

July 13, 1992

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order, I have reviewed the following petition pursuant to rule 11(7), and it is hereby read and received:

Of farmers and citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to allow the 1991 GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) to stand for this year.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Thursday next ask the government the following question:

Regarding the government's decision to close Provincial Court circuit points: (a) What was the number of cases handled in each point in the province in 1991-92 fiscal year? (b) What was the cost of operating each point in the province in 1991-92?

Thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you, Mr. Speaker, and to all members of the House a gentleman who is sitting behind the bar on the government side of the House, Mr. Speaker. His name is Bob Huget. And Mr. Huget is a first-term, New Democrat member of the Ontario provincial parliament. He also serves as member for Samia and parliamentary assistant to the ministry of Energy.

Mr. Huget is a Regina boy who grew up and left Saskatchewan, now serves in the Ontario Assembly and is home visiting with his family today. And I guess, Mr. Speaker, he's on a bit of a busman's holiday. He decided to stop in and visit us here in the Assembly. I'll ask all members of the Saskatchewan Assembly to say welcome to one of our Ontario colleagues.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, sir, and to the members of the Legislative Assembly two very distinguished guests who are touring the province of Saskatchewan and Regina and are in the Speaker's gallery today. They are His Excellency Mohamed Adel Hussein Elsafty, ambassador of Egypt to Canada, and his wife, Mrs. Elsafty.

This is the ambassador's first visit. I wonder, Mr. Ambassador, and . . . would you stand to be recognized?

There they are in the Speaker's gallery. This is their first visit to the province. They're meeting with the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker, of course myself, and the mayor of Regina, and we look very forward to the meeting this afternoon, sir.

We welcome you to the province and hope that you find the visit an enjoyable and informative one. Please join me in welcoming them here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Mr. Hagel: — I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend literally thousands of travellers were drawn to Moose Jaw for two very different and very successful events.

Friday through Sunday the Moose Jaw Multicultural Council hosted Motif, an ethnic extravaganza in the park with 11 different cultural food booths, 42 different ethnic performances of dance or song, and an attendance of over 5,000 people — an all-time high.

Many who took in Motif also spent Saturday or Sunday at Canadian Forces Base Moose Jaw's 22nd annual air show, where 80,000 people saw aerial acrobatics at its best, with the highlight as always being Moose Jaw's own world-famous formation flying team, the Snowbirds. For the first time, a shuttle bus connection between the air show and Big Valley Jamboree in Craven, Mr. Speaker, contributed to the attendance at both.

The organizers of both Moose Jaw's events are to be highly commended for their hard work and very successful efforts putting together the weekend extravaganzas. It was organization at its best, and the results showed it. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in extending the Saskatchewan Tourism tip of the hat to the multicultural council and Canadian Forces Base in Moose Jaw.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Murray: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to report to members about the success of Saskatchewan's biggest tourist attraction, the Big Valley Jamboree at Craven. I understand this year's event at Craven was the most successful in the jamboree's history. There was a paid attendance at the country music extravaganza of about 28,000 people.

I'm told that attendance will translate into a profit of close to \$250,000. The profit from this year's show will go to paying off some of the event's outstanding debt and perhaps to some capital improvements for next year's show. I am pleased to say that after 10 years the jamboree has reached the point where it can now stand on its own without government financial help.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that the Big Valley Jamboree is a perfect example of what can be accomplished when Saskatchewan people work together. I want to pay special tribute to the hundreds of people who

volunteered their time to make the jamboree a success. The Big Valley Jamboree brings together thousands of people each year for a few days of fun and country music. It also puts literally millions of dollars into our economy, attracting tourists from all over North America and indeed the world. I understand that there were even some visitors to this year's jamboree from New Zealand.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members of the House to join me in congratulating everyone involved in making the jamboree such a resounding success and to encourage them to keep up the good work for years to come.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was my privilege to attend the launching of Saskatchewan Express for their summer tour on behalf of the minister responsible for Community Services and accept a picture that I will be presenting to her after my remarks.

Saskatchewan Express has a new support partnership this summer with partner groups Saskatchewan Council of Cultural Organizations, Sask Sport, and the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association that represents thousands of dedicated volunteers.

The Express has a new performance for the summer called Canadazzle which celebrates 125 years of Canadian history. From its beginning, finding talented young Saskatchewan performing artists and offering them a training and performance opportunity here at home were the main objectives of Saskatchewan Express. It's hard to find anyone in the province who haven't seen their performance and raved about their show. We've been thrilled to see our own young artists offer top-notch entertainment right here at home.

They have also been excellent ambassadors for Saskatchewan at the Calgary Stampede. And I'm also told that the Saskatchewan booth has received special recognition. The troupe's tradition of excellence has been fostered from the beginning by two very talented people, artistic director Carol Gay Bell and music director Vern Bell.

Over the years many talented young artists have started their performance career with Saskatchewan Express. We acknowledge both their outstanding talents and their commitment to providing excellent musical entertainment. We wish them well on their provincial tour and at Ameriflora in Ohio.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to recognize a number of organizations, not only in my constituency but certainly throughout the province, that will be putting forward their agricultural days, and it's the agricultural societies of Saskatchewan.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, there are a couple that are events that are taking place in my constituency this week. I look forward to attending some of the events. Over the years the agricultural societies have really played an important role in letting people around the province know the

importance of agriculture.

In my constituency the communities of Kipling and Moosomin and Fairmead and Kennedy all have agricultural fairs. In fact, Fairmead celebrated their 100th — it's their centennial this year.

Certainly many of the agricultural societies are concerned about funding. Mr. Speaker, these societies and the fairs that take place, take place because of the many hours of volunteer work. And so I compliment the people of Saskatchewan for their hard work in promoting agriculture in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to report an event over the weekend that took place here in Regina. It was the Canadian national Indian and Metis Golf Championships held right here at the Murray golf course. It was hosted by the Peepeekisis Indian Reserve.

I would like first of all to report about the winners in regards to the various flights. At the championship level, we had from Duck Lake, from Beardy's Reserve, Bill Cameron, who won the championship flight by one stroke over Ken Sinclair of Regina. And there was also Mitch Buffalo who came in third and John Dorion, fourth.

On the other flights we had winners on the first flight, Roy Goodwill; second flight, Hugh Pratt; third flight, Lester Bull. The tuck flight was won by Louie Wolverine. The juniors was won by Justin Albert. The woman's flight was won by Linda Poitras.

There was two special flights with Chief Enoch Poitras, the Minister of Justice, Mayor Doug Archer, and the member from Cumberland, as well as the MP (Member of Parliament), Willy Littlechild, from Alberta; and FSIN (Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations) vice-chiefs, Dutch Lerat and Ernie Cameron.

There were special comments, Mr. Speaker. They said Doug Archer was a powerful golfer. They said his stance was wider than the Saskatchewan River or Wascana Lake. And they said that the minister was so smooth, he said he ended up with a . . . down the middle of the fairway and ended up with a tremendous score.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kluz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On July 3 I rose in this Assembly to let members know that members of the Legislative Assembly, when they paid tribute to two recipients of the Medal of Bravery, Terry Bzdel and Andy Bucko at Government House in the ballroom . . . Since that time they've also been given the Award of Merit from the Government of Saskatchewan, Department of Community Services. And they've also been given a Carnegie Heroes Award. It's an American medal that goes to world-wide heroes.

Their brave act has brought much attention to the town of Mozart, and all because they've pulled two sisters from a burning home and saved their lives.

But the point is that 17 people in this province last year were not so lucky; 17 people lost their lives in fires last years. There was also a \$40 million loss of personal property.

And it's one of the reasons why, and I'm proud to say, that our government is developing a new fire prevention Act and it will give the people of this province a much-needed fire prevention awareness program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Effects of Budget on Job Creation

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Minister, several times in this House you have stood and told us that your ultimate dream for this year, as far as job creation, is 2,000 jobs for 1992; that the great goal of this NDP (New Democratic Party) government is to create 2,000 jobs.

Mr. Minister, the Labour Force Report is now out and it shows that 18,000 jobs have been lost in our province — 18,000 jobs, Mr. Minister. In light of this fact, Mr. Minister, wouldn't you agree that your goal of 2,000 jobs is completely inadequate? And that a budget that is designed to create 2,000 jobs in the face of 18,000 is inadequate?

Mr. Minister, given that evidence, would you agree to now start redrawing that budget so that you truly can create jobs in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I want to tell the member that the budget, which has been presented in this legislature on May 7, addresses the financial crisis which the previous government left behind, and therefore is the right step to be taken in order to create security for the future and job creation for the future because it brings financial reality to the fiscal situation of the province, it begins to control the growing deficit and the growing debt, which you have to do in order to be able to get job creation and economic development for the future.

The member opposite knows from comments that he and other members of his colleagues used to make that growing deficits are nothing but deferred taxes which would have a great, negative impact on job creation in the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, that flimsy excuse will not put one person back to work who's been put out in the streets because of your budget. We have 18,000 fewer people working in this province today than we had a year ago. I suggest to you, Mr. Minister, that's an awful lot of people in a province the size of Saskatchewan.

You're proposing to replace those 18,000 jobs with

higher taxes, higher utilities rates, health care premiums, higher insurance rates, and somehow out of that mix you're going to create 2,000 jobs and replace the 18.

Mr. Minister, realizing the absurdity of that, will you now tell this Assembly how many of those 18,000 jobs — very specifically — how many of those 18,000 jobs lost were lost in the agricultural sector?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, obviously I have to take notice of that kind of a question. That's not a detailed information which I will have with me. But I want to say this. The member opposite should come to face some realities. The reason there has been over the last several . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. The minister has taken notice.

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Minister, my information is that out of those 18,000 jobs lost in this province, that 2,000 were lost in the agricultural sector. Areas such like cattle feeding, hog feeding, meat packing business, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, those type of things — two thousand jobs in agriculture alone.

You also know, Mr. Minister, from those same numbers that there are 6,000 fewer young people working than there were a year ago. Your promise of 2,000 jobs in conjunction with higher taxes won't even replace, won't even replace one-quarter, Mr. Minister, what you're losing in youth and agriculture alone.

Now, Mr. Minister, given that the massive losses in agriculture-related employment, would you not agree that it's time for you to rethink your budgetary process that is even going to make that situation worse by Christmas time? Would you do that, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, the 18,000 jobs, or whatever they are that the member talks about, are the price that we are now paying because of the misguided policies of the 1980s under the previous administration.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Now the member from Thunder Creek stands up and says that the solution to the economy is to go back to the policies of the 1980s. I want to say to the member from Thunder Creek, the critic for Finance, that's not what this government intends to do. It is time that we turn around and turned away from the policies of the 1980s which have caused this province to suffer depopulation — that's now stabilized, I want the member opposite to know — which has caused this province to go into debt to the tune of \$15 billion in total. And it's caused the province to suffer a financial crisis which causes us to be on the edge of being unable to borrow the money that we need to refinance old debt. I want to say to the House, Mr. Chairman . . . Mr. Speaker, and to yourself that everybody here ought . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. I was wondering if the Leader of the Opposition has a question. I would recognize him if he's willing to stand. The member may continue.

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, if we don't come to grips with the growing debt and the growing deficit, the only option that'll be available to this government or any government in the future would be to create and to raise higher taxes and cause even more difficulty to the economy. That's not an option, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Mr. Minister, it's absolutely shameful that you don't take responsibility for your own government's actions. You're going to have to get off the blame kick here some place and honestly look at what you are doing to the Saskatchewan economy. You've lost 18,000 jobs since a year ago, and yet all you make is political speeches about the past.

Mr. Minister, the *Leader-Post*, Statistics Canada information from this morning says that even though we've lost 18,000 jobs, we still only have a 7.5 per cent unemployment rate in this province. But their conclusion is, and I quote: people who are out of work or under-employed are leaving the province, end quote. They're simply leaving.

Given that your dream, Mr. Minister, is to create 2,000 jobs, wouldn't you now admit that your job-creation policy amounts to a population reduction in the province of Saskatchewan?

And will you tell us what your ultimate population numbers are then, that you would prefer to work with?

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite obviously hasn't looked at the population trends in Saskatchewan in the last several months. If he would examine what the statistics show, he will find that the population of the province in the last several months has stabilized and the net out-migration, the net out-migration that used to exist in tens of thousands a year under the previous administration does not exist any more.

It's not going to be . . . it's not going to take just eight months to turn the situation around which the former government left behind. It's going to take this budget. It's going to take another budget. It's going to take responsible government, open and honest and accountable government. That's what we have in Saskatchewan today and that's why the situation is beginning to turn around, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Well, Mr. Minister, I remind you, that the only time our province's population has gone over the million person mark since the 1920s was under the previous administration.

You claim you're going to create 2,000 jobs in this province. The numbers are in saying there are 18,000 gone. Now you tell me, Mr. Minister, how you are going to create those jobs by eliminating FeedGAP, closing rural schools, closing hospitals, reducing employment in bottling plants, breaking GRIP contracts and increasing income tax by 10 per cent?

Mr. Minister, given the stark reality of all of that and no concrete evidence of job creation, simply people fleeing this province and fleeing your administration, will you now tell us what you're going to do to re-change your budget and come up with something positive for Saskatchewan people?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I could tell the member what we're going to do when we started it. We're going to take this province from the verge of bankruptcy to prosperity . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — And we're going to, in a responsible and an honest and an open way, deal with the deficit and the debt situation which the former administration left behind, so that our children and our grandchildren will not be saddled with even a greater debt than they already have. That's the way you deal with this situation, Mr. Speaker.

And the last thing we will do, I want to tell the member from Thunder Creek, is the last thing we will do is go back to the policies of the 1980s which brought us here.

Aid for Drought-Stricken Regions

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister responsible for Crop Insurance. The agriculture sector unemployment is at an all-time high. Drought is ravaging some parts of our province, and the '92 GRIP program will not adequately protect those affected by the drought. And Mr. Hartley Furtan has substantiated that. Especially the drought is affecting those areas in the North and the north-east.

Would the minister have on hand the acres that have been ploughed under in those areas of Melfort-Kinistino areas? Has he got those numbers available to him so he could provide them to the Assembly here today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I do not have the numbers here today. There has been a small amount of ploughing down of crops. The drought is growing in the North, in that belt that the member opposite speaks of. We are monitoring it and of course looking to help the farmers there. We had a drought situation in the south-west which fortunately was alleviated by a significant rainfall, and we are monitoring the situation.

