiring policies in the North — you know, from about 15 to about 25 per cent. But we said, we have done this, you know, by arguing about a six, seven-year period. We would like to see the government follow the regulations of what was laid out in the lease agreements. And the lease agreements laid out that it was supposed to be 50 per cent; that the law stated 50 per cent and not, you know, a 25 per cent limit.

So that the connection here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is this: that we are debating the context of a democratic aspect of bell-ringing and the aspect of how it ties in to privatization, because that was the context of our debate.

And so I'm introducing concrete information in regards to northern situations about the jobs question, which just is in the process of occurring also at the time that we are debating this motion, because the privatization of Cameco (Canadian Mining Energy Corporation) is occurring right now, and that's the context of the debate. And when I looked at it, I saw that while there was a general improvement on the number of jobs, you still didn't follow the full regulations. It didn't fully follow the law. It was only following the law by about 60 per cent. So I might add that the law has to be followed 100 per cent, not 60 per cent as in this case, and we have to make sure that when we are talking about privatization strategy and jobs that indeed that the laws are being followed. And the law wasn't even being followed in this particular case.

So when we are dealing with the regulation in rules and procedures of the House and we make a connection to privatization and we make a connection to the jobs issue, the concrete context is one where there were indeed not even ... there was indeed a case where the law wasn't even being followed.

And as I looked at the promises of privatization and jobs, I look at it then as mere promises. If you can't even follow the law that exists right now, how can we hope to believe the government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in regards to really following the law. So my point of the argument is that the context has to be conducted with the bell-ringing and privatization and the jobs question, because that was the context of the debate as we went to the people. The people said, we are worried that in the long run the jobs aspects in SPC and the SaskEnergy aspect, if it becomes privatized, will no longer be honoured; that indeed more and more people, you know, from the outside will get the jobs, and less people from our situation.

And I go back to the context of SMDC again, and I looked at the issue there, and here it was. We raised it last year and we said, look, Mr. Deputy Premier, this situation of privatization is going to be one of amalgamation. When you amalgamate, you're going to have to cut staff. And he says, no, no, not to worry about it; I think we're going to

see a situation there's going to be more jobs. But this year the historic record shows that there were 100 jobs lost in Cameco in northern Saskatchewan — 100 jobs.

I know that the Deputy Premier was so red-faced and he got pounding on the table quite a bit and got pretty excited about jobs at Rafferty-Alameda. But he didn't get that excited when we lost jobs in northern Saskatchewan. There was 100 jobs ... there was 350 jobs in regards to lay-offs, you know, starting July. And a lot of people feel those jobs are very important for their own families. And I was hoping that when we got into this debate that some of the members from across would deal with some of these concrete historical aspects of unemployment and how we are losing jobs through privatization.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order. I would just like to remind the member, he has been trying to relate his comments to the bell-ringing, but I believe jobs in the North and public participation are not totally relevant to the motion that is before the House. And I would ask the member to just maintain his debate around the motion on 33 that's before the House at this time. Thank you.

**Mr. Goulet:** — In regards to ... the reason why I entered into a debate on those issues was during the debate we were talking about participatory democracy and some of the issues that do relate and connect to it. So I will continue in regards to the context ... the context I was getting at was in regards to the promises made, and I was trying to get to the concrete level of the jobs, but I won't mention the northern jobs any more because of your comment. So I will continue and talk about the context therefore about the bell-ringing incident.

As we went around to the communities — when we talked about this bell-ringing incident and we went down to the community level — one of the things we learned, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that people were indeed about, you know, while they didn't ... they were considering the general context of jobs is what I should say then. They were very worried about the jobs aspect in regards ... during the period of bell-ringing when we went out to the community level.

And the people said, my goodness, we have worked hard, you know, to get at these things. We have made gains on these. And we want you to make a strong stand on those. We want to make sure that we not only, you know, look at those jobs that we lost previously, you know, in a general level, but we want to make sure that in the overall bell-ringing that you people are going through, that we want you to give a message to the government.

