

August 4, 1989

AFTERNOON SESSION

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

ORAL QUESTIONS

Investigation into Private Vocational Schools

Mr. Rolfes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education. Mr. Minister, my question deals with the private vocational schools and the problems that exist with them, and the saga simply continues about the rip-off of students by some private vocational schools.

Mr. Speaker, the minister is aware that a former instructor had this to say about one of the private schools, and I quote:

Private vocational schools in Saskatchewan are little more than factories designed to process government-paid student loans.

Mr. Minister, that is an outrageous statement. That is simply an unacceptable statement, but it's in fact a truthful statement. And I'm asking you again, Mr. Minister, as I have done in the past, you have told this House that you are investigating the complaints that you are receiving. Would you tell this House today: is that investigation completed, and if it is completed, what immediate action are you going to take to stop this rip-off of students by some private vocational schools?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, the allegations that have been reported in the media and noted by my department cause me concern. They cause our department concern. I think they cause the public concern, and they certainly cause our government concern. That is why an investigation is under way. It's a very aggressive and active investigation. In terms of looking at . . . And that investigation is not yet complete.

Similarly, because I was of the view, as were many of the very reputable private vocational school operators, of the view that perhaps the regulations governing private vocational schools needed updating, and that was why some several months ago I asked for a review of those regulations, I expect that report perhaps as early as next month. In hindsight, I suppose, we could all wish that that report had been tabled and maybe perhaps new regulations put in place six months or a year ago. Such was not the case, but I can say: (a) the investigation is active and ongoing; and (b) I look forward to the report from the committee that's reviewing the regulations on private vocational schools.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, if you hadn't been so eager to take some of those programs out of government institutions which were regulated, if you hadn't been so eager to take those out of those institutions, we wouldn't have the

problem today. You were so eager to privatize education, so eager to privatize education that you took them out of government institutions — said to the private people, set up any school you want to; I won't regulate you and I will make sure that you will be financially rewarded because every student will be able to get a loan and you will be eligible to take those loans off students. That's exactly what has happened.

I spoke to an unmarried mother yesterday, with two children . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I have question, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Would the member get to the question.

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Minister, my question to you is this: what are you doing to protect unmarried mothers with children who now are indebted to the tune of \$10,000 of student loans, which student loans the private vocational schools are in receipt of? What are you going to do to protect those kinds of people and making absolutely certain that single mothers with children won't be ripped off by these private vocational schools?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — I don't like to see anybody ripped off, whether it's a student or indeed the public purse, Mr. Speaker.

I've already raised with the legislature what steps are in place. Specifically and additionally, as well, there is a policy relative to refunds. As part of the investigation, there is an audit going on relative to student loans at one private vocational school and one private religious school that have been in the news lately, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, although this is a serious situation and one that deserves plenty of attention, we must keep it in perspective in that there are some 50 private vocational schools. Some of them have been operating for some several decades, and two of the 50 are under investigation, Mr. Speaker, and I would just draw that to the hon. member's attention again. I'm not trying to be an apologist for any school who is not doing a good job, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: — A new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, it was brought out in estimates that over a million dollars in student loans went to Bridge City College itself. Some of the people that you have on that committee are the ones that we are receiving the complaints about, and that worries me.

I want to be assured, Mr. Minister, that once that investigation is completed, that you will set in place regulations by the time the fall session starts again, that you would put in place regulations which will guarantee that students will not be ripped off by some of these private vocational schools which have come into existence because of your privatization ideology. Will you give us that assurance today that those regulations will be in place by the time the fall school session starts

again?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, that's a worthy suggestion, and I'll give it active consideration, depending on how the work of the committees go, as well as the investigation by my departmental officials.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — I have a new question for the Minister of Education. Mr. Minister, as you know, students in this province have been complaining about some private vocational schools for well over one year. And for well over one year your government has failed to act on the present situation in terms of regulations that would adequately protect young people from unscrupulous operators.

Because your government has failed to act, Mr. Minister, many young people in our province have taken out student loans in excess of 5, 6, \$7,000 and in fact in some cases they are much higher than that. Can you tell this House, Mr. Minister, what your government is prepared to do for those young people who have taken out those student loans, attended these facilities in good faith, and now have nothing to show for attending those facilities other than a massive debt?

It was your government's failure that has caused this problem, Mr. Minister, and the least that you can do is offer these students alternative courses at credible institutions or forgive their student loans. Which is it, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, once again the opposition, in this case the Education critic, has jumped to a lot of conclusions without having the advantage of all the facts that might be uncovered during an investigation. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, it would make sense to get all the facts first, so that one can make an informed judgement as to what should be done.

I think it's silly for the hon. member — and quite frankly I think she's merely engaging in some political grandstanding on this issue — to suggest that our government has failed to act.

Some several months ago, before either of these instances were raised in the newspapers, which is the primary source of research for the NDP, before either of these were raised in newspapers, I had commissioned a group of people, Mr. Speaker, highly credible, to review the whole question of private vocational school regulation because I think therein lies the long-term solution to ensuring that the public purse is well served, on one hand, as well as our young people, Mr. Speaker. So I think it's unfair and fatuous to suggest that we failed to act.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, where the situation has warranted, where the situation has warranted, until investigations were complete, we have in some instances frozen admissions to private vocational schools, which tells me, Mr. Speaker, that on behalf of the students of this province, when we have to, we act and we act swiftly and

with authority, Mr. Speaker. And such will continue to be the case, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — New question for the Minister of Education. Mr. Minister, over 18 months ago my office raised with your government officials a problem, a serious problem at a private vocational school in the city of Saskatoon. That issue did not become public because we wanted to bring it to your attention in order for your government to resolve the problem at some private vocational schools.

You cannot use the excuse that, well this has just become a problem in the last few months because it's being raised in the press. That's simply untrue, Mr. Minister. Simply untrue.

Hundreds of young people in this province have thousands and thousands of dollars worth of Saskatchewan student loans and Canada student loans. If they fail to repay those student loans, they will never, ever, ever be able to get a student loan at a bona fide educational institution in this province. You have closed the door on their education, Mr. Minister.

And what I simply want to do is ask you, **Mr. Minister:** are you prepared to allow those young people to go on to a bona fide institution at no cost to themselves, or are you prepared to forgive their student loans because of your failure to act in the interests of the people of this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — What I am prepared to do, Mr. Speaker, is to act, based on the results of a full investigation by my department when I have all the facts. The hon. member would suggest that she has all the facts. I do not believe she does. I do not have all the facts. I will act, based on the advice of my officials after they have completed their investigation, number one.

And as well, in dealing with the larger issue of regulation of these private schools, I will as well act on the advice of the committee that was put in place to look at the situation, Mr. Speaker. And when it comes to the whole question of student loans and making post-secondary education available to the young people of this province, the one thing I will do is take this province and our young people back to the dark days of the NDP when 6,000 young people had access to student loans and today that same number, Mr. Speaker, is over 17,000 young people. And that number will grow, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Assistance to Tornado Victims

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. It's been over a month now since many Saskatchewan residents were devastated by the tornadoes in the province. At that time you were out giving much fanfare to all the support you were going to give. And I'm wondering, Mr. Premier, if today you can stand in this legislature and announce the details of the

program in terms of who is eligible for compensation payments from the provincial government, and in what amount they will receive those compensation payments?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, I can indicate to the hon. member that the federal-provincial drought . . . or disaster assistance program has been in place for some time, that the criteria have been well established, and that the various municipalities affected have made application. I am advised that we are still awaiting, I think, two more for approval. The others have all been approved. They will do, and quite properly, their evaluations and assessment of the damage, and as soon as that is completed in the usual manner, Mr. Speaker, assistance will be paid.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was not directed to the four-billion-dollar man. My question was directed to the Premier of the province who went out and made commitments to people in the province of Saskatchewan about disaster relief. You can see the pictures in the paper. People were promised assistance from the Premier of this province for the devastation of tornadoes more than a month ago in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is obsessed with the privatization. I quote from Daniel de Vlieger, the dean of political science at the University of Regina, where he says, "The Conservatives are reeling over privatization." And if you're so consumed with your privatization and other things that mislead people in the province of Saskatchewan, we want you to stand this afternoon, Mr. Premier, and honour your political commitments to show that your mouth doesn't operate better than your programs, and announce what the disaster assistance is going to be to people in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — To attack the media, on one hand, and to quote Dan de Vlieger as an independent authority, is somewhat humorous, Mr. Speaker, and I don't think the public would take it as anything less than the hon. member either having a belief that he can only take his hard-nosed partisans for his authorities.

Mr. Speaker, the disaster assistance program has been well established. It's been in place for some time. There are criteria that operate in this province. The municipalities apply, I've indicated, and I've now indicated twice today that the municipalities that have applied have been approved. We are expecting two more, and when they make their application, they will be approved. And then the payment for the disaster are set out in the criteria, and when those valuations are done in the normal course, Mr. Speaker, then the payments will be made, as promised.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — New question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier or to the Minister of Finance. I don't think that the Minister of Finance has much credibility when you make an \$800 million mistake on the budget.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Where people in Saskatchewan are devastated by a tornado, by a natural disaster, your Premier promises assistance just like you promised drought assistance during the federal election campaign. And only recently are farmers getting their drought assistance, which is substantially less than what you promised during the federal election campaign.

My question to you here this afternoon, Mr. Minister, is that will you detail to us, not talking about application forms and due process and we'll evaluate and then we'll pay — we no longer want you deceiving the public in the province of Saskatchewan and misleading the people in the province of Saskatchewan — the disaster victims want to know what they're going to get and when they're going to get it? And will you stand in your place this afternoon and be very clear and explicit in what you're going to do about this very serious problem?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, we don't need to talk about deception from . . . hear about deception from any of the members opposite, especially in the practice that is now ingrained in their ethic, as showed up in this session, Mr. Speaker, from day one. But what we have said, Mr. Speaker, is that the disaster assistance program is in place. The assistance will be provided as set out in the guide-lines.

I am prepared, Mr. Speaker, to table in this House the copy of the disaster assistance program guide-lines. They have been well distributed. They have been in the public domain for many, many years, Mr. Speaker. The media have had them at the time of the latest tornadoes, or the tornadoes referred to, but I'm prepared, Mr. Speaker, because the hon. member obviously has not taken either the time or the effort to look at what those criteria are, that the criteria when met, Mr. Speaker, the payments will be made as promised and, Mr. Speaker, as the guide-lines require.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Pay-out to Investors in Principal Trust

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, a week ago today your Minister of Finance in this House indicated the position of your government in regard to the thousands of Saskatchewan people who lost their life savings in Principal Trust. He indicated the position of your government was that the Alberta government should pay out 100 per cent to Saskatchewan investors. He said that not once, he said it here from the *Hansard*, not once but once, twice, three times.

Also a week ago he promised me a certain amount of information which he has not provided. So, Mr. Premier, I ask you today: what is your position, what have you done to communicate this position to the Government of Alberta, and what has been the response from that government?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated last week, it is the government's position that the province of Alberta should provide the compensation.

I do apologize for the hon. member for not having tabled in the House the correspondence that we have forwarded to the Alberta government. I believe that we should be in the position — I'll check with the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Affairs who has written to the province of Alberta, whether we can table all of the letters of our communication to the province of Alberta, both from myself and from the appropriate minister. Mr. Speaker, I will undertake to do that this afternoon, honouring the practice, Mr. Speaker, of tabling the documents in this House, and I will be speaking to that a little later, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, new question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I do not want, nor do I need, any further answers from the Minister of Finance. I want and I need some answers from you, sir. Mr. Premier, why would you not now do the honourable thing, the honourable thing? Will you not now compensate those investors in Saskatchewan who have lost their life savings and then, as a government, go after the Government of Alberta to be reimbursed. Will you not now do that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, if I recall, it was the honourable thing in the Pioneer matter that the province of Saskatchewan would make the payment. I also recall at that time, Mr. Speaker, the intense criticism of the New Democratic Party that the province of Saskatchewan made payments to those affected by the Pioneer. We did that, Mr. Speaker.

We have indicated in our position that the province of Alberta should pay compensation. There will be, Mr. Speaker, in light of the procedures set out by the province of Alberta for investors to make application for their payment — we have been . . . at least the press indicates that Alberta would make prompt payment when those applications are made.

Once those investors make applications to Alberta, certainly we will have at that time a far better indication, Mr. Speaker, of the extent of the problem. Many investors at that point will be at least satisfied or believe the matter is closed. I do, Mr. Speaker, restate my position that we will be tabling the documents in the practice of this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, new question again to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, the answers we're getting today tell us that the negligence that got us and the Principal investors in this province into trouble, that negligence goes on and on and on.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Premier, in conversation with one of the investors this morning, he put this thesis to me, and I put it to you: is it or is it not the fact that it's your intention to move closure on this session, hoping that you can shut this session down; hoping that you can sweep this whole issue under the rug; hoping that you can sweep these thousands of investors under the rug, and their concerns, and hoping that they'll just go away? Isn't that your hope?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know how closure, closure will cause investors to go away, or the problem will go away. There's a jump in illogic, Mr. Speaker, in that hon. member's mind that is difficult to comprehend. The problem will be there, Mr. Speaker. The problem, in our view, should be dealt with in the appropriate manner by the province of Alberta, and we will continue to maintain that position.

Mr. Speaker, I did take notice the other day of a question from the member from . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I'm afraid I can't allow that.

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, investors now are facing legal costs and complications to reclaim their money to file their claims in Alberta. Would you at least, as a government, would you at least provide some legal assistance to the Saskatchewan investors to help them through this process of filing their claims? Would you at least do that much?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Certainly, Mr. Speaker, legal costs will apply to those that are going to take legal action. Many, I suspect, will decide that when they receive their payment they will wait the matter as to whether the investment and legal cost is worthwhile. That's too soon to make that assumption, Mr. Speaker, so you're premature on your question.

And, Mr. Speaker, again I have an important response to the hon. member from Regina Elphinstone as to a question . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'm afraid I can't allow that. It's an established practice of the House.

An Hon. Member: — I'm on my feet.

The Speaker: — I'll recognize the Minister of Finance if there's nobody else.

Cost of Barber Commission

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I took notice of a question, Mr. Speaker

... (inaudible interjection) ... I was on my feet; I was on my feet; I sat down; now I'm on my feet.

The Speaker: — Order, order. The minister did sit down and rose, and I waited for the hon. member to see if he had a supplementary and he didn't, so I recognized the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, I took notice of a question from the member from Regina Elphinstone, and it dealt with a matter of an invoice that he referred to, number 2-GCLB-001, and whether the payments were made by SaskEnergy to the company — well the question was Cy MacDonald.

I am advised and I understand the seriousness of this, Mr. Speaker. I am advised that no such invoice was sent by the company, and that SaskEnergy has received no such invoice, has received not an invoice for the public meetings, Mr. Speaker, and that therefore no such payment has been made. Given the seriousness of that, Mr. Speaker, I can only ask once again that the practice of this House be followed and that the hon. members opposite table the document, Mr. Speaker, because such document was not received by SaskEnergy and no payment was made, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Time Allocation

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the intention to speak at length in my few remaining remarks for the balance of the afternoon, but I do have, I think, some fresh points to make on this issue. Before I begin I want to simply summarize again the main points as I thought I had made them before the lunch-hour.

I tired to say, first of all, in rebutting the Minister of Health's intervention that the question of comparing the rules on budget and on throne debate, which rules have been agreed by all of us, is an entirely different situation where the rules are being imposed upon us by a majority government. And that argument of his, in my judgement, held no water.

I tried to rebut his proposition about obstructionism pointing out to you, sir, and the members of the House, that in fact, on obstructionism, it's this government which has obstructed the functions of the Provincial Auditor, which has obstructed us in the opposition and the public at large with respect to the tabling of documents and reports and *Public Accounts* and the like, and the answering of orders for return which have been ordered by this Legislative Assembly.