The comment that the member opposite makes about the GRIP program not being adequate, we knew that the old GRIP program was not adequate to cover disasters such

as droughts. This program is as adequate or more so than the old one. And we are calling on the federal government again for the third line of defence that we were promised, the disaster relief that we need, and we'll continue to do so.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Will the minister of Crop Insurance tell us in which rural municipalities in the Melfort-Kinistino area have had meetings to discuss the possibility of withholding their municipal tax as a result of the drought that's there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of farmers withholding municipal tax. I certainly would be hopeful that they would not resort to those sorts of measures. If I hear about some, we will certainly be in touch with those RMs (rural municipality).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — I would expect that the minister wouldn't know exactly what was going on there because he didn't go to the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) meetings to find out what was going on.

Will the minister for Crop Insurance tell this legislature what contingency plans he has plans for that would alleviate the drought problems that they have in the North and the north-east.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, we have feed listing services. We have Water Corp standing by to look at possibilities of helping with water-related problems in drought areas. And we have those measures in place, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Question to the minister of Crop Insurance. This last week, Mr. Minister, there has been some rains throughout the province and it has alleviated some of the drought problems. But Sask Wheat Pool are still saying that approximately 75 per cent of the acres, crop acres in Saskatchewan are seriously dry.

I'm going to talk especially to you about the constituency of Humboldt-Watrous. They've got an area in there, especially the easterly side, that is really dry. These people are ploughing down some crops and will be ploughing down some more if it doesn't rain very quickly. And you said yesterday you hoped that people wouldn't talk about not paying their taxes. Well you don't seem to understand, Mr. Minister, when a farmer runs out of money and they can't pay, they can't pay. You don't seem to understand that. None of you do.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, will you tell me how many acres have been ploughed down now in that area, and how many acres in the entire province? Because you,

as minister of Crop Insurance, should know exactly the acres. Will you tell us that, Mr. Minister, and what you're going to do about it? What are you going to do to help these farmers?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I do not carry around numbers like that in my pocket. The member opposite should know that those sorts of numbers are not likely to be available in question period at a moment's notice. And that figure is changing, of course, daily, as farmers plough down crops.

And again I point to the fact that we have . . . as Crop Insurance and the GRIP program are stabilization programs. They're designed for normal conditions. We know the Prime Minister has admitted that these are not going to be adequate for situations of disaster and we're calling for a third line of defence to solve those disaster problems. And again, this is a federal responsibility and we will continue to work for some disaster relief for areas that do turn out to be dry.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, again to the minister of Crop Insurance. Naturally I guess you don't know what's going on in your department because you fired so many of the good people that there's nobody left there to inform you. Mr. Speaker, I was minister of Crop Insurance for many years and I'd be ashamed to be sitting in this House if I didn't know all those details.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: — They always had a paper in my desk every time I walked through that door informing me exactly what was going on in this here serious things that go on with farmers in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, will you inform us, if there's not some immediate rainfall, and what are you going to do for emergencies for the farmers in this Saskatchewan? Because they're losing their land daily. You won't even bring in their Bills. What are you going to do for them? You've been talking about moratoriums for eight months and you've done nothing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, we are trying to move forward to help progress with legislation. We are trying to get the new changes to the GRIP Bill through the legislation. We're trying to get our debt legislation through the legislature, and if the members opposite co-operate I think we would progress in those terms.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the minister of Crop Insurance another question, a question on behalf of some of the rural MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) in the north-west part of this

province, Mr. Speaker, that can't ask because they're NDP MLAs. They can't ask the type of question that we'd like to ask the minister.

In the North Battleford district, in the North Battleford district, Biggar, Redberry, Meadow Lake, Turtleford, there's drought there as well, Mr. Minister. I wonder if you could tell us how many acres of crop have been ploughed down in those areas.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, again while the drought is growing in those areas, there has not been large amounts of plough-downing of crop anywhere in the province as to date. I do not have the number of acres in my pocket but it changes from day to day, as the members opposite certainly know. And as to the members opposite, maybe you should talk to the MLAs up there; I'm sure they will enlighten you as to what's happening in those areas.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Minister, the point is, have you talked to those people in the north-west, your MLAs that are up in that area? Maybe it would be useful if you'd bring something in your pocket to the legislature, some information on what's going on with respect to drought in this province, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Minister, in the north-west part of this province there is a very real drought going on. Can you update us on any plans that you have for drought in that area?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I think I've answered that question about four times today. We are working to alleviate drought. We can't make it rain. We can try to help farmers and we are talking to the federal government about a disaster relief fund for drought that occurs in the province.

And we have, as again I say, the Prime Minister has acknowledged that the third line of defence is needed, that disaster relief is a necessary thing, a predictable, long-term, natural, third line of defence. That's the support that I must remind the members opposite that when they didn't realize there was a drought they voted against that in this House; and if they'd have voted for it, we may now have had that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For my colleagues on the government side from Nipawin, from Kelsey-Tisdale, and from Shellbrook, I'd like to ask the minister for Crop Insurance about the drought in the far north-east, as how many acres there of crop land has been ploughed down, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I was at Tisdale last week and flew over the area, toured the area around Tisdale, looking at the alfalfa fields. And I have to say that very, very few fields that I saw were ploughed down. And

we certainly are monitoring them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, it's nice that the minister can fly over, but I'm sure it would have been a lot better if he had driven and stopped and talked to some of the farmers that are being afflicted with the drought.

To the minister again: what kind of plans does the minister have to help out the alfalfa industry in the north-east? Their crop is very short because of the drought, and if they don't get any rain they're not going to have a second crop this year.

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, in talking to the alfalfa dehy association at Tisdale, they tell me that the first cut of alfalfa is coming in dead on the 10-year average. They expect a somewhat shorter crop in the second cut. They also have large surpluses left over from last year. And so I think there won't be a huge shortage of product coming out of those areas. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Minister, I just talked to some people in the north-east this afternoon before coming into the House. They say their crop is very short, that if there isn't any rain there will be no second cutting. And what plans does your government have for those jobs that won't be there?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, there are no doubt pockets of drought, and we are not . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. There was very little interruption when the question was asked, and I expect very little interruption when the answer is given. Order. The member from Arm River just had his turn at asking his questions. I wish he'd let the minister answer the question.

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, again we're aware of the fact that there is drought in the north-east and in the north-west in the alfalfa growing area. Again I say, our information is that the first crop will be average or close to it, that there will be second cuttings. They may be a lower quality, maybe some that are not second cut. But we do not anticipate large lay-offs in the alfalfa industry. Thank you.

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister of Crop Insurance. You've acknowledged today that there is drought in the north-west and drought in the north-east, the north-central. There is drought, according to the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, in about 75 per cent of the crop growing region. You know that rural jobs are down by 2,000 people so far. You also know, Mr. Minister, that professors like Mr. Furtan say that the '92 GRIP program is no good when it comes to drought.

Under all of those circumstances and given that evidence, can you advise us whether in fact you're looking seriously at a way to get money into the hands of farmers who are suffering a crisis that is worse than last fall, compounded as a result of GRIP changes, and now

the higher taxes and the higher unemployment and the closure of opportunities in rural Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I must point out again as I did here the other day, that with the predicted grain prices, the '92 GRIP will have at least as good a coverage as '91 GRIP had, and we'll have better coverage than what we would have got had we had the old program this year, which was what we were going to get, not the '91 program which never has been a possibility. It's always been the old program with the '92 numbers in it.

And therefore I think that there is no lessening of coverage in those areas. And again I'll have to repeat that we acknowledge last year's GRIP was not adequate, this year's GRIP is not adequate for drought situations — federal government has acknowledged that, and we have been pressing the federal government to come up with some disaster relief.

And if you would help us instead of voting against the resolutions when we're calling for federal government aid to force disaster relief — just because there was no drought at that time, I think, Mr. Speaker — that that would help us to accomplish what we need, some money for farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I want the minister of Crop Insurance to be on record here now because he just said that prices are lower and under '92 GRIP there's going to be a big pay-out. Well I want him to be on record so all of his MLAs from Kinistino, Nipawin, Shellbrook, Redberry and the north-east, north central, and north-west area will know, that under the '92 program, you're saying that if you have a crop which is pretty good, you're also going to get a payment because you've got prices pretty low. And if you don't have a crop, you're obviously going to be out all that money and you're not going to get as much money as if you did have a crop.

So you're going to have a very, very serious imbalance for those that have no crop and no money. They're going to get less money than those that have a big crop because it's based on revenue and prices.

Do you want to acknowledge that today in this legislature and acknowledge that Hartley Furtan is right — that is under the 1992 GRIP a drought is a disaster in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, a drought in this province is always a disaster. I think the member opposite does not fully understand the '92 GRIP program, or the '91 program either for that matter. That if you lose your crop under the new GRIP program, you will get crop insurance up to 80 per cent at market value. Plus if prices are low, you will get the price insurance, which the new GRIP now is, and you will get the money and as much money as you would have under the old program.

Now if you don't understand that, you should maybe read

the changes to the program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTIONS

Special Committee on Rules and Procedures

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Shillington that the second report of the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures be now concurred in, and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Britton.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well we've had since I was speaking here at 1 o'clock on Friday . . . my closing half hour remarks were talking about the front-benchers in this House, the senior members, the member from Churchill Downs, the Minister of Finance, the member from the North, the Minister of Finance, then the Premier. And I asked them very sincerely to think it over over the weekend, Mr. Speaker, to think it over very carefully and come into this House and stand to their feet and speak on this motion.

We had the Minister of Justice. He's maybe not as senior as some of the members, but he's on his second term. And he's a very knowledgeable man, and he must know, Mr. Speaker, that this is absolutely a Bill that is wrong for people in Saskatchewan. This motion is wrong. He knows that it's wrong, and I challenge him, as I did on Friday, to ask the elite members of the caucus or of the government to stand to their feet and say where they stand.

I'd like them to stand up and say that we have a GRIP Bill that we're trying to get through the legislature, and we're having trouble. And we have to get it to the court, so we can save paying the farmers so much money. So they take it to the Rules Committee. It goes to the Rules Committee and back here to be able to get what they are wanting, Mr. Speaker, and that is to not have to pay the farmers so much money.

So I asked very sincerely, Mr. Speaker, very sincerely that the now Premier and the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Justice, the House Leader, and the deputy minister of Finance that they will stand up in this House and say this is right and proper. I asked them if they would go home on the weekend. I asked many of the members here if they'd go home on the weekend and talk to their people and say to them the facts. Just don't say what isn't happening here. Say what is happening, that we have introduced a rules motion in this House to stop bell-ringing so we then can have a GRIP Bill so we pay the farmers less money and see if they agree. And not one will stand to their feet. There isn't one member will stand to their feet and say that that's what they did on the weekend.

But if they did and got the answer that I know they . . . I'm sure they received, as I did, then they won't be standing to

their feet. But in case that they did, and they're sure what they're doing, absolutely certain, they know that they're on the right track. They know that it's right to do . . . the first time in the history of the Commonwealth, first time in history, to legislate a Bill through the Rules Committee that has never happened in England, that's never happened in the Commonwealth. I'm sure that these people will stand to their feet and defend it. If they can't stand up and defend it, how can they be so sure they're right?

Mr. Speaker, I spent a lot of time on the weekend talking to as many people as I possibly could, and I even phoned out of the constituency to talk to key people. And I'm telling you, this is a serious impasse we're at here. I asked sincerely on Friday if my House Leader and the Government House Leader, the government whips will get together, and they will try to solve this impasse why we are speaking in this House.

Because as sure as I'm standing here, we all know — the media knows and all Saskatchewan know — that it's a straight filibuster. That's all we're doing. But our motive is to try to let people know out there what's going on so cooler heads — so cooler heads, Mr. Speaker — will be able to sit down and use their heads and come up with some way to solve this impasse. They must come up with some better way. There must be a better way to get a Bill through the legislature other than using the Rules Committee for that procedure. That is wrong, Mr. Speaker. It is wrong to use the Rules Committee.

When the Rules Committee changes their rules . . . we tried to change it in 1989. The members opposite over there had every reason in the world why it was not right. We couldn't get an agreement, Mr. Speaker. We weren't able to get an all-party agreement at that time, and so we had to drop it. But I'm sure that these people would do the same thing.

But the Minister of Agriculture's made the biggest blunder of any minister has ever made in the history of this province by trying to force GRIP upon farmers without that letter going out prior to March 15. He knows it. His ministers are covering up for him. Not one of them will stand up and say, the reason why we're at the Rules Committee and we're into this here impasse . . . the deputy minister of Finance has to stand to his feet and bail out the Minister of Agriculture.

(1415)

The Minister of Agriculture said to Hartley Furtan and his committee, well don't worry about it. If I don't get the letter out prior to the 15th, there's ways to work around it. He has said that. Now they're trying to work around it.

We should not be here. There's no reason we should be sitting here . . . standing here in this House and wasting the time we're wasting. We are wasting taxpayers' money, Mr. Speaker. We are doing it. But don't blame the opposition for it. Blame the government. Blame the government why we're doing it because they know that we should be talking about important Bills instead of the Rules Committee. We should be talking about some of the important Bills for farmers that is before this House,

that is before the House.

They have a lease program that we may or may not be supporting. In generalities we likely will because it was one of our formats in the last election — lease to own. But at least we need to be discussing it and getting it done.

But no, this House is held up for ransom by the Rules Committee. It's held up for ransom because the Rules Committee says we have to control this here bunch of Tories and control Saskatchewan farmers by the Rules Committee to stop the bell-ringing so they can introduce their GRIP Bill. And we're not going to do it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have 10 people on this side of the House that I can assure you will still be talking when it comes 1 o'clock on Friday, because we have lots of clear speakers and amendments we can put in. So you might as well all relax and just . . . either listen to us, and if you don't like listening to us, then go to your House Leader, go to your Premier, go to the Deputy Premier and go to the Deputy Minister of Finance. They're the elite of this party. They're the power-hungry people that I used to call pretty good individuals back in the late '70s when they were in government — early '80s. But something has gone wrong. Something has gone wrong in the last 11 years.

And now they're using the Rules Committee. I can't believe this, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order, order. I would like to draw to the attention of the member from Kindersley and the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster, that we have another speaker on the floor in case they weren't aware of that, and it's his privilege to speak and they'll have their turn.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that and I'm sure that when I'm through that they'll be taking their place in this Assembly and standing up and defending what this here government is doing. I'm sure that . . . oh, I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that they will.

