

The Assembly met at 8 a.m.

Prayers

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

NOTICE OF MOTION OF CLOSURE

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Speaker, before the order of the day is called for resuming debate on item no. 24, the allocation of time motion, I move:

That debate on the motion moved by the member for Melfort regarding the allocation of time to the debate on Bill No. 20 — An Act respecting the Reorganization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan — and on any amendments or subamendments proposed thereto, shall not be further adjourned.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I wonder where, can you show me on the blues, that this motion is printed.

The Speaker: — The motion itself is not in the blues because it's being moved pursuant to rule 31. He had given oral notice that he would be moving this motion Friday past.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — My understanding of the rules is that a motion would have to be printed in order for it to be allowed by the Assembly today. And I would like you to give the ruling on that that would allow for a motion to be put forward at this time, that isn't printed and isn't on the agenda.

The Speaker: — As I indicated earlier, the motion is being moved pursuant to rule 31. The motion itself is included in the *Votes and Proceedings* of Friday, August 4. He has given 24 hours notice, and there isn't any particular rule that I'm aware of where it says it must be printed in the blues. It's printed in the *Votes and Proceedings*, he's given 24-hour notice, and therefore the motion is in order.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. It seems to me that we have here a government that's moving, for the first time in history, a motion that doesn't appear on the agenda for the day. And I can't see how we can deal with it and I would really question whether or not . . .

The Speaker: — Well as I said, sir, I've gone through the reasons why we're allowing it, and I've answered your question, I feel, fully. And the debate will proceed.

An Hon. Member: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — No point of order. No point of order. I've given my ruling and the debate will proceed.

An Hon. Member: — Let me make my point of order so that you can understand whether it's on your ruling, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — No, no. There is no point of order, sir. I have given my ruling on it.

An Hon. Member: — How do you know?

The Speaker: — There hasn't been intervening business take place, therefore I must assume there is no point of order.

The division bells rang from 8:08 a.m. until 8:43 a.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 30

Devine	Hardy
Muller	Klein
McLeod	Meiklejohn
Andrew	Martin
Berntson	Toth
Lane	Johnson
Taylor	McLaren
Smith	Petersen
Swan	Swenson
Muirhead	Martens
Maxwell	Baker
Schmidt	Wolfe
Hodgins	Gleim
Gerich	Saxinger
Hepworth	Britton

Nays — 24

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

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTIONS

Time Allocation

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Hon. Mr. Hodgins.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to take part in what I think is an historical debate, the first time closure has ever been invoked in this province. And I sincerely hope it'll be the last time closure is ever invoked in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — This province, Mr. Speaker, has been a crucible of social change. We have managed to do that in a relatively peaceful way. I think we've done that because we've always allowed full and free discussion of all the issues, and it is unfortunate in this case, in what is an important and historical event, that this government hasn't the patience or the energy to see the debate through.

Mr. Speaker, I want to explore for a moment the reasons why I think this government invoked closure. Mr. Speaker, one must ask whether or not this government invoked closure because they think everyone has spoken. Clearly that's not the case. Quite a number of our members haven't spoken; some members opposite, including the Premier, has not spoken. It's almost accurate to say that the Deputy Premier hasn't spoken. He did enter the debate in an impromptu fashion and adlibbed a few complaints about the behaviour of the opposition, but anyone who looked to the Deputy Premier's speech for an explanation as to why potash ought to be privatized would go away without being any the wiser for having read it.

Mr. Speaker, in a debate such as this we think it's important that everybody be heard from. We think it's important that the Premier be heard from. We think it's important that government private members be heard from and the opposition members be heard from. That hasn't happened, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one must ask oneself whether or not this debate is being truncated, prematurely brought to an end, because of the expense of running this legislature. I think members opposite would dearly like to sell that to the public, but the public I think clearly know better. The public know that the money which goes into the running of this Assembly is money well spent, and for them to attempt to complain, as they have in some past debates and some past legislatures, that this legislature's expensive, I think they know better. I think they've tried that argument, and on past occasions — particularly they tried that during the summer of 1987 when the legislature went longer than one would ordinarily expect — they tried to sell that and weren't able to. The public of Saskatchewan well know that money spent in this Assembly, money spent in keeping members here debating the issues is money well spent.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, this debate isn't being prematurely ended with closure because of the government's concern for its legislative agenda. If the government had any concern about its legislative agenda, it would have dealt with some of those other issues and not exclusively with potash and privatization.

This government has been obsessed with privatization in the last six months, and they've been obsessed with privatization to the neglect of other issues, some of which really cry out for attention, Mr. Speaker.

I won't exhaustively enumerate those issues. Suffice it to say that there are issues in agriculture, in the Deputy Government House Leader's own area of highways, some serious problems in health, in the area of social

services — all of which demand attention, and has got none from this government; have got none from this government because they've only got one thing on their mind, and that's privatization.

It's getting to the point, Mr. Speaker, that this government has only one thing on its mind — privatization — and increasingly the public has got only one thing on its mind, and that's getting rid of this government so they can elect a government . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — And I suggest to members opposite, if you have any hope of moving the public off that position of what this province really needs is a new administration, then I suggest it's high time that this government got on to some other issue and got off of privatization. If this government thinks that the issue of privatization will end on Monday next — presumably that's when this debate will end, a week from today — if this government thinks that this issue is going to end a week from Monday, you're in for a very sorry surprise.

The Premier said that this was our Alamo. Well it's been their millstone, has been a very large millstone about their necks. And if you think the millstone's suddenly going to be lifted on Monday, and you walk away into a carefree future, then you really haven't thought this matter out very carefully — you really have not thought it out.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, this debate is not being prematurely ended because of public impatience. The public I have talked to, the polls that I have seen, suggest that they don't want privatization and they're prepared to back any opposition which uses legitimate and reasonable means to prevent it. That was my impression of talking to the public, some of whom have traditionally voted NDP and some of whom haven't, and of course it is reflected in the polls as well.

Rather, I think we're getting closure, Mr. Speaker, because this government has run out of, I think — first of all and in a very crass way — one of the reasons government members opposite feel the need to get this debate out of the way and to get out of here is because the per diems are no longer being paid. I wished that were not a consideration. I wished members opposite were not behaving as overly indulged, spoiled children — and I think they are — but that is the case. One of the reasons why members opposite have lost patience is because they're no longer getting paid. It is unfortunate that on a debate of this importance, of this historical importance, that a pretty issue of the members' pocket-books should loom large in the discussion of these issue. It is unfortunate that this discussion has been sullied by the greed of members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, it is undoubtedly another factor — I wished it were not so — undoubtedly another factor is simply the desire of members opposite to enjoy their summer. They don't want such trifling issues as potash and privatization interfering with their attendance at summer fairs or the cottage . . .

An Hon. Member: — You wouldn't understand, because

we're normal.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to resist replying to the member from Wilkie only because I'm limited to 20 minutes. That really does deserve a response, but I'm going to forgo the temptation to respond to him . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, indeed it does illustrate the point; indeed it does illustrate the point. The member from Wilkie said from his seat, when I said they were truncating this debate because they wanted to go to a summer fair, the member from Wilkie said that I am not normal. I think what the member from Wilkie is admitting is that that is a prime motivation and that is unfortunate. It really is unfortunate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — I think, Mr. Speaker, that there is another and a more fundamental reason why this government wants to shorten this debate. It's because this legislature is serving its historical function as a focus of public opinion. This legislature, Mr. Speaker, is doing what it's always done; it's acting as a focus for public opinion. Public opinion are opposed to privatization and therefore this government wants to bring to a conclusion this focus of public opinion, and that's what this legislature is.

They don't want to be here, Mr. Speaker, because they don't want to face the music. They don't want to be reminded that the public don't want this. They are acting contrary to public opinion and they are being arrogant, insensitive, and undemocratic.

This legislature serves as a forum through which the public are able to express that in an indirect way, and they do not want to hear that expression of public opinion. And I think that is perhaps the most fundamental reason, Mr. Speaker, why this debate is being brought to what is really a premature conclusion.

Mr. Speaker, I want to refer briefly to some of the comments we have had from members opposite about the reasons for closure. The Minister of Health spoke and his speech really consisted of a bald statement that 80 hours is enough; did not attempt to provide anything in the nature of an analysis why 80 hours was enough. He simply said that 80 was enough.

One note I made of his comments was that he stated that there are limitations on the throne speech and budget speech. That's accurate, Mr. Speaker, but the throne speech and budget speech are special orders, and this Assembly cannot get on to anything else until those are disposed of, and it would stand to reason that those items which take precedent over all else have to be limited.

But this debate, at least until this motion is passed, is not a special order. The government can deal with other legislative items. We have done our utmost to urge that they do so. The public have indicated in the clearest possible fashion that they want them to move on to other items on the legislative agenda, but this government hasn't.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Highways introduced this

motion. I got a copy of his comments and we read them on Thursday . . . on Friday, rather. His speech, which lasted a little under 20 minutes, contained — and given the time limitations, I won't go through these in detail — but it contained a lengthy commentary about the opposition and very, very little about potash.

He stated that the opposition had become arrogant. Then he went on in the next paragraph to state that the opposition had not learned the lessons of 1982. Then he got back to the question of how arrogant the opposition was. Then he commented about the absence of the Leader of the Opposition in the debate — a strange comment to have made and a strange comment, as well, given the very good speech which the Leader of the Opposition gave with respect to potash. But he made the comment.

He then dealt with the question of our supposed intention to offer shares in the potash corporation, a complete misrepresentation, not an accurate word in that entire commentary by him. Then after a brief reference, then he went on and made a brief reference to our arguments being as shallow, I think his comment was, as any wading pool in the city.

(0900)

Then he went back again to the issue of our supposed intention to sell shares in the potash corporation — an intention we never had, and something that has been fabricated by this government.

He then spoke about our failure to speak on behalf of the employees of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, a strange bit of logic which I couldn't follow. Then made a commentary, what he believed was a contest among our members to see who could speak the longest.

Then he talked about Ross Thatcher kicking in the door. Then he talked about the 17 day walk-out. Then he talked about our intention to make the province ungovernable. Then he talked about John Richard, the former member from Saskatoon. At that point, Mr. Speaker, you suggested to him that perhaps he should make some fleeting reference to the Bill under discussion. And then when you suggested he get back to the subject, he closed his speech in two paragraphs. About 100 words later he brought his speech to an end. He had nothing to say about the closure Bill itself. His speech was nothing but an attack on the opposition, and that has been true of other members who have spoken.

Mr. Speaker, I want very briefly to make a comment, and I want to make it clear that I do not do so, and in no way challenge the ruling that you yourself brought down, sir, with respect to repeating the arguments of others. I do, however, want to refer to the same incident as that ruling actually rose out of.

It's illustrative, Mr. Speaker, because it illustrates, I think, what happens when there isn't a full and fair discussion of an issue. Mr. Speaker, the ruling which you brought in arose during a discussion of a Home Rule bill in Ireland.

In 1867 the franchise in England had been extended to

include ordinary citizens of Ireland, not just the nobility, but ordinary citizens of Ireland. That brought to the British parliament for the first time Irish members of parliament, and they, Mr. Speaker, introduced a Bill into the House of Commons in England which would have provided home rule.

One of the means used to limit discussion was the ruling that no member could discuss the same item twice. Eventually in 1982, some time later, closure itself was introduced during the discussion of that Bill and, Mr. Speaker, 10 years later in 1876 the Bill actually came forward for discussion and just missed being passed by 30 votes. I think in the view of any reputable historian, had the vote been positive, Ireland would have home rule in the last century and a bloody century of revolution and bloodshed would have been avoided.

What happened subsequent to that was that Ireland was partitioned and it has been in a constant state of turmoil ever since. A very serious mistake, I think, might have been avoided had there been some more tolerance of the views of those Irish members of parliament and had the government listened to them instead of trying to choke them off. And that is what the government did.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that while I don't question your ruling, the historical setting in which that ruling arose strongly suggests that any government is well advised and any society is well advised to listen to the views of minorities.

Mr. Speaker, I want to . . . I gather the time limit within which I may speak is coming to a conclusion. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that it is . . . parliament is not a decision making body. It is a place for discussion of issues. Decisions — effective decisions — are taken by Executive Council, always have been. This is a place for discussion of public issues.

This issue requires a good deal more discussion. It hasn't got it, Mr. Speaker, and I urge government members opposite to limit and to change their minds with respect to this. I don't suppose that's going to happen, but, Mr. Speaker, I can only say that while this debate may be prematurely brought to a conclusion. This issue of privatization and the issue of this government's arrogance is going to continue, and eventually, Mr. Speaker, this government will be the victims of their own impatience and arrogance.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have a few comments to say with regard to this debate and with regard to this issue. I think that much has been made of the historical nature of this particular debate. I think that if we reflect back, we are going to find the history saying that this was a great debate that never was, quite frankly.

Mr. Speaker, let's go back and look at the history of, Mr. Speaker, the whole question of filibuster, the whole question of bell-ringing, and the whole question of repetitive speeches. And the member from Regina Centre quite properly reflects back to the last century in the

British parliament with what has become known in history as the Irish rebels or the Irish radicals, who brought forward each of those mechanisms.

Let me review them each in their order, Mr. Speaker. First of all, the bell-ringing. The bell-ringing issue, as I've said before in this House, was brought forward by the Irish radicals, corrected by the Speaker in the House in that instance in parliament. That did not find its way back into Canadian parliamentary procedure in any other Commonwealth jurisdiction except Canada, and that was in fairly modern times, and has been subsequently corrected by rule changes in all jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker, except Saskatchewan. And I'm not sure that's a great thing for us to hold on to, but it's only Saskatchewan now that allows for unlimited bell-ringing.

If you go to the filibuster, the filibuster introduced by those same Irish radicals did not come into great use either in the British parliament or the Canadian parliament, quite frankly. It found greater use in the American system of government, or the American congressional system. And if you study the history of the filibuster, the filibuster was used perhaps more than any by the southern Democrats. And the most recent, I think, historical filibuster used in the United States was by those same southern Democrats in the civil rights movement, and that's where you saw tremendous amounts of filibustering.

And if you look at that and look historically, other than the beginning where it came from the Irish radicals, the filibuster use in the debating forums of a free society have tended to be by the conservatives, by those resisting change, and used, that filibuster being used to resist change, Mr. Speaker, rather than to move forward with change and new ideas. And that's where you saw it.

With regard to the repetitive speeches, that was again a vehicle used by the speaker in parliament to try and attempt to avoid the use of filibuster. And the reason they tried to avoid the use of filibuster, I think has been adequately demonstrated in the potash debate so far. People have said there has not been a debate, and I think in fairness many can say that is in fact the case.

How do you debate, Mr. Speaker, how do you debate in any normal rules of debate where one side stands up and takes 13 hours to make a speech and then you expect a counter-debate on the other side. A proper debate, Mr. Speaker, in any type of forum is a balanced debate from both sides. So if some side has, as we do in this debate, 20 minutes, you will see the debate going back and forth. Twenty minutes perhaps is too short, but is 40 minutes or an hour? Fine and dandy, Mr. Speaker. But you do not balance it off, 13 hours versus half an hour. How do you expect anyone to see a debate coming out of that?

And that's why . . . what this reflects, I would suggest more than anything, Mr. Speaker, is the needs and the need by which we must look at reforming the rules in this legislature, because that's where and why you don't see this happening in virtually any other jurisdiction of the Commonwealth any more, Mr. Speaker, because each of those jurisdictions have in fact used this type of forum.

The members talk about closure. And you can go back in history and look at closure in this country as well. They referred to the great pipeline debate in 1956 where it was properly used, Mr. Speaker.

But let's go back now and look at closure or time allocation in the Canadian political parliamentary setting. Closure is a rule, not an exception, in the parliamentary system in Ottawa these days. You go back into the records and ask yourself how many years time allocation has not in fact been used in parliament since the time of Trudeau. And Trudeau was the one that introduced time allocation rules so that the House of Commons could be properly managed. And following Trudeau, the Mulroney government has used it over the past five years, in fact this very spring.

If you go to the province of Ontario, Mr. Speaker, where the rule we are using today was invented, was used back perhaps 5, 10 years ago, was also used to close the session in the Ontario parliament this very year, Mr. Speaker. And did we see a great deal of writing about this in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*? You saw very, very little, Mr. Speaker.

The reason I think that you have to look at time allocation is, modern politics marches on. We've heard in this debate, Mr. Speaker, we have heard in this debate — they talk about the giants, Mr. Speaker. And when they go back and refer to the giants, who do they talk about — Churchill or Diefenbaker or Douglas? And each of those people were giants, Mr. Speaker, in an era where you had great orators and where you had great debate.

But if you look at modern times, Mr. Speaker, where you see the change as we've changed from the great orator to the great communicator, and it's not now the Churchills or the Douglasses or the Diefenbakers, it was the Kennedys who started this on television, followed by Ronald Reagan who made . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Excuse me, excuse me. Order. The hon. member is in the midst of his speech, but we have continuous interjections, and I think it's unfair to him.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Ronald Reagan made that sense of the great communicator in an art form, and that's now fallen to Gorbachev who now does it as well. And I think that's a lesson for all of us here, Mr. Speaker, because what you have with television in this legislature, with the modern electronic era, what you have is the great, long speaker has shifted to the one who can make their point through the television media. For good or for worse, that is in fact what has happened to modern politics.

So I say to you: what is the role of the filibuster in the modern electronic age? And I think it's gone past, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, its era in which it is used.

What this says, Mr. Speaker, is we have to look at ways by which we can change our rules; by which if it takes by 1960's rules, which we have here, how do we adjust those rules to fit the issues and to fit the forum in which we find ourselves heading into the 1990s? And that's really what we're talking about, because you need adequate

time, as the hon. members suggest, to be able to communicate their message. It should not be restricted to a week or two weeks on significant issues. Clearly that is something, Mr. Speaker, that we have to look at.

Now I think where we look at those things, I think we have to look at changing the rules on bells. I believe it is also important that we look at changing the rules as to the balance of debate by way of time. Now I don't know what that number is; I don't know whether it's appropriately to be an hour or even two hours or whatever it is, but clearly, Mr. Speaker, I believe there's time needed for that.

Then we've asked ourselves, I think, as all elected members here, this debate has gone on for . . . began some four months ago; it's gone on for — what? — 15 to 30 days and the longest number of hours, so it's been more time spent debating this in the House than it has with any other issue.

Then we ask ourselves, if we put that much effort into it, sitting here listening to someone speak, why have the galleries not been full? And why have we not seen a great deal of this in the newspaper, of all of this debate? We ask ourselves, I think genuinely, and I would think as all elected people, why has it not been covered, Mr. Speaker? Why has the debate not been covered?

(0915)

Is it because they want to be out on the golf course; they want to, as some of the members say, if they don't report it then maybe we will go away? Or is because, Mr. Speaker, nothing very new has been said about an issue? Mr. Speaker, in all due respect, I think that sometimes we look like we're running back to the debate of 1975. And I think that's a proper criticism for all of us to look at.

I say to the hon. members opposite, quite frankly, and I think history can properly show and will show for anyone that wants to review this great debate, this motion that we're bringing forward today, quite frankly, while the members opposite squeal and yell about it, I think they do so more so in acting than they do in emotion.

Mr. Speaker, there has not been emotion like one would expect from a great debate. The hon. member that just stood up and took his place, I mean, he gets into the question of saying, well, the reason you're doing this is because your per diems have run out. That does no justice, Mr. Speaker, to anyone sitting in the House, and anyone that would make that type of statement, Mr. Speaker, I think deserves to be roundly criticized, not only by his colleagues but by everybody else, because that is not a proper reflection on anyone, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order. I must interrupt the member unfortunately again because other members are interrupting him and not giving him the opportunity to speak in this forum. I once more ask for your co-operation.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I think when we look at lowering ourselves to that type of criticism of each other, that we're not being paid our per diem, we all, Mr. Speaker, lose some as members of this House, because it

becomes, Mr. Speaker, not a pox on one side or the other but a pox on the entire House, and I think properly so, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about here — and let me close by saying this. And I can have more to say when I come to the four days of debate. Let me make two observations. One, it would seem to me appropriate that the House leaders in any type of institution that works, given that there's two days for continuation of second reading, and two days for continuation in the Committee of the Whole, that the House leaders would sit down and say, how many people in the opposition have not yet spoken. Is it 13? What would be an appropriate time to allocate to them — 45 minutes? Would one be able to say what one has to say in 45 minutes if they were forced to? I think they probably could, Mr. Speaker, and then allow for the debate to go back and forth.

So maybe the opposition would have 45 minutes and the government members would have 30 or 25, whatever you want to seem to be fair. Each could put up a number of speakers. Perhaps we could make the debate that has now gone on for 80 hours, the debate that never was, quite frankly, into a debate in those last short periods. Hopefully we could, Mr. Speaker.

The second thing I think we would like to see, Mr. Speaker, or I would like to see, if you are looking at the great debate, maybe we could, as members, put our minds to what potash should be, your view and ours, in the 1990s, not in the 1970s, because surely that's what we should be speaking about. This is not a review of history when you come to the main debate. This should be a debate about the future, and should that corporation be owned by the government, as the view is advanced by the NDP, and is that concept current in modern economics? And I would argue it is not.

Can it somehow still remain in ownership of a majority of Saskatchewan people, and in doing so how can we get into the savings of Saskatchewan people to invest in things like the potash corporation? Surely that's what we should do. I think the short history of SaskEnergy, of SaskPower bonds, etc. have shown a willingness in our people to take what otherwise was their savings in the banks or credit union accounts and put those into sharing in the development and the expansion of our Crown corporations.

The debate also needs to talk about, Mr. Speaker, is what the 1982 document from CMB (Crown Management Board of Saskatchewan), or CIC (Crown investments corporation of Saskatchewan) when the NDP were in power, talked about, which is a key issue. If you need to expand your Crowns, and we know we do, where do you get your capital? Does your capital come from government, and if it's equity then it crowds out other expenditures, or is it borrowed? And if you're going to expand a corporation, are you going to expand it only on borrowed money, and is that wise? When there is a large amount of capital in the small bank accounts around this province willing and prepared to make an investment in a corporation in Saskatchewan, does that not mean, Mr. Speaker, of giving the people of our province an opportunity, but also having some faith in them that they

have pride in ownership, or do we want to go back to the antiquated argument of the dinosaurs that talk about only the big boys will buy the shares? Well the big boys today happen to be pension funds of school teachers and government employees and employees of various corporations in registered retirement savings plans — those are the big boys.

Mr. Speaker, so we go back to the view, somehow, that it's going to be some elusive rich guy, the Reichmanns that come in and buy everything up. The history is — of the ones we've done to date — has not shown that. The history of the Alberta Energy Corporation or similar corporations, Nova, has not shown that to be the case, Mr. Speaker. And I believe that's not the case here. But it's a worthy debate, Mr. Speaker, and it's a debate we should be on, not what the royalties were in 1975, and what the royalties were in 1983, or what the potash price was then and now. What does that contribute to a debate? That does not make it a great debate. Let's take these next two days, I say, and make it into a better debate than it has been to date.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to oppose the motion put forward by the Deputy House Leader. Mr. Speaker, it's in my view an act of a desperate government, a government that is falling on hard times that have been created by its own actions. It's very undemocratic. It's reflective of the government losing touch in Saskatchewan. In my view, it's not far away from their objectives though. This government is trying to put a muzzle on the opposition. They're trying to use an extreme measure to limit debate, which in other parliaments in Canada and in the British Commonwealth have really frowned upon over the historical examples that we will use in this debate.

But the record that I am referring to is the record that the government opposite has gone on record as trying to create. They say they wanted to make Saskatchewan number one. Well they've made Saskatchewan number one in a number of areas, Mr. Speaker. They've made Saskatchewan number one by invoking closure upon closure, which has to be one of the rare times, if not the first time, to happen in Canada — certainly the first time to happen in Saskatchewan.

It's our view, Mr. Speaker, that the Progressive Conservatives are afraid of the truth and, more importantly, they're afraid of calling an election. That's the real problem here, Mr. Speaker. They've shown time after time, with lack of credibility that they have, they've shown time after time their ineptness in managing the economy. They've mismanaged the economy to a point where we have record bankruptcies, fastest growing debt in all of North America, we have the largest number of people leaving this province in the history of the province — they've just shown utter incompetence when it comes to running the business of the government.

And it's my view, Mr. Speaker, that invoking closure on closure won't stand the test of time. Their record will stand the test of time, because come the next election, the people of this province will be casting their ballots to

reflect very clearly what they've thought of this government's mismanagement capability over the last number of years.

I listened with incredulity with regard to the Minister of Justice's comments. He talked about the House of Commons and he talked about closure and he talked about credibility, and he talked about getting back to democracy and the democratic principles of the country and the province that we live in and represent.

Yet when you look at his argument, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't hold water at all. He talks about closure in the House of Commons. Well closure in the House of Commons is rare enough, but even when it's invoked, it's invoked with a great deal of consideration and thoughtfulness by the government, and trepidation as well, Mr. Speaker, and the reason being that it's a very severe move in the parliamentary process. But also the House of Commons, when they go through all that consternation and consideration, you have to recognize that the House of Commons has 282 members, 282 members, Mr. Speaker, so closure in the rare circumstances that it's been used would be used in the game where there are 282 speakers.

We sit in this legislature with barely 20 per cent, 20 per cent of the numbers in the House of Commons, and yet they invoke closure because they don't think that the small amount of time that remains in the debate for the members who have yet to speak is sufficient or that it's too much. They want to muzzle the opposition.

The other aspect that I want to address with regard to the Minister of Justice, very briefly, is the fact that he talked about democracy and the democratic principles and credibility. Well he's the minister, Mr. Speaker, that stood in this House on May 27, 1980 and put forward a Bill, a private member's Bill, a freedom of information Act, requesting that more information be allowed and less secrecy in governments be promoted, but more information be provided to the people of this province, individuals collectively as well, and to members of this House.

Yet he has stood time after time in this House as part of the Conservative government in making the cabinet more secretive, making government more secretive, providing less and less information to the public, and in fact squeezing and choking the democratic principles that he puts forward. Now what kind of credibility is that?

And I can talk as well, Mr. Speaker, about his credibility when it comes to his performance just recently, in the spring part of the session, when he attacked in a personal way the auditor of this province, the Provincial Auditor, for coming forth with the truth and explaining and outlining 46 different occasions how the government broke their own law. And he calls that democratic, and he's the Minister of Justice who says, while he doesn't respond to that, instead he makes a personal attack which shows what little credibility he as a member in this House has. So, Mr. Speaker, I think his arguments hold far less water than any member to stand in this debate on potash or in this debate on closure to date.

But I want to get on with my comments, Mr. Speaker, as they relate to democracy and closure and censure and the muzzling of the opposition. Democracy and civilized society of political freedoms have been built up over centuries on the foundation of certain parliamentary traditions and institutions. And we have seen, Mr. Speaker, example after example of this government, the Conservative government opposite, attack those fundamental traditions and attack those fundamental freedoms to where we're at now, where they're attacking full force with a sledge-hammer a solution that could be resolved with simple communication and debate. Communication is the beginning of understanding, Mr. Speaker. The government opposite doesn't understand that that is so. They believe that communication should not be allowed. They want to muzzle the opposition and keep us quiet.

There have been many, many articles written, Mr. Speaker, about this very issue, and one is — there are a couple of them I want to quote from — a book entitled *The Decline of Democracy*. It's by Ralph Bultjens — spelt B-u-u-l-t-j-e-n-s. and it's essays on endangered political species, which is the decline of democracy. And one of the individuals that are quoted in here is Alfred E. Smith, and he talks about an issue that this government, in my view, is participating in, that they really sincerely believe in. They believe what Alfred E. Smith once said about democracy. What he said, and I quote, "All the ills of democracy can be cured by more democracy."

(0930)

This government opposite believes that democracy can be cured by a totalitarian state, by a dictatorial move to shut people up from speaking on the issue of the day, speaking on issues which are important to people who elected us to come here to speak on. And in my view, Mr. Speaker, that's really incredible.

In this book as well, John Stuart Mill, who has been quoted by the members of the government in the past, says as well with regard to closure and muzzling and silencing the opposition, and I quote him:

But the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of opinion is that it is robbing the human race, posterity as well as the existing generation, those who dissent from the opinion still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; if wrong, they lose what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression on truth produced by its collision with error. We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavouring to stifle is a false opinion, or if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil.

So what John Stuart Mill has said about democracy, Mr. Speaker, very simply is that why do you have to silence the opposition. Let the opposition speak and put the positions forward that they represent. And if they are right, they will prove that the government is wrong and the government perhaps will change its ways.

But if their opinions are wrong, if the opposition's

opinions are wrong and the statements put forward are unacceptable to the greater majority, then they will suffer the consequences thereof. But why would you want to silence and muzzle those who have yet to speak on this issue?

Mr. Speaker, even John Stuart Mill, who spoke on the democratic environment many times, found something like an action like this government is now undertaking appalling and unacceptable.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to quote as well from another book that I've read and it's entitled *Totalitarian Rule: Its Nature and Characteristics* by Hans Buchheim, and it's spelled B-u-c-h-h-e-i-m. And it was originally written in German; it was translated from German to English, and they talked about the totalitarian state.

It's my view, Mr. Speaker, that this government is a totalitarian government. They have shown time after time with their insensitivities, with their accumulation of power and secrecy into the cabinet, away from the opposition and away from the people of this province, and other examples that we've seen here, in particular this closure motion, that they are a totalitarian state. And I quote from one section, and it says here:

The word totalitarian was used to designate any state which was governed in an authoritarian rather than a parliamentary manner.

So my definition holds water, Mr. Speaker, that this government will not allow free speech in this issue of Bill 20, yet they want to talk about parliament and democracy. They're speaking out of both sides of their mouths, and that is not unusual for the Conservatives opposite or Conservatives at a national level. They always speak out of both sides of their mouths.

And I want to quote further, Mr. Speaker:

Totalitarian power grows beyond all standards of normal politics. It gains incalculable and sinister dimensions. Under its dominion, life falls into confusion and insecurity of a kind not known heretofore. Human beings find themselves not only oppressed and confined in their freedom, but also delivered up to the regime mercilessly exploited by it, and finally, as it were, inadvertently criminally involved in the regime's activity.

Characteristically it was precisely the politically sophisticated observers who predicted a quick collapse of totalitarian rule. And from their point of view they were justified, for according to traditional views and standards, such a regime destroys all the preconditions that can give permanence to a government.

What this says, Mr. Speaker, very simply is that the totalitarian rule is growing by their very own actions, but that as a result of their very own totalitarian actions and authoritative actions, the permanence of their government is very limited. And I maintain, Mr. Speaker, that their actions, closure and all other examples that

we've raised and will be raising in this debate, will show very clearly that this government will not be very permanent. And I submit that come the next election, Mr. Speaker, this government will be history as is this motion.

Mr. Speaker, we have other comments in this book. I want to just maybe go off to one more. We have here, Mr. Speaker, comments on totalitarian rule. And it's interesting because this book is written about a lot of totalitarian governments. It was not written with having experienced the Conservative government opposite, Mr. Speaker. Yet many of the comments made here make many, many references to the past governments, the Nazi party and others, that have very many similarities and similar analogies to the government of the day. And it's very scary, Mr. Speaker, very scary.

But I want to quote another section here. It says here:

The demand of totalitarian movements to dominate completely over men in societies without any controls and to recreate social life radically rests on their claim to know the intention of world history and therefore, to be in the position of completing its course.

Now they think they're part of the history making of this world. They believe that they know where the history of man will take this government. It's my contention, Mr. Speaker, that this government has not learned the lessons of the past. And we all know the familiar saying that if you do not know the lessons of the past and history lessons of the past, you are doomed to repeat them in the future. And that's why this comment, this quote from the *Totalitarian Rule* is very pertinent to the government opposite.

They believe they have a place in history, but they don't have the sensitivity to know where they've come from, or where the province's come from, and where we should be going. They are going off in an ivory tower and isolation with this Bill 20 and other moves in the past that they believe, I'm sure truly believe, will make this province and country great.

But when you look at the history of our province, Mr. Speaker, and the history of other totalitarian regimes, that has not been the case. They have failed every time. They have failed every time, Mr. Speaker, and failed miserably, but in so doing it's not a matter of trying and failing — better to have tried and failed than not to have tried at all — but what the problem is, Mr. Speaker, is they've hurt countless people in the process. And we've heard about the unemployment rates in this province, the highest in our history. We've heard about the largest number of people leaving this province, the largest number in the history of this province, only because this government's economic policies are poor and dismal. And they believe privatization is going to be the be-all and end-all.

Well we've witnessed they provincial government break promise after promise. They promised to reduce taxes; they increased them significantly. They promised to balance the budget; we've got the largest deficit in the history of the province and the fastest growing deficit we've ever seen.

We've witnessed the government selling off the assets of this province, including the potash corporation, but others before, and they say that's going to create jobs and that's going to improve the economy. But in every case, after every sale-off, after every sell-off of an asset, the debt has increased, unemployment has increased, the number of bankruptcies have increased. That's their record. It's failed miserably, and what have they done? They've continued to go headlong and shut the opposition up when it comes to putting forward the viewpoints of the people that elected us.

Mr. Speaker, we've witnessed them break the law in the auditor's report. We've witnessed the government breaking the law as it applies to the issuing of the prospectus of SaskEnergy. They're doing things contrary to their own laws, similar to the totalitarian governments that have come before them.

Mr. Speaker, this democratic government, so-called, has really put a difficult handcuff on themselves. They have put forward an economic program that has failed miserably and now they are saying we will not allow the opposition to talk about their economic record. They want, Mr. Speaker, to proceed and go with . . . proceed and sell off the balance of our economy because they think that's the right thing to do. And history will prove them wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I want to now just quote from one other document if I might, and it's a document which was published . . . it's called *The Development of Procedure*; actually it's called *The Procedure of the House of Commons, a Study of its History and Present Form* by Josef Redlich. And it says in this book, Mr. Speaker, a number of quotes out of the 1500s in Great Britain, and I quote as it relates to freedom of speech:

There is nothing so necessary for the preservation of the prince and the state as free speech, and without it is scorn and mockery to call it a parliament house.

Sir Erskine May, Mr. Speaker, is quoted in this book. And he points out, and I quote:

To this cause in his pamphlet remarks with a view to facilitate the dispatch of public business in parliament. The development of freedom (he says) had enormously increased the desire to speak in the House. Delays and even obstructions must not always be regarded as illegitimate parliamentary weapons as they afforded the means of collecting the opinions of constituencies and the public for the future. On important legislative proposals, long debates might always be reckoned on.

And there's a number of other examples here, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues will refer to them, but basically what this document shows is that the history of parliament has always provided for members to speak their views, to share their views in the House of Commons, in the legislatures of the country.

And I want to maybe end my remarks, Mr. Speaker, with

somebody who has not been quoted in this House for a while, if at all, and it was actually a musician by the name of John Lennon. John Lennon was one of The Beatles; he was a very popular musician during the course of my generation growing up in this country, and he had a significant impact on a number of young people.

One of the things he did, Mr. Speaker, was write about totalitarian regimes such as the government opposite. And he wrote a song and it was called *Free the People*, and I want to quote from that song because, in my view, it really outlines very clearly what this government's record has been and their intentions are. And I quote:

We understand your paranoia, but we don't want to play your game.

You think you're cool and you know what you are doing. 666 is your name.

So while you're ripping off each other, you better bear this thought in mind,

Your time is up, you better know it, but maybe you don't read the signs.

And he was referring, Mr. Speaker — and I wish I could sing that song but I don't have a very good singing voice — but he was referring to regimes such as this opposite that forced themselves; and the 666 there as you recall is a sign of the devil — but he was referring to the government like this who were forcing their opinions without having a mandate.

And it's my view, Mr. Speaker, that this government's mandate is just about over. The people have told us in the opposition that what they are doing with regard to Bill 20 is unacceptable. And in my view, they don't know that their time is up when it comes to major significant economic programs like privatization. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that this government will go down in history in flames just like John Lennon wrote about, because they lost touch with the people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to enter into this historical debate, and I think it's a historical debate although I believe that it's a tragic one. It's a tragic debate because of the fact that it is being forced upon the members of this House by a government who was elected to do things which it is not doing, by a government which is doing things which it promised the people of Saskatchewan it would not do.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this closure motion that we're debating here today is here because we are faced by a government which is afraid. It is a government that is afraid of what its inevitable disposition is going to be if this debate continues. Why are they afraid of debating Bill 20? Why, Deputy Speaker, are they afraid of debating Bill 20? Because there could be no other reason why they would move this motion.

Well they are afraid, Mr. Speaker, to debate Bill 20 at length because they know that public opinion is against them on the issue. They know it and yet they intend to proceed with it in spite of the wishes of the people.

Privatization has become a dirty word in the public in Saskatchewan. You know that Mr. Deputy Speaker, in your constituency, as the members opposite do. Privatization is a dirty word and it's unacceptable. And because that is the case, the government feels it cannot allow a democratic debate and therefore chooses to use this closure to stop it.

(0945)

And my colleague, the member from Regina Centre, made the other comment about another reason why the members have introduced, the government has introduced this motion. They have introduced it because their per diems have run out and therefore they don't want to stay in this House any more and do the work of the people.

Well I say for the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we were not elected here for any other reason than to do the people's business, and we should not do the people's business only when it's convenient to us. We should be doing the business of the people when it's necessary, and it's necessary to debate the issue of privatization of the potash corporation because of the major implications that it's going to have on the future of Saskatchewan and the ability of Saskatchewan to build the kind of future that the people of this province have a right to expect.