We want to give them a message that bell-ringing is very important to focus in on the aspect of the jobs question. They said, do not back down on that issue because it's a very important issue. Do not ever back down on the need for jobs for all Saskatchewan people. And that's in the context that I guess I was trying to explain myself, Mr. Speaker, but it didn't come through that clearly.

So as I look at the other issue, I'll also mention the aspect of bell-ringing. And as I talked to the people at the different community levels again, people were saying to me, they said, well you have to stay out. We knew it was

very difficult to try and stay out on the bell-ringing situation. We knew that it was a very difficult thing for us to do. As a new member, you know, coming into the legislature, I never experienced the issue of bell-ringing, you know, at the level that we had gotten into.

And I knew that at a certain point you look at the politics of process and the politics of substance. And you always have to make a connection between the politics of substance and the need for regular government business and the like, as we went through. And when I talked to the people about that and we did mention that it was a very touchy situation for us, and as I recall, the petition that went out . . . the petition basically gave us, you know, full support on the substance of the argument on SPC, on privatization, on just about anything. A lot of the people said, we're opposed to it, you know, by a 70 per cent margin.

And when we look at the bell-ringing situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was about 49-39 in our favour, you know, at that point. So it was relatively close in regards to public opinion on the bell-ringing session, you know, at that point in time in history.

So when I got into the discussions with the people about the bell-ringing, a lot of them stated to me, they said, look, make a strong stand. They said, it's not jobs; they said, it's our assets, it's our provincial assets that this bell-ringing is all about. We are talking about our Saskatchewan heritage; we are talking about not only the future of ourselves, they said, we're talking about the future of our children; we're talking about the future of our grandchildren, and whether or not they will have assets that they can rightfully say, hey, those are ours; those are Saskatchewan's to own, and so on. That's the future that indeed we are talking about.

So when I mentioned the aspect of assets, a lot of them asked me, they said, well, do you know anything about the other assets and profit margins that we have in the other areas? And I said, well, I could only, you know, reply back to the SaskEnergy and SaskPower one offhand, and I said I'll do a little bit of research in the other areas. And sure enough, we did a little bit of research on it, and I got back to them on it. And we said, look, we see that SPC makes over \$100 million this past year and, you know, the SaskEnergy portion was approximately 60 and about 54, the utilities portion.

But we also looked at the fact that when they started asking me questions, they said, what about . . . well, how did the SaskEnergy aspect, which is connected to the bell-ringing, tie in with the utility aspect of the question?

And a lot of the people started saying, we would like to see the annual reports on those. And when we examined the annual reports, of course the annual reports showed that there was about nine, seven out of the 10 years where the utility section had been . . . on the electrical side had lost money — sometimes not too much; sometimes a little bit more, but it did lose on those seven. And when we looked at the SaskEnergy side, we saw that indeed they had made money 10 out of 10 years, and the reason was fairly clear as I got the feedback from the people.

They said it's probably because the gas section is probably the cleanest of the fossil fuels in burning, and we're concerned on environment and that type of thing. Those are the types of issues that the people, you know, raise with me as I discussed the issue of the bell-ringing session with them.

They also said that it's probably because of the fact it's rising and it's making a lot of money, and a lot of the big companies, they said, want to privatize this thing, so they're forcing the PC government to try and get them to sell off the most . . . I guess, the most jewelled possession of the utilities. And they said, that utility makes a lot of money, and it's true that, you know, some of these big corporations want fair ownership on that.

And a lot of people also told me, they said, don't be fooled, they said; even if there is a series of different owners in this case, this bell-ringing is very important for you to get the message out. And the message, they said, is this: that sometimes these big corporations have interlocking directors. They said that the interlocking directors here sit in on the same boards in these big companies, so even if they're legally a different company, they know what's going on. So if they're legally a separate company, and you could show in the historic records that they are different, the directorships are interlocking so that they know, even though that they are separate, they can make, you know, monopoly decisions, although there may be seven, eight owners in that regard.

(1615)

So I learned a lot as I talked to the people about the bell-ringing session. And the more we talked, the more they were very interested in doing participatory — what I call participatory — democracy, which is the very essence of this debate. And we talk about, you know, the right of the government to do whatever they want to do, and to even a certain extent even ram certain Bills and certain debates, you know, as quickly as they want to, or the right of opposition to criticize and to oppose whatever it is that they're putting out.