Because any . . . this is one of the biggest things that's ever happened in my life as an MLA, Mr. Speaker. And this is on my 15th session, and I've never seen anything like this ever happen. So when it does happen, when it is happening, surely they can stand to their feet and defend what they're doing. They must stand to their feet, and I'm sure they will, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure they will.

Mr. Speaker, there was one member when he spoke, the member from Churchill Downs and then the member from Prince Albert, I'm not sure, Carlton I believe it is. Prince Albert Carlton; when he spoke the other day in the House, they seemed to blaming this impasse on the Tories. They were blaming at us. They go out to the press and they blame it onto us. How can it possibly . . . how could it possibly be our fault that we're in this position?

It isn't us that made the blunder, Mr. Speaker, that didn't deal with the farmers right last winter. It isn't us, the Tory government or the Tory opposition that let the farmers start planting in the end of March, the first part of April under the '91 GRIP, and now have to deal . . . and borrowed the money and had to borrow their money, and now they have to be pushed a '92 GRIP upon them.

It's not us that caused this problem — it's them. And they're the ones that didn't know how to get out of it, and it was brought up at the Rules Committee, how do we handle this? So they try to camouflage it through the ringing of the bells. We've got to stop the ringing of the bells, put a three-day hoist on it. And we all know that three days is going no place.

Mr. Speaker, I have some statements that I want to just read into the record here, Mr. Speaker, if I may. And it's pertaining to the . . . at what we're doing here. Mr. Speaker, in addressing the amendment, a number of points need to be made. This is very serious.

First the government says the reason it needs to end bell-ringing is that the opposition cannot be trusted not to veto to everything they disagree with. Now that's an awful statement for them to say. It is a terrible statement.

The member from Swift Current sits there and mumbles. Why doesn't he stand up? He's the moral man from the south-west. Why doesn't he stand up and be counted and say exactly what he believes? Stand in this House and say retroactive legislation is good.

An Hon. Member: — Let's vote and I'll stand.

Mr. Muirhead: — You see, Mr. Speaker, that's the arrogance — let's vote; let's don't stand up and talk. Let's vote, he says. Let's vote.

Well I'll tell you, that just shows that . . . I can't believe that a man like him is going to go along with the arrogance . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Let's get back on the topic. All right?

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't help it. When I see this arrogance, I can't help it. But I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, and I'll try to stick to the amendment.

The amendment proposes that the Rules Committee reconsider the length of the suspension and the possibility of a public hearing phase. And the point is this, Mr. Speaker, that if the government is worried about bell-ringing becoming a routine, they should understand that in fact a three-day suspension is far more likely to become a routine. A three day can't help but become a routine.

In fact I would say that if this rule change goes ahead, three-day suspensions will become the normal process, just as there is a two-day notice requirement now. Effectively, all the government proposes is to insert another period of notice. Just as the opposition agreed to extend the time allowed for replies to written questions from two to five days, adding three days, now the government is saying it is equally willing to extend the notice of motions period from two days to five days, or three extra days. Now is that being fair to the opposition and to the people that oppose controversial Bills in this province?

Some of the members have said there's nothing wrong

with what we're doing and it's just . . . and the Tories are . . . I said a moment ago that they say blaming us for stopping and vetoing all Bills. That's not correct. And it's not correct of the government members either, Mr. Speaker. Because, Mr. Speaker, in my 15 sessions that I've been here, I've only seen two real controversial Bills, and that's one in '89 and one now.

And they had to have some mechanism. And there has to be a better mechanism than the bells ringing. I agree that we have to have a mechanism. The Rules Committee must come up with a mechanism. They must come up with a mechanism that this here House can go along with their regular working of the legislature, but there must be some extension to the three-day heist period because that's not fair. You can't do anything in three days.

You can tell . . . you can well understand that it will become routine very quickly when they use the three-day suspension, Mr. Speaker.

Let us just look at the order paper to compare what did happen here — what would have happened under a three-day suspension and what would happen under a longer suspension accompanied by public hearings. The whites of last Friday can be looked at as the record which incidentally reflects a record of co-operation, co-operation with which the official opposition conducts itself.

Our conduct is, Mr. Speaker . . . but we will get into that in a bit. Mr. Speaker, the member from Regina Churchill Downs stated on July 7, 1992 when he introduced this motion that: "We (meaning the NDP government) have no assurance . . . that this (meaning bell-ringing) won't be used again and again." *Hansard*, July 7, 1992, page 1276.

And that similar argument is why they, the government, says it must limit a suspension to three days.

Well, Mr. Member from Churchill Downs, there have been many pieces of legislation put forward in this House that we have not agreed with. Did we ring the bells? No, we did not.

Let me make my point. I'm going to refer to the whites of July 3. I see recorded on the whites that on May 13, 1992, Bill No. 5, An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act . . . not to create confusion, I am referring to the *Votes and Proceedings* dated July 3, 1992 which contained within them the notation on An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act as having received first reading on May 13, 1992.

On that day Bill 1 passed first reading. It passed without incident. Did we ring the bells? No, we did not ring the bells. Was there a great shouting and movement around the Chamber? No, there wasn't, Mr. Speaker. This Bill was introduced very swiftly, no problem; there was no problem, Mr. Speaker.

Now if there had been in place the proposed three-day suspension, what would have happened? Whether we're in opposition or if they're in opposition, what would have happened?

Well probably on that Bill, it would have been used at first reading stage because we didn't have any forewarning of what would be in the Bill. Nobody knew what was going to be in it, so that would be the time to use it, whether it's a good Bill or a bad Bill. It may be a Bill this province needs, and it'd be a Bill that we agree with. But we wouldn't know, so we'd probably hoist it for three days. So no three-day suspension would have been declared if we didn't have the new ruling they're talking about.

By the same token, if there were instead a 60 or even a 30-day suspension period, it would assuredly not have been used at that stage. You'd never use it if you know you had 30 days or whatever the day could be that could be agreed upon. And we know that this could easily have happened. We know that if the Rules Committee could have very, very easily have come up with agreement on 20 days, 30 days, 40 days, whatever, even 20, whatever it be. They could have come up with it.

But three days is not long enough to know what's happening when a Bill is being tabled in this House. So you'd use your three-day heist right there in the first reading. A prolonged suspension is very serious stuff in treating public hearings, a very big step. You must have this mechanism so you can get some public input — not quite as dramatic or serious as ringing the bells for a prolonged period, particularly since it only affects one Bill, and it does not stop the Assembly from operating.

Mr. Speaker, does the cooler heads of this Assembly, the members in the front row and many back-benchers . . . I look around me and I see some back-benchers that are . . . I talk to them daily here. And there's some good heads, good thinkers. But they're not getting their word through. I'm sure they're going to their caucus, and I'm sure they're saying to the caucus, hey, this is not even a democratic thing we're doing. This is not even morally right.

But the front row, Mr. Speaker, they seem to be completely in control. It's not hard to pick up what the members really think when you get talking to them one on one. They're worried about this because . . . especially in the rural seats. They're just as normal as the members . . . constituents from Arm River and Thunder Creek and seats I'm involved in — Rosetown-Elrose and Last Mountain-Touchwood, Humboldt, Watrous-Humboldt area, Kinistino. And I talk to people in these areas and they're all the same. So that means their members must be getting notified constantly.

If I'm getting it constantly . . . Like I had an individual ask me yesterday — I was at an 80th birthday party in Davidson, Mr. Speaker — and this individual asked me, do you get paid your salary when the bells are ringing? And I said, we get paid our MLA salary for our constituency work and other government work, but our work for a session is \$155 a day per diem, and we don't get that. Good. Keep the bells ringing.

And that's normally what the people think out there. And we're not getting paid. We don't hold up the province for ransom when the bells ring twice for extended time in the last 15 years — 17 days in 1989 and 11 sitting days in 1992. That's not holding the province up for ransom. That's trying to get the people out in Saskatchewan, get

the word to them. We're trying to get the word to them at every day that goes on, every day that we as opposition members speak here. And we get calls and we're talking. The word is getting out there.

But if only you people, if only the members opposite would try to get the word out to their constituents, then you could get the word back to the upper echelon of the front row and say stop it; it's gone far enough; you must stop it. I'm sure that the member from Riversdale, the now Premier, would never, ever go against his entire caucus. I'm sure he wouldn't do that. I know that there's some awful left-wing socialists around him but he's kind of a down-the-centre . . . he was an individual, Mr. Speaker, that was always considered to be kind of the middle of the road and I think that he would overrule on this Rules Committee and on this GRIP Bill. I think that he would overrule if the back-benchers would get the message to him.

(1430)

And I again, I again plead with you. If you didn't do it on the weekend, and if you did, for goodness sakes, stand up this week and be counted. And I'm sure that they will. I'm hoping that they will, that they'll be in their caucus tomorrow or whenever it goes on that you'll be talking about, is this right? Is this right what we're doing, to use the Rules Committee to get a Bill to the courts that will likely, when it hits the Supreme Court of Canada, be ruled unconstitutional.

See that's the worry about this here Bill, Mr. Speaker. That's the whole problem that the people are worried about out there, legislating this here letter that they're supposed to have got in March 15, that is it constitutional? You can make this here to the Rules Committee and through this Chamber you can make it provincial law that this is a legal Bill. And they, the judges may have to rule . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I want to remind the member that he has already spoken on the main motion. He's now speaking on the amendment. Although I said it's concurrent, the member must not repeat what he has said in the main motion and I would want to direct him to get to the amendment, please.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll go ahead with these written statements I have here.

It would be a serious thing to do so and you can be assured, Mr. Speaker, that we would not have exercised the right to suspend on Bill 5. And on May 21, 1992, Bill No. 5, An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act passed second reading. But by that time we did not know what was in the Bill. We had a chance to review the Bill and could have made a determination of what to do with it. And the official opposition did not stand in the way of this piece of legislation. We did not like all this Bill contains, Mr. Speaker, but we certainly didn't walk out of the House and let the bells ring. How many times has that happened? It just doesn't happen very often. It's got to be something that's serious before any responsible members will do that.

We are responsible; therefore we act responsible. But now, ask if the three-day suspension were in place, what would have happened?

Well I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that on second reading of an important Bill to the people of Saskatchewan it is very likely indeed that we would have asked the Bill be delayed from a second reading for three days to give the public a chance to gather their thoughts on the Bill. We almost certainly would have used such a small and insignificant measure in the public interest.

So on the second reading of Bill 5, the three-day suspension would have been invoked, and it would have been used to give the public their first chance to get more than a passing glance at the Bill before it was debated in principle. The debate in principle, being the second reading stage debate, gives the public a chance to know what is going on before the process becomes irrevocably committed to passage.

So Bill 5 would have been the subject of a three-day suspension at second reading. Now what would have happened if a 60-day suspension . . . or we can say, Mr. Speaker, a 20 or 30, whatever. But let's just use the example of a 60-day suspension with public hearings as the alternative. What would the opposition have done then?

Let's say the government was over here when the energy Bill was such a serious thing. Let's say they were over here then. What would have happened if a 60-day suspension with the public hearings was the alternative? What would the opposition have done then? Well, Mr. Speaker, we would not have triggered the process on Bill 5. We would not have done that because it would not have been reasonable in those circumstances. There were no extremely basic issues at stake, and the will of the people was reasonably clear on the subject of the Bill, certainly clear enough that what further needed to be brought out could be brought out in a second reading debate itself. So it wouldn't be necessary.

So a long suspension period would not have been used, would not have been triggered on Bill 5. They never would have used that 30 or 40 or 20 days, Mr. Speaker. It just wouldn't happen. There'd be no sense to it whatsoever.

Just as I have said before, the Bill that came through the House, Bill 13 and 14, that was the adoption Bill and the child care Act. We went on for a long time, Mr. Speaker, and it didn't have to be dealt with under the rules. But it was at least several weeks. And it was just the minister and myself not understanding. When she finally stood to her feet and I got her to answer some questions and I apologized for the delay and let the Bill just go like that. We went through just . . . they were gone in 15 minutes, soon as I got her to explain a few things about that Bill.

So if the government just stands up, brings a Bill in, and stands up and says this is what the bottom line is, this is what it means — there's be no problem on this side of the House. But if it's a Bill like the Bill that we're talking about here, this GRIP Bill, naturally we're going to fight it with every bit of power we have in it because the people in

Saskatchewan don't want it.

A three-day suspension with regard to Bill 5 would not have accomplished what the Rules Committee intended. The Rules Committee intended a suspension to serve as a replacement for a prolonged bell-ringing. We understand that. That's what the suspension, three-day suspension means, for a prolonged bell-ringing, which I've only known of two. We've had some more where we've had a few hours, but I can't remember any long, long bell-ringing in this House in my 14 years. But it's also clear from our examination of the process as it would affect Bill 5 that the intention of the committee would not and will not be served.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at the next example. And we need to be very comprehensive in our examination of this amendment. We need to be very, very comprehensive in examining the cases we have experience with, because the government's entire argument rests on the fact that if there's more than a three-day suspension, it would become routine; that the opposition would use a prolonged suspension without discretion.

So we must be comprehensive and look at each instance to see what would have happened under three days, what happened under the existing rules, and what would happen if the committee reconsidered and expanded the time to some longer period — perhaps 45 days, perhaps 60, perhaps 30, or whatever.

So if we return to look at our *Votes and Proceedings* — what is frequently referred to as the whites — if we look back into the whites for July 7, 1992, we can examine the next example. I stand corrected, Mr. Speaker. It is actually the *Votes and Proceedings* for July 3, '92, not July 7. I'm sorry. It's July 3, '92.

So if we look to the whites for that day, we find the next example. On May 13, '92, Bill No. 6, An Act to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act, passed first reading. It passed first reading without any hesitation on the part of the opposition. There was no problem. But if the three-day suspension is there, it would have taken another three days.

Under the current rules, the procedures this Bill was considered next on . . . this is another one of the member from Melfort's Bill. I ask the member from Melfort: did we ring the bells? We did not ring the bells on this Act to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act. We did not ring the bells, and Bill 6 received first reading without any disruption of any kind. It was brought into the Assembly and it received first reading as it is recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

We take bell-ringing seriously and would never abuse it. I think any responsible member in this House would take bell-ringing seriously. I know that the members opposite in 1989 took it seriously. And we definitely have taken it seriously now.