When I was first elected to this Assembly in 1971, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I never thought that I would have to rise in this House and debate an issue like this one. I've been a member here for 15 years, which in the scheme of things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a long time. I have always been able to speak on behalf of my constituents and on behalf of people of Saskatchewan who had a certain point of view which I shared. I have always been able to do that until this draconian action by a very desperate government, and I really find that repulsive, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I want to say, as other colleagues of mine have said, that even though the government may muzzle us in this legislature, we will not be muzzled in saying the things that need to be said, because if we can't say them in here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will say them from one end of this province wherever we go, because those are the kinds of things that are important to the people of Saskatchewan. Democracy will be protected by this opposition to the largest extent that we can, at every opportunity that we can.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — My colleagues and I will not be muzzled by this government or by the press, both of whom are guilty of seriously attacking the freedom of speech — the freedoms which should come without question in a democracy, Mr. Speaker. The quickness with which editorials have leaped to the defence of the government's action says a great deal about the dangers that our democracy faces when there is a monopoly in our major press outlets, which decides to support action by any government which is contrary to wishes of the people and for which the government has no mandate. And when the people cannot be heard, freedom, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, is destroyed.

It seems, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the press decided not to cover this debate on the potash Bill because the ministers opposite did not enter into the debate. And when the minister of participation finally spoke the other day, he received some coverage, but almost every member of the opposition who spoke in this debate received none.

It is well known, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the majority of people oppose the government's privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Polls have shown that. Just start a discussion on the street, Mr. Deputy Speaker, or in the coffee shop, or in the elevator, and that sentiment is blindingly obvious.

Clearly the opposition was the voice of the people that was being expressed in this people's legislature. And the opposition is today being muzzled, and that voice of the people, for the most part, during the debate on this 20, was being muzzled at the same time because we, after all, are here to speak for the people who elect us to do just that. And the government with closure is muzzling the opposition, and therefore the voice of the majority of the public.

And the press of this province are prepared to help the government do that. And I find that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, abhorrent. It frightens me to think that the press who should be, more than anyone, concerned about the freedom of speech can so easily support the erosion of the freedom which the government's motion on Friday and the closure of today proposes to do.

I want to refer you, Mr. Speaker, to the *Leader-Post* editorial which is titled "Reasonable limit will focus potash debate," because I think that editorial and some of the comments made in it tells you something very clearly about the dangers that we face. First of all . . .

An Hon. Member: — *Star-Phoenix*.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — In the *Star-Phoenix*. First of all it says, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

It's not as if the time limit rule will result in the taxpayers of this province missing out on some crucial element of the discussion.

But the point then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that but for 80 days the press has not bothered to report the discussion which has taken place so that the taxpayers could be better informed. And then this comment is made, and then I find it particularly ironic and something that leaps beyond the ability to find reasonable argument when the editorial further went to say:

The time limit should also force the Premier and his ministers to speak on this issue.

Well what kind of reasoning is it, Mr. Deputy Speaker,

that the government has to use closure to force its own Premier to enter the debate on Bill 20? I fail to understand the logic of that argument by the editorial, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And then it went on to say:

And perhaps opposition leader Roy Romanow will also take a higher profile in the debate.

Well I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people who wrote that editorial should at least offer the opportunity to pick up the speech that the Leader of the Opposition made when he spoke right after the Minister of Finance rose and said nothing about the Bill, a speech which was comprehensive and thoughtful and well reasoned, and pointed out why the Bill was wrong and inadequate, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — There has been a debate in this House. Unfortunately it has been on the part of the opposition and on the part of the public of Saskatchewan. If there has not been an adequate debate on the part of the government members, they should answer for that.

Even today, today we are now faced with closure. Has the Premier spoken on Bill 20? Has the Minister of Justice spoken on Bill 20? He's the minister in charge of Trade and Investment; you'd think he'd have an interest. Has the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, the member from Maple Creek, has she spoken on this debate? Course not. Now no minister would probably have a greater interest in the debate here than the Minister of Energy and Mines, the member from Swift Current. Has she spoken in this debate? Of course not.

Now, of course, they may rise now with the closure motion in, and they may try to cover their backsides by entering this debate because they know that there will not be adequate opportunity for members of the opposition to respond. But they have up until now chosen not to enter this debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they need to explain that.

So I say that on Friday morning and again today on Monday morning, freedom, democracy, freedom of speech in Saskatchewan was seriously wounded. On that day and today, this government declared war on the people for this province to be heard in this legislature through their elected members. The government served notice that the right of the people of this province, through their elected representatives, to say to the government is acting against their wishes, and that the government should seriously reconsider what it is doing. Because in the opinion of the vast majority of the people what they are doing is wrong and destructive and continues, and contrary to all of those aspirations and dreams and hopes that the people have about their future and the future of their children and the future of this province as a caring place and as a place which is unique and different from many other places in this continent.

This, Mr. Deputy Speaker, can be only defined as a form of political blitzkrieg where this government has decided that it must move as quickly as it can to destroy all vestiges

of the progress and the building that has been carried out by the people of Saskatchewan since the beginning of this province, in order that this government can impose on them its own way of doing things, a way in which politicians opposite, in which the Premier have convinced themselves is the best way, even though the people who elected them don't agree that it's the best way. And they are determined to have their way, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and so they have introduced this attack on democracy and freedom in this legislature.

Some have described it as a scorched earth policy. From some of them . . . some of them have said it quite unashamedly — that the intention of the government is to change the face of this province so dramatically that when there is another government in place, a more progressive government, it will never be able to rebuild some of the things that this government has destroyed. And that's on the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's in the record of the public accounts of the Crown Corporations Committee where the member opposite said just that, Mr. Speaker.

No government is elected in a democracy to act in such an arbitrary and arrogant way. No government in a democracy like ours is elected to do things for which it has absolutely no mandate. No government is elected in our society to say one thing during an election and do things absolutely different after the election to please a few select individuals and some powerful interest groups, and a few self-serving politicians, at the expense of the rest of the population. And yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's exactly what this government is doing here today and intends to do in the days ahead.

This government intends to act in a self-serving way to reward a few select supporters of this Conservative Party, to reward a few former and present Conservative politicians who are affiliated with this particular PC government in Saskatchewan; to take away all of those tools and institutions by which Saskatchewan people have been able to guide their own destiny, build in their own way, provide things that nowhere else in the North American continent were being provided; being leaders and innovators and builders of programs which were the envy of people from one end of this country to another.

This is a government which does not believe in government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is a government that has decided, in some strange and perverse way, that we in a province like ours can only be the victims of the forces around us and that we should not be able to determine or influence how those forces affect us.

These people opposite believe that we can only be the victims of the events of the world, and that we should not even attempt to influence them. I know that Saskatchewan people don't support that view, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the government knows that the people don't support it, so the Premier has ordered that this motion be put before this legislature that we're dealing with today.

I stand here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I say without any hesitation that I do not accept or support that view. I say

that I have faith in the people of Saskatchewan. I have faith their ability and their determination and their creativity and their desire to steer their own course, to continue to build in the future as they have done in the past, to continue to harness those forces which would take advantage of us so that they might in fact benefit us instead.

But this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, can only happen in a free and an open society where people can speak and expect to be heard, where a minority in the opposition side of the legislature is not muzzled. There should not be a place in our society for an elected dictatorship. But that's what we have in Saskatchewan today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — We have a government which was elected by the people in good faith. Now it's important to note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the government did not receive as many votes as the official opposition in that election, but it was elected through the democratic process. And yet in spite of that they have so little respect for that democratic process that through this motion they spit in the face of democracy. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, can be described as nothing other than arrogance and dictatorship.

Even more horrendous, Mr. Speaker, is that once this government has used this process, it is well known that they will be prepared to use it again. Once they have used this process, we know that they will be prepared to use it in SaskEnergy. We know that they will be prepared to use it in privatization of health care and education services. Once they have used it, we know they'll be prepared to use it again at any opportunity in which they think the public doesn't support what they are doing, because having use it once, they will be comfortable with it and they will use it again and again and again.

(1000)

And I say that the people of Saskatchewan will not forget this day. This day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will remain for a long time the symbol of a government out of control, the symbol of a government that has become so arrogant that they believe that only they can be right, so arrogant that they believe that no one else's opinion has a right to be expressed if it is contrary to the opinion of the government. They seem to believe that the people do not know what is best for them, that only this government knows what's good for the people.

And so I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as my time runs out, in all seriousness, that this day will be remembered as the day which put the final phase in the destruction of the Conservative Party in this province for many years to come.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — It happened in 1919 and it's happening again in 1989. But what concerns me gravely is that even some of the members opposite who are people of good conscience are prepared to sit in their seats and allow this to happen without protest, without

doing what they know they could do to stop this attack on freedom. Because there are a few members opposite who know better and who should take the initiative and take the act of courage and do what's right and not allow this to happen, because it's an attack on freedom, it's an attack on democracy, it's an attack on the right of people of this province to speak through their elected representatives. It's abhorrent, it's distasteful, it should not be allowed to happen in this legislature as it is happening here today, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to address my remarks to the motion as presented by the Deputy House Leader, not with a good deal of concern, not without a good deal of concern. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that I have a responsibility and a duty to speak. I am in favour of this motion, Mr. Speaker, because it is a reasonable effort to bring back to the Assembly the business and the proper perspective of the business of this Assembly.

This Assembly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a forum for debate, and I have somehow been held back from that debate in various fashions by the members of the opposition, because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have had to sit and listen here for 13 hours, for 10 hours, for 8 hours, for 6 hours, a continual review of the same facts, and almost fiction, that the members of the opposition have presented to us. The motion, I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is reasonable, it's carefully thought out. It provides a balance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it provides a balance between the rights of the opposition and the rights of the government. And I believe, Mr. Minister, that focus has to be clearly enunciated, and we will, with the discussion that we have today, deal with those issues.

I want to point out a number of things that have been suggested by the opposition in relation to this debate that I feel need to be addressed. First of all the discussion hinged on Friday around aspects of the Rt. Hon. John George Diefenbaker in the '56 pipeline debate. One of the things that I don't believe Mr. Diefenbaker ever would have done in the discussion is back out from debate. He was factual, he was right, he worked hard to provide the facts to the people of Canada in terms of the kinds of things that he would discuss. He did not back away from debate.

And what we have had in the course of the history of this session, Mr. Speaker, is two things; the NDP backed off from debate in two areas. One is they did not allow the members of the government to speak by continually speaking for 13 hours, for 10 hours, and all of the period of time.

And now the second thing, Mr. Speaker, that I think they did not allow debate, is when they walked out for 17 days. They did not allow debate, they did not allow debate by members on the government side; they did not even allow debate on the part of the members from the opposition, and I think that that is highly unreasonable.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we have today editorials out of the *Star-Phoenix* and the *Leader-Post*, the way they

are printed, because of that fact. They focus, on August 5 in the *Star-Phoenix*, the editorial reads:

Putting a time limit on the potash privatization debate will not, as the opposition suggests, subvert democracy; rather, it will serve to focus democracy in this case.

And I believe that is absolutely accurate. We have had to listen to everything from the *Romper Room* to the Alamo, and a whole lot of things in between that, from the kinds of things that the opposition have suggested in this debate. And I feel, Mr. Speaker, that is not enhancement for the people of this Assembly, nor is it an enhancement for the people of this Assembly in respect to the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — And I believe that, Mr. Speaker, and the time to debate is in this House and the time to debate it with fervour is in this House. And I would like to say also that the kinds of things that involve the people of this Assembly in debate have been factual, they have been on target, they have been pointed, and they have been brief enough to make the point.

And over on the other side what we have is the idea that they will extend debate to see who can talk the longest and not necessarily make the point.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Let us allow the member for Morse to participate in the debate.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, the debate has to take place in this forum, and the debate has to be two ways. And it can't only come from the other side, Mr. Speaker, as it has in the potash debate for the last 80 hours. And that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what has been happening. We on this side have been refused access by the fact that they talked for the times that they did.

The debate, Mr. Speaker, in the editorial of the *Star-Phoenix* goes on to say:

The debate over the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan has so far gone on for more than 70 hours, and the time would allow more than another 20 hours on debate, second readings, and 20 hours on clause-by-clause examination of the Bill. These limits seem to be a reasonable way of bringing this discussion to a head.

Mr. Speaker, that's what has to happen, and what we have had over the last 70 hours is a debate on the *Romper Room*, and Texas history, which has absolutely no relationship to this side of the House nor even to the debate. And I don't think that, Mr. Speaker, that they have a right.

I recall on one occasion that members of this side of the House brought to order one individual 21 times in relation to the debate because of irrelevance, repetitious irrelevance; and that, Mr. Speaker, is primarily the reason why this motion is in the position it is today. It's the kinds

of things that the opposition dealt with on a continual basis. And that is why the editorials after a time come to the place and say there has to be something done in order to provide for the debate to have a conclusion, and I think that that is extremely important.

The opposition cannot expect to filibuster for ever, *Star-Phoenix* editorial on August 5:

It is not as if the time limit rule will result in taxpayers of the province missing out on some crucial element of the discussion.

Exactly right. It pins back exactly the points that have been made by the opposition, and the things that they have not said.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that is why we on this side of the House feel that this is an important motion, and I will be supporting this motion in every way and detail on that very fact. Because it is outlined in the kinds of things that they have done and the kinds of things that they have said. And, Mr. Speaker, what it will do, in fact, both sides will be forced to focus their key arguments.

And as I sat and listened to the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden on Friday focus in on the key points, and as I heard the Leader of the Opposition do exactly the same thing, that is what debate is about. It isn't a debate about the kinds of things that we have heard from the members opposite and even from the front row of the members opposite. That's the kind of thing that I think is key to the development of the kind of debate and the format for the debate that we need to have in this Assembly. And that, Mr. Speaker, is how the people of this province will learn to judge whether the kinds of discussion, as represented by the debate on this side and the *Romper Room* activities on the other side, are really the kinds of things that we ought to be debating.

The *Leader-Post* on August 4 had some more to say on this, Mr. Speaker:

The legislature ought to be the focal point for deliberation and it is unfortunate if debate is restricted . . .

That's right on. Seventeen days we were sitting here waiting for the opposition to come back and even vote on a first reading so we could discuss the facts. And now we are . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. It's going to be an interesting day, and I think we should give whoever is on their feet the opportunity to speak without continued interruption.

Mr. Martens: — It is important, Mr. Speaker, I believe, that the focal point of the deliberations on the debate be brought to a head, and I believe that this is the way to do it. And it is substantiated by people in this province who I have visited with throughout the province. They agree that it's time to focus this debate, and it's going to be focused because those people on the other side are going to have to limit their 13-hour speeches to 20 minutes. And that, Mr. Speaker, is going to focus this debate very

pointedly, and I believe that it's the right thing to do.

The editorial in the *Star-Phoenix* goes on to say:

The hour is fast approaching where one might suspect the Opposition objectives have less to do with persuasion than with procrastination for procrastination's sake.

And that, I believe, is exactly what we were having. They were extending the hours simply to bring about a realization that . . . the kinds of things that the members opposite have deliberately said they would do.

And those deliberate points, I want to point out, the Deputy House Leader in the opposition has said and been associated with people who have said, I'm going to make this province ungovernable; I'm going to throw sand in their teeth. And that, Mr. Speaker, is accented by the member from Regina Rosemont who said the NDP must organize to create a climate of political revolt in this province. That, Mr. Speaker, is the kind of confrontation that they want to have, the kind of confrontation that has nothing to do with debate, Mr. Speaker; it has to do with a whole lot of other things that don't relate to debate. And that is, Mr. Speaker, the kinds of things that we have from the opposition. It goes from extremes, from the *Romper Room* to radicals, and that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what we have.

The member from Regina Victoria said, I'm proud to be a radical. The member again from Regina Rosemont in Public Accounts Committee, which I am a member of says, I take great pride in wearing a badge of a radical because I am one. Now, Mr. Speaker, those are the kinds of things that I believe point to the fact that they have an agenda that has not related to debate; it has not related to debating an issue on potash that I think is absolutely necessary.

We need to have the facts, the people of the province need to have the facts, and I believe that this motion gives an opportunity for that to happen.

This motion takes into light a few other things, Mr. Speaker, and I want to point them out. In the book that we use for the rules and regulations of the House we have three separate areas that we deal with where we have a limited time debate. One of those, Mr. Speaker, is the budget. The budget debate is limited, and each person gets up to speak, and we have not a time limit on the time we can speak for each one of us, but we have a time limit on the volume of debate that there can be.

So we have a framework, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the kinds of things that I believe are important. We have a framework to allow other members of the Assembly to have the time to speak. We do not have an overpowering debate from one person or another person just simply to prove the fact that he can stand in his place longer than another person. That's the budget debate.

(1015)

What do we have where the government outlines its belief in the kind of philosophy it's going to have for that

session. That debate, Mr. Speaker, is also limited. We have the government and the opposition able to speak to that frame; it's limited in its debate. But what do we have, Mr. Speaker? We have debate within that framework. We haven't got people rambling on for two days, three days, four days just to prove that they can stand there longer.

And then, Mr. Speaker, when we have an appropriation Bill before this Assembly and that is a Bill that deals with appropriations during the time of the session when the budget isn't completely passed. And what does it say on that. At the conclusion of that day, Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of that day and the day the Bill is presented, second and third readings will be given, and at the conclusion of that day they will be voted on.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have time allocation in this Assembly. We have three occasions where we have time allocation, and I don't believe it's new. And why would you expect to have time allocation on those items? Because, Mr. Speaker, over a period of time the people who make the rules in this Assembly have found out that there are occasions when people take the freedoms that they have to speak and believe them to be rights that impinge on the rights of others to speak in this Assembly. And that's what we have had on this debate. We have had members of the opposition more or less take over the debate by the very fact that they have gone on and on and on and on.

And, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly the reason why the people of the province of Saskatchewan, the editorial staff of the two major papers in this province, have come to the conclusion that we have to begin to limit the debate on this issue.

That's not necessary to say that all of the issues are dealing with the kinds of things that we need more time for. We may, on occasions, Mr. Speaker, need less time. But, Mr. Speaker, there is a time that has come in the process of this debate on the potash Bill that we need to have an allocation of time. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe in that.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have three things that we limit the debate on: the budget speech, the throne speech, and appropriation Bills. Other jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker, have also placed a restriction on the allocation of time. We just had an example of that in Ontario, and they did it there, I believe, Mr. Speaker, for lots of the same reasons. They did it in the House of Commons for lots of the same reasons. And that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what we're debating here today, is the reason why we believe that this motion should be brought forward. And I believe that it is important. I believe that it is time to move on because the people of Saskatchewan are believing in that too.

We can no longer, Mr. Speaker, focus our thoughts on obstructing for obstruction's sake. We can no longer obstruct just to present our own perspective. We have to deal with governing this province, Mr. Speaker.

And it's time. The time has come for the government to lead the people into a future, as was expressed here early by the Minister of Justice, to lead the people of Saskatchewan into a future that is going to be positive, forward-looking, and upward-looking, Mr. Speaker.

And I think that that is the reason why we have provided a fair debate in this . . . time for a fair debate. The debate coming from the other side dealt with a whole host of areas that were not necessarily related to the Bill, and I can recall many times that members on this side of the Assembly bringing that to the attention of the House. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that that is very, very important that the people of the province of Saskatchewan realize that.

The debate has to be fair; the debate has to be real; the debate has to be factual; the debate has to express the point of view that we want to have. And I believe that we need to get to that, and I believe that limiting the debate on the time allocation for this potash Bill is going to do that for us.

Now we've noticed this morning already, Mr. Speaker, on 20 minutes that members opposite have had to be very, very pointed in their discussion. They have had to point out precisely, Mr. Speaker, their perspective of the kinds of things that they want to discuss in relation to this motion. That, Mr. Speaker, is exactly the reason why debate is going to have to be limited.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Opposition and the members opposite need to address the . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Once more I ask the hon. members not . . . Order, order.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, the kind of debate that we need to have is the kind of debate we're having here today. It's going to be the debate that is limiting the individuals to the 20 minutes. It also, Mr. Speaker, provides an opportunity for all of us to speak on it.

This motion, I believe, is a point in democracy that has to be taken. It is my view, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan are going to benefit from the kinds of things that we have discussed here today. I believe that it is the time to do it. The opinion of the people is expressed, I think, very, very accurately in the two editorials that were presented from the Regina *Leader-Post* and from the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*.

Mr. Speaker, we have had many, many times when those editorials didn't agree with us, and we haven't brought that up. I find it very interesting that the members would take a scathing attack against the media, both on Friday and then today, on the kinds of things that they believe that they should be writing about. And, Mr. Speaker, I haven't done that, but I respectfully submit that they are absolutely accurate in their perspective in dealing with this motion here today. Thank you for the time, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — Mr. Speaker, I was not elected to this Legislative Assembly by the constituents of Saskatoon Centre to be forced into silence by this government. I was elected to speak, and this motion denies me and my colleagues our parliamentary right to represent the

people in this Assembly. This motion is a direct attack on the democratic principle of freedom of speech in this Assembly. This motion is the bullying tactic of a government desperate for power and control at any cost.

My colleagues have described this as an historic debate. Forcing closure on the people of Saskatchewan is an historic event, but this motion is worse than closure, Mr. Speaker. It is an attempt to control the agenda, to bring forward a motion that they say will limit debate instead of actually coming with closure. And it demonstrates what cowards the government members are, that they have to speak in with this kind of a motion, a motion that has not been agreed on by the Legislative Assembly.

The tradition in this House is that the rules of debate are agreed on in a consensus. This government doesn't respect consensus, it only respects a bullying tactic using the majority to silence the rest of us, and that's why this is such an historic debate and such an attack on democracy.

But, Mr. Speaker, as we have all become most painfully aware, this government has demonstrated many times that it has total contempt for the parliamentary process designed to enhance our democratic traditions. This motion is put forward to muzzle the opposition by a government that does not want to listen to the people. It wants to muzzle the people and it wants to muzzle parliament.

One of the arguments they say is that the debate are already limited; that there's a limit on the budget debate. Mr. Speaker, yes, there's a limit on speaking to the budget in general. There is no limit on Committee of the Whole, talking about estimates, which is an ongoing discussion of the budget. And we have been here since March 1 and we have yet to discuss a number of estimates of very major departments. We have not talked about Agriculture and Food. We have not talked about Economic Development and Tourism. We have not talked about the Executive Council, the budget from the Department of Finance, the Department of Health, the Department of Highways and Transportation.

We have not spoken about the estimates for Human Resources, Labour and Employment, Indian and Native Affairs Secretariat. We have not spoken about the Department of Justice, which has recently become the department of injustice, Mr. Speaker. We have not spoken about Parks, Recreation and Culture, the Provincial Auditor, the Public Participation department, Social Services or Trade and Investment, to mention the major ones. There has been nothing said, and here we are in the middle of summer into August and have not brought forward that agenda.

They control the agenda in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, not us. It's the government that chose to bring forward for days and days and days the motion on bell-ringing. They chose it, as many people on this side of the House have pointed out. It's been their choice to have this kind of session go the way it has. They have far more tools of control in the parliamentary tradition than the opposition has. And I say shame on them for not using those tools and not bringing forward proper items for debate.

Since 1986 I have seen this government launch a series of serious attacks on the powers of this Assembly and I am deeply concerned. The Minister of Justice I heard him this morning dismiss learning from history, Mr. Speaker, as being anything of value. He doesn't want to talk about history. He wants to talk about the future as if it's going to exist without its history. And the people who refuse to look at history are unfortunately the people who have to repeat it.

I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that this year, 1989, is the 300th anniversary of the British Bill of Rights, on which our parliamentary tradition is based. It was introduced in 1689 when William of Orange was made king of England during what is known as the Glorious Revolution.

In 1689, 300 years ago, the Bill of Rights took power from the king, the executive arm of government at that time, and diffused that power to the parliament. Although it left the monarch as the chief executive officer, it made that power conditional. Mr. Speaker, in 1986 I saw in this Assembly, with the passage of the government reorganization Act, this government reverse these 300 years of history of liberalized parliamentary procedures; they reversed it. And this motion before us today continues this attack on our parliamentary system.

The Bill of Rights, Mr. Speaker, was a major step towards freedom from arbitrary government. The Bill of Rights removed the absolutist divine right of kings and gave parliament the power to limit the monarchy. Yet in 1986 in this Assembly, the government brought forward an omnibus piece of legislation which concentrated decision making power in the cabinet, which is our executive branch, power which had previously been vested in this legislature. In effect, this government went backwards in time 300 years.

Mr. Speaker, the prelude to the Bill of Rights also bears resemblance to the current flaunting of our laws and traditions by the government. James II used his pardoning powers to dispense with the laws, and our Minister of Justice recently did the same thing. He recently exempted SaskEnergy from following the law when they were found to be in violation of The Securities Act. And he has also tried to pretend that the accusations by the Provincial Auditor, that the laws have not been followed in accounting procedures, were also a right for the government to do.

We have been accused of that same flaunting by taking the debate into the community halls and the public meeting places for 17 days. Mr. Speaker, we went into the community and to those who elected us for that 17-day period because we base our strength and our legitimacy on the will of the people, not the fallacious, divine right of kings, nor the financial interest of Cargill, or any of the other moneyed or propertied people that this government bows down to.

Mr. Speaker, words are said to be cheap, but I disagree. Words are what human beings use to translate ideas into realities, and it's language that separates us from the animals. And I have watched the government members opposite, including the Premier, sit in stony silence, refusing to debate, refusing to use language to explain

clearly to the people of Saskatchewan what they believe and why they are taking the actions they are.

Mr. Speaker, the junior House Leader gets on radio and complains about the abuse of the Assembly by the opposition because we want to speak out. You should hang your head in shame, Mr. Deputy House Leader, for trying to palm off on the people of Saskatchewan the idea that you and the other government members have been engaging in debate. Indeed, sir, you should apologize to all of us in this Assembly and in the province for this façade that you present outside this Assembly.

(1030)

Mr. Speaker, there's been a deception perpetrated even regarding this motion, because the junior Deputy House Leader has spoken about the number of days that will be allowed in debate and the number of hours. He's made the point publicly that it's going to be 20 hours of debate on the potash Bill, 20 hours on second reading, and 20 hours in committee. But the motion actually says, "not more than two sitting days shall be allocated to debate," not more than two sitting days. And if this motion winds down some time today, the rest of this day, the tag-end of this day will count as one full day debating the potash Bill. And tomorrow we have a shortened day, and that will be the second day, Mr. Speaker.

It's not 20 hours, as the minister has tried to pretend to the people of Saskatchewan. And the *Star-Phoenix* picked up on this mistake, and in their editorial they also called it 20 hours. It's not 20 hours, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I put the question to the members of the government opposite who have sat so silently so far throughout our discussion of the potash Bill: why don't you defend the policies that your legislation reflects? Is it because the members opposite have no ideas; or because these ideas represent the interests of the wealthy few and of international conglomerates for whom they keep rolling out the red carpet?

Mr. Speaker, isn't it true that if the government members did engage in debate they would betray their real intentions? I accuse the Premier and the government members of representing not the interests of the majority of people in this province but of the wealthy and the multinationals that seek to pick the bones of this province clean.

We know when we went out, when we took the risk of speaking out in the public, leaving the legislature for 17 days, that that was a courageous act on the part of the opposition, Mr. Speaker, because we took a great risk — and I've said that before in this House. We left the Assembly to see if the people were with us, and we found out that they are very strongly with us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — We made a link between this Assembly and the community of Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatchewan. We made a very vital link. We showed that the people were with us. We know that they're with us on the potash legislation. That makes it even more

important for all of us on this side of the House to have the opportunity to speak as long as we want to on that potash Bill, which is such a major piece, not only of economic policy, but social and political policy as well.

I am one of the people that has not had an opportunity to speak, and I am one of the people that is objecting very strongly to this Bill that muzzles my right to represent my constituents.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — My colleagues have made some very important points about the potash Bill, and I've heard the members opposite dismiss it all as if there was nothing there to speak to. They have refused to stand up and debate and defend their policy. They have sat like stony bumps and not spoken a word.

But I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . stoned bumps, my colleagues say. I think that's an apt description.

But I have no doubt that once the debate is being limited to 20 minutes each, that the government members will use up the small amount of time that is left to us and then they will pretend to the people of Saskatchewan that they have spoken in depth and spoken to our points. I say, shame on the government members for denying us our right to represent our constituents in this parliament by allowing us the time needed to present our positions on this very important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, when this government does speak, it does so falsely. It engages in doublespeak, saying, for example, that SaskEnergy is not a division of SaskPower. Through the manipulation of language and the treachery of redefining terms, the government has constantly tried to deceive the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this doublespeak and misrepresentation through verbal flimflam has been aimed at packaging this province for an economic sell-off of our economic sovereignty to its carpet-bagging Yankee friends such as Weyerhaeuser and Cargill. But "sell-off" is not the right word. Give-away is rather what this government is doing to our resources and our future.

The government and the Premier have peddled themselves in the corridors of power and wealth, and the price is their silence. Their price is that they won't stand up and defend these actions, and the cost to the province is tremendous. The cost will not only be an economic cost but, as we see with this motion, it's a political and a social cost as well.

The people of Saskatchewan are paying dearly for the actions of this government and the failure of this government to speak. This turning back the clock on British parliamentary procedure is ominous for our future and our ability to govern ourselves. We are being muzzled economically and politically.

I think it's not entirely a coincidence that this government since 1986 has been destroying this political process in Saskatchewan, destroying the credibility of this

Legislative Assembly, contributing to tremendous political cynicism among the people of Saskatchewan, at the same time as they're turning around and selling off our economic resources to people outside this province.

I say there's a parallel to that, Mr. Speaker. There's a parallel to destroying our political power and destroying our economic power. And while you may say that this motion is a small step, a small step, and if we say that what you're doing is becoming more like dictators, you laugh. And I've heard the members opposite laugh. They don't take it seriously.

But dictatorship doesn't come down on a people suddenly. It comes in a series of small steps of erosion of the people's power and the people's right to control their economic and their social destiny.

Mr. Speaker, I've heard the members opposite when they do speak, and very briefly, justify what they're doing by the fact that we are now in this world becoming what they call a global village. And that's a term that's used a lot in the *status quo* economic circles who want to persuade us that we mustn't be talking about our own situation; we can't remain in isolation; we have to become part of the global village.

Mr. Speaker, there are many people on the face of this earth who live in reins of terror in this global village. They have the most terrible governments, and I don't want to be any part of that kind of a government for this province and for this country. And I accuse the members opposite of walking blindly, if not with vision, into that kind of a terrorist government system that remains in place in much of the global village.

The opposition in Saskatchewan must have the right to speak out, and those who are silent are submitting to the will of the few. The turning back the clock on British parliamentary procedure is ominous for our future, as I've said. When I hear the illogical rantings of the members opposite, I conjure up images of dictatorship and images which frighten me very much.

By way of stressing my points, Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude with a quote from Senator Eugene Forsey, which have been used in the House before but they're beautiful words. They're taken from an article of his, a thesis on public law, the constitutional and administrative law of the Commonwealth. In 1957 he wrote — his points are in reference to the use of closure in the 1956 Canadian pipeline debate. I quote:

Parliamentary government is not just a matter of counting heads instead of breaking them. It is also a matter of using them. It is government by discussion, not just by majority vote. Parliament is not just a voting place. It is also, pre-eminently, essentially, a talking place, a *parlement* "Parliaments without parliamentary liberty," said Pym, "are but a fair and plausible way into bondage. Freedom of debate being once foreclosed, the essence of the liberty of Parliament is withal dissolved."

Mr. Speaker, it is freedom politically and freedom

economically that we are fighting for in this province with this potash debate and in our discussion against this motion. Those are very important concepts for us to preserve in this House, Mr. Speaker. I am opposed to this motion, and I am opposed to selling the potash corporation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I enter this debate actually to carry forward an important message to the members opposite on the way that I interpret the views of the majority of my constituents of Regina South, and I know that my responsibilities include speaking to you, Mr. Speaker, on their behalf.

It all starts, I suppose, with the Leader of the Opposition and his public admission early in the year, that did not go by unnoticed to my constituents, of the difficulties that he has in controlling his caucus. It was quite a statement for a leader to make — difficulty in controlling his caucus. And none the less the time went by, and we see where that statement that he made in early days of his leadership has come forward to haunt him. And I won't bother repeating the headlines that go on regularly and the comments made back and forth, but none the less it's very apparent as debate goes by that the Leader of the Opposition does indeed have a problem controlling his caucus.

Then it goes from that point, I suppose, to the rules in our Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker. And my colleague from Kindersley spoke well on how our rules are outdated and need revisions, how they really have to be brought into line with other provinces and the balance of the country. And he explained the reasons for that, Mr. Speaker, so there's no need for me to repeat his argument at this time on those remarks.

Then, Mr. Speaker, I guess we entered the great potash non-debate. What did we encounter? A filibuster — shallow, very shallow speeches that contained not too much about the potash industry or the reasons why or why not; meaningless efforts of speeches and standing in their place; repetitiveness; speeches that went for 8 or 10 or 12 hours or more, that indeed became a contest in the opposition benches, Mr. Speaker, cheering and congratulations when they were done.

My constituents called it a disgrace. They were upset. They did not appreciate the fact that the members used that length of time to speak on nothing, really. They really didn't bring forward any arguments. And then today's debate, we're witnessing unfortunately more of the same. Name-calling, I suppose that's their strong suit. Today we have had references to Naziism and the like . . .

An Hon. Member: — Hear, hear, that's what you guys are.

Hon. Mr. Klein: — And we hear them acknowledging that; they're proud of that, that name-calling. Nonsensical comparisons, nonsensical accusations. We've heard phrases of totalitarian regimes — had a little trouble with totalitarian regimes, it's a tough one to say — dictators. We've heard them say that we're a government that's afraid. You know, the same old phrases — call an

election. We heard a new one for me — stony bumps. I don't know what stony bumps is but, you know, that's what I thought I heard the member opposite say.

Then they get into a matter of per diems. Well, -ms quite a debate, isn't it — that's quite a debate. Lots of good solid argument over there in all of that. Isn't that interesting. This debate, Mr. Speaker, 20 minutes, only 20 minutes. They can't even put up a good argument for 20 minutes. Simply a matter of name-calling.

I think that I have spoken on this before, and it's fair to say that as far as I'm concerned there is perhaps one or two orators in the opposition. Their leader is one, there is no question of that — a debater, a skilled debater. So I will confine my remarks, my brief remarks in this debate, to his. He was the only one over there that at least had some apparent interest in a debate and saying something meaningful. But you know, he . . . I'll quote him: "The government coming in and using the heavy hand of its majority . . ." It's interesting; he said it; he used the word majority.

(1045)

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's how governments work in a democracy, is indeed by a majority. As a matter of fact, that's how we get elected to this Legislative Assembly, is by a majority. Now . . . and that's, Mr. Speaker, how we will get re-elected. I can hardly begin to imagine the polling stations at the next election when they start ringing the bells and say, no you can't go in there and vote. Who's going to be left to govern? How does a majority work if it's not like that?

He spoke of obstruction. He tried, Mr. Speaker, to defend the opposition's position; came up with all kinds of argument. Interesting debate. At least he argued about it. But I say this and I ask this, and my people in Regina South have asked me this: what if, in the last legislature when the opposition was limited to eight, they did indeed have the same strategy. Would that have been fair? Could eight members of the opposition have rang the bells for 17 days — or let's take it to a ridiculous amount, two months or three months — could eight elected members of this Legislative Assembly indeed control the government of 56 members representing the people of this province?

Mr. Speaker, that rule was there, had the leader of the opposition then, Mr. Blakeney, wanted to have used that. But he didn't use that kind of an obstructionistic tactic. He didn't and he wouldn't. But over there where we have a caucus that is controlling their leader, a leader that has no control over the caucus; they can do whatever they wish and argue about whether that happens to be right or not.

Unfortunately then, we see the leader in his remarks, Mr. Speaker, take a vicious and brutal attack on the media. Now every now and then, I suppose, my colleagues — yes, we are not happy with what the media may print about our government or any particular member, but it's accepted. But unfortunately the Leader of the Opposition, his remarks were very strong and threatening to the media, as far as I was concerned. And what he was telling me was, it's fine for the members opposite to have free speech, but it is not just as equal for the members of the

media to have that same freedom of speech.

I was dealt with unfairly, but I didn't criticize what I believe unfairly with the media. I spoke on the potash debate. I made my points. I spoke directly to the Bill. I made comparisons. And yet the Leader of the Opposition was annoyed because one of his members didn't get any media attention. Well I wasn't expecting, I don't suppose, any media attention, but I was expecting that the media would not have said that no minister stood in his place and spoke on the potash debate, because I did speak and I am a minister, Mr. Speaker. But none the less, I'm not about to attack the media for that oversight.

I continue with the Leader of the Opposition. He said this:

Mr. Speaker, they will deliver the speeches (he was referring to his members), and they should have the right to deliver the speeches as long as it takes in order to make the point.

And that was his quote from *Hansard*. And that's exactly right. I agree with that, and so do my constituents in Regina South agree with that. But how long? How long to make a point — eight hours, 10 hours, to talk about *Romper Room*, to talk about the Alamo, to talk about all of the other things?

If we went through the *Hansard* of all of those 70 hours, or whatever they total, and take out meaningful debate — and they say that we are taking away their freedom of speech? On the contrary.