And when we looked at the petition, people said, you have a right to this bell-ringing session, they said, because it's a really key issue. I mentioned before about the history. They said, I am going to put my name in there. I am going to put my name in this petition in support of the bell-ringing that you are doing, but more particularly they said in support of the public utilities. They said, we would like to still support our public utilities and that was clearly the message that was imprinted on the petition. And the people said, we are putting our names in there because we want you to make a strong message. I don't usually like signing my name on a petition, they said, but in this case we'll make an exception. In this case we would like to support you because you are supporting us.

So I learned quite a bit as a rookie politician going out to the community level and being worried about this bell-ringing session and being very worried about, you know, the degree of impact it would have in regards to the overall important issue of privatization which we were debating.

So as I went along and we got different people involved, people said, this petition is very important for us, and a lot of the young people, you know, went to work at the community level, a lot of the professional people, a lot of farming people, a lot of workers went out. A lot of different types of people went out and got involved, not only in the signing of the thing but in the process of getting it signed.

And I was truly amazed as a rookie politician in seeing the intensity and feeling that people did have about their Saskatchewan corporations.

It became very clear that they didn't want to see the thing completely turned over to the monopoly interests of big companies because they knew that the companies already control too much of our lives and that they could sway opinions, you know, in such a way that many issues that are important for us would not be touched.

And I can only look in the context of today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I saw the issue of the Exxon Corporation. They completely disregarded environmental laws, and none of the politicians want to touch them because they control too much of the things.

And that's what people told me as I debated the bell-ringing, and we talked about the public utilities and the privatization issue connected to the bell-ringing. And the people kept saying, they said, we don't want to be solely under the control of big companies; we'd like to have a little bit of a say. They said, we like the message that the opposition leader, Roy Romanow, had to bring out — pardon me, I'm not supposed to make any names — but the opposition leader had to say in regards to the mixed economy approach. And again, being a rookie, I slipped up here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And so as we look forward, we saw the people saying, well the mixed economy approach that you're talking about in regards to this bell-ringing situation is very important for Saskatchewan because that's how we built it, some of the seniors told me as I went out, and because I wanted to talk about bell-ringing, they want to talk about the whole history of Saskatchewan. And of course, I can only present a brief picture of what they told me.

They said, we built these things. We spent many years working, building these corporations so that we could sometimes control our public utilities as in the case of SaskEnergy, I was told. They also said that we also wanted to do joint ventures with big corporations. Not that we wanted to completely control all the industry in mining. For example, I was told, they wanted to do joint venturing, working side by side with big corporations, so that we have at least a stronger say and a little economic clout in decision making when we sat side by side and negotiated with big corporations in regards to this whole issue.

So when we were discussing this whole context, we got into a lot of issues that touched upon the whole context of this bell-ringing, which is the privatization issue. And while we went on, we also talked about the importance of . . . people raised to me, they said, I am glad that along with bell-ringing you are doing what you call

participatory democracy. I'm glad, they said, of the petitions.

They say that putting your name to something is very important. Signing your name on something shows that you have commitment. Signing your name to something shows that you have real concern. It's not something that you just talk about. Talking is important, they said, but you have to put your signature to something. We live in a situation where we honour contracts, where we honour our signature. When we put our name to something, it becomes, you know, a very significant aspect for our lives and whatever it is that we decide upon. So they said, look, this petition, this participatory democracy is very important.

And as I look back at that now, you know, when I look back on those two weeks and I'm back here at the legislature, I look at the number of petitions and I look at the tremendous numbers — 80,000 people have already signed petitions on it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And at that time when we debated it and when I was a little bit concerned with the people, when I used to raise that issue about bell-ringing, it became very important that we were on the right track, that people were siding with us and saying this was an important reason why you need to do bell-ringing. They said, you have to make sure that our voice is heard. They said, make sure that our voice isn't just shut down by technical aspects. They said those things that are very important in parliamentary democracy still need to be there and still need to be continued.