It's not something that somebody . . . You might let it ring for an hour or two or whatever till you gather your thoughts and make a few phone calls and your caucus talks it over. That's different, Mr. Speaker. But going out

and having extended bell-ringing is not a habit that I'm sure that responsible members would ever do.

On May 12, 1992, another of the Environment minister's Bills was considered. An Act to amend The Environmental Management and Protection Act passed first reading and I'm sure everybody recalls this. On July 3, 1992, Bill 3, An Act to amend The Environmental Management and Protection Act passed second reading.

Bill 4, An Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act passed first reading on May 13, '92. On May 21, 1992, An Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act passed second reading. On May 25, 1992, An Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act went into committee. On May 25, 1992, An Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act passed third reading. On June 3, 1992, Royal Assent was given to the Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act.

Bill 7, An Act to amend The Assessment Management Agency Act passed first reading on May 13. On July 3, '92, An Act to amend The Assessment Management Agency Act passed second reading.

Bill 8, An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act passed first reading on May 13, 1992. On May 21, 1992, An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act passed second reading. On May 25, 1992, An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act went into committee. On May 25, 1992, An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I've listened very carefully to what the member is saying. I fail to see how he is relating when the various Acts passed in the legislature has anything to do with the motion or the amendment that is before us. And unless the member connects it with the motion that is before us, I will call him out of order.

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, it is very, very clear that all these here Acts that I'm talking about here — and I said at the beginning if you go back and read my words at the beginning, Mr. Speaker — that if we use the three-day suspension on all these little Acts, the three-day suspension is what we're talking about, if we had of used them at all it would have taken three days longer on every one of them. And so, Mr. Speaker, that's what's being talked about. That's what our amendment was, to go back to the Rules Committee and go out for public hearings on these here important Bills.

The Speaker: — I just want to remind the member that that's a good point. But to read when all these Acts are passed each day has absolutely no relevance to the amendment that is before us. Your point on suspension, that's fair enough. But to read when each . . . on the date that each one of these had passed each stage in the House has no relevance to the motion that is before us. And I want the member to get back to the amendment.

Mr. Muirhead: — Well, Mr. Speaker, is it in . . . if I went through each Act and take each one back to what could have happened throughout the province over three days, would that be in order, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — I have no intention of debating with the member, if he wishes to make a debate. If I find him out of order, I will so rule.

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, I wasn't asking for a debate with you; I was just asking if that would be in order for me to take each one of these Acts and say that we could have taken those out and talked about the three-day suspension. Would that have been in order, Mr. Speaker? Because if it's not, I won't continue.

The Speaker: — If the member wishes to speak, he's allowed to speak.

Mr. Muirhead: — Mr. Speaker, we have quite a few of those Bills here. We can for now just put them aside. That's not a problem, because I can bring them back and go through them one by one, Mr. Speaker. But I don't need to do it right at this time. And we can definitely connect them with the Rules Committee and what could have happened with these Bills, because it's very, very important to the record that these Bills did go out, that we didn't hold these Bill up, that they did go through.

But in the mean time, Mr. Speaker, let's just move to some quotes then. Let's just do that. There's some quotes that I want to put on the record, made by the members opposite. We can do that now, Mr. Speaker.

The member from . . . on June 9, 1989, the member from Saskatoon Sutherland-University. Here's a quote from him out of *Hansard*:

This government has an agenda . . . This government wants to bulldoze ahead . . . willy-nilly and ignore public opinion and ignore the democratic process.

Now if he can say that in those days, well I wonder why he didn't stand up today three years later and explain why he's got such a turn around now. I wonder why the member could say such a thing then and not stand to his feet and apologize for that and say, I've changed my mind.

He goes on to say:

And I think that is beginning to be a damning indictment of this government, that it rejects a democratic process . . .

Well that's what we've been saying here for nearly a week, that this government is bypassing the democratic process. That's exactly . . . I agree with exactly what this member says from Saskatoon Sutherland-University. I agree exactly, that it rejects the democratic process. And that's what we've been saying to you.

And that's why in '89 that we didn't get our impasse solved then. We had to drop it because we weren't getting an all-party agreement. And unless you get an all-party agreement at the Rules Committee, this process is not going to work. We have to have something in that manner that we all agree upon.

He goes on to say:

... the government has an agenda to ignore the legislative process ... and to, as a consequence, put forth a motion to muzzle the opposition, to muzzle the people of this province, and to change the rules for bell-ringing.

(1445)

Well now isn't that exactly, Mr. Speaker, what the members opposite are doing today? That's exactly what they're doing to us.

The government (they have) an agenda to ignore the legislative process and ... as a consequence, put forth a motion to muzzle the opposition, to muzzle the people of this province, and to change the rules for bell-ringing.

... it must have a bell-ringing motion that limits bell-ringing so that it can do what it pleases against the will of public opinion, against overwhelming sentiment of public opinion.

It is a tool to the government to muzzle the opposition.

He continues, the member continues:

... I say, Mr. Speaker, that this issue of bell-ringing is bogus and silly for the overwhelming majority of (the people of the province of) Saskatchewan ...

That's what they said in '89. They're the ones that said it, Mr. Speaker. They're the ones that said it, that "bell-ringing is bogus and silly for the overwhelming majority of (the) Saskatchewan people ...". They said it; we didn't say it. But stand to your feet now and repeat it and say it now.

Say that you're sorry for saying these words; that you heard wrong from Saskatchewan; that we weren't listening in 1989. We were wrong when we brought in 100,000 petitions. We were wrong. We misled the people. That we want to now change our mind and say, this is the way we believe, we want to walk over you and be arrogant and just walk right over Saskatchewan people. Be truthful and stand up and be counted.

Then he goes on:

And the question might well be asked then, of people across the province, what does the particular motion by the hon. member from Kindersley, the Minister of Justice, what does this particular motion, this proposal to change the rules, do to democracy? What does it do for the people of the province?

Keeping in mind, Mr. Speaker this is not us speaking, this is the member from Saskatoon Sutherland, June 9, 1989. Is he going to stand to his feet and correct this whole statement here?

Does it do a service or does it do a disservice to the people of the province? Is it a genuine service to practical democracy and to facilitate democratic

interaction in the province outside of this Assembly? And I think that's one of the hallmarks of scrutiny that this legislation has to bear. It isn't a question of whether it serves simply the democratic process here in the Assembly, but we have to ask ourselves, does it do genuine service to the practice of (the) democracy outside of this Assembly.

And that's what I say to these people today, Mr. Speaker. Are we doing a duty and a proper practice to the democracy, to the people in the province of Saskatchewan? These people sit with their heads down, Mr. Speaker. They won't look up. They're very quiet. They just know what they're doing is wrong. And if anybody does look up and smile, for goodness sake, stand to your feet and speak.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is continued on from the member from Saskatoon Sutherland:

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to say in terms as forceful as I can that the present rule that we have for this Assembly guarantees — guarantees the democratic process outside of this Assembly. And that's why we on this side of the House, as New Democrats, are so insistent that this rule change be opposed.

What's caused the turn around, Mr. Speaker? What has caused the turn around? Why can't one head look up at me — one head — and be proud of what they're done? What's happened to the moral person from Nipawin? Why can't he look me in the face and look the Speaker in the face and say that these people were wrong in 1989? That we believe it is right to be arrogant and walk right over Saskatchewan people? Where are they? They can't be counted.

Where is the minister from Rosetown, the Minister of Agriculture? The person that caused all this problem. The person that bungled in the GRIP program and had to get his front row to come and bail him out. He's the one that caused all this problem. And they know they have to cover for him, and they won't do it.

And he continues to say:

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to say in terms as forceful as I can that the present rule that we have for this Assembly ...

I've already said that, Mr. Speaker. I've got to jump down here.

... that's why we on this side of the House, (and I want to repeat it) as New Democrats, are so insistent that this rule change be opposed.

And in closing, for the member from Saskatoon Sutherland. Somebody said, is there any preachers over there? Yes, there is. There's several preachers and there's a lot of good, moral people over there, but they won't stand up and be counted.

It's not without scorn for the people of

Saskatchewan that a government would say, there's no need for the bells to ring more than an hour. That will do quite well; that will suit our purposes; that will serve us quite conveniently to have the bells ringing for only one hour. It will present only one minor inconvenience, and then we can get on with doing what we bloody well choose.

That's his thoughts on this thing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask that member, for goodness sakes, stand to his feet and put it on the record that he was wrong in '89, or he was right in '89 and wrong now.

I think — and I've said it many times, Mr. Speaker — that it's the back-benchers, the people like this gentleman right here, the man from Saskatoon Sutherland, him and about 25 more that need to stand up and be counted and tell the front row, the upper echelon, exactly where it's at.

Tell them, and see if the member from Riversdale will listen. Because I said before, if you take your message to it, if you got the fortitude to stand up, take the message to him, he will change his mind.

Now I have a quote, Mr. Speaker, from the member from Moose Jaw Palliser. These are some very interesting ones. And I'm sure not going to get into very many of his because he went on, I think, 16 hours — 15 or 16 hours. But I have a small page of quotes here. The member from Moose Jaw Palliser states:

We're debating this motion, not because it interfered with the government's plans but because the government is hurting. And it's hurting over the public response more than anything else.

And when we consider these kinds of motions having to do with the conduct of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we have to put them into their context as how they serve the democratic process, and most importantly, the people of Saskatchewan.

There's the member from Moose Jaw Palliser said the most important thing is the people of Saskatchewan. How could he forget so quickly? How could he just up and just say well, members, my constituents from Moose Jaw Palliser, I have forgot you. I've been dictated to by the upper echelon of the party. I've been dictated to by the Deputy Premier and the Premier and the House Leader, the member from Elphinstone and the member from Churchill Downs. He has dictated to me to take the message back to Moose Jaw that we must stand up against farmers and make sure they do not get paid their GRIP money so there's maybe more people for you people in Moose Jaw. He continues to say, Mr. Speaker:

If there's anything that I know about rules of the game, Mr. Speaker, there's a very clear rule and that's this: you don't change the rule in the middle of the game.

We've been arguing that here for a week, Mr. Speaker.

Nobody worried about it last fall or during the winter meetings when the Rules Committee met. Nobody thought that we had to change it in the middle of the game, that we had to work something out over this . . . can't get it done before the session. We got to do it before the next session. Nobody would ever suggest that it's appropriate to change rules in the middle of the game.

Well now what happened to the member from Moose Jaw Palliser? He wants to change the rule in the middle of the game now. He said change them. Don't worry about the democratic process; don't worry about it. He said: "let's consider", the member from Moose Jaw Palliser goes on to say:

Let's consider, let's consider, Mr. Speaker . . . we're into the ball season, and the Toronto Blue Jays are playing ball in here in Saskatchewan last week.

And he goes on to talk about the Blue Jays and a game and who won and what not. I'm not going to continue that one, Mr. Speaker, because I had that quote once before and I just bring you the highlights and I won't repeat it, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry, I didn't realize it was the same quote until I got into it.

Then he goes on to say . . . I'm going to move on. I got so many quotes here that I'm going to move on to another one here. Then when I finish this quote I've got a statement that I want to say, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to be making a statement to the House. This is from the member from Humboldt:

When we talk about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the motion before us to limit the number of hours the bells can ring in this legislature, to limit the effectiveness of the official opposition, we have no option but to stand up, each one of us, and voice our opinion on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan to this government's high-handed, arrogant, undemocratic method of running government.

Now doesn't that bother a lot of people in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that these are quotes from the members of 1989 talking about the arrogant government that was trying to stop the ringing of the bells. But we didn't get so arrogant as you people. We didn't get arrogant. What we did is, when we couldn't get an agreement in the Rules Committee, we pulled it. And these people can't pull it and they won't pull it, because it's the only way they can take the money away from the farmers on the GRIP Bill.

Then he goes on to say:

. . . I'm not doing this for my own political purpose; I'm doing it because the people of Saskatchewan, the feeling that we (must) have for the people of Saskatchewan must be heard, their concerns must be heard.

May 29, 1989, *Hansard*.

Now I'm wondering what the people at Humboldt, Watrous, would think. When I was up there last week in

the Watrous pool and I hear the people up there complaining, what's going on, I wonder if they would think, if I sent a mail-out, Mr. Speaker, to what their member said in 1989 about this arrogant government. And now it's turned around and they're the arrogant government.

Why is the government trying to stymie the whole process by limiting bell-ringing? That's the questions he asked. But I want him to stand to his feet — like I do the Premier of this province and the Deputy Premier — stand up to say why you're doing it. Mr. Speaker, I want the Deputy Premier to stand to his feet and tell us that we cannot afford to pay out the farmers. I want him to do that, and I'm sure he will do that. Give us the figures. It's going to come . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. The member may well like to talk about that topic, but that's not before this Assembly. And I ask the member to get back to the amendment that is before the Assembly.

Mr. Muirhead: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's no problem, because I've got a lot of other things to talk about.

But I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, the present rule, the present rule in this legislature, gives the opposition the opportunity to engage the people in an exercise known as democracy.

May 29, 1989, *Hansard*:

Not only will this motion to limit the length of the time that the bells ring, not only will it muzzle the opposition, an opposition who, like I said, gave the people the opportunity to speak, but it will also muzzle the people of this province, because if we have to depend on the media, we have to depend on general elections, what opportunity do the people of this province have to speak in between elections and if the media don't pick up their cause? That is the role of the official opposition.

And he goes on to say:

. . . the government is attempting to muzzle the people of Saskatchewan by limiting the length of the time the bells can ring.

Well of course we did. We tried, but we didn't try to muzzle Saskatchewan people. We tried to bring it to a Rules Committee. We couldn't get an all-party agreement, so we dropped it. And that was in *Hansard*, May 29, 1989.

The member from Humboldt goes on to say:

And what we have here, Mr. Speaker, with this bell-ringing motion, I think, is a total disrespect for this institution.

A total disrespect for this institution. How many people will stand up and say what you people are doing is a total disrespect for this institution. You must believe it because you said it. Every last one of you that spoke, and most of

them did, in all the days that they filibustered, this here 26 members, and most of them spoke — some of them for 10, 12 hours; one for 15 I believe — and they all said it's a total disrespect for democracy.

Now what are they going to say? What are they going to say? Don't tell us we're wrong on what we're doing. Rule changes in this House are traditionally done with the consensus of both parties. They said that. Both parties. They're saying, everybody over there knows that we should have a full agreement. This can't work if you're going to just choke it down Saskatchewan's throat, choke it down the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party and said, we the Gestapo say this is the way it's going to be.