I will quote again the Leader of the Opposition, who says: "The basic right to speak is being denied." No, it isn't; we're not denying their right to speak. This motion is providing for their right to speak, Mr. Speaker, but not to speak in irrelevance. And speaking about irrelevance, the Leader of the Opposition said: who is to judge that? Well, Mr. Speaker, I say the people — the people will judge irrelevance, and the people have judged and in no uncertain terms. And that's why you see happening this day what is happening.

Indeed the government is taking the role to govern. The members opposite were elected to opposition, not to govern. And the people have told us that they've had enough; the media has had enough. And meaningless 8- and 10-hour speeches are not even near the issue, and if it was something that they're quoting out of books or texts or technical, that the people won't understand. They don't want that. All they want is some good, honest debate.

We've also heard . . . and members opposite have indicated all kinds of reasons and excuses for why they went on strike, and we've heard them all. But interestingly enough, I think I must accept what the Leader of the Opposition said. He said this, and I quote:

When we walked out after 17 days in order to grab some press attention . . .

Now, press attention. That says it all. Is that what this magnificent Assembly is all about, Mr. Speaker, is press attention? Is there no meaning left for debate — good,

honest, sincere remarks — that you can get up and say factually what the people of your constituency expect you to say? I'm sure that the members of Regina Centre aren't interested in *Romper Room* and the like when their member gets up and goes on and on about the history of the Alamo. No, they're not interested in that when he's supposed to be speaking about potash.

So if that's all this place is all about, the people of this province will judge all of us — government and opposite alike, Mr. Speaker — and put all of us in our place. I believe that it's time that as members of the Legislative Assembly we went to our constituents and worked and earned the respect that we want, rather than expect the media to either create or destroy us in that role.

My job here is to represent my constituents, the way I interpret their views and their observations. They expect me to make my points in debate. They expect me to do them concisely and accurately. They expect me to put some meaning into my debate to make it relative, to make it important if I'm going to be representing them.

My constituents, Mr. Speaker, are telling us that we have to get control and we have to govern; that's why they elected us. And they will ultimately judge us on our performance when that time comes, and it is not up to the opposition to say when that time will be or for any particular reason. We will be judged by the people, and fairly, and I look forward to that when that time does come.

Opposition, Mr. Speaker, is just that — opposition. Make your points. But you're not government; don't be obstructionist. Get some work done in this Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, with their attitude they never will be government.

This motion provides exactly what my constituents expect and demand and believe is fair for all of us to live by. And there is no question that they, as I, support the motion that is on the floor today, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by commenting on one of the remarks that the member for Regina South made with respect to this debate. He said that the motion before us defends and provides for the right of the opposition to speak on this issue. Mr. Speaker, that comment is so misleading. It reminded me, Mr. Speaker, of the comments of cabinet ministers in the PC government who claim that selling off SaskEnergy is not selling off SaskPower. It's another example of the kind of doublespeak, Mr. Speaker, that we've seen so often in this Assembly, because the motion before us today, Mr. Speaker, deals with an unprecedented act, and that is the denial of freedom of speech in this Assembly, and in effect the gagging of the opposition, Mr. Speaker. We've never seen that before in the history of the province of Saskatchewan, and it's a sad day that we see it taking place this week in 1989.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to why freedom of speech on this issue of potash privatization is so very important. The potash resource, Mr. Speaker, is a resource that could have been available to more than 200 generations of Saskatchewan residents, a resource that

when paid for, Mr. Speaker, the profits of that resource would have been available to the people of Saskatchewan for the next 4,000 years.

This PC government wants to deny the people of Saskatchewan and future generations access to the profits of that resource. And they say, Mr. Speaker, that denying the people of Saskatchewan access to those profits and those benefits doesn't even merit 80 hours of debate in this Assembly. They say, Mr. Speaker, that an issue of that importance doesn't merit free speech in this Assembly, and I say shame on the members opposite.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, potash and the revenues from potash are the last available vehicle, in my view, for paying off the PC deficit of \$3.9 billion without having to turn to the people of Saskatchewan and ask them to pay higher taxes to pay that deficit, Mr. Speaker. This government, Mr. Speaker, has sold off every other revenue-generating Crown corporation in this province, and now they want to sell off the last revenue-generating Crown, Mr. Speaker, and that, Mr. Speaker, is potash. And the profits from potash, Mr. Speaker, were the last vehicle for writing down the debt that this government has run off without charging the people of Saskatchewan dramatically higher taxes.

This government wants to take that vehicle away, and not only do they want to take it away but they want to deny the opposition the right to speak out against what they're doing, Mr. Speaker. And I say, shame on the members of the government

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, you can tell that I feel passionately about this issue. Mr. Speaker, this is a government that in the last seven years has laid off half the people who worked at the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. I remember when we had 2,200 people working there. Now we have just over 1,100 people, and I have no doubt that more people will lose their jobs after PCS (Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan) is privatized.

Mr. Speaker, these people, I say that the people who were laid off, the 1,100 people who were laid off, don't believe that debate on this issue should be limited to 120 hours, Mr. Speaker, and nor do we, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when the real head office for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, by virtue of the legislation before us, no longer lies in the province of Saskatchewan; when there's just a phoney paper head office here; and when some 90 per cent or more of the shares of PCS are held by people who live outside the province of Saskatchewan; and when control over the potash resource of this province, instead of lying with the people of Saskatchewan lies with American entrepreneurs and with governments and private industry in countries like Japan and China and India, as this Bill provides for, the next generation, Mr. Speaker, who are denied access to the ability to control this resource will say, Mr. Speaker, that not even a year of debate would have been enough.

Not even a year of debate would have been enough on a Bill, Mr. Speaker, that proposes to deny the people of Saskatchewan, for the next 4,000 years, control over this potash resource, Mr. Speaker; a Bill, Mr. Speaker, that in effect takes away the birthright, not only of this generation of Saskatchewan residents but, in effect, of all Saskatchewan residents for virtually time immemorial, Mr. Speaker. That's what this Bill does, Mr. Speaker.

(1100)

This Bill proposes to ensure that as long as the free trade agreement stays in effect, whatever amount of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan that Americans buy and own and control after PCS is privatized can never be taken back by any future Saskatchewan government. And, Mr. Speaker, given the fact that this legislation is so sweeping, it is unbelievable that any government would say that not only do they want to institute this unbelievable piece of legislation, but they want to gag the opposition in speaking out to it, Mr. Speaker. And that is truly incredible, unprecedented, and a black day in Saskatchewan history.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, I say that it is my duty and it is the duty of all members of this Assembly with conscience to speak out on behalf of their constituents and to say that this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is a betrayal of the people of Saskatchewan, a betrayal of the people of Saskatchewan.

You know, Mr. Speaker, what I particularly resent, because I'm one of the members who hasn't had an opportunity to speak on Bill 20 yet, Mr. Speaker, but what I particularly resent — and I'm trying to make myself heard over the voice of the member from Saskatoon on the PC side of the House, Mr. Speaker. But what I want to say is that what I particularly resent is that this government is not only denying our right to speak, it is denying and restricting our ability in Committee of the Whole to ask questions about how PCS will be privatized. And that is what I particularly resent, Mr. Speaker.

We are going to have only two days to ask questions about how PCS will be privatized. We will be asking questions, Mr. Speaker, of the member from Qu'Appelle Lumsden, who is a master, I might say, Mr. Speaker, at stonewalling, a master at preventing this Assembly from getting the information that it requires.

Mr. Speaker, I think that more than anything else what this motion before us will do, is it will deny the people of Saskatchewan access to information about how the real privatization of PCS will take place. And I am deeply concerned about that, Mr. Speaker. It's a point that's not been made in the debate so far.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to make a couple of other points, before I sit down, on this motion. Mr. Speaker, I see this motion for closure to cut off debate as being symbolic of what this PC government has been all about in the last three years while it's been governing the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this is just the latest of series of highly undemocratic moves that we

have seen from, I believe, an undemocratic government.

We see, for instance, Mr. Speaker, that the same government that is cutting off debate here today is the same government that has brought in an electoral boundaries gerrymander in the province of Saskatchewan.

It's the same government, Mr. Speaker, that refused to call the legislature for three months in 1987 and spent a billion dollars of taxpayers' money illegally and operated illegally without a budget, Mr. Speaker.

It's the same government, Mr. Speaker, that promised that they would not undertake the privatization of public utilities during the 1986 election, and then proceeded to attempt to do so in violation of the commitment that they had made.

It's the same government, Mr. Speaker, that during the last election misled the people of Saskatchewan about the size of the deficit, claiming that it was only some \$300 million when in fact they know, Mr. Speaker, that it was going to be well in excess of \$1.1 billion.

This is the same government, Mr. Speaker, that has consistently attempted to cover up their spending practices, that has gone to great lengths, Mr. Speaker, to attack the Provincial Auditor and deny the Provincial Auditor access to how taxpayers' money in this province is being spent.

It's the same government, Mr. Speaker, that resorts to filing in 1989, in this Assembly, annual reports for the year 1986. Last month, Mr. Speaker, we got three reports dated for the year 1986 in 1989 — a government, Mr. Speaker, that refuses to provide access to information to the people of Saskatchewan on just about every issue.

And we're going to see them do the same on Bill 20, Mr. Speaker. They are going to deeply restrict, by way of this motion, the ability of the people of Saskatchewan to find out the real truth about how privatization of potash is going to take place in this province, in the same way, Mr. Speaker, that they have attempted to restrict the ability of the auditor to access information to how taxpayers' money in Saskatchewan is to be spent; in the same way, Mr. Speaker, that they file reports in this Assembly on the activities of government departments as much as three years after the fact, Mr. Speaker.

Those are all examples of how the people of Saskatchewan are being denied the right to information that comes, normally, in a democracy, but that is being denied by this undemocratic government, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what we have before us now is a motion that, as I mentioned earlier, has never been seen before in the history of the province, but not only has this government resorted to closure, but first, Mr. Speaker, before they went to closure I want to review for a moment what they did, Mr. Speaker, this government tried a number of strategies to wear down the opposition when it came to potash.

First of all, they wanted to run up the number of days that

they could claim the debate had been on, Mr. Speaker, so they would allow us to speak on potash for a half an hour to an hour every day, right at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker. That ran up the number of days of the debate.

Then, Mr. Speaker, when that didn't wear us down, they decided they'd try a new strategy, and that is that they made a decision that the Assembly would sit from 8 o'clock in the morning every day to 11 o'clock at night every day, Mr. Speaker. That in itself was an undemocratic act, Mr. Speaker. It was a clear attempt to wear the opposition down, and they failed to do that, Mr. Speaker, because of the resolve of this opposition. So their second attempt didn't work.

And so now, Mr. Speaker, because this government is desperate to end the debate, and desperate to end the debate in the summer-time, Mr. Speaker, they have chosen this long weekend when they know that people are at the lake; when they know that people are on holidays; when they know that the public's attention to the affairs of what is going on in this Assembly is at a low ebb, they have chosen this day to bring in closure, clearly a very intentional strategy on the part of the government, Mr. Speaker, because they don't want this debate to run into September. They don't want this debate, Mr. Speaker, to go into a time of year when the public's attention will be deeply focused on this legislature again.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we see a government that's desperate to get out of the legislature. We see a government, Mr. Speaker, that is desperate to get out from underneath the scrutiny of the opposition. We see a government, Mr. Speaker, that is desperate to sell off potash as quickly as possible so that before the next election it can use the revenues from the sale of potash to finance the next election campaign and its next round of election promises, Mr. Speaker. That's the agenda of this government, Mr. Speaker, and it's clearly an agenda that is not in the interests of the taxpayers of this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what this government should be doing on this issue that it has no mandate for, is instead of introducing closure it should have the courage of its convictions and go before the people of Saskatchewan and call an election, and I will be proud to fight an election on the issue of whether or not potash should be a publicly owned resource, Mr. Speaker. But this government doesn't have the courage to do that, Mr. Speaker . . . (power outage) . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — The debate continues.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to continue my remarks in this debate. The electricity, I thought, Mr. Speaker, went out at a rather timely point in this debate. The darkness that this Assembly fell under when the lights in the Chamber went out at 11:08 a.m., I think, symbolizes the dark day for democracy that the closure motion that we're currently debating represents, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — I think it symbolizes, too, the dark day for

future generations of this province that Bill 20, the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, represents, Mr. Speaker.

I said earlier in my remarks, Mr. Speaker, that this government has no respect for democracy. It basically makes up the rules to suit its own purpose, and that's what we're seeing again this afternoon with the motion we're considering, Mr. Speaker.

We had a recent example of this a few months ago when the government wanted, in its anxiousness to privatize Saskatchewan Power Corporation, it went about promoting share offerings in PCS without going through the proper procedures required under the legislation that it passed governing the Securities Commission, Mr. Speaker and we saw another example there of how the government's prepared to make up rules to suit its own ends, and we're seeing another example here today, Mr. Speaker, with this motion.

So we see a government basically that has little respect for the democratic process, and that is trying to ram this potash Bill through the Assembly in midsummer when public attention to all the activities in this Assembly is understandably at a lower ebb than at any other time of year, Mr. Speaker. We see a government that's trying to push this Bill through so that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan can be sold off in time for this PC government to be able to generate enough revenues from the sale of that very important public asset to finance its next election campaign and its next set of election promises so that it can attempt to buy another election in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

We see a government, Mr. Speaker, that is afraid to get up and defend Bill 20, Mr. Speaker. We see a Premier who has, after 80 hours of debate, still not entered the debate to lay out in detail to the people of Saskatchewan why he believes that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan ought to be privatized and why he believes that's in the public interest. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that one of the reasons he hasn't risen to date is because in reality the steps that he is taking cannot be defended from the point of view of the public interest, Mr. Speaker, even though they may well be able to be defended from the point of view of a few wealthy private investors in the province of Saskatchewan, and some of the foreign corporations that the Premier likes to pander to, Mr. Speaker.

And we see, Mr. Speaker, at this point a government who is using closure in this debate, not only for the reasons I've just mentioned but because, I believe, Mr. Speaker, it is afraid of the political consequences of this debate continuing. It knows, Mr. Speaker, that at least 65 to 70 per cent of the people in this province, as borne out time and again by public opinion polls in Saskatchewan, don't support the privatization of PCS. And, Mr. Speaker, it knows that as this debate goes into fall, if it was to continue, that that level of opposition would only increase, and therefore it wants to cut off the debate now, Mr. Speaker, while it still has an opportunity to salvage its reputation — a fading reputation from the point of view of the public.

Mr. Speaker, for all these reasons the government is using closure. Unable to persuade the public of its views, Mr. Speaker, it has opted for the cowardly route instead, and that is the route of closure.

Mr. Speaker, the final point I would like to make is that what all of this represents is the denial of a dream for young people in this province and for generations yet unborn, Mr. Speaker, members on this side of the House, when we put potash under public ownership, we just didn't do it for the benefit of the current generation of taxpayers. We knew that when potash was paid off, the next generation and all that followed would be able to benefit from the profits that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan would provide, Mr. Speaker, and that that would be something that could be passed on to future generations. This government is denying future generations this benefit, Mr. Speaker, and that's one of the many reasons that I'm opposing this motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I see the government not standing up in their places to defend the reason they have taken this unprecedented action of stifling debate and democracy in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start out by asking a question, and that question is — we have to ask ourselves — why we are in this debate? And I think there are a good number of reasons why we're in this debate, and among those reasons are the fact that this government is so far out of touch with the people of this province, so far out of touch with tradition, and so far out of touch with the reality of what's going on in Saskatchewan that they think that they are above tradition, above reality, and above responding to the people of Saskatchewan.

Another reason we are in this debate, Mr. Speaker, is because this government is unable, I believe, to manage the affairs of this province, to manage the affairs of the legislature, the proceedings that we go about day by day in here to get the work of the people of the province done, or to manage the province in general. So therefore they have to go to unprecedented measures, unprecedented steps in order to finalize or to complete all the actions that a responsible government must take in order to fulfil the needs of the people of the province.

Mr. Speaker, we are in this debate because this government, I believe, is drunk with power as well. They are so consumed with themselves, so consumed with their friends, and so consumed by the power that they wield, that they just refuse to allow the democratic process to work. They simply just do not respond to democracy in a traditional way in this province because they are so drunk with the power that they hold.

And this government, Mr. Speaker, is governing, I believe, for a few. There are a few people in this province who are benefitting from the route that the government is taking with its privatizations, with its patronage. There are a few people who benefit because those people are in close and tight to the Tory government. But the problem that lies, Mr. Speaker, is that the rest of the people of this

province are suffering. The rest of the people of this province are finding themselves being foreclosed upon, they're finding themselves out of work, they're finding themselves on unemployment insurance, or they're finding themselves on social services, simply because this government is governing only for the select few, for the elite of the province. And they can line their pockets with the proceeds from the potash corporation, from some of the other privatizations that they have sold off.

And that's why they have to invoke closure on closure in order to ram through a Bill that is going to again by beneficial only to the elite of our society. And that is a government that's out of touch and uncaring.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this government is desperately trying to save face. They are in so deep with this whole privatization mania that they're involved in that they have to somehow try to get out. And the only way they can get out is to put closure on Bills, closure on closure on the potash Bill.

And they have to do that because they know every time that we stand in this legislature, every time one of our members stands up and relates to the people of this province to drive home the point that this Tory government is not governing for the needs of the general public, that this Tory government is not doing what it should be doing with regards to the economic environment in Saskatchewan, that they suffer, that they drop another notch in the polls. And we know how far down they are right now.

So in order to save face and in order to get out of that dilemma that they're in, they take the unprecedented action of putting closure on the potash Bill — trying to save face.

Mr. Speaker, this government, I believe, is setting a precedence of arrogance, a precedence of arrogance in the Legislative Assembly of this province. Never before . . . and they can relate to other jurisdictions around the world, it matters not to me. What matters to me is the way Saskatchewan, who has always been unique, whether it's medicare or hospitalization or whatever the governments before this government have done, has always been unique.

Because Saskatchewan is a unique province; we have unique needs. And one of the long-standing traditions in this province is that we have allowed the people in opposition and in government to debate as long as they wished on behalf of the people that they represent; to debate the issues, to put their concerns forward. And this government says no, we don't have to have that debate because we know better than the people; we know better than anyone in opposition who are representing the people of this province; we know better than their own constituents. They do not get up and speak to represent the wishes of their constituents.

They are arrogant and therefore they're acting arrogant by cutting off the debate which has been a long-standing tradition in the province of Saskatchewan. And this unprecedented arrogance, Mr. Speaker, what does it do? It sets the stage for the next problem that the Tory government

has. It sets the stage for SaskEnergy or for SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) or for whatever other privatization they want to push through.

It sets that arrogant attitude, and let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, I think the reason they're doing this is because every time they do it it becomes easier, it becomes more accepted by the people of the province. Once it's done, then the people they think will say, well it's been done before, then they'll accept it a little easier next time and the next time and the next time.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that's an accurate assumption on the part of the government members because I don't think the people in Saskatchewan who have a long-standing tradition of having debate in the legislature, of having debate in the general public in order to govern the affairs of this province to the ultimate and in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan, I don't think they're going to get away with that.

And, Mr. Speaker, those are some of the reasons we're in this debate — the arrogance, out of touch, unable to run the Assembly or the affairs of the province, drunk with power, and all those other arguments. They're trying to get out while the getting's good, trying to end the debate, to squelch it.

Mr. Speaker, there's one thing that I have to ask, and you have to ask yourself, is: would we be in this debate, debating closure on the debate on the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, if it weren't for the people who were before this government who built things in this province. We would not even have to have this debate if it had not been for forward-thinking people in this province in years gone by who saw the need to have a mixed economy, who saw the need to have the private enterprise and the co-operatives and the public enterprise.

So they took it upon themselves to build Crown corporations where Crown corporations were necessary. And they built things like Saskoil, they built PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company) or saved PAPCO and built it up; Sask Minerals they built; SaskCOMP; and the parks in Saskatchewan. They built a dental plan for the people of Saskatchewan. They had highway equipment that was working well for the people of Saskatchewan. They had Manalta Coal. They had SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation), and there's others.

But what's happened now? Because the people before this government had the foresight to build in Saskatchewan, we see this government using those years of knowledge, those years of concern, those years of knowing what was right for the unique province of Saskatchewan because of our population and our distances and our low tax base — we see these people using that experience, using those years of building up corporations to finance their corruption, to finance their mismanagement, to finance their incompetence.

(1315)

And I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, as I go around this province I hear people one after the other saying, why did we build it in the first place just for some Tory government to come

along and use patronage to line the pockets of their friends, to give money to Guy Montpetit and GigaText, to squander the resources of this province?

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Tories said, this is a new economy; this is the way of the world; this is how things are going to be done in the future. The private sector is the only way. So we gave away Saskoil to the eastern investors. We gave away PAPCO to Weyerhaeuser. We gave Sask Minerals to two companies in Ontario and Quebec, and we gave SaskCOMP away to wealthy investors. And if this was the new Tory economy, then you'd think it should be working, if this is the way of the world.

But what's happened? In every year that this government privatized a Crown corporation that was built up by the forefathers in this province to help the people in Saskatchewan to keep their tax base down — the ordinary citizen's tax base down — every time they privatized a corporation, Mr. Speaker, what happened? They taxes went up. The taxes went up, and also the debt went up.

So another question the people are asking me: where is the money going? If the taxes are going up, the debt's going up, and they're selling off the resources we have in this province, the Crown corporations that were used to draw money into the coffers of this province in order to keep the tax load down on the ordinary citizens of this province, where is the money going?

And I guess we in this legislature have given many examples of where the money is going, Mr. Speaker. It's going to Tory friends that are very well paid, it's going to advertising, it's going to polling and it's going to patronage. And all the while, Mr. Speaker, as the debt grows, as the income tax level grows, and as we divest ourselves of revenue-earning corporations, the waste and mismanagement continues.

They attempted to privatize SaskEnergy . . . SaskPower, the natural gas portion of SaskPower. To exemplify this in a democratic process, we on this side of the legislature said, no, that is wrong. And in order to make sure that we were right, we walked out of this legislature and said the people have the right to voice their opinion on this very critical point of debate. So we exemplified democracy by letting the people's voice be heard. And what did the people of Saskatchewan say? They shouted a clear no to privatizing SaskPower, a clear unequivocal no, don't do it.

And let me relate this back to why we are debating this closure Bill, because this is the process the Tories are going through to try to change their strategy. And it hurts, Mr. Speaker, it hurts the Tories because that's the one point that they pick up on. They say you were on strike, you walked out, you held up democracy. Well, Mr. Speaker, we did not hold up democracy; we gave democracy a chance to work by letting the people of this province say whether SaskPower should be privatized.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — And they continue to harp on that point of a walk-out or a strike, as they say it, but we know and the people know why that was necessary. But did this stop

this power-drunk, anti-democratic group? No, it did not. So as I said, they're going to try another route.

So they're going to first try to privatize PCS because they think in their own little minds that PCS may be less controversial than SaskPower because they're thinking that some people would say, well yes, there's no business being in the potash industry.

But I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, there's one thing you have to think of and remember when you're talking about potash, and this is why there should be no limit on the debate on potash.

Is it necessary to have funds for this province in order to govern? Well the obvious answer is yes. So where do we get the resources from? Well if you go out . . . I ask any member to go out and ask any one of their constituents if they think that they could do without the \$106 million that potash brought in this year — and who knows what it'll bring in in the years to come — or if they think they can do without that and have their taxes increased, or if they think that we should keep some of these resources for the people of Saskatchewan in order to keep our tax load down. Well I think the clear answer will be, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this province will say we need resource revenue to keep this province operating.

And the income tax level is already too high, and many people say, I can't afford to pay any more taxes. So where is the revenue going to come from? Is it going to come from Saskoil? Well it did at one time. It did at one time, but now that revenue is going to the large investors who come out of eastern Canada; at least three-quarters of it is.

But anyway, Mr. Speaker, this government is desperate for cash. That's the point I'm trying to make — desperate for cash, so they're going to try to sell this industry, limit debate on it and ram it through. All the while in the back of their mind is SaskEnergy, because as I say, once the PCS is rammed through, it is much easier to, they think, ram SaskPower through. But I think the people will say no to that as well again.

And Mr. Speaker, when the opposition plunges into debate on behalf of the people of this province, what is the response? When we stand in our place and on behalf of our constituents argue the point that the potash corporation should not be privatized, the response is closure; closure, from an anti-democratic government drunk with power and desperate for control. They need that control in order to finance their own incompetence, and that will not change, Mr. Speaker.

So what would we have if we would have not had forward-thinking people in the past to build up the resources? It really annoys me, to be quite honest; it annoys me to see this government using resource revenue through the Crowns, selling off these Crowns in order to finance their incompetence. Because those — again I say those Crowns were put there for a reason; they were put there to keep the tax load of the people down. They were put there to develop and to promote and to strengthen industries in Saskatchewan, so that with our sparse population and our huge distances we could finance the

necessary social programs, we could finance education and hospitals, we could finance all those things that are so necessary for the people of Saskatchewan to have because of their small population.

And it really annoys me to see this group of people who think they're so smart, who think they're so knowledgeable about private enterprise, who are the free traders — the big shots who are going to run around and say, well there's a better way, when in Saskatchewan it's been proven that there's a right way and a wrong way. But they run around saying, there's a better way, the private enterprise. And how are they doing it? How are they financing their private enterprise? They're selling off the Crown corporations that the forefathers of our province built in order to do good for the people of this province. And that really annoys me, to be quite honest, Mr. Speaker.

I mean, they're so smart, but they can't use the private sector to promote growth in this province and to generate income to support the people. They have to use the way of the forefathers, the forward thinking . . .

An Hon. Member: — And foremothers.

Mr. Upshall: — . . . and foremothers, as my colleague points out, the people who knew the formula for building Saskatchewan. They saw that formula, they implemented that formula, and that formula paid dividend upon dividend for the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — But these geniuses across the way, they know that private sector, that private enterprise works better; it works much better. So they use all the Crown corporations, they sell them off to finance the running of this province because the truth is, they know that the private enterprise looks out for one person and that's the shareholder. And that's the problem, and that's a great message to be sending around this province.

Mr. Speaker, we're limited in this debate, I believe, for another reason. And that reason is so that we can't drive home many points. And one of the points is the two hypocrisies. This hypocritical government, while on one hand saying that the government shouldn't be running things in Saskatchewan, the government can't run it efficiently, that the private enterprise can do it best, what are they going to do with PCS? They're going to sell it to a foreign government.

Now that's a pretty hard line to sell, I believe, when on the one hand you're saying that the government can't run anything, and on the other hand you're selling it to a foreign government. That type of logic, Mr. Speaker, is totally foolish. They're grasping for arguments with which to sell their idea of privatization. But people are much wiser than that.

And the other hypocrisy is that all the while they're saying that private enterprise can do things best. Let's look at the example of Pocklington and Weyerhaeuser and Cargill. If private enterprise were so great and could do things best in this province alone, without the mixed economy, then

why did they pump \$290 million into Cargill? I mean, that is a hypocritical move on the part of a government who says that government shouldn't be involved. On one hand they're selling off corporations, and on the other hand they're pumping money into Cargill and Pocklington or Weyerhaeuser. That is hypocritical. It simply doesn't sell, and the people of this province know that doesn't sell, and that's why they're cutting off debate in here so that we can't drive those points home and make sure that the people of this province are being heard through our voices in this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make one more point. Limiting debate in this legislature to put closure on potash, to sell an asset, to sell an asset and sell many assets, as I have pointed out — Saskoil, PAPCO and all the others — when the rest of the world, what are they doing? The rest of the world is acquiring assets because they know . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask for leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, in your Speaker's gallery I would like to have the distinct pleasure to introduce my sister-in-law, Charlotte Stephens, and her husband, Rick Stephens. They're in here from Saskatoon and visiting family and friends, and also taking in the game with the Saskatchewan Roughriders. They're really great fans of the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTIONS

Time Allocation (continued)

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased this afternoon to enter into this debate on time allocation on the potash Bill.

It's unfortunate that we've come to this point, that there was need for a time allocation Bill. But when you have an opposition like the opposition that we have had in this legislature this term, Mr. Speaker, an opposition who only operates on obstructionist tactics, an opposition who doesn't want to let the government do the work of a government, but rather than they make decisions in their own back rooms that indicate to them that they have the right to stop a government at all costs, well, Mr. Speaker, you can't allow that type of operation in any legislature. When this type of action occurred in other legislatures — like the House of Commons in Ottawa or the legislature in Manitoba and, just recently, the legislature in Ontario, when it occurred in the House of Commons in London, England, there was a need by those governments as well to move to put time allocation in place in order that the

work of government could proceed.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it's only fair that when an opposition behaves the way that this opposition has, that after a reasonable amount of time has been given for debate that the government move to bring an end to that debate and let the work of the legislature proceed.

I believe that the comments that were made by the House Leader of the Opposition side, when he indicated to the news that they were going to make the province of Saskatchewan ungovernable, I think a comment like that clearly depicts to me that they are going beyond what the citizens of this province would allow. When the Leader of the Opposition goes out and speaks in varying communities across this province and he makes the statement that as long as he's the Leader of the Opposition the potash Bill will never pass, I think again that indicates to me that that particular member is going further than the reasonable citizens in the province would expect any opposition to go.

So it comes a time when we have to take action, and that action is being taken now. I think the very fact that the bell-ringing has been used as a delaying tactic in this House a number of times, and this year to the point where it went for 17 days, I think that's going too far as well, something that the people in this province do not appreciate and do not accept. I think it's time that as a legislature we move forward to do the work of a government.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard in this debate the opposition say that the government moved closure because the government members weren't getting paid. Well I think we need to set the record straight on that issue, Mr. Speaker. The government members have been here day after day. They were here all through the 17 days when that side of the House went on strike. They've been here steadily every day since this legislature opened, many . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Continued interruption is not acceptable, as we know, so I'd ask hon. members to please keep that in mind.

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, many afternoons in this legislature we have seen five, six, four opposition members and that's all. And they talk about this side of the House not being here because they didn't want to get paid.

The Speaker: — Order, order. I realize that often we say things with no intention of drawing attention to anybody, but I don't believe we should draw attention to presence or absence of members.

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, I was bringing out a point that this side of the House has been doing its job, and has been here regardless of whether we were paid or not, and I think that's very important that the country know that the government members have been in place day after day.

Mr. Speaker, I hear one of the opposition members today saying that the potash corporation has been such a great contributor to our national wealth, and I think that that also needs to be sort of set straight.

To begin with, the potash money was taken out of our Heritage Fund, and all of the Heritage Fund was basically spent. Then they went to foreign banks and borrowed money in order to expand the potash corporation and to buy more mines. At the time that they were doing this, the bounce between the American currency and the Canadian currency changed considerably. So we weren't only paying high interest rates but we were also paying a very high exchange rate.

Mr. Speaker, on average, during the period that the NDP were in power, the potash corporation lost 16.9 per cent per year — not a very great investment; not one that I would clamour to put my money into . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'm going to once more bring to the attention of the hon. members — to bring to the attention of the hon. members that we're going to have to refrain from continuously interrupting a member when he's on his feet, in this case the Minister of the Environment. Good debate can't continue if we interrupt members when they're on their speak, regardless of who it is in a continuous fashion. Unfortunately that's taken place now, so let us co-operate and allow the member to speak.

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, as the potash corporation lost money and was not able to even pay the interest on its debt, we got to the point in 1987 where the Government of Saskatchewan had to take over \$660 million worth of debt from that corporation in order to keep it solvent. So, Mr. Speaker, it hasn't been a great investment for me and for the people of this province.

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'm going to once more interrupt the member and I'm going to draw the attention of the hon. member from Quill Lake. Now I just asked the hon. members not to continuously interrupt the Minister of Environment, and I'm sure, if you were speaking, you would appreciate if you weren't continuously interrupted. And I'd like to ask you to keep that in mind and pay the courtesy of refraining from interrupting on a continuous basis. The Minister of Environment has some comments to make.

Hon. Mr. Swan: — Mr. Speaker, when we have corporations that are a drain on the public purse, I think that there comes a time when this government has to act to make a change in direction. And that change of direction will be to alleviate that debt load that the corporation has carried by the selling of shares in the corporation. I believe it's the right way to go and the direction that most businesses go at a time when they're in financial difficulty.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that it's time we proceed with this debate. I'm very much in support of the motion that is before the House and I will be supporting it. But, Mr. Speaker, when this House adjourns for recess, I would hope that this government can structure a rules committee, with our Speaker as the chairman of that rules committee, to put in place rules that will allow this House to function properly without opposition obstructive tactics.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: — And I think if both sides of the House have the opportunity to work through a rules committee, I'm sure that in the next session of this legislature things will operate in a more sensible manner. Thanks for the opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, August 8, we will have sat in this Legislative Assembly for five months I believe, Mr. Speaker. And what has occurred in that five months? The motion that we see here before us today is an act of desperation on the part of the provincial government. That's why this motion is here today.

In the last five months this is a government that has totally betrayed the people of Saskatchewan. And the people are wondering: and how have they betrayed us. They introduce a Bill to privatize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, a corporation that is worth some \$2 billion according to independent financial analysis. This government is proposing to sell this corporation for \$1 billion only. This is a government that introduces a Bill to privatize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, and then it moves on to another four Bills to privatize SaskEnergy, or the natural gas side of the power corporation.

And in response to that Bill that was introduced in this legislature . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Well, you know, the hon. member for Quill Lake is having great difficulty, as I can see, containing himself, and I don't want to have to ask him again. If he simply can't contain himself, maybe he'd like to withdraw for a while. But we can't have him interrupting on a continuous basis. I'm bringing this to your attention again, sir, and I trust that I will not have to rise again.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you. And in response to the Bill, the member of the opposition took the drastic step of exiting this legislature for some 17 days, or 11 working days, according to the rules of this Legislative Assembly.

We took that drastic step because this government had betrayed its promises during the 1986 election. In fact that Deputy Premier on the government benches had said in May of 1988, the intentions of the Government of Saskatchewan was not to privatize Saskatchewan Power Corporation when the government made the decision to divide up the power corporation into four different companies, one being SaskEnergy.

We had a Premier of Saskatchewan tell the public in January of 1988 and in the election of 1986 that the public utilities in this province would never be privatized, that that was not the intention of the government. So we took the decision . . . we made the decision to exit this legislature because the government had betrayed the people of Saskatchewan. And the members opposite called it a strike. Well I call it an act of democracy. I call it an act of democracy because the people of this province have a right to participate in the decisions of their government.

And this government, day in and day out, makes decisions without any input from the people of Saskatchewan. And they are making a decision today, Mr. Speaker, they are making a decision to limit the debate on the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. If this government had the courage of its convictions, it would withdraw the motion of closure and this government would get down to the business of the people of Saskatchewan and do something about some of the problems that Saskatchewan people are facing.

And what are some of those problems? People are leaving this province every day of the week because they can't find work. They are leaving this province in record numbers. And what is the government's response to this economic reality? Their response is to debate the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Their response is the Barber Commission, which is a whitewash of the debate that should be going on in this province over what the future direction of this province should be. That is their response. Do they get down to the real problems of people? Absolutely not, absolutely not.

We have people in this province that don't have enough to eat, and what does this government debate? They debate privatization. We have people in this province who are mentally ill, and we see someone this morning sleeping on the steps of the legislature because that individual is encountering problems. And what is this government's response? Is it to expand the number of beds for people who are mentally ill? Is it to make sure that those people can get into hospital and to get the treatment that they require? No, the response is to debate the privatization of PCS.

We have individuals in this province that don't have jobs; they don't have enough to eat. We have older people that can't afford prescription drugs, even though the government has changed the procedure where all you need now is 20 per cent of the money. But for many of those people, many of the people in our province, that's simply out of reach; they don't have the 20 per cent.

We have young people that can't get into our universities and colleges and technical schools, and they're going into situations and private institutions where they will never, ever get the kind of education that they so rightly deserve. They will receive a certificate that is worth nothing, absolutely nothing, and they will incur horrendous student loans that they won't be able to repay because they don't have the money. And when they want to go on to a bona fide institution, they'll be denied access because they've been delinquent on their student loans.

Those are some of the real problems of the people of this province. And what does this government do in terms of offering hope? We sit here in this legislature and we debate a motion that will stifle democracy in this province. That's what this government does. If this government had the courage of its convictions it would get off this closure motion, it would get off this closure motion and get on to what's really important to the people of Saskatchewan, and that's having enough to eat, is having a job, is having some security in their old age, is having access to a hospital if they require it, or health care

services or education. That's what the people of this province want. Privatization in this province has not meant jobs. It has not meant jobs. It has meant a loss of jobs. It has meant job loss to the extent that people no longer have the kind of wages that they once had.

When you look at what's happening in our parks. Are those workers getting \$10 an hour? They are not; they're getting minimum wage. That's what they're getting. We've seen 420 highway workers fired. We've seen 408 dental therapists lose their jobs with privatization. With SED Systems, we've seen 70 people lose their jobs. With the potash corporation privatization, the government sent 200 workers at Cory onto the unemployment rolls, and many of those workers have left this province.

This is what privatization means. Privatization has not meant shares in the hands of the people of Saskatchewan. Privatization has meant that Weyerhaeuser from Tacoma, Washington owns the forests in the North. Privatization has meant that it's not Saskatchewan people that own Saskatchewan minerals at Chaplin or the peat moss plant at Carrot River. Those companies are owned by people in Quebec, in Ontario. It has not meant shares in the hands of Saskatchewan people.

