

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure this morning to introduce to the members of the legislature and to you, the newly formed Premier's disabled persons advisory committee that has been now established in the province of Saskatchewan. And I want to introduce some of the members of that committee to you this morning. They're seated in the Speaker's gallery, and one of the members is seated on the floor behind the bar, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier's disabled persons advisory committee has been formally established to guide the government in its development of policies and programs which affect Saskatchewan people with disabilities. It was initiated by Rick Hansen, Mr. Speaker, and he has asked premiers across Canada to put together advisory committees. And I am happy to announce the members of our advisory committee here today.

So I will just briefly introduce them. There are 11 members in all, Mr. Speaker. I believe that six members are here today and I will introduce them and ask them to be warmly welcomed to the Assembly.

The first is Kirk Banadyga who is an architect with experience in design for accessibility for disabled persons; Mr. Doug Caswell, member of Handicapped Farmers' Association; Ruth Fiala, civic alderwoman, community organizer, past editor of community newspapers, and SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) representative; Dr. Jim McClements, chairperson, Integration '84, College of Physicians and Surgeons; Mr. Quinn Schafer, who is a 22-year-old disabled person from Saskatoon, and Quinn is sitting right here. Doreen Silcox, parent of a physically disabled person, and volunteer worker with disabled people.

There are five other members, Mr. Speaker, and I'll be making a brief ministerial statement after question period about that.

I would ask all members of the legislature to warmly welcome this very important advisory council to the province of Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to join the Premier in welcoming the members of the Premier's advisory body on the disabled. I'm sure that they will perform their task very diligently, Mr. Speaker. And it's our pleasure to join with the Premier in welcoming these distinguished guests to our Assembly this morning.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to the Assembly a group of 17 grade 8 students from Eatonia, Saskatchewan. They are sitting in the Speaker's gallery just above the folks that were just introduced. This particular tour is sponsored each year by the Eatonia Lions Club where the students are brought to Regina to tour various points of interest in Regina.

Accompanying the students is their teacher, Roxanne Lemire, along with the Lions members, Robby Bennett, Don Punter, and bus driver, Karen MacDonald. I would ask all to welcome this group of students from Eatonia. And also I would like to congratulate the Eatonia Lions Club for their community service that they undertake each year.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my real privilege to introduce to you, and through you to all members this morning, 40 students from the grades 3, 4, and 5 classes of King Edward School in Moose Jaw and in my constituency. I want to welcome these students to the legislature. They will be viewing question period and then touring the building, and then I look forward to meeting with them at about 11 o'clock.

Mr. Speaker, I'm particularly glad to welcome this group of students because they do come from King Edward, and King Edward was the school that I attended just a few short years ago.

Mr. Speaker, they are accompanied today by their teachers, Rhonda Meena and Bob Gusa, and they have adult chaperons, Faithe Daniels and Louise Chamberlain with them. I ask all members to welcome these students.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure that I introduce to you, sir, and to the members of the Assembly, some 20 grade 4 students from White City School. This is the second grade 4 class to attend the Assembly this session, and this week. And to the students, I did advise the Assembly the other day when the first class was in, about the tremendous interest and practical programming that White City has shown in the Far East, Asia, and particularly the People's Republic of China, one of the most imaginative programs in the school system in Saskatchewan, and for that they are to be commended.

They are accompanied by a teacher, Mrs. Debbie Bresciani; chaperons, Mrs. Judy Leier and Mrs. Barb Bender. I will ask my colleague, the Minister of Highways, to meet with the students after. I have a family matter to attend to, Mr. Speaker. And I would ask all hon. members to join with me in welcoming the White City students.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure this morning to introduce to

you, and to other members of the Assembly, some special visitors that we have from the state of North Dakota visiting with us, and they're seated in your gallery: the dean of the graduate school, Minot State University, Dr. Carol Sue Butts, and her children, Nathan and Jessica.

Along with touring the legislature this morning, they're also going to be visiting the Science Centre and taking in some of the festivities at the Mosaic. And I would ask all members to join with me in wishing our American visitors a very warm welcome this morning.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: — Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure for me to introduce to you, and through the members of the legislature, students from the Parkland Christian Academy from Canora. And, Mr. Speaker, they are a small group, but I know they are very dedicated and intelligent students, and I respect and have a very close working relationship with the pastor, Mr. Keith Eberhard, who is with the students today.

And I'm especially thrilled that they chose to come here today, and I have the opportunity to introduce them and later on to visit with them and have pictures and to have a little discussion. And I would certainly ask all members of the legislature to help me in welcoming them to the legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Problems with GigaText

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister in charge of SEDCO.

Madam Minister, yesterday you told us that the Deputy Premier would be here to answer questions that had been taken notice of, and I would ask you to be more accurate today in the answering of the questions we have for you than you were yesterday.

You informed the people of Saskatchewan through the press yesterday that Monsieur Montpetit retained sole signing authority for disbursements for GigaText until March of this year — March of 1989. Madam Minister, are you telling us that for six months after the Montreal lawsuit was launched, well after to the time Mr. Montpetit had testified about the questionable disbursements from the company, you still allowed him sole signing authority for GigaText?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, the opposition for the past two days have been questioning me on this matter. I think we're dealing with three issues, Mr. Speaker: one, will the system work; two, the opposition has made allegations of wrongdoing; and three, they have also made allegations of either proper or improper management.

With regard to the first one, will the system work — we

have made it clear, Mr. Speaker, that we have given the company to June 17 to demonstrate the technology does in fact work. We still do have a high degree of confidence that that technology will in fact work.

With regards to the allegations of wrongdoing, it was clearly stated, Mr. Speaker, that when we were apprised of the Montreal lawsuit on October 27, the whole matter of the \$4 million investment into GigaText was referred to the RCMP, and I understand that the RCMP will be wrapping up their investigation about mid-June.

With regards to whether or not there was proper management, Mr. Speaker, and the question from the member: in October when we were apprised of the lawsuit and the matter was referred to the RCMP, SEDCO put an employee . . . an employee of SEDCO was put into GigaText to monitor the day-to-day activities of that particular company.

The reason, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Guy Montpetit had sole signing authority is because SEDCO, at that point in time, did not have control of the company and therefore did not have signing authority, though we monitored from October 27 on. We monitored all payments made by the company; however, as of March 7, SEDCO was able to gain control of the company and thus gain control of signing authority.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Madam Speaker, new question to the same minister. The court case started in Montreal. You said at that time, because of a memo from Dr. Young that you turned it over to the RCMP, yet you still allowed for six months the individual in question from Montreal, Guy Montpetit, to be the sole signing authority for the company. That's shameful, Madam Minister, shameful.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Instead of providing us with a written answer that you're reading from on your desk, how about if you told us, during that period of time from March of 1988 until April of '89, when SEDCO finally got control of the company that they had lost complete control of. Can you tell us what disbursements, what expenditures were made under the signing authority of Mr. Montpetit?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, obviously the member does not listen. I clearly indicated to him that once the matter was referred to the RCMP for investigation here in our province, SEDCO put a person . . . an employee of SEDCO was put into GigaText to monitor and evaluate all payments. As of March 7 of this year, SEDCO gained control through the transfer of shares to SEDCO of the company, complete control. But from late October till March, all transactions were monitored and approved by SEDCO.

Further Payments to GigaText

Mr. Lautermilch: — My question is also to the minister of SEDCO. Madam Minister, you said in this House

yesterday that aside from the \$4 million, that your government had advanced a further \$500,000 to GigaText and that 1.25 million was on call to the company through a SEDCO mortgage.

Can you tell this Assembly how much of that extra money Mr. Montpetit stuffed into his pockets before you finally got smart and cut him off?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, from October to the present day, SEDCO is running the daily business of the company, paying the bills that have to be paid — I believe it's around \$50,000 a month. The majority of that money, Mr. Speaker, goes to the 22 or 24 young people that work at the company.

Mr. Lautermilch: — Another non-answer, Mr. Speaker. I have another question to the same minister. Madam Minister, in this House on Tuesday the Deputy Premier told us that your government referred the whole matter of GigaText to the RCMP, in his words, "in October or November". And he also said, and I want to quote to you, that:

the minute that this court action in Montreal, that we became aware of that, we moved to protect the investment of people of Saskatchewan.

Moved to protect the investment of Saskatchewan people? You gave a blank cheque to the Montreal business man for \$4 million. Six months after court action commenced you still allowed him to continue fleecing the people of this province. You not only continued to give him a blank cheque, you advanced him more money. Is there anyone on that side of the House that cares about the people of this province and the money that you're throwing at this guy?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, for all intents and purposes SEDCO had control of the company as of late October. We didn't have signing authority, Mr. Speaker, because SEDCO did not have control of the company at that point in time. However, I clearly indicated that at the end of October a SEDCO employee was put into GigaText to run the company, for all intents and purposes, and to monitor all payments and authorize all payments.

Loan Made to Ken Waschuk

Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the same minister about another very concerning aspect of this deal, the kind of information which makes people in Saskatchewan realize that your government can't manage public funds wisely or properly. Now according to the sworn testimony of Guy Montpetit, in December of 1988, and again in April of this year, one of the places where our \$4 million in taxpayers' money went is to a no-interest loan of \$150,000 paid to the Conservative Party's pollster, one Ken Waschuk — Ken Waschuk.

This loan was paid to Mr. Waschuk's Bermuda company,

Libra International Ltd. And according to Mr. Montpetit the loan was for favours Mr. Waschuk performed in getting GigaText set up, in opening the doors to the PC Government of Saskatchewan so that Montpetit could come in and get our \$4 million and get all the other things that he got.

Now, Madam Minister, when were you made aware that the PC Party's pollster, Ken Waschuk, had received a \$150,000 no-interest loan from taxpayers' money for helping Mr. Montpetit open the doors to the Government of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, the allegations of the member are not accurate. That payment that came . . .

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

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — That payment that came to light in the court in Montreal, which we read about in the Montreal *Gazette*, I might add, was not made by GigaText — was not made by GigaText at all. And he would have to ask Mr. Montpetit. That payment allegedly made to Mr. Waschuk was not made by GigaText and does not involve Saskatchewan taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Mitchell: — Madam Minister . . . a new question to the minister. Minister, that \$150,000 no-interest loan was made by Mr. Montpetit to Mr. Waschuk from money that he received from GigaText. There is just no question about that, and you know it, Minister. No question at all.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — Now in this House on Tuesday the Deputy Premier told us that your government . . . sorry, Minister. As I said, that money clearly came from Mr. Montpetit and there is simply no question that it came from the money that he received from GigaText, which is our \$4 million of taxpayer money.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — And I suggest, minister, that rather than reading *The (Montreal) Gazette*, you also read the transcript of the court proceedings that have taken place in Quebec. It's in French, but if you have somebody other than GigaText to translate it, you might have access to it before the change of government in 1990 or 1991.

Now in his testimony, Mr. Montpetit states that on a Regina golf course Mr. Waschuk approached him for a loan, and he decided that since Mr. Waschuk did him such great favours in getting the company going in Saskatchewan, he would oblige him. And I quote testimony given in April 28 of this year. Quote, this is the translation:

Because, after all, he (meaning Waschuk) had rendered us a good service. He had, after all, negotiated. It was he who had done the representations. He was, after all, my representative, or the one I used with respect to the Government of Saskatchewan.

Now, Madam Minister, Mr. Montpetit clearly understands what the loan was for. It was for payment for favours rendered.

Now do you have any problem understanding that, Minister, and do you have any quarrel with Mr. Montpetit's clear evidence in that regard?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, it was because of those very allegations of criminality that the matter in October was referred to the RCMP.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. I believe the member from Saskatoon Mayfair is asking the questions, and let's allow him to do so.

Mr. Mitchell: — A new question to the same minister. Minister, this is taxpayers' money that is going from our pockets into the pockets of the PC Party pollster. You can't get away from these questions by saying that the matter of criminality has been referred to the RCMP. That's interesting, and we're glad that happened, but that doesn't relieve you of responsibility to answer for your knowledge.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — Now, Minister, what was this valuable service Mr. Waschuk provided? Mr. Montpetit testified, and I quote: "He is not a member of the government; he is an individual; he knows the people in the government well, but he is not a guy from the government."