You can't get away with it. The people of Saskatchewan will not let you get away with it. You'll never get away with it. As I said before and I've said in this House and I'll say it again, that if you want to take a look at what's happening in this Rules Committee, it used to be when I sat there and looked at that Rules Committee back in '78 it was a pretty good bunch of people. You could look around and see some socialists, you could see some Fabian socialists, you could see some capitalists. Well now when you see things that can happen here in Saskatchewan that wouldn't be allowed to happen in Russia today . . . No way.

This government, first of all they said they were going to bring in the rule of bell-ringing motion to limit the number of hours. And then they said, well maybe we should do it the right way. Maybe we should ask the opposition to be a part of this.

We on this government side, we should have the opposition. So we said and we discussed and we discussed and we couldn't come to settle the impasse and so it was dropped.

Then the member from Humboldt goes on to say:

So that little procedure went forward, and we have members from the government side, and members from the opposition, getting together and talking about some of the changes that could be made to the rules, some positive changes, a number then that we could bring forward and help this democratic institution become a better institution.

(1500)

And that was okay. But what happened just a few days ago, so what they said is that we're not going to make this democratic process work. They said that. We're not going to make this democratic process work.

Well that's exactly . . . this statement is the only one that's correct. That's what they're saying today — we're not going to let the democratic process work. They don't believe in the democratic process. We're going to change our minds, they said. We're going to change our minds and we're going to go ahead and change the bell-ringing for one objective, and that is because they do not want anything to stop the procedure of this Bill to pass. May 29, 1989.

Mr. Speaker, we have been talking here last Tuesday for six or seven hours. We talked here on Wednesday for two and a half hours, Thursday for two and a half hours, Friday for two and a half hours. And we know what we're standing here talking for, because we want the House Leader here, our House Leader and our whip and deputy whip, and perhaps the leaders should be involved with the leader, the Premier, and their House Leader and try to solve this impasse. That's what's got to happen.

But while this is going on . . . and I know there is talk going on. There's talk been going on in this legislature trying to solve this problem. And so I suggested here last Friday that maybe we should be getting back to government work, getting back to the work of the government. The reason why I suggested . . . because it was heckled from many, many areas and seats from that side of the House — why don't you sit down, and let's get back to the government process.

I'm suggesting, Mr. Speaker, I'm suggesting that perhaps we should not be sitting here talking hour after hour while our House Leaders . . . and I'm sure the Premier and our leader are going to get together. They've had a little talk now. I think they've talked several times. And I think that if they could sit down, they had a good conversation. And they both put some suggestions forth that may solve this here impasse we're in.

But some how or other, before it even got back to the caucuses, we had this here Rules Committee send motion right to the House before either one of them could have got the message to the caucus. So while this is happening . . . and I'm sure that the House Leader and now that . . . I understand that the House Leader is . . . I don't know whether he's away or what, Mr. Speaker, but he's . . . I understand that the deputy minister of Finance and our House Leader have been talking today. So I'm going to make a motion, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to make a motion:

That this Assembly now proceed to Committee of the Whole.

The Speaker: — Order. The member I think well knows that that motion cannot be made. We have a motion and an amendment before the House right now, and you can't have two motions simultaneously before the House. So I think that the member knows that that is out of order.

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

Mr. Muirhead: — Well I wish this Assembly would get their rules and regulations correct because I asked this on Friday, and the Clerk talked to the Deputy Speaker and said it was definitely in order so . . .

The Speaker: — Would the member let me have his motion. My apologies to the member. That is a superseding motion, and therefore it is in order. The member from Arm River has moved that the Assembly now proceed to the Committee of the Whole. Before I put the question, I'd like to have one of the Clerks come. I want to discuss with the Clerks . . .

The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member from Arm River that the Assembly now

proceed to the Committee of the Whole. This is a non-debatable motion, so is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

The division bells rang from 3:06 p.m. until 3:32 p.m.

Motion negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 11

Devine	Britton
Muirhead	Toth
Neudorf	Goohsen
Swenson	D'Autremont
Boyd	Haverstock
Martens	

Nays — 29

Van Mulligen	Hamilton
Tchorzewski	Johnson
Teichrob	Trew
Shillington	Draper
Atkinson	Sonntag
Kowalsky	Roy
Carson	Cline
Mitchell	Wormsbecker
MacKinnon	Crofford
Penner	Stanger
Hagel	Knezacek
Bradley	Keeping
Lorje	Kluz
Calvert	Renaud
Murray	

Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I would beg leave of the Assembly to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly two of my uncles who are visiting the legislature today, seated in the west gallery — David Cline, who is a retired United Church minister, and Edwin Morgan, who is a retired archivist with the Provincial Archives here in Regina. And they've come to witness the exciting proceedings in our Chamber and I know that they will enjoy them. And I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to the legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — By leave, Mr. Speaker, I would like also to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to you and through you to introduce to the Assembly a constituent of mine, Dale Hassett, who is in the gallery behind us. And he has come all the way from Leader, Saskatchewan, to discuss various matters that concern him in our constituency. And I would appreciate it if you

would all join me in welcoming him here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTIONS

Special Committee on Rules and Procedures (continued)

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to stand in my place right now and re-enter the debate on the motion and the amendment to the motion in light of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that my colleague just proposed a motion that would have allowed the government to move to government business and certainly allowed this Assembly to proceed with the workings of government.

And I believe many members in this Assembly, both on the opposition side and the government side of the House, have indicated over the past number of weeks that they're more than willing to work and more than willing to enter the debate and more than willing to allow this Assembly to operate.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, we go back not that long ago to a ruling in this Assembly that suggested the House move along and enter into the debate and enter into government business by giving the opportunity for the opposition and the government to put aside any Bills, contentious Bills, that would defer the normal process and the normal proceedings in this Assembly.

It boggles my mind and I'm rather surprised, Mr. Speaker, that some of the members on the opposite . . . on the government side of the House would not have taken the opportunity this afternoon to enter into the debate on this issue in light of the fact that the debate back in 1989 regarding the question of the bell-ringing and regarding a number of changes to the rules and the changes that have been suggested through this motion and certainly through the amendment, many members did stand in this Assembly and take the time to voice their concerns about limitations that were proposed and would have been brought forward.

I would also like to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the motion that was presented by my colleague I think in today's paper, the feeling was in the media that a dispute was being worked on and certainly the parties . . . and I think I can indicate that the parties are all working towards an agreement and some kind of a solution to the stalemate that we have found ourselves in this Assembly.

But as we work towards that stalemate, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it would have been appropriate for the House to get along with the normal business of the Assembly as well. And I would have expected, or I would have thought that members, government members and certainly ministers in this Assembly would have been more than willing and more than happy to get on with the proceedings of the House as far as the normal business so that we wouldn't delay the number of Bills that are still sitting on the order paper, delay passage of the Bills.

And as I read it, to date 70 Bills have been introduced into this Assembly and only 20 have received third and final reading, which when you find that there are 50 Bills still before this Assembly, we realize that there are a number of days that we as members in this Assembly are going to have to spend in this Chamber debating the workings of the government, debating the Bills, debating the motions that are before us so that the people in the province can be served and served well.

We're all aware as well, Mr. Speaker, that of the 32 government departments and agencies, so far none of them have passed the estimates in this House. I find it very interesting that we would be at this time . . . and our Legislative Assembly having been here for some two months and now into our, I believe it's about our 38th or 39th day, Mr. Speaker, the fact that we still haven't spent . . . or haven't passed any of the estimates with regards to spending of the government for this fiscal year.

And if I'm not mistaken, the Minister of Finance has indicated that certainly it is very imperative that his budget be passed. He's indicated that he needs the passage of his budget so that people across the province will know where the funds are coming from for them to operate.

And as we sit here and discuss the bell-ringing question, as we sit here and discuss proposals to change the rules, as my colleague from Wilkie has suggested, that it would be appropriate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for this Assembly at this time to take the time to send this debate back to the special Rules Committee with . . . and possibly setting out some specific guidelines asking the committee to work towards a consensus regarding the contentious issue of bell-ringing.

I think and I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I speak for many people in my constituency, people who have indicated their feelings over the past, certainly back in 1989 and again through the past couple of months. They've indicated that bell-ringing is an issue that they feel there should be some limitations to. They feel very strongly that there should be another avenue by which opposition members can raise a point and at the same time bring that point out to the public.

The amendment that is placed by my colleague from Wilkie suggests that the committee be given the ability to address the motion that is before this Assembly, and that they sit down and after further consultation and consideration of this motion arrive at a time period that would be favourable to all members. And as the media have indicated today, certainly their feeling is that it would be appropriate for members in this Assembly to arrive at a process by which we could address the bell-ringing question and allow for the House to proceed.

But more specifically, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all must realize that it isn't the role of the opposition just to totally be contradictory to all the motions put forward by government or the Bills. Certainly we must be very careful in perusing the Bills, perusing the motions, going through government estimates so that we can be good stewards and hold the government accountable. We all must be

good stewards of the fiscal responsibility that the government carries and we as elected representatives carry on behalf of the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

I firmly believe that this motion must be referred back to the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is imperative that this committee be given the mandate to address a number of rule changes such as we've already seen in this House.

I believe the committee came forward with a suggestion earlier on in the Assembly, and we at this time are in a time period where we are experimenting with some changes to the rules to this Assembly. And we are all aware of the fact that at the time when the committee moved and brought forward the motion — I believe it was 15 days into this sitting — regarding some of the rule changes that the bell-ringing was one area in which they had difficulty reaching consensus and that asked and suggested that there were a number of changes . . . that there was a process that was needed to continually allow . . . continue to work allowing the committee to address the other contentious issues.

And no doubt we are going to find that there will be many contentious issues that will continue to surface as we are in this Assembly and as we look at rules in this Assembly.

(1545)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe the motion before this Assembly suggests that a three-day hoist would be appropriate. The amendment that my colleague brought forward suggested that this motion go back to the committee because a three-day hoist, in our opinions as opposition members, is not appropriate. It doesn't given an opposition adequate time to consult, adequate time to meet with people, and to let the public of Saskatchewan know what the particular points of a special Bill or a motion are before this Assembly and how it will affect them directly or indirectly.

And we have offered on numerous occasions . . . in fact my colleague, the member from Rosthern, the opposition House Leader, has conferred with and brought to our attention some of the proposals brought forward by the government members. But he has also on a number of occasions thrown out ideas to the House Leader . . . the opposition leader has approached the Premier of this province with some suggestions. And to date, Mr. Speaker, we still are waiting for some concrete counter arguments by the government other than the fact that they just want to proceed unilaterally with changes to the rules without allowing for a voice or an expression, giving the opposition an opportunity to express concerns on any issue or Bill that we may face in the days to come.

When you look at the suggestion that this Assembly just allow for a three-day hoist, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the rules of this Assembly already allow, or if you will give the House the ability to lay aside a motion for three days, maybe four days, maybe five days. And we're all quite well aware of how the House works on notices, given that a Bill is going to be coming before the House and that is given with 48 hours notice. And then when the first

reading is given, it's a day or two before the Bill again comes before the Assembly.

Well I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can realize the difficulty that we in the opposition side of the House were facing when the bell-ringing motion came to the floor. And the bell-ringing motion came to the floor because on this side of the House we had a lot of difficulty with the Bill that was presented to the floor by the Government Leader . . . Government House Leader. And it doesn't matter where you go, Mr. Deputy Speaker, people across this province realize that the two are intertwined as they were in 1989.

I'm going to go for a few minutes to some comments and make some observations from a speech that was made in this House the other day by the member from P.A. Carlton, Prince Albert Carlton. Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me just quote for a minute. The member from Prince Albert Carlton said, and I quote, on July 9, 1992:

. . . while members have always tried to reach consensus on changes to the rules and procedures in this Assembly, that consensus sometimes has been rather illusive. In fact previous rule changes have occasioned considerable debate in this Assembly.

And we're all well aware of that debate that has taken place. I'm sure members on the government side, many of the members on the government side are aware of the debate that took place in 1989 regarding rule changes. And I will get to some of the comments regarding that debate as I enter into my speech this afternoon regarding the amendment before this Assembly and indeed the motion, as we are allowed to speak concurrently to the motion.

Clearly agreement and consensus are laudable objectives. But as we all know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they are not always achievable, and they certainly do not extend to any requirement for unanimous consent.

Now we're well aware of the fact that any time you endeavour to reach consensus amongst people, amongst two parties, it takes a fair bit of debate. It takes a long period of debate. There's give and take on all sides.

And on any occasion when debate takes place regarding consensus or regarding give and take, or regarding in this case a motion, or as we have just seen in our country, the debate over the constitution, when you have a number of parties around the table you are going to find that it is going to take a period of time for all party members to be able to sit down and be able to present their points of view. And there's ample give and take back and forth so that parties can feel that they have achieved the best that was available to them without unilaterally being forced into changes that they have difficulty in accepting.

Mr. Speaker, I continue to quote from the July 9 *Hansard* and the member from P.A. Carlton:

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite limited the bells in this Assembly to 10 minutes on all recorded divisions related to that piece of

legislation.

He was referring back to 1989. He says:

So you see, Mr. Speaker, this House has already seen limits on bell-ringing under the previous administration. And believe me, Mr. Speaker, there was no provision for a compromise or for compensation of the suspension provision which we are offering at this time. There was no such move by the members opposite at that time.

Well I want to again indicate — and I believe my colleague from Wilkie indicated that; I believe he indicated in his speech — but I want to indicate to the people who may be watching today, and being such a beautiful day there may not be a lot of people inside with their televisions on, but if anyone is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fact is, the bells in this House are not limited. That's why we continue on this debate.

The fact is that the government of the day did eventually listen to people, listened to the arguments presented by the then opposition, and at that time tabled the Bill and sent it back to the Rules Committee for further debate.

And so if people may think from the comments made by the member from P.A.-Carlton that changes were made, in fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we stand in this House again debating bell-ringing because those changes were made for the simple reason that if they would have been made, it would have been a unilateral change to the motion and to the rules. And of course we're all well aware of the fact that the government of the day would certainly have been reprimanded for changing the rules without consent. And so with the same thing that members in 1989 asked for, we today ask for.