Saskoil — what has it meant? — the privatization of Saskoil. Seventy-five per cent of the shares are held by people outside of Saskatchewan. Any dividends that are paid are paid to people outside of Saskatchewan. Those people pay taxes in places other than Saskatchewan.

It has not meant economic control of the people of Saskatchewan. Not at all. That is one of the reasons why we had public enterprise in the first place — to keep resource rents in this province working for Saskatchewan people, providing social services and health care and education for the very people that I just talked about a few minutes ago. That's what public enterprise and public ownership has meant in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1345)

Ms. Atkinson: — This government is so committed — so committed — to privatization that it's forgotten to do what governments are supposed to do, and that is to enhance the human condition, make life better for people, make life more meaningful for people, make life more enjoyable for people. Not by giving people everything that they want, of course not, Mr. Speaker, but providing the conditions, the environment that allows people to grow and mature and become the very best they can be. That's what government's about, but that's not what government's been about for these people.

Government has been about winners and losers, and the winners have been out-of-province corporations like Weyerhaeuser of Tacoma, Washington, or Premier Cdn in Quebec, or Kam-Kotia in Ontario, or some of the big shots that have never had the interests of Saskatchewan people at heart, never had the interest — Fred Mannix from Calgary hardly had the interest of the people of Saskatchewan.

It's been about some of their friends, some of their friends who've been able to come up with the money and take advantage of the Saskatchewan Stock Savings Plan and make thousands and thousands of dollars once they've gone to sell their shares in these privatized companies. It's been about Dome Advertising and Spence Bozak getting thousands, in fact millions and millions of dollars with the Saskatchewan taxpayers' money.

It's been about some accounting firms making millions of dollars through these share offers. It's been about brokers making millions of dollars. It's been about some law firms, some law firms in Saskatoon and Regina making millions of dollars to set up the legislation. That's what privatization has meant.

And in the meantime there's a young man in my riding who gets kicked out of his home at the end of June. He's 17 years old, he's a good boy, he's a good kid, and he can't get access to social assistance in this province, and he's living on the river bank. And he gets sick, and he can't afford prescription drugs, and he can't get into a hospital, and this young man can't get to see social assistance until August 19 because this government's so busy with its privatization that it's forgotten to do what governments are supposed to do, and that's look after the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — And if this government was really interested in the people of Saskatchewan, we wouldn't be having this most undemocratic debate in this Legislative Assembly. This government would be bringing in legislation to protect thousands of Saskatchewan farm families who will be losing their land with the economic crisis that is out there . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And they say it is not 10,000 farmers; it's 6,000 farmers. Well I suggest to you, members opposite, it doesn't matter if it's 10,000, or 20,000, or 6,000. There are thousands of families in this province that will not be on the family farm because of the inaction of the federal government in Ottawa — a federal Tory government — and the inaction of a PC government here in Saskatchewan, because you are so wrapped up in privatization that you absolutely do not care about what happens to the people of this province. I would say that to you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — And they introduce . . . they introduce a lottery tax that's to raise \$28 million for hospitals. Well PCS made a hundred million dollars last year, and PCS can make a heck of a lot more money for the people of this province in the future. And what has the public said to them? They're not buying lottery tickets. And what does that do to the small-business people in this province? They're not getting the kinds of commissions they used to get to keep their businesses going.

I have many businesses in my riding — small groceries; small, independent grocers, or druggists — that require those lottery revenues, those lottery commissions in order to keep their business going. And they're simply not able to do so because of your decision to impose a 10 per cent tax for \$28 million. That's why you did it; when we've got

a hundred million dollars in the potash corporation last year for health and education and social services. Your priorities are all mixed up, members opposite.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I have briefly put on the record my concerns about this decision by the Government of Saskatchewan to limit our ability to debate in this province.

Our ancestors came to Saskatchewan and to Canada to get away from undemocratic regimes in countries like the Ukraine or the Soviet Union or Chile or El Salvador or South Africa or Europe or Ireland, in my case. They came to this country because they wanted to create, as Tommy Douglas would say, the new Jerusalem. They wanted to create something different.

And the members opposite say to us this morning in this legislature, we need to change the rules because every other province in Canada has rules that limit debate. We need to change the rules because the Canadian parliament has closure motions.

Saskatchewan has never done something just because it's fashionable to do it. We have always done what's important for the people of Saskatchewan; we've always done that. We have created a province unlike any other province in this country because we dared to be different. We dared to be different.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — I say to the members opposite: dare to be different. Dare to be different than your federal and your provincial counterparts. Dare not to be like Tories. Dare not to be like Tories who are right-wing and ideological and want to smash the people's view of the world. Dare to be different. Dare to be democratic. Dare to stand in this House and have the debate. Will we have the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan or won't we? Let's have a debate; let's get on with it.

We've been able to stand in this House and speak for hours. Well I haven't seen many of you get up. Get up and put your philosophy on the record. Have the courage of your convictions. If you're so into democracy, which you say you are, let's get rid of this motion and let's get on with debating this Bill and let's get on with the future of Saskatchewan.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly a pleasure for me to enter the debate at this time. I think that more aptly put the question before the House would be: when is enough enough? We've just heard the member across the way speak at great lengths, and she is an excellent speaker, I might add. But she's rambled all over the place and made a lot of statements that certainly lack an awful lot of substance and a lot of truth. Let me talk about this. And I will be entering the potash debate in the next couple of days.

Mr. Speaker, what I like to talk about at the very beginning is what I see as the role of government and what I saw as my role as a MLA when I was elected in 1986. What were my views? I believe, Mr. Speaker, that when a government is duly elected by the people of the province or of the country, that they are elected for one reason, and that's to govern. And I think that we've seen an ample case in this legislature in the last five months, or nearly five months as the member points out, that we've not been allowed to govern.

In my view, the idea in the legislature is that Bills are introduced and after a fair amount of debate by both sides of the House that then they are voted on and the opposition has ample opportunity to oppose, put through their views and why they would oppose. But once that's done, Mr. Speaker, then the Bills are passed on into law. When votes were taken, it was the normal case that the members would be called in to vote; they would be called in to vote with the ringing of the bells, and once the votes had been taken, then you moved on to new business. And after all of the business of the day had been taken care of, the House was adjourned and people returned to their constituency to look after other constituency matters.

During the past, the history of this province and other jurisdictions and, indeed, in the federal parliament, there have been many heated debates on many different subjects; and that will continue, Mr. Speaker. Here in Saskatchewan we know that we had a very lengthy debate on medicare and the nationalization of potash. There was good debate but, Mr. Speaker, there was no walk-out, there was no extended ringing of bells by oppositions — good debate, but when the debate was over, the Bills were voted on and passed into law.

In Ottawa we saw a very extended debate with regard to the flag. Diefenbaker and Douglas gave a very good and very strong debate, Mr. Speaker, there was no walk-out and there was no ringing of bells.

Free trade — there was a good deal of debate with regard to that, both sides of the House, but we didn't see Mr. Turner or Mr. Broadbent leading the troops out of the House. There was no extended ringing of the bells. This has been the case, Mr. Speaker, for many, many years in every jurisdiction across the country and indeed in the federal parliament.

So why is it different today in Saskatchewan? What has brought us to this point in time when the government must introduce time allocation and limit debate? Let us review the actions of the present opposition, Mr. Speaker, to look at some of the reasons for where we are today.

Never in the history of this province have we seen such a radical opposition — never, Mr. Speaker. Never in the history of this province have we seen so many obstructionist tactics in this Assembly — never, Mr. Speaker. Never in the history of this province have we heard the NDP and the unions saying that they must make the province ungovernable and vowing to create a climate of political revolt — never, Mr. Speaker. Never in the history of this province have we had an opposition go

on strike for 17 days.

Where is it written, Mr. Speaker, that a majority government should be denied the right to govern? Where is that written, Mr. Speaker? Is it any wonder that this government should have to take then the historical measures that we see today. And we are talking here, Mr. Speaker, about limiting the debate on potash only. This has absolutely nothing to do with any other issue. And let me make that very clear to the members opposite and to those who might be listening in on the debate today. We are talking about the potash debate only.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the biggest problem that the NDP have with regard to Bill 20 in potash, the biggest problem that they have, it's not to do with the fact that we are dealing with time allocation, it's not to do with the fact we are debating the privatization of potash. Do you know what the main problem the NDP has with this, Mr. Speaker? It's the problem that they know full well that they made a mistake when they nationalized the industry in the first place. That's the biggest problem that they are dealing with.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — So let's look at the potash debate that has taken place over the last four months, Mr. Speaker. We've had filibuster after filibuster of meaningless rhetoric, very little substance, where there's been very limited opportunity for other members to speak. We've had speeches that have extended up to 13 hours in length. Mr. Speaker, I don't think that the members have any reason to whine about not being given an opportunity to speak . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. We have on several occasions in the past asked that hon. members not use the term "whine" or "whining" in reference to other members.

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite have any reason to complain at all about not having an opportunity to speak. I think the biggest problem that they're grappling with there is that they're angry because they weren't able to get into the contest as to who could speak the longest. And it looks like the member from Rosemont clearly has won that very significant contest.

Mr. Speaker, we've now been debating this Bill for some four months. It's gone over some 28 different days, 80 hours, with still another 40 hours that can be used in the debate. So again we're only limiting that to the potash Bill, and they still have 40 hours, Mr. Speaker, in which they can debate, and that's still going to be, and mean, the longest debate in the history of this province.

Taxpayers are not being denied fairness in this debate, Mr. Speaker. Putting a time limit on debate will not subvert democracy but rather will focus democracy in this case.

That's the *Star-Phoenix*, August 5, Mr. Speaker. So when they talk about democracy not being adhered to, that's simply not true.

They talk an awful lot about free speech and being denied the right to free speech. Well, -Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. These are the saviours of democracy on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker. They talk about denial of free speech. Well, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'd like to ask the member for Moose Jaw North to also contain himself and not interject occasionally, and sometimes repeatedly. Allow the member to continue.

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — These saviours of democracy on the opposite side of the House, Mr. Speaker, they're the ones that invoked closure on this Assembly and muzzled free speech when they walked out of the legislature for 17 days.

Now isn't it interesting that they think they can have it both ways; that they can walk out of the House one day and come back in on another day and indicate that they're here as the great defenders of free speech. Where were they during the 17 days, Mr. Speaker? Who were they denying free speech during those 17 days? And the member from Riversdale full knows that. Where were they for those 17 days?

(1400)

And what about the right of free speech and the right for debate in this Assembly? I think, Mr. Speaker, that we saw on Friday and heard on Friday the member from Riversdale chastising the media for ignoring speeches delivered by NDP members during filibuster. This was the *Leader-Post*, August 5, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition said:

In almost any other gallery in this country, with this momentous debate, with this unprecedented act of closure, this press gallery would have condemned this government and forced them to call an election so the people can decide.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — Mr. Speaker, this is defender of free speech. He doesn't even believe then in free speech in the press, because he's now chastising the members of the media.

This is the same member, Mr. Speaker, who says he's opposed to strike, opposed to strikes. I heard him on the radio.

An Hon. Member: — I said I was opposed to strikes?

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: — You said that last night on the radio, and yet he's the one who led his members out of the House for 17 days. You missed the program last night that I heard.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. When the NDP created PCS and nationalized this potash industry, it went ahead with its agenda after suitable debate and despite opposition in this House.

Mr. Speaker, again the *Star-Phoenix* of August 5, and I quote:

That's what governments are elected to do, implement their policies and govern. Oppositions have the job of opposing, but in a constructive manner that furthers the interest of the public.

Well, Mr. Speaker, where has the opposition been then during the last few months?

The NDP have taken the attitude that if the government does something that they don't like, they're being totalitarian or dictatorial. If the media doesn't print what they like to see, they're being irresponsible. Well, Mr. Speaker, this is the opposition that talks about freedom of speech. Democracy doesn't work that way, Mr. Speaker. It's time to end this debate and to get on with other business.

The opposition have indicated by their own actions in 1981-82 that they're not opposed to public participation, including potash. At a time when countries all over the world are moving to more privatization or public participation, the NDP cannot be taken seriously with their opposition to Bill 20. In the future the government of the day will introduce legislation that will be opposed by members of the opposition, but sooner or later they will be allowed to exercise their majority and to move on to other business.

Mr. Speaker, that is clearly the case now. It is time to dispose of the potash Bill and then to move on to other business. With that, I thank you for the opportunity to enter this debate, and certainly will be supporting the motion before us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to take part in this time limitation motion, or a motion of closure, glorified closure, is what we really are debating here today.

And I want to touch on a number of issues, but first of all I want to touch on why we as New Democrats are in the legislature today and why we are fighting for what we are fighting here for today. And I think it's very important, Mr. Speaker, to realize that we're fighting today to retain the assets of Saskatchewan citizens for our citizens for tomorrow — very, very important assets.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — Fighting to retain the assets that will give benefits for generations to come, and I will get into that and explain that a little later, Mr. Speaker. What we have seen now is the province of Saskatchewan, through the blind ideology of the Conservative government and their privatization philosophy, that we have moved from a province that was a was province to a have-not province. And it's only taken seven short years for this government to literally destroy this province.

When you take a look at what we're fighting for here, we're fighting for assets right now. This Bill is on closure

on the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, which has assets in excess of \$2 billion. And just imagine, Mr. Speaker: assets worth \$2 billion, a corporation that is bringing in hundreds of millions of dollars of profit every year for the people of Saskatchewan, and these Tories want to sell 45 per cent of that to foreign ownership and Hong Kong and other parts of the world. And the rest of it will go down into eastern Canada.

And when you take a look at what we have in this province in potash, we have reserves, 5,000 years. At the present rate of extraction, we could be taking potash out for 5,000 years, a resource that would be bringing in hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue a year to carry out the types of programs that we need in this province. That's what we're debating today, and that's what the Tories here are wanting to sell off. They want to sell off our heritage. We have a right to that, and I say that we're going to put up a battle, and it will be a good one.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — And, Mr. Speaker, we take a look at privatization Tory-style, and what it has accomplished in the province of Saskatchewan. Well first of all, when they took over in 1982 we had balanced budgets and they had a surplus of \$139 million in the bank. We had a total debt in this province of less than \$3 billion.

And here's what we got through privatization. Here we are sitting in 1989 debating a Bill to sell off our assets, and what has happened through privatization? We now have a total debt, accumulated debt, operating debt in this province of over \$4 billion. We have a long-term debt of over \$13 billion, and that's why we're debating this important issue, Mr. Speaker, because it's important to the citizens of Saskatchewan.

And I know that the members across there know full well that privatization has not worked. One has to take a look at what's happened to Highways, to the privatization of the Department of Highways. And a lot of that equipment that was purchased was purchased from funds that we in the province had got by selling off potash, potash that came back for revenues to this province to build up a Department of Highways so that we could continue to build better highways and roads.

And we see what's happened. We see the destruction of the families in the Department of Highways. And we see other such programs as hospitals, the long waiting lists. This has all come about because of the privatization philosophy of the Conservative government.

Schools, the dental program, another program that was brought in by the New Democrats, and a lot of that program, the dental nurses, the training of the nurses, that was done through revenue that we achieved from the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — And here we have a government that wants to sell it off. They want to get rid of the hundreds of millions of dollars that we would receive in revenue every year to carry out these types of programs that I just

mentioned.

An Hon. Member: — Give it away, Fred, give it away.

Mr. Thompson: — This is right. This is right, and this is what they do. They don't really sell any of our assets. There hasn't been any money received from the assets of Saskatchewan. That's why we have a total debt of \$13 billion, because they just give it away; they sign the promissory notes.

And one has to go back right to Manalta Coal, down in Estevan, Mr. Speaker, and that was the first privatization. And there, there was no money changed hands, but a \$30 million drag-line and a coal deposit worth \$230 million was given to Manalta Coal up in Calgary, Alberta — some of their Tory friends. There was no money exchanged, absolutely no money. All that happened there was that they got the coal mine, they got the drag-line . . .

An Hon. Member: — And we got the shaft.

Mr. Thompson: — . . . And we got the shaft, is right.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — That is what's happened today under privatization. And who has gained? I'm talking about who has gained. Well I can tell you, the Weyerhaeusers of Tacoma, Washington have gained. They came into this province, picked up eight million acres of our prime forest land, picked up a saw mill in Big River, they picked up a pulp mill in Prince Albert, and never put one cent down, and a chemical plant in Saskatoon.

The member from Shellbrook is shaking his head. Well I ask the member from Shellbrook to stand up when it's time for him to speak and tell us how much money Weyerhaeuser put down on the pulp mill in Prince Albert. And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, not one cent, absolutely zero.

And look at the assets that they have today. That's privatization Tory-style, and that has to come to an end.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — Let's take a look at the rich millionaire from Edmonton, Peter Pocklington, the owner of the Edmonton Oilers — \$21 million, and who signed the promissory notes? The Government of Saskatchewan signed the promissory notes. Not one cent did Peter Pocklington put down, not one cent, and he got the . . . Not only that, 10 million of that was an outright grant. I tell you, with that \$10 million we could build hospitals and schools and many highways and roads in this province. Those are the big winners under privatization. Those are the big winners, let me tell you, Mr. Speaker.

And who are the big losers? Well it's the young men and women of this province. The member from Saskatoon Nutana was just speaking, and she spoke about the human disasters that we have in this province. Well let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, there is a human disaster in Saskatchewan. One just has to take at the hopelessness that we see in the young men and women who are migrating out of this province to look for work, heading

out to Alberta and to British Columbia and to Ontario and to the Northwest Territories. The out-migration is continuing on a daily basis. That is who the big losers are, the young men and women of this province. And the Tories are turning a blind eye to what's really happening in this province.

I ask them to go and drive around any city or town in Saskatchewan, drive around the city of Regina. You would honestly think that there was a provincial election or a federal election taking place, because there's so many signs for houses for sale. And it's not only just in Regina, it's in every city and small community in this province.

And look at the vacancy rate in our apartments. The vacancy rate is the highest that it's ever been in this province, Mr. Speaker. And that tells you something. That tells you what's happening in this province. That tells you what we have with the large debt that we hold and the young men and women who cannot get a job in this province. Families, total families are leaving because of the philosophy, Mr. Speaker, of this government. They are leaving and it's a province, it's a have-not province, and it's hopelessness. The men and women of this province just do not know what to do.

And I think that you have to get out and speak to the citizens of this province. This weekend I made a trip up to Saskatoon and went over to North Battleford, and I talked to many people. And let me tell you, they all tell me the same thing. They all say that this government has to go.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — This government has gone . . .

An Hon. Member: — Did you talk to them about this motion at all?

Mr. Thompson: — That's right. And I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, the citizens in Saskatchewan say, you just continue to fight those Tories because their days are numbered.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — You take a look at the small-business community in this province, Mr. Speaker, and they are in serious trouble . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I've given the member quite wide latitude and I'm sure he appreciates that, but I'm going to have to ask him to somehow relate it to the motion under discussion, which is time allocation. So far, sir, you've been giving just a wide-ranging political speech, you might say, but I'm not sure it was all relevant to the motion. I'd like to ask you to make it relevant.

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try and make the debate more relevant, but what I was trying to do, Mr. Speaker, was relate to the situation that we have in this province. The small-business community are suffering because of the heavy debt burden we have in this province. And the only way that we can solve that debt burden, Mr. Speaker, is to retain the assets that are

bringing the revenue to this province so that our debt can go down; so that men and women of this province can stay in this province and spend their money; so small business can survive and can flourish in this province, the way they always have. That was the reason, Mr. Speaker.

(1415)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — I want to talk for a few minutes about some of the remarks that were made for the member from . . . the Minister of the Environment from Rosetown. He said that we made a mistake. He said that we were using funds out of the Heritage Fund to purchase potash mines and to expand potash mines.

And I say yes, we did. That's right. We used the Heritage Fund. That's what that Heritage Fund was for — to build up assets for the citizens of this province.

An Hon. Member: — To build, not tear down.

Mr. Thompson: — Not to tear it down, but to build it up.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — We used the revenue from the Heritage Fund, Mr. Speaker, and when the member from Rosetown got up and spoke — and knowing full well that he will not be running again; he's announced that, and I've said that before — but he said that we didn't have a right to stand up in here and to filibuster; he used the word filibuster.

We're not filibustering, Mr. Speaker. We're here trying to protect the assets that the citizens of Saskatchewan have built up over the years and they deserve.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — And he said that we didn't have that mandate. I believe the member from Regina South indicated that the deals were made in the back rooms. Well I'll say . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I've waited again for the hon. member to give him an opportunity to relate his remarks to the time allocation Bill, but so far I'm still waiting. And I once more ask him to.

Mr. Thompson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm quoting from the other members who . . . I'm just responding to statements that other members have made.

And this is why we're opposed to the closing off of debate. This debate should not be closed off, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Debate on this motion, Mr. Member from Regina South. We are debating an important motion, the first time it's ever been used in the history of this province. And he asks me, what debate, what motion? Well I think he should know by now what motion we're debating. What is the effect of this motion?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — And I want to say that it's about time that some of those members, the member from Regina South and other members got up and spoke on this, and got up and said their piece on the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

This is an asset that the citizens of Saskatchewan cannot afford to lose. And I'm asking those members, those private members, those back-benchers, who I say to them are being railroaded by about 21 to 24 members on the front benches who will never seek election in this province again. I guarantee that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — And they know full well, they know full well the importance of this potash debate and this motion that is facing this legislature today. They know that, but they are muzzled by a few senior cabinet ministers who are saying, oh, that's our right. We'll get rid of this resource. We're going to sell it off regardless.

And one of the members over there said . . . one of the last members that said, and I believe it was the member from Saskatoon Mayfair, that the big mistake the New Democrats made, the big mistake that Saskatchewan New Democrats made is when they purchased the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. That shows you what the ideology and the thinking is and the mentality of that Conservative government on that side.

It's revenge that we're dealing with, Mr. Speaker. It's revenge because New Democrats purchased 50 per cent of the potash industry in this province. We most certainly did purchase 50 per cent of the operating capacity of the potash industry in this province. We own 100 per cent of that corporation now. They want to sell it off because New Democrats are the ones who decided that, in their wisdom, that they should go into it. It was successful. It has provided \$116 million revenue this year, Mr. Speaker. It will continue to provide hundreds of millions of dollars of revenues for the foreseeable future — 5,000 years.

And the member from Saltcoats, I know that he will get up and he will contribute to the debate — I know he's going to contribute to it — but I know that he is one of the 24 members that will not seek re-election, Mr. Speaker. And the reason they're not seeking re-election is because of the potash debate and the nationalization of SaskPower. These members know full well that it's going against the grains of the citizens of this . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I have been waiting patiently, quite frankly, and brought it to the hon. member's attention, and I don't, of course, like to cut off debate, and I don't intend to do that with you, but I have to once more bring to your attention that you're not being relevant except in a very, very peripheral way and not very frequently at all.

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I now want to close off by going into some of the remarks that the member from Kindersley made in this debate. The member of Kindersley, he talked about the Irish radicals; he talked about the southern Democrats. This is what the

member from Kindersley was discussing. And he accuses . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. The member was on topic and the member from Quill Lakes is interrupting and I ask him to refrain. The member for Athabasca may continue.

Mr. Thompson: — I just want to comment on the member of Kindersley's remarks. And when he got up in the debate on this closure motion, Mr. Speaker, he talked about the Irish radicals, and he referred to us at the Irish radicals. He talked about the southern New Democrats. He talked about the rule changes. He talked about us being actors.

But he also talked about what I think is important and that is who is going to control the potash industry into the '90s. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that who is going to control the potash industry into the '90s, the potash industry that's owned — the corporation — 100 per cent by Saskatchewan people, will be the citizens of Saskatchewan.

I say that the Tory government over there does not have a mandate to sell this industry off, and the only way that they can do this is by going out and dissolving this legislature, Mr. Premier, call an election, and let the citizens of Saskatchewan decide who, as the member from Kindersley said, who is going to control potash into the '90s.

I say that we as New Democrats, if given the opportunity at the polls, we will make those decisions. We'll make those decisions for the benefit of the citizens of Saskatchewan. We most certainly won't be selling it off to foreign ownership out of this province.

Mr. Speaker, when the member from Kindersley was making these statements — and I was listening carefully; I was listening carefully — he referred to us as being actors. Well I say that there's a lot of actors on that side, but I think there's a lot of actors on that side that better stand up and start doing some acting.

You better get up and do some speaking — the member from Wilkie, the member from Kinistino . . .

An Hon. Member: — Saltcoats.

Mr. Thompson: — Yes — and says goodbye — and I agree that, that's probably . . . he's not going to run again.

But stand up and speak for the right of Saskatchewan. Speak for the right of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: — If the rumour, Mr. Speaker, if the rumour that I got up in Saskatoon this weekend is right, then I say that this government will not nationalize the potash industry in Saskatchewan until they call an election.

I think that the individuals who want to buy this industry are saying to this government: look, I'm not sure if you have a mandate. You call an election . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Petersen: — Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've listened with great attention to the comments made by my colleagues and members opposite, and I've seen the debate range back and forth.

But just so that there is no mistake, you're right: I plan to run again, and I'm here now to stand up and I'm here now to stand and talk about the motion in front of us and why I think it's necessary. I plan to run again and I plan to win.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Petersen: — Mr. Speaker, the motion before us today talks about the reason for government, the reasons for being government. We've heard members opposite talk about potash, health care — we've rambled on and on all over the place.

One of the nice things about this debate being limited to 20 minutes is for the first time in about four months I've heard some really stimulating debate. I mean, everybody was just sitting around here saying, you know, haven't you noticed the level of interest has gone up a little bit? Rather than having to sit here and listen to a 13-hours monologue by a member who's just trying to prove that his bladder is bigger than his brain is something really interesting. It's nice to see the refreshing difference.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'd just like to bring to the hon. member's attention that I don't think those kinds of references to other members are necessary.

Mr. Petersen: — I apologize, Mr. Speaker, if I've cast any aspersions on anyone. The record speaks for itself, Mr. Speaker. We've seen members stand here for an inordinate amount of time and go on and on and on about irrelevant material. We've just seen, even in this most stimulating debate, the inability of the opposition members to stick to the motion at hand.

Well the motion at hand is a motion to limit debate on the following motion:

That following that adoption of this motion when the order is called for resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill No. 20, An Act respecting the Reorganization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, not more than two sitting days shall be allocated debate on such order, and that at 15 minutes before the set time of adjournment on the second sitting day, unless sooner concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the order; and

That there shall be two sitting days allocated to the consideration of Bill No. 20 in Committee of the Whole, and at 15 minutes before the set time of adjournment on the second sitting day, unless

sooner concluded, the chairman shall put all questions necessary to dispose of every section of the Bill not yet passed, and shall report the Bill forthwith to the House, and that the question for the first and second reading of any amendments shall put forthwith and decided without amendment or debate; and

That there shall be two hours allocated to the consideration of the motion for third reading of Bill No. 20, and at the expiration of two hours, unless sooner concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the order for third reading of the Bill; and

That consideration of Bill No. 20, pursuant to this motion, be a special order of this Assembly and be called immediately after orders of the day.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing is that after over 80 hours of debate on Bill No. 20, this government has finally taken the courageous step of saying enough is enough; fair is fair; you've had 20 hours. But this government did not just step up and go back, that's it, and guillotine it, as member of the opposition have claimed we did.

The motion itself puts forward four days — four days. Now in four days at 11 hours a day. I mean let's . . . We could have another 40 hours of debate on this, you know. I mean, 40 hours debate plus the 80 already, that's 120. I mean, we could get right up there so that we're even longer than the original nationalization debate.

I mean, let's take a look at where we're at. We have sat here and listened and at the finalization of this motion we will have listened and talked for over 140 hours, 140 hours.

Now if we would have had the opposition in the House for the 17 days that they were out on the road, on strike, or whatever they were doing, whatever point they were trying to prove, we wouldn't have had to be sitting here in the middle of August doing this. We would've had things settled. If the opposition would have stuck to the spirit of this House . . . They fell back on the letter of the law saying hey, we're allowed to do this; it's in the rules; we can do this. And we see them every day digging in *Beauchesne's* trying to find some obscure ruling that with to back their arguments, that if it's in the rule book it's okay.

Let's go to the other side of the coin. The government says fine, fair is fair, enough is enough. The rules of the Assembly allow for a time allocation motion and allow for closure motions, and the opposition stands up and yells, oh, no fair, no fair because now you're using the rules, you're using the rules. The difference is, Mr. Speaker, we are using the rules of this Assembly to bring some order back in here, to bring some dignity back to this House, rather than having to listen to that kind of garbage.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Petersen: —Mr. Speaker, I may not be a very eloquent speaker, and I think . . . No applause for that line? Okay fine. But I'm speaking from my heart. I'm speaking about what I believe in. I believe that this Assembly, that this type of government system that we have in place should not be used for purposes that are designed to create anarchy, designed to create revolt, designed to create a situation where, in the words of members of the opposition, the province will become ungovernable.

(1430)

Let's take a look at the agenda that we've been on here. Why are we looking at anarchy? Why are we looking at making the province ungovernable? Members of the opposition, union bosses, the big union bosses said we're going to stop them, boy. We're going to cut them out of this. They don't like the average employee having the opportunity to buy shares in companies that they formerly worked for because that takes away from the power of the big union bosses, that takes away from the power of big government that the members opposite spouse. They don't like it, Mr. Speaker, so they try anything that they can possibly come up with to stall. They try whatever they can possibly do, use whatever rule is available to them in order to disrupt the proceedings of this Assembly.

This Assembly, Mr. Speaker, deserves a little, a little bit more respect than that. Members opposite have time and again stood up and gone on for hours, as I've pointed out, on topics that were totally irrelevant — totally irrelevant.

We've talked about *Romper Room*, we've talked about a number of other issues. I mean, it's gone on and on and on and on and on. It's nice; I caught up on a little bit of sleep now and again.

But, Mr. Speaker, the cost of running this Assembly, the cost of running this Assembly is a consideration, but the primary point here is the lack of respect that members opposite have for this Assembly and the traditions of this Assembly, this institution that has been around here for hundreds of years, parliamentary system. And they stand up and make a mockery of it. They say, oh gee, we didn't like that; we're just going to walk out for 17 days, ring the bells and whatever.

And then they say, why would you bring in a motion, why would you bring in a motion that would bring some order back here? That's exactly the reason. We want some order in here.

They talk about the heavyweights who used to debate in this Assembly, and others who used to debate and stand up and talk back and forth. Well I don't think they ever saw oppositions that would walk out of a debate — just walk out. Bang, 17 days, out. They stood there and they did debate it. They did debate. And they had some respect for the House, they had some respect for the Assembly, for the spirit of this Assembly. They didn't fall back on some niggling little point, some niggling little ruling in *Beauchesne's*. They stood up and they talked about it; they debated it. They didn't run out of this Assembly.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I could probably go on a long time.

Members opposite are very fond of saying how they are elected by people to stand up and say what people want them to say. And I'm very fond of saying that I was elected as well, and I'm doing what I believe my people would like to have done. I'm doing the best I can for them out there. I believe that if I stand up in this Assembly and speak my mind openly and honestly, I will be judged at election time, whenever it may be. I don't run out of here and hide.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Petersen: — Mr. Speaker, along with the honour of being elected comes the responsibility to the institution that we call parliament. And, Mr. Speaker, I would just ask all members of the Assembly, especially members opposite, to think about that. With the honour comes the responsibility. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take my opportunity to debate the motion we have here today, rule 31, closure on the debate of the potash Bill, the Bill 20, an Act to reorganize the potash corporation, the privatization of that Crown corporation.

I'd like to say, Mr. Speaker, that the test of any Legislative Assembly or any parliamentary institution in a true democracy can be centred around three main areas. First is the budgetary process for the provincial expenditures. The second one would be the creation and the amendment of laws. The third is the preservation of democracy.

I think that any legislature has to be tested by those three topic areas. And when you have a heavy hand of the majority in any legislative institution, this Legislative Assembly that overrides any one of those three, that's where they fail.

The test, of course, if they deal fairly with the budgetary process, the creation and amendment of laws and the preservation of democracy, if they treat it fairly, then they'd have to have to a passing mark on their report card. But if they use the heavy hand of the majority in any legislative institution to override those three topic areas, then I believe that you'd have to give them a failure on their report card.

So I want today, in this debate on rule 31, to look at those three areas.

First off there's the budget for provincial expenditures. We came here on the early part of March, March 5 or March 8, I don't remember which the date was, but very early part of March, and shortly after that time there is the introduction of the provincial budget. So the first step, the government actually prepared and introduced a budget into the legislature.

But since that time they have not dealt with the second step of the budgetary process and that's the estimates. By far the majority of the departments and agencies that have to go through estimates yet have not been dealt with ever since the budget was introduced back in March. And of

course anyone who follows the activities of government know that the fiscal year for the government runs from April 1 of this current year, April 1, 1989, until March 31, 1990. So here we are into the early part of August and the government, who controls the agenda, has still not brought forward all the departments and Crown corporations and agencies that are necessary to be brought before this Legislative Assembly to go through the estimates process.

And of course at the end of the budgetary process, Mr. Speaker, we would all know that we have the tabling of the *Public Accounts*. The early part, those first stages, introducing the budget and then going through the estimates, gives a projection of what the government plans to spend over the fiscal year. The end part of that is the *Public Accounts*. And this government has been late every year in tabling the *Public Accounts*, so that when you look at the budgetary process for the year — the tabling of the budget, the estimates — you don't know what the government has done in the previous fiscal year because they haven't tabled the *Public Accounts*.

So when you look at the budgetary process, the first function of this Legislative Assembly, this government Mr. Speaker, would have to receive a failure on their report card. No question about that.

The second thing, what about the creation and the amendment of laws, the second function of this Legislative Assembly? Since we came into this session of the legislature, the government — and private Bills included — there's been some 93 Bills introduced. And we know that Bills is the term that is initially there, and once that Bill goes through the stages of first, second, third reading, committee, and receives Royal Assent, that Bill becomes a statute or a law within the province of Saskatchewan.

Well 93 Bills have been introduced, Mr. Speaker. Only 33 of those Bills have received Royal Assent because the government has been obsessed with their privatization. The first Bill they brought in was the privatization Bill, then they wanted to sell off SaskPower, now they're wanting to sell off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Their obsession with privatization has stopped the second function of this Legislative Assembly, and that's to create and amend laws by which people live within in the province of Saskatchewan. So 93 Bills, Mr. Speaker, here we are from March until early August, only 33 of those Bills have received Royal Assent.

And it's important to the public to know it's the government who sets the legislative agenda. And they say, well these Bills have been there for a long time; the opposition didn't want to debate them. We debated Bills. Whenever the government said to us, you're blocking the process, bring in the Bills, we said, go ahead, bring them in. We passed the agricultural Bills in practically one day in this Legislative Assembly once we moved the government and forced the government into bringing those Bills before the legislature, and they went through all three readings in one day, Mr. Speaker.

So the government can't use that blockage of the legislature, the obstructionist tactics. We were doing our job, Mr. Speaker, in terms of speaking for people in the province of Saskatchewan. What people were telling us to tell this government was that privatization is not the route we want to go, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the government was still introducing Bills in the month of July. We had March, we had April, we had May, we had June, and still in the month of July this government, who said that we were obstructing the system, was still bringing in government Bills to be debated. And so here we are left with the situation: 93 Bills introduced, only 33 Bills come into force, become a statute because they've received Royal Assent.

So if you mark this government, Mr. Speaker, on the creation and amendment of laws and what they've done on it, the heavy-handed majority again by the government, they would have to receive a failure mark on the report card, Mr. Speaker.

What about the third thing, the third thing that is the function of this institution, and that's the preservation of democracy, Mr. Speaker. In many countries throughout the world where they don't have a democratic institution such as this, people fight and they die and there's bloodshed over the right to have their democratic voice in some type of Assembly.

In this country, in this province, we're very lucky that we do have democratic institutions such as this. But this government has done more to erode democracy since they have come back into power in 1986 than any government in the history of the province of Saskatchewan.

And let's look at just some of the things that this government has done over the past few months — in fact, let's say the past year or so.

An Hon. Member: — The 17-day walk-out.

Mr. Anguish: — And I'll talk about the 17-day walk-out that the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg brings up. But first, in terms of democracy, this government has arbitrarily, by their heavy majority, changed rules without going through the regular process of setting up a committee and gaining consensus to change rules. They appoint an Ombudsman without consultation with the opposition, and when the former ombudsman leaves and goes to the John Howard Society, David Tickell, this government was mad at him. So within a week or so of Dave Tickell going to the John Howard Society, what does this government do? They cut the budget of the John Howard Society in half — vindictive, anti-democratic, get-even attitude that this government has.

What happens when the Provincial Auditor, an officer of this Assembly, brings in the annual *Report of the Provincial Auditor*, and criticizes the government. The government doesn't try and correct their ways. What the government does is they attack the Provincial Auditor. Unheard of, Mr. Speaker, in terms of legislative assemblies and democratic institutions in Canada.

Governments in the past have been upset with provincial auditors, but what did they do? They try and correct whatever the auditor points out because they're a professional officer of this Assembly, sir.

What happens when the Legislative Counsel, the legal counsel of this Assembly, wanted to offer a ruling that was asked for by the opposition? They attacked the Legislative Counsel, Mr. Speaker. Very undemocratic and unheard of.