Now to the public that says only one thing: this is an individual who has influence with the government and who used his influence with the government to set up a deal for Mr. Montpetit, and in return he got this \$150,000 that I mentioned. Now surely you can see that clearly, Minister. Are you naive, and are you not prepared to stand in your place and admit that this transaction actually took place for that purpose.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, what the member from Saskatoon Fairview is alleging is criminality in this case. And that, Mr. Speaker, I will reiterate, is the very reason that it was turned over for a thorough investigation by the RCM Police in our province, and I understand that the RCMP report should be finished by mid-June.

Mr. Mitchell: — New question to the same minister. Minister, are you telling this House that it was that precise question of that payment to Mr. Waschuk that was referred to the RCMP?

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — That and many other questions, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Mitchell: — A new question to the same minister. Will the minister tell the House what other questions were referred to the RCMP?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, the allegations that the hon. member has just raised with regards to what I would say was influence peddling, that, along with all the other issues that came out and were emanating from the court action in Montreal, the entire operations with regards to the \$4 million investment was turned over by the Department of Justice to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The reference by the Department of Justice to the RCMP was to look into the entire operation alleged, and that's exactly what the RCMP, I'm advised, have done and are now in the process of doing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to refer a question also to the minister in charge of SEDCO, and I refer again to Mr. Montpetit's testimony when he discusses where the money paid by your government, through GigaText, for the purchase of the computers from his other company went.

In his testimony, Madam Minister, he takes the money through a series of companies that he owns until it ends up in Bermuda, company called Koyama, from which it goes directly into his bank account — all except \$150,000 which he testifies that went to Mr. Waschuk's Bermuda company, Lebra International Ltd.

What we have here is Mr. Waschuk setting up a deal for Mr. Montpetit with your government, then Montpetit using taxpayers' money, paid to himself for his own equipment, and handing the proceeds over to Waschuk for his service of influence peddling with this government. I ask you: how can you condone that type of activity with taxpayers' money?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises in his question the allegation of influence peddling by these two individuals. That is exactly why this matter was referred to the RCMP. And the entire issue was turned over to the RCMP. Now those are serious allegations of influence peddling. If that is in fact proven, Mr. Speaker, then proper action would be taken by the RCMP and charges would be laid, as they should be laid, Mr. Speaker. And that's the allegation by the hon. member. The investigation is ongoing at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, and it is in the hands of the RCMP, and it's been referred by the Government of Saskatchewan, Department of Justice.

Allegations of Influence Peddling

Mr. Koskie: — A new question to the minister in charge of SEDCO, in charge of GigaText, and I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, the gross negligence and the management of taxpayers' money is becoming evident as this case unfolds.

Here we have a man, Waschuk, who worked for the Tory party provincially and federally. In the last two years in the *Public Accounts*, we see that the government paid to this individual, Waschuk, almost \$250,000 for polling. This is a man who can walk into the doors of the Premier and into the Deputy Premier. He has influence. And for cash consideration this is what we have before this House. He used that influence to cut a deal with his friend, Montpetit, and his buddies on that side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — I want to ask you, Madam Minister, how much of this kind of behaviour are you prepared to countenance before you realize that this is not the legitimate way to carry on the business of representing the taxpayers of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I say to you the following, as I've answered in the two previous questions. The hon. member has raised the issue of influencing peddling by these two individuals, involved in influence peddling by these two individuals, and then says: what is the government's response to that, Mr. Speaker? When this matter came to our attention, the response of the government was to refer the entire question to the RCMP. Now it seems to me that is the proper response when there's allegations of criminality, whether it's in this case or in any other case, Mr. Speaker. That matter has been referred to the RCMP. The RCMP are still in the process of conducting that investigation.

Mr. Speaker, that, in my view, is the proper response of the government and of anybody else when there is allegations of criminality, allegations of influence peddling in this particular case.

Mr. Koskie: — A new question to whoever wants to answer it, including the Premier. I refer also to October 20, 1988 memo from Dr. Douglas Young in which he sets out his concerns over the way GigaText finances were being handled.

On a flight from Regina shortly before the deal was closed with your government, Mr. Montpetit and Dr. Young discussed the considerations which had to be made to certain unnamed people before the deal could go through. I say, Mr. Minister, we're talking about the management of taxpayers' dollars. It points directly to corruption in high places. And I say to you, is your government also under investigation for either its gross incompetence, or duplicity in this case?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Now the minister should be allowed to answer. He was having some difficulty last time, so I'm bringing it to your attention before he speaks.

Order, order.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — The hon. member in his questioning today has raised without question, questions of criminal wrongdoing against individuals, and other allegations. Now as I've indicated in my previous answers, when this matter came to the attention of the government, the entire question was referred to the RCMP for a full investigation. Now, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that is the proper course to take.

Now I've also indicated that that particular investigation has been ongoing for some period of time, from last fall until now. It is still ongoing at this point in time, Mr. Speaker. And I simply ask the question: what do we serve with regards to the question of criminality by discussing, or attempting to discuss in this House, the question of that particular investigation? The matter is in the hands of the RCMP.

An Hon. Member: — And your cover-up.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — And the member from Regina Elphinstone says it's a cover-up by the RCMP. I don't believe that, Mr. Speaker, that it's a cover-up. The matter has totally been referred to the RCMP; the RCMP are investigating it. That is the proper course of action to take. Once that investigation has been completed, the RCMP will recommend what their course of action is, or should be, following that, Mr. Speaker. I think it is only proper that we all wait for that investigation to be completed.

Mr. Koskie: — I have a further question to the Minister of Justice. As you have indicated, Mr. Minister, that there's an RCMP investigation, the potential of criminal investigation into the matter. That's one thing — you admitted that.

The other thing is the accountability of the taxpayers' money. That's the one that we are pursuing here. And what I want to know: when were you aware of all of the expenditures that were being made in respect by the French-Canadian business man from Quebec as the sole signing officer of this corporation when he initially started the operation? And did you concur with those outlandish expenditures and the pilfering off of taxpayers' money?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has raised in the question period today the allegation of influence peddling, and that's a serious allegation to make, and that has to be dealt with seriously.

The hon. member today, in her answer to the question, indicated that there were three questions involved here. One is the question: will the system or the process undertaken by GigaText to translate languages through computers work - _ will that work? And that has been mandated by SEDCO to the middle of June sometime to determine that.

There is a second question, Mr. Speaker, and that is the question of criminal wrongdoing that the hon. member raised today. And I indicated that that was referred to the RCMP back last fall when the allegations first came to surface with regards to that, Mr. Speaker. My involvement, and my understanding when I knew about

this, was when I heard about the matter raised in the media last fall in the Montreal media with regard to this question. That's when the matter was referred to the RCMP. I was not apprised, nor was I aware of the various issues that come out in *The (Montreal) Gazette* of what, a week and a half, two weeks ago.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Order.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Disabled Persons Advisory Committee

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a very brief statement with respect to the Disabled Persons Advisory Committee that I introduced this morning.

With the help of Mr. Rick Hansen in November of 1988, 37 groups concerned about the disabled developed a set of recommendations which were presented to cabinet members and to me. Today it was my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to announce the new advisory body, the Premier's Disabled Persons Advisory Committee, that has been formally established to guide the government as it develops policies and programs which affect Saskatchewan people with disabilities.

The mandate, Mr. Speaker, of this committee is to provide advice and sincere guidance and to identify issues, policies, programs and procedures which require additional research and analysis to meet the needs of disabled more effectively here in Saskatchewan, and frankly to make recommendations across Canada.

Committee members have been drawn from across the province from a variety of occupations and backgrounds. They will have first-hand experience with disabilities, either because they or a family member have a disability, or because they have been actively involved with individuals or groups associated with the disabled.

Although the committee will report directly to me, I have asked the Minister of Human Resources, Labour and Employment to assist in getting the initiative off the ground.

Together, we have named the following individuals to participate, and for the record, Mr. Speaker: Alvin Law is the chairman. Other committee members are Kirk Banadyga of Regina, Colette Bourgonje of Saskatoon, Doug Caswell of Wolseley, Ruth Fiala of Swift Current, Bob Livingston of Regina, Dr. Jim McClements of Saskatoon, Quinn Schafer of Saskatoon, Cindy Smith of Regina, Doreen Silcox of Regina, and Dave Wall of the city of Regina. Each member will serve for one year, Mr. Speaker, and their term may be renewed.

The government recognizes the capabilities of the disabled in Saskatchewan, and we're happy with the initiatives that we've taken recently to put people to work and back into the community. I feel very confident that the insights and, indeed, the guidance we receive from this committee will help make significant progress in that direction here in the province of Saskatchewan. Thank

you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, we welcome the formation of the advisory committee. In fact, it's long overdue, Mr. Speaker. And I guess our greatest concern will be to see what action the government takes on many of the very pressing issues that disabled people face.

Mr. Speaker, disabled people in this province have an unemployment rate of in excess of 50 per cent. That's intolerable. And we've seen this government do very little over the last few years in terms of affirmative action within government or within civic authorities, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that disabled people would receive employment and good-paying employment.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen that advocacy groups on behalf of the disabled in this province have received severe cut-backs. For instance, two years ago, the Voice of the Handicapped received a 37 per cent cut in their budget.

We've seen, Mr. Speaker, a government that has placed disabled people in poverty in this province, and an example is the welfare rates for the disabled. A disabled person, Mr. Speaker, at the maximum in this province — for clothing, household allowance, personal allowance, food allowance, everything other than rent, Mr. Speaker — receives a maximum of only \$225 a month. That's a government that has guaranteed that the poor who are disabled in this province live in bitter poverty, Mr. Speaker — in bitter poverty — and the government ought to be ashamed of that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — We've seen a government, Mr. Speaker, that has cut off the travel allowance to many partially disabled persons in this province, forcing them, Mr. Speaker, to . . . isolating them, in effect, by doing that, Mr. Speaker, and making it very difficult for them to get around their communities.

We've seen a government that has taken inadequate action with respect to assuring accessibility in public buildings in this province. Not even members of the legislature, when they open their constituency offices, Mr. Speaker, are required to open an office in an area that's accessible to handicapped persons.

Mr. Speaker, we've seen cuts in mental health services, to people with serious mental health problems in this province. We've seen disabled children, Mr. Speaker, in this province, in a situation where they . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I don't know if we're into the whole spectrum of this area, and I'm sure the hon. member knows that.

Mr. Prebble: — I will wrap up with this comment, Mr. Speaker. We have seen services to disabled children in rural Saskatchewan — speech therapists, occupational therapists — cut back so that children in dire need, and their families, aren't able to access those services.

These are the kind of issues, Mr. Speaker, that we hope that this committee will address. The urgency of addressing them and the urgency of the government taking action on them is great indeed, and we look forward to the recommendations that this committee will make. And we hope that those recommendations will be public, Mr. Premier. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 43 — An Act to amend The Highway Traffic Act

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Highway Traffic Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

The Speaker: — Order, order. I think the most important thing is that government and opposition members obey the rules right now. We're trying to get on to the next order of business, but there's a stream of heckling back and forth across the floor. And I would just like to ask the members to cease and desist. Order.

(1045)

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. Lyons: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again the priorities of this government are totally evident for the people of the province. It's more important for this government to deal with changing the rules of the legislature than it is to deal with the real problems that ordinary people, including disabled people, in this province feel.

Mr. Speaker, I say to you that the agenda of this legislature has turned into a document of hypocrisy, a document of hypocrisy and the sign of a failed government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — A hypocritical document, Mr. Speaker, a hypocritical agenda, a hypocritical government because it's not dealing, Mr. Speaker, it's not dealing with the realities that face the people of Saskatchewan. It is not dealing with the realities on a day-to-day basis that face everybody in this province.

What this government wants to do is ram through its own

political agenda so that it can carry on its maniacal, it's maniacal course to privatize the assets which belong to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker. And everybody on this side of the legislature, and now everybody in Saskatchewan, is saying shame, shame to that government that is more interested in its own narrow, partisan political purposes than it is in the real problems facing people in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we had an example here of a Premier setting up an advisory committee to supposedly deal with the problems facing people with handicaps in this province, who are physically handicapped and who have other handicaps which limit them, and some of the things that those of us who are . . . or don't have those limitations feel.

