

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

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

Of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that the Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to order SaskPower to facilitate the production of non-utility generated power in areas of increased demand.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Penner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and to the Assembly a friend of mine who is sitting in your gallery. He's a constituent of mine and he's just here to observe proceedings today, Henry Fehr from Swift Current.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Renaud: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to the Assembly a former speaker, Mr. John Brockelbank, Jr., sitting in your gallery. He controlled this House almost as good as you do, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Brockelbank has a lot of common with the Kelsey-Tisdale constituency. His father represented the Tisdale area for many years. And we do have a large area of land in Kelsey-Tisdale that's called the Brockelbank hill. And we do have a student's scholarship known as the Brockelbank scholarship. So I'd ask the House to welcome John today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the House, Vonda Kosloski and Amy Manz and another pair of ladies and a gentleman up in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They wear white ribbons to protest Bill No. 38. And I would ask that the Assembly welcome them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome John Brockelbank to the legislature. As the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) for many years for Saskatoon Westmount I'll tell you he left behind very big shoes to follow in. And when I'm in the constituency, I still have people asking where you are, so they would love to see you back in.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It is my pleasure today to introduce somebody who is sitting in the Speaker's gallery. May

I also add my words of welcome to the former Speaker, John Brockelbank. That's not the person that I do want to introduce.

I do want to introduce another Speaker in another Assembly who is going to be our guest speaker this evening at our annual CPA (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association) meeting, and of course I'm referring to Arthur Donahoe who was the Speaker of the Nova Scotia Assembly for I believe a period of 10 years.

And he had a most difficult task of being Speaker because while he was Speaker his brother was a cabinet minister. So he had a very difficult task. But I had the pleasure of meeting Arthur in The Bahamas last September or October and it was at that time that Arthur became the first Canadian secretary general of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

And I welcome you here today, Arthur, and I'm sure the members will join me in making sure that you have an excellent stay here in Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Changes to Rural Health Care

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for bringing in closure into this House to force closure at rural hospitals, namely, the Minister of Health.

Madam Minister, last night you finally screwed up the courage to go and listen to people, to Saskatchewan people, and what they are saying about your wellness model. You didn't have to run an expensive ad; you didn't have to do an expensive poll; all you had to do was go out, meet, and listen to the people. So maybe now you understand people want more time, people want more information, and people want more input into this massive restructuring of our health care in this province.

And I ask the minister, don't the people of Saskatchewan deserve that much? Will you withdraw your plan to invoke the heavy-handed use of closure and will you delay passage of this Bill until a full public debate can be held on this matter?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the member is correct, the Minister of Health was in Weyburn last night; also the Minister of Labour was there. Mr. Speaker, I was in Moose Jaw last night meeting with people involved in health care. The evening before the member from Melfort and I were in Melfort. Members of this caucus have travelled the province extensively talking to people about health care and health care reform, not only just currently but for the past many months, Mr. Speaker.

And what the people of Saskatchewan are telling us from border to border is that health care reform is important to preserve our medicare for future generations and they want to be on about the task, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say to the hon. member with the greatest amount of respect that the people of Saskatchewan are not interested in speaking to the B team, they want to speak to the minister, the real minister. And she has up until now — and I give her credit for being in Weyburn yesterday — has been ducking the people of this province.

Over the past few weeks, Mr. Minister, you have repeatedly suggested the town-hall meetings being held around the province are being orchestrated by the opposition. Well finally your minister went to a meeting in Weyburn last night. And that was a meeting in an NDP (New Democratic Party) riding organized by CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees), I might add, hardly a traditional ally of the PC (Progressive Conservative) Party.

Now you understand that these meetings are not political. These are not being held by political people. Apolitical people are the ones that are attending these meetings. They're concerned, Mr. Minister, about what you and your government are doing to the health care of this province.

So, Mr. Minister, there are going to be more public meetings. There's one in Kerrobert on the 14th, Eston on the 15th, Kindersley on the 19th, Codette on the 20th. Will you assure us that Madam Minister will be at these meetings, will be there to listen to the people and will not be ducking these meetings that are so critical to the rural well-being of this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, it is the fact that we are involved in major health care reform in our province, a major health care reform that is long overdue and welcomed by the people of Saskatchewan. Understandably, Mr. Speaker, understandably there are many questions, there are many questions being asked and many questions to answer.

Mr. Speaker, as meetings unfold, just as meetings have been conducted over the past number of months, as meetings unfold I can assure the member opposite and all members of this House that government will be represented at those meetings.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — No, no. That's not good enough, Mr. Speaker. That's not good enough, Mr. Member. We don't, and the people don't want government represented at these meetings. They want the government there. Your Minister of Health should be

there. The Premier should be there. The Minister of Finance should be there. People of this province are saying, we want to give this message to the province.

And they are wanting to know one other thing, Mr. Member. So far, except for Weyburn, the rural hospitals of this province don't know where they stand as far as finances are concerned. The budgets have not been released to them as yet. They don't know where they're at. Why don't you come forward? Why don't you make a commitment that these hospital budgets for rural Saskatchewan will come out forthrightly so that, indeed, the full impact of your plans are going to be known to the people of this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that in the days and weeks ahead, all of that important financial information will be provided and provided in detail, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to say this. I want to say this about the need and the desire of members of this government, this caucus, and this cabinet to be at public meetings. We need to be there, Mr. Speaker, because members of that opposition are turning up and misleading the people of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, that's simply unconscionable, unconscionable when we're talking about something as important as the health care of Saskatchewan people and health care reform. And we will be there, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will then assume, and my colleagues will inform the various towns and the various people in rural Saskatchewan, that you have made the commitment that the Minister of Health will be attending the meetings that I have just listed. Nothing else will do, Mr. Member. Nothing else will do.

Mr. Speaker, the former chairman of the health board in the Swift Current area offered this comment. He said that when a horse raises its tail, it's time to take a step back. I want to let that sink in, Mr. Member.

What has happened in Swift Current is that your appointed wellness team health board has resigned. They've resigned. The reasons that are being given are that there was no homework done by the government; there was random planning. Everything that they thought they would have a chance to have an opportunity to make a decision on had been preplanned, had been decided on where the areas would be, their areas of responsibility . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order. Does the member have a question? I want the member to put his question.

Mr. Neudorf: — The question, Mr. Minister, is very simple. The people of Swift Current area want to know what you are going to do as a government when board

members are starting to resign *en masse* because they have utterly lost any faith in the process that you have implemented.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear to the member because apparently he does not understand. The group of people in Swift Current who have resigned their work at this point have been members of the planning committee. They are not board members. Mr. Speaker, these are individuals who have volunteered to be part of the planning process.

Now the member talks about Swift Current. But what he does not talk about of course is the group of people that formed a planning committee in the mid-west district and have planned and established a health care board. He does not talk about the group of people that planned and established the board at Twin Rivers. He does not talk about the group of people who have planned and established a board in Moose Jaw and Thunder Creek, the first rural-urban board in the province, Mr. Speaker.

Across the province people are working together. Sure, there are bumps. This is a difficult process, Mr. Speaker. But I tell you, across the province people are working together to build reform for the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister. I think the public caught on to your response. You did not answer any of the reasons that the board members gave for resigning. You just simply ignore the reasons.

And, Mr. Minister, the tally is going up higher and higher. And we are asking you, along with other members of the public of Saskatchewan, to reconsider. All is not well with your wellness plan. Opposition is growing on a daily basis. The momentum is increasing. You're feeling the heat; you're feeling the pain of the pressure that the public of Saskatchewan is bringing upon you and your government. That's why your House Leader is going to invoke closure. No debate on this issue. You want to get it through before all of the people in Saskatchewan realize the momentous implications that your wellness program is going to have on them, Mr. Minister.

Now what we're asking you on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan is: whoa, slow up, back off a step; give the people a chance to have a true input into this wellness plan of yours. Will you make that commitment, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, again members of the opposition, in this question period and elsewhere, are not giving accurate information to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It is suggested by

members opposite that the legislation we're now debating is somehow legislation that will form district boards or ram district boards — I've heard that kind of language come from members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan know that the legislation that's being debated in this Assembly today is framework legislation, enabling legislation that will enable communities to come together and form boards of their own free will, Mr. Speaker. That's quite a different process that's been used in other jurisdictions. We believe in the process of communities working together of their own free will to make their own decisions. The legislation we're debating in this House is framework legislation to enable it to happen, Mr. Speaker.

Now why in the world this opposition would want to obstruct and delay that kind of tool for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is beyond me.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I sincerely believe that the NDP government don't understand what they're doing. They don't exactly know where they're going. With closure on their health Bill, they are not just quashing the official opposition, they are quashing the voices of the people they've been elected to serve.

Mr. Speaker, allow me a moment just to read a letter that we received recently in response to the minister's comments. It represents just one of the voices that the NDP government is silencing. It's from the rural municipality of Antelope Park and contains a resolution that was passed at ratepayers' meetings in Marengo and Hoosier. And it reads in part:

Whereas the provincial Health department has indicated its intention to . . . reduce health care funding, particularly in rural Saskatchewan;

. . . which presents severe hardship for these communities;

. . . be it resolved that the Minister of Health be petitioned to grant an extension of the August 17, 1993 deadline for health district formation to at least December 31, 1993.

The question to the Premier. My question is to the Premier, and, Mr. Premier, I believe you are a principled man. I ask you to draw on those principles — rather than oppressing these people, will you withdraw your closure motion and allow free speech to prevail, allow for the deadline to be extended? Will you do that, please, Mr. Premier?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the process leading up to the formation of districts by August 17 will have been a process extended over a period of 12 full months — a full year, Mr. Speaker.

The member quotes a letter. Indeed we have a variety

of letters from important health care organizations in the province. We've had expressions of support from SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) and SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) for health care reform.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are anxious to proceed with health care reform. There has been a year of time spent in terms of planning and preparing, and it's clear that we want the districts to be in place. It's urgent that they be in place so that we can begin to reshape, reshape health care, not just for next year and next year, but for the next generation, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that the Premier of this province knows exactly what he is doing. He knows what he's doing, Mr. Speaker, because he did this same thing to farmers last year.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — He knows what he's doing, Mr. Speaker, because he did exactly the same thing to the farmers of this province in the last session. He took away their rights, and he took away their safety programs. This time he's turning his back on everyone. Now he is closing debate on the closing of hospitals. Mr. Speaker, I too have an example of how he is . . . and the NDP government are trying to silence these people. This is a letter from a registered nurse at Watson.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order. I don't need the help from the member. I just want to remind members that you can't take all that time introducing your question and then wanting to read from a letter. You've already taken 50 seconds, and I ask the member to put his question.

Mr. Goohsen: — Mr. Speaker, I have to quote from this lady because it's imperative to my question.

The Speaker: — I'll ask the member to put his question.