Voltaire, the philosopher — and I've said this in this Assembly before — Voltaire said that one of the tests of democracy, one of the greatest principles, and he was quoted as saying: I may disagree with what you have to say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.

This government, Mr. Speaker, if they disagree with what you say, they either attack you or change the rules so that it suits them and not an opponent of the government.

So I think when you look at the report card in terms of the heavy hand of the majority attacking democracy within this institution, again they'd have to have a failure, Mr. Speaker.

So on all three counts: the budgetary process, the preservation of democracy, the creation and amendment of laws, this government would have to receive no question an "F" by any political scientist that would look at the record of this government, Mr. Speaker. And I think that's shameful of the government that we have here in Saskatchewan today.

We've heard quite often during this debate by members of the government that we went on strike, walked out of the Legislative Assembly for 17 days. They say this was unprecedented. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd want to correct the record, because it was Conservatives, in fact the Conservative cousins of the government opposite in Ottawa, in the Parliament of Canada, who invented bell-ringing. In fact, they walked out of the Parliament of Canada for 14 days to protect the oil companies on an omnibus piece of energy legislation. But when this opposition in Saskatchewan walks out to protect the people of Saskatchewan, they say it's anti-democratic; I say that's wrong, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — I've also heard the government talk about obstructionist tactics of the opposition. Obstructionist? Again I say we've spoken for people in the province of Saskatchewan.

Look back at the same time when the federal Conservative cousins of this government in Ottawa walked out of the federal parliament for 14 days to protect the oil companies. They also stormed the Speaker's chair, shaking their fists and hollering and screaming. I believe the speaker at the time was Lloyd Francis, who happened to be in a Liberal administration at that time, and the Conservatives in opposition stormed and threatened the Speaker, the most respected part of any Assembly of a democratic institution in this country. Again I think that's shameful.

(1445)

Conservatives invented those intimidation, scary, scary tactics that have not been used by this opposition in this legislature. We've used democratic means, we've used rules to express what people in Saskatchewan feel about a government who's so blatantly gone astray. They've stopped listening, they can't hear what people are saying, and they're obsessed by their own moves to want to privatize anything that operates efficiently in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They can't stand to see something that's been built up that's been good by another administration; they want to tear it down. We remember what the *Toronto Globe and Mail* called it; they called it, "the revenge of the nerds."

Since that time I think what we've seen is nerdonomics in the province of Saskatchewan. Otherwise why would you have a government, in the budget they introduced, where the third-highest expenditure after health care, number one; education, number two — the third highest is interest to service the debt, a debt that did not exist when this government came to power in 1982? It's a debt that people for many years will have to be paying. I believe the figure's something like \$384 million a year that we have to pay just on interest of a debt that's been created by this uncaring, unorganized, unplanned, incompetent government, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Anguish: — Now I heard one of the speakers, I believe it was the member from Morse, when he made his intervention. I do enjoy the debate; finally some of the government members are getting up and speaking on a very historic debate in this legislature. But I believe the member of Morse said that since the Trudeau administration in Ottawa, it's quite common practice to have closure. Well I agree it's quite common practice now to have closure in the federal Parliament of Canada, because since the Liberal administration of Trudeau it's been a Conservative government of Brian Mulroney since that time, and they use their heavy hand and majority to bring in closure motions to stop debate on Bills that opposition members think are crucial to the direction and the existence of our country.

Now closure is going to be a very damning experience, I think, for this government when the people of Saskatchewan judge what the Conservative government has done. But one thing we have to keep in mind is that once a government has used closure — and again, I reiterate that this is a first time in the history of the province that closure has been used to stop debate in the legislature — but once it is used, it becomes much easier to use by a government, becomes more acceptable the more you use it.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that this government, you will find, every time they find something they disagree with in this democratic institution, they'll be discussing in cabinet and in their caucus, we should maybe bring in closure again, Mr. Speaker.

Why do they want to stop debate? I think they want to get

out of this institution; they want to get out of here because they don't want to talk about some things. They don't want to talk about the fact that they want to give away 45 per cent of the potash corporation to foreign investors, Mr. Speaker. They don't want to talk about GigaText where they gave Guy Montpetit sole signing authority for \$4 million that was squandered and wasted. They don't want to talk about the agricultural crisis in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They don't want to talk about working people who have a shrinking, shrinking consumer dollar so that the businesses in Saskatchewan are starting to shrink as well, so they don't want to talk about business bankruptcies in the province of Saskatchewan. They don't want to talk about their debt, and they don't want to talk about the interest payments that they've created so that taxation is going up in Saskatchewan, not down, as they promised in the previous campaigns of 1982 and 1986, Mr. Speaker.

So in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, all I want to say is that when you put the three test to this government of the budgetary process, the creation and amendment of laws, and the preservation of democracy, they fail on all three of those tests, Mr. Speaker — there's no question about that.

There's only one day in Saskatchewan where we will have democracy, Mr. Speaker, and that's the day when the Premier of this province screws up enough courage to call an election and go to the people of Saskatchewan. And I say that the people of Saskatchewan will give him the same mark on the report card; they'll give them a failure, and they'll remove this government because they've done a poor job for the province of Saskatchewan.

They're blatant about the things they do to attack democracy, to attack people, to run the government into the hole because they don't believe in government. And on the day the election is called, Mr. Speaker, there'll be a campaign that will go across Saskatchewan, people will stand up and speak out against this government, and they'll get a failure on the report card when election day is held, because New Democrats will be in government in the province of Saskatchewan, to set right what this government has done wrong in the previous years that they've been an administration in government.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've had an opportunity to speak on the potash Bill a few days ago, and why I felt it was important for this Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to move on to the '90s, because it's good for the people of the province. Therefore it's my privilege today to talk on the time allocation motion, the motion before us today, Mr. Speaker.

It has been said by many here that it's a privilege to speak in this Assembly, and it is a pleasure, but it is also an honour. It is also a responsibility, Mr. Speaker.

I is my belief that had the NDP not abused their privilege

that a member of this Legislative Assembly has in making his or her point in sensible debate, had the members of the NDP not gone on for hours and days on end with repetitious nonsense; had they not abused that privilege, it would not have been necessary to limit the amount of time a member may speak on this motion.

The opposition, Mr. Speaker, has shown a serious lack of respect for this legislature, Mr. Speaker, when one is dealing with an opposition that is out of control — and I say out of control because the power of their leader of the NDP has been eroded; the member from Riversdale has slowly seen his power slip away, slip away into the hands of the radical group led by the member from Regina Elphinstone. But is he the real leader of . . . is he speaking on behalf as the leader? The member from Regina Elphinstone, is he the real leader of the radical group, or is he just a mouthpiece for the head of the Saskatchewan Federal of Labour, Barbara Byers? Ms. Byers, by the way, said that they would make this province ungovernable, and they tried hard, Mr. Speaker, they tried hard. But fortunately the democratic process is strong — too strong for even the radical group of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, when a government is dealing with members who say they're proud to be radicals, and who say the NDP must create a climate of political revolt in this province, and who speak for 11 hours and more; when the government is dealing with a group of people committed to disruption, you have to go to the rule book, Mr. Speaker, and see how our predecessors in the parliamentary system decided this kind of difficult situation should be handled.

Time allocation provides for a reasonable time period for each member to speak once the debate had reached a certain time period, like five months or some 80 hours. Now we've extended the debate an additional 40 hours, bringing the total debate time on the potash Bill to something in the neighbourhood of 120 hours.

Let me make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that this time allocation motion is for the potash debate alone. The time allocation motion is for the potash debate alone. It has no effect on any other Bills or motions brought forth by this government. And one would hope, Mr. Speaker, that time allocation will not be necessary again in this session or in other sessions.

Most reasonable people believe that if you can't make your point in a debate or argument in 20 minutes or so, you're wasting your time and everyone else's. You have to admit, Mr. Speaker, and certainly the media has clearly shown in editorial comment that those long-winded speeches by the NDP, some going on for 10, 11, 12 hours, were simply boring — boring, Mr. Speaker.

Now there were exceptions. The Leader of the Opposition spoke for two hours and made a couple of points and was certainly entertaining. And the member from Saskatoon River . . . Fairview, rather, spoke well, with logical presentations, but we have come to expect that of him, and we usually see that. So the point is, Mr. Speaker, we do not need to be long-winded to be effective.

I'd like to make another point, Mr. Speaker, and that is this: I believe that the NDP wanted time allocation. I believe that the NDP wanted time allocation. It gave them an out. You will recall a moment of euphoria some months ago when the Leader of the Opposition said there would be no more privatization or public participation Bills passed by this government. Well, Mr. Speaker, it is going to happen, because governments are elected to govern, and public participation is part of the mandate of this government.

So the NDP were backed into a corner, and the only way they could go to their hard-liners who will find it difficult to forgive them for seeing this potash Bill passed, and they can go to their folks and they can say, hey, we put up a good fight. We talked for 120 hours on end and occasionally talked about potash, but finally the government said enough is enough and ended the debate with time allocation.

So the hard-liners can then say, well why didn't you walk out. Why didn't you take a hike and ring the bells for 17 days and really shut down debate? Talk about closure, Mr. Speaker, talk about stifling debate, like they did earlier this spring. Why didn't you do that, the hard-liners are going to say, why didn't you do that?

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's a question that only the NDP can answer with certainty, but one would have to suspect that they know that the public supports a potash Bill, that the workers in the potash mines, some of whom have supported the NDP in the past, think the opportunity to own a share in the potash mine in which they work might be a pretty swell idea. The NDP certainly don't want to lose any more support in those potash towns.

It's simple, Mr. Speaker. They, the NDP, know this Bill is good for the province, that it is the thing to do to take up into the years ahead. Quite frankly, they haven't got the courage or the political will to argue outside on the street. And besides, they can say to their hard-liners that they really had no choice, that the government forced it on them.

Mr. Speaker, let me make this final point. This motion of time allocation on the potash Bill has created the first real debate that we've seen in this House since it opened.

Now members must get on their feet, focus their thoughts, and make their pitch in 20 minutes or less. They will give each of us a chance to speak in that time frame and hopefully to bring new arguments to the debate. That's the challenge, Mr. Speaker, for the members opposite and for the members on our side.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I say that I certainly support this time allocation motion, because the time has arrived. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to take the opportunity to join and to set the record straight from this side from the debate that we have been listening to and the nonsense from the other side.

I want to, first of all, just turn briefly to the member from Kelvington-Wadena. And he says the one contribution that he had during the debate, this historic debate, is that he had an opportunity to catch up on sleep. That was his admission in this House, that he was sleeping while the debate on potash was raging in this House; that was his contribution.

And secondly, he says, you know what the NDP are doing; they're wasting their times looking up rules to see whether or not they can operate the House in accordance with the rules. He says that's bad — fiddling around using the rules.

Well let us take what they're doing here in the House. They are creating their own rules, new rules, not rules that are in existence, that have been developed by committees — and traditional rules. They institute new rules.

And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the outset that this is a frightened government. These are desperate men and women on the opposite side that have lost touch with the public, and the public no longer trusts them. And accordingly, they are desperate and are taking desperate means to try to cover up.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — I listened to the debate of the member from Rosetown-Elrose. He says this is the way to go; change the rules unilaterally. And he says what we have to do, he said, is go further and change them some more, he says, unilaterally to suit their own agenda, not to have debate in this House for the people of Saskatchewan can be informed. Oh, no — they don't want this institution, meaningful debate in this institution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because they have behind them the media, their advertising firms. And they will get their side of the message out after the debate. But they don't want to debate here for the people of Saskatchewan to have an opportunity to hear both sides.

(1500)

And could you feature a man of the experience of the member of Rosetown-Elrose standing up in this House and indicating to this House that the potash corporation under the NDP lost money. Anybody in their right mind would have to say that that was the jewel Crown of all the Crowns in Saskatchewan under the Blakeney administration. That potash corporation made . . . from 1976 until 1981, it made \$413 million of profit over and above paying all of the royalties. And it was entirely paid up other than \$88 million until they took office.

He stands up and said it lost money under our administration and they turn around and spend \$600 million further in investment saying it was a great investment. Now there has to be some skip of logic, Mr. Member, just a little bit, and the public don't follow you any more because deception will no longer work. Let us get at the basic issue here, the issue of why there are limitations on debate.

And I listen to the Finance Minister stand up and he said, isn't that awful; the Leader of the Opposition allowed his members to go on strike for 17 days, walked out. Well let's take a look on the issue in respect to when the bells rang. The bells rang because they introduced in this House the privatization of SaskPower, a promise that the Premier made that he would not privatize and was reaffirmed in this House by the Deputy Premier. It was an absolute and total breach of a promise to the people of Saskatchewan. And as my colleague said in the debate, when we walked out of this House we walked out to defend the rights of the people of Saskatchewan and to indicate to them how the Premier of this province can no longer be trusted; how the Deputy Premier, when he split up SaskPower into different divisions, and then to stand up and when we asked him whether it's going to lead to privatization and he said no, no it won't.

Well he said that's awful to have walked out, but he didn't tell the whole story. The bells rang, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because there was a breach of faith by the Premier of this province and the Deputy Premier.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — And I want to say on that issue I would willingly walk out again. When you can no longer trust the Premier of this province, when you can no longer trust the word of the Deputy Premier, the opposition has a right on behalf of the public to react, and we did.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — And I want to say, we spoke to the people of Saskatchewan, and the people of Saskatchewan spoke to the Tories and to us. During those 11 days of the bell-ringing — not 17 because there's tied in three weekends, which are not sitting days, but leave that aside because that's some more of his deception and half-truths — but I'll tell you, the people of Saskatchewan were given an opportunity and they spoke.

We got over 100,000 petitions laid before this Assembly, and I'll tell you across this province Tory after Tory signed that petition. They said this government has gone too far, and they said fight, fight for our assets, fight for our rights. And I want to say, the people of Saskatchewan spoke on that issue. There were large public rallies across this province. Thousands of people came to hear the Leader of the Opposition to explain our position and to indicate what . . . talk to the people and to discuss with them what steps could be taken in order to save the public utility.

And the people came. And I want to say that donations rolled in to help us in this mission. I want to thank the people of Saskatchewan for their participation in true democracy in stopping deceit and half-truths, and doing that which they promised the people during the election and after that they wouldn't do.

I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that what happened after we came back, here was the government, anxious to get on with the people's business, and you know what we did then? For 10 days we stood in this House and debated whether there should be a bell-ringing limitation. Ten days they stood here, and then finally what normal House

leaders and deputy House leaders do in any kind of an organized government, they discussed it with the opposition and . . .

An Hon. Member: — Oh, there's a novel idea.

Mr. Koskie: — A novel idea. And do you know what happened? They pulled that. Ten days of debate wasted. Rules in this House have always been changed not unilaterally, rules are changed by the discussion of members from both sides of the House along with the Speaker, and that has been the tradition, and a well-founded tradition and one that should be preserved.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Well they had no rush for other important business then. They didn't bring in, introduce Bills after that. The ag Bills, we embarrassed them into it. They brought them in and we urged them and embarrassed them into passing the Bills on agriculture — the major crisis.

But we haven't finished any of the estimates. We haven't passed many hundreds . . . not hundreds, but many, many Bills that are on the order paper. And why haven't we? Why, if that was important to them, to get that ordinary work of the government done? Well, because they have become obsessed with privatization.

And the action that they are taking here today in this resolution, that is what they're doing now — and I want the public to be clear — that they brought in here to this House a motion which will limit the amount of debate on the privatization of potash. They are now saying two days for second reading, two days for Committee of the Whole, and two hours for third reading. That's what they're saying.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that isn't good enough; that isn't good enough. In fact, within the rules that we have established and agreed to, there is a method of suspending debate or limiting it. There's a closure provision under rule 31, but they said no, no, to the press; we can't use that. We have to get out of this session because we're getting destroyed; our credibility is gone. We can't stay in this session with the corruption and waste and mismanagement being exposed. We've got to get out. We're not going to use the ordinary closure.

What we're going to do is introduce a closure, and now what they're doing and we're doing this afternoon is closure of closure. Now that is a step forward in democracy — a closure on closure, and they stand up and say, I really welcome this opportunity; I can speak 20 minutes and say everything. And do you realize that most of them that got up this afternoon couldn't speak 20 minutes? Most of them that got up to participate couldn't go the 20 minutes.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, there has been tendencies in respect to this government that are anti-democratic before. This is the culmination of it. Let us take a look at some of the unprecedented actions that they have been taking, actions which are undemocratic, actions which are not following the rules because it doesn't suit them.

And some of these have been alluded to — the late filling of annual reports so the opposition doesn't have an opportunity to scrutinize before they are called. Let us take a look at the delay in the session where they went until June before they had a budget and run government on a special warrant. Let's take a look at the attack on the auditor, a servant of this Assembly that they viciously attacked. And we spent days debating privileges. The actions and the accountability of this government is so bad, so bad that we were able to raise a point of privilege in this House because this government opposite was breaking the law and not providing information to the auditor. And we spent days debating a privilege.

Can you feature a premier having any credibility with the people of this province any longer? The actions of this government is so bad that they have to get out, Mr. Speaker, because they're getting destroyed by being in here.

They aren't interested about democracy. They're interested in getting out of here so that more scandals and corruption and waste and mismanagement won't be exposed, and also they want to get out so that our side of the story cannot be told to the public because they want to go and use taxpayers' money and to pay a high-rolling advertising to tell the people what's best for them. They don't want to debate.

And let us take another look at their anti-democratic approach. Not only did they attack the auditor, the Minister of Justice attacked the credibility, and the Minister of Justice, as many of the editorials said, was unfit to stay in office — unfit to hold that office. This isn't the crisis that they have before them.

Then they come to SaskEnergy and we got the Securities Commission, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and all the business people in Saskatchewan are supposed to follow the rules, but what did this government do? They completely circumvent the security commissions and said, doesn't apply to us. And they passed the rules, changing it retroactive.

Democracy they say they're sticking up for. This government has no more concern about this institution or the democratic process. All right-wing governments want to make governments irrelevant. They want to make the legislature less relevant, and they want to run it on the basis of advertising and public opinion polls outside of the session, not through debate.

I want to go on, Mr. Speaker, to indicate what happened in the process. As I indicated, they brought in here a motion to limit the length of time the bells were going to ring. We debated that for eight to 10 days. Then they reached an agreement in writing. Ultimately, what they did is they unilaterally changed and broke the agreement. They said there would be no extension of hours without the agreement of the opposition. And you know what they did? They walked in one day and they said, well we'll teach you guys a lesson because you want to debate. And they set up 15 hours a day to debate, unilaterally done.

Yes, they're interested. And now, Mr. Speaker, these

brave, brave Democrats that sit across there, they say, let's bring in something more because we've got to get out of here. And so they brought in closure on closure.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I alluded to, this government has major problems, massive problems. The polls, as was taken and indicated during the privatization debate, indicate the unpopularity of this government, unpopularity of what they're doing. They're faced in this House with the GigaText scandal. They're faced with the lack of carrying through and getting the licensing for a major, major power development at Rafferty. They have the auditor's report that slams this government. They have the auditor's report that slams this government. They have the fiasco that they tried to pull under the people's . . . wool over the people's eye in the SaskEnergy privatization. They have the massiveness of the debt, and they have the myth of privatization helping people fall into shatters.

I say, here we have this government standing up and they're saying, we've got to get on with the people's business. Well I'll tell you, the people of Saskatchewan, looking at what they . . . the mess that lies before them, say, hold them back; don't let them do anything more.

An Hon. Member: — Hold the phone, they say.

Mr. Koskie: — Hold the phone, they say.

I want to say, if you take a look, we've been privatizing and privatizing for seven years. And as others have mentioned, they have sold off SaskEnergy and they've sold off — not SaskEnergy, but Saskoil. They sold off Manalta Coal; they sold off SaskCOMP; they sold off Sask Minerals, and all that we get is further and further in debt, Mr. Minister.

All I can say, that in the debate on privatization, which they saw fit to put closure, the Deputy Premier stood in this House — he had an opportunity because we embarrassed him to get up. And you know how long he lasted? Seven minutes.

(1515)

They wanted to debate, they say, and they weren't given an opportunity. The Premier of this province has neither debated his unprecedented action of closure on closure nor did he enter the debate on privatization.

I want to say that the Minister of Trade and commerce and Justice minister has not entered the debate. I want to say that the minister in charge of potash privatization, the Finance minister, spoke 22 minutes. Now that is a real contribution to debate, isn't it?

They're afraid of debate, and what they're doing is closure. They're afraid of debate. And I want to say that I know that they want their per diems and they want to get out, because these boys want their money, there's no doubt about that.

But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, they shouldn't feel too bad. Because just about every one of them over there is getting paid extra — extra — as legislative secretaries. Over \$7,500 is being paid to almost every one of those

back-benchers. So I say, they can afford to stay and debate, and debate properly.

And I'll tell you that they stand up and say, oh, there's a concern about the cost of debating here. Well can you feature that, when they give every individual in that caucus \$7,800 to be a legislative secretary, extra, over and above. And you know what besides? They got five or six executive assistants for every minister. And they say they're concerned about a cost of government? Ah, no way. All I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that this government has wasted money, and they stand up here and pretend they're concerned about it.

The nuts and bolts of what I want to say here is that why we have this closure before this Assembly, this closure on closure, is that this government has lacked credibility, that this government has a crisis on its hands because it's no longer fit to govern this province.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that as long as we in the New Democrats, we are going to continue to fight on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, and we are going to be opposing this unilateral, frightened action of desperate people opposite.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak in this debate. Mr. Speaker, let's be aware, this debate this afternoon is not simply a debate about potash and it's not simply a debate about privatization. It's a debate about something far more fundamental than that, Mr. Speaker. It is a debate about a direct attack on the democratic traditions of this legislature. That's what this debate is about — an attack on the democratic institutions of this legislature by an arrogant and an obviously desperate government. That's what this debate's about, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, there are some things which do last. Now there is no debate that even this potash debate will pass some time; this whole privatization mania will pass some time; and this government will surely pass, that's for sure — they're gone. But some things, Mr. Speaker, some things remain, some things remain. This House will remain long after we are gone. The democratic traditions handed to us by those who have gone before and pioneered them, they will remain long after we're gone.

So let's be clear what's happening here today in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. For the very first time in Saskatchewan's history we have a government, a government that seeks to stifle free speech in this House. That's what this debate is about, a government who seeks to stifle free speech in this legislature, Mr. Speaker. And that, in my view, is a tragedy; that is nothing short of a tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, I have here a little booklet that is given to students who visit this legislature. It's given to visitors who come to this legislature. It is entitled, "The Legislative Assembly — Responsibility and Representation in Saskatchewan." It is a little booklet that

describes the role and the function and the importance of this legislature. And the author of this booklet, Mr. Speaker, ends his booklet with a proverb-like little saying. I'm not sure where it comes from, but it reads:

... like love, democracy can survive all attacks except indifference or neglect.

Like love, democracy can survive all attacks except indifference or neglect, Mr. Speaker, on this day, ironically, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan Day, a day that we've come to call Saskatchewan Day, ironically on this day we are engaged in debate about a government who out of arrogance and who out of desperation chooses to neglect a tradition of democracy in this province as old as the province itself; a government who chooses to neglect almost a century of free speech in this legislature; a government who out of their own desperation and arrogance chooses for the very first time — no other government has done this — to limit, to limit what opposition members can say in this House, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, democracy can withstand every attack except neglect, except a government that will so neglect the traditions of democracy. Mr. Speaker, they do this. Why? They do it for short-term political gain. For their short-term political gain, they are willing to neglect a century — almost a century — of democratic tradition in this legislature.

Mr. Speaker, democratic tradition, the traditions of this House, the traditions of this parliament seem to mean nothing to the members opposite, seem to mean nothing at all to them if those traditions happen to get in the way of their political agenda. Those traditions can be cast aside if, in fact, they would stand in the way of what this government wants to do in Saskatchewan. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, democracy can withstand every attack except this kind of neglect.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to you that on this side of the House, democratic traditions do matter, the traditions of this place do count. Not once, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not once in all the years of CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) or New Democratic Party administration in this province, not once did we seek to stifle the free speech of this legislature; not once did we seek to limit debate in this House. Not during the heated debates of the late 1940s, not during the medicare crisis, not during that time when the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was being formed, not once did we seek to limit the rights of the opposition to speak in this legislature.

On this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, democratic traditions count.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — And that's why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's why until the last possible minute this day, until the very last moment allowed in this debate, until the Speaker rises in the Chair as he must do at some point and close the debate, members on this side of the House will oppose this attack, this unprecedented attack on the democratic traditions of this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, like love, democracy can withstand every attack except neglect and indifference. Mr. Speaker, this is a debate about a government who, over and over again in its life, has demonstrated its indifference to the democratic traditions and the valued traditions of parliamentary democracy in this province. Others have illustrated; I illustrate as well.

In 1987, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the government who hacked and who slashed at medicare in this province, who hacked and slashed at our social programs in this province, who did away with the children's based dental plan, who hacked away at our prescription drug plan. And they did all of that while the legislature was sitting? No, Mr. Speaker, no. They did all of that while they kept this legislature silent, Mr. Speaker. They did all of that without recalling this legislature for a debate. And when they're confronted, what is their response? What is their response? Well they say, so what, we'll do what we want to do.

This is the government, Mr. Speaker, who stand in their place today bitterly complaining about 17 days when we went to the people of Saskatchewan with the issue of the privatization of SaskPower. They stand in their place today bitterly complaining, the same government, Mr. Speaker, who kept this House silent nine long months — nine long months — preventing debate in this House, refusing to call this House into session, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this is the government indifferent to the traditions of democracy in this parliament. If they find themselves under attack, their response is to attack, personally attack members of the opposition. If they find themselves questioned, they personally attack the valued servants of this legislature.

This is the government that refuses to provide information, refuses to answer questions put by the opposition. This is the government that refuses to provide information to the Provincial Auditor. And when they're confronted, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when they're confronted what is their response? So what, so what.

Mr. Speaker, democracy can withstand almost any attack except neglect or indifference, this kind of indifference to the traditions and the values of this House. And so perhaps it should come as no surprise, Mr. Deputy Speaker, perhaps it should come as no surprise to any of us that this would be the first government in the history of Saskatchewan, this would be the first Premier in the history of Saskatchewan who would seek to silence debate in the people's Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, Davie Fulton, and I believe Mr. Fulton was a Tory. Davie Fulton . . .

An Hon. Member: — Liberal.

Mr. Calvert: — Liberal . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Tory, Diefenbaker Tory. Mr. Fulton in the House of Commons quoted one C.D. Howe. He quoted C.D. Howe as having said this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, "If we

want it, we'll get away with it because who is there to stop us?" It's a quote from C.D. Howe.

Well the C.D. Howe attitude has gripped this government — if we want it, we'll get it. And their attitude is who is there to stop us, because that's precisely what they think and that's precisely how they act. Who is there to stop us, they say. That's their attitude to this opposition. That's their attitude to Saskatchewan people. That's their attitude to parliamentary tradition. If we want it, who is there to stop us?

And we've seen and we've seen how they've gone about doing that, Mr. Speaker. And the motion we have before us today to stifle free speech in this legislature is precisely indicative of that kind of attitude, the C.D. Howe attitude — if we want it, who is there to stop us?

Well, Mr. Speaker, if I were a back-bencher on that side of the House, if I were a back-bencher over there I would be absolutely ashamed to be voting for this motion. I would be absolutely ashamed to be counted in with the first government in Saskatchewan history to limit free speech in this House. I'd be absolutely ashamed to stand up with that front bench and do as they had beckoned me to do.

Mr. Speaker, this motion is proof positive of the arrogance of this government, proof positive that theirs is the attitude: if we want it, who is there to stop us? Well, Mr. Speaker, let me pause here and say, they will be stopped; they will be stopped.

Now this motion may pass. I expect that enough of the back-benchers will fall in line some time today, that this motion will pass, and free speech and debate in this House will be stifled. Their potash privatization legislation may pass, but some day, Mr. Speaker, some day either sooner or later, they will have to go to the people. The people will have an opportunity. Who is there that will stop them? The people of this province will stop them, that's for sure.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — You see, Mr. Speaker, they may be able to stifle speech, free speech in this legislature. They may be able to silence this opposition. They may be able to deny members of this House the right to speak, but they will not silence the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I am convinced of that today more than I have ever been convinced of it before. I'm convinced this government will never survive another election because the people of Saskatchewan will not forget this day. They will not forget the day. This government, the first government in the history of Saskatchewan to stifle free speech, the right of members to speak in this legislature, and when given a chance, the people of this government will be the people who stop them.

(1530)

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan understand,

they understand this government's arrogance. They understand what's going on here. They see a leaderless government, a government now unable to convince the people of Saskatchewan of its position, a government that now must turn to the strong-arm tactic. They understand that this is a desperate motion, a motion being brought to this House when everything else has failed. They understand that. They understand just how far this government is willing to go to achieve its political ends. They understand, Mr. Speaker, but I tell you, they will not forget.

Mr. Speaker, I want to return to this little booklet and quote from it because it talks about our legislature, our parliament, and what this place, what this place is for. It reads:

The legislative assembly as a parliament — a place of speaking — is a forum for debate on the problems and issues that face the province in general and the individual in particular.

Parliament, Mr. Speaker, is a place of debate, a place where men and women can debate the issues.

The government opposite wants to say that we need this motion of closure, we need to limit debate in this House because there has been adequate opportunity for debate.

Mr. Speaker, when is a debate not a debate? When only one side of the House participates. We have, Mr. Speaker, some of the most significant legislation in the province's history now before us, the sell-off of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. The sell-off of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan — the debate has gone on for some time, but primarily with members of this side of the House.

Why is it, Mr. Speaker, why is it that the Minister of Mines has not yet participated in the privatization debate? Why is it that the Minister of Health has not stood in his place and put forward his views? Why is it? Why is it that the Minister of trade and economic development in this province, why is it that he has not stood in the potash debate? The Minister of Labour, why is it that he has not expressed a view?

But people of Saskatchewan are asking: why is it that the captain of the ship over there, why is it that the captain of the ship, the head of this government, has not stood in his place to debate the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Speaker, they talk about the debate having gone on too long. How can they say that when such significant members of their caucus, when such significant members of their government, when the Premier himself has not yet even stood to express an opinion in this debate?

Mr. Speaker, this is the government, the first government in the history of Saskatchewan willing to come into this House and limit debate, limit free speech, Mr. Speaker, this is a sad day for the traditions of this House, the traditions of this parliament, and the traditions of parliamentary democracy in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, one only needs to look just beyond the borders of our own nation to see how precious and how fragile indeed is parliamentary democracy. One needs only to recall the sacrifice of my father's generation on the battlefields in Europe to realize how precious is the rights of free speech and the right of parliamentary democracy and the right of a legislature. We only need to recall and to look beyond our borders to know just how fragile this parliamentary democracy of ours can be if treated with neglect or treated with indifference.

Mr. Speaker, the most of us who sit in this House today have not had to defend on a battlefield this institution, this parliamentary democracy; we've simply inherited it and we have prospered because of it. And we are the ones now charged with its preservation and with its strengthening.

Mr. Speaker, I stand to oppose this action to limit debate in the Saskatchewan legislature. I stand to oppose the silencing of an opposition. And I stand to oppose this motion, not simply because it is the means by which this government wishes to privatize the potash corporation; I stand to oppose this motion because it limits the freedom of speech.

Mr. Speaker, if a foreign power, if a foreign power sought to limit the free speech of this legislature, if a foreign power sought to limit debate in this legislature, we would oppose that with all the strength we could muster. Mr. Speaker, it's not happening from without, it is happening from within. We have a government who seeks to limit the free speech of members of this legislature. That's no less reason, Mr. Speaker, for opposing this with all our strength.

So I'll vote against this motion; I'll vote against it. I'll put my name on record against this limiting of free speech in the Saskatchewan legislature. And when that day comes and I no longer have a right to sit in this legislature and to speak here, when that day comes, I will at least not go away with the shame of knowing that I was part of a group of men and women who sought to limit those rights in this House.

Mr. Speaker, there is a party that still believes in parliamentary democracy, that believes in free and unlimited debate in this House, a party that still believes in this legislature, and I am proud to be a member of that party and the caucus that represents it here, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I want to close my remarks in this debate with a short paraphrase of Sir Wilfred Laurier, who said these words in the House of Commons in 1913. Sir Wilfred Laurier said:

With Heaven as my witness, I would rather stand here today in defeat and in opposition by appeal to the people than to stand over there in office by the power of the gag.

Mr. Speaker, I would rather stand here in opposition by appeal to the people than to stand over there in office by the power of the gag. Therefore I will vote against this

motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with considerable regret that I'm standing here today entering this particular debate.

Here we are, Saskatchewan Day, 1989, and I'm wondering when the Conservative party will start to issue as a matter of course to their candidates flame-throwers so that they can better follow the scorched earth policy that this government is so hell-bent on carrying out.

The Speaker: — Order, order. I'd like the hon. member to withdraw that remark. I don't think it's a term we should become accustomed to using.

I ask the hon. member to withdraw "hell-bent on."

Mr. Trew: — I withdraw.

What do I mean by a scorched earth policy, Mr. Speaker? I'm talking about when you look around you in Saskatchewan today, we see record unemployed. And those are people that are unemployed. It's not just some statistic that we in the legislature or someone . . . some statistician can keep. It's women, it's men, it's the youth, the best this province has got to offer, wandering around looking for work, and the look is becoming more and more desperate as the days go by.

I'm talking about the scorched earth policy that has forced thousands, tens of thousands more people into accepting help from our Social Services department here in Saskatchewan. Fortunately we do have social services to help, but why is it that the numbers of people that are forced to reach out to social service, or vice versa, is growing so dramatically?

It's because of the scorched earth policy. It's because of one miserly, two-bit increase in the minimum wage in more than seven years of Conservative government. We've got in Saskatchewan somewhere around 40, 50, some estimates as high as 60,000 Saskatchewan residents who are working at minimum wage. That number of people who, while the Conservatives are in office, those people have witnessed the same inflationary pressures that everyone else has, inflation running in excess . . . pardon me, inflation that has accumulated in excess of 40 per cent in those seven years. And yet we see a minimum wage of \$4.50, up from \$4.25 when the Tories took office in 1982.

We see record business bankruptcies, we see record farm bankruptcies, and we're seeing record personal bankruptcies. And now we're seeing a government that is saying, but the opposition is bringing too much of this to light. The opposition is too vociferous. They're actually standing up and speaking out for the people that elected them. Isn't that a shame. Isn't that a shame that the opposition would stand up for the people in our society who elected us to stand up for them.

And what we've got now is a closure motion that is going to be voted this very day. My only hope is that, as my

colleague from Moose Jaw South asked, that some of the back-benchers will scratch their heads and think, do I really want to be in the history books as being part of that government that voted closure for the first time in 84 years in Saskatchewan history?

Why would we have it? We see this closure brought about as an act of desperation from a very, very desperate government, a government that has floundered — and floundered is perhaps too kind a word — we see a government just bouncing like some drunk from one wall to the next. They just bounce from one crisis to the next crisis to the next crisis to the next crisis.

Meanwhile, the real people of this province are suffering; the real people of this province can't wait for the next election. And it will come whether it's this year or next year or even the year after — it will come. And those people will remember this government.

But what are they going to remember it for? Are they going to remember it for its tax increases? Yes, I think that people that are paying a 2 per cent flat tax now will remember this government for that. Will they remember this government for the 40 per cent increase in the education and health tax, moving it to 7 per cent on all goods and services that we purchase? Yes, I think that people will remember this government for that. Will they remember the government for its ill-fated attempt at privatizing SaskPower? Yes, I think that people will remember this government for that.

Will it remember this government for having attempted to push through a unilateral rule change in this legislature earlier in this session and debating, causing us to debate it day after day after day after day, when they're the ones that control the legislative agenda? The government every single day has an opportunity to bring forward whatever legislation it wants. We have been calling almost every day of this session, we've been calling for the government to bring forward legislation that profoundly affects people. But what do they do? Instead they embark on some privatization of SaskPower.

Then that didn't work, so we see the Minister of Justice attacking the Provincial Auditor and of course we know that went on for some time. I'm not going to refer back to that debate, but that's one of the things, Mr. Speaker, that this government will be remembered for, is a callous attack on a servant of this Legislative Assembly.

Then we see the . . . I'm coming back to the unilateral rule change where we were forced to debate or lose the rule, lose the right to ring the bells. We were not using that right in any, any way other than during the privatization, or proposed privatization of Saskatchewan Power Corporation. That's the time we used it and we used it well. The people of the province responded overwhelmingly, and I thank them for that.

(1545)

I realize that not everyone will always be in agreement with myself politically; I don't expect that. I expect that there will be difference, but let's have them as honest

differences of opinion. Let's not stifle it.

Canvassing in my constituency the other day, I ran into a gentleman who . . . it happens to be the third time I've talked to him since I was elected. And he said, you know, there's still some Tories around. I said, yes, I'm well aware of that. He says, in fact, I have been at your house now, this is the third time. And then he smiled because he realized that we'd had previous conversations. I can't understand why he would still feel the way he does, but he's certainly entitled to it, and I'll defend his right to consider himself a Tory.

What else is this government going to be remembered for? Potash privatization. We've been debating Bill 20 now, and I use the word debating, I think, a little bit loosely for the simple reason that a debate involves two sides. But what we have is the biggest one-sided debate in Saskatchewan history, where my colleagues and I have stood up, talked about what privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan will mean to people, what it will mean to their taxes, what it will mean to their services, what it will mean to the deficit.