It seems to me that the work of this legislature would be much less hypocritical in terms of the agenda of the government if that government, Mr. Speaker, were to deal with the problems that those people face, rather than the problems that it faces because it has lost the confidence and the trust of the people of this province, and it's more interested in trying to ram through its own political agenda, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I have been on my feet in the past few days speaking on this issue, we've covered a number of different topics. First of all, we have dealt with the question of the constitutionality of bell-ringing that brought forward this motion to the House. Secondly, we've done an analysis of whether or not, not only was it constitutional, was it the duties of the members of this side of the House to engage in that operation.

Thirdly, we have dealt with the question of, is this Bill enhancing, strengthening, democracy. Pardon me, Mr. Speaker, it's not a Bill, it is a motion. It is a motion. Does this motion enhance and strengthen the democratic operations of this institution, or does it weaken it? And, Mr. Speaker, I think the only conclusion that has been drawn to that is that in fact it has been weakened.

And today, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with — before I get into the main part of my speech next week — I want to deal with some of the options that these members had in terms of the kind of legislative reform that could be coming before us, before this House; things which would have been agreed upon by all members of the House, as has been done in the past. And hopefully a little later on today, I'm going to get on into the question of what has happened in the past in this legislature when it comes to rule changes.

But I think for now, Mr. Speaker, what I want to say is that the government has options, even on the field of democratic legislative reform, which would have opened up this legislature to a much greater extent for the participation by citizens of Saskatchewan in the actual operation of the legislature, as opposed to what they are doing, which is trying to close the doors of this legislature, close in the political debate, to try to carry on their narrow, partisan, political interests behind closed cabinet doors. And when we see what that happens, Mr. Speaker, we see what that leads to in the Gigagate scandal that's emerging before the people of this province.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to take some little time outlining to you what our party and those on this side of the House see as what constitutes real democratic legislative reform, as opposed to the kind of authoritarian, undemocratic legislative reform that this government is trying to drive through in order to carry through the privatization of SaskPower and the potash corporation and SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) and the electrical side, which will end up coming up, as they already have partly done already, is privatize the electrical side of SaskPower.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to outline to you a document which was presented by members of our caucus in April of 1987, a scant two years and two months ago, which proposed an alternative to what this government is doing, which proposed what we consider a step forward, as opposed to a step back in opening up this legislature. And the name of the document is *A Legislature for the Future, Proposals for Reform*. Not proposals to close in the legislature, or try to limit debate, or try to stop the participation of citizens in the actual operation of this legislature, but proposals for reform that would open that legislature up.

And, Mr. Speaker, this document was based on four principles, and each of those principles led to a number of conclusions. And I want you, Mr. Speaker, as I go through them, to contrast the proposals that our party put forward to this legislature as an alternative to what this government is presently doing.

Let's weigh them in the balance, Mr. Speaker, here in the forum of public scrutiny, and then I will ask the question and have hopefully members on the side, when in fact they get their turn to participate in this debate, of who stands on the side of real democratic reform, and who in fact kneel before the jackboots of authoritarianism, spitting and polishing them up in order to cut off public participation in their affairs.

And, Mr. Speaker, the first principle enunciated in our document was to make the legislature more accessible to the public. That was the first thing. We believe, contrary to what this motion does, that we want to enhance the accessibility of this institution to the people of this province. And we say so and do so, Mr. Speaker, on the understanding that, unlike the days of medieval England in which learned . . . the quote was, those knights of the shire and able burgesses were drawn together and those of able and discreet character were drawn together, in order to make decisions.

We think that things have changed somewhat since this institution was established, and that there must be reform because of just the very nature of the world that we live in. One of the things that has changed is in fact the accessibility. Unlike taking 20 days to ride from the north of England down to Westminster or Reading or where the parliament was being held, or if we want to say from the north of Saskatchewan to Regina in which in the '20s and '30s it was almost a major undertaking of trek proportions or an odyssey to come down from northern Saskatchewan to Regina; now with the accessibility of air transport, we are able to have people from northern

Saskatchewan come to Regina, not just the members of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, but all people in northern Saskatchewan, because that modern form of transportation can be, and should be, available to all. So we can have that kind of accessibility.

And what we're proposing, Mr. Speaker, in regards to that accessibility, is this. First of all, we believe, Mr. Speaker, that the special . . . in order to help make the legislature more accessible to the public, we want to open up the legislature to public hearings, and that special legislative committees be appointed to study rule changes.

The very, very first thing . . . item on this agenda, Mr. Speaker, is this: that we want to establish a special legislative committee to study rule changes, hold public hearings throughout the province of Saskatchewan, not being stuck here in Regina, not being ensconced and hidden away under the dome in the marble palace. But we want to take this committee out around the province so that the people themselves can have input and direct input as to what they see is necessary to change the rules of this legislature so that more public accessibility is made available to them.

You contrast that, Mr. Speaker, you contrast that very first recommendation of a whole series of recommendations to what the motion this government is proposing, and I ask you, sir, and I ask everybody in this province who is watching here today, which is more democratic, a government which tries to ram through a rule change in order to carry out its political agenda, or a proposal which would set up a committee to travel the province to allow people to say themselves how they want this legislature to function in order to make it accessible to them? Because after all, it is their legislature, it's not ours.

You, Mr. Speaker, pose that question: which is more democratic in terms of legislative reform. I say, and I submit, and I know the members on this side of the House say that our proposal to allow the people of this province to determine what legislative changes are necessary, to determine what kind of accessibility they want, is much more democratic — in fact is democratic, as opposed to the anti-democratic and authoritarian and arrogant, contemptuously arrogant, actions of this government to try to ram this rule change through the legislature of the province of Saskatchewan.

Because it goes on to say that it's set out to collect ideas on how to improve the workings of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, those of us on this side of the legislature say this place needs to be improved in its workings. This place needs to be improved in its workings. I don't think, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, that there's anybody in this House, given the very nature of this debate that stands before us, that would not agree to that particular proposition.

Now the second specific proposal, Mr. Speaker, we have in regards to making the legislature more accessible to the public is this. We want province-wide television coverage of the proceedings, province-wide television coverage of the proceedings, Mr. Speaker. Right now we find ourselves in the situation in Saskatchewan where television coverage is available to some and is not

available to others.

Now I know some members of the Legislative Assembly are uncomfortable first of all with the very notion of television coverage at all, and that's understandable. But it seems to now have become, throughout Canada and throughout other areas of the British Commonwealth, an acceptable practice in houses of parliament and in legislatures that in fact television coverage be provided so that the citizens of the country can actually see what is going on in their Legislative Chamber.

And given the changes from medieval England to modern day Saskatchewan, in terms of the enhancement of the ability to communicate what constitutes the issues of the day, we think, Mr. Speaker, that it is only a fair and just thing that all citizens — all citizens — have the right to view the proceedings of this Legislative Chamber and its committees, I may say. Right now we have a situation which is discriminatory. Quite frankly, some citizens are granted access; other citizens are denied access, based on their place of location.

(1100)

Now, Mr. Speaker, we argue that this television coverage must be expanded throughout Saskatchewan, and we have the technology here in this province to enable us to do so through the fibre optics. The Minister of Education takes great delight in talking about distance education. Well, Mr. Speaker, I say this, that our proposal, compared to what's before us today, can form an integral part of the democratic educational system in this province, where the citizens of this province are educated as to what the nature of the issues are and where the political parties stand on those issues.

You contrast, Mr. Speaker, that second specific proposal, which is to expand television coverage so that we end discrimination in Saskatchewan, with this motion before us, which limits public participation in the governance of the daily affairs of the province of Saskatchewan.

And I may say, Mr. Speaker, you take this proposal, this specific proposal to expand television coverage province-wide, with what was passed at the annual policy convention of the Progressive Conservative Party in Swift Current, and what did they say, Mr. Speaker? What did the Tories say about television coverage? They passed a resolution saying, phase out television. They passed a resolution saying that the people of this province should not see what's going on in the legislature.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if I was sitting on that side of the House looking at what's been happening lately — one scandal after another, one Tory after another getting accused of fraud, going before court, having the jail door slammed behind them — I too may not want television coverage in the province of Saskatchewan.

But that is the short-sighted view, Mr. Speaker. That's the short-sighted view. Because, Mr. Speaker, when this side of the House changes to that side of the House, I'm sure that the Tories who survive the next electoral onslaught which faces them will want to have their day before the court of public opinion. And the best way, in terms of

modern technology, to provide that day in court, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, is not to, as the Tory party wants to do, phase out television coverage, but in fact expand television coverage.

Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that this rule motion before us which limits democratic debate, limits the ability for people to participate, is in the same mode, the same authoritarian, arrogant mode of the Tory policy convention resolution, which was to phase out television coverage.

Now I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that the Conservative Party has very good reasons for wanting to phase out television coverage — very good, narrow, partisan, political . . . partisan reasons — but it doesn't serve the interests of democracy in this province. It doesn't serve the right of individual citizens in this province to be able to see what is going on, to understand what the issues are. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, our party supports that, and put this forward in this document of April 1987.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Legislative Assembly's proceedings have been televised in Saskatchewan since 1983, but the broadcasts are currently available in only eight Saskatchewan communities. Well, Mr. Speaker, you know and I know that there are many, many more communities in Saskatchewan than these eight. And I say that it's discriminatory, and that this government has the ability to expand, has the ability to expand the democratic process into each and every living-room and den and study in the province of Saskatchewan if they had the will.

Because, Mr. Speaker, what we're talking about is a whole new generation of political participation by citizenry on a world scale. And the role that television plays, that particular medium, well outlined by Marshall McLuhan in his world famous book — and Marshall McLuhan being a great Canadian scholar, and the book, *The Medium is the Massage*, or is the mass age, depending on how you read it — talked about precisely how the expansion of democracy can take place in terms of developing the global village. In fact, it was in that book, the term "global village."

Well, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that we could have a global province, or that concept, that notion that each of us are all connected through the fibre optic system here in Saskatchewan, and can, in fact, develop ways of political communication through the box, as it's called. Instead of being, Mr. Speaker, I suggest instead of being a mechanism of alienation, Mr. Speaker, it can be a mechanism for participation. Television on a provincial scale, a provincial television political network in which the issues are well laid out before the people of the province can do nothing except serve the people of the province and serve the whole strengthening and the concept of democracy.

Mr. Speaker, in our document we outlined with the following words:

The public has a right to know what their elected representatives are doing on their behalf. To make that right meaningful in the television age requires

making the Assembly's proceedings available for broadcast.

So that's why, Mr. Speaker, in contrast to what the Tory party wants to do, which is to shut down television coverage, we want it expanded.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the third specific proposal relating to our principle of making the legislature more accessible to the public is this: we want television coverage of legislative committees as well. Remember, Mr. Speaker, this is in April of nineteen hundred and eighty-seven. We want:

That all meetings of Saskatchewan legislature's two key committees, the Crown Corporations and Public Accounts committees, be held in the Legislative Assembly to allow television coverage of their proceedings.

Mr. Speaker, you contrast that notion of opening up this legislature to the motion that's before us, and once again I would say, sir, that this specific proposal to broadcast the proceedings of the legislative committee, including the Public Accounts Committee and the Crown Corporations Committee, you contrast that with what this government is doing, trying to limit and muzzle the opposition through this motion which would end bell-ringing, and I ask you, sir, once again: which is the most democratic option for the people of Saskatchewan?

One is the democratic option, I would submit, Mr. Speaker, and the other is the anti-democratic option. The one which is democratic is the coverage of the Public Accounts Committee.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we had here, in the last several weeks in this province, a fairly major debate as to the activities of the auditor. And certain charges were laid against the auditor and certain things were done in regards to the auditor, and we had an auditor's special report presented to this legislature to put forward his side of the proceedings.

Yesterday in the Public Accounts Committee, in following along with our proposal, our proposal for reform of this legislature, I moved a motion saying that the question of the auditor's public accounts for 1987-1988 be dealt with in this Legislative Assembly so that television and the people of this province, through television, would be able to see precisely what the auditor was charged with, and that the auditor would have the right to defend himself in this Legislative Chamber.