The member quoted from a *Star-Phoenix* editorial on July 4, '92. And this is the quote he read:

Reasonable people should need about five minutes to agree on a time limit for the bell-ringing tactic. Let the MLAs just do it, then get on with what the public pays them for.

Well, Mr. Speaker, no one disagrees with that. People agree that we need to look at the rules. We need to address the bell-ringing question.

The member goes on to say:

In doing so, Mr. Speaker, we understand that we are removing from the Assembly a tool that has been used rather efficiently and effectively by members of this Assembly. And we felt that it was very important not to just remove something without compensating, without putting something else in place.

Well I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would suggest that there isn't a member in this Assembly who, if they really sat down and thought about the compensation or the changes that have been proposed by the government, that would suggest or would even think or dare to believe that a three-day hoist would be

sufficient to allow members to address the public. And that's why we on this side of the House suggest that, as in 1989, this motion should again be returned to the Rules Committee.

So what have we decided to do, Mr. Speaker, and what we are offering . . . the opposition offering this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan is a way of suspending the business on a specific item or a specific Bill that is in contention and allowing the House and the proceedings of the House to continue without disrupting the total proceedings of the House.

And we agree with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I believe many members in this Assembly — government members, NDP members, Conservative members, and the Liberal leader — have all indicated that they believe the House should be allowed to work. And we have thrown out some suggestions that would allow the House to work. We have asked the government members and other members on the committee to consider the fact that . . . of lifting a Bill for maybe 60 days, maybe 45 days.

We all know when you're negotiating, when you're trying to reach consensus, all sides lay out what they specifically would like, and in fact in most cases lay out arguments even a little broader than what they're anticipating of receiving, in light of the fact that hopefully at the end of the day they might get close to what they really felt they could receive. And we all know . . . most of us have bartered at one time or the other, and we all know you never start off with what you hope to receive. You always leave . . . let say you're selling a car, you always . . . if you hope to get \$7,500 out of it, you will make a suggestion or you will set out a price of maybe 8,500 to 9,000 so that you have something to barter with.

We as Canadians, being as we come from all different nationalities from around the world, have also learned like other groups of people that you must barter in order to survive.

And so what we're suggesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the opposition is not saying don't eliminate the bell-ringing . . . or what the opposition is saying, Mr. Speaker, we must address the question of bell-ringing, but we also must have a way of raising concerns we may have. And whether it's as it is, the Conservative Party today, whether it is the NDP government down the road, I believe anyone would argue we need . . . an opposition needs the opportunity and the ability to raise specific concerns to the public, to bring to the public's attention Bills that are brought forward such as the GRIP Bill at this session, Mr. Speaker, that has a very, very threatening clause in it regarding retroactivity.

Mr. Speaker, I feel very strongly that it is appropriate for us to ask that this motion be again sent back to the Rules Committee.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I continue on reading from the quotes by the member from Prince Albert Carlton when he was . . . as he is talking about the Special Rules Committee and talking about the difficulty of reaching consensus, he indicates too:

And last of all, there was the bell-ringing — the bell-ringing tool. And I mention again, Mr. Speaker, there's only one problem with the bell-ringing tool, and that is that in addition to stopping the process on a specific Bill, it stops the process of the entire government.

We realize that, Mr. Speaker. That's why we are suggesting we need a tool that allows the opposition to bring to the attention of the general public the concerns they have while allowing the government to continue to operate, while allowing members of this Assembly to continue to address the specific items, Bills, and estimates that would come before this Assembly, to address the question of health care, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we all are aware of the concerns that are being raised out in rural Saskatchewan and across Saskatchewan with regards to health care.

And the fact that if we had a change in the rules and if we allowed the parties to work towards a consensus, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a consensus that would allow the business of the House to proceed, we would be able to address the concerns that were, as I found over the weekend, the concerns that were raised with me regarding agriculture and the drought across this province that is affecting many people, regarding hospitals and hospital closures in rural Saskatchewan, regarding the fact that many people are finding it even more difficult, specifically our seniors, in trying to make ends meet in light of the fact that they must now pay for optometric services or they must pay a higher deductible for their drug fees, Mr. Speaker, and many other concerns that they are raising.

And those are the reasons that we stand here today debating this motion, so that we can indeed let people know what is taking place so they can indeed have the opportunity to voice their concerns with us. So I don't think it's unreasonable for this opposition to ask for the ability to address the Rules Committee and to put suggestions forward.

We know where the government's stand is. Of course any government would like to . . . and would feel that a three-day hoist is appropriate. But I believe if you asked any member on the government side of the House today, if you would've asked them in 1989 . . . and as the member from Prince Albert Carlton indicated, even a ten-minute hoist wasn't appropriate at that time. And at that time the House felt it appropriate to move to the motion back to the Rules Committee.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — For leave to introduce a guest.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for leave to introduce a guest, and introduce to all members of the legislature, Dr. Frieda Beberfall who is in the Speaker's gallery. Dr. Beberfall is a Spanish professor at the University of Saskatchewan and she used to be a former

constituent of mine. She's now living in the constituency of the Speaker. So I would ask all members to join me in welcoming Dr. Beberfall and her guest. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTIONS

Special Committee on Rules and Procedures (continued)

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Certainly all members of this Assembly welcome those who would take the time to come and watch the proceedings today.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Prince Albert Carlton also went on to say: much has been said, Mr. Speaker, about the issue on which the bells were rung. And remember, he talked about the process and had talked about the fact that opposition members or members have used bell-ringing at any time before efficiently and effectively.

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that there will always be an issue. In 1989 it was SaskEnergy privatization. This year it's the GRIP. Next year it could be something else. There will always be an issue.

And we're not arguing that fact, Mr. Speaker. That is the purpose of this Assembly — for us to find ways, for us to debate issues, and then to figure out ways of resolving them.

And that's all we're asking of this Assembly. We're asking this Assembly to move the motion back to the Rules Committee where it belongs so that all members in this Assembly, through their representatives on the Rules Committee, can work towards finding out ways in which we can resolve the issue of bell-ringing.

And as I indicated just a few moments ago, certainly a number of ideas have been put forward. And I don't believe the ideas put forward are without merit. I believe they all have merit. I believe they give, not only the government but the opposition, the ability to raise the question that may come before this House that would affect people's individual rights.

So I believe it's very imperative, Mr. Speaker, that we indeed allow this motion to go back to the Rules Committee. As I indicated just a few moments ago, three days certainly is not long enough.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the motion before this Assembly, when we look at the normal format that has taken place over the years and all the talk we have had regarding consultation, regarding consensus — and I believe many people have indicated and many people felt that when they voted in October of 1991 they were electing a government that was going to be more consultative, a government that was going to work more on the basis of consensus, a government that was going to respect the wishes of the people — I think, Mr. Speaker, what we have seen over the last while despite all the rhetoric, despite the fact that the government in their

throne speech indicated that they were going to be consultative, that they were going to take the time to speak to people, that they were going to bring a brand-new face to government, I think, Mr. Speaker, what we see is the government seems to have forgotten all their promises.

And I think back to the debate that took place in this Assembly, I believe it's somewhat of a year, two years ago regarding Consensus Saskatchewan. We're all well aware of the fact that group of people that went around the province seeking input from people across the province as to how we should address health care, how we should address education, how we should address rural programs, and how we should address agriculture, and, Mr. Speaker, at that time the opposition of the day suggested it was just . . . it was a political sham; that it wasn't the proper tool; that you really didn't need Consensus Saskatchewan because they indeed were the voice for the public.

Well I would suggest that if the opposition at that time felt that they were the voice of the public, then I believe the members on the opposition side of the House at this time must take their proper place and be a voice for the public as well. And even though the public speak out against bells, they speak out against any government that would use its position, its large majority at any time, not only to change rules but to change the way the people across Saskatchewan are able to live.

Mr. Speaker, I think also of the consultation process and I think of the promises of the present government to consultation. And we're all well aware of the recent paper that was released regarding health care in this province. And again, as was indicated in question period on numerous occasions, the question was asked: well what consultation took place? Who have you contacted? Who have you consulted with, Mr. Speaker? And we were continually promised that consultation will take place.

Well I would suggest consultation should take place prior to any changes made, prior to any motions, prior to any approvals given to changes, whether it's in health care, whether it's education, whether it's in rules — rules that come before this Assembly, Mr. Speaker — consultation must take place. And that's what we're asking for through our amendment.

We're asking for a consultative process to work. We're asking the committee to sit down and take a very serious look at the rules. We're asking for this committee to sit down and address a way that would be workable and favourable to all parties, that the government can agree with and that opposition members can agree with.

Mr. Speaker, as I was speaking of the comments being made by the member from P.A. Carlton just the other day regarding the motion laid before us, I also look back to the May 29, 1989 debate that took place and some comments by the members. And in light of the motion that was just brought forward by my colleague, the member from Arm River, asking for the government to move on, allowing this Assembly to move on to business of the House . . . And this is what the member from P.A. Carlton said:

So what you should be doing at this time is you should be dropping that legislation. (Talking about the privatization legislation, the SaskEnergy Bill). You should be dropping the debate on this legislation. You should be coming forward with estimates. You haven't passed any but one yet. You haven't done any but one yet. Why? Because you haven't brought it forward. You are the people that bring forward the agenda. Day in and day out you bring forward the agenda.

What have we got here? How many days have we been here for? Forty-five days you haven't brought in a second estimate — 45 days and you haven't brought one in.

The member from P.A. Carlton brought the same argument at that time as I'm bringing right now in light of the motion that we just voted on. And he says:

That's unbelievable, unbelievable that here we've gone this far into the session and there hasn't been anything accomplished whatsoever. Why? Because you choose to deal with this that the people of Saskatchewan soundly rejected.

And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, and I didn't research it thoroughly, but the indication was that we really hadn't accomplished a lot of government business at that time, that 45-day period. But certainly at this present time, yes, we haven't accomplished much in the area of estimates, but we have passed 20 Bills in this Assembly — 20 Bills that allow the government to continue governing and working and meeting the requirements of the people across Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, at the same time the member from P.A. Carlton was arguing the fact that the opposition needed a way to communicate. And he says, and I quote:

You've got to have some way, some way of communicating. The bell procedure provides an opportunity and provides a bit of time to be sure that the people of Saskatchewan are able to hear exactly what's going on. And you know, it wasn't such a bad . . . it didn't turn out to be such a bad thing for the people to find out what this government was trying to do with the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. In the first place there was a promise that was about to be broken. And secondly, they were going to do it quietly, as quickly as possible, and pass the thing away . . .

Mr. Speaker, I would have to ask, in light of the current debate in this Assembly, if it doesn't resemble the 1989 debate. If indeed we are not facing the same circumstances. And it would be appropriate in light of the 1989 debate, Mr. Speaker, that we indeed do the same thing, or the suggestion that was made in 1989 and that the government of the day moved on, that the Bill was voted on and then tabled and that the motion on bell-ringing went back to committee, went back to the special committee on rules and regulations for further consideration.

And if it was appropriate at that time, Mr. Speaker, I believe it would be very appropriate right now to indeed adhere to the amendment that my colleague from Wilkie brought forward, asking this Assembly to move this motion out of the debate in the Assembly back to the committee. I think it would be very appropriate.

It would also be appropriate, Mr. Speaker, in light of the circumstances that we have seen take place across this country recently, and in light of the fact that the House was allowed . . . or suggested the House get on with business a few weeks ago and that members pursue the proper channels of changing the rules, that members work on consensus.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at consensus and I believe people right across . . . not only across Saskatchewan but across Canada believe in operating and working on consensus, believe in consulting, believe in working together, sitting together and discussing their issues and coming to an agreement.

And I refer to the specific debate that took place in this country regarding Canada's constitution. Back on July 8 the headline is: "Premiers make a deal." And it says:

'Historic day' as nine provinces and Ottawa agree on a unity package.

Mr. Speaker, that unity package would not have been agreed to if the government, the federal government of the day would have indeed said no, no more extensions of deadlines. And we can think back to early January, and even into last fall, of the deadlines that have come and gone as the Prime Minister and the minister responsible . . . the Hon. Joe Clark sat down and continued to negotiate with the premiers and with the provinces. In fact, it says:

Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow (and I'm quoting) was concerned about some aspects relating to removal of interprovincial barriers, but was heartened to see conditions to equalization and federal transfer payments to the provinces entrenched in the Constitution, should the package eventually be ratified. He also praised the final Senate reform agreement, saying it contained elements of the Saskatchewan proposal that had been put forward previously to bridge the distance between Triple-E supporters and opponents.

Mr. Speaker, the debate on the constitution, yes . . . The Premier of the province of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan didn't get all it was bargaining for and all it was hoping to get. But the Premier of this province realized that if he was going to reach some kind of consensus with the other premiers across this province, with the other provinces and with the federal government, with the Northwest Territories, the two territories, and the aboriginal community, we had to sit down and there had to be give and take on both sides, on all sides.

Mr. Speaker, another comment in the same paper said, the headline read, "Much consultation . . ." Much consultation. And I have to ask you, how much consultation have we actually seen in this Assembly to

address the problem of bell-ringing, the problem of the motion that has been brought before the Assembly?

The article goes on to say, and I quote:

When the Meech Lake accord died in 1990, Canadians demanded more consultation. Consultation they got.

And, Mr. Speaker, we're aware of the consultation that has taken place and it hasn't been easy. In fact, Mr. Speaker, because of the time allotted and the allowable time given for consultation, we find that in the process that has taken place since 1990 or the Meech Lake Accord back in 1986, the province of Quebec has been sitting on the sidelines because they felt there wasn't an ability to . . . they didn't have an ability to compromise and they weren't quite willing to consult. And it would almost appear that the same process is taking place in this Assembly today.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is appropriate that we allow the process of consultation to continue. Another article in the *Leader-Post* indicated: "In the end, it was a compromise on the Senate that few had expected." That allowed an agreement to take place between our leaders in this country regarding the constitution — a compromise on the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, that's all we're asking for. We're asking for an opportunity for our representatives on the Rules Committee to sit down with the government representatives and the Liberal leader to work out a compromise. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, it is very imperative that the opposition not be totally limited in their ability to debate in this House. In fact I would suggest that the Premier of this province has those same views.

Let me go back to the 1989 debate. And I'm quoting from *Hansard*, May 11, 1989, quotes made by the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, the then opposition leader, now Premier:

What new-found Democrats are these, Mr. Deputy Speaker? (He's speaking of the government.) What new-found democracy is this? What kind of charade is this? What kind of an unprecedented action it is for these people to bring forward a motion for rules change without consultation . . . without any consultation from us.