Mr. Goohsen: — Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is simply based on the letter that this woman writes where she says that you are taking away the rights of the people. And she says you should reconsider your position. You won't allow me to quote the letter so I'll pose my question.

Mr. Minister, this is not a question about the Tories against the reds. This is about the government against the people. People like the registered nurses . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Does the member have a question? Ask your question, please.

Mr. Goohsen: — Will you allow the people to speak, Mr. Minister, or are you going to turn your backs on them as well?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the whole process of health care reform from the very beginning, and if I may say, even prior to a change of government in this province, many, many discussions were held across this province regarding health care reform.

Now members opposite, when they were on this side, did not have the courage or the foresight or the ability to move forward and reform.

But, Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of all of the reform discussions, people of this province have been fully involved and have had many, many opportunities to participate in those discussions. And, Mr. Speaker, the shape of health care reform that is before us today is largely a result of the wide consultation process that has gone on throughout this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it strikes me that really what is happening here, is a group of members sitting in the opposition looking for more political grandstanding opportunity. Mr. Speaker, that will not serve health care and it will not serve the people of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — Next question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to quote. And I quote: the NDP government has always said that they support the concept of rural living. But your actions, but your actions would indicate that you are not prepared to support the communities with less than 2,000.

In talking with my fellow workers, I find they share the same ideas and feelings about your changes to the health care system. You should reconsider your position on health care before you do irreparable damage to rural health care.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister in charge, whoever has the nerve to answer this question: are you going to listen to the people of this province? Are you going to take a step backwards now, reconsider your position, give them a chance to be heard? Will you do that for the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the member talks about steps backward. We lived with 10 years of backward-stepping in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, health care reform that is happening in this province is a reform, Mr. Speaker, that is pioneering again in Saskatchewan, across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share with the member opposite, I want to share with the member opposite a

quote, Jane Fulton, a leading health care expert in Canada — widely, widely recognized. Ms. Fulton says, in regard to health care reform that is happening in Saskatchewan, she says, and I quote, Mr. Speaker: the province will be better off in terms of its balance sheet and people will get better care.

Mr. Speaker, that is our goal, that's what it's all about — assuring quality and better care for the people of Saskatchewan . . .

The Speaker: — Next question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a simple question for the minister. Is your outside-of-the-province expert more intelligent and more in tune with what's going on in Saskatchewan than a registered nurse from Watson?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, the reform that is happening in Saskatchewan was born in Saskatchewan, born in the hearts and minds of Saskatchewan people in communities across this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one thing is for sure, Ms. Jane Fulton knows more about health care and health care reform than anyone I see across the House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address my questions and comments to the Premier. Mr. Premier, we are not leading this outrage; we are merely passing it on to you. People all over this province are speaking out and you are not listening. In fact, Mr. Premier, you are trying to drown them out with political rhetoric and Draconian legislative tactics.

A citizen from Leader wrote to us and implored us to help them in their fight to preserve health care and stop the destruction of rural Saskatchewan. Mr. Premier, your closure motion is aimed at the Tory opposition but you are hitting everyone in this province, people you swore to protect, not to hurt, people like this individual in Leader. Mr. Premier, will you make the commitment today to this Legislative Assembly that you will attend those meetings that are being held all over this province protesting against your destructive changes to the health care system?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite mentions the community of Leader. He should know that just last night the member from Moose Jaw Palliser, the member from Prince Albert, met with a group of people from Leader to discuss health care reform. And I'm told it was a very productive and fruitful meeting.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, again I say to members of this House that what health care reform is all about . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I cannot hear the minister. Please, let's just calm it down a bit.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I say again to this House, what health care reform is all about is the goal of preserving and improving this health care system that we have enjoyed in our province and that we want to leave as a valuable inheritance to our children and those who come after us. That's what it's all about, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Education Department Firings and Hirings

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, the government claims to be acting to save money. However, the people of Saskatchewan no longer believe this government and I'd like to show you why.

Mr. Speaker, as part of the NDP's iceberg budget, 16 top officials in the Department of Education were terminated. A number of these people were praised by the NDP when they were hired by the previous government. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education defends these cuts in the Regina *Leader-Post* by saying: a downsizing exercise designed to save taxpayers an estimated \$585,000.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education and it deals with the part of the budget which is beneath the surface. Madam Minister, can you confirm that at least two of these positions have been back-filled by NDP supporters? Orran Reiman and Jack Lloyd in the positions of assistant deputy minister and principal of the correspondence school. Will you confirm these appointments, Madam Minister?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that question. I can confirm that there are acting people in some of the positions. None of the positions that were terminated have been permanently filled. They will be advertised within days. And I want to say this, that we are attempting to set an example in this province to school boards and the education system in this province. We have reduced our administration by 22 per cent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Unfortunately cuts of that magnitude in the size of government cannot be achieved without costing some jobs, unfortunately. But I am astonished that the members opposite want to retain the status quo in education. We have a lot of good things happening in education. We have to build on those. But we have over 20 per cent of people that drop out of high school, over 90 per cent of aboriginal people that do not complete, over 40 per cent of first-year university students that fail, and you don't want education reform? We do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, when the minister talks of acting, she's just fiddling around with semantics. Because that's all you have to talk about, Madam Minister.

The facts remain that you fired these people under the guise of restraint and then you turned around and immediately appointed NDP partisans into these positions. Contrary to what you think, that kind of upsizing doesn't save the taxpayers a lot of money, Madam Minister. In fact, these two individuals may be costing the taxpayer more than the two they replaced because of the cost of reorganization, replacements, and severance.

Madam Minister, can you confirm that these two individuals whom you've hired are also drawing government pensions while they're under your employment?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, if the member will refer to page 33 of the *Estimates* he will see that the amount for administration allocated in this year's budget is \$585,000 less than the previous year.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — We are reducing the size of our administration. The department is being restructured, will have a new role, will be a facilitator to the education community. We are continuing to restructure the organization in the department. In the meantime we have people acting in positions. They will all be advertised. They will all be filled in open competitions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, Madam Minister, you talk about estimates. We already asked you a few days ago to go into Education estimates and you refused. We're prepared to go into Education estimates this afternoon if that's what you wish. Will you answer the question that I asked you last time? Are these people receiving government pensions while in your employment?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, some of the people who we have put in acting positions on a temporary basis are experienced people, are well known and well respected throughout this province for their contribution in the educational field. They were available; they are acting until we reorganize the department and fill the positions available on a public basis.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 48 — An Act to amend The Police Act, 1990

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Police Act, 1990 be now introduced and read the first time.

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

Bill No. 49 — An Act respecting Correctional Services

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill respecting Correctional Services be now introduced and read the first time.

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

PRIORITY OF DEBATE

Conditions at the Regina General Hospital

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier today I gave you notice that I would be rising pursuant to rule 17 asking for priority of debate to raise a definite matter of urgent public importance, and as required by that rule, I will now state the matter.

In the Regina *Leader-Post* an orthopedic surgeon, Dr. John Kim, reported to the people that in his professional opinion, the situation at the Regina General Hospital has deteriorated to the point that we may see — and I quote the doctor — “sudden death in young patients as well as old”.

Mr. Speaker, so that this grave crisis facing our children and seniors may be at least debated and faced in this Assembly, I move:

That this Assembly demands the government immediately appoint an emergency task force to look into the statements of Dr. John Kim and that all necessary actions be taken to prevent avoidable fatalities among children and the elderly resulting from health policy.

I so move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member from Thunder Creek.

The Speaker: — Let me first of all inform members that I think we are a few steps ahead of ourselves under rule 17. Under rule 17 the member is to state the matter and then seek leave for priority of debate, and I assume that that's what the member has been doing.

I want to state to the House that a notice of this matter on priority of debate was received in my office at 10:25 a.m. for which I thank the member for Rosthern. I find the member has provided sufficient reason for me to allow the Assembly to decide whether the member has leave to proceed with this matter.

Therefore, pursuant to rule 17(6) I now ask whether the member from Rosthern has leave of the Assembly.

The member does not have leave. I ask those members

... Order. Now according to rule 17(7), I ask those members who support that motion to rise in their place. Order.

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, 11 members have risen.

The Speaker: — Be seated, please.

According to rule 17(8) the member does not have leave. Give me just a minute here. This is a very complicated rule. Okay, does the member have leave to proceed?

Members, we ... I just want to inform members I am following the rule as we have it, the motion that I will put before the members now. Does the member have leave to proceed?

The division bells rang from 2:37 p.m. until 2:47 p.m.

Motion negatived on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 10

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

Nays — 40

Thompson	Lautermilch
Wiens	Calvert
Tchorzewski	Johnson
Teichrob	Draper
Shillington	Serby
Koskie	Whitmore
Anguish	Sonntag
Goulet	Flavel
Atkinson	Cline
Carson	Scott
Mitchell	McPherson
MacKinnon	Wormsbecker
Penner	Kujawa
Cunningham	Stanger
Upshall	Knezacek
Hagel	Harper
Bradley	Keeping
Koenker	Carlson
Lorje	Langford
Pringle	Jess

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Time Allocation

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my comments I will read the motion set out as item no. 1 in the *Routine Proceedings*. It's fairly lengthy and I won't read it now. It will however, allocate the time available for the discussion of this Bill.

The province is facing two separate but not unrelated realities. One is the fact that with our current financial

problems, budgetary cuts in the health sector are unavoidable. The second reality is that without the legislative framework for a restructured delivery system in this province, the people of this province will not be able to move forward with the first critical step in health care reform.

Only through the establishment of these district boards will Saskatchewan people, working in their local communities, be able to meet the challenges involved in these two realities by doing more with less.

With the passage of this legislation and the establishment of these district boards, our communities will have the capacity to conduct the appropriate assessments of regional needs, to reduce the cost of duplication of services, and to plan and develop cooperative lead programs and services that Saskatchewan people want.

Members opposite and the member from Maple Creek last night in Weyburn, stated, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill is all about closure of hospitals. They may so represent the case if they like, Mr. Speaker. I guess no one can stop them from that, but I want to say that in my experience those who misrepresent the facts usually get caught on their own misrepresentations.

I do not think members opposite can say as they do say, I'm in favour of wellness, but this is about closing hospitals, and make that last very long. Mr. Speaker, this legislation is all about giving local people a say through district health boards in dealing with the financial problems created by 10 years of the worst financial mismanagement this country has ever seen.

This is all about allowing local people to participate in fashioning a solution to a problem which we didn't create and which to a large extent they didn't create, but which members opposite created through their mismanagement.

To date, Mr. Speaker, this Assembly has spent 12.5 hours in second reading debate on Bill 3, An Act respecting Health Districts. This motion to schedule the remaining debate on this piece of legislation is not overly restrictive.