On the second point to the question of the issue of why it is that we feel so strongly. In effect, if I may rephrase the question, by what authority is it that we take part in this debate at length. The point that I was trying to make there, Mr. Speaker, is because we as MLAs have the highest sanctification, if I may put it that way, of our authority to speak, and that is because the people elected us to speak.

That's not to diminish the activities of people outside of this Chamber, whether they're members in the press gallery or otherwise, my point being that they have their job to do. Our job is entirely different, and it's a job which is sanctioned by the fact that the majority of the people of the province of Saskatchewan have elected us to act and to speak at length and to mount the arguments that we wish to mount to advance our case on a matter of fundamental importance and issue such as this. This is a fundamental matter of importance and issue, the potash privatization, Bill 20, of which now the government is trying to in effect guillotine the opposition from speaking.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, I have been trying to make the point in my remarks this morning that the real reason for the government putting the guillotine, cutting off the debate, has been that their privatization program is in tatters; that it no longer has the support of the public; that it's stuck in a mud hole; that the Premier should be saying again, don't say whoa in a mud hole. I think in essence that's what he's saying, but that if he was smart, he would know that the mud hole is so deep and so much caught his government in the quagmire that he can't either go forward or backwards or sideways, and by his stubbornness he refuses even to get off the buggy of building this province, of diversifying, of providing for schools and for roads and for hospitals and for jobs, something which he refuses to do.

I also, fourthly, Mr. Speaker, made the point that this is a matter of fair play. It's even more than a matter of fair play. I would argue that it's a matter of natural justice. These rules are being changed unilaterally by the government in power, using their heavy-handed majority on this black Friday for democracy, without any discussion, without any deliberation, simply because they arbitrarily decide. They decide, in their infinite wisdom, that in fact the debate has gone on too long.

In doing so, Mr. Speaker, they trample over the rights and the history of this parliament, of this legislature. They've embarked upon an unprecedented action — I'm going to say a word about that, or two, in a moment. And in addition to doing that, Mr. Speaker, they have denied such things as private members' day, a long-sought-after right gained by opposition members in the Mother of Parliaments and elsewhere, to raise issues in private members' days that the public itself would want us to raise freely and quite independently.

And the fifth point that I was making this morning, before I move on now to my other fresh arguments in the course of this debate, is that not only is the government stuck in a mud hole, not only is the government trying to salvage its own reputation — that that's the real purpose behind this motion. It has nothing to do with public interest. As we know, it has nothing to do with democracy, it has everything to do with trying to salvage the political timetable.

But the point that I was also making, in addition to that, is that the government is under enormous pressure by its big business corporation friends to at least get on with this privatization.

In fact, if this government's big-business, multinational corporations had their way, they would in fact have the sale-off of the province of Saskatchewan done holus-bolus, lock, stock, and barrel as quickly as possible as it could.

There are some disturbing supporting characters in this push on the government to privatize and to limit debate on the arguments against privatization, such as Bill 20. One of the most vicious and leading exponents in the advocacy of privatization is something called the Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise, sir, a group which is unabashed in its support for the government, is unabashed in its Tory connections, is unabashed in its support for the closure and the undemocratic nature of this particular operation.

I'm not going to name the individuals which are involved. They may, in their own circumstances, believe what they advocate. But the extent to which they carry out this campaign and to the extent to which this group of big business people re pushing this government to do it, it has been brought to my attention only after the lunch break, and something I was not aware before lunch — in an article paid for by the Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise, in effect it had to do with an article written by Mr. Eisler with respect to the institute's report on the financial status of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this institute, so-called, among other things, things like this, quote:

. . . Saskatchewan had received no net returns from PCS after seven years under the NDP, zero.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'll debate that in Committee of the Whole in detail with the minister when we get to Bill 20 sooner or later. But, Mr. Speaker, that is a falsehood, that statement, and it is the most political statement by the most political organization, an arm of the government, that one could see. It's an example of the kind of pressure this government faces to introduce this motion of guillotining the opposition.

When I take a look at this advertisement, which was placed under the guise of a letter to the editor but really was paid for in a rather sneaky and underhanded way, I see another statement here which says, quote:

. . . Eisler is either being professionally incompetent or is biasing his analysis to favour the NDP . . .

Mr. Speaker, for all of my criticisms of Mr. Eisler, and I've had some, as I've expressed at some occasions, I think this person is a competent and not biased reporter. His arguments, which are advanced, all of us may dispute from time to time, but to make this kind of a proposition I think is another example of this institute's determination to force this government, to force the guillotine on us in this legislature. And I object to that too, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — And finally, Mr. Speaker, before I conclude my wrap-up of this morning's discussion and debate that I entered into, I want to make this other one last point, still pertaining to this Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise.

The argument I'm making is the inordinate pressure which they have on the government to proceed to guillotine. And that is the unparalleled arrogance of this group, this Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise, because in this same article which is paid for under the guise of a letter to the editor, the people in the institute say this, quote:

Each side can holler long and hard, but will never know the truth.

In the meantime, it's up to the Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise, is the implication.

Now in my judgement, Mr. Speaker, that is the height of hypocrisy and arrogance, the height of arrogance that a group, no matter how well intentioned, would say that even the government — and I object to their arguments on Bill 20, the potash Bill — that the government somehow does not have an analysis of facts and arguments. How arrogant it is to say that of them. How arrogant it is to say that we don't have facts or that the press gallery has no facts.

I believe that is the height of arrogance, but what it shows is that anybody who should have a contrary point of view, anybody who should have a contrary point of view, clearly is in great disfavour with this institute and with these people who control the government opposite and the Premier opposite, yet placing another argument for the pressure on this particular motion to cut off the debate on Bill 20.

Mr. Speaker, the Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise is but one of a coterie of groups which have now captured this government lock, stock, and barrel. And it gives me a great deal of sorrow to refer to the fact that Ipsco has been a Crown corporation and publicly funded, and that somehow in the minds of some of the people in the Institute Saskatchewan Enterprise a distinction can be made between that level of public involvement and the history of how that corporation got established, that they can overlook that in their convenience to sell off the province of Saskatchewan — not to sell it off, to give it away.

I'm very sorry that the government opposite finds itself tied so irrevocably to these people who speak but for a few, these people who do not speak for the ordinary Saskatchewan people, and who do not speak — that's for sure — for those here on the opposition side.

So those are the four or five points which I made this afternoon, Mr. Speaker. And now I wish to conclude, or move on to the conclusion and my remarks, and make three or four other points before I take my place on this important and historic debate.

As I've said, Mr. Speaker, this debate is a debate which will go down in history as a black Friday for democracy.

Shame on the Conservative government opposite. Shame that they've had to use their majority. Shame that they have not taken part in the debates. Shame on them that they simply stony-faced, with blunt determination, shame on them that they fear words, the power of words.

We know all about the power of words because we have seen, in other jurisdictions, other governments who fear words in other circumstances — I don't say that in this circumstance, I'll make this absolutely clear, Mr. Speaker — but who hide behind guns and the barrel of a gun because they're afraid of words. Shame on them.

Shame on this government which hides behind its majority. Shame on this government which uses its majority to stifle — what? — the power of words; to stifle the very essence of what this institution is all about — words. And it's not only words, it's words and it's political action inside the House and outside the House, while the legislature is meeting and while the legislature is not meeting.

These are words. These are ideas. This is the essence of why we're into political life. This is what the clash of these ideologies that we are competing here in Saskatchewan now between the Conservatives and the New Democrats — this is what the essence of parliament is all about.

Shame on them, sir, because they use their majority to stifle — stifle they are determined to do — contrary ideas, because, they say, it's "too long, too repetitive, enough is enough." How shallow those words are. Too long. Too repetitive. It's shallow enough. But nothing as the substance of the debate.

Where have we heard the Minister of Finance articulate his vision of Saskatchewan and how privatization fits into the year 2000? Where is it that we've heard any of the other speakers in this debate articulate that with respect to the ideas and the hope for our families and for their families and for our children and for the farming people? Where have we heard those ideals and those visions? Shame on them.

No, it is — the debate is too long, the debate is repetitive. We can't take it any more. Well you know, Mr. Speaker, parliament is words and it is ideas. And cutting off a debate, as they're trying to do under Bill 20 here, is an example that they don't understand parliament and they don't understand democracy.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, from years of experience in this legislature, and I think you would agree with me, sir, in the most difficult job of all of us in the House, sir, that you have — this is not an easy institution. We are men and women with strong ideas and competing visions.

It's not a perfect system, parliament; it doesn't fit into some orderly, computerized, almost factory-produced end result. You don't compartmentalize debates in 20 minutes; you know, sometimes it could be 25 or 30, the germ of the idea needs to be developed — or even longer. It's not neat; it's not tidy.

In fact that great parliamentarian — perhaps one of the

greatest of all time — Winston Churchill said of parliament that it is not like a sausage factory, Mr. Speaker. It's not a sausage factory that simply produces by rote a series of ideas or a series of positions as if we were some sort of factory or assembly line. We are men and women with ideas and emotions and fears and dislikes and likes, and we are imperfect; and as a result, the system works imperfectly and the result is that the system frequently imposes frustration upon the governments of the day.

(1345)

I know that. I sat on the treasury benches for 11 years. I know how hard it is dealing with an opposition can be. They express their frustration toward us. They say we're recalcitrant and we're not being co-operative. I tell you, I've felt the same thing; I probably said the same thing when I was the government House Leader.

But this is the one forum, when the legislature is sitting and when we're not cut off from debate, where there is no closure motion, it is the one opportunity, Mr. Speaker, where we can, through the power of ideas and the power of words, hold the government to account and put forward the critical ideas and advance new ideas. And it's not tidy and it's not perfect. Some of us are not eloquent — goodness knows, not as eloquent as the Premier and the people opposite — but we try.

This is the one time where we can advance the views, because it is not a system which is perfect and it frustrates those that are in power. It frustrates us. I'm sure the Premier and the government opposite is frustrated by it. I'm sure the opposition, the government House leaders, and the Deputy House Leader is frustrated by it.

But how do you deal with that frustration, Mr. Speaker? How do you deal with it? Do you deal with it by the sledge-hammer approach of closure, simply saying, I've had enough of your ideas; I'm going to shut off the debate, as I'm going to do on Bill 20; do you do it that way? Or do you do it with your words, with your publicity, with your public rallies? Do you try to go beyond this Chamber to convince public opinion and get public opinion to gradually work its way on our point of view, if we happen to be in error, so that we can be reflective of that public opinion and judge by that public opinion and make the decisions in this legislature as to whether our speeches should be shorter, whether debate should be shorter. Do you do it that way, or do you use the sledge-hammer of closure and the black day of democracy and the cutting off of democracy as the Premier and the members opposite have determined to do?

This is not the first government which has been frustrated. It won't be the last government that'll be frustrated. I can be key to that. I'll be sure to that. That is the one truism that I say.

An Hon. Member: — It's how you handle it.

Mr. Romanow: — But how you handle it, as my colleague from the Battlefords says, which shows the level of maturity, which shows the strength of your

arguments as to what you're trying to do in the justification, which is the key.

Now we've had other examples of closure. We've had other governments frustrated, Mr. Speaker. Did they use closure as is being done on this particular Bill?

An Hon. Member: — Never.

Mr. Romanow: — They did. They did in some circumstances. My colleagues say never. They never did in Saskatchewan; that's true. But it's been done, and it was done on many occasions, unfortunately, in Ottawa, or more occasions. But the one time which sticks out in history was the pipeline debate. Some of us remember that; I think most of us remember that.

And what I'm trying to say about the power of words and ideas and public opinion being the censure on an opposition which is not doing the right thing, as opposed to the government majority, was best summarized by a great parliamentarian. I referred to him before lunch and I want to give another quotation from him — Mr. Stanley Knowles, who now sits as an honorary clerk at the Table at the House of Commons — at the time of the great pipeline debate.

And during that debate the government was frustrated. During that debate the government decided it wanted to go with closure, and during that debate the government had what it had felt in its own mind were as good arguments for doing it, as I'm sure the government does with respect to Bill 20. And they went ahead and they implemented closure.

And we know the outrage of the media, and we know the outrage of the Canadian public, and we know the outrage of those, all of us who love democracy with all of its inconsistencies and its lack of tidiness and its lack of neatness. There was outrage.

And Stanley Knowles said this, Mr. Speaker. And he quoted former prime minister on the use of closure. He said the following:

There are some occasions on which there is a cleavage between the majority and the minority, and then there is an easy remedy.

Get this, Mr. Speaker, "and then there is an easy remedy." Mr. Knowles said:

The remedy is not closure. It is not the application of brute force. The remedy is an appeal to the people. The people, after all, are the judge and the jury. The people, after all, are the parties to pass judgement as between the government and the opposition in the point of an impasse, between the majority and the minority.

I repeat again, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier and the members opposite, as Stanley Knowles says:

The remedy is an appeal to the people. The people, after all, are the judge and the jury.

That's what we've been doing. That's what we've been doing with SaskEnergy; that's what we've been doing for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. We appealed to the people in a public way, going out and meeting them at the time of the SaskEnergy debate. We are now appealing to the people here in this debate, on the jury of public opinion, Mr. Speaker. And that's exactly what the government should be doing. In fact I would argue the government has been trying to do that.

But the government and us differ as to what's happened. Whereas we've succeeded in marshalling public opinion in this province against the privatization madness of this government, the Premier and his team has totally failed in marshalling their ideas and arguments on the privatization scheme.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — And so, Mr. Speaker, denuded, disarmed of the most potent weapon that any politician in a democracy can have — public opinion — standing naked, absolutely without any armour or any weapons, no public opinion, this government, like the government during the pipeline debate, resorts to the one weapon that it does have — the censuring of the opposition, not by public opinion, but the censuring of the opposition by the use of its raw, brute majority to guillotine, to hammer down, and to close down the debate because it doesn't have public opinion.

Let me make my point just another way, Mr. Speaker. If you think that we did not have public opinion on our side, if what the Premier and the members opposite were saying is true — that we're fed up, that the people are fed up; we don't want these so-called obstructionist tactics — if that was the case, if that's what public opinion had us at, do you think that we'd be in here debating potash day after day? And if you think that that's the way that public opinion is going, why would they be bringing in the closure motion? They would be saying: keep those opposition people out there; let them dangle in the wind of public opinion; they are going to pay the price. But no they didn't do that.

They haven't done that because it is the most glaring admission that the biggest arsenal, the biggest weapon that any government or any political party or any political leader has, and that is ideas and words and public opinion. This government is denuded of it and they are reduced to the most base, the most crass, most harmful, most undemocratic, and that's why I call it a black Friday day closure. I say the people of Saskatchewan will never forgive them or forget what they're trying to do today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — That's why use of closure is big news everywhere. Not because . . . Well everybody's tired about the length of debate. It's big news because it shows that the government is bankrupt of public opinion. It shows the government's public opinion is simply not there. And that's the point that I was making this morning, and what I shall repeat to make to the Regina editorialist boards, or any other editorialist boards: you do not have the support of the public on your side.

Now let me turn to another point, Mr. Speaker. Let me turn to another point. And that is this motion and what it means for the future, Mr. Speaker, because, Mr. Speaker, this now sets a precedent. I tell you, sir, excuse me for saying so because you know more than anybody does in this House, this is an unprecedented act. This is a first-ever act, a shameful act, first ever.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I repeat again, I've been in this legislature with the heavyweights. I've been in opposition and I've been in government prior to this time in 1986 when I got re-elected. I think of people like Ross Thatcher and Cy MacDonald and Davey Steuart, and I think of Woodrow Lloyd and I think of Allan Blakeney and I think of heavyweights. I have seen people who have carried their ideas with vigour and determination and passion. The debates in this hall rang with eloquence. They rang with determination, but never ever did I see this first-ever unprecedented act — it's never happened, Mr. Speaker.