He goes on to say:

They know that the people of Saskatchewan oppose what they have done and oppose it vigorously, and they wanted the opposition to do what was being done, and they've gotten beaten up.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, many people across this province believe the same thing. They believe that yes, bell-ringing must be addressed. But they also believe that opposition must speak up for what the people of Saskatchewan believe in, and the virtues they believe in.

(1615)

I continue to quote the member from Riversdale, the Premier:

I don't mean beaten up politically; I don't care about the politics. They got beaten up on this fundamental policy of theirs, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They got beaten up and now they're coming in and they're going to show us who the bosses are.

Again, what kind of democrats are these? He goes on, and I continue to quote:

... for the first time in the record of the province of Saskatchewan ... they come forward to change the rules of this House in the name of democracy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What kind of a double standard is this?

I find that very ironic, Mr. Speaker, that the then opposition leader, now Premier, would have found it very undemocratic for the government of the day to unilaterally change or ask for a change of the rules. And now today, where is the Premier's voice?

Has the Premier taken time to speak in this Assembly? He has the same opportunity as he had back in 1989 as the opposition leader. How ironic that he hasn't taken the time to speak out on this issue. I believe he would have a difficult time reversing the feelings he had in 1989. He would have a difficult time supporting the motion as it sits before this Assembly today, a motion which he defended, he spoke so vehemently against back in 1989.

And I believe because of his principles and because of his belief in individual rights and freedoms and the democratic process, that the Premier of the day would have a difficult time standing up and speaking against the motion that has been brought in by his colleague and his colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I go back to some further comments that were made by the then opposition leader:

These are the people who say they're the defenders. If they're the defenders, why didn't they approach us in this kind of a fashion — traditionally — of trying to define the rules in a way that we could all accept and agree, these self-proclaimed, new-found democrats?

The opposition leader as he was debating in the 1989 debate continued to bring to our attention the fact that it was very improper for the government of the day to unilaterally change the rules. He says, and I quote:

That's the context in which this motion is to be done, and let's not fool ourselves as to what's happening here. This government, if it was really genuinely committed to democracy, would have, as much as it hurt the Minister of Justice, as much as he opposed what we did, they would have done it in the traditional and normal democratic way. Let's not be fooled about what's being planned here.

I believe that argument exists today as well. I believe that argument is just as appropriate for the debate as it is taking place today as it was in 1989. I believe it would be very appropriate for the member from Regina Churchill Downs to indeed come to this Assembly and say, Mr. Speaker, or say to the Assembly, let us indeed rethink this change to the rules; let us allow the debate on the rules to go back to the special Rules Committee as it has been brought forward, as the amendment brought forward by the member from Wilkie has indicated.

And, Mr. Speaker, we could live with that; we could work with that. And I believe the Premier of the day could work with that as well.

Back in 1989 the then opposition leader indicated, or said:

Now they want to introduce the bell-ringing motion to come back and to say to us that on top of all of this artillery that they're going to use to submerge the opposition — forget about the opposition — and submerge the people of the province of Saskatchewan. On top of all that they say, we are going to muzzle you for ever on this issue.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we are facing today. Because let me just bring to your attention and bring to the attention of the Assembly and the people of this province the fact that in 1989 the numbers in this Assembly were some 36 government members and I believe 26 opposition members. And today it's 55 government members and 11 opposition members.

So if there is an effective way to muzzle the opposition, it is to remove the bell-ringing question without allowing a process in place that would give the opposition the ability to at least stand the Bill.

And even for that fact, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that a government wouldn't mind having the opportunity of just putting a Bill on the shelf to let the public decide whether this is the appropriate process that they should be following other than, as in 1989, the opposition of the day believed very sincerely that the SaskEnergy Bill was the wrong process at that time, although it appears today that they wholeheartedly agree with it now because it's before this Assembly to split SaskEnergy from SaskPower.

But I also believe that the government of the day believed when they were in opposition that it would be muzzling them to limit the bell-ringing to 10 minutes or to take the time and even only allow for only a two- or three-day debate to take place, putting a Bill on the shelf for three days. And I think they would feel just as strongly today, that the opposition needs that process of allowing a motion or a Bill or any amendment that would come before this House that would affect people's rights allowing the opposition, whether it be a lone opposition member or whether it be an opposition of 10 members or whether it be an opposition of 20 members or whatever the format or breakdown of any opposition may be following a provincial election.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that anyone in this Assembly believes that the opposition must have the ability to speak and to raise the concerns of people, raise the concerns of the electorate out there, because that's what we're elected for. Everyone in this Assembly is elected to represent their constituents.

And one of the five things I find difficult and I found difficult since my election in 1986, the process of the parliamentary system that basically dictates that members follow the wishes of their party and party consensus.

And I will agree that, at least from the processes that have taken place in our party, many times as members argued on certain rules or certain changes they'd like to see brought forward to the legislature, certain issues that concern their own constituents as you ruled in caucus, we didn't always receive consensus which reached that . . . didn't necessarily go along with the viewpoints that I may have expressed or that my colleague from Rosthern may have expressed or that my colleague from Thunder Creek would have expressed, Mr. Speaker, but we went along with that consensus.

I would suggest that we take a look down the road and maybe I'll throw this out as another idea for the Rules Committee to look at, that MLAs should be given the ability in a number of circumstances to even speak out very freely about concerns that affect their constituency that in some cases may go against what the government is trying to do, may even go against what their opposition is bringing forward in consensus.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think it's very appropriate that this Rules Committee be allowed to broaden its base and to take a more serious look at some of the changes that I believe we need or we should see take place in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many arguments that we can bring forward regarding the rules changes. We also . . . we are aware of the fact that other jurisdictions have changed the rules. We are aware of the fact that very serious and heated debate has taken place whenever rule changes have come forward. We're aware of the fact that the government has used its mandate on many occasions to bring in closure to limit debate. As opposition members, we're also aware of the fact that we can take the opportunity to speak to a motion or to speak to a Bill and, if you will, filibuster.

But I think we'll all agree that in this case with 10 members, and certainly going back to 1982 when the opposition of the day had eight members, there was a limit, a limited time period in which opposition members can place their concerns. Therefore it is imperative that we have appropriate changes that would allow opposition members to be truly true opposition members.

Mr. Speaker, as I continue speaking to the amendment and the motion, I want to take a few moments to go back to some of the debate as well that was brought forward by a number of members in this Assembly. And I've talked regarding a few members so far. And certainly this is an ongoing debate that allows us and gives us the ability to

look at where members were years ago and the particular debates that they brought forward and the particular reasons that they gave as to why this Assembly should not allow the motion to proceed as it had been brought forward by the then Justice member, the then member from Kindersley.

And I go back to some comments made by the member from Saskatoon Eastview-Haultain, I believe is the new riding. But it was Saskatoon Eastview at that time. And he says, and I quote:

This rule change, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is very instrumental to the government in ramming its unpopular privatization plans down the throats of Saskatchewan people.

And I believe over the last few days, over the period of time that we have been in discussion regarding the rules and regarding the bell-ringing debate, motion that has been presented to this House by the member from Regina Churchill Downs and the amendment to that motion, Mr. Speaker, we have endeavoured to bring to the attention of the Saskatchewan people, the Saskatchewan public, the electorate out there, that the only reason the bell-ringing question is before this Assembly today is the same reason that the then opposition members indicated why they were taking such a strong stance against the unilateral change to the bell-ringing.

At that time it was SaskPower and the privatization of SaskPower. Today it's because of a legal aspect in which we believe and many people across this province believe, not just the farm community that are affected by the particular Bill, the GRIP Bill, but certainly people right across this province, from seniors to young people to business men and women, to the wage earner — the fact that this government needs the Bill, needs a change in the bell-ringing to change the Bill, to unilaterally change a contract, to unilaterally go against the wishes of the electorate who voted for them, believing that they would be more open and honest.

Mr. Speaker, the member goes on to say, and this is the May 17 *Hansard*, 1989.

I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the proposed rule change will go a long way towards perhaps putting in the hands of the government the power to steamroll over the wishes and the will of not only the opposition but the people of Saskatchewan . . .

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, when we take a very close look at that, we have to agree that what we face today is indeed going to give the government the very thing that the member spoke out against in 1989, and that is the ability just to steamroll over the opposition, steamroll over the electorate of Saskatchewan whenever an opposition would dare to speak up against the government.

And, Mr. Speaker, I don't deny the fact that a government needs the opportunity to govern. I don't deny the fact that the government, regardless of politics, regardless of who may sit on the government side of the House, needs the

ability to make changes.

And on many occasions changes are difficult; they're not easy. It's not easy to make changes when people become very complacent. It's not easy to make changes, especially in difficult times or when people are facing situations where, as we see across this province today, Mr. Speaker, a large area of this province is facing a very severe drought situation. And I find it hard to believe in light of the fact that my area has been quite well . . . we've been really blessed with a fair bit of moisture. And a number of people in my constituency at this time would just as soon see the sun shine for a least a dozen days or more to allow them to get along with their haying process.

And, Mr. Speaker, the motion before us and the amendment, the amendment endeavouring to send the motion back to the committee, is asking the government to come to grips with the fact that we must work on consensus. We must work out our differences. And it would be a lot more favourable for everyone in this Assembly, government and opposition members, everyone here, to find that we were able to sit down, put aside our differences, and negotiate a favourable agreement that any party down the road, regardless of whether they're in government or opposition, would be able to work with.

(1630)

But I find today, Mr. Speaker, the same process taking place as we saw in 1989. The member from Saskatoon Eastview-Haultain went on say:

The members opposite will try to justify this heavy-handed unilateral change of the rules of the House by claiming that the opposition would use the tactic of the bells on any issue in the future and could, in fact, paralyse the government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say to you that this government that condemns our walking out, our use of legitimate means of this Assembly, this government fails to understand why this situation occurred in the first place. It did not happen because the opposition was prepared to take that sort of unwarranted action. It obviously . . . as the Leader of the Opposition said on Friday, this was a very, very serious step — a very serious and a very necessary step — so it is not something that we did lightly.

I would have to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the same scenario is present here this year in this Assembly, that your loyal opposition, Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition of 10 members, take their position very seriously. They didn't walk out and ring the bells on a whim. They felt very strongly, and we continue to feel, Mr. Speaker, that this government must act responsibly; that it cannot turn around and after it has signed a contract with individuals, whether they be farmers, whether they would be contractors, whether they be Saskatchewan bonds holders, whoever they may be, this government cannot use its majority to change the rules in the middle of the game.

We've heard so many arguments over the past number of days from members of the government, catcalls across the floor, about getting in the game. I believe the Premier of the province talked about getting in the game in question period the other day.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is time the government got in the game. I believe it is time they sat down and addressed the very major concerns that the Bill that was presented before this House that precipitated the motion, the bell-ringing motion that we're addressing in the amendment to this motion . . . Mr. Speaker, I believe it's appropriate that we indeed give the Rules Committee the mandate that this Assembly has given them, and that is to work out a unilateral agreement regarding rules and regulations.

If it was a problem, if it was a mistake for the government not to consult with the public before moving to privatizing SaskEnergy, Mr. Speaker, I believe that same mistake has been made here. In light of the fact of the process of consultation that was continually brought forward and continually is brought forward by government members, by cabinet ministers, by MLAs about the fact that they are going to be more consultative, wouldn't it be appropriate for this House to allow that consultative process to continue to work?

Mr. Speaker, we have indeed . . . And I believe my colleague, the member from Rosthern, the Opposition House Leader, I believe the Government House Leader, and certainly the Leader of the Government, the Premier, and the Opposition Leader, have been conferring back and forth. I believe they have been very diligent in putting forward their arguments. And they have been in the process of continually consulting each other to come out with . . . presenting their arguments, trying to reach a consensus. And as I indicated, the member from P.A. Carlton indicated the other day, reaching consensus is not always easy.

I go back to the member from Saskatoon Eastview:

Mr. Speaker, the action taken by the government in proposing this unilateral change, because — let's remember they've now reneged on their proposal to us to sit down and discuss this in an all-party committee — the action taken by this government to propose and attempt to enact this unilateral rule of change, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is totally — and, I repeat, it is totally unprecedented in this legislature, as the Leader of the Opposition said the other day.

I would suggest if it was inappropriate at that time, if it is totally unprecedented in 1989, then what is it today? And I ask all members, why are we facing the situation we are facing today? An election was held in October, 1991. We have had a fair bit of time for members to sit down, and as I indicated earlier, to sit down and come up with rule changes. And we have a test, a trial period right now, regarding a number of rule changes that were brought before this House.

And certainly it's by no means the end to all the rule changes, to some of the suggestions that have been made.

But it was a process that allowed the Rules Committee to at least offer some changes that this House could work with over the next 50 days. And I believe most members would indicate that the rule changes that were proposed have been working and have been working fairly efficiently. But yes, there are a number of changes that will take a period of time for the members to reach agreement on, such as the bell-ringing question.

And I believe it is imperative that we all allow that process to continue. I don't believe that the process of changing rules can work in harmony when we have a big bat over our heads, or a major change and a government feeling that they need a rule change in order to bring forward legislation.

Talking about the discussion that took place back in 1989, the member from Saskatoon Eastview-Haultain said:

A week ago yesterday, on Monday, when the opposition returned to this House, the Premier stated publicly that the government would talk to the New Democrats about possible changes in bell-ringing rules.

He says:

Obviously the Premier's initial reaction was the correct one in terms of the parliamentary traditions of this House. However, (he goes on to say) shortly afterwards, on the same day, the government served notice it was going to introduce the rule change without consultation with the opposition.

And if I remember correctly many members on the government side of the House today who were in opposition were very indignant that the government and that the minister of Justice would indeed do such a thing, would take that format. As the member indicated:

Mr. Speaker, until now, as I indicated, this Assembly has not made these kinds of changes without all-party input and consent on any rule change. As I say, this has been a strength of our system. It has protected the majority from ramming through procedures without minority input and approval. And this is an important . . . the importance of this tradition cannot be underestimated, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This has got to be preserved as an important tradition.

I argue that is the same process applied today. We must preserve the tradition of this Assembly.

Throughout the history of the Assembly, substantial consultation on rule changes has taken place through the mechanism of all-party committees which are given a mandate by this Assembly.

