

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish at this time, Mr. Speaker, to present several pages of petition on behalf of the farmers and urban people in province of Saskatchewan with regards to the GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) program that has been gutted by our government. And they wish to show their opposition to the things that have been done.

To the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in Legislature Assembled:

The Petition of the undersigned farmers and citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan humbly sheweth:

The Government of Saskatchewan entered into legally binding contracts with them to provide a Gross Revenue Insurance Program explicitly guaranteeing that the provisions of the contract would not be changed without notice being given to farmers by March 15, 1992, and that the Government has announced its intention before the Courts in Melville that it proposes to pass a law saying farmers received such notice when in actual fact they did not and concerned that the crisis on the farm is being made much worse by these actions:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government to

- (1) allow the 1991 GRIP program to stand for this year,
- (2) start working with the federal government and farmers to design a program that will be a true "REVENUE INSURANCE" program by the end of this calendar year, and
- (3) ensure that the new revenue insurance program be set up on an individual cost-of-production to return ratio instead of risk area formula.

And as in duty bound, your petition will ever pray.

And we have several names and several sheets. And if a page would come forward, I would have these laid on the table, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition here today with respect to the GRIP changes. I won't go through . . . it basically covers the same format as the petition that my colleague presented. There are names on the petition from all over western Saskatchewan — south-western Saskatchewan. One that stands out, I'm having a little difficulty making out the name, but it's Bernie Weins, of Richmond, Saskatchewan. At this time, I'd like to present this petition, Mr. Speaker.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, sitting in your Speaker's gallery, 74 grade 5 students and their teachers and chaperon from McLurg School in my constituency. I will be pleased to meet with them after question period, Mr. Speaker, to discuss the events of the day and to answer any questions they may have. I look forward to doing that.

Accompanying the students are the teachers, Mrs. Carol Grant, Mrs. Joddy Graham, Mrs. Verna Taylor, and a chaperon, Mrs. Anderson. I would ask all members to join with me this afternoon in welcoming them to the Assembly.

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

**Mr. Roy:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the other members of the legislature, 14 grade 8 students from Cudworth, Saskatchewan. And they're accompanied by their schoolteacher Tom Thomas. They're seated in your east gallery, Mr. Speaker.

And I'd also like to introduce to you and through you, 19 students from Bruno. They're in my colleague's riding from Humboldt. They're accompanied by their schoolteacher Tom Schwinghammer and Arlene Julé. I would ask all members of the legislature to welcome them here today in the legislature. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Kluz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, 47 grade 4 students from Wadena Elementary School. They're seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker. The grade 4 class from Wadena has made the annual trip to this legislature for many, many years. I see they're here again today.

The teachers are Reg Glennie and Denise Nelson. Chaperons are Wendy Gauthier, Isabel Fidelack, Gloria Jesmer and Bernice Burtnack. Bus driver is Tony Lipinski. I would ask that all members of the Assembly greet them here today.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly, 11 students, their teachers and chaperons, from the Manor School. They are seated in the opposition gallery.

Their teachers are Maria Hanson and Muriel Parrott, and their chaperons are Chris Wiggins and Darlene Entwistle. I hope to be able to meet with these students after question period. I would ask all members to welcome them to the Assembly.

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

**Mr. Goulet:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you

and through you and to other members of the House, visitors from northern Saskatchewan from the community of the Opawigoscigunee, which is Pelican Narrows.

Mr. Speaker, up on your gallery to the right here we have the Elder Fred Ballantyne; James Swan, the mayor; Mel Linklater, who is a councillor; and James Linklater, Richard Highway, and Pat McCallum.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to express the greetings as usual in the language of the Opawigoscigunee.

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.)

I'll be meeting with them a little bit later on, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Development of Mainprize Park

**Mr. Devine:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I'm going to ask you if you know of this event that I'm about to describe, and if you do, if you'll step in to stop it. I say with great respect that the event looks like it's revenge, and the revenge is starting to cost people dearly.

Today we have learned that you intend to damage our reputation as a province and particularly the previous administration's reputation because we were involved in building this project. You have announced the cancellation of Dr. Mainprize Park.

In the park, as you know, is thousands of trees. We've spent up to \$6 million on it now. It would generate tourism, jobs, economic opportunity, and a park that is the pride of the south-east of Saskatchewan. It is close to the U.S. (United States) border. And just let me say before I ask you if you knew about this again: on one hand your minister of SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation) has been announcing loans for golf courses — and I have the list of them here, loans for flower shops all over the province; and on the other hand, you have this minister from Canora announcing the cancellation of Dr. Mainprize Park.

Mr. Premier, did you know, did you recommend it, and would you please consider stopping this revengeful activity on the people of south-eastern Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to lighten the mood of the Leader of the Opposition and tell him that the Mainprize Park has not been cancelled.

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

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, obviously the minister or the Premier has not read the news release. The news release says that . . . the news release has stopped all further economic development and funding in Dr. Mainprize

Park. Now we have contributed up to \$6 million in the renewal of the park for trees and for the golf course and for the tourism, and it's completely wildlife mitigated. And the minister announced today that they were going to stop funding and not complete the park, seed over the golf course.

I want to ask the minister: is he aware of this activity? And if he's aware of this activity, how can he justify not finishing the park in a proper fashion when we put that money into it already, when in fact you have \$155 million . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Let the minister answer.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — The park has not been cancelled, whatever that might mean. It is partially completed. It is true that the completion of the park is going to be slowed in some of its aspects. That has as much to do with the fact that the Rafferty dam, the water levels of the Rafferty dam are not what you predicted they would be. They're just something less than what you predicted they would be, and that impacts itself on the Mainprize Park.

The completion of the Dr. Mainprize Park is being slow-walked if you like, but the park has not been cancelled, and I'm not sure what that term would mean with a park that's already partially completed.

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

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll go back to the minister. If you have any idea at all about the water that is up to Mainprize Park, there's substantial water there because Rafferty is being filled from the west. We've put \$6 million into the development of the park, and it is to be finished.

And as I just pointed out to the Premier, there is ample retained earnings and profits in SaskPower to complete this park because we want to attract Americans to come into Saskatchewan as tourists. We have cross-border shopping. You're familiar with the economic development associated with that.

Would you consider an independent viability . . . or an independent assessment of the viability of Dr. Mainprize Park before you decide not to complete and not to put the money in as was designed as we fully mitigated the park so that in fact the people of south-eastern Saskatchewan know that you will stay with the commitment that was made on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan to build a park that has been there and part of south-eastern Saskatchewan for decades.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much. In a fashion which was so typical of the former administration you budgeted \$1.3 million for the park. By the time the park was partially completed the budgetary figures were a multiple of that, some \$10 million. That, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, is an inordinate amount to pay for a regional park, if not in your riding, then in the riding adjacent to your own.

We felt that that expenditure was excessive. It was

certainly excessive by the amount you budgeted. And we felt it was excessive by any standards. So the funding has been scaled back. The park has not been cancelled, to use your term. It has certainly been scaled back. And, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, if you had had any concern for the taxpayers of this province, you'd have done that yourself.

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

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the member if he would agree to an independent viability assessment of the park. I want to ask him if he would table Jack Chapman's report. The former member of the legislature, Jack Chapman, from Estevan was asked to review the park.

Now it's my understanding, and the minister may know and the Premier may know, that he's released that study that you've done to private members in society, to NDPers (New Democratic Party), to people like Rod MacDonald who go around suing the government. But he has not tabled it here. Would you table Jack Chapman's report to this legislature? And would you agree to an independent study to look at the viability of Mainprize Park now that we've made that investment so that we could consider whether you should seed it over, as the news release says, so that . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I think the member has asked his question. Let the minister answer.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I want to read from the press release which the member purported to quote from. In the bottom of the first page on a press release dated May 21, 1992 headline, "Government announces plans for Rafferty-Alameda and Mainprize Park," it says:

The new Mainprize Park will be much smaller in scale than was planned by the former administration, which will save taxpayers \$5 million;

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

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — That, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, the licence you take with the English language is truly legendary, but I'm surprised even you think that that is a cancellation. It's not a cancellation; it's scaling it back to a reasonable scale. And that's what we're doing.

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

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, again I will ask the hon. member, will he table a Jack Chapman report for this legislature, because I'm going to ask for it through the media. Will he go for an independent study of the viability of that park if you spent \$6 million in the construction of this . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Of course we spent it.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I want to call the member from Saskatoon University to order. That is inappropriate parliamentary performance in yelling at someone when he's trying to ask a question.

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I just ask the member again — and I appeal to the Premier — if in fact you've done a study that recommends you do that, would you table the study, Jack Chapman's report that says you should stop funding this because cutting \$5 million out of the completion ends it. You can't finish it.

And in here you say you're going to seed over the golf course. Well that's the major attraction for the South-east and for the people in the United States that come in, and you're going to seed it over. Read that release.

Will you table the report, would you look at an independent study to make sure that we can all be confident, and would you list in this legislature the people you have consulted that recommended that you not finish the completion of this park.

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

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the Leader of the Opposition what happened to this project under your administration. A nine-hole golf course became a 21-hole golf course, something that would be worthy of a major city, much less an area which is located some distance from a major city.

A \$1.3 million budget had a cost overrun of \$11 million. It is being scaled back. Any sane person would scale back a project with such a gross cost overrun as that.

Mr. Leader of the Opposition, this project does not need any more studies. It needs a bit of sound administration and that's what we're going to give it, is some sound, decent administration.

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

**Mr. Devine:** — Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, that the utilities reports that we talked about yesterday clearly showed that our administration made something like \$400 million in profit and retained earning in the utilities. One is SaskPower. That money is obviously there.

If in fact, Mr. Speaker, we spent something in the neighbourhood of \$6 million to develop this park in south-eastern Saskatchewan and the people now on the NDP are saying, oh we don't have any money but we've got all this money in the utility, and if in fact they said that they are going to cancel this, cancel the finishing of the development of this park when they've cancelled the GRIP, when they've cancelled programs like Saskatchewan Pension, when they've cancelled programs . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Does the Leader of the Opposition have a question? Well let's have the question.