And we've heard barely a murmur from the government, barely a murmur. Why is it? We have a government that controls so much advertising — nary a peep. We have a government that clearly has media attention, clearly the media will print almost anything you want them to, and yet, and yet, nary a word on potash privatization.

We have — I want to use as an illustration an article in *The Fort Qu'Appelle Times* of July 25, from the member for Regina-Lumsden. He fills three columns full of . . . It's very difficult to describe in parliamentary language so I'll leave that to your imagination, what it is. But he talks about the 17-day strike of the opposition in the legislation, and that having cost, he says, 30 to \$40,000 a day for that 17 days. And I know that's the numbers that the government is using. But even if we accept those numbers, that 40,000 — I'll take the highest number — that \$40,000 a day is less than 200 times the amount that the Finance minister was out on his last budget, less than 200 times. That was just one mistake which he'll brush over and say, oh well it doesn't matter.

Or put it another way, this . . . I get the message, Mr. Speaker. We are here debating closure, and the point I'm making: is why are we debating closure, sir? It is because of the desperation of the government opposite. They know that the polling — I have here a Wednesday, May 3, Regina *Leader-Post*, "Major poll done," and it shows that support for privatization of Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan running at just over . . . well it's at 28 per cent, those opposed 50 per cent. A clear majority oppose the privatization of potash. That was available to the government, assuming they could read, as long ago as May 3.

What have they done since? They brought potash daily; it's been a standard fare here. On this side of the legislature we have no choice other than to continue our remarks and continue the debate or lose it all. We're saying, not only from the poll — we were saying it long before this poll was put out — we are saying that the people of Saskatchewan think this government has gone

too far in its privatization. And for those reasons, we have been standing up and speaking out for the people of the privatization province — not only the present but the future generations, and that's something that the government members have lost sight of. They're now into this narrow tunnel vision, just looking towards the next election. And because of that, we have the prospect of privatization.

The government is fond of . . . in fact, it was the member for Saskatoon Mayfair earlier today, said that we on this side of the legislature are keepers of democracy. My chest kind of stuck out when he said that, because I'm very proud of the fact that on this side of the House we do take democracy as seriously as we do.

We have never . . . and I see the member for Regina South laughing about it. He can't laugh now, but it was not an NDP government that moved the first closure in Saskatchewan history; it was the Conservative government that's doing it to us right now. And that's a laughing matter? Well laugh all you want, laugh all you want now, because your time is going to be very, very limited.

Mr. Speaker, it's sometimes not a pleasant job defending democracy, sometimes not pleasant to have people say you're being obstructionist, but at the end of the day, I know that my colleagues and I sleep very well knowing that we are doing everything within our power to try and work for the benefit of the people of Saskatchewan and not the foreign multinationals — not just the big corporations, but the regular people of this province, the voters of the province and their families. That's who we're working for, and we're proud of it.

The scorched-earth policy that the government is following is going to be a lasting legacy, one of the final pieces — or at least I hope it's the final piece of this puzzle, this scorched puzzle — is the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, a corporation with assets over \$2 billion, a corporation that earned \$106 million profit last year. This government wants us not to talk about it. This government wants us not to talk about the revenues that have flowed into the provincial coffers from the potash industry, and the only way they can stop us from talking about it here is to muzzle us with this closure motion.

Mr. Speaker, that's why colleague after colleague after colleague is getting up today. We're limited, as you know, to 20 minutes of speaking time on this particular motion, but we are each trying to put out in our own words, and in perhaps a slightly different way, why it is that this closure is so hard-headed, so wrong, so undimensional, and so serious. It is such a profound thing happening right here in Saskatchewan, and it's something that most of us never thought that we would be witnessing.

Mr. Speaker, if there's something good to be said about this closure motion, it's that, for at least a couple of the members of the government, the closure motion won't mean a thing, because two of the members have never spoken in the legislature anyway, other than introducing guests. And that's not a great commendation for the 38 MLAs, or should I call it 36, or fewer.

Some of the questions that this closure motion draws to mind is: why now; why the first time in Saskatchewan history should the government be imposing closure; why should a government be restricting the free speech of this great Legislative Assembly? The government might ask somewhat of a different question. And they would say, well why let democracy interfere with the goings on in the legislature? And that's I think the nub of this whole question. Why let democracy interfere with our agenda, the government says.

Well my colleague from Moose Jaw South pointed out that this legislature will be here long after the present Progressive Conservative government is gone, and long after the next New Democrat government is gone. This legislature will still be here, and hopefully it will still be serving the people of Saskatchewan well. Hopefully, it'll be serving my children and my grandchildren and even beyond that, God willing.

So I see I've touched a nerve with some people. We ask: why is there such disregard for people? Why is it that you become so sensitive every time we talk about people? Why the sensitivity to people? And we think that the government says, well why not disregard people? You can fool most of the people, you know, some of the time anyway. And that seems to be the basis they're operating under, but it's not going to work any more.

I listed earlier a number of problems. I didn't talk about GigaText; I didn't talk about the Northern Lights game farm, or some of those other areas. But, Mr. Speaker, those are just part of the grand parcel of problems that this government lurches from, one crisis to the next, one problem to the next, and they don't know how to get out of it.

And I'll tell you right now that the way out of this is not by passing this closure motion. Take a break. Take a breath. Walk away from here for a little while and think about it; get away from the heat of the debate and think about it. Is this what you want? I just can't believe that that's what government members want.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to sum up because I believe my time has just about expired. But I ask government members to reconsider this, reconsider it. By passing this closure motion, you are putting not just one more nail in your political coffins, but I think you're closing the lid on yourselves — closing the lid.

And, I mean, much as I'd like to see the government change, I want to give this bit of earnest advice: don't do it; don't go down this way. We think we'll beat you anyway, but I'd rather beat you on a different playing field, rather than defeating you just because you have such a lack of regard for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I will be with my colleagues opposing the closure motion right to the bitter end. Thank you for allowing my participation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, it is a real honour again to rise

in this Assembly and to join in the debate and, in particular, the motion which is before the Assembly, the motion of time allocation.

I would also like to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that in light of some of the comments made by members, and even coming from across the floor, about the courage of members to stand in this House and debate any motion which is brought forward. I would just like to say that I believe there isn't a member on this side of the Assembly who at any time would be afraid to stand and debate any motion that comes before this Assembly.

Also, a number of colleagues have brought forward a number of different arguments in the debate for time allocation and why this motion would be before the Assembly today.

But I would like to, if possible, just bring in another argument that maybe has been overlooked or really haven't arrived at or taken the time to pursue. Mr. Speaker, a number of opposition members have argued that this motion, when passed, will limit their opportunity to debate. In fact they would accuse this government of stifling debate in this Assembly.

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, that argument of limited debate is not a valid argument. We have seen over the past number of months numerous occasions when opposition members would stand in this House and speak for hours on end, sometimes monopolizing anywhere from 6 to 12 hours of sitting time, Mr. Speaker. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that some of the lengthy, tedious debate we have seen to date has much to be desired in the way of relevance to the motions or Bills being debated.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe the rules of this Assembly under clause 25(2) state that a member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition, either of his own arguments or of the arguments used by other members, may be brought to order by the Speaker. I believe the role of the Speaker in this Assembly is unquestionable. And I believe the Speakers of this Assembly over the years have done a remarkable job in bringing the members to order and causing the members to relate to the motions and the Bills that have been presented.

(1600)

We are also aware that the rules allow for members to vary from the topic to a certain degree in relating a particular argument which may bring out a particular point.

Mr. Speaker, in the last number of days we could argue whether the speeches given were relevant to the motions before this Assembly. I personally believe if you can't make your point in 30 to 45 minutes, then it is time to sit down and give someone else an opportunity to speak. In fact, one of the hon. members indicated that if his church pastor spoke more than 20 or 30 minutes and didn't get to his point, he would gain more by closing his sermon and allowing the congregation to go home.

Mr. Speaker, the debate before this Assembly today is talking about limiting debate on the potash Bill. For

people who are not aware of the working of this Assembly, the rules of this Assembly do allow unending debate on any Bill. However, Mr. Speaker, most debate in this Assembly is participated in in a responsible manner.

When we talk about the potash Bill, which has precipitated the debate on the motion before us, we must remind ourselves of the fact that more than 80 hours of debate have already taken place on this particular Bill, the potash Bill, Mr. Speaker, the motion before us this afternoon limiting debate still allows approximately another 40 hours of debate on the potash motion if members so desire. That, Mr. Speaker, will allow at least 120 hours of discussion on the potash Bill, Bill No. 20, before the Assembly at this very time.

Let me remind members that the nationalization of the potash industry in 1975-76 consumed 105 hours of debate before it was passed. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the argument of insufficient time to debate potash is not necessarily true.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to inform the public, that limitation of debate on the potash Bill does not limit debate of any other motion or Bill which will yet be presented in this Assembly before there is a recess of this House.

Mr. Speaker, over the years I've been involved in many organizations and committees. In all the meetings I have attended, the length of debate on any issue did not indicate whether a motion would be passed or defeated. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the final decision was made through the democratic process of voting on the motion. I would like to add that the most progressive and constructive meetings were ones where members limited their arguments to the particular motion on the floor.

Mr. Speaker, in the 1975-76 potash nationalization debate, the then leader of the Liberal Party, the Hon. Davey Steuart, indicated that in their debate he didn't feel ringing the bells was an appropriate and a responsible action of the opposition. As I have reviewed some of the '75-76 debate, I note one of the opposition members, in presenting the case of that day, said that regardless of the continued debate in the Assembly on the potash Bill of the day in 1975-76, that the Bill would pass.

And you would wonder, well why would that argument hold? Why would a member state that the Bill would pass eventually, even though there would be continued debate and filibuster. But, Mr. Speaker, the member indicated, he said the members opposite on the government side of the House, the then government of the day, had 38 members on their side of the House. The combined opposition of Liberals Tories was 24. The opposition of 1975-1976 realized that despite their arguments the government of the day had the right to govern and implement the program that they felt was beneficial to the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, if in 1975-76 it was the right of the government to govern, is that not the same right and honour that we have today? If, in fact, in 1975-76 it was the responsibility of the opposition to oppose in a responsible and respectable manner, does that not apply

today as well? Mr. Speaker, I believe that there is a time and a place for responsible debate. I therefore will be in support of the motion presented by my colleague, the member of Melfort. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, as I rise to make my remarks on this debate on closure, closure on closure, I want to say that I am proud to take my place on this side of the Assembly, on the side of SaskPower, on the side of Sask potash, on the side of no closure, on the side of free debate for the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — I'm going to limit my remarks, Mr. Speaker, to three areas of debate on this Bill. I'm going to talk briefly about closure and what I think is wrong with it. Then I'm going to propose a couple of alternatives to closure that I think the members opposite should have considered, or any government in this day and age is incumbent to consider. And last of all, I'm going to present some of the reasons why this closure motion, this closure on the limitation of debate on the privatization of potash, is not in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan and why it is a bad precedent.

What can we say about closure, Mr. Speaker, and closure, or in this case it's a matter of closure on closure. Sitting back and listening to a lot of the arguments that have been presented, and listening carefully and knowing very well that this is the first time that closure has ever been proposed in this legislature and ever used in this legislature, I can say that to me it smacks somewhat of totalitarianism.

I feel that closure is somewhat of an affront to democracy. I think and I believe that it is the antithesis of democracy — the exact opposite — because what it does is it stifles debate as opposed to what the democratic principle is of encouraging debate.

If democracy, Mr. Speaker, if democracy implies making decisions that reflect the public mood, then this motion of closure is definitely an affront to it, because closure offends the democratic principle of free speech. I find it very distasteful; I find it a bitter pill to swallow, because it doesn't solve an issue, it smothers it. And that's not democratic.

I think what the government ought to have done is let debate take place. They ought to have come in with other important matters, Bills, and estimates; they should have brought them forward and let debate take place and let the public be tested more than once, because I believe that the debate was polarizing. I could see since the introduction of the Bill to privatize SaskEnergy that the people of Saskatchewan were more and more displeased with this government's attitude towards privatization, with their single-mindedness towards privatization.

This was reflected also in polls published fairly recently in the press. And it showed that there was an increasing number of people that also opposed the privatization of potash. And I feel that if the debate were allowed to

continue, that this polarization would go even further. Perhaps that's the reason that the government decided to muzzle this legislature at this time.

What is closure? Effectively it's an expedient measure. It's not a democratic measure; it's an expedient measure. It's using a heavy-handed administrative move. It's a way of forced muzzling of members to stop debate and to force a decision.

Now several government members, including the House Leader on the government side, argue that they need to do something to get the business of the government done. They say, we let you debate this many hours and now the time is over. They say, we need to conduct the work and the business of the House. They say, we have the majority so we should therefore have the right to pass what we want. And they rationalize that at some stage there must be a balance between free speech in the legislature and getting some work done.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, there is an obligation on the government's part to get some business in the House done. Clearly there is an obligation. And clearly, Mr. Speaker, it's important that the government should not use its majority to effect a law which is not in the interest . . . which is not in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan. The government could well have taken its majority to progress with any other order of business which they know was supported by the people of Saskatchewan, and which we would acknowledge as supported by the people of Saskatchewan. But I question whether the government has the moral authority to go ahead and pass some legislation which I say does not have the majority support of the people of Saskatchewan.

I acknowledge that the government has the legal authority to do what they're doing — and that's what it is; it's a legal authority. In fact we could go further than this. We could argue that the government has a legal authority to pay itself a bonus of some sort. They have the legal authority to vote stipends to any of their friends. There is a legal authority, and that would happen despite what the opposition says. And they could use the same arguments to back that kind of a decision.

The question I ask, Mr. Speaker, is do they have the moral authority to do this? Are the new laws that they are proposing with respect to the privatization of potash, and before that that they proposed to the privatization of SaskPower, are they in the public's best interests? I say they aren't — I say they aren't.

What the government is proposing to do by this closure motion is to use an authoritarian model, rather than a democratic model. And that's why I mentioned earlier that this is not a democratic process that they're following. They're following a rule, and I say the rule if legal, but I say it violates a democratic principle and it also violates a democratic tradition in this legislature here.

Let me give you an analogy, Mr. Speaker. In disputes between two parties, psychologists sometimes refer to relationships being child-parent relationships where the child, the person who is acting the role of the child, gives

all the arguments; and the person who's acting the role of the parent listens to the argument and then said, fine, thanks, now go to bed. Because the parent has the hammer.

Another way of looking at that same model is instead of using the words child-parent, you might look at it as boss-employee relationship, where the employee might put all the best arguments, the boss listens to the arguments, lets them go in one ear and out the other, and then says, fine, now go back and do your job.

I say that the government, by doing this action of bringing in closure, is saying, you've had your say; now we're going to go ahead and do what we want anyway. I say that violates a democratic principle, the democratic principle of setting up an adult-adult relationship, or a boss-boss relationship, or an employee-employee relationship, where under those conditions the person who is playing the role of the adult doesn't have the hammer exclusively.

See, in adult-adult disputes or boss-boss disputes, we have ways of settling these things, on one-to-one. We have a court system, and if two bosses are in dispute they can go to court. We have a mediation system in some cases. If it's a case of bargaining, we have arbitrators, we have judges, some mutually respected body. Now it would be wrong for me to suggest, I think, that we could go to a court system or to a mediator or to an arbitrator or some mutually respected body, but we do need an alternate authority.

(1615)

What is that alternate authority when you get into a dispute between the opposition members and the government members; a dispute of such magnitude that both sides agree that this is the pivotal point upon which the economy of our province rides? You need to go to an alternate authority. What is that alternate authority? I say it's the people of the province, it is the people of Saskatchewan.

If the government feels as strongly as they do, and I see that they do, and the opposition feels as strongly as we do, and as we have represented on this issue of privatization, I say there's only one other way — with one possible exception which I'll mention shortly — and that is they should have gone to the people of the province.

I would like to quote from Stanley Knowles, who spoke in the House of Commons in the May 30, 1956 pipeline debate in his response to Prime Minister St. Laurent, who was at that time imposing closure. And Mr. Knowles was referring to the words of Laurier, which were mentioned often in this debate today. And Mr. Knowles said, referring to Laurier:

That great Liberal said that the solution was not to impose closure, was not to use brute force, was not to hold the terror of the guillotine over our heads, but was to follow the only democratic, parliamentary, and liberal course — take this issue to the country.

That would be a solution; that would be an alternative to

closure and I would find that acceptable, Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to propose one other suggestion, Mr. Speaker. I do so because I feel that with the coming of closure . . . The best-case scenario with closure is that this would be the one and only time it's ever used in this legislature; however, I fear that would not be the case. And the worse-case scenario would be that this would be used once again this fall to privatize SaskEnergy, perhaps to privatize SGI and on and on, and we would have lost a tradition.

Earlier in this day, we heard the Minister of Justice speak briefly. The Minister of Justice referred to changes that we must have in government, and he suggested that now in the days of radio and now in the days of television we should be looking at different methods, and he suggested that these things should be taken to a committee, and I agree that those things should be done. And I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that when that is done, when those rules are taken to committee and we're looking for ways of resolving impasses like this, that the committee also take a strong look and consider and study how things are done in some other jurisdictions and other democracies in the world.

And I want to refer to the concept of referendums, the concept of referendums, where, if they're afraid to take this issue directly to the people in an election, we should at least be looking at some way of taking an issue as important as this one to the people through something or some mechanism like a referendum. In this day and age, with all of our communications, all of our communications devices, there are ways of getting the opinions of people quite directly, and I think we would have something to learn from other people in the world. And we should think about it, because closure is that distasteful that we should not, we should not allow it to be something that becomes a permanent part in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I close my remarks by referring very briefly once again to the problem of what happens when you use a hammer. By using the hammer, what's happening is the government is using an expedient method to solve a problem or what it conceives as a problem without considering the best interests of the people they represent.

What the government is doing by using the hammer is exercising absolute power, power to expedite the agenda. And we know, Mr. Speaker, that absolute power, as it has been said over and over, corrupts. It's sad to see the government, when they have the hammer in their hands, feels that this issue, the total issue of privatization, should be treated like a nail. I say when that is done it does nothing to further democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I close my remarks then by standing with my colleagues on this side of House, saying that I will be voting against the closure motion because we feel that using this motion to privatize SaskPower, or in this case, to privatize the potash, is not in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This has, by all accounts and by any judgement, been an extraordinary session of this legislature. And I think if we consider carefully the motion that's before us today and the debate that is taking place with respect to that motion, this is a most extraordinary day in this extraordinary session.

It will be very interesting, Mr. Speaker, in a few years, to look at how historians treat this particular session of this particular legislature, how they evaluate it. And in particular I'll be interested to know what future historians are going to say about what is the worst of the blunders or the worst of the crises that the government has created for itself in this session. This well may be it, Mr. Speaker. This motion of closure, this first use of the device of closure in this province, may well be judged by historians to be the worst blunder that this government has made in this session.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — And, Mr. Speaker, that will not be an easy accolade for today to earn, because there have been so many blunders in this session. And without going into any detail at all, Mr. Speaker, you have only to just cast your mind back to the SaskEnergy dispute, and the Provincial Auditor kerfuffle, and the whole Rafferty situation, and the GigaText scandal, and indeed perhaps the whole privatization thrust of this government and what's happened to that thrust and the degree to which that thrust has wounded, has wounded this government.

Now I thought, Mr. Speaker, as I watched this session unravel, that I had seen it all, that we would somehow get through the potash debate after everyone had had an opportunity to fully express their views and to debate the subject in detail across this floor. I thought I had seen it all, but I hadn't. The capacity of this government to wound itself never ceases to surprise us on this side of the House, and it's done it again, Mr. Speaker. It's done it again.

Now you ask yourself, why? We ask ourselves why we're faced with this motion today. Why is it necessary, after all we've gone through in this session, to suddenly end debate on the potash Bill within four days? Is it just simply that the government members are tired and want to go home? Is it that they want to move on to the other business of the House? Let me deal with those two matters first of all, Mr. Speaker.

We're just as tired on this side of the House as they are. We've been here just as long as they have, and we're prepared to stay here until all debate on this Bill 20 has been completed. We're prepared to stay here as long as it takes to properly debate these issues in this legislature, and allow the public of Saskatchewan to make a reasoned and informed judgement with respect to that Bill.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — If it's a question, Mr. Speaker, of wanting to get on to other business, then our long-standing offer across the floor of this House remains. We're prepared to deal with other government business; we're prepared to deal with it expeditiously; we're prepared to deal with it right now; we're prepared to continue dealing with it for

as long as it takes to get it through, and we'll expedite it in every way we can.

So if that's your reason, that you want to do other business, then don't go ahead with this. We're prepared to solve that problem for you. Why, what other reason could there be? Why would you object to participating in this debate with us? I mean it doesn't bother us that we're here without salary and without expenses, and if it doesn't bother us, why would it bother you? Surely you regard this issue as being as important as we regard this issue. So if we're prepared to stand here and stay here and debate it, why aren't you prepared to stay here and stand in your place and debate the issue?

An Hon. Member: — They can't defend it.

Mr. Mitchell: — I think, Mr. Speaker, that the answer was just suggested by one of my colleagues who said that, they can't defend it. And I think that strikes close to the heart of the matter. I think that's the problem here.

This Bill, this motion has been referred to in this legislature by a number of speakers on this side of the House as an act of desperation, and I agree with that. I think that is correct. It is an act of desperation simply because the government has found that it can't sell this idea; the people just aren't buying it.

They're not winning the debate, and this is a desperation attempt to end the debate in the rather naïve belief that you're going to be able to go ahead with the privatization and somehow carry it off in a way where people will finally accept this outrageous notion; that you'll be able to hand out enough goodies or do something with respect to your sale of shares that the people will say, oh, yes, that's not a bad idea at all, and change their long-standing view, change their view — which now is that they don't want their potash corporation interfered with. They don't want it sold. They don't want it converted into a public company and shares sold in it. They want it to remain as it is. That's the simple fact of the matter.

It's a debate that you're not winning. You haven't been winning it for months, and you're not going to win it in the future. So you're just trying to bring it to an end. You're trying to close it down. You're trying to close it down so that public attention can be diverted to other issues. And you think, in the mistaken belief that you're going to be able to sell this somehow through a share offering or some kind of goodies that you might be able to offer to the public. Well, my friends, it's not going to work. It's not going to work. It's not going to work because the people of this province know what's happening.

If anybody on that side of the House should think, Mr. Speaker, that the public of Saskatchewan is accepting of the notion that this debate should be shut off, then I invite them to think again. Every indication that we've been able to get on this side of the House, every indication that we've been able to get is that the public of Saskatchewan think it's important, crucially important, that the opposition have the opportunity to debate this matter and to debate it fully.

And they think it's important that the government should

enter into this debate, and that the government should stand in their place and offer reasons why this sale of the potash corporation is a good idea — to offer the economic reasons why it's a good idea, to explain why the enormous social implications of a Crown corporation such as the potash corporation is no longer a good idea, and we should get rid of that, Mr. Speaker, they're not buying that idea.

In my view, when historians look back on this session from the perspective of a few years down the road and ask themselves just what is it that went wrong in that extraordinary session of 1989, it is quite possible that it is to today, that it is to today that they will point as being the worst blunder which created, in the long run, the worst crisis for what is arguably the worst government that this province has ever had.

Mr. Speaker, I've said before and I'll say it again, that this notion of privatizing the potash corporation is just a new terminology for what is in fact a very old idea. All we're talking about here is a group of politicians who want to get rid of a Crown corporation. They made that very clear in the throne speech this year, Mr. Speaker, with their privatization thrust in which they told the public of Saskatchewan that they want to privatize SaskEnergy, the energy part of SaskPower, that they want to privatize SGI, and they want to privatize the potash corporation.

(1630)

Well that, Mr. Speaker, is not a new idea. That privatization notion is just a new buzz-word for a very, very old idea in this province. Ever since Crown corporations were established in this province, and particularly since the Second World War, there has been a group of people, a stream of political thought, that was opposed to the creation of those Crown corporations. And there has been a political creed on the right wing of the political spectrum in this province which was dedicated to the idea that those Crown corporations should remain in existence, that they should not be run by the government, that they should be sold off and returned to the private sector.

What we're seeing in this privatization thrust in 1989 is nothing more than a rerun of a very, very old movie, going back to just after the Second World War, an old movie which says that government has got no business in any of these businesses, that these businesses ought to be owned by the private sector.

So it is that we've had the opposition over the years to SGI, to SaskPower, to SaskTel, to all of the other Crown corporations, and most recently to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. It's an old idea, Mr. Speaker. It's an old, right-wing, worn out, tired idea that has been rejected over and over again by the people of this province. And it's going to be rejected again, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: — It's going to be rejected, as I said the other day, because it strikes right at the core of the way we Saskatchewan people have developed to solve the

problems with which we are faced.

And I traced in some detail, Mr. Speaker, the other day, the rise of the great co-operatives which our predecessors used to help to solve some of the enormous economic and social problems with which they were faced, and then how the Government of Saskatchewan under Premier Douglas, following the Second World War, took a hold of the idea of a Crown corporation — which was an idea that already existed in many other parts of Canada — and transplanted that idea on to Saskatchewan soil. And then Saskatchewan people used this organization, this Crown corporation idea, in order to solve many of their problems. And this is an established way of doing things in Saskatchewan, and the people of Saskatchewan are attached to their Crown corporation.

Proof of that was given beyond any argument in the fire-storm of protest that followed the government's plan to privatize the energy division of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Beyond any question at all they expressed their view that their Crown corporation, the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, was not to be touched. It was not to be sold off. It was not to be converted into a public share company, a public company offering shares to the public. It was to remain as it was, a Crown corporation owned by every person in this province, and in existence to service the people of this province.

So it is with their potash corporation, Mr. Speaker, and that's where my friends opposite have made a miscalculation. They somehow thought that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was on a different footing than the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. And I suppose the reason is that the potash corporation hasn't been around as long and therefore people's attachment wouldn't be as deep as it was to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Not so, Mr. Speaker, not so. Every public opinion poll that one hears about confirms beyond question that the people of Saskatchewan regard the potash corporation in almost the same terms as they regard SPC, and they're no more enthusiastic about a privatization of the potash corporation as they are about a privatization of the power corporation.

That's the fact of the matter, Mr. Speaker. The attachment is there. And when my friends opposite seek to meddle with that through this notion, this crude, tired, old notion of selling off Crown corporations, they run solidly against that wall of public opinion and they're going to pay an enormous price for that, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm going to vote against this motion. I'm going to vote against it, Mr. Speaker, and I regard it as perhaps the most important vote, as perhaps the most important vote that I will cast in my three years as a member of this House. And I will vote with a great deal of pride when I vote against this motion to close debate in the way that this motion describes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to move an amendment to the motion, moved by myself and seconded by my colleague from Regina Lakeview:

That the first three paragraphs be deleted.

That the first three paragraphs be deleted.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think it's necessary for us to examine with some detail the reason why the government is engaging in closure and attempting to close the debate with respect to the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

The member from Kelvington-Wadena had said earlier that the arguments that we were raising when we attempted to give our opinion as to why the government is moving with this drastic step of closure, the member from Kelvington-Wadena had said our arguments were irrelevant on this debate. And I would like to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the member from Kelvington-Wadena is hardly in a position to say whether or not our thoughts are irrelevant on this question.

When we examine whether or not . . . Or when we examine the reasons why the government is moving with closure, we must look at primarily two reasons for this. First of all, Mr. Speaker, there's absolutely no question that they are losing the debate with respect to privatization; and secondly, this session has been a very bad session for them. They have been riddled with scandal, they have been riddled with examples of mismanagement and incompetence, and their record which has existed and been on the records for some time culminated in a session with one scandal after the other, in one example of mismanagement and incompetence after the other.

And these issues are still coming forward, Mr. Speaker, so obviously they members opposite would like us to quite talking about them. They resent the fact that we have this forum in which we can criticize their actions and call them to account and bring to the attention of the public just how incompetent this government is. And that, of course, are the two main reasons for this government taking an unprecedented action in the history and traditions of this province — and that's the action of closure.

The member from Kelvington-Wadena and other members on the government side of the House would obviously like us to restrict our arguments to very narrow arguments limited only to the technicality of the motion before. But that's not the reality, Mr. Speaker, of this debate. And it's not fair to expect the opposition, whom they are limiting on the potash corporation, to also limit their debate to the technicality or the technicalities of their motion.

What this debate is all about, Mr. Speaker, is it's a debate about a government that is desperate, a government that is desperate to flex some muscles because it has appeared as a weak government, a government in chaos over the last several months. It wants to show some strength, Mr. Speaker, so it brings forward a motion to close debate. And we've heard comments from some of the members opposite in their seats about, oh just how they're going to show us with respect to this.

They want to flex some muscles because obviously the opposition has been effective with respect to putting forward its point of view — effective. And that is clearly witnessed in the polls, Mr. Speaker, and in the response that we are getting from our constituents as we go through our constituencies, and in the response we're getting from many of the members' constituencies, that the opposition has been effective in bringing forward the arguments in this debate on privatization, privatization of SaskEnergy and privatization of the potash corporation.

This debate, Mr. Speaker, is about a government with its own agenda, an agenda that is not in the best interest of the people and that is not good for the people of Saskatchewan. And the people of Saskatchewan have spoken out loudly and clearly about the fact that they do not respect nor have no use for the government's privatization agenda. We've seen it in the polls. We've seen it by a petition that was tabled in this House, Mr. Speaker, with thousands, tens of signatures, Mr. Speaker.

This debate is about a government with its own agenda, a privatization agenda to sell off as much of the public Crown corporations as they can. And they're starting . . . they're not starting; they've been engaged in this for some time, Mr. Speaker, but they want to do it in this particular instance to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

And they want to sell off our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, because of their right-wing ideology and because they are nothing more than puppets of the multinational corporations and their Tory friends. They want to sell off our Crown corporations in order to pay for the deficit that they created through their incompetence and mismanagement, Mr. Speaker.

They've created something like a \$4 billion deficit, Mr. Speaker, and now they are desperate for funds before the next election to try and get that deficit down. And so they want to sell our Crown corporations for a quick injection of cash, Mr. Speaker, for a quick injection of cash for a slush fund, and to attempt to make themselves look better on a temporary basis prior to the next election. They don't have the interests of the PC Party in mind. That's their interest, Mr. Speaker.

This debate, Mr. Speaker, is about the sell-off of our future, the sell-off of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan with its huge reserves, Mr. Speaker, its unlimited resource; the fact that this is a crucial and important resource to our future and the fact that this government, for its own personal agenda, for its right-wing ideology, wishes to sell off this prize corporation of the Saskatchewan people for its own selfish purposes. And that's what this debate is all about, Mr. Speaker.

This debate is about muzzling the opposition, Mr. Speaker — muzzling the opposition — something that this government is not reluctant to do because we've seen repeated examples of how they've muzzled other people who have effectively spoken out against their policies, their cut-backs, and their harsh and cruel tactics, Mr. Speaker.

We've seen the Provincial Auditor who was attacked by the Minister of Justice and attacked by other members of the government, Mr. Speaker, because he had the courage to stand up and call it the way it was, and this government instead launched on a personal attack against the Provincial Auditor, unprecedented in the history of this province. And so this debate is about the government now attempting to muzzle the opposition.

Mr. Speaker, we've seen this government try to muzzle the Ombudsman in the past. We've seen them attack the Legislative Counsel publicly and openly and viciously because these individuals had the courage to stand up and say it the way it was. And now, Mr. Speaker, this government is attempting to muzzle the opposition, is attempting to stop the opposition from debating this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, that's really quite ludicrous because, as you recall, when the SPC (Saskatchewan Power Corporation) Bill was brought forward, the New Democratic opposition decided to let the bells ring. And the government says: come back and debate; we want to debate you; come back and debate. And so we came back and we stood in our places and debated. And now they're saying, oh it's irrelevant; it's too long; we got to shut down debate. Now they don't want to debate. That's where they're at, Mr. Speaker — muzzling the opposition.

(1645)

They don't want to debate this matter, because when we were out in the hustings, debating with the public and talking to the public, where the public debate was raging on the privatization of the energy portion of SaskPower, we were being successful and the people were on our side, and they were telling us that. And this was giving the public an opportunity to express their grave concern over the privatization of a public utility, and it was giving the public an opportunity to express their grave concern over the PC government's privatization that has created nothing but hardship in this province.

And let's talk about that for a minute, Mr. Speaker. Let's talk about the hardship the PC privatization has created in this province.

In 1983 this government privatized the SaskPower assets, and power rates increased and their deficit increased, Mr. Speaker. In 1984 they privatized highway operations and more Saskatchewan Power assets, and the power rates increased and their deficit increased. In 1985 they privatized Saskoil, taxes increased and their deficit increased. In 1986, PAPCO, taxes increased, deficit increased. In '87 the children's dental plan was privatized and SED Systems, taxes increased, deficit increased. In '88, Sask Minerals and SaskCOMP, a major portion of SaskTel, taxes increased, deficit increased. Taxes increased, deficit increased — Mr. Speaker, that's PC privatization.

And that's why the PC government does not want to stand in their place and enter this debate in a free and democratic manner.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And they indicate that, oh the speeches are too long or irrelevant. Well, Mr. Speaker, this institution is an institution that is based primarily on free speech and debate. That's what we are here for, Mr. Speaker. The very essence of this institution is free speech and debate. But they said after we let the bells ring on SaskPower, come back and we'll debate, Mr. Speaker. And did they debate? Hardly any of the members opposite debated, Mr. Speaker. Hardly any of the members opposite entered this debate.

And now with respect to closure, how many of them have stood up? There have been many more members on this side debating this momentous motion, Mr. Speaker, many more members on this side. They don't wish to debate because, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, they are losing the debate.

Mr. Speaker, I've also indicated that another reason for this government wishing to close the debate is the fact that they have had a very bad session. This last session has been bad for them. It's been disastrous, Mr. Speaker.

We see the disastrous mistake and incompetence in the Rafferty-Alameda process, a government that can't do anything right and is now costing the taxpayers millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker. We saw in this session the unprecedented attack on the Provincial Auditor, a first in the tradition of this province. We saw the GigaText scandal where the government is wasting some \$5 million for its own agenda because they consider themselves high-flyers, and simply, Mr. Speaker, because they are too incompetent to properly strike a deal with an entrepreneur. We see the Cargill situation where the government says it's a 50-50 deal but really is taking risk for about 85 per cent of the costs, and where other areas in the province are being left out and are not going to be able to participate in the manner in which they had been led to believe they could.

We see this government dropping every day in the public opinion polls because the public is opposed to their privatization, opposed to their incompetence, and opposed to their mismanagement. We see growing opposition in the public to privatization, not just to the privatization of the Saskatchewan power Corporation, the energy portion of SaskPower, but to privatization of the potash corporation and other PC privatizations.

That has been the sort of session that this government has had, Mr. Speaker, and they want to get out of here. They want to close down debate and they want to get out of here because they can't stand in their places and answer to the people and be accountable and debate their ideology and their ideas, because it's not standing up, and the people aren't buying it. And that's why they don't want to debate, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And the member from Morse said, well we need to get on to other business, or words to that effect. Well, that is the most ridiculous argument I've ever

heard. The opposition has stood in their place and repeatedly asked this government to come forward with legislation, to come forward with estimates, to get off their privatization kick. And the government has refused to do it. They've refused to do it because this is their agenda. This is their agenda, not the budget, Mr. Speaker — not the budget. Their agenda is privatization and they will debate privatization first and they'll worry about the affairs of the government, about farmers and small-business men, and families later.

It was the New Democratic opposition that had to embarrass them into coming forward with the farm legislation. It was the New Democratic opposition that did that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And they still forge ahead with their privatization agenda in spite of the fact we have families suffering in their province, small-business people and farmers who are in crisis. They still persist with their privatization agenda, Mr. Speaker, and that is where this government is at. The member from Morse said we must get on to other stuff.

It's up to the government to decide what the agenda of the day is. The government can bring forward Health estimates any time they wish. We've been ready to deal with them for a long time, but this government refuses to do that. The government can bring forward any other piece of legislation or any other estimates they want at any time during the day on any day, but they've refused to, Mr. Speaker, time and time again.

You don't have to limit debate to get on with other business, Mr. Member. You don't have to limit debate. You have just chosen to persist with your privatization agenda while we have always remained ready and willing to deal with any of the province's business.

This government, Mr. Speaker, is a bankrupt government. It's bankrupt literally, inasmuch as we have an unprecedented deficit in this province; and it's bankrupt of ideas and policies — completely bankrupt. And that's why, that's why, Mr. Speaker, they want to close debate, because the public is increasingly, day by day, becoming more and more aware of just how bankrupt this government is.

And the member from Morse says that we would not allow them to speak in the potash debate. Well that is also one of the most ridiculous things I've ever heard.

They can stand in their place and get up and speak any time, Mr. Speaker, and the practice of this House has been for you to acknowledge one here and then one from the other side. They can get up and speak if they want. Just because we may make speeches that are longer than theirs doesn't mean they don't have an opportunity to speak.

They could have stood in their place and spoken at any time during this debate, but they chose not to, Mr. Speaker, and they didn't because they had nothing to say and because they didn't have the courage to face the

people of the province of Saskatchewan. And it is not open to them now to say that they are not allowed to speak in this legislature.