The motion suggests that the Assembly devote five full days to debate on this one Bill — five full days. Under ordinary sitting hours this will amount to a further 21.5 hours of debate for a total of 34 hours on this single piece of legislation.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite have a great deal of difficulty in collecting their thoughts, but surely in 34 hours they ought to be able to collect their thoughts and make ...

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. Order. I would ask the member to direct his remarks through the Chair please. And I ask all other members to please let the minister make his presentation.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that

most people in the province would agree that 34 hours is sufficient time to enable the members opposite to state their case.

Mr. Speaker, under the . . . Mr. Speaker, with the current opposition in place, they I think have really lost sight of the function of an opposition. An opposition . . . The function of the opposition is not to stop the government dead in its tracks with respect to every controversial piece of legislation. Their function is to oppose but not to obstruct. They have, Mr. Speaker, been obstructing.

In addition to the 50-plus hours available to the opposition, it should be noted that this piece of legislation was introduced and distributed to members of the Assembly and made available to the people of this province on March 3, fully five weeks ago. The minister made her second reading speech on March 10, the first day available for government business during the session. That was four weeks ago. The legislation is not something that the members opposite should be surprised about.

Mr. Speaker, if it is the intention of the Tories opposite — and the Liberal member apparently, although we have not heard her position on this Bill and we await that with interest — if it's the intention of the Tory opposition opposite to derail this initiative, then I want to be very clear about this government's intention.

The people of this province have . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I will have to ask the member from Rosthern to please come to order.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — The people of this province have watched before as Liberals and Tories alike have made every effort to undermine the planning, the development and the establishment of a modern health care system which has not only been the national model, but the world model for over 30 years.

Over the course, Mr. Speaker, of the next three years the government and the people of this province will move forward with health care reform into what has been called the second generation. Most people in the province, as my colleague from Moose Jaw Palliser said today, most people in this province agree wellness is a useful reform. And where they are free of the misrepresentations and the nonsense spread by members opposite, Mr. Speaker, by and large they're understanding and supportive and want to work with us to make these changes, which are inevitable, as painless as possible.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, members opposite are able to create some mischief. They have done so before; they will create mischief again. But I say, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite will not stand in the way of this government preserving health care for the future generations. And that's what the health districts is all about.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation isn't the end of the debate on health reform in this province. On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, the debate has been going on for over five years. And for over five years members opposite have done whatever they can to restrict the reform of health care. Just as members opposite include . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Members can't constantly interrupt. I ask them again, please let the minister make his presentation.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, over 30 years ago the former premier of the province, Allan Blakeney, stood in this place and introduced medicare. Members opposite opposed it with everything they had. They made the work of the government as difficult as they could. Mr. Speaker, well I may say, it's not obvious what you've learned in the ensuing years.

Mr. Speaker, during the decades which have followed, members opposite have opposed and obstructed every single improvement of reform to health care. It is expected by the people of this province that members opposite will go on obstructing everything this government tries to do to make health care a better system and a system we can preserve.

An Hon. Member: — Who did he talk to — you or us?

The Speaker: — Order. If the member from Arm River wishes to make a comment, at least he should know he's got to do it from his seat. Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — As I said, Mr. Speaker, this is not the end of the debate on health reform. The debate has been going on for over 30 years, but on the current system for over five years. We fully expect that members opposite will go on obstructing the progress and reform of health care in this province.

This, Mr. Speaker, puts in place a cooperative framework for action, cooperation with the local communities. The debate will continue, as it has over the last decade, on the basis of individual self-interest and turf protection for the special groups which members opposite take such pride in representing.

Under this legislation, true health reform is going to be possible and real debate on how we undertake the massive challenge can begin.

(1500)

Mr. Speaker, I therefore move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Fairview:

That notwithstanding the rules of the Assembly and following the adoption of this motion, when the order is called for resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 3, An Act respecting Health Districts, not more than two sitting days shall be allocated to debate on such order and that at 15 minutes before the time set for adjournment of

the second sitting day, unless sooner concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the order; and,

That there shall be two sitting days allocated to the consideration of the said Bill in Committee of the Whole, and that at 15 minutes before the time set for adjournment on the second sitting day, unless sooner concluded, the Chairman shall put every question necessary to dispose of every section of the Bill not yet passed and shall report the Bill forthwith to the House, and the question for the first and second reading of any amendments shall be put forthwith and decided without amendments or debate thereto; and,

That there shall be one sitting day allocated to consideration of motion for third reading of the said Bill, and that at 15 minutes before the set time for adjournment, unless sooner concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the order for third reading of the Bill; and,

That consideration of the Bill, pursuant to this motion, be a special order of the Assembly to be called immediately after orders of the day.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I rise as the seconder for this motion. And I want to make a few brief remarks in support of the motion.

As my colleague, the Minister of Labour, has pointed out, this House has debated this Bill on a number of occasions so far, and we have heard from the members opposite, about twelve and a half hours of debate, I think. Which even, even in such a short time as twelve and a half hours, Mr. Speaker, has been a very repetitive, a repetitive debate. You boil down the arguments of the members opposite, the points are simple, they're easily comprehended.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as I was indicating, there has already been twelve and a half hours of debate on this Bill, most of it, the bulk of it containing speeches, the speeches of the members opposite. And from the speeches that they have made, it is clear what their points are. Their points are already before this legislature and in that way, before the people in the province of Saskatchewan.

There has been already, after such a . . . after twelve and a half hours, the debate has become repetitive, Mr. Speaker. So that the allocation that is being proposed in the motion is, I submit, in the minds of all fair-minded people, an adequate opportunity for the opponents to this Bill to get their points of view in front of this Assembly and in that way in front of the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

The allocation of five more days, Mr. Speaker, should

be more than adequate to complete the members' points of view with respect to this debate and get the question decided by this Assembly. That's what we're elected to do. We're elected to decide things like this. We're not elected to fan the air with speeches that go over and over the same points and try in different ways to make the same points.

So I would suggest that these time allocations are quite adequate, Mr. Speaker, for the kind of debate that we have with respect to the health district Bill.

As the Minister of Labour pointed out, Mr. Speaker, this matter has been before the public of Saskatchewan in a very active way for at least the last five years.

I want to also say that the members opposite are of the same view of the government when it comes to the question of whether or not health reform is necessary. I want to quote from a document, Mr. Speaker, and I'll identify the document at the conclusion of my remarks. But I want to quote from this document:

Health care represents the most difficult financial challenge facing my government and the people of Saskatchewan today.

The challenge is straightforward. How do we maintain the system while, at the same time, controlling the ever-increasing costs?

Our primary goal over the next decade will be to ensure effective and relevant delivery of health care. It will require setting priorities to accurately forecast our needs so we can adequately fund the system. It will require drafting a blueprint for health care into the year 2000.

It is a challenge for all of us.

And later in the document, Mr. Speaker:

The questions we must answer include those surrounding the specialization of services in major hospitals; regional health care services; the most effective use of nurses and other health care professionals; the role of home care in the system; services in rural Saskatchewan; life-style programs and preventative medicine; the special needs of seniors; and the urgent requirements of funding.

Our system is now 25 years old. It needs major renovations. We must all get involved in making the changes.

Now this was not a speech of the Minister of Health nor the Associate Minister, nor the Premier. These are direct quotes from the throne speech of the then Conservative government delivered by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor on March 21, 1988.

This is the task that they set before the Murray Commission which was announced in that same

throne speech. The Murray Commission went across this province and heard testimony, and received briefs from practically everybody having any kind of an interest in health care, and then at the end of that time delivered a report to this government. Now we did not agree with all aspects of that report.

We did not agree with all aspects of this report, Mr. Speaker, but the government who received that report — the former Conservative government — just simply didn't act on it at all, just run and hid on the issue because they didn't have the nerve to take it on. They didn't know what to do so they decided to do nothing because they were then running in fear of the electorate of this province, running in fear. And so they didn't act at all, Mr. Speaker, but just simply left the problem, which they clearly identified, for the next government to handle.

And here we are — elected for, among other reasons, to handle that problem, to get some fiscal responsibility back into the public affairs of this province and that is what we are seeking to do, Mr. Speaker. That's what we're seeking to do. That requires of necessity some reform to the health care system, but let me remind members opposite that the system needed reform anyway. Their own document clearly identifies the need for reform and so we set about that task.

Now it puzzles me, Mr. Speaker, why the idea that district health boards would be created by legislation is wrong. Is it better that those decisions be made in Regina by bureaucrats in the Department of Health, or is it better that these decisions be made by people out in the districts? Appointed and then elected. Of course, everyone of a fair mind must agree that it would be better for these decisions to be made at the local level. And that's what we're seeking to do.

Now there's a great deal of support for that idea, a great deal of support. It may not exist on the other side of the House. I don't care about that, Mr. Speaker, but it does exist out in the communities. It does exist in the communities and we are seeking to accomplish that by this health district Bill.

Now the point, Mr. Speaker, is what will this House decide to do? It will vote as to whether or not this Act should pass and these districts ought to be formed. And that debate, Mr. Speaker, can be held, and can be held effectively within the time limited by the motion which I am proud to second today.

And so I would urge members of the House to support this motion so we can get about the business of considering this Bill and voting on it in the House, and hopefully to implement it across the province so that, I repeat, so that local people, people living in the districts, will have the opportunity to make their own decisions with respect to the kind of health care system that they should have within the fiscal realities of the province of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — What's the member's point of order?

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As an opposition we're being throttled and we have closure being threatened and forced down our throats. And we find that the government members are taking the valuable time that is left for debate by trying to demonstrate the need for this.

And I find it ironic, Mr. Speaker, that first of all, they are saying there is going to be a limited time for debate and then the Minister of Justice attempts to . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I think the member knows that that's not a point of order. That's a point of debate. That's not a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — So, Mr. Speaker, having made my point, that the motion will allow sufficient time in the minds of all fair-minded people for all points of view to be stated on this Bill within the time limited by the motion put forward by the Minister of Labour, I hereby give notice, Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule 34, that at the next sitting of the Assembly, immediately before the order of the day is called for resuming the adjourned debate on the motion to allocate time for the proceedings on Bill No. 3, An Act respecting Health Districts, and on any amendments or subamendments proposed thereto, I will move:

That the said debate be not further adjourned.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I want to draw members' attention to rule 34. And rule 34 does say that no closure motion can be introduced or can be given notice of until the debate and time allocation has at least been adjourned. And I do not believe that that has happened. So at this time we cannot accept that motion.

Order. Order. Order. The debate will continue on the motion moved by the member from Churchill Downs and seconded by the member from Saskatoon fairway . . . Fairview. It's a little early. Order. Order. It's a little bit early.

(1515)

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak on this motion with a considerable amount of disgust for the type of action that a government has had to bring forward today.

Mr. Speaker, we see the Minister of Justice on his feet, the minister who has talked about reform in the past, reform of this system, and he brings in the heavy hand of government like we've never seen before in this province — never seen before. And he can't even bring it about into this House properly.