In 1967 I was first elected to this Legislative Assembly, and right after that election, the government of the day, the later Premier Ross Thatcher introduced deterrent fees on medicare. It's something that we on this side cherish and love, and we fought it as a matter of fundamental principle.

I might say — just to cast this in context — in those days a legislative session would be about 40 days, if that. It would start before Easter time and somehow the conventional wisdom was that you'd be done by Good Friday. It might spread over a couple days after Good Friday. That was the way the rules of the House and the conventional wisdom operated. There was no television, and for whatever reason, the lengthy sessions which we have had never were there.

But they brought in deterrent fees right after medicare in 1962. We lost the election in 1964, the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) did. To us, Mr. Speaker, that was a fundamental issue, and we said as an opposition, we're going to mobilize public opinion and we're going to filibuster. We're going to fight against it. And by the yardsticks of the debate in the 1968 period, it was a major debate.

You know, we read letters after letters. If you think the debate here has been repetitious, we read letters after letters after letters from ordinary people saying, don't take away deterrents . . . medicare, I'm sorry, by putting on the deterrent fees.

And we were enjoined by debate. Ross Thatcher, that great orator, as much as I disagreed with him, what an orator he was! And Davey Steuart and Gordon Grant — there was a clash of the ideas. They didn't run away and hide on the arguments; they took part in the arguments. They didn't simply try to outwait the opposition, you know, until we tired out, and then say after 14 weeks, oh look, they've been talking for 80 hours.

They debated us and they never introduced, to their credit, closure. And they got deterrent fees — sadly. To this day I say they did it — sadly. But they did it because

they know that they would not violate the fundamental principle of this House and of parliament, although they may have violated the fundamental principles of medicare at the time of doing it. That debate I'll never forget in 1967, Mr. Speaker.

This is not unprecedented. I'll go back to 1962 when Woodrow Lloyd and Tommy Douglas, in this hallowed Chamber — think about these giants who here on those benches — brought in medicare, and the Conservatives fought them on medicare and the Liberals fought them on medicare, those people who now form the front benches, many of whom opposed it and still don't believe in medicare.

What a debate that was, Mr. Speaker. What a debate that was. People kicking on the doors of the Legislative Assembly, they reported. There were strong feelings and strong passions. Woodrow Lloyd went through a living hell. Woodrow Lloyd's life was threatened. Woodrow Lloyd had to live through a doctors' strike. Woodrow Lloyd had to compromise and find a solution.

There was a heavyweight and a giant, and he went out there to the public and he sold the public on the question of medicare; at least he tried to do it. And he did everything that he could do to win his day, Mr. Speaker, but one thing he did not do is he did not bring in closure. No, he didn't.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — What did he do, Mr. Speaker? Did he get up in the House and say, oh, you know, the opposition's been talking a little bit too long; the opposition's been a little bit repetitive, you know; Mr. Thatcher's been boisterous about this; Mary Batten, the distinguished jurist, she's been a little bit too harsh; you know, these people should be cut off.

Did he do that? Did the giants of the day have that? Did they slink behind their majorities to cut off the debate? And I want to tell you, in 1962 when you were fighting for medicare and you had the galleries and the media against it — just take a look at the *Star-Phoenix* and the *Leader-Post* — and you had the chambers of commerces, and you didn't have an Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise but you had the Keep our Doctors committee there, and the battle was on, the NDP and the CCF, because we were trying to save and to build for this province. Did they slink behind their majority and say: we're going to cut you off? Were they that weak? Were they that gutless? They were men and women of courage because they went to the public opinion to sell it. And that's what we believe in, Mr. Speaker.

(1400)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — And I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I lived through one of these debates, and I mean a debate. I don't mean these 80 hours where the opposition government says nothing, as it's done nothing for the entire 80 hours or whatever length of time we've debated it.

I piloted the potash Bill through. I piloted that through the second reading debates and all of the emotions and the amendments, and I piloted it through clause by clause, and I want to tell the Premier opposite I had heavyweights opposing me, I had heavyweights . . .

An Hon. Member: — For personal reasons.

Mr. Romanow: — No personal reason. I believed in it. We still believe in it. And if the public doesn't support us, we paid the price in 1982. We'll pay the price again in 1990 if they don't buy it. We'll see if they do or they don't.

But the one thing that we did not do is we did not use closure and we had a debate, Mr. Speaker, on this issue. We had a debate. We weren't simply mute. We simply didn't see the government stand back and do nothing. And we didn't threaten closure, and we didn't use closure because we allowed the democratic process to go.

And even if public opinion was against us, we concluded that we could change public opinion. We felt that we could get out there and sell public opinion; that in the course if we did, we would get the opposition to change their ways and they would give in and allow the passage of the Bill, because if they didn't they would pay the price politically.

That's what we did in 1976 and 1977. And it's not a matter of saying, well you debated potash in '76 for 110 hours or whatever it is, and you're going to get 110 hours now, and we're going to guillotine you. I mean, if it was that simple, Mr. Speaker, if we were that shallow intellectually then, of course, what's the sense of any of us being here?

That was a titanic struggle of philosophy and of politics and of economics and ideology and Canada and future. And we've not had that here because the other side's refused to join us in the debate. Oh they will now; now that they've decided to abrogate the fundamental right of democracy, now that they have lost the public opinion battle, they try to sell some . . . why did we not use closure then, Mr. Speaker? Because I want to tell you, we believed then, as I believe now in 1989-1990, as I'm getting up here and defending the position of my party on this issue, we believed then that the ultimate judge on this issue is not the majority. They do not have the right in this House, this majority, to determine whether or not the debate's gone on too long or whether the arguments are too tedious, or whether the arguments are repetitive. The ultimate judges of those, Mr. Speaker, are the people outside this Chamber and not the Premier and his dictatorial group.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, we didn't hide behind our majorities. We didn't hide. We took it right to the front and we took the lumps and we did the debate. And this government is not doing that because It can't pursue the courage of its convictions and it doesn't have public opinion on its support, and so it resorts to the last way out — the majority — the last way out, the last unacceptable way out.

What a precedent, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what a precedent. What a precedent and what a day that the member from Regina South is a party to. What a happy day that the Deputy House Leader, the member from Melfort, is a party to.

In the midst of all of their collapses from GigaText to SaskEnergy to the economy to the debt, they now have to suffer the ignominy, the ignominy of not having the strength of public opinion behind them in shutting down the doors on what we believe, and a lot of people do — whatever the majority is — of a fundamental issue, so weak, so gutless, so scared, so afraid, so fearful, so out of touch, so rudderless, Mr. Speaker, that I guarantee you, the people of Saskatchewan, when they catch up to this Premier and this government, will give it the biggest licking it's ever had in political history. I guarantee you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — And in addition to that . . .

An Hon. Member: — Table the document.

Mr. Romanow: — You see, that's the level of the interjection, the level of the interjection. And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, notwithstanding the catcalls from the member from Melville, I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, still on this point about the dangerous precedent that we're talking about here, have the members opposite considered what this means for the future?

You do it once, it will be easier to do it twice, and then thrice, and then from then on in. What will be tomorrow like if SaskEnergy comes . . . not if, when SaskEnergy comes back to this House and they want to sell off that to the people of Canada and beyond? What happens when they want to bring back SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) and all of a sudden we decide as a matter of fundamental principle that that is going too far?

Will they now use it a third time because, well the speeches were a little bit too long. You know, sometime the speeches get a little bit longer on second and third occasions and the patience gets a little bit shorter. Will it happen when they decide to privatize medicare or hospitalization if they should be re-elected in the next election time?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, by this motion on Bill 20 to cut off the debate, this government has set a course, not only in terms of the economic and the philosophical direction of this province — I'll speak to that when I have a chance again on Bill 20; if I have a chance, given the short number of hours that we are facing by this guillotine movement.

But I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I'll speak to that because I want to make a prediction to you, sir, and I want to make a prediction to the people of the province of Saskatchewan who may be watching this debate, if this government gets away with this quashing of democracy because they are so blindly in the hip-pocket of the big business people of this country and this province because they are pursuing a policy and a philosophy

which is outdated — privatization, it's a passing fad — if they are so determined to do that here, I predict they will do it in privatizing SaskEnergy, I predict they will do it when they want to sell off SGI, I predict they will do it when they want to privatize medicare and hospitalization, because, mark my words, members of this Assembly, that's next on the order paper is medicare and hospitalization.

This Premier and this government has decided that there are more efficient ways to deliver our social service programs; they believe that. They believe that. I'm fighting Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. I'm fighting the issue for the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Member. That's what I'm fighting for.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — And you know, Mr. Speaker, if what I said was not true, where will it happen in the future? Why wouldn't this government and the deputy leader, in introducing the motion, announce to the government and the press and everybody here in the Assembly, no, this is a once-in-a-lifetime shot. It still wouldn't be justifiable, but at least he could've said to us, it's a once-in-a-lifetime shot.

But he hasn't done that; he won't do that. Oh, he will say, you know, we are rebellious and cantankerous and all of these kinds of things. There isn't an opposition in the world that isn't rebellious and cantankerous. And I want to tell you, we've conducted, under the circumstances, a good piece of the business, and we're ready to stay here to conduct the balance of the business of this House, as we always have been. We'll use all of those arguments.

Well, they laugh. They bring in their Bills in July; they bring their Bills in July. We have not sat for nine months, Mr. Speaker. We've not sat here for nine months, and there's been no legislation brought in, and all of a sudden they bring in all of these Bills in June and July, and then they say: you've got to debate these Bills; mind you, we're not going to call them, we're going to force you to potash, but you've got to debate these Bills.

But the most important point that I want to make here, Mr. Speaker, is they have not set any parameters on this dangerous motion, this worse-than-closure motion, not whatsoever. This means that this power is open and it's available to them, and I guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, it's going to be used again and again. And I predict that this power will be used, if not this term, if they should get re-elected, it will be used, as sure as I am standing here, for SaskEnergy and for SGI and for medicare and hospitalization.

And I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that's why we are standing in the defence of this Assembly and democracy. We're not going to let them do it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, it's a dangerous precedent. Every government has the constitutional obligation and duty to govern; I accept that totally. It is the job of the opposition to be a part of that government. It is

the part of the opposition to debate, to oppose where it opposes fundamental legislation. But the idea at the end of the day is that governments should continue and should proceed; no one quarrels with that.

But the very basis of governance in a democracy, Mr. Speaker, the very basis upon which everything else rests is mandate and authority by the government at election time to do what it's doing. This government has none because it didn't campaign on these issues; moreover it said it wouldn't do it. It needs the mandate and it needs the public opinion going into this.

And so long as a legitimate opposition believes that there is no mandate and there is no public opinion, it has the obligation — nay, I say the duty — to oppose lawfully and correctly in any available means to it. That is what the experts say; that's what the students of political science say. That is the tradition of this great institution; that's the position of the New Democratic Party when it comes to privatization and all the things the PCs have tried to do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish to conclude my remarks. I wish to conclude my remarks very briefly, just saying what I said at the outset. These have been sad times for the PC government opposite. I think being a Premier of the province of Saskatchewan under the current circumstances under which our Premier must labour must be a very difficult job for him. I don't know how he gets to bed and sleeps with GigaText and everything else around his neck and the cabinet that he's got to deal with. I know it's not easy. And I know how tough it is when he's got this huge, multibillion dollar debt and all those problems around. I understand that. I wasn't a Premier, but I was around and I knew how tough the job is. I know it's tough . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Some of my colleagues say that it's because it's created by them. I think it was. We can debate that on other occasions

But I'll tell you, that as difficult as it's been for him and for them, the reality is that these were created not by us, but by them, these problems. I didn't sign the GigaText deal; neither did the people on this side, or the Provincial Auditor's report or the other problems.

That's the inevitability, Mr. Premier, of what government does. You make some good deals; you make some bad deals; you get into some controversial policy initiatives. Some of those controversial policy initiatives mean a long debate. That's the job you signed up for, sir. That's the job that you undertook and you're going to have to take the criticism and the heat and the responsibility. I didn't do those; our people didn't do that. I think what we're doing is what an opposition is to do, and that is to raise the questions.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this motion shows that the credibility of this government has been shredded by a string of promises, broken promises, and trust betrayed. Their record is a record of incompetence, waste, mismanagement. The privatization agenda lies in tatters. They're losing their authority to govern.

(1415)

They do not have the simple administrative skills to govern, Mr. Speaker, just the simple — whether you're a Conservative, or a Liberal, New Democratic — just the simple administrative cleanliness of running a government. I'm not talking about in terms of any scandals. I mean just neat administrative enactment of policies — none of that.

It's a dangerous and desperate government which has lost touch, driven by such friends as the Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise, and a few others. They're stuck in that mud hole of privatization and they cannot get out of that political quicksand and they have no other solution but to try to silence debate, as has been said by Mr. Stanley Knowles and the others.

I want to close, Mr. Speaker, by giving you one last quotation which makes my point better than I ever could. I know the member from Meadow Lake, the Minister of Health, is urging you to sit me down, as I suspect he doesn't like to hear this very much. But I want to make this last point if I can, and that is this, Mr. Speaker, in closing my remarks. More than 30 years ago . . .

An Hon. Member: — Give us some more medicare, Roy.

Mr. Romanow: — Well the Minister of Health says, give us some more medicare stuff.

An Hon. Member: — Yes, you always revert to that when you got nothing else to say.

Mr. Romanow: — Well I revert to that because it's absolutely true. You people have never supported medicare, and you don't now — you don't now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — And I want to say, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I want to close by saying, more than 30 years ago, Mr. Speaker, there was another great heavyweight, a giant. I never served with him . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well a lot of them are, but a great giant. I had many occasions to serve on platforms with him, and I got to know him quite well, to be very frank with you. John Diefenbaker.

An Hon. Member: — Right on.

Mr. Romanow: — Right on, and that's so true, all the ideological differences that one could have with Mr. Diefenbaker. John Diefenbaker participated in that historic pipeline debate in Ottawa that I referred to then when another arrogant out-of-touch majority government tried to ram through parliament a major — and lacking popular will, denuded of that weapon — measure on the use of closure. And Mr. Diefenbaker with forceful eloquence spoke out in defence of free trade — this was during closure — he spoke out in defence of free trade and parliamentary democracy as set against the frustration of the minister of the government — the

frustration which I understood.

Mr. Diefenbaker condemning closure then said — and the same arguments were there about a duly government's power to govern and the speeches are repetitive; all those things were said at the day — Mr. Diefenbaker said this. And not these words, Mr. Speaker, as I close my remarks:

Not for the purpose of interfering with unnecessary debate (referring to closure) but rather designed (Mr. Speaker) to secure silence, that's what closure is.

To secure silence and to use parliament as an institution in which the government may produce what it will, to produce what the government will will (Mr. Diefenbaker said).

If that's what parliament is, is able to propound any proposition it likes (Mr. Diefenbaker says) and because of its majority here to know that regardless of whether or not there is any support for it, the majority will carry it through, that is wrong (he said). They are afraid of the truth in using closure; they're afraid of the truth in using closure, they're afraid of an election (Mr. Diefenbaker said in that debate).

And that's the situation with this government opposite.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — You know, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Diefenbaker was dead right. They're afraid of the truth so they hid behind their majority. They're afraid of an election so they hide behind closure. If Mr. Diefenbaker was alive today, he'd be sitting right here on this side, opposing the PC government on this issue.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — In fact I'll tell you this: if Mr. Diefenbaker was alive, what he is seeing this government doing in the sale-off and the privatization and the Americanization of Canada — the Americanization of Canada, where today's *Globe and Mail* talks about a loss of another major foreign corporation — that's what's happening with the privatization of Bill 20 on the potash corporation.