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I ask the member if he will table Jack Chapman's report; and if he will do an independent analysis, if he would table the people he's consulted with in the south-eastern part of Saskatchewan; and will he table any recommendations or any history on wildlife mitigation in the development of that project, raised by the member from Indian Head-Wolseley or

raised by the member from Regina Rosemont who over and over again said, you'd better spend some more money on mitigation . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Let the minister answer.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I remind the Leader of the Opposition that he refers repeatedly to the profit of SPC (Saskatchewan Power Corporation). I remind the Leader of the Opposition this is a project of the Saskatchewan Water Corporation, not SPC, and the Saskatchewan Water Corporation does not enjoy \$100 million profit, I want to tell you. It enjoys much the opposite.

I say as well to the Leader of the Opposition that in a day when we are struggling to feed hungry children, in a day when we are struggling to maintain the social safety net as a result of your gross overexpenditures and waste, a \$10 million overrun on a park is simply not a priority that any sane person would adopt.

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

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister again if you are aware of any legal obligations, either through federal or provincial licences, mitigation orders, or other agreements that will be affected by your decision to cancel the development of the park.

Are you aware of any legal obligations, any mitigation reasons that would prevent you from not finishing the park as it is designed out and pass the federal licences, provincial licences and the rest of it? And if you are, will you table them? And if you're absolutely sure, will you also table the reason that you're sure that you can do this without any consequences?

So once again . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Let the minister answer.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I have answered this question several times. I don't know why you should feel the need to continue to ask it.

Let me say this with respect to mitigation and legal obligations. I've said this on this subject and I'll say it on additional subjects in the future. This government lives up to its legal obligations. We've done so in this case, and we will do so . . . We've done so in past cases, and we're going to continue to do so. We live up to our legal obligations; we have, with respect to this park. And we don't break the agreement. We don't break the agreements.

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

### Expansion of SGI

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). Mr. Minister, your party takes great pride in opposing and, in some cases, stopping economic development and job creation for the people of Saskatchewan. And I congratulate the

minister for that. I'm sure that the unemployed are very proud of him.

One such project was the expansion of SGI's general insurance business into other provinces — an initiative that could've meant hundreds of jobs for local residents. But because of your philosophy and political opposition to public investment, this was not accomplished.

Mr. Minister, in January you indicated that your government now intends to finish the job, and are pursuing the expansion of SGI into Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario. Mr. Minister, you indicated at that time that you had applied to these jurisdictions. Can you table those applications in this legislature, and can you table any responses that you have received?

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

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The matter to which the member refers is under review by the government. The discussions are sensitive, and we are not in a position to make any further comment at this time.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Minister, can you tell this Assembly how you plan to accomplish this expansion, given that a new corporation such as that would be unfair competition . . . have an unfair competitive advantage over other insurance companies in other jurisdictions — these other insurance companies that don't have the government subsidies to operate with in those provinces.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Speaker, the suggestion that SGI could not expand because it was a Crown corporation is what it always has been, that is, a hoax by the Progressive Conservative caucus to sell an unpopular privatization. There's simply no truth to the comment you just made.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Minister, I find that interesting because I believe that other jurisdictions are not going to look favourably on your government subsidizing an insurance company setting up shop in their provinces. And in fact the member from The Battlefords even agrees with that.

New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, can you confirm information that you have restructured SGI CANADA insurance services in order to facilitate the expansion, and can you tell this Assembly how the composition of ownership is now arranged?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member says he believes it not to be so. I'm afraid there's not much I can do about what members opposite believe. We've been trying to deal with that problem for the last few days, quite unsuccessfully.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Minister, I believe the question has not been answered. The minister has not answered my question. How is the new corporation being structured?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I say, as I said in the answer to the first one, government policy will be announced in due course. And in due course, we'll be in a position to share with the Assembly restructuring plans. At the moment, this matter is under consideration. It is sensitive and delicate and a statement by myself at this point in time would not be productive.

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, thank you. A question to the Premier on principle.

Mr. Premier, does your administration agree or disagree with a Crown corporation being subsidized by taxpayers in competing in other provinces? Like, if SGI went into Manitoba, could it draw on the Saskatchewan people as taxpayers to subsidize its operations if in fact it got in trouble or went in the hole, and would you describe that philosophy to us.

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

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, just a very brief answer to the Leader of the Opposition. We take the view that Saskatchewan Government Insurance office should be run as a commercially viable operation and corporation, and it is done so on that basis as best as possible.

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

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, two points to the Premier. You recall, Mr. Premier, that in the '70s you lost \$54 million in SGI on some international and out-of-province ventures. The taxpayers of Saskatchewan had to pay for that.

Now are you telling me now that if SGI as a taxpayer owned company goes off into another part of Canada, loses money, that the taxpayers will never have to bail out that company? And if that's the principle, I want you to say so today. And if it's not, then I want you to tell the people of Saskatchewan and this Assembly how you plan to get into other provinces and compete with taxpayers' money from Saskatchewan and Alberta and Manitoba and get away with it.

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

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, with the greatest of respect, I think confuses his terminology and his concepts. And I mean this with the greatest of respect.

What the Leader of the Opposition should understand is that in this case the shareholders who own Saskatchewan Government Insurance, SGI, like any shareholders, expect that the enterprise is to be run on a commercially viable and efficient basis. And the fact that the shareholders happen to be, in this case, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, where his confusion comes into place, is largely irrelevant. What he does is he mixes the concept by the argument that it is subsidization. And I say to him that of course as we saw in his privatization scheme, this kind of reasoning got him into a whole lot of trouble — and Saskatchewan, unfortunately, during the 1980s.

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

**Mr. Devine:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Clearly, Mr. Premier, you did not answer my question. You didn't say whether the taxpayers would be involved and would subsidize this interprovincial joint venture. If you think that they might be, then I raise, and I ask you, what you think of the Minister of Agriculture's statement who says, when it comes to the FeedGAP (feed grain adjustment program) program competing internationally, interprovincially with Alberta or anybody else, the Saskatchewan government now has a philosophy where it will not compete with taxpayers' money against other provinces. Now how do you square that circle, Mr. Premier?

You are saying now that SGI is going to run about and take taxpayers' money and go invest in Manitoba and Alberta, put the taxpayers' money at risk — and you've just admitted that — and your minister over here, for political reasons says, we will not do that in Saskatchewan now because the NDP doesn't believe in it.

Mr. Premier, will you tell the people of Saskatchewan one way or the other, are they involved in interprovincial subsidization of economic activities like Crown corporations?

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

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid there's not very much I can add by way of a further answer to the Leader of the Opposition because he insists on these words of subsidization. I've said to the Leader of the Opposition, I've said to the House before, that SGI seeks to operate — and he should know this, and he does know this — on the basis of a commercially viable operation.

Like any commercially viable operation, there are years of profit, there are years of non-profit. But none the less, the yardstick is the yardstick of commercial enterprise and the test of the market-place. The fact that it happens to be a publicly owned corporation doesn't change that central fact. Accordingly, whatever SGI does internally or externally is guided by the principle it's to be a commercially viable enterprise in competition with all of the other insurance industries that are here or extraprovincially.

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

**Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Premier, would not you agree that the 50 to 60,000 farmers that we have in Saskatchewan have to compete with people across Canada and indeed across the world? And your minister stood in his place and says that the NDP Government of Saskatchewan doesn't have the money to protect Saskatchewan farmers or to help them compete in the international hog business, international cattle business or the feedlot business because we will not get involved with interprovincial subsidization using Saskatchewan taxpayers' money.

Now you're going to go out into a very risky business: life insurance or general insurance, auto insurance or whatever it is. Mr. Premier, are you telling — just so we

got it clear — are you saying to this Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan and to farmers: yes we'll risk taxpayers' money out in the insurance business interprovincially, but we will not stand up for farmers so that they can compete in the international market. Is that what you're saying?

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

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, no, I'm not saying that. That's what he is saying. I am saying to the Leader of the Opposition what I've been saying. If SGI decides to move extraprovincially . . . And by the way, I may add that if there's logic to his argument, the logic would be traced all the way back to a privatization of SGI in its internal operations too, because the logic would be you should get rid of it internally. And the Leader of the Opposition is nodding his head in support because his argument is if you lose money, taxpayers' money, as he describes it, not shareholders' money, internally and you can't use it for something else, that's bad.

Well that's an interesting philosophy because I think he did want to in fact privatize auto insurance. We do not support that.

Our idea is that if we go extraprovincially, we will conduct SGI on the same basis as we do internally on a commercially viable basis.

As regards farmers and the problems that they face, as all the other people in the province of Saskatchewan face a lack of money, that, sir . . . do not point the finger at us. That, sir, should be pointed at you and your administration and 10 years of horrendous mismanagement and debt. We have no money.

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

## TABLE OF REPORTS

**The Speaker:** — Before orders of the day I wish to, pursuant to subsection 1 of section 30 of The Ombudsman Act, table The Ombudsman Act today . . . or the *Report of the Ombudsman*. I'm sorry.

## PRIORITY OF DEBATE

### Federal Opposition to Leaseback Program

**Mr. Keeping:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day I rise pursuant to rule 17 to ask leave of this Assembly to debate a matter of urgent public importance. I have provided the Clerk with two hours notice of this action.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan plans to take steps to deal with the crisis that farmers are facing, and we need the support of the Farm Credit Corporation, the federal government's farm lender. However, Mr. Speaker, the minister responsible for the Farm Credit Corporation has stated on May 20 that he will order that corporation not to co-operate with the Government of Saskatchewan to help solve the problem.

Mr. Speaker, this is a matter of grave concern for all the people in this province. And if I am given leave I will

present a motion urging the federal government to actually become part of the solution instead of part of the problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**The Speaker:** — Will the members just give me a moment.