Another thing that I wish to talk about, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that this motion violates the very spirit of democracy. It violates the right of freedom of discussion, free debate in the legislature on an issue of this importance.

Also closure is used, Mr. Speaker, when it's urgent, when there is an urgent problem. The privatization of the potash corporation is not urgent. It's not urgent from the point of view of the public. It's not urgent from the point of . . . well perhaps it is urgent from the point of view of the government. Perhaps it is urgent if they want to call an election this fall or next spring, and they need a slush fund for it, and they want to be in a good position. Maybe it is urgent, Mr. Speaker, from the point of view of the government, but I tell you, Mr. Speaker, it's not urgent from the point of view of the public.

Or perhaps they've already sold it, perhaps they've already sold it, and they've got a deal with a deadline. And maybe for that reason it's urgent, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And in making that argument on urgency, Mr. Speaker, I do not concede nor acknowledge that closure should even be necessary when there is an urgent matter facing the province. I think that what is best is for the province to debate at length and for the members to stand in their places and enter into a full and complete debate on the issue, and it's not up to the government to decide whether the opposition's arguments are irrelevant or illogical.

One other point that I wanted to mention, Mr. Speaker, and that's on the allegations of obstruction. First of all, I do not acknowledge for one moment that there has been obstruction by the opposition, the New Democratic Party opposition. In fact the government opposite, if there has been obstruction, has been obstructing the passage of estimates by failing to bring them forward and obstructing the passage of Bills by sticking to their privatization agenda and failing to bring forward the legislation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a few comments first, Mr. Speaker, pertaining to the words made by the member from Lakeview. She says the members on the government side should set the agenda; I agree with her. And we have set the potash agenda, and they still don't agree. Which way do they want it? We're in the government; we should set the agenda.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to comment on something she said. She got away talking about petitions and 100,000 names on petitions. Well let me just tell you about the petition in Arm River — 239 names, 50 didn't exist at all, one family from age 12 to 2 on that petition. So how can we, how can we possibly, Mr. Speaker, how can we possibly debate such a petition?

Mr. Speaker, a comment pertaining to the member from Fairview. He misled the people of Saskatchewan today very clearly when he stood in this House and stated that we are paid nothing, we are not paid. That's a false statement, because we're all paid our salaries. He's just not paid for his bed and his food. And that's misrepresenting the people in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, many of the members opposite have said it's a sad day when this government has to bring in closure; the member for Prince Albert said it's a happy day. They don't know where they're at. But I agree with the majority of the members that it's a sad day when the government has to bring in closure.

Mr. Speaker, it would have been different under the opposition members of Tommy Douglas. The government wouldn't have had to do that, and the member from Riversdale knows right well. Mr. Speaker, it would have been different under Woodrow Lloyd — the government wouldn't have to bring in closure; and it would have been different under Allan Blakeney — the government would not have to bring in closure.

But under the member of Riversdale, the now Leader of the Opposition, it is different, Mr. Speaker. He thinks he's the Government of Saskatchewan. He thinks it's his way or no way, and he has turned those members behind him into a bunch of radicals, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1700)

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, it's a very sad day in Saskatchewan when members of this House stand up and says they're proud to be radicals. Well I'm proud to be the member of Arm River. I am proud when I went through the constituency of Arm River and the surrounding areas in 1977. And the mandate they gave to me is to stop the nationalization of government agencies. That's the mandate that I carried in here.

Mr. Speaker, the member, the leader of the now opposition, has misled the people of the province of Saskatchewan. He has went around this province and his people all get up to speak — they are all behind me, they all believe that, everybody believes that the potash corporation shouldn't be sold.

Well I can inform the Leader of the Opposition that the member from Arm River has covered many areas of this province in the last 13 years, and I have covered many areas, Mr. Speaker, in this last month or two.

I will inform this House what I believe. And I do believe, in Saskatoon, that there's probably a pretty large majority of people agreeing with the members opposite. Not so much in Regina, Mr. Speaker, not so much in Regina, but don't try . . . And I challenge you to go out into rural Saskatchewan. Go to Kindersley, Davidson, Craik, Melfort, go down to Yorkton, Swift Current, and get what the real people are saying.

Mr. Speaker, the real people say that it's time, it is time that we stand up and be counted in Saskatchewan. We

either believe in state ownership or free enterprise, and we ask, who's in control of this, your province of Saskatchewan — the government or the opposition? That's what's out in the real people. That's what they're asking.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite try to justify themselves for what they're doing. They only justify themselves. They haven't got out and talked to the voters in Saskatchewan to see if they are right. Because I'll challenge any member, I'll challenge anybody in the province of Saskatchewan that this province of Saskatchewan is not ready for communism and socialism because they know . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — They know, the people in Saskatchewan know that socialism cannot work without a hard-working free enterprise to pay the bills.

Mr. Speaker, if I was the Leader of the Opposition, I would call this a sad day for him because what I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, that they overplayed their cards. One month ago, maybe even six weeks ago, what they were doing maybe the people in Saskatchewan are taking a look at; maybe they're right. They had their doubts after 17 days of bell-ringing, Mr. Speaker, they had their doubts.

I was in the great town of Humboldt where Lynda Haverstock better make up her mind which side of the fence she's on, whether she's a mugwump or not, because I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the good old Liberals in the province of Saskatchewan who were able to vote in 1976 know where they are when it comes to nationalizing the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

I wonder why, Mr. Speaker, when I'm . . . Usually when I speak in this House, the members opposite get so excited they don't even hardly let me talk, but they seem to be kind of quiet over there today because maybe they are thinking that we're right. I doubt it, Mr. Speaker, but maybe they are. But we know.

I'll give them credit, Mr. Speaker, that that's why we live in this great country of Canada, that we have our God-given right to believe in what we want to believe. And we on this side of the House believe in free enterprise; we believe in freedom of speech. And if anybody thinks that this opposition haven't had freedom of speech in the potash Bill, well then I'm badly mistaken. And I don't think the members on this side think I'm mistaken. I've heard them challenge over there, why are people standing up here with their 15-minute written speech and say something than 15 hours of nothing — absolutely nothing.

The Leader of the Opposition got up and spoke the other day. He was speaking and trying to rally his troops that were getting sad, they were getting down. They were saying to him: how do we get out of here; how do we get out of here? And he says, just wait on the Tories, Mr. Speaker. He said, wait on the Tories; we'll wait. They'll

vote closure and let us out of here. That's exactly what he's been saying to them.

So I think it's a happy day for them over there. They're finally going to be able to get out and not have to make up these . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — If I go on any longer, Mr. Speaker, you'll be saying I'm long-winded. So I'm just going to close in saying yes, this is a sad day for Saskatchewan when we have to go closure, but under no other opposition in the history of this province would a government have to do it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do want to say a few words on the Bill that is before us, or the motion that is before us on closure. But I have to gather my thoughts together before . . . after listening to the member from Arm River. He reminded me a little bit about the character in history called Attila the Hun. Well I'll tell you, there was no room on the right side of Attila the Hun, but this guy made it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also was worried when he grabbed his water, because I remember an incident in the 1970s when I sat on that side of the House, and the member who just spoke from Arm River — he sat on this side of the House — when he was speaking, and I'm sure the member from Wolseley remembers it quite well, because he suffered the consequences of that, the throwing of the water at that time. And I was really worried that the water would come over on this side again this time. But he has improved a little.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I couldn't help, though, but watch the members opposite, and particularly the Premier, when he . . . When the member from Arm River spoke, the Premier enthusiastically applauded the words of what the member from Arm River was saying. That only tells me one thing; that tells me one thing about the Premier and where he's at in this whole privatization debate and what he has in mind for the people of Saskatchewan should he ever get re-elected again.

And I want to say to the people of Saskatchewan: don't take this Premier at his word. Don't take this Premier at his word, because what he told us in the 1986 election was that no utility would ever be privatized — no utility would ever be privatized. The Deputy Premier in this House, when they divided SaskPower, was very, very precisely asked: are you dividing SaskPower in order to privatize? And his answer to the member from Regina Rosemont was a categorical no.

So I say to the people of Saskatchewan, don't listen to the man that occupies the Premier's chair and what he says, but watch what he does once he gets into power.

I want to talk a little bit about why we are at the stage that we are, Mr. Deputy Speaker, today. Why are we here

today? And I want to, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say to the people of Saskatchewan that when I got back into this legislature in 1986, I must admit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was shocked — no, more than that, I was horrified — at the lack of respect that this Premier had for this institution, the lack of respect that this Premier had for this institution; and not only that, but the lack of respect that the front-benchers, the cabinet had for this institution.

Because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this institution, a democratic institution, can only function if what the members opposite, particularly the members on the treasury benches, if what they say can be taken at its word. And when the Premier says something in this House, you would expect that that will be carried out and that we can abide by that.

So let me get back to it. The Premier says he's got a lot of respect for this institution — very, very little after the 1986 election. What does he do instead of calling the legislature together in the spring of 1987 so that he could bring in a budget? He governs for three months by warrants. He talks about the 17 days that we walked out to consult with the people of Saskatchewan on SaskEnergy, but for three months, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he governed this province by warrants and refused, refused to call the legislature together so that he could present a budget and that we could legitimize the expenditures that they were doing under warrants. Lack of respect for this institution.

I am not surprised that this Premier would bring in closure; I'm not surprised at all, because he doesn't respect the traditions of this House. He doesn't respect it, neither do many of his ministers. Time and time again, Mr. Speaker, we've found the ministers misleading in their statements in this House. When they're asked, Mr. Speaker, to answer questions in this House, they refuse to answer. If they do answer, they don't give us the facts.

Time and time again, the Deputy Premier has been caught giving the wrong facts to this House. Time and time again, other ministers have been found, Mr. Speaker, wanting in their answers that they give to this legislature.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I was very disappointed today that they called upon the Minister of Justice to second this motion, because just a short time ago this was the minister, this was the minister who had an unwarranted attack on the Provincial Auditor. He made an unwarranted attack on the Provincial Auditor, and when he was asked to bring forward the facts, he didn't have any.

This was the minister, Mr. Speaker, who attacked the Legislative Counsel and Law Clerk and had to apologize. This was the minister who refused — who refused, Mr. Speaker — to bring before the House people from the public so that we could, and the Provincial Auditor could, defend himself against this minister in this legislature. He refused to do it.

Mr. Speaker, what bothers me is that this legislature used to have some tradition. And I can remember under the former premier, Allan Blakeney, who had a high regard for this legislature, and it ran well. It ran well. Sure we had

our debates. When we brought in the potash Bill in 1976 the opposition debated for 105 hours. Did we ever bring in a closure legislation? No, we didn't. No, we didn't.

And the Minister of Finance sat on this House. He debated it, not as a Conservative — he debated it as a Liberal, debated it as a Liberal. But I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, at least he had the chance to debate it. He didn't win in the end, but he had a chance to debate as long as he wanted to. And that, Mr. Speaker, is not what he is allowing us to do today. That is not what he is allowing us today.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I find this piece of legislation so abhorrent. He doesn't have the right to decide how long I can speak in this legislature. He doesn't have that right. The people of Saskatoon South have elected me to speak for them. And when, Mr. Speaker, they brought in legislation in this House which was contrary to the promises that they made in the 1986 election, when the Premier gave his word that no utility would be privatized, he gave his word; and then when he was re-elected, he brought in legislation which was contrary to that, the people of Saskatoon South said, do whatever you can to stop that legislation. That's exactly what we did. We went out, we let the bells ring, we consulted with the people.

And I think the Angus Reid poll very clearly indicated that the people were with us, were with us, and they're saying to the government, you were wrong in promising us one thing during the 1986 election and then going back on your word, and then particularly the Deputy Premier who not only gave his word in the 1986 election but gave his word in this House that SaskEnergy was not and would not be privatized.

Mr. Speaker, he misled, and for that he did not have the mandate to bring in that legislation into this House, and we as an opposition not only had the right but the duty to go out and consult with the people and ask the people, what do you want us to do now? They told you one thing during the election; they're doing the opposite now. And the people, very clearly, very clearly told us to stay out, to stay out.

We finally decided, Mr. Speaker, to go back into the legislature and try and convince the members opposite to withdraw that legislation, and they did. Temporarily they have withdrawn it. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question: why the urgency, why would the government opposite not, for even political reasons, why would they not clear off the agenda, get rid of all the estimates, do all those other Bills that they say are so important, and then say to the opposition at the end, now if you want to, here, go ahead and debate, as long as you want, this potash reorganization?

(1715)

Why are they in such a rush to get that Bill through by the end of this week or early next week? Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely convinced the reason for it is, all of this is simply a sham. They have already made a deal and the deadline is next week. They must have this legislation through so that the deal they've already made can be

made next week. That's why they need this legislation. They are not being honest with the people of Saskatchewan again. A number of times, Mr. Speaker, have we found them wanting in their honesty in this House and certainly in their honesty to the people of Saskatchewan.

So I say again, you don't have the right, you just don't have the right as a government to tell me whether I can or cannot speak in this legislature. The people will decide that.

And, Mr. Speaker, once you use closure once, it is easy to use it the second time and the third time and the fourth time, and we lose more and more respect for this institution. Is it any wonder that the people out there are being so cynical about politicians, when on the one hand, in an election time we tell them one thing and give them our solemn word that we will do this or we will not do that, and then once we've formed the government, we do exactly the opposite? Is it any wonder that people are becoming cynical about politicians?

Even today, even today, Mr. Speaker, when members get up, very few are giving any legitimate reasons as to why closure has to be proceeded with. Why would they not have come in today and have said to the opposition, look, we have reconsidered and there is urgent legislation that we have before us; there are a number of departments which estimates we have not considered. Let's work out a timetable; let's spend the next three weeks or the next four weeks doing the other business, and we'll set aside the potash. Why would they not have done that?

That would have been within their best interests, would have been within the best interests of the opposition, would have been in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan. Why would they not have done that? They set the agenda. You cannot run this legislature arbitrarily. You can't make unilateral decisions. Oh, I recognize they've got the numbers on their side, but that's not the way this legislature will function. It can't function that way. And as long as they have that attitude that, we are the government, we will make the decisions, and we will put on the agenda whatever we feel like, without any consultation, this legislature simply cannot function, and it will not function.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: — Mr. Speaker, in parliament right across the British Commonwealth, we have the function of both government and opposition. And it is the function of the opposition, basically, to oppose. That's the way our system is. I'm not saying I always agree with that, but that's the way it basically functions. And oppositions should from time to time give alternatives, and we have. We have given alternatives. We haven't given alternatives to every piece of legislation that the government is proposing, and neither do we have to.

But certainly we must make certain, Mr. Speaker, that we scrutinize, scrutinize very carefully legislation that is brought by the government, and that we scrutinize the estimates to make sure that the government is being honest with the people of Saskatchewan, that they're not

trying to pull a fast one or sneak some legislation through which might have ulterior motives. It is our business to scrutinize carefully, and that we have done.

We believe that this potash legislation, the reorganization of the potash corporation, is the sell-out of the birthright of our children. What legacy, if we allow this legislation, Mr. Speaker, what legacy can we leave for our children and their children's children? What legacy can we leave them? How are we going to ever pay off that huge deficit that has been created in the last seven years, the \$4 billion? How are we ever going to pay that off? How are we ever going to solve the problem of an \$8 billion or a \$9 billion long-term debt if we sell off the resources that will bring in the revenues that are required?

Oh, I know today and next week there will be some people who will rejoice over this decision because they will be the benefactors. They will be the ones who will be able to buy the shares. They'll be the ones who will be able to buy the potash corporation, and in the future, Mr. Speaker, they'll be the ones that are laughing all the way to the bank. And we, Mr. Speaker, will be left with the debts. We will be left with the huge deficits which we cannot pay off because this government has sold off all the assets which were revenue producing.

That, Mr. Speaker, is what we are debating here in the whole potash debate. Should we sell it to the big corporations and let them make the profits? They say to us, well, look at the success that Saskoil has had. Well if you look at Saskoil's annual report, their latest annual report, most of their profits, and the chairman himself says so, was made because they bought the cheap gas that SaskPower sold them, proven reserves. That's where they made their profits.

WESTBRIDGE, another glorious privatization scheme. Where does WESTBRIDGE get most of its business? From the government. Look at all the departments; I ask people to examine the annual report and see all the business that WESTBRIDGE is getting from the various departments and Crown corporations — millions and millions of dollars.

SaskCOMP made a profit of 3.4 million, is now part of WESTBRIDGE. Of course, WESTBRIDGE is going to be very successful. If that's the kind of set-up we're going to have, we'll give them all — no tenders — we'll give them all the government business. But, Mr. Speaker, when we sell off, when we sell off those resource, revenues-bearing corporations, then there is simply nothing left for the future of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to the member from Regina South.

An Hon. Member: — Minister.

Mr. Rolfes: — Yes, I want to refer to the . . . The media didn't even recognize him as a minister. I will recognize him as a junior minister, because that's what he is, the junior minister from Regina South.

The other day when he participated in the debate on the potash, he made this comment about the people from

Regina South, and I think it was a real insult. He said that on that particular day he had spent the day with hundreds of Regina South people, and their biggest concern was not the potash debate, but their biggest concern was the third putt on the 18th hole. That's an insult to the people of Regina South, that they don't care whether their resources are being sold off, that their heritage is being sold off to outsiders of this province. I just don't believe that, and if the member of Regina South believes that, I think he doesn't understand the people of Saskatchewan at all — he doesn't understand them at all. These people have fought for a long, long time.

Mr. Speaker, this closure motion that is brought in today is a sad day for Saskatchewan. We cannot support it. It is an infringement of our freedom of speech, of our right as elected members of this legislature to speak our minds on very important issues.

It's not for the government and members opposite to determine whether they are important; it is up to us and our electors to determine whether those issues are important. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I hesitated for a couple of moments before I stood in my place to speak to this motion today, because I wanted to give the Premier of this province an opportunity to join this debate, which is what he has neglected to do.

I was interested to hear some of the comments from the member from Kelvington-Wadena, indicating that his main purpose and his main contribution to the potash debate thus far was to catch up on his sleep in his place as he sat in the Chamber. And I ask — and I wouldn't want to accuse the Premier of sleeping in his place — but if he was interested in what was going on in this debate, why then wouldn't he join in?

And I'm hoping that we'll get an opportunity for the Premier to stand up and indicate to the people of Saskatchewan why he is invoking closure on the people of this province and on this legislature for the first time in the history of this legislature.

It's been said before, Mr. Speaker, that this government has been a government of firsts in Saskatchewan. And I think, if you examine the record, clearly they have. Today members of the opposition on this side of the House stand in their places for the first time debating closure in this province.

But there are some other firsts that this Premier has been part and parcel of. I've seen, Mr. Speaker — and I've only been elected to this place since 1986, so I can't say that I've been here a long time and have gathered the experience that some of my colleagues have in terms of the running of this legislature — but I've watched pieces of legislation that they've introduced before this House, much of it no longer responsible once it's passed through this legislature, because so many of the items in those pieces of legislation have been turned to regulation, which means that the Premier and his cabinet members sit behind their desks and decide how these legislative

pieces may be amended or may be changed without ever having to bring them back to this House.

It's been, in my estimation, Mr. Speaker, a government that is becoming more and more autocratic, less and less willing to bring issues before this legislature — governing behind closed doors. And I want to say that the motion that we debate, the closure motion, is just another example of that.

I said before that this government is known in many areas of this province as being a government of firsts, and clearly it has. In the history of this province, every budget that they've delivered in this place has been a deficit budget. And that's a first, Mr. Speaker.

But I'd want to say another first. Not unlike the motion that we debate today, it's a first that no government would want to be proud of. I've seen the abuse of Crown Corporations Committee where the minister will sit in his or her place and refuse to answer questions on the expenditure of \$5 million to a Montreal business man — just blatantly refuse to answer. Guy Montpetit walks out of this province with \$5 million, but a refusal to answer. And I would want to say, Mr. Speaker, it's a lack of democratic action on behalf of this government. It's just another example of this government's abuse of the legislative process in this Chamber.

When this government moved to invoke closure on this debate, it said something about the mentality of this government. It's a government that's willing to ram through what it desires at any cost, whether it be the wishes or the desires of the people of Saskatchewan, or members of the opposition who hope to represent the people of this province's views in this place. They do what is politically advantageous for that particular government and the party that they represent.

(1730)

And it's been mentioned here today, and I would like to again mention, that I'm wondering if the potash corporation hasn't already been sold. And I tell you why I believe that to be the case, Mr. Speaker, because I remember the announcement made that Weyerhaeuser was going to be purchasing the pulp mill in my home town, in Prince Albert, in the spring of 1986. That announcement was made just before this government was about to call a spring election.

They did their polling and they found out that, well, it just wasn't an opportune time, so they were putting it off to the fall. Then in the meantime they had to sit down and negotiate with Weyerhaeuser to close the deal. So Weyerhaeuser gets a pulp mill for \$248 million, about \$100 million undervalued. People involved in that industry indicate that this government gave \$100 million of provincial assets away.

I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, if that's not why there's such a rush to pound this potash Bill through this legislature this time. I would want to ask myself and I would want to ask members on that side of the House whether the Chinese were negotiating, whether there's been a deal cut. I would like to ask how far these negotiations went

and how much it's going to cost us to ram this potash Bill through, this Bill 20, how much it's going to cost the people of this province for this government to go ahead with the privatization of the potash corporation.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the reasons I would raise those concerns would be because of this government's past performance and other moves that they have made, other privatization moves that they've made; the lack of competence that they've displayed from one government department to the other. This government that promised to run a business-like government, that's just been shamelessly squandering the heritage of our young people in this province.

I want to say that it's not isolated to members of the opposition in this legislature. I don't know how many places the MLA from Arm River has been canvassing and who he's been talking to, but I can tell you, if he's talking to people in the business community, small-business men and women who are seeing taxes increase because of what they feel is an incompetent government, if he's talking to the same business men and women that I talk to in this province, then he's either not hearing the whole story, or because of intimidation they're afraid to tell that member the truth, because of this government's record of intimidating people in this province.

But I tell you what they tell me when we talk about the privatization of the potash corporation, and when we talk about this government invoking this closure motion to limit the debate on that particular Bill. They tell me that they've had enough of this PC government. They tell me that they're looking for a premier who is willing to listen to their concerns and their aspirations, and they tell me that they're looking for a government that they can trust.

Now that member may have his head so deep in the sand, Mr. Speaker, that he still feels what he had was a mandate in 1982, or whenever it was that he was elected to this Chamber, and that his mandate was to stop the nationalization of assets. And the free enterprise philosophy and the big-business friends that him and his government have tied themselves to, that people are looking for that. Well I just want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, if that's what they were looking for when they elected him the first time he sat in this Chamber they're sure not looking for it now because they know what Cargill's cost them and what Weyerhaeuser's cost them and the fact that this government has ignored them.

This motion, Mr. Speaker, is not representative of the type of government the people of Saskatchewan are looking for. They're not looking for a self-centred government that's got its agenda tied to one little aspect of what a government could be doing or should be doing. They'd like to see this legislature dealing with economic issues and health care issues and education issues. They really would like to see the problems faced by small-business people and farmers dealt with in this legislature though some positive legislation.

I tell you, they're sick of hearing about this government's privatization agenda. They're sick of watching their assets squandered shamelessly while this government at the same time can take money out of a hat, or find it from

wherever they find it, and borrow to Cargill, one of the biggest agricultural companies in North America or in the world. Because you see what they believe to be about free enterprise, Mr. Speaker, is that if a project is viable and a company has the economic backing to go ahead with the project, then they should do that because that is free enterprise.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that people on this side of the House have a different understanding of free enterprise and business-like government, and fairness and democracy, than do members on that side of the House. It's pretty clear when they stand up to do their three-minute blurbs that there is a fundamental, basic difference, and that people on this side of the House are in tune with what the people of this province want, and not what the PC Party of Saskatchewan wants.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, this motion is going to ram through closure in order for this government to privatize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Public opinion polls indicate clearly that over 60 per cent of the people in this province don't want this government to do that. They're opposed to the sell-off of yet another public asset. Why then, Mr. Speaker, would this government be so stubborn and so self-serving that they wouldn't allow the debate on that particular issue to go on?

Now this government says that the people of Saskatchewan want the potash corporation privatized. Tell me then, Mr. Speaker, why this Premier and why this cabinet and why back-benchers on that side of the House wouldn't want this debate to continue on. I would think that if there is one positive political move that could come out of this legislature, out of this session of the legislature for that government, that they would want to see it happen because they've lost on everything else that they've attempted since they got into this place in this session.

If they're doing so well on the privatization of potash, why then would they want to invoke closure and limit the debate on something that clearly must be a negative for us if it's a positive for them?

There's a couple of reasons, I would think, Mr. Speaker, that that could be. The one reason may be, as I said before, that they've already got it sold and they've got to ram the Bill through to proceed with it. Or the other reason is that they're so turned inside of themselves that they don't understand just how negative the politics of this closure motion and of the sell-off of the potash corporation really is.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that this is the act of a government that is desperate. It's the act of a government that's, I believe, in its dying weeks and its dying months. It's the act of a government that no longer deserves to govern because, Mr. Speaker, people have governed this province, Saskatchewan people, men and women, have governed themselves since this province became part of confederation and I want to say, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province know that not one government in this province has ever had to muzzle the opposition by

invoking closure. People of this province understand, Mr. Speaker, very clearly, that this government has lost control of itself, and they're waiting for the opportunity to display their dissatisfaction during an election.

But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this motion, this motion to invoke closure: the people of this province also understand that there may be little left when this government is finished governing, in terms of what assets are left. I would suggest to you that one of the biggest worries of young men and women in this province is what the debt load is going to be when this PC government has finally run its course. They're worried about how many farm bankruptcies are going to have happened since then, and they're worried about whether or not, if we run through a period of drought where the farm community may need some help, whether there'll be some money to develop a long-term program to create some stability in rural Saskatchewan.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, the farmers of this province are facing foreclosure and the legislature and the legislators in this Chamber are facing closure. Foreclosure, PC style, for farmers; closure, PC style, for the people of this province through the legislature. And I say, Mr. Speaker, it's a sad day; it's a sad day when that's all on the government's mind, when that's all they can bring themselves to debate.

I didn't see members on that side of the House stand up and talk about the high cost of taxation in this province. I didn't hear any of those back-benchers speak about that, the fact that we've got one of the highest tax levels anywhere in this province. But one or two of them, by golly, did get out of their seats when we were talking foreclosure, in support of that. I didn't see any of those members stand up and talk about the agriculture Bills that we passed here in one day, other than their front-benchers, their little inner core.

And I wonder why that would be, Mr. Speaker, when government back-benchers will get up to speak in favour of a motion of closure, but won't speak against farm foreclosure. It tells me, Mr. Speaker, that this government is out of touch. And it tells me as well, Mr. Speaker, that even in spite of the fact that this government knows that privatization hasn't been working for the people of this province, they're going to ram ahead, because the Leader of the Opposition has said on many occasions, and I happen to believe more and more that it's true, that this government is on a scorched-earth policy. And that's the policy of this government: leave nothing for anyone else to govern.

And if you can't do it through the normal channel of debate, get your agenda passed, your privatization agenda passed, then you invoke closure — autocratic government, self-serving government, maintain your power and your agenda at any cost: that's what this Premier of this government is about.

And I mentioned before that when the Premier was sitting in his place, I was hoping that he would get up and address this important motion, this precedent-setting motion. But not a peep from this Premier, not a sound. Did he say anything in the potash debate, Mr. Speaker? I

tell you that the Premier of this province never said a word. The opposition leader stood up and addressed — very eloquently, I may add — this legislature indicating his reasons for opposition. But what do you hear from the other side? Not a word, not a word.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, my colleague says that it's because they don't have any arguments to support it. There are no economic arguments to support the sale of the potash corporation, none that make any sense in terms of the actual facts and figures. Mind you, the member from Elrose can stand up and he can make up some figures as he goes along. They may have absolutely nothing to do with what the economic truth of that particular corporation was. I mean, it may not have anything to do with what the real number and the real facts are, but he could find some numbers out of a hat.

But I tell you, if the Premier of this province is so convinced that the selling of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to foreign owned companies and individuals in such a positive move, then let him stand in his place and explain to his constituents and the people of Saskatchewan just why he favours and why he's ramming ahead with the privatization of the potash corporation.

You know, I would want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that this government doesn't want to put it on record because he's got no facts, no base to which to mount his arguments and to substantiate his arguments, so that's what he does. We sit here dealing with a closure motion. Instead of getting involved in debate, he instructs his ministers to put a motion forward to close debate.

Well I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake never sent me here to watch this government muzzle the opposition or to muzzle them through their member. And I want to tell you that they're going to pay dearly, not only in Prince Albert-Duck Lake but throughout this province, because people now understand what they're about.

(1745)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Because of this motion, Mr. Speaker, my time is limited, and since I've been muzzled I'll have to limit my debates to these 20 minutes . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed.

Mr. Britton: — Mr. Speaker, I had no intention of getting into this debate, Mr. Speaker, but I was sitting here listening to some of the comments, and I thought I would like to maybe mention a few things. The question has been asked by those opposite is why are we debating this motion, Mr. Speaker . . .

An Hon. Member: — Why are you bringing it?

Mr. Britton: — Mr. Speaker, yes, that's right, why did we bring it? Well I was home on the weekend and I was home a week before, and my people were saying, do something; this is crazy. And of course they laugh, Mr. Speaker, because they don't understand that the people

are sick and tired of the endless nonsense that was coming out of the other side.

And, Mr. Speaker, we did something. We did something to bring some semblance of order to this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, anyone, anyone that takes the time to study the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan says it was not a good deal. Now I'm not going to get into the why it was done at the time it was done or not, but the fact remains, Mr. Speaker, it turned out a bad deal. Now that can happen to anybody. The thing that I can't understand is why they can't admit it, when they know very well it was a bad deal because they had their own plans to privatize it.

Now the only people that can find a good deal in the potash corporation is the socialists with their convoluted, acrobatic mathematics, Mr. Speaker. No one else can find anything good about it unless you juggle the books. You pay a dividend on one hand but you don't count the interest you pay on the other. Now you don't do accounting that way, Mr. Speaker. And anyone that does any kind of a survey or takes the time to look will say it's a bad deal — we made a bad deal, Mr. Speaker, I can't understand why people won't admit to that.

The opposition, they want to set the House agenda. They keep saying to us, you won't do what we want. Their idea of what is democracy is that if it's not my way then it's the highway, and they walk; they take a walk. If they can't have their way they take a walk, Mr. Speaker.

Well I don't know of any game that's played that way. I don't know of any other game that's played that way except from those people on the other side. That's fine. And to walk out, Mr. Speaker, as far as I'm concerned, that's not fair, that's not fair.

Mr. Speaker, that we won't allow debate . . . Well I would ask anyone to go back and read *Hansard*, go back and read *Hansard* and tell me or tell anyone that what we saw and what we heard in the last few days, the last few months, was a debate.

Mr. Speaker, what we had was the biggest non-debate in the history of Saskatchewan. There was no debate, and we wouldn't take part. Why would we take part with something so foolish as what they were doing there, Mr. Speaker?

An Hon. Member: — Can't you read it?

Mr. Britton: — Yes, it's a little hard; I had to write it myself, Murray. I'm like you. This time I had to write my own speech.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Britton: — Mr. Speaker, I did feel that I should get up and say a few words because they talk about that this is the first time allocation had ever been used in Saskatchewan, and what a terrible thing. Well, Mr. Speaker, let me mention to you that the first time in the history of the Commonwealth, not Saskatchewan, the Commonwealth, that somebody got up and walked out of the House on first reading . . . They say we never gave

them nothing to . . . no time for debate. Well they've had 80 hours, or something like that. Now we didn't have one minute, not a minute to explain our position when they walked — not a minute, Mr. Speaker. Now was that fair? Is that fair? I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what is fair?

We had exactly zero, exactly zero and they walked out, Mr. Speaker, and took advantage of the rules. The rules were there. They took advantage. Now when we want to say, look, enough is enough; if you want to talk we'll listen, we will listen to you. And I have to say that, Mr. Speaker, I have listened more in the last two days to the members opposite than I did in the other 40 days because at least there was a little bit of debate going on now, and that's what we brought it on for.

Mr. Speaker, I haven't had time to prepare a whole lot of this, but I can't understand why they can't stand up in their place and say yes, we were wrong, we'll try it different. They keep telling us how bad it's going to be; we're going to lose the next election. Fine, fine — if we do, we will. But why are they so concerned? They should be clapping their hands and urge us on to all these crazy things, because they know, Mr. Speaker, if this goes through and when it goes through and the employers and the employees get together and the employee has a part of the action, they're going to like it. They're going to like it, Mr. Speaker, and those opposite are not going to like it. They're not going to like it at all.

And I for one, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to support this because I believe it's right and it's fair and it's the thing to do, and I will be supporting the motion, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order, order.

Mr. Koenker: — Mr. Speaker, there's an old adage that actions speak louder than words. And when we come to this debate today and the action of this government invoking closure and a limitation on debate in this legislation, then it's very clear that this action speaks louder than any of the words of any of the members speaking to this motion. And it's this action of closure that will be remembered long after any or, I dare say, all of the words spoken in this debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: — Mr. Speaker, this debate, I wager, will be remembered by my constituents not on the basis of what I have to say here today or on the basis of what the Premier might have to say here today, or what any given member might say here today. This debate will be remembered — the whole debate indeed, about potash — will be remembered on the basis of closure.

Why closure? Why closure, people might now well ask, before the potash debate is concluded, before the potash mines have been sold off. Why closure? Why must it be that, after all of these hours of debate, the government has to force the issue and press closure into place and muzzle the opposition? Why closure?

I say, because the real issue behind this motion to limit debate. The real issue behind closure is not simply democracy, although that's been talked about extensively today. The real issue behind closure is not simply potash and the privatization of potash. I say, Mr. Speaker, that the real issue behind closure is the re-election of the Progressive Conservative government; that they simply must have closure and this privatization of potash if they are to win the next election. There's no other reason for it. There is no other logic for it but that the PCs need the privatization of potash to buy the next election.

And the people of Saskatchewan might as well sort this out now and get it straight, because there are at least three scores on which the government has to use closure and has to buy the next election. The government, first of all, can't stand away or separate itself from its right-wing agenda. It's committed totally to the ideology of privatization. It can't divorce itself from it; it can't step back from it; it can't backtrack from privatization.

For better or for worse, for richer or poorer in terms of political fate, privatization is their agenda. It's an ideological agenda, and they've committed themselves to it in so many words and in so many actions from the Premier himself that they simply can't walk away from it now. That's reason number one why the PCs need to have privatization for the next election, because they can't back down from their own ideology. And that's at the core of their ideology.

Secondly, I want to say that the PCs can't run on their record. How could they? How, Mr. Speaker, can you run on a record of successive tax increases? When it comes to the flat tax, for example, going up from a half a per cent to 1 per cent, to one a half per cent, to 2 per cent. Do you feel comfortable about running on that kind of record if people are confronting you with that record if you're a Progressive Conservative candidate? Not at all.

Increases in taxes to the sales tax and the gas tax. And now we have a new tax, the so-called lotteries tax — the hospitals tax, the hoax tax — which supposedly is going to go to fund health care, but in the very legislation that introduces it, has nothing earmarking those funds for health care at all.

Can you run on that kind of record? The Conservatives won't try to do that. They're smart enough to do that. They can't run on their record of successive deficits from 1982 to 1989. They can't run on their record of the succession of cuts to social services and health care and education that characterized the spring of 1987. People would remember that and hold it against them. So they have to have potash to buy the next election. It's as simple as that. They're committed to their ideology and they can't run on their record.

And what potash give them is a cool 1.2 or \$1.3 billion to buy the next election. And that's why we have closure here today — to buy the next election so that the Progressive Conservative government and this Premier can open his wallet, the government's wallet, and say to folks, you see, tough medicine, those cut-backs to health,

to the prescription drug program and the dental program in the spring of 1987; tough medicine, but it worked; tough medicine, those tax increases. Tough medicine — not that we wanted to do it — we had to; we had a deficit. Tough medicine, tough medicine, the poor highways, Tough medicine, the restricted access to university. But see, thanks to potash it's working. All of these cut-backs, all of these tax increases, all of the neglect of the highway system, and the restricted access to education, and the squeezing of poor people on welfare — thanks to potash and to privatization it's working.

The only question is, who is it working for? And I say, Mr. Speaker, it's working not for the people of Saskatchewan, but it's working for the re-election of the Progressive Conservative government. And that's why we have closure today, to ensure that the re-election fortunes of this Premier and this PC government are in place before the election is called. They have to have potash privatization. They have to have something to show. Before they go to the voters, they have to have some money to buy the next election, and so we have closure here today.

(1800)

They bought the election in 1982 with cheap gas, cheap mortgages. It worked. They bought the election in 1986 by appealing to the greed in people and offering low interest loans for home improvement, in fact matching government money for home improvement, and matching government money for pension plans, for those wealthy enough to have homes and to have money to put into a pension plan in the first place. And they bought the last election. And we'll see that repeated again this time around with money from potash, as a result of the closure we have here today.

And I ask, Mr. Speaker, I ask the people of Saskatchewan to consider, will this be the only time that we see closure invoked in this Assembly? It has been the only time that closure has been used to date in this province, the first time, the only time that closure has been used here in Saskatchewan.