And they said, make sure that you keep on having these meetings also, that you've started. We've got a whole series of small meetings where we were asked to come at the community level and we discussed these issues, you know, including bell-ringing and also the privatization of public utilities. So people were very, very, very well informed about the history of our province. They knew what the bell-ringing was about. They knew about the importance of debating the issue of privatization of our public utilities.

So they had these . . . the other thing they said is that it's good to have your name on something. It's good to have the petition out, and stuff like that, but they said continue having these meetings on even a larger scale. So we proceeded to get larger meetings, and as a northern member we went to an area of P.A. and we looked at about a thousand people that come out. And they said, that gives you a good indicator, they said, to balance that aspect of bell-ringing with people and public participation.

They said petitions are important but, they said, we want involvement. We want to be able to drive in our car from Nipawin or from Tisdale or from wherever in the province of Saskatchewan, to move to these central locations at a short notice and present ourself and make our views known to the province of Saskatchewan, to the Government of Saskatchewan. And they said it was very important to do these things and a lot of them did become involved. And we saw over a thousand . . . we saw approximately a thousand people in P.A.; about 600

people in Yorkton; over a thousand people in Saskatoon; and about 1,000 to 1,500 in Regina, depending on the different estimates.

So we were able to make the connection between bell-ringing and the people's movement in the province of Saskatchewan. And we became convinced, you know, during the second week when we got into the meetings, that we were on the right track, that indeed the issue of public utilities and how the people felt about it was a very, very strong one indeed.

And when we looked at it, people said, my goodness, the government may break their promises on many little things here and there. We understand; we've seen the PCs do that over the history of the seven years. But they said, this is a major one; this is an issue that cuts in the historic heart of the history of Saskatchewan. They said, make a strong stand.

So as I was debating with myself as a new MLA, I kept on thinking, you know, of whether to go back or to keep on following the people's issue. We kept following the people's issue on the second week there, and I learned a lot about looking at technical arguments, about bell-ringing and looking at the substance of the context of where a debate takes place. I knew I learned something from that. I knew that you could never only talk about how loud a bell rings or what size the bell is or all of these types in a debate; that the context of the debate has to look at the question on where the central issue did come from.

And as I travelled along on the second week, and I went to Prince Albert, and I went to Yorkton, and I went to different communities and talked about this whole issue of not only bell-ringing but the privatization of public utilities, I got to know and I got to have a real sense of where the people were at in regards to that. It made my feeling a little bit more at ease, although I still felt it was a tricky issue all the way through. I really felt that, my goodness, you could only go so far on this; that at some point we would have to come back.

And as I listened to people, that's what kept crossing my mind as we debated as to whether we go bell-ringing or the issue of public utilities.

When I looked at the debate and the very first aspect of it, I looked at it as one where I learned a lot from the people of Saskatchewan as I went out to discuss not only the bell-ringing situation but the privatization issue.

I learned that people were not only willing to talk about things, to talk about the issues surrounding this, and to try and get more information about this and that, and for them giving me information about the historic past; they also said, we wanted to put our name into it in a petition. And 80,000 . . . more than 80,000 is one where that has become a central point in our debate.

We also looked at the aspect of the meetings. People have said, the context of bell-ringing has to be looked at in regards to participatory democracy of meetings, of public meetings. And I understand that the government has followed our example and went out and had their own

public meetings.

But I must say that ours were more of a dynamic aspect of a people's movement. Because I thought as I looked back at it, we didn't have the massive advertising budgets of the government. We didn't have the practical staff to be able to do something in just a short two-week period.

What it did prove to me was the strength of the people — the strength and the concern that people had about their Saskatchewan, the strength and the concern that the people had about their public utilities, the strength and the concern that people had in regards to the problem of privatization and the problem that complete ownership of big-business interests is not Saskatchewan history, that indeed we have to have public ownership working side by side in this issue. And that's the message I got as I talked about the bell-ringing incident with the people, Mr. Speaker, as I travelled through the province.