A notice regarding this matter proposed for priority of debate was received in the Clerk's office at 11:59 a.m. today, for which I thank the member. I agree with the member that the matter raised is of great public importance. The key question whether it is urgent enough to set aside the business of the Assembly in order to debate it at this time is what we must consider.

While the issue proposed for priority of debate is of serious importance to the people of Saskatchewan, the member has not established the urgent need to debate the matter immediately. It is a concern of a continuing nature, and opportunities do still exist for the member to debate it in the usual manner in this Assembly without invoking rule 17.

I rule that the member has not substantiated the case for priority of debate on this issue which therefore does not qualify under rule 17.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 11 — An Act to amend The Marriage Act

**Hon. Ms. Simard:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased . . . I am pleased to rise . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Point of order. Yes, what's your point of order?

**Mr. Neudorf:** — The memo that we got from the Government House Leader indicates that prior to second readings there will be the government motion on the mandate for the Standing Committee on Constitutional Affairs.

**The Speaker:** — If I may make just a brief statement here. My Clerk just informs me that she has erred on giving the wrong item, and therefore it is our fault here. And if the members would allow us, we would revert back to orders of the day and government orders. And the Clerk will now call the right order.

## MOTIONS

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### Authorization of the Standing Committee on Constitutional Affairs

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak on the amendment and the motion. The amendment and the motion, Mr. Speaker, are not

complex matters. If we are to charge the committee that was just established, then we must put in its mandate the terms and conditions this Assembly feels are the basis of its purpose.

I was very pleased to hear the Premier yesterday state in this Assembly that the creation of yet another committee did not mean he would not endorse a referendum. He then went on to state that no one else understood the constitution, understood federalism or the constitution-making except himself.

In his discussion about the need for a referendum — the subject matter of this amendment, Mr. Speaker — the Leader of the NDP once again showed just how pompous and narrow and egotistical he really is. He stood in his place and shouted across the floor that we did not understand federalism if we thought a referendum was so hot. He stood in his place and made the most political remarks on the matter of the constitution that have been made in this House since the process began.

And I will say very bluntly, Mr. Speaker, that this NDP leader traded away the interests not only of Saskatchewan, not only of the West — that man traded away the interests of Canada in his own rush to be a big man in history. He may have a law degree, he may have political science degrees, but the man who is the Premier of Saskatchewan today betrayed his country in 1982 and did so again in 1990.

How dare he, Mr. Speaker, how dare that man lecture this Assembly about what this country means, what federalism means, or what the dangers are of allowing the people into the process through a referendum. That guy, Mr. Speaker, does not really know anything about federalism. And I don't care how many NDP professors he has stashed away in little constitutional units around this province, because whatever this country means it certainly is not the constitutional playground of a one-man game show from Riversdale.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. I wish to draw to the attention of the member from Souris-Cannington, Erskine May, page 337, Amendments modifying a question:

If it is intended only to modify the question by leaving out or adding words, debate should be restricted to the desirability of the omission or the addition of those words. Similarly, if it is intended to leave out certain words only and to substitute other words, then although both the original and the proposed words may be discussed, debate should not range over the other words of the motion to which the amendment is not directed.

I ask therefore the member that he restrict his comments to the amendment and the purpose of the amendment.

(1445)

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am trying to direct my comments to the need for a referendum.

Whatever this country means, it's certainly not the constitutional playground of a one-man game show, Mr.

Speaker, from Riversdale. A referendum for all of us, Mr. Speaker. This country belongs to the people, and the people have spoken unequivocally. They did not all run off to the University of Regina for NDP politics.

Mr. Speaker, they went to the voting booth and told this legislature that they demand a vote. Not for the one guy who almost destroyed their country on two separate occasions, but for themselves, Mr. Speaker. They want to vote in a referendum. They want to be standing over the shoulder of this government or of any other government because they do not believe the member from Riversdale has proven that he is trustworthy in these matters.

Why is a referendum necessary, Mr. Speaker? The NDP leader has made it necessary. First he is the man who invented the art of constitutional making cooked up in kitchens in the dark of night.

**The Speaker:** — Order. I will have to ask the member to restrict his comments on the amendments — order, order — on the amendment, and why the member feels that that amendment needs to be into the main motion.

**An Hon. Member:** — That's what he's talking about, the referendum.

**The Speaker:** — No he is not.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try and keep my comments germane to the issue.

We want a referendum, Mr. Speaker. We need a referendum, and it's absolutely incredible that the Premier stands in this Assembly and says that while it's worth noting what the people have to say, that's about all there is to it.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Premier said that a referendum is for the rich and the elite. It's the old bugaboo fear tactics. But this time he's put his foot into it, Mr. Speaker, because the people themselves have said they want a vote. The people themselves have said they want to vote. They do not want to repeat the NDP's leader hiding from the vote on Meech Lake as he did in this Assembly. Then while the NDP leader was hiding in a kitchen somewhere, the NDP MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) voted for Meech Lake. They stood here, Mr. Speaker, and voted for it. That's not well-known in the public.

The NDP leader has stood here and spoke up against voting on a referendum, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we must vote on the referendum. And why is it necessary to have a referendum? Why is this amendment necessary? If nothing else, it is necessary because of who occupies the Premier's office. This Premier is so pompous that we see it reflected in the House every day. Yesterday is a prime example, Mr. Speaker. He deigned to participate in the question period. He gave us his royal moment.

Mr. Speaker, this institution is a democracy. We practise parliamentary tactics . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That is the whole attitude, Mr. Speaker, why the people of this province feel they need a referendum. They feel they need the opportunity to judge whether or not the actions

of the government are the actions that the people of this province want. They need the opportunity to be able to stand up and speak as to whether or not the government is making the decisions that are in the best interest of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the simple facts are that not only do the people have the right to vote on their own future but they have a responsibility. The people, Mr. Speaker, want to accept that responsibility for the fate of that country. They understand that until they do, until they take personal responsibility, the constitution will for ever belong to people like the member from Riversdale.

They want to take their constitution back, Mr. Speaker. They grow weary of the games. They grow tired and frustrated with all the committees that people like the member from Riversdale love to force on them. The people say it's time that they took ownership of the process and of the constitution itself. Mr. Speaker, the Premier of Saskatchewan in all his pompous indignation has no right to deny the people that option, no right at all.

The vote of this amendment will be an important and powerful signal. And I want you to note a comparison, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Premier of Saskatchewan thought that a vote on whatever, whether or not to establish yet another committee, was so important that he let the bells ring and forced a roll-call vote. He thought this was real important, that he wanted to get everyone on the record how they felt about setting up another committee for him to play with.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this Premier thinks voting on committees is important. We will today show how important letting the people vote on their own constitution is to this Premier. We will see whether he has the courage to be present in this House to be counted. We will see how he votes. We will see how his colleagues vote. Because it is time that the people knew for certain whether this Premier still thinks the constitution belongs to him or whether he is ready to give it back to those it serves. And it will, Mr. Speaker, be a recorded vote.

Before I sit down, I would like to say one very heartfelt thing to the Premier of Saskatchewan. I say to the Premier from the bottom of my heart, shame on you; you ought to know better. You want to poison the atmosphere of the constitutional process once again. And you as much as said you want this committee to be a bash Ottawa committee. Shame on you, Mr. Speaker. History will remember your actions.

**Mr. Roy:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to express my support for the Standing Committee on Constitutional Affairs. At the end of my remarks, I will be moving a subamendment to the amendment proposed yesterday by the member from Thunder Creek.

Mr. Speaker, fellow members of the legislature, I have a personal interest in constitutional affairs and the future of this country, Mr. Speaker. My family, Mr. Speaker, came to . . . my ancestors came to this country in 1625, Mr. Speaker. They were at the Plains of Abraham, Mr. Speaker, and they have been in this country at every step of constitutional affairs and nation building, Mr. Speaker.

So I take a great interest in this debate.

Mr. Speaker, the process of nation building is a process that takes . . . it's an ongoing and a very delicate and arduous process. And, Mr. Speaker, it's something that we keep on working at.

In 1982, Mr. Speaker, there was the federal government in conduit with the nine provinces. And the people of this country felt that it was important to bring the constitution home, Mr. Speaker, to get it patriated. And, Mr. Speaker, we did that. And some will suggest that we should have waited and made sure that Quebec was included in this process. Well let me tell you that it would have been very, very difficult at that particular time to find an agreement with the Government of Quebec because of the government in that province at that time.

Five years later, Mr. Speaker, we entered into the Meech Lake round of constitutional negotiations, and it was a very closed door secretive process. And because of that, Mr. Speaker, the people of this country felt that they did not have an input into this particular process and felt very betrayed by the process.

We've now reached a point, Mr. Speaker, where we are trying today to find some kind of constitutional agreement. It's a delicate process, a process in which you must exercise flexibility at all times. The Standing Committee on Constitutional Affairs, as you know, will be authorized to review and make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on proposed constitutional amendments brought forward by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments or legislatures in Canada.

The Standing Committee on Constitutional Affairs will invite presentations and the expression of views from individuals and groups, and will report from time to time to meet the constitutional time lines arising out of the nation-wide negotiations and amendment processes. This committee will be non-partisan and open in its operation. It will include members of the opposition as well as an independent member.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that this committee consider whether or not a referendum should be held on any proposed constitutional resolution. Mr. Speaker, it is important that this committee take its considerations and recommendations from the legislature.

I therefore move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Idylwyld:

That the amendment moved by the member from Thunder Creek be amended by deleting all the words after the word "committee" and substituting the following therefor:

be asked, at the appropriate time, to consider and recommend to the legislature whether or not a referendum should be held on any proposed constitutional resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand



today in my place to speak to, first of all, the amendment and also address the subamendment. And possibly, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if it would be as well in order to have someone deliver a copy of the subamendment so I could have it at my perusal here, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, this constitutional committee that has been agreed to by the members of the Assembly yesterday and the discussion that has taken place, and then we've moved into this second motion about talking about what the Standing Committee on Constitutional Affairs be authorized to do.