Fat chance, I say, that this will be the only time the people of Saskatchewan see closure. The people of Saskatchewan under this government will see closure invoked when it comes to the privatization not just of the Saskatchewan potash corporation or the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. I say, Mr. Speaker, that closure will be used very deliberately by this government again to legitimate the privatization of health care in this province. That will be a battle royal when we come to the privatization of health care and the elimination of medicare, a battle that will make this battle over potash pale into insignificance. But now that the tool of closure has been used for potash it will be used for medicare and health care if they're re-elected, if they're re-elected.

And that's why we have closure today, as I say, to ensure that re-election. Privatization of health care — how could that come about, some people might ask. Isn't that exactly what we've seen, Mr. Speaker, with the cuts to the prescription drug program where if you want your medicine you pay for it up front? Don't look to the

government to provide you with pills; you take care of your own medical needs. That's the beginning of the privatization of health care, where Saskatchewan people who can't afford medicine have to front the costs. That's what happened in the spring of 1987 — the two-tiered medical system.

The privatization of health care from this government — have we seen that? Not just in the elimination of the prescription drug program as we knew it, but in the changes and the cut-backs to the dental program for children. That too was privatization of health care. That too was saying to people in rural Saskatchewan, your children need their teeth looked after; don't look to government to do that for you; don't look to the schools to provide dental clinics. Look to yourself to take time off of harvest or seeding and drive your children into a major centre to get their teeth looked at. And it doesn't matter whether it's 5 miles away or 50 miles away, the responsibility is yours.

And that's why we have closure today, to use it and invoke it if they're re-elected, should they be so lucky, should they be able to buy the people of Saskatchewan with potash money. That's why we have closure here today.

What I find so offensive, personally, Mr. Speaker, with the use of closure, is the manner in which this government would foist privatization off on the public without public debate. We all know that there is scant attention being paid to the debates of this Legislative Assembly ever since the summer holidays began when children got out of school. At the best of times there's scant attention paid to public debate, and it really hinges on those moments of excess or brilliance that happen to make the television clips or the news reports. And particularly when people are at the lake or on holidays out of province for the summer months, the proceedings of the legislature don't assume an importance any more great than they ordinarily have.

But this government now wants to foist off on the public, without full debate, by virtue of closure, the privatization of potash so that they can buy the next election. And I say they have no mandate to do this. My colleagues have talked about this. The Premier of the province himself, and the Deputy Premier, have said the contrary, that they had no intention at all before the 1986 election — no intention whatsoever — of privatizing SaskPower, or SGI, or the potash corporation.

But just like the cuts to medicare in the spring of 1987, just like those cut-backs for which this government had no mandate although they were re-elected . . . Those weren't part of the package that Saskatchewan people bought when they voted for the Progressive Conservative Party candidates. There was no mention of that. There was no consultation on those cut-backs, so there was no public consultation and there was no mandate for the privatization agenda that this Premier has embarked on. And it's really part of this government's mandate to govern by executive decree as they perceive it to be.

Mr. Speaker, as I've sat here these last days and weeks and months of the session, as you yourself have, I've become

increasingly aware that the legislature is here this session for one reason and one reason only, this session, and that is to privatize — to see the government's privatization agenda through.

And this was signalled, as you'll recall, in the Speech from the Throne on Wednesday, March 8 when the government announced its intentions to privatize SaskPower and PCS and SGI. And one week later when the first piece of legislation was introduced into this Assembly, Bill No. 1 for first reading, what was that Act? It was an Act to establish the public participation program, which is a euphemism for privatization, as we all know.

And what are we dealing with today, Mr. Speaker? What have we dealt with most of the days of this session? Privatization, privatization — not the people's business.

And I want to close by saying, Mr. Speaker, where is the will of the public to privatize? Where do we see or find or hear that expression of public opinion that simply is crying out for the government to privatize?

We don't see it. In fact, we can read *Maclean's* magazine of this week, and I quote an article entitled, "A prairie deadlocked on privatization deal, debate heats up in Regina." Quote:

In May 1 an Angus Reid Associates poll showed that Premier Grant Devine's Tories had the support of a mere 33 per cent of the public, 21 points behind the New Democratic Party standing.

That same poll, would you believe, found that 58 per cent of the respondents were against the government's privatization plans, with only 27 per cent expressing support. And the polls have only gotten worse since then.

Where is the public resolve to see privatization implemented as the number one agenda of this province? I don't see it — and I'm not alone; the public doesn't see it. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that the government doesn't see it either, because it simply isn't there.

When the government doesn't hear an outcry for privatization, though, what does it do? It'll even resort to the invocation of closure today to ram privatization down the throats of Saskatchewan people. And I don't say it's ramming it down the throats of those of us who are members of the legislature. That's beside the point, that's academic. The real point to be made today is that the privatization agenda of this government is being rammed down the throats of the public, with no mandate, to ensure the re-election fortunes of this government when they come to the point of orchestrating the next election.

You yourself know, Mr. Speaker, that fully one-half of the public business, more than half of it, hasn't been done this session yet in five months. Half of the estimates, including estimates for the largest of government departments, hasn't been done, and yet there's been ample time for ramming the privatization agenda down the throats of the public at every opportunity.

Half of the legislation tabled by this government was only

introduced after mid-July. Why? Because of the privatization agenda. And now we have closure. When the government has had all sorts of opportunities to do the public business, now we have closure invoked in the name of getting on with the public business.

It's not the public business; it's the business of getting this PC government re-elected once again. It's at the top of the PC agenda and it comes from the top of the government itself, the Premier, who can't even get up yet to date and defend his agenda and share a defence of it, who can justify this major policy initiative with studies or documentation. Have we seen those? No, we haven't. The institute for Saskatchewan studies can present bogus reports on privatization and on potash, but not a word do we hear from the head of state here in Saskatchewan in defence of his own agenda. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that's because it's a raw political agenda.

It's not the agenda of a leader, a leader like Allan Blakeney, a decade or more ago when he introduced privatization . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed.

Mr. Lyons: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that in entering the debate today obviously none of us in the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan on this side of the House are pleased to be debating a motion which would gag us and which would gag the voicepieces of the people of this province, as opposed to the multinational corporations, the mouthpieces of which sit on that side of the House.

But in having to debate this particular motion, Mr. Speaker, I've got a story to relate to you and then some comments to make regarding that story. As is usual, the first Sunday of every month in my constituency I meet with constituents over supper at a local pizzeria, Juliana's Pizza, and we sit down and talk about politics. And some of those people belong to the New Democratic Party and are members and some are supporters and some aren't. And last night's topic at Juliana's Pizza, when we began to discuss after supper, was the whole question of closure and how one goes about dealing with a government which attempts to impose its will over the obvious and expressed will of the majority of the people of Saskatchewan.

And there was a member sitting at the table, one of the people sitting down there, turned to me and said, are you telling me, Mr. Lyons, that I went to war . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. You should not refer to members by name in the legislature. Whether you use your own name, it's still out of order. So I'd ask the member not to refer to himself by name.

(1815)

Mr. Lyons: — Well they were asking, were you . . . thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The gentleman turned to me and said, do you mean to tell me, Mr. Blank, that I went to war in the Second World War and I put my life on the line so that a government here in Canada and a government here in Saskatchewan would have the right to dictate to

me — not speaking of myself, but of the person who was talking to me — has the right to dictate to the people of this province something that is obvious to every man, woman, and child in Saskatchewan, something which is obvious to every political commentator all across Canada, that the privatization of the potash corporation or of SaskEnergy or all this privatization stuff, are you telling me that a government has got a right to ram this stuff down our throats even though they know we don't want it?

And in that conversation, before I get to the end of it, he then asked me some questions about bell-ringing, whether it would be appropriate or not to walk out of the legislature, to have mobilized the people of Saskatchewan, as was done earlier on this year, to show the government in the most graphic example possible that the people of this province oppose their right-wing ideological privatization agenda.

And I responded to that. Says yes we could, but what they would do then would just end the session, prorogue it, turn around, bring in a new session with a set of Draconian rules which would make closure look like child's play. Because that's what they will do. That's what they would do, and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that — and I will deal with this a little later — that that in fact is on their agenda, political agenda.

So, Mr. Speaker, after dealing with this, the gentleman who was a veteran of the Second World War said, well you know what's happening here, don't you. And I said, what? He said, what's happening here is that we've elected a bunch of dictators the same way that the Germans elected Hitler; the same way that they elected Mussolini; the same way that people elect dictators over the will of the people. He said, but there was a difference. When the German people elected Hitler in 1933, Hitler put out his political program for them and they voted for him on that basis. The difference this time is that we've elected a little dictator and he didn't tell us what he stood for.

Now this person is obviously partisan, this person is biased, he supports the political viewpoint that I represent, but he's a veteran, and he understands how — as several members have mentioned here before — he understands how it is that totalitarianism doesn't necessarily come out in broad daylight and kick your front door down with jackboots. But the real threat to democracy and the real threat to the people's freedom comes in the steady and slow erosion bit by bit by bit; the undercutting, the cutting off, and the chipping away at the fundamental freedoms.

The fundamental freedoms which characterizes every free society, whatever the nature of its economic basis, the fundamental freedoms which were fought and won, not in this century alone, not in the last century, but over the centuries as the serfs in Britain and in France organized themselves for the right of assembly to present grievances to the king; or the nobles back in Runnymede, organize themselves to present grievances to the legitimate authority; or those who earlier on and through the centuries have organized them, demanding the right that they have the legitimate right to be heard and

legitimate voice to be heard and to take that voice to establish the conduct of public affairs. Those fundamental freedoms summed up in the freedom of speech and the right of assembly and the other associated freedoms which characterized any democratic society or any society moving towards that democratic state.

What we've seen, Mr. Speaker, what I have seen since I was elected in 1986, was this government chopping away at those fundamental freedoms, this government inching bit by bit by bit, closing off, not in one totalitarian swoop, not in a right-wing *coup d'état*, but through the steady erosion, like the water torture, slowly eroding the stone.

And that's what we have and that's what we are faced with here today, Mr. Speaker, another little chipping away at the fundamental rights of the people — not of the legislators, but of the people and those legislators who pertain and stand for and say that they in fact act in the interests of the people.

You know, the members opposite have made a great to-do, they have made a great to-do about the fact that well, Saskatchewan is one of the few places left in Canada where bell-ringing is allowed. And I say to that, hooray, because it shows the strength of the popular movement and of the people's organizations in Saskatchewan to stand up and not allow those who would take their freedoms away from them, their strength and ability to hold on to those freedoms. And that's what that stands for symbolically, because the people of Saskatchewan fundamentally believe that the opposition has the right to oppose; and if they oppose unreasonably, they will be dealt with through the political process, that is, at the next election.

But if they oppose reasonably and in a manner which best represents their interest, the people of Saskatchewan, recognizing that reasonable opposition, as they did during the 17 days of bell-ringing, and as they do now through our extended debate and extended speeches opposing the privatization of the potash industry in Saskatchewan, the people will then reward them with the confidence and their trust at the next provincial election.

That's how politics in Saskatchewan worked, Mr. Speaker, up until the 1986 election and the increasing strengthening of the authoritarian hand of this lunatic, right-wing government trying to impose its miserable economic agenda on the people, because that's what's happened. In losing touch with the people of Saskatchewan, in totally divorcing themselves from the desires of the people, this government has continually had to resort to measures which chipped away at the fundamental freedoms. And today we see another step in that direction.

No, the use of closure in this legislature does not mean that democracy will shut down in Saskatchewan tomorrow. You can bet your bottom dollar on that, because each and every member of this side of the legislature will be engaging the people of Saskatchewan in the real debate over what has taken place here. The people of Saskatchewan have memories and they will remember, whether it's 12 months or 18 months from

now, that this was the government which began and continued to chip away at their fundamental freedoms.

Leave aside for a moment the fact that the great majority of people in Saskatchewan are increasingly and more hard, hard, hard against the privatization agenda of the Devine PC government — excuse me, Mr. Speaker, I'll withdraw the Devine PC government — of this PC government. Leave aside for the moment that people do not agree or do not believe that what this government is doing is in their best interest. Leave that aside for a moment.

Because what the people will, as my colleague has said earlier on, will remember this session for is that besides the members of this side of the House standing up and acting in their interest and speaking out as their legitimate voices here in the legislature, that beside that fact, this session will be remembered as the session that the government couldn't put through its agenda because it did not have popular support and it had to resort to the kind of dictatorial methods which characterize it — not a democratic government, but a dictatorial and authoritarian one.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lyons: — In some ways, Mr. Speaker, it's a mark of respect. What we're facing here tonight is in some ways, a backhanded mark of respect — not only to my caucus colleagues who have stood up and fought the good fight, put forward the arguments, put forward the rational and logical economic reasons why this government should not sell off the future heritage of Saskatchewan — it's a mark of respect for us, sure. But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, it's a mark of disrespect of a government who disrespects and has no respect of a government who disrespects and has no respect for the wishes of the people of Saskatchewan.

This government knows — indeed, they know only too well, part of this government knows only too well — what the people of Saskatchewan think of their privatization efforts. This little clique on the front bench, which has access to the Tanka Research and the Summerhill Research and the Nancy McLean and associate focus groups, all understand only too well that their core support for privatization has sunk and has shrunk to a scant 20 to 25 per cent. That's their core, and they know it.

The Minister of Finance, with his head down over there, knows it darn well, that that's where they're sitting, and that each time they put out one of their phoney lines why things should be privatized they know too well that the response of the people of Saskatchewan has been disbelief, incredulity and an increasing amount of contempt, a contempt for a government which tries to treat them with arrogance, which tries to treat them as somehow children who don't know any better, because that's the image that this government has out there among the populace.

This closure motion confirms in the eyes of the public, confirms in the minds of the people of Saskatchewan that this government has nothing but contempt for them, that this government will not listen to what they have to say,

that this government has its own agenda and has its own backers beyond the borders of Saskatchewan, beyond the borders of Saskatchewan and beyond the borders of Canada, financially and politically, who have set their agenda. And they are nothing more than the little hand puppets of the multinational corporations carrying out their bidding, and in this case, Mr. Speaker, the bidding of the potash big boys.

My colleague, the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake, I think, raised a very good question: have they already sold off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to those foreign interests? You know, Mr. Speaker, it was not long ago that we saw here in this Chamber Wan Li, the vice-president of China, the man who backed Li Peng's massacre of the students in Tiananmen Square, playing buddy buddy with the front bench of the Conservative government. And usually, you know, something tells me that you don't have the vice-president, the second most important man in the world's largest country, coming to little old Saskatchewan just to pay a friendly courtesy visit, just to pay a friendly courtesy visit.

It seems to me that when we see the Chinese dictators dealing with the Saskatchewan dictators, that they're up to something. And I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier, who supported a resolution in this House that said that they would no longer continue negotiating with the Chinese, did so with the understanding that there was no need to worry about that; that in fact the negotiations had already occurred, had taken place, and that the deal was signed, sealed, and done.

But that's the reality, and that's why we have here today in this legislature a motion which takes away the voice of the people of Saskatchewan, takes away their heritage, takes away their financial future and turns it over into the blood-drenched hands of the Wan Li and Li Pengs of the world, because that is the reality of what this government has done, Mr. Speaker; that is the reality of what they've done.

(1830)

We didn't see the Premier of the province going on the Orient express, wasting tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money, for nothing. He wasn't just going to China to eat egg rolls. He was going there to sew up, to sew up the sale of the future of the people of Saskatchewan through the sale of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say that what the government has done by introducing closure into this Legislative Assembly is, in fact, a mark of respect — backhanded, none the less, but still it's a mark of recognition of the strength of the people of Saskatchewan and of the opposition to their narrowly defined economic agenda. It's that mark that says that, we have got to tramp on the fundamental freedoms that have always existed in this legislature so that we can drive this privatization agenda through, so that we can ram through the sell-off of the potash corporation or SaskEnergy or SGI, and all those things that they've got on the plate in the future, that that's what it's about.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, in doing so it shows even

more how isolated this government is. It shows how narrow their social base is. It exposes even more plainly to the people of Saskatchewan precisely whom this government speaks for. Because, like my veteran friend, who last night said to me, have we gone ahead and elected a dictatorship, there are literally hundreds of thousands of people across the province who are asking the same question and who are coming up with the same response. And the answer to that question is yes, we have.

And it's not the most powerful dictatorship that we will ever see in this world. One would, in fact, characterize it as a kind of little tinpot despotism which will be easily swept away, provided of course that the government doesn't decide to produce closure on the next provincial general election; provided that they don't try to change the electoral rules like they're doing in the electoral boundaries Act, provided that they don't try to somehow, as they look at the polls, and month after month after month find themselves mired in the political mud hole that the little clique on the front bench have put them all into . . . Right? Provided that they don't . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, history will show, history will show that on black Friday, August 4, 1989, the PC Government of Saskatchewan moved to limit debate in the Legislative Assembly for the first time in 84 years of democratic government in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, history will show as well that in 1989, as the people of this province celebrated a holiday known as Saskatchewan Day — today, Saskatchewan Day of all days — as the citizens of this province celebrated Saskatchewan Day, the PC government, led by the Premier from Estevan, invoked closure on their motion to limit debate.

It's closure on closure and it's wrong; it's doubly wrong, Mr. Speaker, from the PC government in Saskatchewan today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan governments have allowed the opposition full debate for 84 years — for 84 years in this province. And the PC government has now invoked closure on two consecutive days — on two consecutive days — after 84 years of democratic government without it being used once. They've said, they've said that, we will use our majority to teach the opposition a lesson. That's what they've said. And I say, Mr. Speaker, I say to the Government of Saskatchewan today, to the PC government, you may try to use your majority to teach the opposition a lesson today, but in the end it is you who will pay the price — it is you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, this is a government afraid of words, afraid of words and afraid of ideas, afraid to let opposition MLAs, elected by their constituents to speak for them, do just that in these legislative chambers, the chamber so the people. Mr. Speaker, this is in my view a despicable act by a desperate government, a blatant betrayal of principles of democracy by a PC

government that has lost touch with the people and no longer even pretends to respect the traditions of democracy in Saskatchewan.

I have to ask the obvious question, because there is an obvious question that begs to be asked in this debate that we're involved in now. And the question is this. If this is how the PC government treats those who are democratically elected to speak for the electorate in the Legislative Assembly, what freedom of speech is there for individual Saskatchewan citizens in our province today? If this is how this government will treat those who are elected to speak, Mr. Speaker, for an individual citizen, that is not an encouraging sign.

This PC government with this motion has said formally and officially with their closure upon closure motion, they said, if you dare to oppose us, if you dare to criticize us, if you dare to speak against us, we will eliminate your right to speak. That's what they've said. And I say this PC government no longer deserves to govern, and the sooner they're gone for the people of Saskatchewan the better, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make some observations about the government's move and their motions and their actions and this motion to cut off debate on the Bill to privatize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. And I recognize that some of these have been referred to before, but in speaking for the constituents of Moose Jaw North, I feel it is important to include them in my debate in this sad but historic debate that we're involved in today.

Number one, Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting, as I've listened over the last two days of this Legislative Assembly, that not a single member of the government, not a single member has offered any defence of their position to move this motion — not a single one. The mover and the seconder and every member since then has chosen only to attack the NDP. That's been the content of their speeches, only to attack the NDP, and it parallels their debate in the potash Bill itself. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it speaks miles for the lack of vision and commitment to democracy that is implicit in this motion that they've put forth today.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I point out that not a single member of the government yet, in two days of debate, not a single member of the government has quoted a precedent — not one. First of all, of course, in Saskatchewan it's impossible to quote a precedent. There are none.

But secondly, Mr. Speaker, they've made no reference to any other Legislative Assembly in Canada or the Commonwealth. Lord only knows, they could have, because PC governments across this nation are using closure, but they didn't even bother to do that.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, I note with interest that not a single government member has offered to explain the urgency. What is the urgency? They said, we've got to have it, but not a single member, including the Premier who has

refused to enter into this debate, not a single member has attempted to explain to the people of Saskatchewan why the urgency to cut off the right to speak of those who are elected to speak in this Chamber.

And so you have to ask, has there been a devious deal struck in the dark chambers behind closed cabinet doors, perhaps with one of the private potash companies here in Saskatchewan; perhaps, as others have referred to in this Assembly, with foreign interests, foreign governments as a result of the Premier's Oriental express in the spring of this year.

I note with interest, Mr. Speaker, that when this Bill goes through, if it is passed, that literally 80 per cent, over 80 per cent of the potash production in the province of Saskatchewan will be foreign owned, owned outside of Canada. And literally, Mr. Speaker, over 90 per cent of the production of potash will be owned outside of Saskatchewan. The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan today ensures that 40 per cent of the production of potash is owned by the people of Saskatchewan.

Is it the per diems? I've noticed with interest that the Tory members opposite have gotten mighty antsy since the per diems have been cut off. And I speculate, Mr. Speaker, that the greed of a Tory knows no bounds.

Maybe they're having trouble keeping their MLAs here, Mr. Speaker, involved in a debate of principle about the future of the province of Saskatchewan, ignoring the fact that before Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was created, this province saw only \$2 million a year in taxes and royalties, and after the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan came into being in 1976, in its first five years we saw that increased to \$200 million a year. But they've ignored that.

So I ask: what is the urgency? How can a government possibly move this kind of Draconian piece of legislation, to change a rule without agreement of the opposition, without even attempting to explain the reason for their urgency? Mr. Speaker, I find that offensive and so do my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I want to comment specifically on the two speeches presented in this Assembly related to this by the Minister of Finance, also the minister responsible for the potash corporation, the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden. Some months ago when he introduced Bill 20 to piratize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, he stood in his place and he spoke with no vision, gave no reasons, and spoke with no passion.

But I found it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that when he stood in his place last Friday to speak on the Bill to eliminate the right of the opposition to speak, he spoke again with no vision, he spoke again with no reasons, but this time, Mr. Speaker, he spoke with passion. What does it say about the minister responsible, who gets passionate about cutting off the right of the opposition to speak, but has no vision when he speaks about a Bill to dramatically change the economic future of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I note as well that not once, not once in this entire debate has any single member opposite attempted

to give an explanation as to the economic advantages of piratizing the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan — not once. Not once has anyone attempted to defend it in economic terms — not a single member.

When I've listened to their speeches, they've followed an interesting format, and they go like this: the New Democrats formed the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan; we don't like the New Democrats; therefore we don't like the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan; and therefore we're going to get rid of it. That's their argument. That's the sum total for the arguments we've heard from those members who have dared to stand on their hind legs and speak in this Legislative Assembly. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that that is a speech formula that is tailor-made for members in a party that's on its way to extinction.

When we listen, Mr. Speaker, to the essential message, what members have said in this Assembly and to the media, they've made it very clear that they have little respect for speech as an integral facet of democracy.

(1845)

All of us will remember about a year and a half ago in this Assembly when the former premier of Saskatchewan, Allan Blakeney, retired from elected life and was honoured in this Assembly. He stood, and how did he describe this place, Mr. Speaker? Did he describe it, after 26 years of service to the people of Saskatchewan, did he describe this place as a place where we vote? He described the meaning of this place as a talking place, a place where, yes, we come to vote, but just as importantly — and in the long run, Mr. Speaker, maybe even more importantly, more importantly — as a place where we stand and we stand to say not only where it is we stand but why we stand there. And that's what debate is all about — to let those who chose to send us here understand where we stand but why we stand there.

Contrast that, if you will, with the Premier of Saskatchewan who, time after time, has said to the opposition, if you believe in democracy, why don't you just stand and vote? That's what the Premier says. That's the only thing that has any importance in this place. And I say, Mr. Speaker, I say to the Premier of Saskatchewan, a vote without a speech is a shallow vote, and it reflects the understanding of democracy that all those members have on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker — shallow at best.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the PC MLAs on the other side say that this debate is annoying them. And I say, ain't that too bad. It may be annoying you, but it is not annoying the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we know — everyone knows — that the PC Government of Saskatchewan spends millions of dollars taking public opinion polls. That's no secret; we all know that.

I have to wonder, Mr. Speaker, are they not taking any polls on the public support for piratizing the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan? We've heard all about them. But I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that with these hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money that

are being spent on taking polls about the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan privatization, not a single poll, not a single poll has been leaked.

And so I have to wonder, Mr. Speaker, I have to wonder, what are the polls saying? And does it reflect that as a matter of fact they have little support? They have little support and so they say in this House, Mr. Speaker, we have little support and now is the time to silence those who speak the truth.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this motion brought before us is seven times worse than closure — seven times worse. This motion says that there shall be no more than 18 hours of debate in second readings, and there shall be no more than 18 hours of questions asked in Committee of the Whole over no more than four days, two days each.

Closure itself, the rule that exists, although it had never been used until today, provided for 20 days, for four weeks. And so we have to conclude that this government, Mr. Speaker, with this motion, is seven times as radical, seven times as radical as if they would have used closure.

I have to say to the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, if you have the courage of your convictions, then there is no reason, there is no reason to force the end of an exchange of words and ideas.

Members before me have referred to the fact that if this closure upon closure can be used one, it can be used again and again and again and again — SaskPower this fall, health and education and social services and SGI. Tumbling blocks, Mr. Speaker, fall in one after the other.

But I want to say as well, Mr. Speaker, that this motion has nothing to do with political philosophy. It has everything to do with denial of a fundamental freedom. Around the world today people are dying, people are dying for the right to elect representatives to speak for them in their own Legislative Assembly chambers.

And I say to this government, you don't need closure; what you need is a mandate. You don't have a mandate to privatize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. You know how to go and get one if you want one.

And I say to the members opposite and to the PC Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, scrap this motion and let the people tell you if they give you a mandate. If you'd do the honourable thing, instead of calling a closure you'd call an election and let the people decide on the future of their province — that's what you'd do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, my time is limited, and so let me conclude by reflecting on some words from the song entitled, *Pass It On*, sung by Judy Collins, words that I find very significant, and particularly today, and the words are these:

Freedom, freedom is a hard won thing
You've got to work for it, fight for it, day and night
for it

And every generation's got to win it again;
Pass it on.

Freedom, freedom is a hard won thing
You've got to work for it, fight for it, day and night
for it
And every generation's got to win it again;
Pass it on.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this motion is about freedom. It's about freedom of speech. It's worth working for, it's worth fighting for in order to pass it on — to pass it on to future legislators, but more importantly, Mr. Speaker, to pass it on to future generations in the province of Saskatchewan.

And so I say, along with my colleagues in the New Democratic Party, New Democrats believe in Saskatchewan; New Democrats believe in the future of Saskatchewan; New Democrats believe in the people of Saskatchewan; and New Democrats believe in freedom for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, along with my colleagues in the New Democratic Party, I will be voting yes to all of those and no to this infringement on a fundamental freedom of the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, it's with a great deal of disappointment that I rise and have to become involved in this debate to introduce closure for the first time in the history of the province. I deliberately waited a few seconds, Mr. Speaker, you will have noticed, in order to allow members of the government to stand and take their place and be put on the record — few have today — in particular, the Premier of the province. In particular, the Premier of the province, who to this point has not entered the debate on the potash Bill, Bill 20, or on the motion that will introduce closure for the first time in the history. He fails to become involved in the debate.

Mr. Speaker, this individual who has brought us to this point, starting out this legislative session you'll remember back where he talked about privatization in glowing terms. Privatize what? The throne speech — we were going to privatize SaskPower; we were going to privatize SGI; and we were going to privatize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

And every day in the House for the first few days he wanted to talk in question period. You'd ask him a question about farming and he would talk about privatization. You ask him a question about health care; he would talk about privatization. Ask the Premier a question on anything in April of 1989; he would answer you with the privatization theme of his government.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we've come a long way in the last four or five months to the day when the Premier sits in this House all day. He's been here virtually all day . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I must draw to the member's attention that the indication that a member is present or absent is a breach of the rules of our House.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I say the Premier has not entered the debate today. In the debate that has gone on on Bill 20, which the Premier says is too long, he hasn't taken the occasion to rise in his place and enter the debate.

Now I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, it's a sad day. Let's compare it to the football team who comes into the game. More players, more players than we have, they get to choose the game that's to be played — privatization. They get to choose the referee, they get to choose the referee, and they still lose the game. Mr. Speaker, not only do they lose, but when they start losing, they say, let's change the rules of the game because we don't have enough advantage. We got more players, we choose the referee, we choose the game privatization, but now we got to change the rules in order to win.

And I say to you the rule that was changed, and I want to quote to you:

That the Assembly do not sit in the mornings until the work of Crown Corporations Committee, Private Bills Committee, and Public Accounts . . . is completed.

This is not a rule but is a long-standing tradition in this House. In fact the date on this is April 18, 1970. This is in the rule book; it isn't a rule but is in the appendix, and is the rule that this House has dealt with and lived with since 1970s, 19 years ago.

So the government says we can't win this game that we chose; the Premier chose the game, so we're going to change the rules. And they make the House sit from 8 in the morning, starting Monday morning, until 11, every day of the week, including sitting until 11 on Friday, and they think that this will win them the game.

And then after the rule has been changed, they keep up the debate for a couple of weeks and find they're still losing in the opinion polls and in the minds of the people in the province. And so what do they do then? Well then they say to the people of the province, we're not playing the game any more; we're not going to play any more. We got the most players; we choose the game that we're going to play, we pick the referee; we change the rules to our best advantage and we still can't win, so we're going to quit playing.

Well wouldn't that tell the ordinary person something about the team that is playing the game, that they're on the wrong track, that they should try to do things differently instead of attacking the rules of the Assembly in terms of whether or not they're the correct rules.

Well I say that closure is the most despicable rule that this government could invoke at this time. And I say that clearly because it wasn't a rule that was invoked by members of the CCF back when they implemented medicare, and it was a great debate. It was a debate that went on for a long time. They didn't invoke it when the deterrent fees were being introduced by the Liberals. It wasn't introduced at that time.

It wasn't put in place back in the great potash debate back

in 1975 and '76. I have here the *Hansard*, and the debate went on for days and days. In fact the debate now, in terms of committee on this Bill, will be a third of the length that it was back in 1976 when committee stage lasted for six days.

This volume, this much of the debate that took place at that time was when the now Leader of the Opposition, the attorney general at that time, was piloting the Bill through the House, and he was on his feet for five days in committee while different members asked him questions, including the now Minister of Finance who ironically is piloting Bill 10 through the House today. I say that minister is afraid of the Leader of the Opposition, that's why he's not willing to answer questions unlimited in this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: — He's not willing to, Mr. Speaker, because he knows that he is going to be ripped apart when it comes to answering important questions about the potash privatization. I want to say as well that the Minister of Justice this morning talked as if he were a great defender of democracy in this Assembly.

I say, people can either laugh or cry, and there's no sense crying in this situation, so I guess they'll laugh at this individual portraying himself as a protector of democracy.

An Hon. Member: — Did he touch a nerve there?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well he touched a nerve all right, a nerve of irony. Because this is the same minister who earlier in this session got into all the conflict with the public over the auditor's report and the auditor personally. This is the minister who attacked the auditor — attacked the auditor. I say to you, this minister the press took on and said should not be the Minister of Justice because of this undaunted attack on the auditor who was unable to defend himself.

Now I say when the Minister of Justice takes this approach to the debate that he now pretends to be the saviour of democracy, I say one can either laugh or cry and in this case I think most people in the province are laughing at that minister.

(1900)

Now why is it that we have reached this point, this quagmire in the debate on Bill 20 where the government feels it has to move closure in order to get its Bill put through? Well it's clear that the people of the province don't want the potash corporation privatized. They don't want to be having governments in Hong Kong or New Delhi or Singapore deciding what the potash corporation should be doing here in the province of Saskatchewan.

They have said to the government and through the opposition that they're opposed to that concept of privatization; they don't want it to be taking place. And not only that, not only on potash, but at every turn the people of the province have learned that privatization has failed.

There's three main criteria how you can judge whether an economic strategy is working or not. Is the debt of the province being reduced as a result of privatization? We've increased taxes, we've privatized, we've sold off major assets. Saskoil has been sold, Sask Minerals, many parts of the potash corporation and SaskPower and SaskTel. The problem is the debt keeps going up. It now stands at \$13 billion and growing rapidly.

Well is the unemployment rate going down? I say again, no, the unemployment rate is sky-rocketing, and we have record numbers of families leaving this province. So on that criteria privatization has failed.

Well what about services? Are the roads getting any better? Is the bus line and bus service better? Is the health care better as a result of privatizing the dental plan? On every one of those counts this government has failed with its privatization plan. So it is little wonder then that we have arrived at this state, Mr. Speaker, where the government is invoking closure.

Well I say to the Minister of Justice, I'm surprised at him and his role in that government, and I suppose it will be one of the reasons that he will be demoted or kicked out of cabinet, is because of his role in terms of attacking the auditor. But I say to you that we have to look at the role of the government, the role of the government in terms of why they are moving closure.

They have other options. The other option open to a government, obviously, if you're winning in a debate is to call an election. This is the beautiful option of being in government, that if you're winning on a debate at any time you can simply call an election. This is what the government did in Alberta. They found an issue, they called an election, they went to the polls. They didn't do that well, but they won the election.

I say this Premier today does not have the courage of his conviction on privatization that he had back in April. At that time the issue of the next election was going to be privatization. We've now arrived at a stalemate on privatization. It would seem to me that the logical thing for him to do would be to pull the pin and call an election. But he's not doing that; he's not even getting involved in the debate, and certainly not on closure, because he believes that if he doesn't speak on it, no one will blame him. Well he couldn't be more wrong, because we're not going to let him forget.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to talk as well, just for a moment before I close, about the role of the press in this debate. First of all, I used the example of the *Star-Phoenix*, which on July 27 the headline said, "Debate should run its course", and went on in the editorial to lay out why there should be no curbs on the speeches given in the House — why there should be no curbs. And in the end, it says:

It's better to let the debate go on. If MLAs want to take their time debating privatization and pay their own expenses while they're at it, let them do it.

This was on July 27. Then on August 5, after closure was being announced and contemplated by the government, then the *Star-Phoenix* says, "Reasonable limit will focus potash debate." It says here that:

This will focus democracy in this case.

Will focus democracy in this case. Well I say the irony in here is that there's also responsibility in the press that has to be brought to bear. Now where is the debate going to go after the government uses closure? Will it end? Well I say no, it will not end. Where it will go is to the newspapers and to the air waves; that millions of dollars, in fact, will be spent by this government on the potash debate which they refuse to debate here in the Assembly because they know they can't win here.

Now who will be paying for that advertising? Will it be the Conservative Party? No way. The taxpayers who are opposed to this plan will pay the price.

But I say what the press has to be called to account is this. Who are they going to be paying the money to? Who are they going to be paying the money to? They're going to be paying it to the TV stations, to the newspapers and to the radios.

Now I say, when this debate re-enters the public forum, when these ads begin to run, the *Star-Phoenix* and the *Leader-Post* and others who say the debate should be ending, I believe it will be incumbent on them to say, look this is a wrong-headed idea that taxpayers' money should be spent in our newspapers to sell a line that is unpopular with the people of the province. That should be incumbent on them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Now I want to say again in closing that all members of the opposition are terribly disappointed in this government, terribly disappointed in this government. That their agenda . . . they couldn't keep to an agenda, that we had to spend most of the session on, privatization, which no one apparently wants.

When we weren't dealing with that, we were dealing with scandal after scandal of this government. GigaText and the Premier's role in that, in court documents that show him involved in the case to the extent of using Guy Montpetit's limousine when he travelled to Montreal.

The biggest disappointment of all, Mr. Speaker, is the lack of involvement by the Premier in this debate, either on Bill 20 or on the motion that will restrict for the first time in the history the debate here in the Assembly. He can't skate around it. He's the Premier. He's just not being involved where I think a Premier has a duty to be if he's going to move closure. He should either call an election or get involved and defend this government's role in moving closure — one or the other.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I say again, it's a dark day in the province of Saskatchewan — Saskatchewan

Day, a holiday. This government chooses to move the motion 8 a.m. in the morning on a holiday when they know there's not going to be a lot of attention paid to it. The Premier attempts to stay out of the debate.

I say to the Premier, in leaving this debate, which I intend to vote against this motion, that I challenge him to rise in his place now. I'll give up my place now in order for him to get involved in the debate so he can defend potash privatization, and more importantly, the movement of a motion to use closure for the first time in 84 years. I challenge him to do that now.

Berntson
Lane
Taylor
Smith
Swan
Muirhead
Maxwell
Schmidt
Hodgins
Gerich
Hepworth

Toth
Johnson
McLaren
Petersen
Swenson
Martens
Baker
Wolfe
Gleim
Saxinger
Britton

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Nays — 26

The division bells rang from 7:10 p.m. until 7:11 p.m.

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 25

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

Romanow
Prebble
Rolfes
Shillington
Lingenfelter
Tchorzewski
Koskie
Thompson
Brockelbank
Mitchell
Upshall
Simard
Kowalsky

Solomon
Atkinson
Anguish
Goulet
Hagel
Pringle
Lyons
Calvert
Lautermilch
Trew
Smart
Van Mulligen
Koenker

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

The Assembly adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Nays — 29

Devine	Hardy
Muller	Meiklejohn
McLeod	Martin
Andrew	Toth
Berntson	Johnson
Lane	McLaren
Taylor	Petersen
Smith	Swenson
Swan	Martens
Muirhead	Baker
Maxwell	Wolfe
Schmidt	Gleim
Hodgins	Saxinger
Gerich	Britton
Hepworth	

The division bells rang from 7:13 p.m. to 7:47 p.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 30

Devine	Hardy
Muller	Klein
McLeod	Meiklejohn
Andrew	Martin