He's so anxious, so anxious to cut off debate, Mr. Speaker, that he goes about it the wrong way. He's so used to having his massive majority ram through legislation at any cost that they don't even respect the principles of this House any longer. Invoke superclosure, that's the way to stifle any debate, Mr. Speaker. That's the way to close

off debate. That's the way to shut up the opposition. That's the way to close off the debate in town halls all over this province.

That's the way that this government is reacting to every time there's a controversy. Every time this government feels that they're in a position where they're in some difficulty — invoke closure, shut off debate, absolutely . . . absolutely stifle all debate, don't allow anyone to speak, don't allow anyone to have any voice of opposition. Simply allow the government to move forward at all costs.

This is a mean-spirited motion, a mean-spirited government, brought down by the member from Riversdale — a mean-spirited government like never been seen before in this province.

They say, Mr. Speaker, they say, Mr. Speaker, that there's been adequate debate. Well, Mr. Speaker, there's been five hours of debate in this legislature, actual debating time on this motion, five hours.

Three opposition members have spoke on health care reform in this province, Mr. Speaker. The member for Souris-Cannington, the member for Rosthern, and myself, the member for Kindersley, are the only ones, the only ones in this entire legislature that have spoke on this Bill. The only ones.

Mr. Speaker, five hours of speeches on this is all it's been given. Not weeks and weeks and weeks of debate, as the minister says. Not adequate time. Very inadequate time.

And we've asked this government time and time and time again to allow for adequate debate, to allow the public their opportunity to discuss this. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, that meetings are being organized all over this province as we speak.

Meetings have been organized, upcoming meetings in Eston, in Kerrobert, in Kindersley, Codette, a number of other communities around the province, Mr. Speaker. They all want an opportunity for input into this health care reform.

And, Mr. Speaker, the minister likes to say that everyone is in favour of health care rationalization. Well, Mr. Speaker, the point is, people are not against health care rationalization. People want an opportunity to try and develop a system that we can all live with, that we can all develop, that we can all be proud of in this province. But no, this government cannot allow that debate to take place. This government cannot allow people's input into this.

This is fiscally driven. This is the only thing that they have on their mind, Mr. Speaker. They're not concerned about health care in this province. They're concerned about the bottom line, the fiscal numbers that they hope to be able to bring in a balanced budget at some point, and then stand up before everyone in the province and say we've balanced the budget; aren't we the good guys in all of this process.

Well in the meantime, in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, people's health care is being stripped away from them

in this province by a mean-spirited government.

People are demanding debate, absolutely demanding debate of this Bill. People are demanding that the opposition holds forth, holds strong against a government that's gone completely off the agenda, Mr. Speaker.

The member talks about Mr. Allan Blakeney and how he, how he brought forward things into this legislature. Well, Mr. Allan Blakeney didn't bring forward closure on things after five hours of debate, Mr. Speaker. After five hours of debate, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that Allan Blakeney would not be forcing through legislation of this type. You members should lower your heads in shame at the kind of despicable actions that you're bringing before this legislature.

Allan Blakeney brought about closure on one occasion that I'm aware of, Mr. Speaker, and that was with respect to the potash debate. And that was after 72 hours of debate, actual debating time, Mr. Speaker. And that debate, if we can focus on that for a moment, that debate was about potash mines — nationalization of holes in the ground. That's what it was about.

And what we are seeing here is such a more fundamental, important, important measure, important concern to the people of Saskatchewan. It's about the closure of rural Saskatchewan, closure of rural hospitals, closure and destruction of rural Saskatchewan. That's what this is about. It's about holes all right, Mr. Speaker, holes of a different kind — graves for rural Saskatchewan residents. That's what we're talking about.

And if any of you had the courage to come out to public meetings, you would find that people are opposed to your actions; you would find that people are concerned; you would find that they do not believe what you people are telling them.

This motion was brought before this legislature, Mr. Speaker, by a minister in his normal arrogant fashion — brings it forward and laughs at the opposition. Absolutely laughs at people who are opposed to this motion. He laughs at the people of Saskatchewan. He laughs at the residents of this province that demand adequate health care services.

He talks about misrepresentation. Well, Mr. Speaker, maybe we could lay out a few of the facts with respect to this. What their plan involves is reducing the number of acute care beds in this province from approximately 4.5 per thousand to 1.5 per thousand which is a reduction — and I want to point this out to members — this is a reduction of some 65 per cent of the health care services in my constituency alone. Sixty-five per cent of the acute care beds in my constituency will be done away with with a stroke of the pen by this government — 65 per cent of the acute care beds and approximately 25 per cent of the long-term beds.

And that is grossly, grossly inadequate to meet the

needs of the health care services in that area. And I invite you, every member of this legislature and particularly the member chirping from her seat, Cut Knife-Lloydminster, to look at your constituency and see how many beds will be reduced; what kind of level of service will be left in your constituency. And I invite each and every member to look at their constituency and see what level of health care service will be left at the end of the day when this government gets its way and rams through this legislation. How many will be left? How many hospitals will close?

Mr. Speaker, in my constituency there are five hospitals. There's one in Eston, there's one in Eatonia that was just opened last summer, there's one in Kindersley, there's one in Kerrobert, and there's one in Dodsland, in the proposed health care unit that is being talked about. And four out of those five are small hospitals, Mr. Speaker — small hospitals, but yet they bring about a critically important service to those areas, absolutely critically important.

And, Mr. Speaker, I've had opportunity in the last few days to visit with literally hundreds of people in my constituency about this. There was 400 in Eatonia, there was 500 in Leader, there was something in the order of a hundred at Brock, and dozens of phone calls and letters since then and meeting people on the street, Mr. Speaker.

And I haven't found one person, not one that agrees with this government and agrees that the level of health care services need to be cut back to the extent that you people are talking about. Not one, Mr. Speaker.

In fact I would like to quote from a letter from one lady at Eatonia, Saskatchewan. And it's really quite lengthy and I won't read the entire thing. But I think the important point is she is opposed to what you people are doing. Absolutely opposed.

And she speaks from a lot of experience when it comes to health care services in this province, Mr. Speaker. Her husband had a heart attack a couple of years ago — Mr. Theaker, at Eatonia. And I know the gentleman and know the family well, Mr. Speaker. And he was rushed to the hospital in Eatonia. He was rushed to the hospital in Eatonia by his wife. They stabilized him, Mr. Speaker — there was a doctor there — stabilized that man and then sent him on to a larger health care facility, I believe it was in Saskatoon. And he made it, Mr. Speaker. He lived. He lived.

And the point is, Mr. Speaker, that the attending physician that day said that that man would not be alive today had we not been able to stabilize his condition. He would be dead, Mr. Speaker. And that isn't overstating it. That is what the doctor, the attending physician that day, said: he would be dead.

Mr. Speaker, and following the meeting in Eatonia, she took the time to sit down and talk about health care services in this province and, as I said, she wrote a lengthy letter about the involvement that her family

has had. And then, Mr. Speaker, the very next day, upon questioning from the member from Rosthern to the Minister of Health in this province, she said the people of Eatonia are in favour of health care reform. She got up and went on about fearmongering and the member from Kindersley doing all of those kinds of things, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to read one paragraph of Enid Theaker's letter, and this is a direct quote:

Louise Simard's deplorable temper tantrum on CBC news on April 2 was very unprofessional. The people of this community deserve an apology, public apology.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's what people of rural Saskatchewan are saying to this government: not only are you going to destroy our health care system, not only are you setting about a systematic process of the destruction of all services and all health care services and agricultural safety nets and almost every other thing you can think of rural Saskatchewan, but you stand in the legislature and you lecture them. You stand in the legislature and you tell them what is good for them.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this lady and along with a whole bunch of other people in this province want you to apologize, want you to change your direction, want you to apologize for the kinds of destructive things that you are forcing on the people of rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the very first phrase of this motion has in fact become the manifesto of the NDP government, the single characterizing principle about what this government lawyer from Riversdale is all about — the phrase, the NDP motto, something that the Premier uses on regular basis, "notwithstanding the rules". Notwithstanding the rules — one of the favourite phrases of this government. These are the words that the member from Riversdale lives by, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the rules. And he's used it frequently.

(1530)

And this motion before us, Mr. Speaker, is simply one more manifestation of the Premier's hunger for authoritarianism. The day he walked into the Premier's office is the day the hand of oppression reached into this legislature, and that hand of oppression rests heavy on the Saskatchewan people today, Mr. Speaker.

Let us be clear that this motion is simply part of a pattern, a pattern of oppression that started from November of 1991 and sees as one of its great triumphs, one of its great moments of expression, this exercise of superclosure.

Let me review, Mr. Speaker, this pattern that gives context and meaning to this motion. Shortly after the member for Riversdale ascended the stairs to power, he immediately set about denying the rights of people — denying the rights of farmers, denying the rights of the business community, denying the rights of his own

employees, and, Mr. Speaker, denying the rights of this honourable Assembly. This has been one of his mainstays and his joys, the dark and heavy hand of oppression, and he wears it like a man possessed.

Let us review just some of the man's great achievements, his contribution to the saga of Saskatchewan history. This motion, Mr. Speaker, is the fruit from the same tree that saw the constitution of this province suspended and the rights of this Assembly overruled so that the member from Riversdale could bring in a phoney budget with deceptive numbers and outrageous harm to the good credit of this province.

This motion is the fruit of that same evil tree that actually saw the constitution of Saskatchewan suspended for the first time in history outside of wartime. And you will recall, Mr. Speaker, that the people in the media were so shell-shocked with the outlandish and irresponsible rhetoric of the leader of the NDP that they barely noticed that the constitutional order had been overthrown in this province.

They saw the same phrase that appears in the motion, the phrase that says: "notwithstanding the rules." And they heard the NDP leader say it like it was a necessary measure that simply set aside the rules of this Assembly for a temporary moment.

But they did not understand and the Premier did not have the courage to acknowledge not only the rules of this Assembly were set aside, but the very constitution of this province itself had been set aside. The constitution is both written and unwritten, and its most important elements are the unwritten elements, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the very most fundamental constitutional law is the unwritten law. And that is the law that there shall be a budget, and no government shall tax or spend without presenting and having approved a budget before the people's elected representatives of this province.

But the Premier, the NDP leader set aside the constitution and defied 700 years of parliamentary democracy saying, find it in writing. And he is, Mr. Speaker, a clever constitutional lawyer. The NDP leader . . . And he knew that the people are not constitutional experts, so he could get away with it. He just hopes he can get away with this dastardly motion today.

One more time . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . exactly, he says from his seat. Just one more time is all I need.

An Hon. Member: — Maybe twice.

Mr. Boyd: — Maybe twice — exactly. Doesn't matter how many times this Premier brings in this type of closure motion. You've made it a tradition in this province, Mr. Premier. You've made it a tradition in this province, this type of superclosure.