Mr. Diefenbaker, I predict, would say these people are no more Conservatives than he went . . . as a member of the man of the moon in the voting colony up there, these people aren't Conservatives in the Diefenbaker-like, not at all; these are new Reaganites; these are new Republicans; these are new Americans; these are new frontiers who want to roll back the clock of history, who want to deny the traditions of this institution, afraid to debate, as Mr. Diefenbaker says, afraid of the truth, afraid of an election.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons and others, I stand opposed to this black Friday motion of this government opposite.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, when I talked to . . . I talked to my colleagues when I found out that the Leader of the Opposition was going to enter into the debate. I said, he will talk about medicare. He will say black Friday, because the debate's on a Friday. He will talk about the end of democracy in Saskatchewan.

An Hon. Member: — Not the end.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Well . . . No, he did say, in his rhetoric, the end of democracy.

And the other thing I said, he hasn't attacked the press yet this session. And those that keep score up there know that every session the Leader of the Opposition has to attack them once. And he started it out this morning attacking the press, a democratic institution, attacking the press because they weren't covering what the opposition has been saying for some four months, 80-some hours, and several days.

And I can tell him, Mr. Speaker, why the press weren't covering the opposition — because they didn't say anything about potash, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — All that we have had for four months is an internal contest within the New Democratic Party as to who could talk the longest, Mr. Speaker — who could talk the longest. I don't know what the prize is. I don't know what the prize is. I hate to think of what the prize is, Mr. Speaker, but I'm sure there is one.

But let's take a look at what the Leader of the Opposition said today, and, to put it into the historical context, that he did. Because what I am going to prove beyond a question of a doubt today is that that leader, that leader has lost his authority to control his own party and his own opposition, and I'll prove my case, Mr. Speaker.

And he talked about the historical great debates in this province, and he listed some of them. And those I agree — Tommy Douglas, Ross Thatcher, ones that I'm familiar with, Mr. Speaker, they were tremendous orators. And they debated, and they debated strongly. And you know, there was a difference, Mr. Speaker. When those great orators and leaders debated, they wanted to debate. They never once said, we will walk out of the Assembly so no once can debate. They never once took a strike. I want the hon. member to remember what he said, Ross Thatcher kicking the door, it was Ross Thatcher kicking the door to get in here to talk about it, Mr. Speaker, not kicking the door to walk out and walk out and walk around this province. It was to get in here, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — And let's look at what happened in that debate. Let's look at what happened in that debate. Never in the history of this province, never in the history of this province has a Leader of the Opposition — and I put that

in the same context of the now Leader of the Opposition when he talked about some of the great issue like medicare — never once did the Leader of the Opposition walk out, say that you cannot bring in your legislation. They debated, as he says, they debated strongly. They debated with intensity, they debated with emotion. But I ask the question of everybody; let me say that if the Leader of the Opposition, when the medicare debate was on, had have walked out, rang the bells and said he's not coming back in, we wouldn't have medicare today, Mr. Speaker. That's what would have happened.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — That's what would have happened, Mr. Speaker. If the opposition — and I was part of it, Mr. Speaker, when potash nationalization was on, the previously longest debate in this House — had have said, we disagree with what you're doing, you have no mandate, and they never talked about it in the '75 election. As a matter of fact I'm going to give an example, Mr. Speaker, going to give an example of when the hon. member was House Leader, what actually took place.

If we had have walked out of the House and said we're not coming back, there would have never been a PCS, Mr. Speaker. But every opposition in the history of our great province has recognized, has recognized that there is a balance of rights, that there is a balance between the right of the opposition to oppose and the right of the government to govern. And they always recognized that the time to resolve that was at the next election. And that at the last election the people had spoken. And nowhere in the history of our province has there been a rule, a belief, or a principle that in fact a government elected one day could not bring in its legislation and its proposal. Never once, never in the history of the British parliamentary system has that proposal ever been made until the present Leader of the Opposition assumed his role as Leader of the New Democratic Party.

I'm going to give an example, Mr. Speaker, about prior to the 1976 potash nationalization debate. And I'll tell you how democratic and how much debate there was by the NDP of the day.

In 1973 there was a member of this Assembly by the name of John Richards, and John Richards, Mr. Speaker, was a New Democratic member — fairly famous at one time in Saskatchewan history, a man of strong beliefs in the socialist philosophy, Mr. Speaker, a head of the Waffle movement. I can recall in 1973 the now Leader of the Opposition was House Leader, an important portfolio, House Leader when this event happened. And the then member, Mr. Richards, stood up in this House and he introduced a motion. And you know what that motion said? It didn't say to nationalize the potash industry — even he wasn't convinced — but what the motion did was ask the government of the day to study the nationalization of the potash industry — study, very precise, even he wasn't convinced, but that's an aside — but asked it to study.

And you know what the New Democratic Party did with its own member bringing that motion before the House, under the House Leader, the deputy premiership, the now

Leader of the Opposition did? No New Democrats would second their own party member's motion, Mr. Speaker. It was a member of the Liberal opposition of the day that had to stand up and second that so that the member had the right to speak on something he believed in. And that tells you something, Mr. Speaker, about the true beliefs and the abilities of the Leader of the Opposition.

An Hon. Member: — Intolerance.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — The intolerance — the intolerance — of the Leader of the Opposition is frightening, Mr. Speaker. We have an opposition, and I think we have to go back and realize the true reasons, the true reasons . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. There are two members here carrying on a debate and not allowing the minister to proceed with his remarks in an orderly fashion. Would those two members please refrain?

(1430)

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to quote from the member from Regina Rosemont, because this is fundamental to the debate that we're seeing today. And he said on March 19:

The NDP must organize to create a climate of political revolt in this province.

A climate of political revolt. And I want to take other statements that have been endorsed by the opposition members, of the leaders . . .

An Hon. Member: — He wants a change in government. That's what a lot of people want.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — That's not the words he used. That's not the traditional rhetoric of change in this province. Not revolt, Mr. Speaker. Revolt is not a word that we use in our democratic process for a change in government.

And then we have, Mr. Speaker, the objectives set forward by the federation of labour, endorsed by two members sitting on the same platform of the New Democratic Party, that this province must be made ungovernable.

So when we look at those facts, Mr. Speaker, and the historical position of the now Leader of the Opposition bringing something new to the Table that he endorses and believes that his opposition has the right to walk out, ring the bells and not come back, Mr. Speaker — a precedent in this province, a precedent in Canada of stopping debate. There is a balance of rights, and governments are elected to govern, Mr. Speaker.

I want to take some of the other arguments that the Leader of the Opposition has given. And he started out this morning with a . . . tried to set a stage in his position that this government doesn't build, that when the New Democrats were elected in '71 they built on what the late Ross Thatcher had done. I'm going to tell you the truth about that. The second action of the New Democratic Party in 1971, when he was then Deputy Premier, was not to build, it was to cancel the Meadow Lake pulp mill, Mr.

Speaker; it was to stop the building. One — fact — his statement is totally inaccurate.

He also talked . . . then he said all of the information that the NDP gave in the potash debate, and he referred to one Robertson study. There was a précis given as to why. I'm talking the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

But do you know what was never given to the people of this province, and it has not been given today by the New Democratic Party, is the cost of nationalization, the cost of acquisitions, the valuations of the mines, the valuations of the resource — never, every given. We were always told that the public can't have that because it's commercial. We did not get the information, Mr. Speaker. The second fact that the hon. member said is totally inaccurate.

Let me talk about . . . he says that this government persists in just bringing potash forward. We've accomplished something in this session. He says he didn't do that.

Let me talk, Mr. Speaker. The historical record again refutes what the now Leader of the Opposition says. November 26, potash nationalization; November 27, potash nationalization; December 1, potash nationalization; December 3, potash nationalization; December 4, December 8, potash nationalization; December 9, potash nationalization; December 10, potash nationalization; December 11, potash nationalization; December 15, potash nationalization; December 22, potash nationalization — we'd have a break for Christmas — January 7, January 8, potash nationalization; January 12, 14, 15, 19, 26, 28, potash nationalization.

Didn't he, Mr. Speaker, didn't he, Mr. Speaker, drive potash . . .

An Hon. Member: — Wasn't the budget dealt with?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — No it wasn't dealt with. The budget was brought in after, to tell the hon. member; he wasn't around. And it didn't happen, and the budget wasn't dealt with. It was one topic, Mr. Speaker, and that debate, Mr. Speaker, took some 19 days — 19 days, Mr. Speaker. But in those days there was a belief — and the Hon. Leader of the Opposition is right that the opposition fought it and fought it hard with emotion. But, Mr. Speaker, the opposition didn't walk out for an extended period of time. The opposition didn't go on strike. The opposition did not, Mr. Speaker, shut the House down. That was unprecedented, Mr. Speaker.

In that intense medicare debate, the opposition didn't walk out, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, they didn't walk out. They didn't go on strike. They didn't shut the House down.

Mr. Speaker, the evidence is so strong that the fundamental driving force here is not a concern about the issue; it's what the opposition said, that they want a political revolt.

And I look at the words of the House Leader of the opposition before the press the other day on the introduction of the notice of the motion when he said: we

will string it out — string it out. Stringing out is not debate, Mr. Speaker, it is thwarting debate, Mr. Speaker. It is obstructionist, Mr. Speaker; it is not debate.

And the fundamental principle that is missed by the Leader of the Opposition on those two conflicting rights is the fundamental right of parliament, Mr. Speaker, to decide, to decide, Mr. Speaker, and that all debate in the history of parliament is for the reason to eventually come to a decision, to come to a decision, to decide — to decide.

And what do the NDP say? We're going to string it out; we're going to talk till winter; we're going to go on strike; we're going to throw sand in the wheels of government — indefinitely. Those are the words used, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, we got to the point — and I think that the Leader of the Opposition has to take full responsibility, as he said the Premier had to for his government and his party, the Leader of the Opposition has to take full responsibility for his.

And, Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Leader of the Opposition had have been here, he would have known why the press wasn't covering it, Mr. Speaker. He would have known that the debates given . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I wish to remind the hon. member that members are not to refer to the absence of members.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I apologize, Mr. Speaker. I do recall this morning when the Leader of the Opposition . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Now that is not the issue. Unfortunately that was done on both sides of the House this morning, and I'm not going to allow it again.

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Sorry, Mr. Speaker. Then it got to the point, Mr. Speaker, where we had the House Leader of the NDP standing up the other day, said, we want to proceed with X, Y, and Z items, nothing else. We've never had a situation, Mr. Speaker, where an opposition party so usurps its role it believes it's government.

Let me tell you, you're not the government, Mr. Speaker. I doubt very much whether you ever will be.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — But, Mr. Speaker, you can't on the one hand, Mr. Speaker . . . the NDP cannot, Mr. Speaker, on the one hand say that they're holding up their right to oppose, and at the same time say they have the right to govern. That's not the system; that's not the process; that's not the British parliamentary system.

The hon. member talked about building, and it was a digression, but he tried to set the stage. And I remind the people of Saskatchewan about his record of cancelling projects — the pride that the New Democratic Party take today in stopping Rafferty, the desire of the New Democratic Party to stop the fertilizer plant.

Mr. Speaker, we've talked about the hours of debate.

With two conflicting rights, Mr. Speaker, with two conflicting rights, obviously the public will decide what's fair. The public will decide what's fair.

Whether the New Democratic Party has now had, and will have at the end of the motion, the longest debate in the history of this province — longer than medicare, longer than medicare, Mr. Speaker — and we should put it on record that the New Democratic Party today took longer to fight Bill 20 than it did to introduce the Bill to medicare. And I think that tells you something about the new New Democrats of today, Mr. Speaker, and their priorities and their objectives.

It is a record debate, Mr. Speaker. The content, the quality, the public can decide. Members opposite seem happy. I think independent judges of that probably have a different view. But, Mr. Speaker, if this issue is as important as the New Democrats say, why was a game made out of it? Why was it a game as to who could talk the longest? This is not a marathon, Mr. Speaker. Parliament is to debate to get to a decision.

And I was shocked, and I'm sure all members of the press were today, and I know the public will be surprised, some of the public, because they're beginning to see through the Leader of the Opposition as they did in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, when he said, Mr. Speaker, that the walk-out, the 17-day strike was not a matter of principle, as they said at the time, Mr. Speaker. It was to get media attention, to get . . . How shallow, Mr. Speaker? How shallow can you get, Mr. Speaker, when the NDP leader stands up and says, we're going to take away the right of parliament; we're going to ring the bells; we're going on strike for as long as we want — to get media attention?

Mr. Speaker, the greats used to do that by rhetoric, Mr. Speaker. The greats that he referred to did it by their ability to communicate, not by their ability to start bell-ringing and stop debate.

Mr. Speaker, I found that a shocking statement. I know it was passed over, but I found it a shocking statement. I suspected it, but that's my partisanship when I say that, Mr. Speaker. I suspected that it was just done for media attention, that it wasn't done for principle, because we haven't seen much principle coming out of the New Democratic Party under its new leadership. We know we haven't seen programs; we certainly haven't seen principle.

So let me put these three facts to you, Mr. Speaker, the three points. I've listed a number of blatant inaccuracies in the Leader of the Opposition's comments. I have stated the tactics in this session, for media attention, I might add; and the admissions, Mr. Speaker, the admissions of the NDP House Leader that it's stringing out; the member from Regina Rosemont, that he wants a political revolt; the member from Regina Victoria, proud to be radical.

Mr. Speaker, you can hold up parliament in two ways. You can hold up parliament with a gun, Mr. Speaker, or you can hold up parliament with bells. But either one, Mr. Speaker, when it's carried to an extreme is no less an action of parliamentary terrorism, Mr. Speaker.

Parliamentary terrorism.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1445)

Hon. Mr. Lane: — And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, the inability of the Leader of the Opposition to control his members opposite — and today when he endorsed that he's proud to be a radical with the member from Rosemont, the member from Victoria, when he joined — leadership is more than that, Mr. Speaker. He had a duty to bring those members around, to teach them the democratic process, that no other opposition in the history of this province has ever shut parliament down, Mr. Speaker — no other opposition.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — And he carries the personal burden, Mr. Speaker, of being the first, of shutting parliament down, Mr. Speaker. Did he ever say, Mr. Speaker, that the motion before the Assembly is contrary to the rules? No, he didn't; no, he didn't. It's all right, I gather, for the opposition to use the rules, but it's not all right for government to use the rules. That's the NDP position on this debate. And even the House Leader opposite said, certainly the government's within the rules.

Mr. Speaker, I think when we look at the question of leadership, that all Saskatchewan people would have preferred that the Leader of the Opposition get control of his caucus, get control, Mr. Speaker. Because if he wants to use history on his side, he must follow it through, Mr. Speaker, and he must be true to it. And there was nothing true to it, nothing true to his position on history when he shut parliament down — terribly inconsistent.

I think Saskatchewan would have been better served, this House would have been better served, if instead of joining the radicals he had have said, look, we have balance of rights; I am not going to be the first Leader of the Opposition in the history of this province, in the history of Canada, to shut parliament down; that at some point the government has a right to govern. He could have said, we'll get even at the next election. That's fair, that's fair. But, Mr. Speaker, that's not what happened, and I say it's unfortunate.

And he says that the government doesn't have public opinion on its side. We don't agree with that. But let me say this, Mr. Speaker, let me say this, that the public will ultimately decide that.

But I can recall, Mr. Speaker, I can recall in the potash nationalization where the same individual admitted that the public was not in favour of it — admitted it publicly. Wouldn't give the polls of course, but said that the majority were not in favour, but they hoped to convince them.

So take the argument . . . it's funny, I mean, we've had during this session — funny in a strange way — that on the one hand the NDP accuse the government of governing by polls, and then on the other hand saying they've got public opinion on their side, so you shouldn't proceed.

They're rather inconsistent arguments, I would think.