(1630)

And when I looked at it I tried to understand why the debate did come in then on the issue of the bell-ringing. Here it was a people's issue making a very strong stand against privatization. They want to stand up for their public utilities owned by the province, owned by the people.

And when we looked at it, I tried to find a reason for the government's intent on pushing through the one-hour limit on bell-ringing. And I must say that I was very disappointed. I looked at the press reports, and I looked at one press statement, and there it was. It said that the government may be thirsty for revenge. And I looked at it in quotes and when they were talking about the bell-ringing. And they said they were thirsty for revenge . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Why don't you read it? Read the whole article.

**Mr. Goulet:** — And one of the members says I should read the whole article, but I think the point is well made. I think the point is well made that the government knew that they were well beat on the issue. I think that the government well knew that the bell-ringing situation, when we looked at the polls, said that we were ahead 49 to 39 per cent. And we were ahead also on the privatization debate where people said there should be no privatization, you know, by a 70 per cent margin. So that the government was intent to try and shift this debate away from privatization and into a bell-ringing aspect, and that's why the context of this debate then comes to be one of tying bell-ringing to privatization.

But I think the real sense, Mr. Speaker, is this: I think it's one of participatory democracy. It's one of the democratic feeling that I got when I went out to see the people in regards to the petitions and so on.

And when we see the right of a government to govern, we always permit that right, and only obstruct it when we feel there is a real issue at hand. Once in a while there comes an issue of the people, and we look at this.

And I was surprised myself, Mr. Speaker, as a new MLA, to see the response of the people as I went out, and the tremendous amount of knowledge that I gained in that short period of time of two weeks.

And when I look back, and then I see this article saying, thirsty for revenge, I say to myself, well that's a very poor reason for putting on a motion, to try and ram through and put a limit on democracy by limiting the bell-ringing. And it's a very poor excuse.

Revenge is something that, you know, very few people would like to be connected to. And when I saw this in the article in the paper, I thought to myself, maybe that person is partially right; maybe they are more than half right; maybe some people think it's totally right. Other people will debate that issue.

But people are saying that that's not a very good rationale for putting a limit on bell-ringing.

And when I looked at it, I looked at the converse of where the revenge was going to. And I thought it was not only a revenge against the opposition for dealing with an issue, for me, I looked at it as revenge, because a lot of the people signed their name on a petition and a lot of people spoke up in the meetings. And I thought to myself, hey, could it be a revenge against the people of the province of Saskatchewan?

And I thought to myself, I hope not, I hope this government doesn't stoop to that type of low in the history of Saskatchewan, because my feeling is that you can't ignore the people. You can't just say, oh I'm going to limit the people's democracy by limiting the bell, you know, by limiting the time to one hour; that indeed all what the people said in the petitions and all what the people discussed during the signing of the petition, all what the people discussed in regards to the history of Crown corporations in Saskatchewan and the mixed economy approach that the New Democratic Party stands for, all this history was talked about and it could not be ignored.

But what the government is doing in this particular instance is not only gaining a bit of revenge on the opposition, it's ignoring the people of Saskatchewan. It's ignoring their input, the input that they have had, the tremendous amount of feeling that they've put into this issue.

They look at the history of jobs it had brought the people, the history of education, the history of health development, and all the money that Crown corporations have put into this province — hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars put into the public purse so that they could work side by side with private industry. And that's the type of approach and the type of system that people were telling to me as I went throughout the province, so that there is a real sense of a bad record on the history of Saskatchewan when I see the tremendous ignoring of the people's wishes.

I hope that a certain amount did go through, Mr. Speaker. And I must concede that, you know, the attempt to get the public panels and so on, may be debated on your side of the House in regards to some people saying we need to

have real input. Some people say maybe we should combine this with a good advertising project, and we'll try and really do a fast sell to the people of the province, so that indeed we could try and run away from the people's wishes and try and side-track this whole thing so that we could spend a lot of time on debating the bell-ringing. But that's the type of connection that I've learned from the people as I went on.

Some of the other things that people have asked me, they said, as a new member you must have been used to the new style of democracy, you know, that the PC government is running. And I said, yes I have, and there are regular aspects of the legislature which are very useful for both sides of the House as we go on through the parliamentary tradition and we look at the debate, you know, on both sides of the House where the bell-ringing becomes useful for the opposition.