This is the motion that comes from a poisoned tree, Mr. Speaker. While it is not a question of grievance

before supply, the principles are clearly related and based on the same principles of democracy. The principle here is that the government should not, must not engage in massive legislative change without allowing the widest and most detailed debate and public exposure before the Legislative Assembly . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the Premier speaks again from his chair and he says, debate. Well, Mr. Premier, with all due respect, we would like to debate. We would like to debate this Bill but we're not being allowed to. We have arguments and the people of Saskatchewan have arguments, sir. They want you at a meeting, and you don't have the intestinal fortitude to make it to one of them. You haven't gone to any public meetings. You, sir are not fit . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. Order, order. Will the Premier please come to order. Order! Will the Premier please come to order. Order, order, order. I would like to ask the member to please direct his remarks through the Chair and not to any particular member in the House; direct them through the Chair.

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. And the member from Riversdale talks about being run out of Brock.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the only one that was run out of that town that night was the people who were concerned about your type of legislation. The people of that community that night are opposed to your government, sir.

They are . . . the minister never even spoke that night, Mr. Speaker. The minister didn't speak that night. I took the opportunity to speak that night. And you weren't there, how do you know what happened? The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that the people of that community are very concerned about health care.

They are very concerned about your measures, sir, and they're even more concerned now that they know about the type of legislative action that you're doing today. Superclosure, superclosure that you are invoking upon the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, are going to turn rural Saskatchewan against you and your government like you've never seen before.

You, sir, Mr. Speaker, this is a one-term government. You can cling to that chair all you like, Mr. Premier, but I'll tell you, sir, the people of Saskatchewan are going to rip you from your position before very long. The very first opportunity, Mr. Speaker, they get, I predict that you, sir, will no longer be Premier.

The chair that you have coveted since the day you walked into this Assembly will not be there for you very much longer, sir. The chair that you have coveted since the day you walked into this Assembly, is about to evaporate before your eyes. Yes it is, Mr. Speaker. The people of the province of . . . (inaudible

interjection) . . . Well and he said, he chirps from his seat, it won't be me over there. Well that's fine, Mr. Speaker, as long as you aren't there that'll satisfy me. As long as this Premier isn't there, it'll satisfy me, Mr. Speaker. It'll satisfy me and the people of this province.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. I would ask the Premier once more to please not intervene when the member is trying to make his remarks. Order. The Premier full knows the rules of this House, that when the Speaker is on his feet, he is not to interrupt. I ask the Premier to please come to order.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Premier doesn't like to hear these kinds of things, and it's obvious. He doesn't like to hear about democratic principles. He doesn't like to hear about what the people of rural Saskatchewan are saying about him and his government. He doesn't like to hear the fact that his government is going to be ripped from that chair before very long, Mr. Speaker.

He doesn't like to hear that his government's credibility is slipping. He doesn't like to hear, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this province don't believe him; they don't believe in his democratic principles; they don't believe in the fact that he's going to help rural Saskatchewan. They don't believe him any longer, Mr. Speaker, and it's becoming obvious.

Rallies all over this province, Mr. Speaker, are beginning to illustrate clearly what people think about health care and health care reform as presented by this government, Mr. Speaker. This motion is to shut up anyone who is opposed to this government and that member from Riversdale. That's what this motion is about, Mr. Speaker. He chirps from his seat about adequate debate, Mr. Speaker. He isn't interested in adequate debate. I know that and the people of Saskatchewan know that.

The member from Riversdale, the constitutional lawyer with a flair for deception, just as that member puts in his motion, just as he suspended the constitution, let us remember the law he passed in this Assembly removing the rights of government employees before the courts. Fruit off that same poison tree, Mr. Speaker, fruit off that same poison tree, this motion, and his attack on the rights of employees of this province.

Mr. Speaker, in his classic, nefarious style, the man with the poison tongue sent his minions into the Assembly to assassinate the character of dozens of individuals denied by the law from any defence for themselves.

And the Premier and his minions did their unseemly work. And from the tree this motion springs, Mr. Speaker. And you will remember that the law that contains this decree, that no government employee could have the protection for law. And I quote:

. . . any claim in damages or debt for unjust dismissal, breach

of contract, inducing breach of contract, interference with a contract, mental distress, loss of reputation, defamation or any other cause of action in contract, tort or equity arising from or incidental to the creation, termination or expiration of a Crown employment contract.

Mr. Speaker, that's the type of action that this Premier brings before this Assembly. That's the type of motions that he brings before this Assembly. Talk about poisoned fruit from the same tree the member from Riversdale planted, Mr. Speaker, and the motion before us is similarly minded. Just as the NDP leader ripped the rights of his own employees from under them, he now aims to rip the rights of the Assembly out of the hands of the people of Saskatchewan.

It is a government and a leader that will stop at nothing, absolutely nothing to have their way with this province. And this motion, Mr. Speaker, is an utter, unmitigated act of shame. The constitution stands in the man's way, so he has to throw it out. His employees stand in the way, so he takes away their lawful rights. This Assembly stands in the way, he brings forward this superclosure motion. He will stop at nothing and the pattern is clear. It is deep, it is reprehensible, Mr. Speaker.

After he eliminated the rights of employees, the fruit from the tree from which this motion grows continued to be fertilized by the miscreant behaviour of the NDP leader, Mr. Speaker. The pattern continued. You'll remember, Mr. Speaker, the rash of legislation that took the power from the people, power from the law, and placed it solidly in the hands of cabinet ministers and their appointees.

Mr. Speaker, just think of the environmental Act for a moment that gave NDP appointees the right to enter private property without a search warrant, another example, Mr. Speaker, of this government that wants to be able to do whatever it wants in this province. This is the same putrid fruit that falls from the tree which this motion grows from. The member for Riversdale passed into law a situation where one of their appointees has more power than a police officer in pursuit of a murder case or looking for narcotics. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the mentality and corruption that this Bill represents.

This NDP government passed into law provisions that give lone, individual ministers the power to create laws out of thin air. But one of the most nefarious and dastardly precursors of this vile motion, Mr. Speaker, was the massive disenfranchisement of all farmers across Saskatchewan. This motion comes from the same principle the Premier used when he unilaterally removed the rights of all farmers to go to the court to seek protection from the government.

And we all remember that last spring, Mr. Speaker. Everyone, every farmer in this province now realizes exactly the type of action that this government is prepared to bring before this Assembly. Any type of opposition has to be quashed — simple and fast. As quickly as possible they bring forward a motion into

this Assembly to cut off all debate, to not allow anyone — not allow anyone to oppose them.

(1545)

The very fact, Mr. Speaker, that the courts are the cornerstone of the people's protection from government tyranny, the very fact that it entirely irrelevant to this constitutional lawyer. Instead of valuing the fundamental protection, instead of cherishing it for the people, he stands and destroys it.

This motion, Mr. Speaker, is an act of destruction at the hands of the destroyers. And, Mr. Speaker, the government shouts to try and silence me and my colleagues, and the government members shout to try and silence the people. That's what's happening, Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly.

There isn't an opportunity for debate any longer. This government doesn't want debate. They don't want people to stand up and outline what kinds of things are happening in this province. They don't want anyone to be able to stand and say that these changes to the health care system — the health care system that they so proudly say they created and so proudly protected all these years — they don't want people of rural Saskatchewan to know the truth, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

They don't want people to know the truth about this Bill. They don't want people to know what is going on, Mr. Speaker, with respect to acute care bed levels. And it's good to see that the member from Elphinstone agrees with that, Mr. Speaker. He knows, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of what he does and what his government does. He knows that this is an important issue. He knows how important this is to rural Saskatchewan, and indeed the entire population of Saskatchewan. He knows how important it is and he also knows how critically important it is to get this Bill through as quickly as possible before there's any more erosion of the support that the member from Riversdale and his government has.

Your support is absolutely eroding before your eyes. And I'm surprised, Mr. Speaker, with all of the experience that this government has, that they don't see that.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this Saskatchewan . . . the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, are opposed to what this government is doing. They're opposed to the actions of this government. They're opposed to this motion.

It was interesting, Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was in my constituency and people . . . the phone continued to ring all day long. People coming into our office, people phoning, voicing their displeasure. They'd already heard, already heard in rural Saskatchewan that this government once again was going to force its way, force its way onto the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this is an act of destruction by a government that seems bent on destroying anything, anything at all that offers a shred of hope in

Saskatchewan.

But I want to remind them, Mr. Speaker, I want to remind them that the right to debate in this Assembly is a fundamental right that this democracy has . . . democracy has protected since the beginning of time.

It's not about silence. It's about debate. It's not about the hand of oppression reaching from the Premier's office. And, Mr. Speaker, we will not be silenced. We intend to go to public meetings all over this province and tell the people of Saskatchewan what this destructive legislation is going to do to them. We are prepared, Mr. Speaker, to go to every meeting that is . . . public meeting that is held in this province and debate and ask and tell the people of this province what kind of legislation this is all about.

An Hon. Member: — Shameful legislation. Shameful legislation.

Mr. Boyd: — Absolutely shameful legislation, brought about by a government that shows no shame for anything they do.

Mr. Speaker, if the loyal opposition does not speak up, if Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition does not use every ounce of their strength to say no, we respectfully refuse, if we do not speak up, then who shall speak for freedom in this province?

Let me paraphrase an old but very wise quote from history, Mr. Speaker. And it goes as follows. They came first for the government employees, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a government employee. They came next for small-business people, and I didn't speak up because I did not have a small business. They came next for farmers, and I did not speak up because I wasn't a farmer. They came next for rural hospitals, and I didn't speak up because I lived in the city. They came next for me and by that time there was no one left to speak up for me. That, Mr. Speaker, is what our opposition to this motion is all about. It is speaking up for the people of Saskatchewan, speaking up for the most fundamental principles of our democratic system.

Look at the track record, Mr. Speaker, look at the fruit on this poison tree that this government has planted and nurtured since it started in office. The poison tree that is wrapped in a strange and mystical chant from the Premier's . . . from the Premier himself: notwithstanding the rules — notwithstanding the rules, Mr. Speaker. This man is above the rules in this legislature. This is a man that has shown no respect for this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. This is a man who tells everyone, at every occasion, that he is going to uplift the principles of democracy. He is going to uplift the principles of government. And, Mr. Speaker, then he comes down the stairs into this Assembly and puts forward this type of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, how can the members of this government stand this? How can you sit in this Assembly day after day after day and watch this Premier destroy democracy before our eyes? How can

you do that? What brings you here every day? What motivates you in the morning to get up and bring yourself to this Assembly?