But, Mr. Speaker, the government does have a right to govern. What the government is bringing forward today is within the rules. Is there fair debate? Fair debate, Mr. Speaker, which should be the ultimate test, is one that the jury is the people of this province. And we as a government. Mr. Speaker, are prepared to take that case to the jury; that the NDP had adequate time to debate ;that it was fair time to debate; that the debate on the privatization of potash is the longest in the history of this province.

NO other opposition in the history of this province, on any other issue, be it from the time of the formation of this province, through medicare, through the charter of rights, through potash nationalization, had more time to debate and to take its message to the members of this Assembly and to the public, Mr. Speaker. No other party, no other opposition has had more opportunity to take their case to the jury except the New Democratic Party. They've had more time; they've had more time by any standard — the longest debate in months and days and hours, in tedium, Mr. Speaker, in tedium, Mr. Speaker.

But I will simply conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker, by saying what the government is doing is quite within the rules; to argue otherwise is wrong.

I restate the points that I've made, Mr. Speaker: of the number of inaccuracies of the tactics and of the verbal admissions of the New Democratic Party that they want a political revolt, and say that democracy is well served when oppositions oppose and when governments govern.

And when oppositions govern, that is not what they were elected to do, Mr. Speaker. They were not elected to govern; they were elected to oppose. And when we balance those conflicting interests of government and opposition, the determination will be fairness.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, historically and in my heart, Mr. Speaker, that fairness is served with the motion here today, and fairness is served with the time and the freedom that the New Democratic Party has had to debate this issue, that freedom guaranteed by this government, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, I didn't come with any preconceived ideas about what the Minister of Finance might say in this debate. I listened to his comments, and I find one comment of the Minister of Finance is worthy of a response to, and I want to just say a word about that.

The Minister of Finance, in talking about the potash debate in 1975 and 1976, stated quite clearly that the New Democratic Party didn't have a mandate, had not told the public that they were going to become involved in potash development in the province of Saskatchewan.

The Conservative Party has been saying this for many years, despite the evidence to the contrary, a very long time they've been saying this.

And I have in my hand, Mr. Speaker, New Deal for People 1971, which was the program of the New Democratic Party. It was put out prior to the 1971 election and received very wide circulation in the province of Saskatchewan. And I recall, Mr. Speaker, sitting in this Chamber, in about that area of the Chamber and listening to the premier. Mr. Thatcher; Mr. Steuart, another member of the Liberal Party; Mr. Gordon Grant; many other members of the Liberal Party, especially from the Executive Council, standing up and waving New Deal for People and talking about it prior to 1971 election.

As a matter of fact, I believe if you check the record of the debates in the House, you will find where they read our announcements about potash in 1971 into the record, prior to the 1971 election, where they actually read it into the record of this House. And what was in the New Deal for People in 1971, which relates directly to the formation of the potash corporation and the whole debate we're in at this time, was as follows. Under the heading resources, it says:

Stop resource give-aways and increase resource revenues; develop Saskatchewan resources for Saskatchewan people.

On page 6 of the document, among other things — and I only want to read a brief part, Mr. Speaker — item 1:

The New Democratic Party government will restore employment in the following ways:

And I'll not read the first part of the paragraph but the pertinent part:

Because the present owners (and it's talking about potash corporations) have generally shown unconcern about jobs for Saskatchewan miners, and because they have used their power to force farmers to pay exorbitant fertilizer prices, an NDP government will consider the feasibility of bringing the potash industry under public ownership.

This was in 1971. It was read by many cabinet ministers across the way. Now we get to 1975, Mr. Speaker, prior to the '75 election when the New Democratic Party was the Government of Saskatchewan, and we were in some difficulty with the potash companies because of their resistance to change. They wanted it their way. We wanted it the way the people of Saskatchewan had endorsed when they voted for us in 1971, on our program.

In 1975, before the election, the New Democratic Party put out a document called New Deal '75. It was circulated very widely in the province; everyone had copies of this. There are many of them still about. And it says under the heading, "Resources":

In 1971, the New Democrats promised to act decisively to see that Saskatchewan resources are developed to benefit Saskatchewan people. Under the Blakeney government, that has been done. Direct revenues to the provincial

government from minerals alone in 1974 were more than four times what it was in 1970. These revenues will be still higher in 1975.

And it goes on, "Specifically, we will," and the second point:

Speed up direct government participation in exploration for and development of potash and hard rock minerals to achieve a greater measure of public ownership of these resources and industries.

This is directly out of the program of the New Democratic Party, circulated widely before the 1975 election. This brings us to the point of '75-76 when we had the debate about potash in this House. So I say to the Minister of Finance, stop perpetrating this story around the province of Saskatchewan that the New Democrats never told the people what their program was. We told them in 1971, we told them in 1975, before the election in each case.

Earlier today other members in this debate on the motion that's before the House talked about who has spoken in this debate. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have not had an opportunity to speak on Bill No. 20, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Bill, or with regard to the reorganization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. I haven't had an opportunity to speak to this Bill yet.

Therefore, I shall oppose this motion which is before the House. In due course, I will present other reasons why I oppose the motion.

Before I advance to my main remarks, I want to comment on some of the debate which has preceded me earlier today.

The Minister of Highways, in presenting the motion, suggested incorrectly, as members of the government have done many times before, that our government planned similar privatizations. I heard him say that. He said we planned similar privatizations back in 1981 before the 1982 election. The Minister of Highway feigns concern about our position in opposition to their resource give-aways such as the sell-off of SaskPower and the potash corporation.

Our New Democratic government gave some thought to more direct participation away back before 1982. Mr. Speaker, that's true. Our plan, although never implemented, would have complemented the Saskatchewan economy rather than be a privatization give-away. In fact, we were considering some plan. And that's no secret; many people know that already.

(1500)

Our plan, contrary to the plan of this government, Mr. Speaker, did not call for the sell-off of Crown corporations. It did not call for the development of Saskatchewan economy by out-of-province investors. It did not involve any change in the ownership of Saskatchewan's vital public utilities. It did not allow for foreign ownership of Saskatchewan's vital public

companies like the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Our plan did not call for that. It did not call for privatization of highway maintenance, or it did not call for the privatization of the school-based dental plan. So the Minister of Highways is wrong in his initial remarks today about what our plans were about the Crown corporations in Saskatchewan.

The Minister of Health today came out as a strong supporter of this super-closure motion, and that's what I call it, Mr. Speaker. It's exactly what it is. It's a super-closure motion. He's a strong supporter of muzzling any opposition to the PC privatization plans. That's the Minister of Health, along with his colleagues. He supports his call for time restrictions on parliamentary debate by saying our two main debates have restrictions on them already.

My leader, the member for Riversdale, pointed out that those two main debates, known as the throne speech and the budget address, are very broad, general debates and have to be restricted so that the Assembly itself can narrow and focus the balance of the legislative debate on specific issues such as Bills, departmental estimates, or resolutions and motions of this Assembly.

The Minister of Health further destroys his already weak argument by suggesting that there are times restrictions in parliament in Ottawa and London . . . that all times, restrictions on debate in parliament at Ottawa and in London, England. I ask any fair-minded people of Saskatchewan to consider the following elementary evidence when judging the sense of the Minister of Health's comments.

It's known to us all, there are 365 days in a year — 365 days in a year. In the House of Commons at London, there are about 600 members — about 600 members. So it stands to reason that you're going to have to put some restrictions on debates. There are only 365 days in the year.

In Ottawa, the House of Commons at Ottawa, there about 300 members, but there are only 365 days in the year. So you can understand, if they're going to get through their legislative calendar in Ottawa or the House of Commons, they have to put some restrictions on debate. Any fair-minded person would acknowledge that, and I acknowledge that.

In Regina, we have 64 members, and the same 365 days in the year. So there is no pressure, other than the political pressure this government feels, to restrict the debate. So I don't accept the minister's argument for time restrictions on democratic debate, and I don't believe that the other fair-minded people of Saskatchewan will support him either.

Mr. Speaker, this motion what we have before us is, I said, a super-closure motion. By definition of the rules of this Assembly, closure when used in the parliamentary sense means — at least from the time it is invoked — that any member will only be allowed 20 minutes in which to debate a question. In any case, every member would be able to speak to the question, even though the time would be restricted. That's closure in the rules of this Assembly.

That is the law of this Assembly.

But, Mr. Speaker, with super-closure that's very different; that is very different. And that's what this motion before the Assembly that I'm discussing now is —super-closure. Obviously it's a deviously anti-democratic PC mind which must have formulated this particular parliamentary device. This super-closure motion will permit two 11-hour days of debate on second reading. It will permit two 11-hour days of debate on committee stage, and it will permit two hours of debate on third reading.

What we have in this province, Mr. Speaker, is a Premier who is prepared to hijack democracy to get his way. That's what this boils down to.

Let me explain, Mr. Speaker. Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition — that's us —have 26, democratically elected members in this Chamber. When Bill 20, Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan reorganization, is put into committee stage, our 26 members will be allowed less than 50 minutes each to discuss and question the Bill on clause-by-clause examination — less than 50 minutes each.

But there's a provision here, Mr. Speaker. The provisions are these. No other member must speak, or that will lessen the time. And that includes the ministers. That includes the minister that's bringing forward the Bill. And provided that the chairman requires no time to read the Bill, which he will, because that subtracts from the 50 minutes, that the staff of the legislature use no time, and that the minister's officials require no time to provide answers to the minister, and finally that this Assembly would take no time whatsoever to get into or out of committee, then each of our members would have less than 50 minutes of time.

I don't believe for a moment, Mr. Speaker, that the members on the government side of the House are not going to speak on this Bill in committee, the Bill we're referring to, Bill 20, to reorganize the potash corporation. I believe they're going to try to monopolize the debate in committee, and the consequence of them attempting to monopolize the debate and being successful in monopolizing at least half of the debate will then be that we will, on this side of the House, be restricted to less than 25 minutes, less than 25 minutes each.

During that precious 50 minutes or less each of us democratically elected members have at our disposal, we will have to ask questions, receive answers, make statements, and endure the other routine and perfectly legitimate time-consuming steps over which we have little or not control.

All this, Mr. Speaker, on a Bill which has multibillion dollar ramifications to this province; all this, Mr. Speaker, which also represents 180 degree policy direction turn for the people of Saskatchewan; 180 degree policy change on Crown corporation participation in our province which in the past was supported by all parties to varying degrees. This is 180 degrees change on a multibillion dollar Bill.

Mr. Speaker, we owe it to our constituents to take as much

time as necessary to find out things like the following in this Bill. Whether we're going to find them out or not depends on the amount of time that's available.

For example, what are the implications of Article 1602, subsection 5 and 6 of the recently negotiated free trade agreement on the lessening of the possible 45 per cent foreign control of shares? If Saskatchewan people decide by democratic means to do that, what are the implications of that? How long will it take to find that out from the minister? I suspect it will take some time.

Another bit of information which may be required by members, and I wonder whether we'll have time to get it: what would be possible if some future government wanted to restrict voting shares to Canadian nationals, vis-à-vis Article 1602, subsections 5 and 6 of the free trade agreement. What would be the implications of that?

I think what we have here is something coming true which was spoken about by the Deputy Premier in Crown Corporations Committee. In the Crown Corporations Committee, the Deputy Premier was being questioned by my fellow member, the member from Saskatoon Fairview, on February 3, 1988. And what the Deputy Premier said was very instructive.

He says, in part, and this is in reference to Crown corporations and the disposal of Crown corporations. It says in the record here, Mr. Bertson says:

We're going to do what we can, though, to make it very difficult for you people to take it over again when you get back into power . . .

He goes on:

. . . because our desire is to have these things as broadly distributed as possible so that it's very difficult for you folks, if you should ever get back into power.

So what the Deputy Premier is saying to the people of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan voters: if you change your mind, if this doesn't work out, we're going to have this potash corporation so widely distributed, we're going to have the power corporation so widely distributed that you will be hamstrung in carrying out the legitimate wishes of the people of Saskatchewan. That's what the Deputy Premier is saying; that's what is behind what the Deputy Premier is saying in Crown corporations, February 3, '88.

That is what concerns us a very great deal, Mr. Speaker, because the revenge of the nerds attitude that the Deputy Premier has — and which was laid out in *The Globe and Mail* some time ago, about the potash debate — indicates that what is behind the Deputy Premier's thoughts on this issue is more a question of revenge that is harboured by he and the Minister of Finance and some of the former Liberals that sat on this side of the House at one time in opposition. They want revenge. They have long memories and they want to get back, even at the risk of doing something which will be in complete opposition to what the people of Saskatchewan may want. That is a bad attitude for a government to have.

In the debate we will, in committee, when we get into committee on this particular Bill 20, we will want to search out where the government gets its advice from, and I wonder whether it will be sufficient time to find out that kind of information. It was referred to earlier by the Leader of the Opposition about where they get some of their advice from. And should I get an opportunity to speak again on this particular issue, I will certainly be taking the time to discuss that about where this government gets its information from; where it gets its philosophy from; who is backing it up; why is there this extreme pressure to force through this super-closure motion so that they can get their legislation through on the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

We will want to have time to discover, Mr. Speaker, what precautions are there to ensure that the number of directors of the purchaser corporation, who must be residents of Saskatchewan, will exercise effective Saskatchewan control on that purchaser corporation. That's a matter of concern to us because the legislation merely says that the purchaser corporation will have three Saskatchewan residents on the board. It doesn't indicate any further any of the other conditions with regard to the board. It might be three out of six, it might be three out of a dozen, it might be three out of fifteen. And as the number of directors gets higher, the influence of Saskatchewan people wanes on the purchaser corporation.

We want to know, and we don't know whether we'll get time to find that out in the committee stage.

(1515)

I want to have an opportunity to fully investigate in committee whether Mr. Paul Schoenhals, who is now part Albertan and part Saskatchewan, will be a Saskatchewan director of the corporation.

This is important because Paul Schoenhals has occupied a position as the full-time chairman of the corporation and now has been relieved of his full-time duties by the Government of Saskatchewan and he commutes to work in Alberta.

I want to know where Mr. Schoenhals will stand. I want to find out, **Mr. Speaker:** if Mr. Schoenhals continues to live in Saskatchewan and commute to his new Alberta job after having been removed as a part-time chairman of the board by our Minister of Finance, can he still be a director of the purchaser corporation? There is some doubt about the permanency of the position of the . . . or of Mr. Schoenhals in the position of part-time chairman of the board of the potash corporation.

And it's illustrated quite clearly . . . or well, it's illustrated, not quite clearly, in articles that appeared in the newspaper recently. One of them appeared on June 29, 1989, and it said under the picture of Mr. Schoenhals, it says, "Paul Schoenhals is packing his bags." And the headline is: "Schoenhals to head oil industry program."

Paul Schoenhals is moving to Calgary to head up the Petroleum Industry Training Service, an

industry-operated training program for various sectors of the petroleum industry.

Schoenhals, chairman of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, will retain his post with PCS, although it will become a part-time position.

Taking up his new duties in mid-July . . .

Which means that Mr. Schoenhals is now commuting between Saskatoon and Calgary, part time on each job.

Taking up his new duties in mid-July, Schoenhals will oversee educational facilities in Calgary, a campus at Nisku (near Edmonton) which includes equipment such as drilling rigs.

So I guess Mr. Schoenhals is the new roughneck on the job out there in Alberta.

Now it also happens that another article appeared which raises some question about, as I say, the permanency of Mr. Schoenhals as a part-time chairman of the potash corporation. And it says, "Schoenhals may be replaced" — the *Leader-Post*, July 6. And I want to quote:

Paul Schoenhals' career as a part-time chairman of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan may be very short, or may not even come to pass at all, says Finance Minister Gary Lane.

Asked by reporters Wednesday if it is possible Schoenhals might soon be replaced, Lane replied: "That might very well happen, yes."

And the Minister goes on to state:

"It is my view that the chairman should be from Saskatchewan and that it should be a part-time chairman," Lane said.