It was useful for the PC government when they were in opposition, it was useful for the Liberal government when they were in opposition, and it was useful for us when we're in opposition because it provides us with a tool of bringing forth people's issues and raising them to a new level where it's strong feeling that they could be brought out that way.

And people said, what about other aspects of democracy? They said, we have seen rotten examples, you know, prior to '82, in the '30s, and during the '60s period, but they said, what about your specific time, since right from 86?

So I looked at . . . I decided to examine it myself. And I remember when I first got into the House, Mr. Speaker, and I got into the context of debate on Bill 5, and of course I was sometimes naming members and making mistakes on this and that and trying to debate this new Bill 5 that was coming up. And some people were talking to me about the principles of democracy, and I was learning about all of this stuff on a very specific context. And some people were telling me, in regards to Bill 5, that it was done at a deliberate time before Christmas. It was a very sharp move by the government, and that we wouldn't be able to sit over Christmas holidays and the like.

And so there was a certain aspect of that type of thing that I related back to the people as we were talking about our debate, as we were out in the field doing the debating, whether we should come back or not during the bell-ringing session. So I said, well we look at the limitations there, I said. And as I responded back, I said, we looked at Bill 5 and, I said, what did I learn from it? I thought that democracy was one of debate from both sides of the House, I said, where we have a critical debate on changing structures of our government. And here was a role that provided the government, the Executive Council, to be able to do whatever they wanted to do in restructuring government so it wouldn't have to go through the debate, so that it squelched the debate.

And I told the person that we were discussing the bell-ringing session, and I said, that is the type of thing that I learned, I said, as a new member. But I said, I decided to read some papers on it, and I said, I went down to England and I went down to the States on this type of

governing, and they said, it's an executive-style governing where you give all the power to the executive so that they can make decisions to change the structure of government, to change rules and proceedings and so on.

But in this particular one, I said, it was changing the structures of government. So when I was doing the debates, I said, well this is the type of thing that I, as a new rookie member, learned in the legislature. It's not too long ago, in December, when we passed that Bill 5. So I said, that was my first example of democracy as a new member, and it was more of executive-style governing rather than proper debate in the House on an important issue such as restructuring of governmental departments.

So the other thing that I looked at as I . . . And I wanted to make these small examples and not get into a long debate on all of them, Mr. Speaker. But just to point out as examples of democracy in this legislature when we were discussing the aspect of, you know, the right of the opposition to criticize and the right of the government to govern. And there always has to be a good balance on that. So as I give examples, I try and relate a specific example that I have experienced as I was talking to people on my two weeks out, as I met them, discussing this bell-ringing incident and the privatization of public utilities.

And I used to say, well we used to have a little debate also, on not only the governing of the province of Saskatchewan, I said, we went at the right of governing at the municipal level. And I said, to make the story short, it doesn't hit the rural areas that much, but the big cities where we discussed the debate on the ward system. And I said, the choice there wasn't given us for the municipalities to not only have any of two choices, but the three choices, and one including the right of choice to have a ward system. I said they didn't have that choice. I said, then I saw a limitation on democracy there; that was another example of limitation on democracy.

So there was a limitation on democracy on limiting debate on restructuring of government. This was limiting the right of the choice for municipalities to make a right and proper decision as to what type of a political voting system they wanted in their municipalities at the city level.

So as I talked with the people, as I went out to the local level, that was the other thing that I did mention to them. And it was again a limitation of democracy. And I looked at the other one; I remember, I said to myself, I was excited to come to the House and it . . . I was taught quite a bit about parliamentary democracy. And when I got elected, I came in here, you know, amidst the pomp and ceremony of coming into the House and so on.

(1645)

And we didn't last here too long, and I looked at that period, and I was saying, gee, I may have made some mistakes here on my first, you know, little short session, but it didn't really dawn on me that we'd be out for quite a while. And we stayed out for quite a while, Mr. Speaker, and we were out from October until June '87. And here I was so excited about coming to the legislature and taking

part in parliamentary democracy and learning about the rules, and I'm always still learning, Mr. Speaker, because I do still make mistakes from time to time and try to deal with the rules of the House, and I'm still learning as we go along.