But what happened, Mr. Speaker? What happened? What did the Conservative members of the Public Accounts Committee do to that motion? They voted against it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously if they want to reform, it seems to me — and they try to talk about defending democracy — those members of the Public Accounts Committee who want to hide what happened to the Provincial Auditor in room 10 in the basement of this legislature, as opposed to bringing out into the public notion in the eight communities presently served by

television, I ask you, who then passed the democratic test in this matter?

Is it those members of the Public Accounts Committee who voted against having television so that the auditor can defend himself, or is it our side of the House, Mr. Speaker, which says, no, this should be a normal, everyday occurrence in the legislature when the Public Accounts or Crown Corporations Committee meet? — that these be televised so that the people of the province, those who are interested and those who have the time, and those who have the ability, and those who have the general interest, I guess, have the right to be able to see how the taxpayers' money of the province of Saskatchewan is spent in a very meaningful way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — And that they understand what the issues that take place in those committees, they understand precisely the nature of those issues.

Mr. Speaker, why we ask that it be moved to the Legislative Chamber, as we did yesterday, is the high cost of outfitting committee rooms with television equipment. That was the . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I've allowed very far-ranging debate, but I don't see the relevance of the Public Accounts Committee to the motion that's before the House, and I would ask the member to make his remarks back on the motion that's before us now.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. I'm dealing with the question of legislative reform. One of the reforms that we want, unlike the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan, given that this motion deals with the question of legislative reform, is of course the question of television coverage.

An Hon. Member: — Roy Romanow and his radical. Hey Roy, can't you control him?

Mr. Lyons: — Once again, Mr. Speaker, once again the member from Cut Knife-Lloyd is chirping away from his seat, right. He was one of those members who voted against having televised proceedings of the Public Accounts Committee, against the democratic right of the citizens of this province to see what's going on.

Seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that this motion before us, this motion which would limit the democratic right, this motion, rule 33(1), that would limit the democratic right of the citizens of the province to participate, stands in stark contrast to our attempts to democratize this legislature for the citizens of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And I guarantee, Mr. Speaker, I guarantee that when we form the next government in this province, those members will have the right to have their viewpoint — even though it will be a grossly, grossly minority viewpoint — they will have their right to have their viewpoint expressed through television, because that's the kind of democratic reform, as opposed to this kind of undemocratic, undemocratic jackbooting that faces us here in this legislature.

Mr. Speaker, that's the third — the television coverage of the legislative committees — the third legislative reform that we're talking about as compared to the Progressive Conservative notions, the authoritarian, Progressive Conservative . . .

Now, Mr. Speaker, the fourth, the fourth motion that we would put forward, the fourth proposal that we put forward on this is province-wide radio coverage of proceedings. Now we went through, Mr. Speaker, we went through yesterday a fair bit of debate — five and a half hours — in pointing out that this motion before us limits the right of, and limits the ability of citizens to participate. And I don't think there's any argument by anybody — at least there hasn't been — by anybody in this Legislative Assembly that that's what it does. The intent is clear; the intent of this motion is to limit the democratic participation.

You contrast this motion, Mr. Speaker, you contrast this motion with our proposal to have province-wide coverage of the proceedings of the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask you to bring the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster and Melville to order. And I thank you.

(1115)

Mr. Speaker, the proposal for province-wide coverage of the proceedings, radio coverage, so that those farmers, when we're sitting here in the legislature and during seeding time and they're driving their tractors and they've got their radios on, they can take part in the debate as well, through understanding the positions of both sides of the legislature.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it used to be in Saskatchewan that there was province-wide radio proceedings. But who cut it? Who cut it? Here we had an effective tool of communications which allow citizens to educate themselves as to the political issues of the day, but who cut it? Was it the members of this side of the House, Mr. Speaker? No, Mr. Speaker, it was the members on that side. It was the members of the Progressive Conservative side of the House who cut radio proceedings, radio coverage of the proceedings of this House.

And why, Mr. Speaker? And why? Because they're afraid to put their arguments, they're afraid to put their arguments — including their arguments on this motion — before the people of Saskatchewan. So what did they do? Instead of enhancing the accessibility of the citizenry to the proceedings which go on in this Legislative Assembly, they cut it. They cut it. That's the record, Mr. Speaker.

And this motion fits in with the same kind of authoritarian, know-it-all, contemptuous attitude that members of the Progressive Conservative Party are becoming well known for in this province — well known for, Mr. Speaker. We already read last night into the record the comments of the Swift Current *Sun*, talked about the . . . and I quote, the Devine government contempt . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. The member is not allowed to use other members' name, and the member

was not quoting from anything. So I would ask the member to refrain from using member's names in the legislature.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I didn't have a piece of paper. I was quoting from memory. I will quote now from the May 29 Swift Current *Sun*. The headline in the Swift Current *Sun* is, as we outlined last night, "Devine government shows its contempt." I'm not going to go into a long dissertation on that. The contempt that this Swift Current *Sun* is what we were talking about is the kind of contempt that this government shows in its know-it-all attitude that it knows best, and that the citizens should be kept like mushrooms — fed the kind of Tory fertilizer that we know, and kept in the dark.

Mr. Speaker, that's not political rhetoric. The actions of this Progressive Conservative government in cutting radio coverage — province-wide radio coverage — fits perfectly in the spirit of this motion; that is, to deny access to what is really happening in this province. Mr. Speaker, that's the fourth for a specific proposal in regards to providing public access.

The fifth proposal that we have, Mr. Speaker, the fifth proposal we have, and I know that the Conservative members opposite are really going to shudder at this, given the nature of the public delegations that their SaskPower road show saw in the last little while, is that we're proposing, as a method of public access to the legislature, that there be a public delegations period, that the Legislative Assembly introduce a weekly public delegations period where members of the general public could come before the Assembly, present their views on matters of concern to them, put questions to cabinet ministers and answer any questions from any of the MLAs here in this Legislative Assembly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you take that proposal, where we allow . . . would, as a group, decide to have the citizens of this province come before the floor of the Legislative Assembly to plead their case, to plead their case on whatever manner, in whatever manner and whatever issue that affected them. You take this proposal and contrast it to the motion that's before the Assembly. Which is democratic, Mr. Speaker? Which is the democratic proposal? The one to allow the citizens of Saskatchewan to present their own case on the floor of this legislature, or the ones which would deny the citizens of Saskatchewan, as this motion does, the right to accessibility to the political process.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that this motion is undemocratic that we are debating, and you can contrast that with our proposal for a public delegation. Again, Mr. Speaker, this was proposed April 1987, long before the bell-ringing episode happened. We were talking about legislative reform, real legislative reform, not the kind of authoritarian backtracking on democracy that has been engaged in by that government. They're not interested. They're not interested in allowing the citizens to participate.

Well, Mr. Speaker, next week I will get into the precise reasons of why this motion is here in order to keep citizens from participating, and the reasons why this

government is afraid of its own citizenry, and what are the political ramifications for that. I'll get into that next week.

Now as I said, Mr. Speaker, in the public delegations proposal, what we want to do is have citizens come to the legislature to put questions to cabinet ministers; to make it accessible, Mr. Speaker; to put questions to cabinet ministers; to have cabinet ministers responsible to the people of this province, unlike the present situation where they're not responsible to anybody but the Premier.

An Hon. Member: — They wouldn't be impressed with the answers we're getting.

Mr. Lyons: — Now, Mr. Speaker, we all know that, as my friend and colleague from Saskatoon Eastview says, they would not be impressed with the answers they're getting these days. But fair enough. It may happen that . . . when even on the government side.

Think about the future a little bit, Mr. Speaker. Think about the future. Think a little farther along than the next election or trying to win the next election. Think about what happens, Mr. Speaker. Those members had better do it, those members had better think about it, because maybe when they're sitting in opposition they would like to see public delegations come before this legislature and question cabinet ministers, if there are any members of the government that survives the next electoral onslaught.

Mr. Speaker, now citizens presently have that right, but only through written petitions filed by an MLA. Saskatchewan people, we believe, should have the right to speak directly, directly to their representatives from the floor of this Assembly.

Now it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that that is a much more democratic type of activity that this government could be putting forward than the present motion that would limit bell-ringing, and I'm sure you would agree to that, sir.

Mr. Speaker, our sixth proposal to open this legislature to the people of the province, to allow the access, is to set up a legislative intern program. Mr. Speaker, we want people in Saskatchewan to understand how the whole process of political decision making and of government operation takes place. We feel that it's important for the self governance of themselves as citizens that they understand that there are rules, regulations, techniques, and principles in order to guide themselves in the conduct of their affairs. Some of them are applicable, some of them the people learn in activities in their own organizations through trade unions or through service organizations or through their churches, or through whatever organizations that they're involved in on a day-to-day basis.

But there are other forms and techniques that they can learn, and we think it's particularly appropriate for young people in this province to be able to do that. So we're proposing a legislative internship program, and that this legislature work with Saskatchewan universities, and with Saskatchewan technical schools, the development of an internship program which would allow young people to train while they're working here at the

legislature.

Mr. Speaker, that's not a particularly radical proposal because it's presently in place in the operation of the federal government in Ottawa. It's part of the function of the Ontario legislature, where the Ontario legislature has its own internship program. And we think, Mr. Speaker, that it's particularly appropriate, given the high level of politicization in this province, and given young people's activity in politics from a relatively early age, that we provide the opportunity for those people to delve more deeply into the subject of how the legislature and how the institutions of democracy function, and that they work directly with elected representatives. Now, Mr. Speaker, you know in Ontario that they work with the directly . . . representatives from both sides of the legislature, some from the government and some from the opposition, and we would propose that that be done here in Saskatchewan.

And you contrast this proposal for legislative reform, Mr. Speaker, with the motion that's presently before us, and once again I ask you: what does more to help the people of this province to participate in the governance of their affairs — our proposal for an internship program, a leadership internship program, or this proposal?

I think the answer to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, as it is to yourself, I know yourself and to members of the opposition, that that obviously is . . . the answer to that is obvious.

Mr. Speaker, that's the specific proposals for allowing accessibility to the legislature: public hearings, province-wide television covering of proceedings, television coverage of legislative committees, province-wide radio coverage of proceedings, public delegations period, legislative internship program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — All, Mr. Speaker, of which, I think, and the members of this side of the House think, are good ideas that would help to serve and strengthen the foundations and functionings of not just this institution but of the democratic processes and the development of those democratic processes throughout the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the second principle, and again I repeat that we enunciated it of April 1987, was making the legislature not only more accessible to the public of Saskatchewan, but also of making the legislature more accountable to the public of Saskatchewan. And we came forward with a series of specific recommendations at that point in time, in 1987, to try to do that, to make the legislature more accountable to the public.

And the first specific proposal that we put forward in making the legislature more accountable to the public was to lengthen the oral question period.

Now, Mr. Speaker, do we find that proposal here in this motion before us today to allow members of the legislature to grill the front benches, to ask questions of the cabinet, to make the executive branch of government more accountable to, not only this legislature, but all the

people in the province through the lengthening of the oral question period? No, Mr. Speaker, we don't find that proposal in this motion. What we find is a motion which would limit — attempt to limit — public discussion of the issues.

An Hon. Member: — They backed away from it.

Mr. Lyons: — What happened, Mr. Speaker? My friend says they backed away from that whole notion. They don't want to lengthen oral question period.

So what do we propose, Mr. Speaker? In April of '87 we proposed that the oral question period be lengthened to 45 minutes per day from its present length of time of 25 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, oral question period — and I want to say this for the people who may be watching this on television today — oral question period is one of the four ways that private members can ask the government in the public forum about its plans or performance with respect to specific issues. You know, Mr. Speaker, there are not many opportunities for private members of the opposition, but I dare say private members that occupy the back benches of the government side of the House — there are not that many opportunities to ask them in a public way to account for their activities.

We want to be able to enhance that opportunity, Mr. Speaker, through lengthening the oral question period to 45 minutes per day. And the reason we put it at 45 minutes per day, Mr. Speaker, is that Saskatchewan has one of the shortest oral question periods in Canada of 25 minutes per day. And we think that, given the complexity of issues, given the . . . for example, we saw today in question period the ministers are trying to outline the government's case regarding Gigagate, and the members on this side of the House are trying to outline their position.