And the member from Biggar, he sits back in the corner there, as he always does, and he laughs, Mr. Speaker. He laughs about the principles of democracy. And I ask him, I ask him: where was he, where was he when it came time to go to a health care meeting in Leader? I offered him a ride, Mr. Speaker. I offered him the opportunity to come there and defend his . . . the actions of his government. But no, no, it was a Friday, Mr. Speaker, he had better plans, better things to do. He was too busy. He was too busy that he couldn't go and listen to the concerns of rural Saskatchewan that day.

And my guess is, Mr. Speaker, that him along with a whole bunch of other back bench MLAs are getting literally dozens of calls about this type of legislation. I'll bet they are getting . . . I'll bet they are hearing from the people of Saskatchewan. And the financial wizard from . . . the financial wizard from Swift Current, in the credit union out at Swift Current, holds his hand up zero. That's about what you know about this subject, sir.

An Hon. Member: — Zero.

Mr. Boyd: — Zero, right. Mr. Speaker, that's about what's left of the credit union that you used to chair.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this province are opposed to this legislation. Mr. Speaker . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Why is the member for Maple Creek on his feet?

Mr. Goohsen: — With permission of the Assembly, to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the Speaker's gallery this afternoon we have with us a former member of this Assembly, the former MLA from the Rosthern constituency, Ralph Katzman. Mr. Katzman has informed me that he has just been the recipient of a 125 medal, along with many other distinguished people in the province of Saskatchewan. And we're very happy that he was a recipient of that award.

We also would like you to know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Mr. Katzman is now just retired from the city of Saskatoon, another great service to the community. Has worked for many years in the city and doing a great job up there. He also still participates in some local government. He's involved with the local recreation board and helps his community in that respect.

I believe that he was a member of the Assembly from '78 to '86, or was it '75? — '75, yes, a goodly number

of years in this Assembly, representing his people and serving the people of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would ask that the folks in the Assembly join with me in welcoming Mr. Katzman today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to add my voice of welcome as well to Mr. Katzman. A long and distinguished career in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Time Allocation (continued)

Mr. Boyd: — The business at hand, Mr. Speaker, is a closure motion that's been presented to this legislature.

In the last session of this Assembly, the NDP government . . . the government member for Riversdale invoked closure on the Assembly more times, Mr. Speaker, more times than has been done before in the entire history of this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want members to think about that for a few moments — think about it very seriously. In one session the Premier has left his indelible mark of darkness, this Premier's hand of oppression, more times than in the entire history of the legislative democracy of the province of Saskatchewan.

This is an enormous thing — a terrible and dreadful thing, Mr. Speaker. From the beginning of this Assembly's existence no Premier has been willing to use the degree, the frequency and the severity of oppression or debate as this Premier has — no one, no one before him. Even when you add it up collectively the whole number of governments that have been in this province before, have not used this type of legislative action more than this government has.

And it seems incredible, Mr. Speaker. They have a massive majority. They have an absolute massive majority in this province. They have the ability to send 20 or 25 members at least, if not more, around this province to debate health care.

These are the great orators of modern day, as they like to think of themselves. These are the people, Mr. Speaker, that like to say they hold democracy as an important value, Mr. Speaker. But yet where are they? Where are they? You've developed an absolute bunker mentality, absolute bunker mentality with respect of legislature in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And they all chirp from their seat now. They're all very encouraged to get into the debate, Mr. Speaker, all interested in debating this. But where are you when it comes time to talk about closure? Where are you? Where are they, Mr. Speaker?

You bring forward this type of destructive action into this province and then you sit there and don't say a

word. Mr. Speaker, it's absolutely incredible that members of that government would take the opportunity not to speak in this legislature about this closure motion, Mr. Speaker.

And the member from Cut Knife-Lloyd chirps from her seat and she says, if I sat down, she would stand up and talk about this motion. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would challenge that member, I would challenge that member to get on her feet and talk about this closure motion. Even though it would be an ill-informed contribution to the debate, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the people of Saskatchewan would like to know her thoughts when it comes to closure in this province.

When you look at this motion, Mr. Speaker, try and put it in a historical context. Consider what happened when the government of the day wanted to sell a potash mine. The debate raged on and on and on for days and days and days, weeks, dozens and dozens of hours. In fact I recall the debate, Mr. Speaker, of selling potash mines, lasted in excess of 70 hours, Mr. Speaker. And only after 70 hours of debate did the government consider even invoking closure, even consider it.

When did this government invoke closure, Mr. Speaker? After five hours of debate. Three speakers, three opposition people have had the opportunity to speak. Look it up, Mr. Speaker.

The important thing to recognize here is that they invoke closure whenever they want. It doesn't matter what anyone thinks any more. They've done it so often it's become a practice. It's a habit, absolute habit. No problem with it whatsoever. They've become so used to it, so used to using this destructive tool of government, so used to it that it doesn't even bother them any more.

(1600)

And it's amusing, Mr. Speaker, because they used to all stand in this legislature when previous governments . . . even after 70 hours of debate, even after that length of time, Mr. Speaker, even after that length of time those members would stand up in their holier-than-thou attitude that they all have and say that closure was a bad thing.

But now, Mr. Speaker, no problem whatsoever. One member spoke for 16 hours on closure one time, Mr. Speaker. I think it's one of the members from Moose Jaw.

An Hon. Member: — No, member from Rosemont.

Mr. Boyd: — Member from Rosemont, pardon me. He probably could have done the same thing, I expect.

Mr. Speaker, this arrogance, the lack of respect for this institution is absolutely breathtaking. Mr. Speaker, I say plainly that I'm tired of the pretensions of this Premier. He stands in this Assembly and he has the bald audacity to talk about the institution as if it means anything to him.

And I'll be the first to concede, Mr. Speaker, that that constitutional lawyer is a fine orator, a fine speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And when you listen to him and his speeches about his great concern for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary democracy, when you listen to his finely crafted words, you might think this guy actually believes it. He's such a great actor in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, that you would think for everyone collectively has . . . when they have the opportunity to listen to that man, they believe it, because he puts such conviction into it.

But look at his legacy, Mr. Speaker. Look at what he has done. Look at what he has done to the province of Saskatchewan. Check his efforts against his fine words and you'll find the worst streak of cynical hypocrisy recorded in the *Hansards* of any legislature . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Obviously the member for Kindersley feels strongly about the question before us, but he should not allow his emotions to override his judgement as to what language is appropriate in debate. And I caution the member to respect the rules of the Assembly which caution us to use language which is appropriate for this House.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Speaker . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Why is the member from Maple Creek on his feet?

Mr. Goohsen: — I think I have a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — What is your point of order?

Mr. Goohsen: — I thought there was some kind of a rule, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that members of the government were supposed to stay awake while the debate was on.

The Deputy Speaker: — Point of order is not well taken.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I apologize if I was outside of the rules of this legislature. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it's important that we all recognize the importance of the rules of this Assembly. But, Mr. Speaker, I think this motion, this motion that we see before the House is an affront to those very rules of democracy, the very rules of this legislature, Mr. Speaker . . . Deputy Speaker.

The legacy that this Premier has left this province . . . Just have a moment to check his efforts against the fine words that he brings forward in this legislature. The legacy of this Premier when it comes to institutional and democratic values fundamental to the process of this institution, that legacy is shameful, hurtful, and profoundly anti-democratic, Mr. Speaker.

That's the legacy that the member from Riversdale has left in this Assembly — completely anti-democratic, Mr. Speaker.

And the Justice minister waves his hand because he . . . it's maybe not as bad as we like to point out. Maybe not as bad as we like to point out, Mr. Speaker. But the fact of the matter is, is it's very, very serious. We are being chastised and not allowed the opportunity to speak in this legislature about an extremely, extremely important piece of legislation, legislation that sets forth in this province the type of change, the type of destructive actions that will set back rural Saskatchewan to the '30s.

People in the province of Saskatchewan in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, will have to travel something in the order of 75 miles one way to get health care services.

Mr. Speaker, in this province we have an agricultural base. We have people that are engaged in agriculture. We all know the kind of things that can happen in agriculture, the high rate of accidents because of the type of job it is, Mr. Speaker. And those people will have to go forward 75 miles if they're hurt in an accident or something of that nature to get health care services now as a result of this government's actions.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important for the members opposite to realize, just take a moment to realize what 1.5 beds per thousand will mean to rural Saskatchewan. In my constituency, Mr. Speaker, it will mean the closure of a bunch of hospitals. That's simply what it means. There will be hospitals all over this province forced to close as a result of the actions of this government.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that we just take a moment to touch on a few of these things. And I'd like to quote from an editorial that just came out today in the *Kindersley Clarion*, Mr. Speaker. It's important to realize that people all over this province now are beginning to see through the destructive actions that this Bill will bring forward. And I'll read parts of this editorial. "Too much too soon," it's entitled.

Can Health minister Louise Simard be serious about her plans for rural health care? Does she really believe she can chop, slash, and hack to the point where people have very serious concerns about their well-being? Does she really think Saskatchewan is so depressed economically that we will agree to this without a fight — a big, big fight?

Well that's the first paragraph of this editorial, Mr. Speaker. That's what people are saying about your plans for change now, Mr. Speaker. That's what they're saying about the wellness plan that you people are saying is going to be the saviour of health care in this province. That's what they're saying.

According to the provincial government, the proposed Prairie West health care district which includes Kindersley, Kerrobert, Dodsland, Eatonia, and Eston does not rate more than 22 acute care beds. This is less than what is now available in just one hospital, the Kindersley Union Hospital. Kindersley's hospital will be reduced . . . Get this now. Just pay

attention for a moment. This is how much the Kindersley hospital alone will be reduced — 72 per cent, from 29 beds to 8 beds. Mr. Speaker, 29 beds to 8 beds is what the reduction will be — 72 per cent. Eston will see their hospital reduced from seven beds to three; Kerrobert will be reduced 60 per cent from 14 beds to 6; and Eatonia and Dodsland will be turned into glorified first-aid stations.

And that's not my words, Mr. Speaker. Those are not my words. These are the words of the people of rural Saskatchewan. This is an editorial that came out today in the *Kindersley Clarion*. This, Mr. Speaker, is what people think about your changes.

An Hon. Member: — This is rural revenge.

Mr. Boyd: — Rural revenge, exactly, Mr. Speaker. The people of rural Saskatchewan now realize exactly the hidden agenda that this government has in mind for them. And I quote again:

Simard assures us that none of us will be in any mortal jeopardy because of the massive cutbacks. Heck, she has her wellness plan which she seems to be aimed at forcing us to stay well or else.

Stay well or else. And it's that or else that's got a lot of people in this province concerned. It's that or else what? Or else there isn't any health care services? Or else we don't need you any longer in this province? Or else what?

But the Health minister must realize we are not the same as the large urban centres. Our population is much more dispersed and on the whole much older. We need more health care here than they do in the cities, and improved roads and more ambulances is not the answer.