But as I looked at it I saw again a limitation, you know, that governments can limit times of when the houses are open, when you can come in and so on, so I learned about that aspect of the limitation of going through our regular parliamentary debate by not calling the House a long period of time.

And the other thing I learned was when one of the PC members decided to resign that time on Eastview, and I looked back at that specific incident, and I thought that a by-election would be called relatively quick. But as we look back at that, it was a whole year before anything, you know, the democratic input of the people was ever allowed, you know . . . for democratic representation, I mean, Mr. Speaker, was allowed for the people of Eastview. It took about a year.

And then I saw another example of democratic input. And I was relating some of this information to the people as I was trying to myself make a decision on this bell-ringing. And I don't think when the Deputy Speaker was here, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that it was a very risky business, you know, for us to go out on the House in that regard. And we were very concerned, and we didn't want to stay out too long. But a lot of the people said, stay out, stay out, because this is a top-notch issue for us. It was an issue for the people of Saskatchewan, and that's the essential message that we did get out.

So I looked at some other aspects too. I look at the aspect of the tabling of *Public Accounts*. And *Public Accounts* are of course very important for us because we know where the money is being spent in the province of Saskatchewan. Moneys are being spent in education, in health, in economic development, in many other fields. And all of that is reported in *Public Accounts*.

And again, the tabling of *Public Accounts* during the Blakeney period was done on a very regular, systematic basis. And when I look at this particular example, I look at the PC government, and there was a two-year delay on *Public Accounts*. And then I looked at it, Mr. Speaker, and I said to myself, this is another aspect of restricting our parliamentary tradition that people cannot govern unless they have information, and the opposition cannot ask the important questions that people have unless there is a tabling of documents. The government knew that by withholding the information, information tends to have less impact, you know, the longer it is from the time that it happens.

So the other example that I'm giving here, Mr. Speaker, is as I related the bell-ringing to the people, I was talking out to the people, I said, well I saw this example of *Public Accounts* and not the tabling as a problem of democracy. I said, I've been . . . having tremendous experience in education, the same as you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a person who has been involved in the field, education and information is very important. And we know that in the school system, we know that in the universities, we know

that in this House, that information is extremely important. Unless we have information, no decisions can be made. Unless we have information, no proper debate can be made.

And when I look at the issue of participatory democracy in our system, I looked at that issue of that tabling of *Public Accounts* and I thought, my goodness, two years is way too long. There should be a regular tabling of *Public Accounts* so that we can improve our democratic process and our democratic information to the people of Saskatchewan.

**The Speaker:** — Order. The member for Morse.

**Mr. Martens:** — I'd like to ask leave to introduce some guests, please.

Leave granted.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Martens:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to introduce the Cabri Hospital Board seated in your gallery here today. They are in at the SHSP (Saskatchewan hospital services plan) office going through the tenders for their new integrated facilities down there, and I want to introduce them: Norm Johnson is the chairman of the board; Bill Bos, a member of the board; Mrs. Rose Kirkpatrick; and Dennis Penner is the administrator. And I'd like to have the members of the Assembly welcome them here and join with me in doing that. Thank you.

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

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### MOTIONS

#### *Amendments to Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly (continued)*

**Mr. Goulet:** — And well, Mr. Speaker, I was just talking about the important principle of participatory democracy, and also democracy that occurs here in the legislature, and how it is extremely important for us to get information. And that when we're debating the bell-ringing . . . and I looked at it and I was trying to get into the debate and trying to make up mind as to what to say, because there's always a certain amount of limitations in the debate, and I saw questions, you know, being raised about that process.

I tried to make my comments in an historical context during the period of the time that I did go out and interacted with the people on what a lot of people have come to recognize as participatory democracy. Because there was two aspects in our role here, Mr. Speaker, and that is the specific roles, you know, pertaining to the House and how they are interconnected and intertwine, and how they have an effect on the public. You know, the participatory aspect of democracy has to be linked, therefore, with the people.