(1130)

That the proposal . . . it seems to me that it benefits all members of the House to take a serious look at this proposal, which is to lengthen the oral question periods to 45 minutes a day. Because it allows for the further development of issues, Mr. Speaker, and hence it allows for the further edification of the public in education as to what constitutes a specific issue.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, it provides a method to bring out the truth. And anything, I submit, Mr. Speaker, that allows the truth to be brought to full light through the proceedings of this legislature is a good thing, not a bad thing.

And I would, Mr. Speaker, very much support a motion like that. Because, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan ranks second to last in its length of oral question period. Only British Columbia has a shorter oral question period. That, Mr. Speaker, is the first proposal that we put forward to make the legislature more accountable to the public.

Second, Mr. Speaker, is to improve the public control of Crown corporations. Now does this motion before us, Mr.

Speaker, enable the people of Saskatchewan to make Crown corporations more accountable to the people of the province? On the political level, Mr. Speaker, on the political level, I would submit that in fact it does the exact opposite; that the result of the passage of this motion — not that it is ever going to pass; not that it's ever going to get through this House — but that the intent of this motion is to make Crown corporations less accountable to the people of Saskatchewan.

And I say so, Mr. Speaker, by way of this reasoning: that if this motion goes through, we're going to see the sell-off into foreign hands, into hands outside Saskatchewan, into hands of the American multinationals or the Japanese multinationals, of our assets of SaskPower, Sask Government Insurance, SaskTel, and so on and so forth.

So far from making, Mr. Speaker, the activities of the public corporations of this province more accountable, it makes it less accountable because the result of this motion will be to move control of those public corporations into the hands of others.

You take, Mr. Speaker, this motion and contrast it to when our proposal was put forward in April 1987. The specific nature of our proposal was that the Crown corporations of the committee of the legislature be given the same powers as the Assembly's Committee of Finance, including the power to approve all proposed spending in advance.

What happens, Mr. Speaker — let me explain that; the nature of that proposal — is that what we are saying is that to make Crown corporations more accountable to the public is to take the spending and the financial activities out of the hands of the technocrats that run those Crown corporations, supposedly for the benefit of all people in Saskatchewan, take that power from them, put it in the hands of the directly elected representatives of the people of Saskatchewan by opening the legislature and allowing the people themselves into those committees where they make proposals, they can make suggestions, and they can come forward with ideas on what those Crown corporations should be doing. That's accountability; that's democracy, Mr. Speaker.

And I ask you, sir, to think seriously, which is the more democratic way of proceeding for this legislature, to limit bell-rings, or to make the Crown corporations accountable to the people of Saskatchewan?

It's obvious — the answer is obvious to anybody, any person of any kind of fair and right-thinking, and with the modicum of justice in terms of their character that you know very well, Mr. Speaker, that there is a need to make Crown corporations more accountable. Nobody denies that. Isn't that what we should be doing, as opposed to debating this particular motion which would in fact take away the public accountability of Crown corporations as its ultimate end.

Further, Mr. Speaker, we proposed in April of 1987 that all Crown corporations be required to submit their expenditures to the Public Accounts Committee of the legislature for review, once again taking out of the hands of the private sector auditors and the technocrats in the Crown corporation, taking their spending habits out of

that particular forum and placing it in open public scrutiny so that the people of this province, through the Public Accounts Committee, which link to our proposal that I talked about earlier, which would be hold open televised hearings so that the spending of the Crown corporations would be subject to public scrutiny and public comment in a very meaningful way.

You take that aspect of this second proposal, Mr. Speaker, and put it up against what this government is proposing, and I say to you that the people of Saskatchewan know who the real democrats are when it comes to promoting public accountability, particularly in the Crown corporation sector of this province.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, that Crown corporations have expanded sharply in recent years. And I want to read, Mr. Speaker, this sentence from this document produced in April of 1987, because it tends to be somewhat of a prophetic statement: "Crown corporations have expanded sharply in recent years, yet their public accountability has been steadily eroded." Mr. Speaker, isn't that what the Provincial Auditor said in the auditor's report, that his ability to . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I do not believe the question on Crown corporations or public accounts has anything to do with the rule before this House on bell-ringing, and I would ask the member to address the rule . . . the motion before this House on the bell-ringing question.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you. Regina North East, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm not arguing with your ruling, I would simply like, because of the importance of this debate, and as I was listening to the member opposite, I heard him make a relevant connection to the issue that is being debated here in that motion, and I would appreciate it, in order that we could understand clearly what your ruling is, if you would indicate some reference in the rules that are before us which would support the ruling that you're making, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because simply stating it does not help.

The Deputy Speaker: — I believe the member from Regina North East is quite aware of the rule which speaks about being relevant in your speaking to a motion. And the debate on public accounts and Crown corporations isn't directly relevant to the rules and the bell-ringing which is before this House.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. We're dealing with the proposal, Mr. Speaker, that the government's putting forward in order to muzzle the opposition, as opposed to the proposals in counterpoise with that, the proposals made by our side in dealing with the Public Accounts Committee and how it should be dealt with, and that is to make it more accessible to the people of the province.

Mr. Speaker, you know, it is a long and established tradition of the Progressive Conservative Party to try to trample on the democratic rights of the people — it doesn't matter of Saskatchewan or British Columbia or England.

And let me say, Mr. Speaker, that the question that, it seems to me, of relevance in regards to our proposals that we put forward of April of 1987, stands in a much higher light in the eyes of the public, given the events of the past two weeks in this legislature, including those of the Provincial Auditor and of the Crown Corporations Committee. Because, Mr. Speaker, as I have said, Crown corporations have expanded sharply in recent years, yet their public accountability has been steadily eroded.

Now I don't know if anybody can deny that fact. Here in April of 1987, in proposing legislative reform, putting forward a suggestion to this House that the rules be changed in this manner, we said that there was a loss of accountability to the public, a loss of financial accountability, steadily eroded. And so what's happening?

Crown corporations today spend nearly as much as government departments, yet unlike government departments, their spending plans are not submitted for public examination in advance. Mr. Speaker, we think that that should be done, and we will ask why hasn't the government put forward that rule change compared to what it's dealing with.

Their spending performance after the fact is subject to only the most cursory of reviews. Public scrutiny of this important sector must be improved.

Mr. Speaker, let me say this, that this bell-ringing and the reason that this motion is before the House is precisely because of the totally out-of-control plans that this government has involved in the public spending of Crown corporation assets and of Crown corporation's money, in particular SaskPower, because this government intends to use those assets of the people of the province to line the pockets of their friends the same way the Tory party did with Ken Waschuk in Gigagate, Mr. Speaker. That's why we need public accountability in the Crown corporation sector.

We have another Crown corporation now, Mr. Speaker, another corporation in the public sector, called GigaText, and it's in the public sector, Mr. Speaker, precisely because of the kind of corrupt machinations that Tories are well-known engaged in, Mr. Speaker. That's why we need accountability. That's what the government should be dealing with now, Mr. Speaker, instead of this motion which limits accountability.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that is what is relevant to the people of this province. Where is their money going? Why isn't there accountability in the Crown corporation sector? Why has this government steadily eroded, steadily eroded, so where even the Provincial Auditor takes the government to task? Why isn't that the motion before us instead of this motion which would limit accountability, Mr. Speaker? That's what the people of this province want to know in dealing with that. We, Mr. Speaker, we think that this question of accountability is more than relevant, and that's why we put it forward in 1987.

Public review of certain cabinet appointments, Mr.

Speaker, our third specific proposal, our third proposal in that regard, relates to the public review of certain cabinet appointments. And we think, Mr. Speaker, that a standing committee of the legislature be empowered to review major order in council appointments. It seems to be a reasonable suggestion. It seems to be a reasonable suggestion, right, made up by members of both sides of the House, where a person who is appointed by order in council for certain levels of appointment be brought forward, first of all, so that their competency could be questioned.

You contrast that proposal with what's before us, Mr. Speaker, and ask yourself this: which is the democratic proposal? And I speak, Mr. Speaker, particularly of an appointment to the head of the Sask Power Corporation which this government wants to privatize, Mr. George Hill. And does this legislature have the accountability in the appointment of Mr. Hill and those other Tory hacks, which erodes the accountability of this legislature and the accountability to the people of this province?

You take that motion, Mr. Speaker, and contrast it with the motion that's before us, and I say there is no doubt in anybody's mind that those of us on this side of the House have been pressing for democratic reform in this legislature, unlike the authoritarian jackboot mentality which is leading to this muzzling of the opposition.

Mr. Speaker, the facts speak for themselves. Mr. Speaker, the public has grown weary of political patronage and suggestions of favouritism and cronyisms in government jobs. Nobody wants that.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member has been allowed a lot of latitude. And the debate before the Assembly is on the motion of rule 33(1), and the member is bringing other debates into the debate. He can debate the rule change, but to bring in debate that's going on in other committees or other debates that are going on in the legislature is not relevant. So I would ask the member to keep his remarks — order — I'd ask the member to keep his remarks to the motion before the House.

(1145)

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much for your ruling, Mr. Speaker. We are dealing with the question of rule changes here, and I certainly don't want to stray off that subject, particularly with the subject that we've been putting forward, our notion of what constitutes rule changes, as opposed to what this patronage-ridden, corrupt, authoritarian bunch of neo something-or-others — and I won't go ahead and say what it is because they can smell the polish on the jackboots themselves.

What these people are doing, Mr. Speaker . . . But, Mr. Speaker, I want to say this: that we have before us a set of proposals put forward by our government that makes this motion that we're debating here today, puts it into the kind of shameful activity which this government is well known.

Mr. Speaker, that's why we call for the public review of certain cabinet appointments. You take that motion . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. The debate is on rule 33(1). If the member wants to debate the actions of the government, by proper notice, can put a motion before the House to debate that. Today we are debating that rule change and that rule change only.

Mr. Lyons: — Okay, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let's look back at the history of this rule change and why it arose. And perhaps we might want to look at the history of rule changes in this legislature, commencing in 1969, because after all, this rule change, Mr. Speaker, this rule change is what has been known as an abnormal imposition into the daily life, as a cancer into the daily life of this legislature, a cancer put forward and germinated by that government.

And if the Speaker wants me to deal with rule changes, I intend to do that. This rule change which is, as you pointed out so quite correctly, Mr. Speaker, is an aspect of an attitude of authoritarianism well known to the people of this province and reflected by the commentators, political analysts, and editorialists across this province, that they can damn well do what they please. That's what the Swift Current **Sun** says in its editorial right here. That's what they can do, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what kind of people, what kind of people, I ask you, would initiate this rule change? What kind of narrow-minded people . . . What kind of world view do these people hold that they think that this little rule change will muzzle this opposition, or muzzle the opposition of the people of Saskatchewan, to their privatization attempts and particularly in regards to SaskPower. Let's describe what kind of people, Mr. Speaker, would come up with this kind of narrow, authoritarian view of the world.

Well first of all, Mr. Speaker, we have characterized this rule change as authoritarian. Mr. Speaker, it is authoritarian because it tries to limit by its very nature — and I don't know whether I'm going to be ruled out of order because I read part of the rule change, maybe that's too narrow, but perhaps I'll try and we'll see what happens, okay. What this rule change does:

That the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly* be amended by adding the following after "rule 33(1)."

So what we do, Mr. Speaker, after rule 33(1) add an article which says: "when the Speaker, or the chairman of Committee of the Whole . . ."

Now we know, Mr. Speaker, that we know here in the legislature what the Speaker is, but we know very well that there are many people out there who don't know what the Speaker is, or who the Speaker is. And for those of you who don't know, I might say that the Speaker, and it's contained right here, second word, third word in the rule change, is the person that occupies the big red chair in the Legislative Assembly and who sometimes makes rulings which affect all of us and the conduct that each and every member has in the House — right? — with the rules. And those rules are laid down and have been laid down, particularly in this Legislative Assembly, have been laid down with the consent and unanimity of a

special committee which was set up, and had been set up in the past.

And I'm going to intend to go into now, at great length next week, as to the actual historical precedence or rule changes and this rule change before us, Mr. Speaker.