This standing committee has been authorized, or at least if the motion passes, Mr. Speaker, will:

... be authorized to review and make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on proposed constitutional amendments brought forward by the Saskatchewan legislature and by the Parliament of Canada or any other legislatures ... to invite presentations and the expression of views from individuals and groups; and that the Committee report from time to time to meet the constitutional (guidelines) ... arising out of the nation-wide negotiations and amendment processes ...

Mr. Speaker, the then amendment that was placed forward to this motion was placed forward, Mr. Speaker, in order to address the fact that the original motion put forward suggested that the House wouldn't really have to convene to address the views or the expressions or the guidelines that the Standing Committee on Constitutional Affairs had come up with.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we have suggested that before the committee report and make a final report, we also want to make sure that the people of Saskatchewan are able to express their opinion on any kind of constitutional forum or debate or process that will take place in this province, or recommendations that will certainly be passed on from the province through, we would probably assume the Premier or indeed maybe the Minister of Justice I believe, who is responsible for constitutional affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I guess the question that we're talking about in giving a referendum, and when I look at the subamendment to the amendment, I read that the subamendment adds that:

... recommend to the legislature whether or not a referendum should be held on any proposed (constitution) ...

It's suggesting that this legislature should certainly sit and give an opportunity, I believe — if I understand what the subamendment is indicating ... rather than being open-ended, such as the motion that was put forward by the Premier yesterday indicating that if the House wasn't in session when the committee gave their report, that the report would be given to the Clerk.

(1500)

And, Mr. Speaker, our question is: well then how do we address the concerns or how do we address the report that would be presented? How do we let the people of Saskatchewan really know or really feel that they have been involved?

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this amendment on the referendum debate, there are three or four points that I would just like to bring out that I think are very important for each one of us in this Assembly to realize — for the government as well as us on the opposition side of the House — that there are some timely guidelines. And our amendment to the original motion yesterday dealt with the fact that we felt there should be some time line set out, laid out for the committee so they would then know what framework they were operating within and would be able to come back in a reasonable time with some suggestions.

Because I believe, Mr. Speaker — certainly if I understand it right — the reason for the committee is to give the government and the Premier, the government of the day, the opportunity to lay out some of the concerns that Saskatchewan has and how Saskatchewan is going to be involved in the process of developing and addressing the problems that we have been facing over the past number of years regarding the constitution.

So I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that is the reason first of all we had the amendment discussing timely reporting. Because, Mr. Speaker, we are all aware of the fact that the Quebec government is going to be offering the people of Quebec a vote come this fall. And I believe, if I'm not mistaken, and I believe very sincerely that the people of Saskatchewan certainly want to have involvement in this constitutional debate. They want to be able to express to their government and to us as opposition members their views and their feelings. And yes the standing committee will give them that process.

But as well, Mr. Speaker, by listening to the plebiscite question that was placed last fall, Mr. Speaker, we do involve the public even in a greater way as to the process and the question that will be raised.

We also have to remind ourselves of the fact that there will be a federal election possibly within a year's time, Mr. Speaker. And certainly there are some ... So as I've indicated, there are some time guidelines or timely processes and time periods that are going to have to be met. And that's why we have raised the questions, raised the concerns, and raised the amendments to the following motions.

Mr. Speaker, as well, I believe when you talk about laying out a plebiscite or laying out a referendum, as I've followed with interest the debate in the House of Commons, I guess one of the major concerns raised by all members of the House ... and if you're going to lay out a referendum or lay out a question, what kind of a question are you going to lay out? And I'm sure that's maybe one of the concerns. I believe the Premier may have indicated that yesterday too.

Like, the issue we face is so complex. What kind of a question do you lay out so that the public are aware of the question? And when it comes to voting on it and having a

plebiscite or laying a referendum before this House, before the people, I believe the people in Saskatchewan, and not only in Saskatchewan but across Canada, want to know what kind of a question.

We want, I believe, a simple, clear definition of what we believe Canada is so that we as Canadians can make a very clear, qualified . . . speak out very clearly and very qualified regarding the question, regarding the constitution so that indeed our premiers, including the Premier of Saskatchewan and our constitutional leaders of this province and Canada, including all the provinces of Canada and the aboriginal peoples of this country working together with the federal government, can come to an agreement on a constitutional format and on the constitutional question that is laid out before us.

Mr. Speaker, what about aboriginal rights? I believe when we look at the format for this committee, I believe there are a number of areas that need to be addressed and should be laid out so even the aboriginal community has an idea of what they can expect from this committee, how this committee will address the questions that they have been raising.

Mr. Speaker, we also note, Mr. Speaker, that over the past number of years our aboriginal community has been speaking up very loudly. They want to be in on the process. After all, Mr. Speaker, they are certainly the original settlers of this great nation, of this country. They were here even before, if you will, the white man came and settled this country.

And so I believe that we've been hearing about it, and I believe again that we must work together with our aboriginal community, as all of us have to work together. We all have to put our heads together. Mr. Speaker, there's going to be give and take on all sides. There's no way we're going to reach a conclusion to this constitution. And as the Premier indicated yesterday, certainly it's a debate that's going to be ongoing. Even if we do arrive at a reasonable solution, it will be a debate that will continue.

What about property rights, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, the members opposite indicated that they're more than willing to enshrine social rights in the charter, but what about property rights for individuals, Mr. Speaker. Maybe that's a question that should be laid out for the committee. The committee should be addressing that factor. And there are so many questions that can be laid out for people to address and to bring before this committee, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as well, I'm not totally aware of the total format of the committee or who all the members may be. But when we look at the make-up of the committee, it would appear to me that it would be a responsible move to at least have the minister responsible for the constitution as part of the committee.

I believe it would be very imperative that the minister be part of the committee members, for the simple reason that it would give the minister an opportunity to keep his cabinet colleagues and certainly other government members more informed and keep them well informed of

the process, what was going on, the discussion that was taking place, the general feeling that they were running into in the province as this standing committee meets . . . would take the time to meet and listen to people around the province.

So I would suggest and I would ask that the government give serious consideration to including the minister responsible for the constitution to be part of the committee as well.

But, Mr. Speaker, the most important question that still arises and still comes before this Assembly, and that's why we really feel that the people of Saskatchewan should have an opportunity to speak and to voice their opinions as they indicated through the plebiscite, is that it would appear to me that the whole format and the whole process is, it would appear to me, just another way of and another format of ongoing committees.

And I'm not sure if this committee will be able to reach any kind of a conclusion. In fact, it would appear to me just to be just another tool by the member from Riversdale and the government to side-step many of the major issues that we are facing in this province today. I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, many people across the province would like to have a plebiscite on other questions as well.

Mr. Speaker, as well, when we look at the make-up of the committee — and I believe the member from Kinistino indicated that the make-up of the committee would have members from all sides of the House — well we would ask that the committee be fair and be made up of a fair representation from all members of the House, not just a group, a large group from the government side of the House basically to do as . . . or to follow the guidelines of the government or that the government would have laid out before them.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it is imperative that before the committee give its final report, or indeed before it lays out its final report, the people of Saskatchewan indeed should have an opportunity to voice their opinions, voice their concerns, and even give . . . they should be given an opportunity to speak through the most important format that they have that gives everybody that opportunity, is through a plebiscite or a forum or a referendum.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to speak today and lay some of these thoughts before the Assembly so that we are aware of the concerns, and laying out some points and guidelines for the government to follow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Having already spoken on the amendment, I realize that my remarks must be confined to the narrowness of the subamendment as proposed by the member from Kinistino, and I will attempt to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the amendment, the subamendment as I gather, as proposed by the member, says that the constitutional committee that will be struck by this legislature will ultimately determine or not of whether the people of this province have the ability to speak in either a plebiscite or a referendum.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that defeats the well-voiced concern of Saskatchewan people last October. Over 60 per cent of Saskatchewan people said they wished to have a say in the constitutional opinion of Saskatchewan. The member from Kinistino has proposed that 10 members of this Assembly, be they government, opposition members together, will ultimately determine whether the people will have that option or not.

And, Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the government, knowing full well that the committee as struck by this legislature will be weighted in favour of government members, that the government would try and subordinate that widely held belief of Saskatchewan people by having this committee which is being charged, as I understand the main motion, with going out and consulting, with seeking opinion, not forming opinion themselves but giving Saskatchewan people the voice that they desire in these constitutional matters; that that committee would go out and seek out a very broadly based opinion of Saskatchewan people. I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan will find it acceptable for 10 members of this House, make-up yet unknown, to be the final determining element in whether they have that broad-based opinion or not.

And, Mr. Speaker, I really wonder if the member from Riversdale, our Premier, coming in with a motion such as this that clearly, that clearly in my view, Mr. Speaker, tries to take away that ability from Saskatchewan people . . . It means that the member from Riversdale can take his five or six or seven members of that committee and say, boys this is the agenda; I want you to follow through. I want you to come back into this House and I want you to recommend, I want you to recommend that Saskatchewan people not have that ability to have that broadly based view on constitutional matters.

And I would say to the Premier today, if he is deadly serious about this business, if he is deadly serious about not repeating the mistakes of 1982, if he is deadly serious about making sure that Saskatchewan people have the utmost confidence in this committee, then I think it would be appropriate today for the government to withdraw this subamendment, withdraw this subamendment and not put the burden on 10 members of this Assembly, 10 members who are charged with going out, not telling the people of Saskatchewan the way it's going to be, but 10 members charged with listening to the people of Saskatchewan as to what they want.

And I would think if the government were serious, if the Premier were serious in these constitutional negotiations, that he would not want a committee of his legislature, of his province marred with that mark — marred with the suspicion, sir, marred with the suspicion that there was some type of manipulation, because the government will have the majority on that committee.

The Premier laid out many points yesterday, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in debate in this House of why he does not think that referendums or plebiscites are appropriate in constitutional matters. He said on one hand, I don't rule them out but here is a long list of reasons of why I don't personally want referendum or plebiscite involved in

determining Saskatchewan's constitutional make-up.