So what we need to know is know more about who is chairing the board in the potash corporation, whether in fact his services will be required in the future by the potash corporation or by the purchaser corporation, and whether it will be as a part-time chairman, or whether it will be as a director of the corporation, and whether he will commute from Calgary, and who will pay his expenses to come from Calgary. Will that be part of the package?

We're unable to ascertain this information up to this point, even though we've raised questions in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, but we'll certainly want to try and get some of that information out when we get into committee, which is restricted to much less than 50 minutes each for the members on this side of the House, providing none of the members on that side of the House speak. Now if they exercise their right to participate in the committee work, then we can probably anticipate that it's much less than 50 minutes; probably much less than 25 minutes in order to determine this information.

We will, Mr. Speaker, as duly elected members of this Assembly, want to have sufficient time to discover what mechanism is in the legislation to prevent the directors of

the corporation, by covert means, to be made subservient to other private potash companies, and thereby relinquish a potash leadership role for Saskatchewan, to the detriment of Saskatchewan people and, particularly, affect the people who are the employees of the corporation.

We all know that some of the top officials in the potash corporation are, in fact, not Canadians, and in fact, prior to working for the potash corporation, owed their allegiance to other potash companies, other large potash companies. We will want to know what kind of protection is there in this legislation to prevent these people from subverting — or some other person that may be hired — to prevent them from subverting the aims of the corporation which should be the aims of the Saskatchewan people.

That's not to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that previous to this government when we had a Liberal government that they didn't take the opportunity to interfere in the potash industry of Saskatchewan. It's quite clear that they did. We're all aware of Premier Thatcher's nonsensical, free enterprise intervention in the Saskatchewan potash picture and the adverse U.S.A. reaction, which brought on prorationing in Saskatchewan, not to mention the social and economic dislocation that he caused by his foolish intervention.

That could happen again at the company level, maybe could happen again at the governmental level. If you have a government of this stripe who has such a commitment to a philosophy of private enterprise at all cost, may again interfere in the potash industry and cause severe social and economic dislocations, what is to protect the people of Saskatchewan? Are we going to have enough time to find this out when we're dealing with this Bill in committee, when we have far less than 25 minutes per member?

This is a multibillion-dollar transaction we're looking at, Mr. Speaker. It's not something to be lightly taken. This is not a routine matter, this is not a non-controversial Bill. This is something that requires some concentrated attention and time, all the time that's necessary, Mr. Speaker.

I want to find out, Mr. Speaker, will I have time, or other members in the House, to find out for my constituents the magnitude and the implications of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan ceasing to become a Crown corporation and thereby . . .

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, I want to be assured with this super-closure motion, which limits us as members of this Assembly to much less than 25 minutes each to examine this multibillion dollar deal, that in fact we're able to find out the information that's necessary.

Now the members across the way may not be interested in this. This may be a daily transaction with them — tossing around a billion here or there. I know it doesn't seem to affect them too much when they're talking about the debt of Saskatchewan. They've got that hiked up to close to \$4 billion now just for the government itself. So maybe these multibillion dollar deals don't faze them, but

I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, they faze the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. They're fazed out by this government and the way they handle the finances of this province.

We want to make sure that we understand the implications of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan ceasing to be a Crown corporation and thereby becoming subject to federal taxation. What is the federal taxation, Mr. Speaker, on \$106 million profit? What is the amount of taxation there? Has the government looked into the implications of the loss of revenue on the province of Saskatchewan just in this one area alone? It could be in the multimillions of dollars annually because of the action of this government. Will we have time in less than 25 minutes to find all that out, Mr. Speaker? What additional burdens will Saskatchewan taxpayers have to bear because of this PC folly?

There's been no discussion whatsoever yet about the implications of the loss of having to pay federal taxation. I may have many, many more questions, and I expect my colleagues will too, Mr. Speaker, when we're discussing this most important issue. This is a pivotal issue. In the history of Saskatchewan, in 84 years, next to the potash debate 1, which occurred about 13 years ago, this is probably one of the most pivotal issues in the economy, and the implications of the ripple effect on our society in Saskatchewan could be very dramatic. So time is required to dig into this and find out what's happening.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to go on to talk about the further absurdity of this PC motion. It becomes more ludicrous, even more ludicrous, when this Bill No. 20, the potash corporation . . . I was saying, Mr. Speaker, that the absurdity of this PC folly of giving away the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan will become even more ludicrous when Bill 20, The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Reorganization Act, having been rammed undemocratically through committee, arrives in third reading stage — in third reading stage.

At that time, Mr. Speaker, this super-closure motion will reach its apex of absurdity. The opposition's 26 democratically elected members will each have 2.3 minutes — 2.3 minutes — to have a final say on this multibillion dollar legislative Bill. Can you imagine that, Mr. Speaker? In third reading, each of the members of this side of the House — and that's providing no one on the other side of the House speaks, as they seem all to be wanting to do now; no one speaks there.

(1530)

The members on this side of the House would have 2.3 minutes each at their disposal to talk on third reading of a Bill. Now, Mr. Speaker, under normal circumstances, third reading of a Bill goes through the House — it takes the time to read it, to read the title, for third reading to go through the House. It's routine.

But this is not a routine Bill. Bill 20 is not a routine Bill, Mr. Speaker. This is a Bill which will affect the people of Saskatchewan at least until the next election, possibly beyond that. It will have implications which some of us have not even imagined at this point. We need time to examine that. We need time to look into it.

Now it's important to examine the record and see in fact whether the PC members or the Liberal members, when the potash acquisition took place in 1975-76, to see if they took part in the debate. And I did that, Mr. Speaker. I got out the debates from 1975-76.

And it's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, in Bill No. 1 and . . . well, let's just say on Bill No. 1 in debate, in Bill No. 1 in debate in 1975-76, there were at least 86 opposition interventions — 86 opposition interventions. This is one volume, Mr. Speaker; there are three more volumes that thick. I believe there's four volumes in that particular year. A lot of it was taken up with discussion of the implementation of Bill 1 and 2 in 1975 and '76.

The interventions were made by such people — well I'll read it right off the record, Mr. Speaker. Reading right out of the book: Mr. Lane, his name's here. It's interesting to note that that person was a Liberal then; that's a Liberal then. And there was . . . Mr. Thatcher made interventions, quite a number of them. According to the record the present Minister of Finance, as a Liberal, made many interventions. I see numerous other interventions by Liberals and Conservatives, totalling up to 81, as I say.

On Bill No. 2 there were similar amounts of interventions. I see Mr. MacDonald here. We all know who Mr. MacDonald is. Mr. Cy MacDonald was a Liberal, and he has now politically prostituted himself to the Conservative Party. I think that's quite clear. Mr. MacDonald was involved in Expo '86. Mr. MacDonald was involved in the free trade effort of the provincial government. Mr. MacDonald is now involved in the SaskEnergy debacle for which, disclosed in the House the other day, he got \$90,000 for arranging 80 meetings of failure around the province for SaskEnergy. That was Mr. MacDonald.

And these are . . . it just happens that these ones I mentioned are all Liberals, Mr. Speaker. That should tell us something. The people that are spearheading this, the minister whose name is on the Bill, is the Minister of Finance. People should be able to put that all together themselves.

A number of interventions by Liberals and Conservatives, and soon-to-be Conservatives, and Conservatives by other means, of economic persuasion, take up about three pages in the index, where that just lists the name and the page number, Mr. Speaker. If you go into the text of the debates in 1975-76, it took a long, long time to satisfy the opposition — and I don't suppose they were satisfied at the conclusion — but till they ran out of questions, it took a long, long time. And it was all done, Mr. Speaker, without closure and without super-closure. It was all done without that.

So what we have here, Mr. Speaker, is we finally get this Bill rammed through committee by the government's super-closure and then we get it into third reading. The members, if nobody speaks over there, the members on this side will get 2.3 minutes to debate this most important Bill in third reading. I think that's a PC mockery of democracy, a PC mockery of democracy, and it shall go down in the annals of the history, the parliamentary

history of this province as just that — a PC mockery of democracy.

And who's hijacking democracy now? Who is hijacking democracy? I think it's quite clear, it's the Premier and the PC Party that's hijacking the democracy.

I want to go back just a bit about notice. I said that the New Democratic party notified the people of Saskatchewan in 1971 that they were going to become more involved. In 1975, before the election, they told them they were going to be actively involved. What has the PC Party done about SaskEnergy? Did they tell them? Did they tell them? Well I got an insert in my power bill. It's May of 1988. It talks about the division of SaskPower into four divisions. There was no mention of sell-off, no mention of privatization of SaskPower or SaskEnergy — not a word.

A little later in 1988 I got a letter from George Hill, Q.C., president of SaskPower. It says: Dear Customer — George always addresses me as, dear customer, you'll understand, Mr. Speaker. And I went through that entire letter from George Hill, and George never told me once that he was going to sell off SaskPower or SaskEnergy, never said a word about it. Said they've created this dynamic new corporation, SaskEnergy. The question is, can you trust what they say; can you trust what they say? I think the people of Saskatchewan don't trust what they say.

A little later in May, 1988, the Deputy Premier being questioned in this House, and this is a news report of it in the *Leader-Post*, Mr. Speaker. It's "SaskPower to be split," and I'll just read the part that refers to the point I want to get at; I'll read the entire paragraph:

The planned reorganization of Sask Power Corporation has "absolutely nothing to do with the sell-off of anything," Berntson told reports.

Absolutely nothing to do with that. Well there was an evasion that deserves a medal. That was an evasion by the Deputy Premier that deserved some kind of a medal. At the same time, May 10 in the Moose Jaw paper, just to corroborate it from another source, Mr. Speaker, "SaskPower will be split" is the heading, and it's talking about the natural gas division of SaskPower and whether it would be put up for sale.

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'm going to ask the hon. member to demonstrate to the House how this relates to the Bill under discussion . . . the motion, I meant.

Mr. Brockelbank: — I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker. I was not relating it directly to the motion under discussion. The motion under discussion asks us to have faith, asks us to have faith in this party and their political sagacity; whether they'll do what they say they'll do. And what I'm doing, Mr. Speaker, and I hope this relates it, is I'm giving you the most concrete illustrations that they will not do what they say.

First they'll say nothing about it, then they'll be evasive, and then later on we find that the Bill's before us, Bill 21, or whatever the number is with regard to SaskEnergy. And

these are the key people in the Conservative front bench. This is the Deputy Premier. He says, no to the New Democratic opposition when it asked him in the legislature if he would confirm or deny a sale was imminent.

Goes on:

Berntson later told reporters the corporate reorganization has absolutely nothing to do with the Tory government's plans to privatize several Crown corporations (this would include Sask Potash Corporation) or the recent sale of natural gas assets owned by SaskPower. "It's simply a splitting of a utility," he said.

Well there's the master of evasion at it again. He's evading the question. They continue to do this. A letter was sent out by the Premier, over his signature, the Premier of this province, on May 3, 1989, and he said, quote:

Let me make one thing very clear. SaskPower is not for sale.

That was May 3. On May 5, Oscar Hanson, who's the chief executive officer of SaskEnergy, was following the line of the Premier's — and I don't know why he was following it, but he was following the line of the Premier's . . . I won't bother discussing that — and he said:

It is to be distinctly understood that SaskPower is not for sale.

That's a concrete statement. We can't believe them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can't believe them.

An Hon. Member: — That's the first accurate thing you said this afternoon is SaskPower is not for sale.

Mr. Brockelbank: — You see, and there by the member for Wascana, he subscribes to this same kind of deviousness that the Premier practises, exactly the same type of deviousness that the Premier practised, and it was followed up by the chief executive officer of SaskEnergy. It's called splitting hairs, evading the issue. You know, they divided the corporation in two and they're selling one-half of it, or they're attempting to sell it.

In the potash corporation they did the same thing. They never told the people of Saskatchewan they were going to sell the corporation, they never told them in the election. Now they're selling it.

We want the time to investigate how this government gets around to be able to say those kind of things to the people of Saskatchewan. We want to expose them for the duplicity of their statements. You name it anywhere, SaskEnergy, Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, it's a litany of reasons that they give saying, no, it's not for sale, we're not going to sell it. But in the back of their mind they're going to sell it. In the back of their mind they're going to sell SaskPower, in the back of their mind they're going to ram this through with closure, which is provided by this motion, and I suggest to you that in due course they may even bring a more severe closure. They're not

above that; they're not above that.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, the question: who's hijacking democracy? Well I want to go back to one of these letters. It's the Premier's letter and right at the bottom of the letter — this is an irony upon irony — the Premier says . . . this is the letter he sent to the members of the PC Party this year. It was May 3, '89, sent to the PC members in Saskatchewan. He adds a p.s. at the bottom. He says: p.s. Don't let Romanow and the NDP hijack democracy.

(1545)

Well now isn't that something? Here is the Premier who's hijacking democracy with this motion of super-closure, super-closure that limits us to less than two minutes of time to discuss third reading of Bill 20, the one to sell off a multibillion dollar asset. That's what I call hijacking democracy. That's hijacking democracy which allows us less than 25 minutes, if all members participate, less than 25 minutes to examine this Bill in committee, in committee, where we're supposed to have a full, free, and informal discussion of the details of the Bill.

This is not a routine Bill, as I've said before. This is not a non-controversial Bill. This is a very controversial Bill. It represents a complete about-face with regard to Crown corporations in this province. Yes, Mr. Speaker, you cannot trust what they say, and we're not prepared to trust what they say now.

Mr. Speaker, in all of my parliamentary career I have never seen such a travesty against democracy as what we see in this motion — never seen anything like it. It's been hoisted on the people of Saskatchewan. Ross Thatcher, at his worst, today would be angelic in comparison to these PCs across the way. He would appear to be positively angelic.

Now what will happen next? Now that we have this super-closure motion, this government probably plans to bring in closure, rule 31, on top of this super-closure motion. We all know closure is not debatable. You cannot even debate it. Closure will allow each member to speak no more than 20 minutes on each question. So that means if they bring closure in on top of this super-closure motion which we have before us right now, which is a possibility, then the members will have their time reduced even further — even further.

That's who's hijacking democracy, Mr. Speaker, those people across the way. They're quite comfortable hijacking democracy in Saskatchewan.

The question in this particular case is the debate on the super-closure motion, as I've said. I predict when the PCs conclude this session, probably even earlier, they will say to the public, we never brought in closure, rule 31, to cut off debate on Bill 20, The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Reorganization Act. They'll say, we never brought in closure on the potash Bill.

Well it's like saying SaskPower is not for sale, but we know that the gas division is for sale. It's splitting hairs, splitting hairs. And I predict, for their public posture, they will eventually say, we didn't bring in closure on the

potash Bill; we've never brought in closure on a Bill. And technically they'll be right. They'll go out and they'll tell all the people: we never brought in closure on the potash Bill; the New Democrats are telling you a wild story.

Well they do that at their peril if they go out and try to tell the people of Saskatchewan that. Because the people of Saskatchewan already know, and have voiced their opinion time and again on the SaskEnergy question, they don't believe that business about we'll never sell SaskPower. They understand it thoroughly. Because when the question was asked by the polling company, they said: SaskEnergy, they asked a question about SaskEnergy being sold, not about SaskPower being sold, and the people said 67 per cent opposed — 67 per cent opposed.

So the people are not fooled. And if these hypocritical democrats across the way, Mr. Deputy Speaker, think that they're going to go out and tell the people of Saskatchewan that we never brought in closure on the potash debate, we've never brought in closure on any Bill, technically they'll be right but morally they'll be wrong. They'll be morally wrong, and the people of Saskatchewan should know that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, do you recall when they turned their divine little faces to the public with their haloes sparking and they said . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I'd ask the member not to refer to other members by name.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I referred to no members. I referred to no members and I've been not drawn to order for that reason. I referred to no members.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member cannot do indirectly what he cannot do directly. So I'd ask the member to refrain from that.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, you will recall a while ago that I referred to, referred to the premier of Saskatchewan, Mr. Thatcher, as being angelic and that drew no response from you or anyone else, and at this time I said, do . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Mr. Thatcher is not the premier here.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, I implore you to listen to the statement I made, carefully. Mr. Deputy Speaker, do you recall when they turned their divine little faces to the public with their haloes sparkling and said SaskPower is not for sale, because I recall that. They're like little angels, they turn their divine faces to the people, their haloes are sparkling, they say SaskPower is not for sale.