So the Speaker is the person that sits in the Chair. And it says when the Speaker — he sits in the Chair and interprets how those rules are to be applied in the House — and he consults with a person who sits at the Table down below, who's Clerk of the Assembly, and who makes advice and advises the Speaker in rulings, or whether not the things he says about rules in this legislature are correct or incorrect, because after all, none of us in this House would want the Speaker to make an incorrect ruling.

That's why we all want an input into what the nature of the rules are so this House functions in a form of civility and operates in a manner which is conducive to efficiency as opposed to the kind of . . . I think it was "a state of continuous warfare," Sir Douglas Diddles said in 1649 upon the impeachment of the Duke of Buckinghamshire, who was one of the ministers who in fact was the very first minister impeached by a Legislative Assembly anywhere in the House of England, and talked about the concept of entrenched warfare.

So we have the Speaker here who operates and decides whether or not the rules of the House are being broken. So this rule change says, when the Speaker or the chairman of Committee of the Whole . . .

Now the Committee of the Whole, of course, for those of us in here and who know what the Committee of the Whole is, I don't have to explain it, but for those who are watching on television, for the edification and education particularly of children who are watching and don't know how this place functions, the Committee of the Whole, Mr. Speaker, as it says here, the chairman of the Committee of the Whole is the person that sits at that desk and is one of the members of the Legislative Assembly who, when the legislature and the Speaker leaves — and there's a reason why the Speaker leaves, and I'll get into that in a few minutes — but when the Speaker leaves and goes out that door, there at the desk comes the speaker of the Committee of the Whole, because the legislature resolves themselves into what is known as the Committee of the Whole.

We then become a committee. We're not the legislature; we're not divided into the same way that the government and the opposition is, but we've all become a committee. And we deal with questions that come before us that are in fact dictated, that come before us by the rules of this Legislative Assembly. And that's what we're talking about, this rules change. It says:

When the Speaker or the chairman of the Committee of the Whole or Committee of Finance . . .

Now the Committee of Finance is a different committee. It's like the Committee of Whole, except it is all of the members of the legislature meeting together to deal with

the question of the public finances and the budget, the budget which is brought down by the Minister of Finance and is discussed on an annual basis. Hopefully, if the Minister of Finance brings it in in a timely manner, we get to discuss it in a timely basis, although that has not always been the case in the past, but that again depends on one of the rules of this legislature.

Anyway, when the Speaker or the chairman of Committee of the Whole or Committee of Finance has put the question on a motion and a recorded division is requested under rule 33(1), which is the rule that we're discussing here, Mr. Speaker, so what does that mean — has put the question on a motion and a recorded division is requested under rule 33(1)?

Well, first of all, has put the question on a motion. Now we all know in this Legislative Assembly, those of us who sit here, what putting a question on a motion is. Putting a question on a motion is at the end of a debate of a particular motion which is put before the House of Assembly, there is question called; that is, after everyone has had the chance to speak or everyone has attempted to have the chance to speak, at the end of their speech, in regards to this particular rule change, the question is then put and a recorded division is requested, pursuant to rule 33(1).

Well many people in this province, Mr. Speaker, will not understand the words "and a recorded division is requested." So for those of us who don't understand what that phrase means, a recorded division, there are votes that are held in this Legislative Assembly that are not on recorded division, and those are votes that are voice votes where one side says aye and the others say nay. And depending on who has the loudest voice, or depending on the way the particular motion is, or depending on the subject matter being dealt with, either the ayes have it or the nays have it, and it's generally accepted.

Those are routine procedural motions, for example, that there is agreement, that basic agreement, for example, times to adjourn, leave to introduce guests, and so on and so forth — all of which are non-recorded divisions, Mr. Speaker, but are recorded by voice. And you know that, but there are many people in this province who don't know that.

But on recorded division, Mr. Speaker, is a different matter. Recorded division is a question of determining who stands for what on a particular issue which is brought before the House, this particular Legislative Assembly.

Now the government would have us, through this rule change, despite the fact that we could be using the time of the House, in our opinion, to much better advantage, debating the questions of farm financing or debating the questions of whatever, that are of particular importance to the people of this province; but this government because of its twisted priorities and its perverse and authoritarian streak, and well-known by . . . a character trait that's embodied in certain members of the opposition, well-known to us on this side of the House, they want on recorded division, that is on the recording of the votes, to, as it says here:

... the bells to call in the members shall be sounded for not more than one hour ...

Well first of all, what is the present situation that we find ourselves in, and does this apply across the piece, throughout the British Commonwealth?

Okay, the present situation in Saskatchewan is that when there is a recorded division, that is that there is a demand a vote be taken that counts each and every member — and that's done by each and every member of the Legislative Assembly standing in their place — when that particular recorded division is taken, the bells ring to summon the members so that everybody in the Legislative Assembly has the opportunity to get in for the vote.

The government, however, as now presently existing in this province, those bells can ring for an indefinite period of time to call attention to the public of issues of great importance. And of course, the longer the bell rings, the greater the issue of importance before the public. And the greater of the issue of importance before the public, Mr. Speaker, such as in the case of SaskPower, when this government tried to sell off the assets of SaskPower ...

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, Order. Order. The member is bringing specific issues into the debate of the rule changes. Order. The question before the legislature is a change to the bell-ringing rule, and the debate is on rule 33(1). To bring specifics into that is not relevant, and I would ask the member to get back on to the ... Order. Order. Order. I would ask the member to keep his comments relevant to the motion before the House. If he wants to get into other debates, he can move motions to bring before the House that can be debated at another time.

(1200)

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I want to make a comment, as a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the question of relevancy. And I want to refer you to *Beauchesne's* ...

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. It was not a point of order. There was no point of order raised. Order. Order, order. The member never said anything about raising a point of order when he rose in his place.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: — State your point of order.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — My point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the rules of the House allow the member to make references to matters which are related to the motion which is being debated at the present time. As is indicated in *Beauchesne's*, on page 98:

299. (1) Relevancy is not easy to define. In borderline cases the Member should be given the benefit of the doubt.

In this particular case, by making reference to the SaskEnergy debate which ... SaskEnergy Bill, which

caused the ringing of the bells, is not even borderline, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I submit in my point of order that the member ought to be able to make that reference in the remarks that he makes, as is indicated in *Beauchesne's*.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. Order. It's up to the Chair to decide relevance. Page ... Order, order. Order. Erskine May ... Order. The member for Regina Lakeview keeps interrupting the Chair. I would ask the member for Regina Lakeview to allow the Speaker to read from Erskine May, page 424:

A Member must direct his speech to the question under discussion or to the motion or amendment he intends to move, or to a point of order. The precise relevance of an argument may not always be perceptible but a Member who wanders from the subject will be reminded by the Speaker that he must speak to the question.

Order. Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Shillington: — I wish to make a brief remark and then challenge the Chair in the appropriate fashion provided by the rules.

Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, I want to read, and I will do this briefly within the rules. I want to read rule 299:

Relevancy is not easy ... In borderline cases the Member should be given the benefit of the doubt.

This rule, Mr. Speaker, this motion that is being passed goes to the way in which this legislature functions, and what the member was saying fell well within the compass of that. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, if one other will rise with me, I will formally challenge this rule.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. His actions cannot be criticized, incidentally, in debate or upon any form of proceedings except by a substantive motion.

Order. Order. The only way the Chair can be challenged is by substantive motion. The Speakers' rulings, once again, belong to the House which, under S.O. 12, must accept them without appeal or debate. That's page 39, rule 119.

Saskatchewan now follows Ottawa's ruling. The Speaker cannot be challenged; the chairman of committee can. Debate continues.

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to deal with the question of the rule changes, and particularly as it has been practised in this House. At an appropriate time I want to speak on the basis of what caused the formation of this rule change.

But before I do, I want your ruling, Mr. Speaker, on this. I'm going to say that the reason that this rule changing took place was because of the introduction of Bill 21 into this legislature, and of something ...

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. The rule change is what it is in the orders of the day. The relevance has nothing to do with any other legislation that has been introduced. It's the motion before the Assembly; it is now being debated. I would ask the member to keep his comments relevant to rule 33(1).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the rule changes that are before us, I want to speak to you about the question of the procedure of how rule changes have proceeded in the past in this legislature; and does this particular motion to add the limit to bell-ringing appear under motion of 33(1); and why it is that this motion is abnormal, and it is an imposition and is a cancer on this legislature, and is in fact one of the kind of germs that it is well-known to be thought up in the somewhat fertile although . . . (inaudible) . . . mind of, I would say, people like the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, this rule change, this authoritarian attempt to muzzle the opposition in Saskatchewan, is without precedent in this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — There is nothing, Mr. Speaker — absolutely nothing — nothing in the history of this legislature which would suggest that this change in position in this legislature by the government — that does not have any basis in the history of this legislature.

Mr. Speaker, in saying that, there is a history recorded in the *Report of the Special Committee on Standing Orders and Procedures of the Assembly*.

Mr. Speaker, we've done a little bit of research. I've looked back in time immemorial in this legislature, at least from 1969, which in terms of any member here is time immemorial, because on the . . . the history of this legislature has been to set up a special committee which is a *Report of the Special Committee on Standing Orders and Procedures of the Assembly*. That's been the normal way in which rules in this Assembly have been changed.

A committee is made up — some of them from the government side, some of them from the opposition side — has been set up to make changes to the rules, such as this rule change as being before. And, Mr. Speaker, that is our suggestion to this legislature, and that is still our suggestion to this legislature. Unlike the authoritarian, jackboot mentality which would try to muzzle the opposition in this province, we're proposing that the people get together, some from that side of the House, some from this side of the House, to decide on what the rule changes will be. And that's a compromise, Mr. Speaker, because . . . and that's the compromise, because that's the way it's always been done.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — That's the way it's always been done.

And, Mr. Speaker, my colleague and seat mate here from

Moose Jaw South wants to introduce some guests, so I'm going to ask if the member can have leave so that he can introduce his guests, and I will resume my remarks, which will be extensive and lengthy, on the procedures in this House, and well on the point and always relevant in regards to the procedure.

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to my colleague from Regina Rosemont, and thanks to all members for leave to introduce these guests.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, to all members, I would like to introduce a group of 40 students who come from grades 3, 4, 5, and 6, from Empire School in my constituency. And, Mr. Speaker, Empire School is not only in the constituency of Moose Jaw South, it is the public school in my own neighbourhood of the constituency, and so I'm particularly happy to be introducing the students from Empire School, Mr. Speaker. It is the school which our son attends, and he will know some of the students here today, although he's only in grade 1. With the students today, Mr. Speaker, teachers Rich Towriss and Marlene Hart, and chaperon Kim Robert.

Students from Empire, you are witnessing an important debate in this legislature today, a debate over a motion to change the rules and the functioning of this House in terms of the ringing of bells in this legislature. And I hope we can have a chance to discuss the debate, because we are going to meet for a picture and then go for some drinks, and you will be able to ask any questions that you'd like to ask.

So I would encourage all members present in the House now to join with me in welcoming the grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 students from Empire School in Moose Jaw.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTIONS

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

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak a little bit about the question of precedent in regards to rule changes in this House, and does, in fact, this rule change as introduced by the government meet the test of time and the test of historical precedent in this.

What has happened in the past, Mr. Speaker, was that rule changes were done through consent, as I was earlier saying. The first establishment of this tradition of precedence, that it be done through co-operation, that it be done through compromise, and that rule changes be taken from the heat of debate in the Legislative Assembly

and moved into a special committee to deal with the rules, is contained in the *Report of the Special Committee on Standing Orders and Procedures of the Assembly* of December 1969.

Mr. Speaker, in 1969, on Monday, February 17, 1969, the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan passed the following resolution constituting a special committee of the legislature to consider and report upon the advisability of making changes in the standing orders and procedures of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. That was the way in 1969 that rules changes were done.

Now in 1969, Mr. Speaker, at the time, there were Liberals who formed the government side of the House, the members of the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation), as it was known then, which later became the New Democratic Party, on the opposition side of the House. The members of the Liberal Party and members of the CCF got together on a motion moved at that time by the hon. Mr. Steuart, and seconded by the hon. Mr. Thatcher.