Is not the answer, Mr. Speaker, absolutely not the answer. And we heard at the meeting in Brock . . . It was interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, there was a representative, I believe his name was John Borody, representing the Department of Health that night. And when asked whether ambulance services in rural Saskatchewan would receive more funding to help with the increased load that's going to be forced upon them, he said no. He said no, there won't be increased funding available for ambulances. We're only going to . . . we're just going to make it better, he said. We're going to make the service better.

We're going to provide them with better training. We're going to provide them with all of these glorious kinds of things so that they'll be able to rush out 75 miles and pick up a heart attack victim and save him or her, Mr. Speaker. And that isn't what's going to happen.

When asked if home care will be able to pick up the number of people that are going to have to move from level 1 to 4 care in rural Saskatchewan into home care situations, when asked if home care could do that job, that same representative of the government that night

said, I hope so. He hopes. Well the hopes of rural Saskatchewan aren't being addressed very well by this government, Mr. Speaker.

And they go on to say in this editorial:

As can be expected, rural Saskatchewan is not going to sit back and take the assault on the most sacred of all sacred cows. Meetings have already taken place in Leader, Eatonia, Brock, and in this area. Others are slated for April 14 in Kerrobert, April 15 in Eston, and Monday, April 19 in Kindersley. No one disputes that given the province's financial position some economies are necessary.

No one disputes that. But the government must assure us that it has cut everything else to the bone before attacking rural health care. It's just too important to too many people. Mr. Speaker, absolutely too important to too many people in this province, to let this just slide through, as the government's hoping will happen.

And other articles, other articles in the same paper today, Mr. Speaker. "Eatonia fighting hard against health care cutbacks." Mr. Speaker, Eatonia citizens want to preserve their hospital.

We are losing our hospital if we accept this — let's fight it. That's what one person said that night in that hall, Mr. Speaker, in the school gymnasium that night. And there were 500 people there.

And it was interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that there wasn't one single person that night that stood up and said, I'm in favour of cutting back acute care beds. Not one. Not a single person stood up and said that.

What happened that night was . . . and it's unfortunate that the government members didn't have the courage to go to that meeting, Mr. Speaker, because people stood up and they become very, very emotional about what their hospital's future is.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to note as well, their hospital was just opened last August, just opened. And as I recall that day . . . And I was there and the member from Biggar was there as well that day in Eatonia, Saskatchewan, and the entire community turned out that day. They closed down school. And in rural Saskatchewan that doesn't happen very often, let me tell you, as the Minister of Education knows. They closed down the schools that day because of the historic importance of that opening of that hospital that day. And the band was there. They had the whole school band there, and they played a number of selections that day, Mr. Speaker, and the whole community turned out. It was a beautiful summer afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

And person after person that were allowed to speak that day, and I had the pleasure of being one of those people, and so I'm sure the pleasure was also of the member from Biggar. He had the pleasure that day of standing up and speaking and opening . . . taking part

in that hospital opening. I think he even took part in the ribbon opening, if I recall correctly. I think he took part in that; I'm quite sure he did. He's nodding his head in agreement. He did take part in it, I'm sure, Mr. Speaker.

(1615)

And he talked that day about wellness. He talked about the importance of health care in rural Saskatchewan. He talked about how critically important it was to have adequate health care services in rural parts of Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He talked about all of those kinds of things in the most, I guess you'd say, important way he could possibly think of. He talked about the importance of the wellness plan and how it'll bring about a renewed sense of vigour in the rural areas of this province and in health care in general.

But, Mr. Speaker, now what's happening? When the fight of their lives in Eatonia is taking place to save their hospital, where is that member? Where is that member the other night in Eatonia? Where was he to come and talk in such glorious terms about the wellness system, the wellness model that your government is creating? Why, Mr. Speaker, would he not come out there that evening to rural Saskatchewan in Eatonia and inform all of the people about the great things that this government is doing in health care?

Because, Mr. Speaker — I think I know the reason — because he's ashamed of it. He's absolutely ashamed of these changes that are being forced upon people of rural Saskatchewan. Either that or he doesn't have any courage. If he had the courage of his convictions, he would come out to that . . . would have come out to that meeting and would of spoke to those people. And they would have given you the opportunity.

They were wondering that night, Mr. Speaker, they were wondering that night where you people were. You were invited. The minister was invited. I invited her no less than four occasions in this Assembly to that meeting. The good people of that community asked me, on their behalf, to invite her. They asked me to invite her to that meeting and I did so on four occasions in this Assembly. And then that minister stands up and says, it's not good enough; it's not good enough for the MLA for that constituency to invite me. We have to have an invitation from the people of that community. She was too busy, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So what happened? I simply picked up the phone, called the administrator of the hospital — Mrs. Debbie Cook out there — asked her if she wouldn't mind inviting the Minister of Health to that meeting. And they said, well I thought that's what you were going to do. And I said, I have. On four occasions I've asked that minister to come to that meeting in Eatonia. On four occasions I've done it and every single time she's denied us. So maybe it would be a good idea if you would send, as quickly as possible, a fax to that member, to the Minister of Health.

And they did that. They a sent a fax as quickly as

possible after question period that day. And they did receive it. The minister acknowledged that they received it. But she couldn't make it. She was too busy. It didn't fit into her schedule, even though she knew and had been invited on a number of occasions. She could have cleared her calendar.

What was more important? What was so important that evening that she couldn't make it? She has access to government aircraft. She has access to getting out there within . . . it's about 30 minutes on the government aircraft that are available to her. She had plenty of opportunity to clear her schedule. She had plenty of opportunity to go there that evening and talk to the people of rural Saskatchewan, but she refused.

An Hon. Member: — She was afraid.

Mr. Boyd: — She was afraid. That's exactly the case. She knows, she knows how destructive these policies are. That's the same member. And it's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, when she was on the opposition side she used to be the champion, the absolute champion of health care protectors in this province. She would stand in this legislature on a frequent basis and point to people in the galleries and say to them to say to the rest of the Assembly how important health care services were and how the government was hurting them in some way. She did it on a regular basis, Mr. Speaker.

And now when she has the opportunity to actually do something about these type of changes, when she has the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, when she has the opportunity to help Saskatchewan health care, what does she do? She brings in the most destructive policy that could ever be brought into rural Saskatchewan and indeed health care in general in this province.

And it's no wonder, it's no wonder that the headlines in the papers out there are saying: Eatonia fighting hard against health care cut-backs. That's what the papers in those areas are saying, Mr. Speaker. And they go on and they go on and they go on, column after column after column of people that are opposed to these types of things, letter after letter after letter.

It's not surprising, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite have to bring in this type of closure legislation because they know how important this is as an issue to them. Their seats, the very constituencies that they represent, are about to turn on them. They're about to turn on them, Mr. Speaker. They're about to throw them from office at the very first opportunity they get.

And here's another letter, Mr. Speaker, that I'd like to read into the record from people in my area:

I'm writing to you at this time to express my concern at your health care centre's lack of funding in our area. I live approximately 30 miles from the hospital and doctor on gravel roads that are not always in the best shape for fast trips. The age of our population is getting older and the need for this type of facility in the

future years will be more critical than ever. You can't expect people not to have health care.

Mr. Speaker, it goes on to say:

I'm concerned that if this facility is reduced in size, staffing will no longer meet my needs or the needs of the community in the future. We are in a large area with hospitals at least 30 to 40 miles away from any other facility. We are in critical condition with the farm economy and our towns, businessmen and women in hard times, and this is the last thing we need now. Please do not downsize this facility.

This comes from a constituent of mine, Mr. Speaker. And he's so opposed to this type of legislation that he's taken the time to write to me.

And now, Mr. Speaker, we see a government that brings forward this type of legislation to cut off debate.

I recall seeing this gentleman, Mr. Kevin Butt, at the meeting in Eatonia that night; him and his wife were both there. I've had the pleasure of meeting those people and talking to them over the years, Mr. Speaker. I have had the pleasure of meeting all of the people in that area, and I haven't found a one — not one — that's in favour of these changes, these cut-backs.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would venture to say that they wouldn't be in favour of this action either if they knew about it, and I'm sure they do now. The media has picked up on it in rural Saskatchewan. They know what's happening now, Mr. Speaker. They know what's happening. They know that this government is bringing forward the heavy hand onto the opposition once again.

The process of this institution, the legacy of this government is shameful, hurtful, and profoundly anti-democratic. I say again — and we want it to sink in — in all recorded history since the birth of this legislature, all of the words from the very first premier to the words of the last premier to come before this one, in all that time, no premier, not one of them, has had the absolute disrespect to impose closure like a narcotic to a drug addict, Mr. Speaker.

I find it incomprehensible that the back benches of the NDP are prepared to participate in this dangerous series of attacks, one after another, session after session, attack after attack on the institution, on our people, on our fundamental values. How can the people sit in their seats and allow the member for Riversdale to continue on this destructive path?

Mr. Speaker, it is a sad statement that we have had to look forward to the basic overthrow of the legislative process, for that is what this man has brought us. Where just two years ago it would have been considered unprecedented for a government to invoke closure — an action, Mr. Speaker, that would have been considered highly unusual and out of the ordinary — now the Premier has made such a

grievous action commonplace.

Mr. Speaker, I say shame on the Premier of this province for doing that. Shame on the man who speaks so highly of democracy in this institution. Shame on him, Mr. Premier. Rarely have so few deceived so many. And the NDP members, Mr. Speaker, the NDP members shout and they insist that the opposition not complain.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of the words the NDP leader said in the *Leader-Post* a few short days ago. In preparation for imposing the motion he had the witty wisecrack from the press when they asked him why the rush, why not allow the people some time to be heard. And the response to those legitimate concerns, the NDP leader wisecracked, and I quote: the train has left the station. The train has left the station, he said, so just quit your complaining, was the implication.

What arrogance. What dismissal of the legitimate worries and heartfelt concerns of our people. The train has left the station, so sit down and shut up. That is the wisdom of the lawyer from Riversdale.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if the train has left the station, I suggest to you that it's a funeral train. That's what it is — it's a funeral train. And that is the member from Riversdale who is the engineer driving the funeral train over rural Saskatchewan and blowing the signal as he crushes their communities. And the signal blows, Mr. Speaker — sit down and shut up.

And the Premier knows, Mr. Speaker, the meaning of the words of Dylan Thomas who wrote: "After the first death there is no other." And after this man has dismantled rural Saskatchewan, there shall be no other. And this is what this motion is all about. This motion is the final signal blowing from the Premier's funeral train after the death of rural Saskatchewan, and there shall be no other.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, in a different poem Dylan Thomas wrote something else. In a very famous poem he wrote what to do on the approach of death and his advice was this:

Do not go gentle into that good night . . .
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And I want this Premier to know that the rural communities will not go gentle into the night, and he and his government will be swallowed by their rage and their rage against the dying of the light.