Given the Premier's stand of yesterday, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on that issue, I would suggest that it would make many people in this province — our aboriginal people, people from ethnic backgrounds, people from the same ethnic background as the member from Kinistino . . . I would think they would be slightly suspicious, sir, that if 10 members of this Assembly were going to be the ultimate determination of whether they would have that broad-based say in the make-up of Canada's constitution . . . And I say again to the Premier, do the right thing, sir, if you do not want this process marred, and withdraw this subamendment to the amendment today in this legislature.

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

(1515)

Subamendment agreed to.

The division bells rang from 3:18 p.m. until 3:29 p.m.

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

#### Yeas — 38

Romanow	Calvert
Wiens	Hamilton
Simard	Johnson
Tchorzewski	Trew
Lingenfelter	Draper
Teichrob	Serby
Shillington	Sonntag
Koskie	Cline
Anguish	McPherson
Goulet	Wormsbecker
Solomon	Crofford
Atkinson	Stanger
Kowalsky	Knezacek
MacKinnon	Harper
Penner	Keeping
Hagel	Kluz
Bradley	Carlson
Koenker	Langford
Lautermilch	Jess

#### Nays — 9

Neudorf	Boyd
Swenson	Goohsen
Toth	D'Autremont
Britton	Haverstock
Martens	

**Mr. Goulet:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to move another amendment, and this will be seconded by the member from Regina North West, and it reads:

That the motion be amended by deleting the words "the Saskatchewan legislature, the Parliament of Canada, or any other legislatures in Canada" and substituting the following therefor:

“federal, provincial, and territorial governments or legislatures in Canada”

And I so move the amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — If it was the intention of the member to make some remarks, I'll not put the amendment until he does so.

**Mr. Goulet:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make my remarks in regards to the amendment of including federal, provincial, and territorial governments or legislatures in Canada.

And basically I'd like to reflect back on the issue of the standing committee as it relates to that, and also the issue of the referendum as it relates to the provincial, federal, and territorial governments or legislatures.

I suppose, to put it very precisely, right off the bat there was a question from one of the members from the other side as to the reasons why. I think the member from Moosomin was asking whether or not we'd be able to receive things, whether or not our legislature was in process here in the province or from other places in Canada or whether the Government of Canada was in session. And this particular amendment addresses that particular question. I think that the question of including governments and legislatures addresses that particular issue.

In regards to the committee, the amendment on the standing committee, I must state that the amendment itself speaks to the standing committee as part of the parliamentary, democratic history of Canada. We know that there's been a long history *en route* to committees and *en route* to amendments and processes and amendments.

And one has to look back to the original BNA (British North America) Act and later on the Statute of Westminster of 1931 and the right of our Supreme Court to make decisions in 1947 and right up to the 1982 Constitution Act which includes not only fundamental rights and freedoms, but ability and equality clauses as well as democratic rights. So we're part of . . . This issue of including this amendment on federal and provincial and territorial governments is basically to reaffirm the tradition of committees in the legislatures and the Parliament of Canada.

And some members asked us to why we were having a standing committee instead of a select committee. And I think it's important to recognize that the committee has to be an ongoing matter of the legislature. Even on the recent history in regards to amendments, we've had quite a bit of debate in the past 30 years. One only has to look at the attempt on an amending formula back in 1964 called Fulton-Favreau formula.

Later on in '68 to '71 there ended up to be a lot of constitutional discussion, and at that time we had the Victoria Charter, and they had a formula which was there at that time. Then later on we had the Constitution Act process from '78 to '81, and then we had the formula of seven and fifty in the 1982 Constitution Act.

Now some members were worried about the input and that type of thing of people, and I might say that when I was in the legislature in 1987 after being elected in '86 I was of course going through the process of Meech Lake. And when I looked at Meech Lake and some of the issues that the members from across were looking at in terms of public involvement, this committee of course addresses that particular issue because we are saying in that committee that we will invite presentations and expressions of view from individuals and groups.

So the argument from across therefore rings hollow in that regard, and it's a very positive aspect of this mandate on the committee that we will be listening to the expression and views from individuals and groups in the province of Saskatchewan.

Also heard the comment on time lines, and I must say that the members from across probably didn't read the main motion which says that we will be meeting the time lines arising out of the nation-wide negotiations and amendment processes. So the members from across are simply not reading the main amendment of which I am speaking to.

Now getting back to the issue on the referendum, I would like to say this much. This morning I was listening to the debate in the House of Commons on the issue of referendum that is before parliament right now which is Bill 81. And these are the types of arguments that we heard in regards to the issue of the referendum that the members from across were talking about, and which we proceeded then to pass another amendment just prior to this.

And a lot of the people were worried at parliament, and I'm addressing the issue at the parliamentary level this morning. They were very concerned about the issue of unlimited dollars. A lot of the members in the debate this morning said that the rich and powerful . . . a lot of the strong corporations would have a much easier time in communicating their positions, sometimes from a very simple basis, to the people in Canada and have the edge over a lot of the people who don't have the money to be able to put their arguments across. So that was clearly stated by a lot of members in the argumentation this morning at the House of Commons.

The other thing that was mentioned was this: that the issue of the constitution at this time is quite complex. We are dealing right now with the unity question of Canada and trying to expound on a new vision as we move forward to the future. And we want to make sure that in this vision we include the questions relating to Quebec as well as other provinces. The questions dealing with aboriginal peoples and the inherent right to self-government is before not only the House of Commons but for all legislatures across Canada, and it becomes a very important question in this regard.

The other thing that's very important is the division of powers, and other provinces are dealing with social charter. So what we are dealing with is a very, very complex issues — equalization payments, and so on. So when you're looking at a referendum, if you had a

referendum dealing with all the issues, if would be a highly long referendum, highly complex. And it's very, very difficult to be able to come out with something that would be simple and straightforward.

And most of the referendums in the world . . . even when I look back at referendum issues in Australia, in all of the 32 historic referendums that they've had, only about eight were of practical value throughout that whole history. So we were looking only about 25 per cent success in that regard.

And so referendums from the members opposite, as they were saying, was supposed to have been a question of uniting Canada. And I might question that on this complex process, you know, that is taking place right now at the House of Commons.

Now the other thing that was very important is that a referendum is only a tiny step in a democratic process. The democratic process of involving the legislatures, you know, right across Canada and the Parliament of Canada and the public through the processes is a very important question. And when we are looking at it, we don't want to be able to say that a particular unifying theme . . . that Canada will break apart just because, you know, if a referendum is not brought about.

I mean the history of referendums in Canada is very limited indeed, because when you look at the history, we're only looking at the referendums back in 1898 on the issue of prohibition and the one in 1942 on conscription. It would be indeed looking and really extending the impact of those by saying that those united Canada. In many cases, one would have argued that they were quite divisive, you know, during that point in time in history.

Of course we are not saying that we will not do referendums and so on. We're relating the matter back to the committee level. And it's very interesting when we're looking at referendums and we're dealing with the other legislatures in Canada, other than the major two historic points of referendums, the 1898 one on prohibition and the one on conscription in 1942, the only other major place in recent Canadian history on referendums happened to take place in Quebec.

(1545)

And when the members were talking about it unifying Canada, one would hardly say that the referendum in Quebec created a unified Canada. The separatist government in Quebec, the Lévesque government, was the one who introduced a referendum in Canada. One would find it very hard to say that because it was in a provincial legislature and because it was a Quebec government, it was hardly another thing to say that it unified Canada.

So when a lot of the members from across say from an historic basis that a specific item, a specific procedure such as a referendum, will solve the unity question, is definitely drawing a long bow.

So I guess, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to place the amendment

before because we know that the processes of involving not only the legislatures but the governments, you know, the provincial and territorial governments and also the Government of Canada, is important in regards to not only their involvements at a governmental and legislature level, but also the process of establishing the committee that we have here today, which is a standing committee, an ongoing committee, because we are dealing with the reality of ongoing problems at the constitutional level.

The members from across and . . . both the Conservatives and the Liberals always see things in a very short-term basis. What we're talking about is a standing committee for a long run because we believe that future legislatures and future members have the right to create amendments and changes in the history of Canada such as we've had today and in the past histories of Canada.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to put my arguments across and support the amendment, and therefore move it, and seconded again by the member from the North West, and so I'll read it again:

That the motion be amended by deleting the words "the Saskatchewan Legislature, the Parliament of Canada or any other legislatures in Canada" and substituting the following therefor:

"federal, provincial and territorial governments or legislatures in Canada"

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

The division bells rang from 3:51 p.m. until 3:56 p.m.

Amendment agreed to on the following recorded division.

#### Yeas — 46

Romanow	Serby
Wiens	Sonntag
Simard	Roy
Tchorzewski	Cline
Lingenfelter	McPherson
Teichrob	Wormsbecker
Shillington	Crofford
Koskie	Knezacek
Anguish	Harper
Goulet	Keeping
Solomon	Kluz
Atkinson	Carlson
Kowalsky	Langford
MacKinnon	Jess
Hagel	Neudorf
Bradley	Swenson
Koenker	Boyd
Lautermilch	Martens
Calvert	Britton
Hamilton	Toth
Johnson	Goohsen
Trew	D'Autremont
Draper	Haverstock

#### Nays — Nil

(1600)

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure indeed to address you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and through you the Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan on this extremely important issue.

We are about to embark on a process, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of putting a committee on the road throughout our province to discuss the questions and issues of our constitution. And now the question is, how do we mandate that committee. And the question becomes then, what does mandate mean and what conclusion will we arrive at with that mandate.

Our concern, to put it in a nutshell, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that at the end of the day when the committee has completed its work, that we end up with a desired result. And that desired result should be that for the people of Saskatchewan and for the people of Canada we come up with a clear and concise message from all of the people as to how they want the future of their country to be run.