And at a special committee . . . And this was the motion, Mr. Speaker — and it's something that may serve as a guide for this government in its activities in dealing with this question of rule changes, as opposed to its present attempt to ram these rule changes down the throats of this legislature — that if they really respected this Assembly and they wanted to operate in a spirit of reasonableness and of compromise, that they may want to consider this, Mr. Speaker, as an alternate method of proceeding as opposed to what they're doing.

(1215)

And at a special committee consisting of Mr. Speaker — and that's important, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it be the . . . that Mr. Speaker take part in those rules as it's the Speaker of this Assembly who has to administer those rules — as chairman, plus eight members to be named at a later date . . . So at that time, in 1969, when they wanted to change the rules, they appointed first of all the Speaker, and eight members to be appointed.

And here's what the mandate of that committee was: be appointed to consider and report from time to time upon the advisability of making changes in the standing orders and procedures of this Assembly. That was the first thing that that committee was empowered to do, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was to set up eight members, chaired by the Speaker, empowered to look at, and mandated to look at, the standing orders and procedures of this Assembly.

In 1969 it was a very reasonable process. We had two political parties that had been locked into pretty intense political debate, particularly four or five years before, around the question of medicare. Yet despite the heat of that particular debate and the animosities that remained in that debate, they were able to set up a special committee, unlike this government today, unlike this government today which wants to, because of their narrow and putrid partisan political purposes, wants to ram through this rule change.

Back then, back then the former minister . . . the Minister

of Finance's former seat mate, Mr. Thatcher, even he recognized that in order to operate this House in any kind of manner that it took compromise and a reasonable approach, so they did that.

Mr. Speaker, that also went on to mandate the committee for other purposes, and that this special committee would be empowered to sit after prorogation of the legislature and during the intersessional period. That is, Mr. Speaker, not only did they recognize that to change rules required a reasonable attitude towards it and a whole spirit of co-operation and compromise, they recognized that in order to achieve that spirit of compromise, that they had to remove it from the heated debates of this Assembly and take it out, to move it after the legislature prorogued and sit between sessions.

Now of course, Mr. Speaker, there was another reason why they did that, is that they did not want the time of the Legislative Assembly to be spent, to be taken up with hours and hours and hours over debates over rules of procedure which, to the average, everyday citizen in Saskatchewan, aren't the most pressing things in their life. They understood at that time that the reasonable course of action was to take it where the debate could be held among those who had a particular interest in the subject and who understood how this legislature operates.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to consider: wasn't that the good old days when things ran a little bit better? You contrast that attitude, Mr. Speaker, to the attitude of the government opposite in dealing with this question of rule changes. You just contrast that attitude as reported in the written record here in the province in terms of the precedent of the operation of this legislature, and I say to you, sir, in all due respect, that the government is to be found wanting — wanting in the highest degree — absolutely no sense of reasonableness, absolutely no understanding of compromise.

Mr. Speaker, this motion went on to say:

That this Special Committee be instructed to include in its reports drafts of proposed Standing Orders drawn to give effect, if adopted by the Assembly, to any change or changes that may be proposed by the Committee; and

That this Special Committee be further instructed to submit its final report to the Assembly not later than the tenth sitting day of the next ensuing session.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are two important elements to the compromise that was reached back in the heated political days just two years prior to the downfall of Ross Thatcher and the Thatcher government. You know, Mr. Speaker, one would be tempted to draw certain political parallels as the electoral clock ticks, ticks, ticks away on this government as it ticked, ticked, ticked away on Ross Thatcher.

But even, Mr. Speaker, with the sense of impending doom of the Liberal government which hung over it, they were willing to sit down in a spirit of reasonableness and compromise to work it out. And not only that, Mr.

Speaker, what they did during that time as they attempted to develop this compromise in 1969, they also said that this committee which is going to meet intersessionally and has got the mandate to draw up the draft rules for the legislature, that this committee had to report back by a certain fixed date.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is in essence the same proposal which we on this side of the House put forward to the government by way of letter, by way of personal contact, and here for the second time in this debate, as I stand on my feet, that that compromise still stands. That offer is still out there.

And if this government were serious, if this government had any kind of understanding of the depths to which they have sunk in the minds of the public and the level of hatred which exists out there against them as a government, and in some cases as individuals, that they would accept that compromise, Mr. Speaker — that they would accept that compromise to try to regroup and gather their forces together to try to work out some kind of political strategy which is at least going to life them up in the polls, if nothing else.

Mr. Speaker, that's why, however, that this motion that we're dealing with, I suggest to you, is here, sir. You contrast the operation of this government when it comes to setting up rule changes through this motion and what happened in 1969 — February 17, 1969.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what happened after that committee met, there were rule changes which were introduced into the House as a result of the work of that committee. For example, there were rule changes which affected the Committee of Finance and the Committee of the Whole in regards to its amendments; and Committee of the Whole in regards to rulings; and the membership and sitting of committees; and the estimates; and the hours of sitting; and the introduction of the guests — as we've just had graphic illustration here not more than five minutes ago; member services and committee on; letters of transmittal; money Bills; motion for returns — on and on and on and on.

All those subjects — not one subject, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but a whole range of subjects in regards to making at that point in time, this legislature operate more efficiently, all those things were done through a committee that was struck in the spirit of reasonableness and compromise; unlike the activities of a government who are hell-bent and desperate government that is hell-bent to ram through this rule change.

Mr. Speaker, was that the only time that this procedure was followed in this Legislative Assembly? Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is not. We have said that what the government is doing is unprecedented, that it does not have any precedent, has never been done before. The ramming of rules at the legislature by an authoritarian, arrogant government has never been done before.

Because the second time, Mr. Speaker, not only was it done 1969, that special committee struck; I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that in November 22 of 1976, seven years later, November 22 of 1976, Mr. Speaker, a similar

type of order of reference was determined by the Legislative Assembly in order to deal with the question of the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly.

And it goes on:

On Monday, (November) 22, 1975, the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan passed the following resolution constituting a Special Committee of the Legislature to consider and report upon the advisability of amending the Rules and Procedures of this Assembly.

On the motion of the Hon. Mr. Romanow . . .

And, Mr. Speaker, unlike the first commission, which was set up in 1969, of which no member remains in this Legislative Assembly, there are some people who were involved in 1976 in this Legislative Assembly to set up the committee to strike the rules.

It says that:

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Romanow, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Smishek:

Ordered, That a Special Committee consisting of Mr. Speaker as Chairman . . .

So once again, Mr. Speaker, we have precedent. In 1969 the Speaker was appointed as chairman to deal with the rules. In 1976, the Speaker was appointed as chairman to deal with rules. And we make the same offer to the government today, we make the same offer to the government today. We want the Speaker. We think that it's important that the Speaker be involved in rules changes. You obviously don't because you got no respect; nothing but an authoritarian streak a mile wide.

We want to put the Speaker, as they did in '69 and as they did in 1976, to be named:

. . . plus seven Members (the first committee had eight members, this one with seven members), to be named at a later date, be appointed to consider and report with recommendations the advisability of amending the *Rules and Procedures of this Assembly* (legislature) to provide for an oral question similar to the Rules of the oral question period in the House of Commons and to consider the possibility of improving on the *Debates and Proceedings* of the Assembly and the feasibility of producing the Debates on a daily basis; and

That this Special Committee be instructed to include in its report, drafts of proposed Rules drawn to give effect, if adopted by the Assembly, to any change or changes that may be proposed by the Committee; and

That this Special Committee be instructed to consider and report with recommendations the advisability and feasibility of televising the proceedings of the Assembly and to consider and recommend on any mechanisms which may be

needed to control the said broadcasts; and

That the Committee review necessary renovations to the Legislative Chamber and sound system; and

That this Special Committee be further instructed to submit all or part of its report to the Assembly not later than March 1, 1976.

What happened, Mr. Speaker, in 1969? In a highly charged partisan atmosphere the Assembly was able to strike a committee to work out through compromise a reasonable approach to rule changes.

In 1976 the same thing occurred. Rule changes . . . actually, Mr. Speaker, that is a misnomer. It was "rules changes," because not one rule was dealt with, but a whole series of rules were dealt with through this committee, outside the heated debate of the legislature, in a reasonable manner. In 1976 that was thought to be the approach that this Legislative Chamber should take.

Why isn't that the approach that this Legislative Chamber, why shouldn't that be the approach that this Chamber take today? What could possibly be motivating the government to try to change that method of operation, except political desperation, except a narrow partisan political interest to ram through their Bill.

In '69 it was acceptable; '76 it was acceptable. Strike a committee; have the speaker as the chairperson; set up a committee where the rule changes of a whole number of issues, including at that time televising the proceedings of the Assembly, could be dealt with. Absolutely nothing wrong with that procedure, Mr. Speaker, for 1969; absolutely nothing wrong in 1976.

What is wrong with that procedure today? What is wrong with that procedure today? The only thing wrong with that procedure today from the point of view of that government, I suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that it doesn't suit their political purposes to privatize the assets of the people of this province. That's why they're ramming the rule changes the way they are . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1230)

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member is bringing specific debates from other issues into the debate of the rule change. And I would ask him again to refrain from that.

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

What motivates the government . . . The question of motivation of the government, Mr. Speaker, I submit to you is highly relevant to the people of Saskatchewan. The whole question of motivation of why the government is ramming this rule changes at us is not only relevant to Saskatchewan, it is the heart of this question of rule changes, Mr. Speaker.

It's not a question of irrelevancy to say that the government is motivated by its partisan political

purposes, and it's not a question of irrelevancy to say that those partisan political purposes are nothing more than the attempt to sell off the assets of the people of this province. That's what the motivation is and that is highly relevant.

In fact, that is not only highly relevant, that is why we are here debating the issue, because those two issues are inextricably linked. They are inextricably linked not just in theory, not just on the head of the pin, or the pin of the head of people like the Minister of Justice who like to take and slice issues into narrow little compartments, and maybe, in fact, if he got out of that lawyer mode of thinking and began to look at the thing in a holistic fashion, he'd be able to understand that. That's not, Mr. Speaker, that's not irrelevant.

What is relevant to this debate is the precedent of the rules change in this House and why this government is breaking with precedent. And why this government was breaking with precedent is for one reason and one reason only — its political agenda of privatization.

Historically these two issues have been linked. This issue that we are debating today, the question of this rule change to rule 33, this motion is inextricably linked in history with the bell-ringing episode which took place prior to the introduction of this motion and with the reasons for the bell-ringing, and no amount of legislative higgledy-piggledy, no amount of twisting of logic is going to change that historical fact, that the question of relevancy is always concrete because the truth is always concrete. And what is concrete in this matter is that the government is breaking with precedent in order to put forward their political agenda.

In 1969 we had a committee to deal with the rules; 1976, we had a committee set up, chaired by the Speaker, to deal with the rules in a reasonable manner.

Mr. Speaker, we've got to preserve that because, Mr. Speaker, that's not the only time, that is not the only time that this has occurred in this House — not just in '69, not just in '76. I refer you, sir, and all members of the Legislative Assembly, to the report of the special committee on the review of rules and procedures of the legislative committee, April 21, 1921.

All, Mr. Speaker — '69, '76, '81 — all part of the history and tradition of this legislature, where the rules are changed, the rules are changed not on the floor of this Legislative Assembly, but are changed through calm and reasoned and rational debate, in the spirit of compromise, intersessionally, with most of all, Mr. Speaker, most of all, a respect for each and every individual member and the rights of each and every individual of this Legislative Assembly, no matter what side of the House they sit on, unlike the activities of that government and members of that government, in whatever particular form or role that they happen to occupy, Mr. Speaker.

The rule changes in '69 and '76 were set up specifically with the intent to protect the rights of individual members of the Legislative Assembly to better serve their constituents. And in doing so, it was understood at that time, at those times — and it's 1969 and 1976 — that the

best way to do that was to take it off the heated floor of this political Assembly.

Because at that point in time in 1969 and in 1976, the people who were occupying the chairs — and it didn't matter whether they're sitting on this side or sitting on that side of the House — understood that there are long-term implications for these rule changes. There were long-term implications for these rule changes.