And so rules are made in the House so that they are not just empty process, from my understanding, Mr. Speaker;

that they are made also to have a certain amount of substance surrounding them. There's always a certain amount of substance on to why certain rules are brought out. In other words, no rule is ever created without a substance, you know, surrounding that rule.

And it's in that context, Mr. Speaker, that I've raised these points of democratic limitations that I've given as examples, and the ones that I gave were the ones on Bill 5 and the limitations on the involvement of governmental debate and restructuring of government, which is a move to more an executive style of governing, and the aspect of not tabling the *Public Accounts* and having two-year delays on it; the fact that the ward system choice was not fully given to the municipalities during the last municipal elections; and the fact that the by-election on Eastview where they wanted democratic representation, you know, who had to wait for a full year. And when we look at it, the aspect of the legislature . . . And I learned a few little things as we come closer, in surrounding the bell-ringing even. I learned some new things about how the legislative process occurs.

I learned that in regards to the quorum, know that there had to be X number of people, you know, present. And as I look back at that, the members on the government side were caught, and it was sort of a little bit ironic, in a sense, Mr. Speaker, that the government said that they would come to the House and really debate the issue of privatization really hard before the bell-ringing session and right after the bell-ringing session. And I took that, you know, very straightforward to mean that they were very serious about debate.

And when I saw the situation developing, you know, I looked at the House Leader talking about, you know, the issue which is supposed to be very embarrassing for the government in that they didn't have sufficient quorum to debate the issues of the House. And I learned something again about democracy, Mr. Speaker, that democracy requires input by people and that the government side of the House who said that they were very, very intent on debating this privatization thing, all of a sudden didn't have the people in the House to debate it. And it happened again just recently where they didn't . . . we didn't even have enough quorum to debate another issue.

So when I look at the issue of legal procedures in the House and this procedure of bell-ringing, I tie it into my own short experience as a member of the House and my experience as I went out to listen to the people. People weren't as strong about the issue of the debate on the bell-ringing as you saw on the percentage of vote. It was 49 per cent saying we were okay to go ahead with the bell-ringing and 39 said we shouldn't go.

But I personally knew that it was still a touchy situation that, you know, we had to come back to the House and that we had to, you know, follow through with the parliamentary debate. But the thing that I learned from it, Mr. Speaker, is that when there is a real strong issue where the future of Saskatchewan is at stake, when the future of people's children are at stake, they want us to pressure, you know, a particular procedure a little bit longer than usual.

And I would say that as I look back, and I look back at that thing, and I come back and I saw the quorum, the government didn't even have a quorum when we come back. And I thought they would have a quorum, Mr. Speaker, to . . . You would think that they were really ready, hard to come and debate an issue, that they would be really serious to do that thing.

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

**Mr. Goulet:** — But, Mr. Speaker, they weren't really that serious, yes. And I looked at the previous speakers before me, you know, starting this bell-ringing debate, and the only people that I saw debating this thing are our side of the House. I saw the member from Moose Jaw get up and make one of the most . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Why aren't we debating debt restructure legislation, the Provincial Auditor's report? Why aren't we debating those things?

**Mr. Goulet:** — That's right.

**An Hon. Member:** — Jobs for northern Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Goulet:** — There are very many, many issues, Mr. Speaker, that the members raise that we should be debating in this House. But I've heard even on the bell-ringing session very important connection made by the member from Moose Jaw and the previous other speakers, you know, trying to deal with the other issue that we were talking about on the auditor question, you know, that came up this afternoon.

But, Mr. Speaker, I looked at the aspect of debate that's very important in regards to the auditor, and that was raised again this afternoon. And, Mr. Speaker, for me I saw this as a situation where there's a connection between, you know, the procedures of the House and the obligations of the people who function in our House to be able to have a situation where they are free to do these things. And I thought that was getting to be a little bit touchy in regards to, you know, an important function area as our auditor. You know, if I was in his shoes, I would feel, you know, I would feel very strongly that, you know, a strong minister, you know, would say something . . .

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

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.