It happens I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be a fact that a mandate is a term of reference. And the terms of references that are used will determine very possibly the conclusion that a committee can come to.

And that is an important point because if you set out with a committee that is mandated or given terms of references that it can only act in certain ways, that it can only talk to certain people, you could end up predetermining the only conclusion that a committee could come to. And that is the danger we see in the process that we're embarked on, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We kind of wonder as we go through this process whether this is going to be a class B fair or a class A fair or some kind of a road show or a dog-and-pony show, or if it's going to be just a fed-bashing exercise. Will the mandate given to this committee provide it with only those options to become a show-piece for the Premier and our present government, or will it genuinely be mandated so that it can do the work of consulting with the people. That is where our concern lies.

We understand as we read this motion that it can possibly be that this committee would sit throughout the entire province and talk to a lot of folks and we could end up with the conclusion being delivered to the Clerk rather than to this Assembly. In which case, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no one in this Assembly would have an opportunity to debate the conclusions or the methods that the conclusions were drawn from. And that gives us serious concern.

Because now it appears that we will not necessarily be heading in the direction of providing a vote for the people to give their final conclusion on the matter. And without that as a bottom line at the end of the day for this exercise, there is only one alternative left for the people to truly have their expressions aired.

And let me go into the possibilities of error for a minute. I've already been involved in one of these committees, the Committee of Municipal Law. And the exercise, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, was in fact a good exercise in principle. However, it has some flaws and I want to point them out for you and for the people of this province.

To begin with, committees sometimes find it hard to get past the apathy of people who believe that the committee may be predetermined in its conclusion and therefore they don't spend the time to go there. So in fact, with our Municipal Law Committee, we found ourselves in a situation where people were actually having to be called and reminded that we existed in order to get enough people out to justify our trips into the country to go to listen to the reports that we solicited.

If that's to happen in a constitutional debate, we run into the same situation perhaps. The next step comes that — and I guess in a democracy it has to work this way — but the committee gathers all its information, has all of its meetings, pulls it all together and then they take it to the caucus of the government of the day. It wouldn't matter which party it is; I guess that's the way the process works.

Unfortunately, the only part of the committee that is invited to that caucus is members of that very political party that holds that caucus. The other members of that committee, in my opinion, Mr. Deputy Speaker — and maybe I'm wrong here — from the other political parties should also be invited to that caucus meeting.

Now I'm not saying we would have the right to vote for the final conclusion there. Obviously that caucus is the caucus of the government of the day and they will, by the majority they have won in a democratic process, finish the process by making that final decision. But how can they in all fairness say that they are doing a democratic viewing of the situation if they don't include those of us who are on the committee from the opposite parties in the final conclusions of listening to the debate within their caucus? After all, the committee went out, and the caucus members who weren't on that committee didn't have access to the information that we as a committee had.

So their first real briefing by the committee comes within that caucus structure and they are making their final decision then based only on the information that they get from their own members on the committee. So it makes the whole committee process of including opposition parties a farce, because we are really not heard in the final conclusions or before the final decision is made.

And so that concerns me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we now find ourselves looking at an issue as complex and as critical to our country as the constitution itself, perhaps going in the same process where the final conclusion will be made by a government that doesn't have to hear the opposing points of view and may want to neglect hearing them, or may in fact be better off to hear them but will never have that opportunity in the way the process is played.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we caution this process be done right. The mandating, the terms of reference that are given to these people, can in fact become, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a self-fulfilling prophecy.

I want to give just a little example here of how a

self-fulfilling prophecy could be designed in this kind of a committee. You could, for example, send the committee out into the country and mandate them only with enough funds to go to two places. Those two places, for example, might be Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan and perhaps Cumberland House.

At Gravelbourg you have a French community who very probably, in my scenario, would explain to the committee their needs for the inclusion of French within our structure of our constitution. On the other hand, at the Cumberland area you would have a meeting where our native people would probably be the most likely to attend, because I expect that they are the biggest part of the population there — and I have never been there so I'm guessing at that, but I think I'm on good authority from some of my colleagues here — and I expect that they would express the needs and concerns of the aboriginal people and the native people. And that's good. It's necessary — just as necessary as Gravelbourg putting in the points of view of the French needs and that sort of thing.

But if the mandate were that those were the only two communities that this committee were allowed to sit in and they only got those two points of view, then you could self-fulfil the prophecy that the biggest concerns you would take from Saskatchewan into a constitutional debate would be the concerns of our aboriginals and the French people, and the rest of Saskatchewan could be totally left out.

So mandating the terms of reference under which this process works is extremely important. It's extremely important to those of us here to know that the mandate of this committee will allow everyone a fair and complete access to the process to be heard.

And it's too bad that we haven't been able to convince our colleagues on the opposite side of the House to go along with guaranteeing that there will be a vote at the end of the day because I do honestly believe yet that the people of Saskatchewan want a final say in this matter. And I think it's important for the democratic process.

As I pointed out in this Assembly yesterday, it is important that politicians now be perceived to be trying to go to the people to get their answers and to allow them to participate in our process rather than to be dictated to all the time after the elections are over.

We could have increased our self-esteem in this one fell swoop of providing one opportunity for the people of this province, and that would simply be in guaranteeing them a vote on this critical issue. No one said that it wouldn't be complicated, but complicated matters can be understood by a lot of people.

We are led to believe by our Premier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that through his discussions that somehow a lot of us may not understand the federal process. Perhaps we're too dumb or too naive to be able to grasp the complexity of it all.

Well I'm not a lawyer, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I think quite honestly that if you take a little time to educate me

— and I think my colleagues can fall into this category as well — I think if you take a little time and explain the matters to us, and while you're doing that if you let the rest of the folks in the province listen, I'll just bet you that we've got enough brains to figure it out. I'll just bet you that we could probably get a few farmers that could actually come up with a constitution that would work. It might not have a lot of big seven-letter words, but at least we'd live in peace and harmony, and I think that's what it's basically all about in the end.

So I don't think we have to have a complicated formula that's too glitzy for anybody to understand. I don't think we want to have a class A or a class B dog show. I don't think we want to be into that kind of a process. I don't believe, quite honestly, that the people opposite want to be in that process, and I don't think they want to get caught up in this self-fulfilling prophecy either. But they are trapping themselves by not listening to reason at the start of the process. They are making it a political football right out to start with.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I complete this process of my inclusion in this debate, I want you to know that I intend to pass an amendment to the motion. And once again I'm going to encourage the members of the government to allow a moment of thought before they immediately jump and vote against it just because it happens to be one of our ideas.

It may be true that a lot of the ideas that we've had aren't the best. But I would caution the government that everything we come up with can't possibly be wrong. And maybe it might just be time to take a look, because this is the constitution of our country we're talking about, it is an important issue, and we need to deal with it very seriously.

There are some issues that will be determined as to how we as a province will stand in the constitutional debate, that need to be understood and predetermined into which direction the government is going to go.

I don't know, as a citizen of Saskatchewan, where our Premier is taking us in the constitutional debate, for example, on the issue of property rights. Because I don't know what he and his government, who are going to have the final say in this process as to what they will deliver to the bargaining table, I don't know yet what their position is. And I believe that I and the people of Saskatchewan should know what that position is.

I want to just dwell on property rights for a minute because I think it's the most misunderstood concept that has ever come around. I heard a CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) reporter on the radio the other day, and he was interviewing some people and they were discussing this issue. And one of the people, of course, was probably playing devil's advocate and was saying that property rights are a terrible thing because it would restrict all of society too much because too many people that owned things wouldn't allow the general good of the public to go on and to work.

An example was used that if you needed a road, that someone who owned the piece of property might in fact

then say no, I have property rights, you can't then build the road. And the public good then would not be served.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let's be reasonable. When you put in any kind of a package into a constitution of rights, you also have the opportunity to protect the rights of the other people against that right. And you have the opportunity to write into that constitution that the public good shall be served above the interests of the person with the property right.

In other words, you can still expropriate the land and have a dump where you want it, and you can still build roads where you want it, and you can still have a public well to get water. So the concept need not become a great dark terror.

It simply would mean that people have the right to own their own home in our country — that ranchers and farmers would have the right to own the piece of property that they run their cattle on and grow their wheat on. It would give them that feeling of well-being that obviously must have been missing in countries like the Soviet Union in order for their system to have collapsed so completely and so quickly.

I think this pride that people can have in themselves is so very important that I have dwelt on it here for a few minutes today. And it need not be the giving away of a right that would totally destroy everybody's interests within society.

Some people even say that property rights, of course, would be taken out of context, and that you would claim to have the right to your kidney and nobody else could give it away. And I don't really think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the process needs to include all those kinds of things. If you're going to give a right, you can draw the line as to how far it goes.

And so within our constitution, I think it's important that we go back to what I started in here, is that we have to know where the Premier and his government stand on these issues. Because they, in the process of this committee set-up, will be the ones that will make the final decision as to what direction our province will take at the negotiating tables — what will be traded for what, what we will ask for, what we will hope to get, and what we will be offering to trade off in exchange for what we want and need — those kinds of negotiating techniques. We don't know, and we don't have any indication yet from our Premier as to where he's going.

And I believe that in all honesty with the constitution at stake, we have to know these things before the Premier goes to those tables. Before he goes to the dark of the night at somebody's kitchen table again, we have to know where we stand. We demand the right to know as a citizenry in this province, to know where the government stands on these issues.

And we're going to ask very seriously, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this package be delivered to this Assembly for debate when the committee gets finished. Because if all else fails and we can't have at the end of the day, at the end of this process, a vote allowing the people all to

decide, at least we should have the right for those of us who are elected by the people, to debate the conclusions and findings of the committee before the government takes its last final decision-making process to the bargaining table.

It has to be done somehow in a form of openness where the people can have at least the feeling that they're watching something that they participate in. Otherwise it gets this cloak-and-dagger reputation again of people doing things behind their back.

And that is why politicians have gotten to be in such low esteem by the people in our communities. All through our country politicians are probably the least high on the scale of respectability . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I can't repeat the things that I'm hearing beside me.