And I can tell you something, Mr. Speaker, in 1982 there was a rule change, and in 1990 or 1991 there's going to be another rule change.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — And I tell you right now, that for the sake of the smiling member from Shaunavon back there who thinks this whole thing is a joke, he won't be here in 1990 to enjoy those rule changes, but there will be a few members who will be. There will be a few members who will be, Mr. Speaker. And there will be a few members who will then live under the consequences of introducing into the House unprecedented rule changes — unilateral actions by the government. Because if you Tories say it's okay, if it's okay to change the rules unilaterally by the government, what's sauce for the goose, boys, is sauce for the ganders. What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the ganders.

And let's ask your friends out there in the real world, when the question comes to putting forward Bills, for example, to take back into the public domain those things which have been sold off, and to take back in a method which may not meet with the approval of the friends of those boys out there. And there is no bell-ringing allowed, and there will be unilateral rule changes, let them then stand here in their place and say, oh heavens, we didn't want this to occur; oh heavens, isn't the NDP undemocratic; oh heavens, isn't things bad. Right? Well, what's going on.

And we can turn, Mr. Speaker, we can turn and say those who are occupying the front bench condoned it. They didn't condemn it, Mr. Speaker, they condoned it. And not only have they condoned it, they have set the precedent for it. Unlike the Liberals in 1969, unlike the New Democrats in 1976 — and I'll get to 1981 in a few moments — unlike those two, these people have condoned the unilateral rule changes to this Assembly.

And if that's the precedent that they want to set, I can tell you boys, if that's the precedent that you want to set, you will be mightily sorry after the government changes next time. Because things will happen that you won't like, and your big business friends won't like, and your multinational buddies won't like. That will happen because we've got the precedent, because that's what precedent means, Mr. Speaker.

We can turn and say there is history here, and in fact every historical change in the Legislative Assembly and in the change of powers of parliament, whether it's a change backward during the days of Richard II or a change backward during the days of Devine the first, or a change . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Members are not to use other members' names in the legislature. I'd ask the member to refrain from that.

Mr. Lyons: — Unlike the days, Mr. Speaker, of the reign of the member from Estevan, when the days when the powers of the people and the powers of the Legislative Assembly went backwards, when we move the powers of the people forward, when we introduce legislation in this legislature and utilize the rules procedure, for example, to allow for employee participation in the direct management of companies, despite the cries and howls of the big business buddies of the Tories.

When we utilize the precedent that these people are setting, I don't want to hear . . . because I'm going to be here, my friends; I will be here. Some of you won't be, but those of you who will be left, I don't want to hear one whimper or one peep or one snivel or one whine out of you, because it is you who have set this precedent, you who have in fact broken with tradition in this province in regards to what constitutes legitimate operations of the Legislative Assembly.

It is you who will make your bed, and let me tell you, whether it is a bed of roses or a bed of nails, you will then be forced to sleep in it. And in the case of the Minister of Justice, the puncture holes from the bed of nails will be well, well received by the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Mr. Speaker, I had mentioned 1969, 1976. I want to turn now to the whole question of rule changes in 1981, and was that done in regard to the precedents which had been set in this Assembly prior.

And I want to read on page 4 of this *Report of the Special Committee on the Review of Rules and Procedures (of the Legislative Assembly)*, the order of reference, same title of the rules, outline which I had read earlier on regarding '69 and '76. I want to read:

On Thursday, May 3, 1979, the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan passed the following resolutions constituting a Special Committee of the Legislature:

On motion of the Hon. Mr. Romanow, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Smishek:

Ordered, That a Special Committee consisting of Mr. Speaker as Chairman and twelve Members . . .

The first committee, 1969, that I referred to, Mr. Speaker and eight members; the second committee, Mr. Speaker and seven members; the third committee, Mr. Speaker and 12 members, to be named at a later time, be appointed. Consider the extent that voice clips should be used by the media; the number, size, and nature of standing committees; and the operation of Committee of Finance and Committee of the Whole.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The process is relevant, but other specific rules are not under debate in this

Assembly. The process, I say, is relevant, but speaking of other specific rules is not relevant. So I bring that to the attention of the member. The rule before the Assembly is rule 33(1). I would ask him to keep his comments to that rule change, but the process of other rule changes is relevant.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, the committee of 12 was set up to discuss specific rule changes — this is a specific rule change — and the extent to which those rule changes affect the operation of the legislature. Looking at other provinces and looking at the other jurisdictions, both in Canada and throughout the British Commonwealth, I would suggest, is particularly relevant.

So we see that on Thursday, May 3, 1979, there was a committee struck consisting of 12 members and Mr. Speaker, outlining three matters, including, I want to say, other such matters relating to rules and procedures which the committee deems necessary. And I think that that's important, Mr. Speaker. I think that's important, that particular item, because it relates directly to what we're doing here. The question of other matters to be dealt with in terms of the mandate of a committee regarding the procedure, as you yourself have said, the relevancy of this committee, very simply is this: "that the committee be instructed to include in its report, drafts of proposed rules given to its effect."

In other words, the mandate of the committee, as it was in 1969, as it was in 1976, as it was in 1981, all of which contain the following elements . . . and I may say, Mr. Speaker, that the latter two strikings of committee to deal with rule changes were initiated, as I have read it, by the present member from Riversdale, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, who, when he was a member of the Executive Council of this government, understood — unlike the Premier of this province who fails to understand — that the process to which you just referred is more than relevant, it is essential.

It is not just a question of relevancy, it is a question of essential, the essential nature of the functioning of this legislature. The member from Riversdale understood that in 1976 and in 1981 when he moved these motions. Why does not the Premier of this province understand the same thing?

(1245)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Why does not those members on the government side understand? Why don't they have got it in their heads that it takes . . . In order to change the way a family lives — and I want to use an example of a family, Mr. Speaker.

We're stuck here, and right now it's day 49, and I am here for a great deal . . . I spend a great deal of my time here having to coexist and live with members of this Legislative Assembly, trying to co-operate. But on a personal level, let me just say this. Some of those members I like and respect as individuals from the other side; others I don't, but that's natural with any family or

any large extended group. But there have to be rules, Mr. Speaker, in order for that coexistence to take place. There have to be rules drawn up that everybody can agree on.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — You know, Mr. Speaker, those rules, first of all, have to be fair; and secondly, everybody has to agree upon them. Mr. Speaker, think of what happens when you have a high-spirited teenager in your family that wants to go out, spend all hours of the night out on the street, driving down to the Burger King or doing whatever teenagers do these days. Well, I think most families, Mr. Speaker, say there are some limits to that kind of activity.

And those rules that are established, in terms of limiting the kinds of activity of a family, are worked out as a compromise. On the one hand, there's the need for that young person to exhibit some sense of responsibility and some sense of freedom and some sense of initiative and going out and making their social connections; but on the other hand, there's the need for the peaceful functioning, if you like, of the family unit and for the development of respect of other members in that family.

So what happens, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a compromise worked out between, on the one hand, the needs of the child and the teenager, and the other hand, the needs of the family as a whole. And that's generally done through a whole process of give and take, of negotiation, of working together in a spirit of compromise and reasonableness, but most importantly, in a spirit of respect, a spirit of understanding.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — In a spirit of understanding that each and every member of that family has their individual needs, and each and every member of that family has their individual wants. And to accommodate those needs and wants, we must all work together.

So that's why, Mr. Speaker, that is why in 1969, in 1976, and in 1981, these committees were struck. I mean, you don't have to look very far in terms of the history of British parliamentary democracy, although we will when it comes to dealing with the question of precedence as it relates to this motion.

In a theoretical sense, but in a very practical sense and a very down to earth sense, what we have here is for many, many days we as individuals have to exist in the common room. We have to find some method of functioning where we can exist. We have to find some method of functioning where each and every one knows what the rules are, and where each and every one feels that they have, in fact, although they may not like this particular aspect or that particular aspect of this rule or that rule, that there is essential fundamental agreement on the way in which this legislature operates. That's always been the case. Mr. Speaker, that's always been the case. That was the case, by the way, in the Parliament of Canada in terms of dealing with the same issue that we're dealing with today, this rule change on the ending of bell-ringing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, whether or not there remains the case

in terms of the aftermath, at least at that point in time there was general unanimity or general agreement, even if somewhat grudging, by all three parties involved in the episode, that that particular legislative change, along with other legislative change, because, Mr. Speaker, that particular rule was not dealt with in isolation. And I'm going to go into that in a little while.

But it was dealt with altogether . . . the same way that the family rules that are drawn up, when a time limit is set on a teenager that you have to be home by 11 o'clock or 12 o'clock on weekends, and that you have to do the dishes and have to make the beds, but in exchange for that, other things will happen. That's common sense. That's just plain, ordinary common sense and understanding how people work together.

Well, what's happened, Mr. Speaker? What's happened here is that this government is not well endowed with that particular quality of common sense these days. In fact, I would suggest that it is a general opinion of people across this province, and particularly in regards to this rule change, that that government has taken leave of its senses; that it's not operating in the way in which every family unit in this province generally operates to make its own rules; that it is not operating through that period of reasonableness and compromise, but that in fact it is operating through a unilateral, dictatorial, and authoritarian manner.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in that kind of a situation in a family, what happens? What happens when you've got the big boss-man, the big daddy in the family, the big daddy that goes and tells the wife what to do and the kids what to do, and this is the way it's going to be, and that's the way it's going to be, and no questions asked because we've got the power? What happens in that kind of situation, Mr. Speaker? Family falls apart — the family falls apart.

You know that and I know that and other members of the Assembly know that, Mr. Speaker, in a very graphic way they know that, that when you try to be the single authoritarian figure in a family, that the family falls apart, because people can't work that way.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, it's even worse when those in the family unit, the teenager, for example, say, wait a minute, okay, this part of the rule I'll accept, but why don't you accept or operate in this or that way; and the parent turns around and slaps the kid, punches the kid in the mouth, then kicks him out the door or locks him in a room or does something like that. Because that's what the analogy that we're dealing with here, Mr. Speaker, is.

What kind of respect, what kind of even modicum of respect do you think will exist after a repeated occurrence of those kinds in any family? Mr. Speaker, you know and I know and everybody in this Legislative Assembly knows that that family will not last very long.

And I'm telling you, Mr. Speaker, the same thing can be applied to this Legislative Assembly. That's why we're sitting here at day 49, debating this unilateral action on behalf of the government, the arrogant and contemptuous manner in which it's acted.

And things are falling apart in the province around us. Things are going to the dogs, as they say, because we're spending the time debating this motion when we could have, as we did when we offered the compromise to the government, done this in a manner which is reasonable, which is civil, and which produces the intended effect, which is to develop a set of rules that we all can live with. Just the way that it's done in a family, just the way that it's done in a family, so too could we bring here into this particular rule change.

But flying, Mr. Speaker, I say flying in the face of tradition, this government has taken a mode of operation, the procedure as you have pointed out, that procedure which has worked so well in the past and has resulted in the kinds of democratic reform that I earlier referred to in our proposals for democratic reform, in regards to those particular items, that procedure worked in the past. And, Mr. Speaker, I dare say that when we form the government after the next election, we will strike up that rules committee and move towards the kind of democratic reforms that I've talked about, in contrast to the activities of this arrogant government.

And doesn't that seem to be a reasonable way of operating things, Mr. Speaker? Doesn't that seem to be a reasonable way of operating, as opposed to trying to come down with the iron heel like a bunch of dictators. Doesn't that seem to be the way of compromise?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mrs. Smith: — I'd like leave, Mr. Speaker, to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mrs. Smith: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I regret having to interrupt the debate, but perhaps it's the end of the week and it's the end of the morning, and it's a good way to end by introducing 53 children from Swift Current.

Mr. Speaker, we have 53 students from Central School. They are grade 4 students. I think every year since I've been in this House we've had the honour of hosting a group from Central School, and this year is no different. And it's always a pleasure to indeed have them in here.

They have with them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, three teachers, Mrs. Donna Stinson, Mark Miller, and Mabel Lake, and I believe they also have a couple of parents that are busy supervising today.

I will be meeting with them at 1 o'clock when this is done, and I look forward to an enthusiastic question period with them. And I would ask all members to welcome them today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I too would like to welcome the students here to the Assembly on behalf of

this side of the House.

I was just ending up on my speech and was going to go into the next topic that I want to deal with, Mr. Speaker. And given that it's several minutes to adjournment time, I would move that this debate do now adjourn.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:57 p.m.