Nobody, nobody out there believes them. Nobody out there believes them. We're not selling . . . Sask Power Corporation is still there, the PCs say, it's still there. But that doesn't wash with the public. The public knows what you're doing and that's why you're backing off on that issue.

The people of Saskatchewan weren't fooled on the SPC

(Saskatchewan Power Corporation) sell-off legislation. The people of Saskatchewan won't be fooled on this legislation and this motion, this particular motion in relation to Bill 20. When the PCs say they didn't use closure, i.e., rule 31, to sell off the potash corporation, we know, we know what they're saying. They're twisting the words, they're twisting the words around. They did worse than that. They're using super-closure, which I have described in some detail, plus rule 31 which is closure to ram through the sell-off of PCS with arbitrary, unrealistic time limits — arbitrary and unrealistic. If we get less than about two minutes to discuss that Bill in third reading, that is arbitrary and unrealistic, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, this is a PC assault on SPC. This is a PC assault on the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. This is a PC assault on democracy and the people of Saskatchewan are not going to be asked by us to tolerate it. We're going to resist it.

So I don't know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what else I can say. I'm sure that I'm not going to be able to convince the members across the way that we have merit in our case. I hope that I have convinced anyone else that happens to be watching that there is some merit to the case we put forward.

This is a very serious issue. I know the members across the way take it lightly, and they would like to get it out of here because their per diem's been cut off. They don't like working for nothing. We're here working because we believe in this. We're here resisting this anti-democratic force of this government.

This is a government that puts itself above the law. They put the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I don't know why, Mr. Speaker, the minister of the Health doesn't go back to his seat and heckle me. He could heckle me from his own seat and it would be much better for me because I wouldn't hear him quite so much.

Mr. Speaker, this government is above the law. I've mentioned that the law of this Assembly is closure, rule 31. When the law is not what they want it to be, they change the law. These laws, the rules of the Assembly, are laws just as sure as any statutes of Saskatchewan. They're the laws by which this highest court in the province is governed. And when the majority take it upon themselves to change the law arbitrarily, that is not good for democracy.

And I want to, in closing, refer to the debates again in 1975, which was on potash. This was the creation of the potash corporation and the other complementary Bill which went forward at that time. This is just a very few, brief words on January 20, 1976; it's the Royal Assent and prorogation, right at the last comment in the book. And it says:

His Honour was in the Chamber and read the following prorogation speech . . .

And everyone will understand these are the words of the government, not the Lieutenant Governor. And it says, in part — I'll read a couple of paragraphs:

After a full and extensive debate, you have given approval to The Potash Development Act, 1975 — a measure which will assure for this and future generations of Saskatchewan people orderly development of this valuable resource in the public interest.

That's what it was all about. The previous government didn't understand orderly development — and if I have an opportunity at another time, I'll get into that — didn't understand it. But this is what it was all about . . . “the orderly development of this valuable resource in the public interest.”

He goes on with the next paragraph:

You have also provided a solid base in law for the public instrument of potash development in the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

That momentous piece of legislation in 1975-76, pivotal points in the economic history of Saskatchewan, which was debated for days and days and days by the opposition without having closure rammed on them or without having super-closure, as this particular motion that's before us — all done without that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I suppose we will stand or fall by the positions we take in this Assembly, and it's quite clear from the comments that I've made that I am prepared to stand on the position that I've taken. I am opposed to changing the rules of this Assembly to suit the government's weakness, without consultation with anyone but themselves; I'm opposed to that. I'm opposed to this super-closure motion which is before us at this time, and I'm sure that I'll be prepared, as all members on this side of the House will be, to stand or fall by that decision.

And I feel equally as strong about this particular issue as I felt about the SaskEnergy issue which came before. With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I say that I will oppose this motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1600)

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like some of the other members who have gone before me, I don't take a great deal of pleasure in entering into the debate today. Normally when a member of this legislature has the opportunity to rise to his feet, you do have a great sense of pleasure because you're doing what the people in your constituency elected you for, and that is to represent their views and wishes in this Chamber.

I must say that I rise with a sense of determination, a sense of reasonableness and a sense of fairness. And like the member from Melfort, my colleague from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, the member from Meadow Lake and the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, I feel that it is necessary for us to rise in this Chamber and debate this very important motion.

I guess what it ultimately comes down to, Mr. Speaker, is:

what is fair and reasonable? What is the role of opposition in our province? What portion of any debate in this Chamber is it fair and reasonable that the opposition have and the government have?

I think in the course of the debate so far we have seen, as in most of the other historic debates that have been mentioned earlier in the day, that the opposition indeed has had the lion's share of the debate. And that is only reasonable, because in a majority situation the government has, in this case, a fair number more members than the opposition does. I think if you look back in history at any debate that's happened in this Chamber, you would see that the majority of the time has been allocated to the opposition, and no one disagrees with that principle.

But as we've talked about debate — and I hope you'll bear with me, Mr. Speaker, that I perhaps will mention things that have been mentioned previously — the medicare debate in our province, which had CCF and Liberal members involved; the pipeline debate in the House of Commons in 1956, which had members from many parties involved; and indeed, the nationalization debate of potash in this province that involved NDP members, Liberal members, and PC members, that at nowhere in the course of those debates was a precedent ever set or mentioned by anyone in opposition at that time, that political revolt should take place in those jurisdictions because of what was happening during those particular debates.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, in the debate in this Chamber in this session we have seen the member from Elphinstone and the member for Rosemont directly suggest that political revolt should happen in our province. And I think the reason that you didn't see this happen in any other forum, Mr. Speaker, in any other debate was because, as the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden mentioned, there was a great degree of leadership exhibited by leaders of the parties involved in those particular situations. And obviously that leadership has been lacking in this Chamber as exhibited by the member from Riversdale. This debate would not be any different than many of those other historic debates that have happened in our province and in our country.

They think about the medicare debate, and as the member from Qu'Appelle mentioned, if the attitude of the opposition of the day had been one of political revolt — and goodness knows, a large segment of the population was expressing itself on the doors of this legislature with the degree of unhappiness of that particular legislation — but if the Liberal opposition of the day had not had the leadership as exhibited by the Hon. Ross Thatcher, if they had taken the attitude and tune of the members of the New Democratic Party, as exhibited in this legislative session, then we would not have had medicare in this province today. And that would have been a sad day, Mr. Speaker, for the people of this province. We think about mandates, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order.

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We think

about mandates which are given to duly elected governments. We think about the mandates which other governments had in these historic debates. And I look back in time, Mr. Speaker, to refute some of the arguments that have been made by the members opposite.

They say that our government has no mandate to govern. They say that our government has no mandate to put forward things which may be controversial. We have no mandate to, in fact, talk about the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

We have just heard the member from Saskatoon talking about 1971 and 1975 elections. When I think about the 1971 election, for some two thousand four hundred and ninety, nine hundred and seventy-eight people in this province voted for the New Democratic Party, and they had over 50 per cent of the vote. And they obviously had a very strong mandate to govern this province.

And then we had the situation, Mr. Speaker, as you well know in 1975, where that mandate dramatically dropped off, where only 39 per cent of the people in this province, 180,700, voted for the New Democratic Party, and fully 61 per cent of the people in this province voted for other parties — 267,426. Now, Mr. Speaker, the nationalization of the potash industry went ahead in the fall of 1975 and the spring of 1976, even though the New Democratic Party in forming a government in this province only received 39 per cent of the popular vote.

The opposition of the day came in debating the nationalization of the potash industry knowing full well that 61 per cent of the people in this province did not vote for the government, knowing full well that the polling done at the time of that particular debate clearly indicated that a majority of people in this province of Saskatchewan did not support nationalization of the potash industry.

And yet those are the very reasons, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite have given for walking out of this legislature on a 17-day strike. Those are the reasons given, Mr. Speaker, from members of the opposition in this legislature to stand in their place and filibuster through the first 80 hours of the potash debate.

I think, Mr. Speaker, when we look at those numbers and we look at those facts that there is a certain amount of hypocrisy has flowed from the members opposite so far in the debate on the privatization of the potash industry.

And I guess the thing that bothers me most, Mr. Speaker, about the 80 hours and the many days over the last four months of this debate in this Chamber, that has bothered me the most as I listened to the long-winded speeches of the members opposite, that they did not want to talk about the potash industry in a meaningful way. They simply wanted to revert back into their socialist rut knowing full well, Mr. Speaker, in this document that I have before me, that members of the previous NDP government, the entire front bench talked about privatizing not only the potash industry but many other Crown corporations in this province.

But did we hear any mention in the debate that has taken

part so far by the members opposite of those thoughts and feelings about how perhaps this thing could be privatized?

And particularly, Mr. Speaker, because their arguments have consistently been that because of the way the Liberal administration of Ross Thatcher handled royalties and taxation this nationalization had to take place, yet knowing full well that the Hon. Allan Blakeney, former premier of this province, in conjunction with other provincial premiers, changed the rules in conjunction with the federal government in the late 1970s and the early '80s, to make a reality that taxation and royalties can be changed, and that the people of Saskatchewan can get their fair share of the resource, which is the potash resource of Saskatchewan.

And you and I know, Mr. Speaker, you and I know that the member from Riversdale, the then deputy leader of the New Democratic government of the day, consummated the finalization of those deals in the kitchen of a hotel room with the former federal member from Shawinigan, the Hon. Jean Chretien. So that the province of Saskatchewan truly did have control of its resources and the power to tax and the power to collect royalties. And that is why members opposite in 1981 felt that they could explore the privatization of PCS, along with many other Crown corporations, knowing full well that as a duly elected government in this province they had control of the resources of this province, because the rules had been changed. And for them now to go through 80 hours of debate in this legislature and not own up to the fact that they not only discussed it but planned it and had given it another mandate, would have implemented more than likely the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, is utter hypocrisy . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — . . . because that power rests within any duly elected government in this province. And instead, Mr. Speaker, what have we had? We have had an ongoing filibuster.

And I think about the 15 hours in this Chamber listening to the member from Moose Jaw North. I think about the 11-12 hours listening to the remarks of the member from Rosemont. And nowhere in those discussions was there any talk about those constitutional changes. No place in there as there any mention of their plans to privatize Crown corporations? Because the changes in the rules meant that they could go ahead and do it, and the people of Saskatchewan could get their due from their resources.

And instead we had nonsensical filibuster from the members opposite who were stuck in their socialist rut, and that is what they talked about, Mr. Speaker. And that is why it has been necessary for this government, this duly elected government of the province of Saskatchewan, to bring in the motion that was brought in by the member from Melfort this morning.

And you know full well, Mr. Speaker, that if those members had not been sat down for repetition and irrelevance innumerable times and had got on with some honest debate on this question, that this motion would

probably not be before this House.

Now on the question of time allocation, Mr. Speaker, time allocation is regarded by most Canadians, in whatever parliamentary system they function under, as a reasonable resource of that legislature. The House of Commons has operated for many years with time allocation on debate at various stages. Our sister province to the west, Alberta, operates with time allocation on debate. I would think, Mr. Speaker, if you check all other provinces in this country, that the use of time allocation is a reality.

(1615)

And I think it has been arrived at, Mr. Speaker, with due thought and process, and the opportunity has been there for the voter in those jurisdictions to pass judgement on that use of time allocation. And I would think, Mr. Speaker, that that use of time allocation was arrived at so that members would be concise and to the point, and that the arguments in debate would be worthwhile arguments and not simply irrelevance and filibuster.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that some day the roles may be reversed, and perhaps I may have the honour of serving in this Chamber some day as a member of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. And I would consider it an honour, Mr. Speaker, because election to this Chamber by any citizen of our province is indeed an honour.

And I would hope that as an individual elected to this Chamber, I would be one who would carry my philosophy of individual initiative, my philosophy of individual responsibility, forward in any debate that occurred in this Chamber. And that I, as that member, would come in here with the idea that government was to be the servant of the people of this province; government would not be the master.

And the things that the members opposite have exhibited to us in this Chamber in this debate is that they firmly believe that government must be the master of the people in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, I am diametrically opposed to that, and that's why I have a great deal of pleasure in supporting the motion of the member from Melfort.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I enter the debate again in this legislature to deal with a most important issue, and the issue which I will outline as I go on forward with my speech.

I must say at the outset, Mr. Speaker, that the motion before us is one which deals with the essence of democracy and freedom of speech and debate in the legislature. And as I look at the limitations established by this motion, it cuts off the very essence of parliaments, the very essence of legislatures, which is debate, which is to freely speak on issues that are of the people's concern.

So as I rise to the debate, the most general principle which we are talking about is one of democratic speech and the freedom to continue debate on issues that are of utmost

importance for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

I must say that as I listened to the debate, it was the very first time for a long time that I've seen members of the government stand up and debate. We had predicted that would happen on this issue when they were just about to be shutting us down in regards to speaking, because the motion itself, Mr. Speaker, will limit the debate to two days, after which it'll be cut off.

It also limits, of course, speeches to 20 minutes. And when we look at the aspect of such an important principle of privatization and also the important principle in Bill 20 of the privatization of potash, we know that there is a lot of information that needs to be discussed and debated, because the essence of any democracy requires knowledge, and very good knowledge about the issue.

I must say at the outset that as I looked at the media, there has been not that much information about potash and the debates that we have had. Although there has been a tremendous amount of historical information way back from the Thatcher government days and also during the days of the NDP and also during the PC, while though there was a lot of information in regards to economic facts, in regards to sociological information, that very little has come out in regards to the media.

So it is of utmost importance therefore that a debate continue in this legislature, because at least it is accessible to the people of the province through the television media. And it's therefore, I think, one of the major debates that has thus taken place here in this province; that this information should be brought out to the people of the province, because without knowledge a democracy simply doesn't work. That in regards to a government that simply brings out a motion to muzzle the opposition so it does not get information out to the people, is a shameful act in the history of Saskatchewan.

I listened to the debates from the members opposite, and I would like to make a few comments on those. I must say that the argumentation used had very little substance, that when we are talking about the substantive issues of the history of potash in this province, and that when we are getting into this motion to close the debate, I think it is very, very shallow to only talk about length, to talk about the mere quantity of time as an important variable from which to debate a particular motion.

And I think the members from opposite do not recognize the qualitative nature of the debate that has taken place in the past while. I've learned a lot from the different members that have spoken before. I learned a lot about the specific communities that were impacted by the development of the potash mining. I learned a lot about the workers and their concerns and the workers' health and safety concerns. I learned a lot about the financial history, the rates of profits that took place in this province in regards to potash during the Liberal years, the NDP years, and the PC years. I learned a lot about the many different aspects of production, the amount of production in potash all during that period in time, the amount, the actual cost of production.

All of these things I've learned through the debate, and none of this did I see in the print media, Mr. Speaker. And it is of utmost importance as I debate this that these particular points which were not in the media be brought out, but it's a sad case in the history of Saskatchewan when important historical information of which the people of the province had built, the people of the province of Saskatchewan had built, the people of the province of Saskatchewan had built these mines. The people of the province had put in and paid for, in many different ways, the building of these mines, and many of the important amounts of profits that were made from it would be utilized for the building of Saskatchewan cannot be known by the people because of the muzzling of democracy by the PC government.