(1615)

There are many issues, Mr. Speaker, that are important to us, and I mentioned a couple of them. But I want to talk a little bit about resource ownership because this is so very important to western Canada.

In a constitution we will decide very critical issues like who will share the resources of an area or a region of the country; who will have the right to tax those resources; who will have the right to even explore for them or to find them; will it be done by state ownership; will it be done by private ownership? Those kinds of questions are questions that will be dealt with in our constitution, or could be, and they likely will be.

So if we are not very careful what we do when we open up this whole package of constitutional discussion, we could end up with a constitution that takes us down the road in the future some place that we never intended to go. And yet we don't know in this process where our Premier is going to lead us in these debates.

What will he be putting on the table? Will he be saying to Quebec, if you guys give up French, we'll give you half our oil revenue from western Canada? Wouldn't that be a shocker. But it could be happening. We don't know, because this government has not clearly indicated to us what its position on the constitution is, and we're waiting to find out.

And I don't believe, quite honestly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this committee process is going to provide those answers. We're going to hear from the people in this committee what they think, but will that information be passed on in such a way to the government and the Premier so as to influence the final decision of the direction they take? I think not. And the proof, I say, is in the pudding. And the pudding in this case, metaphorically speaking, has already been the Municipal Law process, where the conclusion was taken by only party members of the government of day to that caucus, and they make the final decision without input from anybody else.

And so somehow the process, while it started out as a good idea to go and talk to the people, it didn't deliver in fact to the end result. It got cut off in the middle some



place and the people were not truly heard. And it won't happen this time either.

What is our province's position on bilingualism with our new administration? I knew it and I understood it with the past administration, but this one hasn't told us yet. And if we are going to set up a committee that is mandated to go out and find out from the people what their position is on this issue, will that mandate allow that this information be passed on to the government before they make their decision of how they're going to represent us? I fear that it won't. I don't know what the opinion of the people will be for sure because I haven't talked to a lot of them. I know about the opinion of the people in my constituency — that's very clear — but I haven't been to the rest of the province.

So I'm saying to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the process of talking to people is a good idea, but we must ensure that we get the answers to the government and that somehow we put an onus of responsibility on that government to actually enact what the people are saying they want. And I don't know how we can put credibility into this process if we don't end up with a vote at the end of the day showing the people voting on what the government says they're going to do as to whether they like it or don't like it.

What other choice do we have except a direct referendum? We could say that we could judge the government on its past performance. In all fairness, that wouldn't be fair because the government hasn't been in power for very long and we've seen a rather negative look at this administration so far. And if you were to judge it so far, a lot of folks, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would quite simply say that, well we're upset with the increases that we've had in taxation and so on and therefore we don't trust the administration and we are against it.

So it would not be fair at this time to judge the administration in that way on their short performance. Because I'm sure that as time goes by they will attempt to clean up their act and become more respectable to the voters of this province. We don't know that, but we can hope.

We don't know either what the timing of our reporting is going to be, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it is again important to the process that people understand what's going on on a timely basis. If this committee is mandated to report back to the government or to the legislature, then of course we can get the information that they're gathering. If, on the other hand, they are mandated not to deliver anything to anybody until the end of the process, an awful lot of good and valuable time can be lost.

And remember, we are on a time schedule here. Quebec has basically set a time schedule that the federal government is now working within. There are constraints of time. And so we could be playing games with time, and I worry about that. And we must have reports on a timely basis as this committee goes around the province to inform the people . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm sorry. I can't understand the . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — I say, why are we buying into

Quebec's timetable? Why don't we have our own timetable? Why is Quebec setting the timetable?

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well it's rather irrelevant, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I listen across the way to the debate as to how we mandate a committee. What is happening in Quebec right now, I would hope would be a process similar to this. It would seem to me that if they are doing their job over there, as the members chirp across the way, it would seem to me that they would be also going through a process of finding out from their people what they want included in this constitutional debate, and what their final result in the constitution would be as well.

So I expect that's what they're doing, but I have no way of being sure of that. I would hope that if they are doing this process of a committee approach, that they would at least have the good sense to report back to their legislature occasionally to let the folks know what they're finding out.

And this is not clearly spelled out. But maybe by debating it and discussing it, we are serving the democratic process by allowing our views to be known and allowing our Premier the option to think it over and consider it. That's what the democratic adversary process is designed to do, to allow the time for differing points of view, differing ideas, to be expressed openly so that everyone can consider them.

Because sometimes we may find — and this could be a shock to some folks — we may find that we don't always have all the right answers ourselves. Sometimes the other fellow may know something about what's going on too. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important, the timing of the mandating of the process and how it works.

We don't also know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where we're going in the areas of this province representing the Saskatchewan people on issues of interprovincial trade. We have some idea about the position of this administration with regards to international trade. We have heard some things about that. I have to say that most of them seem to me to be very negative to a modern and progressive world.

However interprovincial trade is going to become more and more important if this country's going to stay together. If we're going to debate the constitution, how it's supposed to work, I bet you that on the table will be the issue of how we're going to conduct ourselves in the future with regards to trading from one province to the other. And I think it is important for the people of Saskatchewan to know what the position of this government is when they go to the table on that issue.

And if we're going to talk about a committee going around the province, I think we have to mandate that committee to ask that specific question of the people, just in case they don't get a chance to vote on it in the end.

I wonder, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the mandate will provide that this committee asks specifically of all the people the question as to where Saskatchewan stands on issues of interprovincial jurisdiction or provincial jurisdiction or federal jurisdiction; which areas of

government should be run by our federal government; which areas of our lives should be administered by provincial government.

It would seem to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that a conscientious approach to the constitution would have to include who's going to run which segments of our lives throughout the years to come. And I'll bet you that if we read the constitution as carefully as our Premier has probably done, that he likely, he likely would find that that part of our lives is structured within our constitution.

But I think what he fails to realize is that an awful lot of Saskatchewan people have opinions that may somewhat differ from his as to which areas of jurisdiction the provinces should have and which areas of jurisdiction the federal government should have.

And if the committee is not mandated to go out and ask that specific question to come up with an answer, then the people of Saskatchewan will not have truly had their opportunity to put their direct input into this debate and into the final conclusion of what our constitution is going to read.

These are the rules of how we live our lives for the next number of years. And obviously the constitution may be hauled out on the table from time to time again. I doubt that this is the last time that we'll ever see this thing happen.

But for a good length of time, whatever we put into it this time we will have to live with, and it would be better that we took a minute or two to get it right. And it would be better that the people of the province felt that they had actually had an opportunity to give some input.

And they must not only have that opportunity but they must perceive to have had that opportunity, because people are getting the impression that they're getting a snow job from politicians in just about everything that we do.

I have heard a little bit of discussion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the position our administration in the province has taken on the Triple E Senate question. But it is not clearly defined in my mind, and it's certainly not clearly defined in my mind what the people of this province believe. In my constituency I can tell you what most of the people think about on this issue. But outside of my constituency I have to admit that I don't know, for example, what the people in Regina think about the issue of a Triple E Senate.

I don't know if the issue has been discussed and I don't know if this committee is being mandated to ask that question. I believe it should. And I mention it here today with the hope that somebody will be maybe taking a few notes and that they will — if they at least won't give the people a vote — that they will at least allow them to take the committee through this city and others and ask the question: what do you think about this and how do you think it would work best for western Canada?

This is an issue that affects western Canada, not just Saskatchewan. But it's an important issue, and the stand

that our government takes on that final day of reckoning is important to everyone. We've got to know where our government is taking us in this debate and in this negotiation because this is a negotiation. There will be trade-offs made. Everything we want, we won't get.

And I think it's important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we know which things this government plans on trading off to get what other things. What are you laying on the table for us? Is our resource industry safe? Are our rights as individuals safe? Do you believe in property rights? Do you believe in interprovincial trade? Are our people's options to drive over to Medicine Hat to buy groceries a safe thing or not? Will we seal the borders up and have border patrols?

We don't know. We've got the mandate for our committee to go out and ask these questions of the people — do they want those things? — and see to it that these messages are delivered to the government. And the government has to be answerable to us in this Legislative Assembly as to what direction they're going to take before they go to that table and start trading away our things and our rights. We've got to know where they stand.

And they can only do that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in this Assembly, short of not having a vote among all the people on each of these issues.

**An Hon. Member:** — No blank cheques.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — That's exactly right. My colleague calls it right — no blank cheques. This issue is too big and too complex and too important to write the government a blank cheque.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I've made my point. I hope I have. And with that I want to move an amendment to the motion. Moved by myself and seconded by the member for Wilkie:

That the following words be deleted from the motion (we're not adding; we're just going to delete): and in this regard the committee is authorized to release its report when the House is not sitting by filing it with the Clerk for distribution.

Simply that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker and members of this Assembly, I strongly urge you to support this amendment because it truly will get you off the hook. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I want to thank the member for his motion, but I want to refer the member to Beauchesne's, 465(3) where it states that:

Having moved the adjournment of the debate, a Member has spoken on the question and cannot make a second motion during the same debate.

And I note that the member has . . . or in fact yesterday moved adjournment of the debate. So I find that the motion . . . that it's not in order for the member to move this particular amendment.

(1630)

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — On a point or order? What is your point of order?

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I understand that the member that made the adjournment yesterday on the debate was not the member from Maple Creek but rather the member from Souris-Cannington that made that adjournment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I'll clarify that, but I refer the members to the *Votes and Proceedings*, no. 17, where it is clear on page 4, and I quote: the debate continuing — it was on motion of Mr. Goohsen — adjourned. Therefore the record shows that it was the member for Maple Creek that adjourned the debate.

I thank the member for that, and I'm advised by the Clerk that in fact it was the member for Souris-Cannington, that it was not the member for Maple Creek. Therefore I find the amendment by the member for Maple Creek to be in order.