This Assembly gives a mandate to the Rules Committee, not the government of the day. And maybe the government of the day in '89 abused its position as government in suggesting the Rules Committee come up

with an agreement, and if not an agreement, a unilateral change and took their position just a little too firm and superseded the responsibility placed on the committee by this Assembly. Maybe the same . . . I would suggest the same scenario is evident here today.

Rule changes have, for the most part, been accomplished through consensus and without division. And there are many examples. And we can go back to 1985 and 1981 and 1986. These all-party committees have undertaken in the past, comprehensive review of rules — not just one change at a time, but comprehensive reviews of the rules and have brought forward legitimate changes, legitimate proposal changes for reform.

And as I indicated at the onset of my remarks, there are many current important changes that need to be considered along with the bell-ringing proposal.

And if I remember correctly, Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Eastview at that time would have been a very young member in this Assembly. He had been elected to the Assembly in a by-election just shortly before the debate on the SaskEnergy question took place. And at that time, even though he was very new in the Assembly, he had some strong feelings and viewpoints on changes to legislation.

And I continue to quote from the member:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to place on the record and emphasize that in the past consensus has always been sought for rules changes — consensus has always been sought for rules changes. We thought that the Minister of Justice was sincere in his attempt to reach consensus on this matter as well. That appears not to be the case.

We are trusting that as my colleagues and members of government sit down, that we eventually will come to a consensus.

In the future, Mr. Deputy Speaker, (the member continues) one would hope that consensus would always be sought . . .

And I repeat that:

In the future, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one would hope that consensus would always be sought.

. . . but this government is setting a precedent . . . For the first time in the history of Saskatchewan, this . . . government is setting a precedent, a precedent that we are not unmindful of, that says that if the rules are not in accordance with the wishes and the desires of the government, you go ahead and change them for your own purpose.

And we don't believe on this side of the House that this is healthy, nor do we believe that it is democratic, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

Mr. Speaker, as I go over the comments that were made in 1989, I would have to say that we would all agree that we believe a consensus should be sought, that this

government should not now take the . . . use their iron hand, their iron fist, and change the rules without coming to a consensus, without sitting down with opposition members.

And maybe, Mr. Speaker, sitting down with the public in general and getting some opinion . . . because we have all heard. Members from all parties, we have heard over a period of years, and certainly in the last few days, the public have offered their opinions on bell-ringing. And the public believe very firmly, and they have some very strong views that they believe that bell-ringing should be addressed, that yes it has a place.

And as we have suggested and I believe as has been suggested in the Rules Committee and as it was in 1989 — and I'm certain that it's been over the period of the last few years — that no one disagrees with the fact that there should be a limited time of bell-ringing. No one wants to eliminate the bell-ringing totally because, Mr. Speaker, we must have a means by which we can notify members of a vote, as we are all aware of the fact that work in this Assembly doesn't just involve itself in this Chamber. As MLAs we all have responsibilities, and we have responsibilities to get back to our constituents regarding requests they have asked us of, regarding questions that they have placed forward.

And on many occasions it's not always possible for every member to be right in the Assembly, right in the Chamber at a time when a vote is called. And therefore the bell-ringing allows for a calling of the members to the Assembly — calling of the members, Mr. Speaker. And I'm sure many ministers and premiers over the years would agree that bell-ringing is appropriate.

And as was discussed in 1989 and as has been brought forward at this time, Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that maybe bell-ringing be addressed and a limited time period be given to call members. And if it is impossible to get enough members physically to the Assembly to address a motion or to vote on a motion, that the bell-ringing or the vote be placed maybe 48 hours hence, and allow the House to continue with its work. And many people across this province believe that that would be fair, that that would be appropriate.

But as we have been arguing over the past number of days and will continue to bring to the attention of the electorate and to this Assembly, the opposition — as was indicated by the then opposition — needs a process in which they can bring to the attention of the electorate the fact that we cannot . . . If we're going to limit bell-ringing, there must be a process that allows for an opposition to speak out very strongly, and if indeed it has to, ask a government to put a Bill on the back burner for a period of time, whether it be 60 days . . . And when I say 60 days, Mr. Speaker, I don't necessarily mean 60 sitting days of this Assembly. As we all know, the argument will be, well 60 sitting days. When we first meet in the Assembly, it takes 15 to 20 days just to go through the Speech from the Throne and the budget debate, and the normal House would sit in the neighbourhood of 70 days, maybe 60 to 90 days, whatever that period is.

Maybe, Mr. Speaker, we could allow that 60-day period

to be a process of 60 actual days from the time a motion is introduced, which would still give time for a Bill to be brought before the Assembly. And if there are further questions raised, Mr. Speaker, the public in general will speak out very strongly, and they will take the action that is needed for the government to listen. And I would suggest that any government that doesn't listen to the electorate will pay the price.

(1645)

I find it interesting as I go over other comments and other speeches being made in the debate in 1989, and I would suggest that the bell-ringing debate is not the most pressing and urgent problem facing the people of Saskatchewan today as it was in 1989. And I quote from a speech made by the member from Saskatoon South and now Saskatoon Nutana:

. . . Mr. Speaker, this is not the most pressing and urgent problem facing the people of Saskatchewan. We should be . . . we should not be addressing this issue today.

If the Minister of Finance . . . would take into consideration the most . . . problems of the people of Saskatchewan today, he would be addressing problems facing agriculture, he would be addressing problems facing our deficit, he would be addressing problems that are facing our young people because they're unemployed and have no jobs in this province. That's what he would be doing.

And, Mr. Speaker, we just have to look back a few moments ago to the question period in this Assembly. And if unemployment was a problem in 1989, just take a look at the debate that took place in this Assembly earlier on today, and there's a very strong indication that unemployment has even become more serious. It's even a greater concern in this province. To many people across this province, to young people, to middle aged people, to older people, it becomes a problem. And while we're addressing the bell-ringing question, Mr. Speaker, as my colleague from Arm River indicated, why will the government not allow us the ability to get on with the business of the House, as the member from Saskatoon South indicated in 1989?

The member went on to say:

Mr. Speaker, the people of the province of Saskatchewan should know that it's not the opposition that calls the agenda for the day in the legislature, it is the government. And we have asked the government time and time again to address those problems that are facing Saskatchewan (people).

Mr. Speaker, the member, in 1989, felt it would be appropriate to allow . . . And I would almost think the member was thinking, maybe for a cooling off period, and was suggesting the same . . . making the same suggestions that we are making here today, that this House allow this motion, allow the debate on the rules, allow the debate on bell-ringing to be sent back to the

committee for further discussion, for further consultation, and even to go a step further, to go to the public of Saskatchewan to ask for their input. For we realize that we can address a number of issues that are concerning us.

As I look through the *Hansard* for 1989, I see, and the member from Saskatoon South saying . . . talking about the bell-ringing, and talking about an article in the *Star-Phoenix*, May 11, 1989. And he says:

And they're referring of course to the bell-ringing, that the NDP would have refused any change.

"But (it says) both sides may well have come to a compromise, if change indeed is necessary."

But the member at that time said: "There does not appear to be any pressing need for a rule change."

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that I believe the same thing. There isn't a pressing need for rule changes on bell-ringing today, Mr. Speaker. The member from Saskatoon South said:

Have they (the government) lost their objectivity to govern in Saskatchewan? (He says) I say yes, they have. I say yes, they have.

That was in 1989 following two years after an election. Mr. Speaker, we're only nine months following the last provincial election. And one would have to ask the same question.

And many people feel the same way, are feeling very strongly that within nine months we have had such radical changes regarding government, regarding promises that were made to the people of Saskatchewan prior to an election, that people find it offensive to believe that the government would talk and would decide to change the rules and would anticipate that they would not even be willing to listen, listen to the arguments put forward by the opposition.

Mr. Speaker, here was a rule, here was a rule that was not a detriment to democracy, but it furthered the process of democracy.

And he's talking about the bell-ringing:

It gave the people an opportunity to become involved and to tell the government, no, we don't want what you are putting forth, and asking the government, in fact pleading with the government . . . I know they are receiving letters; (he says this of the government of the day) I know they are receiving phone calls where people are asking them to withdraw the legislation . . . But are they listening? No, they're not listening any more.

As my colleagues say . . . and you're right. We have an obligation to protect the public out there.

Well if it was true in 1989, it is certainly true in 1992, and especially in light of the fact that the legislation that we took a stand on, Mr. Speaker, has such a detrimental effect on many people across this province.

. . . why, why is this government so set on ramming this one little thing through, the changing of the bells (instead of allowing it to go to committee)? And it can only be because they intend to bring back the SaskEnergy legislation and then ram it through this House against the wishes of the people.

That will not happen.

That was the commitment made by the member from Saskatoon South, Mr. Speaker. He says:

That will not happen. And I'll tell the members opposite, this Legislative Assembly cannot work unless we establish trust between this side of the House and that side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, we must continually work to establish trust, and that is going to take a long, consultative process such as the process that took place in the constitutional debate, the process that our Premier was involved in. And I'm sure as the Premier was involved in the debate in 1992 on the constitution, the same process took place in 1981, and the premier at that time and the deputy House leader of the day, the present Premier, found that the consultative process was necessary. Certainly it is necessary in this House.

As the member from Saskatoon South said:

You are not going to do that (change the rules) by ramming through this kind of a rule change. You are not going to get this through, and you're going to be sitting here a long, long, long time.

Mr. Speaker, we're only 10 members, but it would appear to me that I believe we could be sitting here a long, long time. In fact when we get to the end of the day we may be here till — God forbid if I can't get out and harvest — we might be here till late in the fall.

Mr. Speaker, and I have given the members opposite the assurance that we will stop at nothing legally that we can in this House to prevent that from happening. What we are asking of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and asking the member from Saskatoon South, is to allow the process to follow through as it did in 1989, to allow the motion to go back to the committee for that consensus. And the member from Saskatoon South continued:

And I will give you my word and the word of all the colleagues on this side of the House that that is exactly what is going to happen.

And the member also brought out the fact that many of his colleagues had brought out — brought out the same concern:

. . . nowhere in the history of Saskatchewan had this taken place in this legislature where a government unilaterally brought in a motion to change the rules of this House. (We must continue to reiterate that point.) It has always been the custom of this House that when there have been

rule changes, that we send it off to committee.

That's why the committees are appointed by this House, committees in agriculture, committees in finance, a constitutional committee. And, Mr. Speaker, no doubt any time a committee has met they have found that it has been very difficult as you go and talk to people across the province, that it's not always easy.

In fact it isn't easy at all to reach a consensus. It is not easy to find all parties agreeing at the same time on the same question. As the member from Saskatoon South said: it has always been the custom of this House that when there have been rule changes, that they have been sent to committee. They have been sent to committee to reach consensus and then brought before the legislature, then discussed by the legislature and passed.

And I again just point out the fact that we are presently in a time period regarding some rule changes that I believe all members of this Assembly would agree have been working well. And it would be very unfortunate, the rule changes would now . . . we would have a unilateral change on one piece of rule . . . one period of rule changes which would take away from all the work done by the Rules Committee regarding changes to the rules in this Assembly.

And if it wasn't a right in 1989, it isn't the right of the government . . . simply does not have the right to try and bring these rule changes through unilaterally or bring this about unilaterally. And as I indicated before, it's going to get a rough ride.

Mr. Speaker, we are just asking for this Assembly to allow this motion to go back to committee. And I would urge my colleague and the House Leader to sit down and do some serious negotiations. I believe, Mr. Speaker, we would find that our colleagues are honourable, as the Premier has indicated, and that through a series . . . but I would also indicate that it's . . . even though we believe they're honourable and even though we believe a consensus can be reached, I do not believe we will find a consensus reached in a matter of a few moments, a few hours, or even a few days. I think it would be appropriate for the Rules Committee to be able to sit down and negotiate without that hammer over their head.

Back in 1989, the member from Saskatoon South said:

About 70 per cent of the people are agreeing with us, saying no to the government opposite, and . . . (saying) yes to the bell-ringing . . . and saying to the government, please get off that bell-ringing motion . . . and deal with the pressing and urgent problems facing the people of Saskatchewan. But will they listen? No they won't.

My colleagues and I over the past weekend have found that yes, people were coming up and talking to us about the bell-ringing. It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, individuals that would come up to me on the weekend and say, have you guys got the bells still ringing? And I indicated to them that due to a motion in this Assembly and due to a process of consultation, no the bells weren't ringing, that indeed we were in the process of dealing with a motion regarding

the bells. But we'd also spent a number of days in this Assembly dealing with government business.

And if it was appropriate in 1989 to deal with government business, the opposition felt that it very important and I believe the government of the day, if they believed as opposition members we should get on with government business, then why are we as . . . they as government now, not getting on with the business of this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, you may or may not remember the poll that was conducted by our caucus. Mr. Speaker, I believe it was in the neighbourhood of some 76 to 80 per cent of the people believed that the government wasn't acting properly and that they should not have been pushing forward legislation unilaterally. People also spoke out in about the same numbers that they didn't like bell-ringing but they felt bell-ringing was a tool the opposition needed to address serious points of serious concerns that they may have regarding a motion regarding a Bill.

Let me go back to 1989 and further comments made by the member from Saskatoon South:

"I may point out that obstructive tactics are allowed by the rules." Exactly the same thing that we did here . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, it's obstructive . . . Oh, (and he's referring to the Minister of Rural Affairs) . . . says, come on, Herman. (I'm quoting.) Well, Mr. Speaker, what would we do? What could we do?

(And) The minister of rural affairs wouldn't listen to his people; he wouldn't listen. I suppose he didn't even speak up in cabinet; no, he didn't even speak up in cabinet. He wasn't listening to his people, because we got thousands of people signing petitions out of his constituency. But did he listen to those? No, he didn't. No, . . . (he) didn't listen.

That's what the member from Saskatoon South was indicating at the time. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that people really feel strongly about government using their position, usurping their authority.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that this Assembly be allowed to operate in a uniform and appropriate way, that the committees of this Assembly be allowed to work and operate appropriately.

I believe when we look back to 1989, as the olive branches were laid out to the members of the Assembly, both government and opposition members, it is appropriate that we continue to put out olive branches at this time. And if it takes . . . It would be appropriate as well for people across this province, and certainly the chairman of the committee, to lay out some olive branches to all members and asking them to sit down and address the concerns that are raised . . .

The Speaker: — Order. It now being 5 o'clock, this House stands recessed till 7 o'clock this evening.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.