In many cases as we debate this closure motion — and it is referred to as time allocation. Of course in the literature, whether you read Erskine May or whether you read *Beauchesne's*, the two basic areas of time curtailment in the legislature has been closure and what they would call time allocation. I would refer to this particular motion as the member from Saskatoon, who mentioned that it was more of a super-closure motion. Time allocation is a nice word for this super-closure motion.

Another word that has been utilized in the literature, Mr. Speaker, is the word "guillotine"; that, to me, is a more fitting word. Everybody knows about the guillotine used during the French Revolution days in late 1700s, of course, which they're celebrating this year. And the guillotine, of course, was used to cut off heads. I must say that in regards to the super-closure motion, this is indeed a cutting off of the minds of the people of Saskatchewan — it's cutting off the ideas, the tremendous history of Saskatchewan people in regards to the potash and privatization and public ownership debates.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the debate from members opposite, all I heard was that the members are speaking too long; they're going on and on; it's repetitious. And when I listened also to the last member, the member from Thunder Creek talk about potash, it shows very clearly that he was not listening to the debate.

Because if he had listened to the debate, he would have known some of the historical aspects of the potash debate. I picked up on his statement when he mentioned that it was in the late '70s and the early '80s that the constitutional questions on the re-examination of that whole area of royalties and taxes was brought into play. And actually that was not in the late '70s or '80s. If he had been paying attention to the debate that was taking place, it was actually in 1973 and 1974 and 1975 that all of those issues were brought into play.

But indeed, the act of prorationing was not even developed during that time in the late '70s or '80s, as a member states. It was actually done in '68 and '69 by the Thatcher government. The introduction of prorationing, which was to help out the American multinational corporations, was something that was introduced by the Liberal government, and if the member had been listening to the debate, he would have picked out those facts. He would have learned something about the potash industry in regards to the historical development of

potash.

So the point I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is this. The members talk about substance, but they really did not put any substance in regards to the debates that they bring forward as we speak on the closure motion.

As I also look at the other aspect of debate that they introduce, is one of obstruction. I must state, Mr. Speaker, that for a government to accuse us of obstruction is indeed also very shallow. I really feel that they do have the power and actually the legal right to be able to introduce whatever it is that they want to introduce in this House. If they wanted to introduce new business tomorrow, they could do it immediately and we would not be opposed to that. But the type of debate that they are saying is that we're obstructing, and in fact what they are doing is refusing to bring forth new business other than their straightforward obsession with privatization and potash.

As I look at the debate on obstruction, one has to look at the very first time I entered the legislature here back in '86, and the first Bill that was introduced that was of any significance that I can remember was Bill 5. And here again I saw obstruction by the government, because what it did when it reorganized the departments in the House was to obstruct debate. It did not allow debate in the House. The minister could proceed to do any changes that the pleased without having the proper debate in the House.

(1630)

So in other words, Mr. Speaker, it is not us who have been obstructionists. It's been this government who has been the most obstructionist in the history of this province because they introduced new laws that were preventing the opposition from providing proper debate so that the people in this province would recognize and have great knowledge of what indeed was taking place over here. So when I saw the obstruction of Bill 5 right at the very early stages of my introduction to the legislature, that's another example I can use.

The other examples have been made quite time and time again, so I will just take them as a point of individual points. We know that obstruction was there just this past year in regards to the auditor and the auditor's report, because the government refused to give out information. They're always trying to hide the facts from the people. They try and get away from debate; they try and get away from knowledge. So they tried to hide the facts from the people by not providing the proper information to the auditor.

They even tried when there were problems with them during the Securities Commission in regards to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and in regards to the proposed privatization of SaskEnergy, which is SPC. They went against the law. But indeed instead of following the law, they bypassed it and created a new one for themselves. So they changed the rule in midstream.

And that's the essence where I see this debate, Mr. Speaker. When they're losing the debate and they're

losing the issue, they change the rules in the middle of the game. And the greatest rule that you can make is a complete stoppage of debate and the complete stoppage of the freedom of an individual MLA's speech right in the legislature. The freedom of speech of an MLA is curtailed and stopped with this motion. And that is the essence of this whole idea of obstruction that this government is talking about. They are the champions of obstruction when it comes down to democratic debate and democratic speech.

The other aspect that I saw in regards to obstruction was the government's refusal all the time to provide information. We know that the whole principle of hiding facts has been the essence of this government. We also know that not only in regards to regular information at question period on a daily basis, we also know that in regards to *Public Accounts*. If you look at the *Public Accounts* record, time and time again very little information is provided for. In other words the very basis of this government is one of simply hiding the facts from the people. The basics were, if you don't have any facts then nobody knows what we're doing.

Who knows, there may be greater corruption than GigaText. Who knows, there may be greater corruption than the lack of following the rules and regulations put out by the Securities Commission. There may be more to it than that. We could not access many of the documents in regards to the privatization process, so we don't know of the many other deals that have been taking place in this province's history.

So I guess, Mr. Speaker, as I make my introductory comments. I know that I am really talking about the muzzling of the people of the province of Saskatchewan because it is the people that provide the MLA with the information to come to the legislature and debate. This particular closure, this super-closure motion that has been introduced by the government prevents this debate.

Mr. Speaker, I would like therefore to now talk a little bit about the history of closure and where it has been utilized and how it has come about. And again, as I looked at the literature, Mr. Speaker — I only saw procedures of course in *Beauchesne's* and also in *Erskine May* — but as I looked at some of the historical documentation, I started to recognize that although there's been hundreds of years of parliamentary tradition, it's been, in terms of parliamentary history, a fairly recent phenomena; it's approximately a hundred years old.

The first basis of closure, or guillotining, as it was called, was brought in in 1881. And I found it a little bit more ironic as to the Bill that they were debating at that time, Mr. Speaker, because the particular Bill that they were debating then was the protection of the person and property. It was later called the coercion Bill.

Now over a hundred years later, I would say that closure, to me, is a form of coercion because it forces me to be silent. It forces me in a position where I could not relay the information of the people in this legislature. And the other thing is that it was of course ironic that it come about as a time when they were debating property.

And over a hundred years later in this legislature what we are talking about is a debate also on property on a most general sense. That when we are talking about the privatization of potash and the closure of the potash debate, we are looking at the question of private property and public property, that we are talking about the whole question of whether or not there should be a mixed economy approach or whether there should be solely private property. And that indeed, when we are looking at this debate on closure, we are looking at the potash debate and the PC government is stating very clearly that there should not be any mixed economy approach, that there should only be private ownership and private property, that there should be no public property or public ownership in regards to the history of this province. So they're going against the very essence of this province's history. So that's what happened in 1881.

In Canada the closure debate was never really introduced till 1913, and it was introduced by the Borden government. And of course this was during the period prior to the war in . . . and as I stated, in 1913. It was on the naval aid Bill, and the issue of closure was then introduced into the Canadian parliamentary system.

A lot of . . . Not that much closure was utilized in the system, because I think there must have been about . . . I think I read somewhere about it, and by 1964 there was approximately 15 instances of closure that was used. That was including the '56 pipeline debate where you had four instances of closure.

So when I looked at the issue in regards to Canada, it wasn't used to a very great extent right up to '56 . . . right up to '64. And as time goes on, of course as more people introduce this Bill, it became to be more and more readily used.

Although it may have been . . . The great pipeline debate was a significant debate because it came into hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money was at stake, and also the government never had any mandate in regards to introduce this thing. So it was in the context of substantive notions of the day when the pipeline debate was introduced in '56. The closure motion was introduced then.

And I would like to give a bit of the history in regards to that closure debate. And I would like to quote different people such as the late John Diefenbaker, Stanley Knowles, and Coldwell.

I'd like to look at the debate as it was brought about at the time. I would like, first of all, to talk about the statements of Coldwell. And this of course, for the listeners out there, was in relation to the House of Commons debates back in . . . on May 14, 1956. And in *Hansard* on page 3886, this is what Mr. Coldwell had to say:

This is a parliamentary institution. And the opposition, yes, the private members of the House, have a duty to perform. They have a duty to scrutinize carefully every proposal of the government and to use every means, including those laid down in our parliamentary procedures, to bring about a proper and adequate discussion.

I might repeat, Mr. Speaker. He says:

. . . to use every means, including those laid down in our parliamentary procedures, to bring about a proper and adequate discussion.

What the essence of his statement is, as I understand it, Mr. Speaker, is that some of the debates brought in by the members in regards to the bell-ringing debate, which one of the members brought out, those types of things are part of our parliamentary heritage. The bell rings, shorter on some occasions, sometimes longer on other occasions. But it is a parliamentary tradition. And that is the first point that is implied by the statement, as I interpret Mr. Coldwell's remarks.

The other thing is, there needs to be proper and adequate discussion. It is my opinion, Mr. Speaker, that the information that has been provided by . . . in the potash debate has not been adequately discussed. Many of the points have only been gone over once. The different aspects of the economic history, the different aspects of the sociological history have only been gone about once or twice, and in some cases three, four times. But any educator and any parliamentarian recognizes that debate has to be stated many, many times in order for it to be understood, not only by members from both sides but also by the public at large.

There are very many principles of learning in the halls of education where it requires a certain degree of repetition for it to be thoroughly learned. And as I listened to the comments by a lot of the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, we have not stated the history of potash enough times because they still do not know it. They still have misrepresented some parts of that history of which I used examples in the earlier part of my presentation. So as I speak here, Mr. Speaker, I would say that we cannot be muzzled in this House. We need to strongly oppose this motion.

I would like to then move on into statements also made by John Diefenbaker. And I would like to make statements in regards to the aspect of silencing the people, of silencing members and so on. And I would like to state his viewpoints and his position of what he thought about the brute force of majority rule.

On *Hansard*, on May 17, 1956, on page 4031 he states his position on closure, and he says this:

It's not for the purpose of interfering with unnecessary debate but rather designed to secure silence.

(1645)

Notice that he mentions, not the issue of obstruction or interference, he talks about the fact that what the government simply is trying to do is silence the members so that people of the province wouldn't know. And this is directly a continuation again of a quote by John Diefenbaker.

And to use parliament as an institution in which

the government may produce what it will, is able to propound any proposition it likes and because of its majority, you're to know that regardless of whether or not there is any support for it, the majority will carry through.

It's very important in that quote, Mr. Speaker, that the majority requires a certain degree of interference by the opposition, and that indeed we have to bring the will of the people forward in the legislature. If the government proceeds with something that they do not have a mandate with, if they proceed with something that the majority of the people of the province are against; which they have acknowledged in regards to Saskatchewan Power Corporation; which they know very well in regards to the drug prescription plan and the dental; which they know very well in regards to the whole issue of privatization that they do not have the public support, that what Mr. Diefenbaker has stated is that they need to be interfered with, that indeed the simple majority cannot just proceed with any issue that it likes without the public support of it.

I would like to also quote Mr. Diefenbaker in regards to the whole question of knowledge, the whole question of facts, the whole question of truth. And I will let, again, the quote speak for itself, and this was again on May 17, 1956 on page 4032. And this is what he had to say. He says:

I asked the Prime Minister today to tell this House why he is so fearful of the facts; why he was afraid to allow the true facts of this nefarious scheme to be elucidated. I asked why he found it necessary, and the members of his government found it necessary to muzzle the representatives of the people in advance, and anything in the nature of a filibuster or an interference on the part of the opposition with the policy and program of the government. I asked him to explain that today, for certainly the day of silence if past. Are they afraid of the truth over there? Is that why they hide behind the caricature of parliament which they have substituted by the adoption of the parliamentary form of closure in a way that it has never been adopted before?

I must say that Mr. Diefenbaker was vehemently opposed to the idea of closure, basically because it went against the aspect of the introduction of facts to the legislature because the very basics of truth was being denied to the people of Saskatchewan, and in that time it was the people of Canada. And therefore the whole issue of truth is one that the PC Government of Saskatchewan is trying to deny in regards to the introduction of this closure motion.

The other very important point that he had made is that at that time that was worded as being introduced, and he did not like that it would be adopted. And I would furthermore state on the same page, he says:

They are afraid of the truth. They are afraid of an election.

I must state that in regards to this PC government today, the words of Mr. Diefenbaker also ring true. The government knows that it's trying to give away a

tremendous amount of our resources to the big corporation. They know an election will be called in a year or maybe two years, and they want to sell away and give away as much of our resources to foreign corporations as much as possible. So they are afraid to talk about the truth. They are afraid to talk and debate about the fact that a lot of the American multinationals want complete monopoly of our potash industry.

They also know that they want to sell to a lot of the countries, as the Premier went on his Orient express to Japan, to China, to India, and to Korea. And we know that he wants the ownership, rather than by the people . . . rather than trust the people of the province of Saskatchewan to truly own their own potash — which is greater, as one member said, than the oil in Saudi Arabia, because we control close to 50 per cent . . . approximately 40 per cent of the world potash right here in the province — that indeed what they are trying to do is give away the ownership to foreign people to the tune of 45 per cent ownership.

I might add that it will probably by 90 per cent if they were able to ever get back into government a year and a half down the road.

So, Mr. Speaker, I must state the position by one of the strong and renown and historic leaders of this province, John Diefenbaker, who was a Progressive Conservative who formed the government in Ottawa, was strongly opposed to the principle of closure. He stated that it was simply a way of silencing the members and the people. It was simply a way of not getting at the truth; that indeed, it was simply one of muzzling the people.

Others who got into the debate in regards to the pipeline motion back in '56, was also Stanley Knowles. In his statement he said that it was an attack on the right of Canadians. And I will quote what he said on May 31, 1956, at page 4511 of *Hansard*. He stated:

Closure is not a blow at the opposition of the House. It is a blow at the rights of the Canadian people. When closure is imposed in this way by the moving of a motion that is out of order, it is a blow that strikes at the very heart of our democratic system.

So here we have another great parliamentarian in the history of our Canadian democracy where he states that closure is one which strikes at the very heart and soul of our Canadian democracy; that it really strikes at the very rights of the people to be heard; that indeed when it is imposed in this way, there is no way that what we know as a right, what we have become to appreciate as a right, the freedom of speech in this country, the freedom of debate in the House, is now going to be eliminated because a government simply feels that the only way that they can save face, the only way they can get away from a situation where they are in dire straits, a situation where they are in a position where is has been their worst since they've been elected in in 1982, is a sad disgrace to the history of Saskatchewan people.

As I looked upon the debate in regards to the 1956 debate, I would like to make a final comment on it. The

comment I would like to bring about is just a general statement also dealing with Diefenbaker, which presents quite a contradiction to a lot of the Conservatives of course.

The quote I'm going to produce, Mr. Speaker, comes from a book called *The Canadian House of Commons: Procedure and Reform* by John B. Stewart. It was written in 1977. This is what he stated in regards to the pipeline debate. He says:

The furore brought on by the way the closure rule, standing order 33, was used in 1956 to put the pipeline Bill through all its stages in the House in 15 days, together with the defeat of the St. Laurent government in the next general election, made some members in all the parties think that the rule was dead. Never would a government dare to use it again.

In 1957 Prime Minister Diefenbaker committed himself to the elimination of the rule, and even went so far as to give notice of a motion for its repeal, but his motion died on the order paper when parliament was dissolved for the election of 1958.

Mr. Speaker, again this last quote shows that closure or any form of closure is indeed something to be abhorred. It is something that is not a very strong part of our parliamentary's tradition, and many strong politicians and leaders in this country have had a tremendous amount of resistance to it and have made many speeches in that regard.

I might say, Mr. Speaker, that there were further comments that were made by Eugene Forsey in regards to the pipeline debate, which I will introduce on different aspects of the debate. I would say that, Mr. Speaker, although closure has been used in Canada in different parts of the country, it has never been used in the history of Saskatchewan, that this is an unprecedented act in our history.

Whether we look at all the leaders, whether they were Progressive Conservatives, whether they were Liberals, CCF, or New Democrats, none of the leaders in the whole history of Saskatchewan had dared utilize . . .

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

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.