**Mr. Britton:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise to my feet to speak to this amendment which I think is very important, and I also concur with my colleagues that if we're going to do something about the constitution, we should very well make sure that we're right. And, Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will be seconding the motion moved by my colleague from Maple Creek.

Mr. Speaker, it's important that we take this amendment into account, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The role of this Assembly is to speak for the people, to represent those who elected us. That's what we're here for, Mr. Speaker. This motion must be done right, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's why we should not try to hurry this through and not know exactly where we're going.

Mr. Speaker, if the NDP feel the forming of a committee to discuss the constitution is as important as they say it is, then we should have no problem with this amendment. Firstly the members opposite don't think changes to the constitution are important enough to bring choices before the people of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And now they are trying to undermine the very process of this Assembly. Mr. Deputy Speaker, 79.32 per cent of the people said they wanted a vote by referendum on the constitution question. Only 20 per cent said no.

My colleagues and myself have to have the right to debate the outcome of this committee in this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We need that, and it's our right to have that. We must be able to bring the concerns, ideas and inputs from our home constituencies to this Assembly, and nothing short of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will do. I cannot accept and my colleagues cannot accept and this Assembly should not accept a document of this magnitude not to be discussed in this Assembly. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would be inexcusable.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know the NDP hasn't been

especially open with respect to plebiscites and referendums, but that is as far as they can go. The constitution does not have and should not have anything to do with politics. But it certainly has everything to do with democracy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, every person in this province needs to have the right to express themselves. It is a very basic right but a right the NDP don't seem to be taking seriously. And I listened to the member from Riversdale yesterday, and he spoke on the issue. I listened to his comments about federal off-loading, federal referendums, and federal everything else.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are not talking about federal politics. We are talking about our home province and our country. This debate is much too serious to be dragged into party politics. We are talking about the future of this country of ours, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a country called Canada. And what the member from Riversdale failed to accept is that a referendum on the constitution and the tabling of the committee's results will be the only means by which this Assembly can examine the true wishes of the Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not want to presume that the members opposite will vote against this amendment. But it would seem that if an amendment comes from this side of the House, it is voted down no matter what the content. And I ask the members across the way to consider this amendment carefully. We are asking only that this matter be given the appropriate consideration. The constitution is an extremely important issue. The country of Canada is at stake.

For the Assembly not to be in session when the report is tabled does not make any sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it flies in the face of democracy as we know it. Surely the members opposite will agree that the constitution is important enough for them to receive this report in this House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they too, they too have constituents to talk to and to listen to. And I'm sure many of you across the way from me today feel a little too far removed from this issue. The MLAs, the public, and the committee on the constitution must be partners, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the results of the partnership have to be discussed here in this Assembly on a non-partisan basis.

Mr. Speaker, I must remind the members across from me today that in October the people voted almost 80 per cent of the population to have a say in any changes to the constitution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they asked for a referendum. They did not ask for a standing committee. And I say this because the very least you can do to honour their wishes is to allow them to speak through their elected representatives if you are not going to hold a referendum.

If the members opposite were to hold another vote today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all know this would be the case. And I don't know what the members opposite mean, Mr. Speaker, but I certainly have a lot of confidence in the people of Saskatchewan in what they feel and where they

want to be in the future years.

I hope the members opposite will give this the consideration that they deserve. Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of words said today and I'm not going to take any more of your time. I want to assure you that I second the motion put forward by my colleague from Maple Creek. And I thank you very much for the opportunity to express my point of view.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can't believe that there are still people in this province left today that don't think that there should be referendums in this province. Eighty per cent of the people in this province on October 21 voted in favour of a referendum for constitutional change. Eighty per cent, Mr. Premier, voted in favour of the people being consulted on any constitutional change.

I can't for a moment imagine what the people of Saskatchewan would think if this committee that's being proposed to be set up went around the province, consulted with everybody in the province, and then came back to this legislature and said no, we won't have a vote, we won't allow a vote. We won't allow people the opportunity to express their own desires on this very important matter, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think the constitutional business is the Premier's favourite playground. It's exactly where he wants to shine. Once again he will have the type of exposure he wants — national media — a chance to mould the country the way he thinks it should be moulded, the opportunity to show everyone in Canada again that he has the will and the desire to shape the country the way he believes it should be.

But I think 80 per cent of the people in this province believe that they should also have the opportunity to make some comments on the constitution, Mr. Premier. And I firmly believe that the people should be consulted on such an important issue, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure of the make-up of the committee, Mr. Speaker, but I'll say here today that if I find myself in a position of being on that committee, I will not be able to support a committee's recommendation that the people should not be consulted.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier, I know very clearly he doesn't like the opportunity for people to consult on this. He wants to be able to do it by himself. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, he spoke against a referendum yesterday. And it's important, I think, that the people of this province recognize the fact that the Premier does not want the people to be consulted on this. He wants to deal with this issue himself.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'll say again that I believe people in this province should be given the opportunity of a vote for any changes to the constitution. And I will, in my position as MLA for Kindersley, abide by that recommendation that the people of Kindersley put forward to me on October 21.

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

**Mr. Neudorf:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Certainly we will be very succinct and brief in my comments as well in the fact that I've been listening very intently to the debate as it has been going along for the last while and I have to admit that my colleagues have done a very admirable job in bringing forth the concerns that we have on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I think the wish of any politician always is to find out what the will of the people is. Politicians throughout the ages have asked themselves: by golly, if I could find out what the will of the people was or is, I would do it, and then I would stay in power for ever.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan last October 21 did speak and very unequivocally stated their will, which was yes, they wanted to have input. They wanted to have input.

I believe it was 380,000 people that spoke — 80 per cent of the folks in this province said yes, give us a say. And that is what we as an opposition here are asking the Premier and his colleagues to abide by, to the wishes of the people.

Now they have conceded over the last day and a half of debate here that there will be a committee set up and that this committee now will have within its mandate the right to determine whether something should be brought . . . whether that question should be brought forward to the people in the form of a referendum.

(1645)

But I object to that, Mr. Speaker, because of the composition of that committee that will be determining that. It will be a committee made up of NDP apologists. There's no doubt about it. As a matter of fact the House Leader hasn't given me his commitment that the composition of that committee will be ten — six government members, three official opposition members, and indeed the independent member will be included on that committee. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a foregone conclusion in terms of how that committee will render any decision.

Now the other issue that I wanted to bring forward at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the member from Cumberland, I believe it was, indicates to me how this was a flash in the pan approach by the Premier opposite — that indeed there was no long-range plan, that indeed this was on a spur of the moment decision — because we find out that the member from Cumberland got up and made a House amendment, as it were, to a motion made by the government itself.

Now if this was a well thought out plan — if indeed there was a plan, if indeed it was not only a seat of the pants, fly by night kind of an operation — this thing would have been well planned out in advance. Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I am saying is that it's not a well thought out plan, and because of that I sincerely hope that the Premier and members opposite will take very, very seriously the amendment that we have put forward.

We know that the one amendment has already been defeated, that the referendum is not going to be done automatically, that it will be done by that committee. But one thing that we are going to be insistent on is that when that committee has made its resolution, that that report will indeed follow the procedure of this Assembly, which is that standing committee reports will be tabled in this Assembly when this Assembly is sitting. And that is paramount as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What it does do is make that committee accountable. While not accountable directly to the people of this province as would be their first choice in a referendum, it would make that committee accountable to the people's representatives, which is this Legislative Assembly and all 66 members therein.

And that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is what we are proposing as an amendment. And I suggest to the Premier that it's a well thought out amendment, it's a logical amendment, and I think it's an amendment that has a lot of common sense to it. And I would highly recommend that they give it some serious thought and not just out of hand reject it because it was this side that is making that proposal.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you for your time.

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

The division bells rang from 4:50 p.m. until 4:55 p.m.

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

#### Yeas — 8

Neudorf	Britton
Swenson	Toth
Boyd	Goohsen
Martens	D'Autremont

#### Nays — 33

Romanow	Serby
Wiens	Sonntag
Tchorzewski	Roy
Lingenfelter	Cline
Teichrob	Scott
Shillington	McPherson
Koskie	Wormsbecker
Anguish	Crofford
Goulet	Knezacek
MacKinnon	Harper
Bradley	Keeping
Koenker	Kluz
Lautermilch	Carlson
Calvert	Langford
Hamilton	Jess
Johnson	Haverstock
Trew	

**Mr. Martens:** — Mr. Speaker, I have listened with a great deal of interest to the speeches of the various individuals from both sides of the House in relation to the debate on both of these motions. I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there are three things that are seriously absent. And we have tried to point them out. As

an opposition here we have tried to point them out to the government. And we're going to be very pointed in those three observations.

And one of them is, that I honestly, firmly believe that the Premier of this province does not want to have a referendum. That's the conclusion that I came to from the remarks that he made in his speech. He had every reason to believe that the whole process that we went through and the people and the province went through when they said, 80 per cent of the people of this province want to have a vote in deciding what the constitution will look like in this country.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier said over and over again that it was almost impossible to do. He said, as a matter of fact, in an indirect way, that he wanted to be the one that would take the whole of the constitution and mould it and shape it the way he personally wanted to have it happen.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have watched the constitutional debate through the last 15 years of this province, and we have watched it consistently dealing with a whole host of things. And, Mr. Speaker, the process has been flawed to a great deal because of the fact that the people were not given an opportunity to have a say in what was going on.

Mr. Speaker, did the people of the province of Saskatchewan or anywhere in Canada have anything to contribute during the process of debate in 1982? The answer is no, Mr. Speaker, they did not. Mr. Speaker, the role of the attorney general at that time in 1982, who is the Premier today, said over and over again, he can do it. He can control and massage and manipulate the way the constitution of this province is going to be. And when the people of the province of Saskatchewan, through these last 15 years, have watched the development of the debate in 1982 and in 1986, through Meech Lake and through that whole process, the people of the province of Saskatchewan said in 1991 . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Order, order, order. It being 5 o'clock, I now leave the Chair until 7 o'clock p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.