And the stand of the loyal opposition against this motion is only a very thin and almost insignificant part of that rage, Mr. Speaker. We know that we take the stand on the side of right and that we'll stand with the people of Saskatchewan and we shall stand as long as we can turn aside this tyrant's sword.

This motion, Mr. Speaker, is in fact the tyrant's sword. It is the sword of tyranny hefted to cut off debate, swung, Mr. Speaker, to take the life out of genuine

dissent. We shall stand and we will not go quietly to the slaughter. I say how deeply ashamed the Premier must be of his behaviour and is a record in this Assembly, how deeply ashamed he must be of his record of bringing forward this type of motion.

But his shame, Mr. Speaker, is no consolation to the people of Saskatchewan. For what is this motion all about? This motion is meant to force Bill 3 and the health care agenda of the government through the legislature before the people have time to catch their breath and lodge protest that is gathering steam as we speak.

Even as the government rolls in the guillotine the storm clouds gather across the province and the summer of our discontentment begins to broil out of the very soil itself. And this motion is designed to build the Premier a shelter from that storm, a shelter that covers all of Saskatchewan and excludes the people who live in her.

(1630)

You know, Mr. Speaker, this motion puts in mind one of the Premier's pet phrases and I'd just like to take you through it. He starts off and he says, we're all in this same boat together. We're all in the same boat together, except for you government employees. You get out of this boat. And then he says once again, we're all in this boat together, except for you farmers. You belong in Ottawa's boat so get out of mine. That's what he says, Mr. Speaker.

Now, folks, he goes on. We're all in the same boat together except, except again, for rural hospitals. I have surveys that say the rest of us don't want you so get out of this boat. But we're in this boat together, he goes on to say, except for you municipalities. You don't want to share your property tax base so get out of my boat.

Now are we all in the same boat together? Do you understand that, Mr. Speaker? The Premier is left saying, I'm the only one in this boat and I'll dictate what's going to happen in this province. I'll tell the people of Saskatchewan what's going to happen. I'll tell the people of this province what kind of things we're going to do in this legislature. I'll tell the people of this province what they can and cannot do.

But, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province are beginning to rally to the cry. They're beginning to stand up and say, this has got to stop. This has got to stop, these kinds of destructive changes, these kind of destructive things that this Premier talks about.

The funeral train is leaving, and it's headed for rural Saskatchewan. That's what's happening, Mr. Speaker. The people of rural Saskatchewan are understanding clearly what is happening now. Their hospitals are going to close. Make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker. Make no mistake about it. There are 41 hospitals, 41 small rural hospitals in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, with an average daily census of under 10 — 41 of them. And they consume a whopping 1.7 per cent of

the health care dollars that are spent in this province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I say that the rural residents of this province are worth 1.7 per cent of the health care budget of this province. They are worth 1.7 per cent of that budget. And the member from Biggar, he knows very well that that's true. And other members of the back benches of this government, they know it's true. They know that the province of Saskatchewan, the rural residents that are located surrounding those small, little communities, those small rural hospitals, are worth 1.7 per cent of the health care budget. They know that, Mr. Speaker.

The only ones that don't seem to know that any more, Mr. Speaker, are the front-benchers of this government, primarily the Premier, the member from Riversdale, and the Health minister of this province. They're the only ones, along with the Associate Minister of Finance and the Finance minister herself. Those are the only four people in Saskatchewan that want to see this action driven forward, Mr. Speaker.

And the other members of the government, the back bench members and other members of cabinet, I can't imagine why you folks will go along with this.

Are rural residents, I ask the Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker, are our rural residents not worth 1.7 per cent of the health care budget of this province? We think they are. You better believe it, Mr. Speaker, we think they're worth that. We think the people of rural Saskatchewan are worth that kind of expenditure.

We think that the people of this province are important, Mr. Speaker. We think that the people of this province deserve health care services. We think the people of this province deserve the kind of service that they've had up till now, Mr. Speaker. We think the people of this province will continue to oppose these actions.

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

Mr. Swenson: — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask leave to introduce a guest.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In your gallery today, watching the debate, is an old acquaintance of mine. It's Mr. Michael Hegan who was the executive director of the EMO, the Emergency Measures Organization in the province of Saskatchewan for a number of years.

Mr. Hegan has been a long-time member of the militia, and I believe has an officer rank in that organization that he has been a part of, and has certainly brought much of that military training and due diligence, if you will, to the Emergency Measures Organization.

And I think it's an area that all of us in the province,

particularly those of us that live in rural areas, can appreciate, that there are people out there that are prepared to respond to some type of an emergency when we most need it. And I can only remember the flood in Moose Jaw in 1974 when they certainly came in handy.

So I would ask all members of this legislature to welcome Mr. Hegan here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a guest.

Leave granted.

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the east gallery, I have a neighbour of mine that I want to introduce. His name is Mr. Tom Rooke. He's the ACT (Associated Canadian Travellers) chairman and president in Swift Current. He is the president of a Swift Current pistol club. He is a member of the Swift Current Wheatland Mall Merchants' Association. And I want to ask the members of the Assembly to welcome him to the Assembly today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Time Allocation (continued)

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This motion that's been brought forward by the government, Mr. Speaker, is like what we said earlier — a funeral train running roughshod over the people of Saskatchewan. Rarely has a more shameful set of actions been presented to the Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan in such a short time.

This government has been in power for less than two years, Mr. Speaker. This government is in power for less than two years, Mr. Speaker. It seems like an eternity to the people of Saskatchewan, I'm sure. But it is less than two years, Mr. Speaker. But they've already brought forward more closure motions than has ever been brought forward in the history of Saskatchewan.

And the Government House Leader nods his head because he knows very well that that's true. He knows it doesn't bother him for a moment. It doesn't bother him for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to bring forward these kinds of things because that's the kind of person he is. If you can't get it through legitimately, you push it through with whatever it takes. That's the kind of person he is. That's the way he has conducted his affairs, Mr. Speaker, right since the days he was a farmer in the Shaunavon area, to the day that he sits there now.

And the witness and testimony to that, Mr. Speaker, I don't think is that hard to find. When it came the opportunity for that member, Mr. Speaker, and you'll

recall this as all of Saskatchewan does, I'm sure — when it came time for that member to move from rural Saskatchewan into urban Saskatchewan, and get a seat, an important thing that he absolutely required if he was ever going to sit on the government benches, when it came time for that, Mr. Speaker, he had to use whatever kind of actions that were necessary to get that seat.

Mr. Speaker, we all recall what happened. He did the same kinds of things that he accuses other people of doing, but what did he do? He bought his nomination. He bought people with, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I want to caution the member in the words that he is using in this legislature and the imputations that he is leaving. I ask the member that we are on a specific motion and he should get back to the motion.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Rarely before has a government brought forward these kind of actions. Rarely before have we seen a government that's had to resort to these kinds of tactics, Mr. Speaker. I just illustrate that the type of action that this member, the Government House Leader brings forward, it doesn't bother him for a moment to bring forward these kinds of things, Mr. Speaker.

It doesn't bother him to cut off debate. It doesn't bother him to stifle debate in public meetings. It doesn't matter what it takes. Just push her through because we are the government; we're going to do whatever we please. Now you don't have to take my word for it, Mr. Speaker. Just ask the people of Saskatchewan. I can provide you with the words of others who believe this kind of motion is just despicable.

Let me provide some references for you, Mr. Speaker. A member of this Assembly turned his back on his own constituents and walked away from them, and I will shortly use him as a direct reference why this motion should not pass. But before I use that member as a direct reference, Mr. Speaker, let me use him as an indirect reference. Well, Mr. Speaker, an indirect reference why this motion should be defeated.

What I mean to do is the fact that the members of the Legislative Assembly are elected to represent their constituents, Mr. Speaker. We all are. We're elected to represent our constituents. It is their sworn duty; we all recall taking the oath. We all recall being called into this Assembly and standing up and placing our hand on the Bible and taking the oath that we were going to be sworn into duty in this province — the solemn obligation to represent the people who delegate them to this House.

So the member from Prince Albert is here on behalf of his constituents, whether he realizes it or not. Whether he's prepared to live up to that or not, that's why he is here. The good people of his constituency elected him to represent their views.

So as an indirect reference, what I mean to say is that I

use the constituents of that member as a reference, as a powerful argument why this motion must not pass. And what do those constituents want, Mr. Speaker? They want the assurance that the basic decisions in this case, the decision to spend 23 million scarce health care dollars, that the decision will be reserved to elected members of the proposed Prince Albert health care board.

And you know what their MLA told them, Mr. Speaker? He told them that it was possible but not desirable. And that's an exact quote — not desirable, is what he said. When asked, Mr. Speaker, should they be spending 23 million scarce health care dollars, and the decision be reserved to the elected members of the Prince Albert health care board, he said, it's possible but not desirable.

He hasn't yet realized, I don't think, the implications of what he said, Mr. Speaker. And it is an exact quote. He told his own people that it is not desirable for them to have elected representatives making decisions, but they will be made for them by the Minister of Health and her officials. That's what he said. The people of Prince Albert don't need to have a say in this. The Minister of Health and her officials can determine the course of action that needs to take place with respect to building a hospital in Prince Albert.

Now that says loudly to me, and I should say loudly to this House that the motion before us is not worthy of support. Why would we close down debate when the people have been told by their own elected member, an NDP member, that the Bill this motion wants to force is essentially useless to them — useless to the people of Prince Albert.

And now of course those people want more time to assess exactly what in heaven's name is going on. They do not want this motion to pass because their own member turned his back on them and walked away from them. He left them not knowing what the future holds, and they want time to measure what exactly is going on and they want time to react and to have some say in the process. In those circumstances, how can that member in good conscience support this motion?

I also said, Mr. Speaker, that that would be . . . would use that member in direct reference in opposition to the motion, and I'll do that now.

(1645)

Here are the words of that member from Prince Albert Carlton dutifully recorded in *Hansard*, and I quote:

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

And that, Mr. Speaker, was spoken by the member on August 7, 1989 in this very Assembly. That member's assessment of the motion now before this House, Mr. Speaker, is that that smacks of totalitarianism — strong words. Of course the difference was that in 1989 when he uttered this concern, the debate had gone over for a very prolonged period of time. That is why he said it smacks somewhat, and not totally.

But the motion here today, it is before us only after five hours of debate. Only three members of the official opposition have had an opportunity to speak. Only three members have had an opportunity to speak to this Bill No. 3 and already the government realizes that they have to force closure on the people of Saskatchewan. That's all that spoke against Bill 3 so far.

And I would ask people to check the record. The member from Souris-Cannington, the member from Rosthern, and myself, the member from Kindersley, are the only three people in the opposition that have had an opportunity to speak to this Bill.

An Hon. Member: — The member from Moosomin.

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, the member from Moosomin also reminds me that he spoke, but I'm not sure he did.

Anyway very few of the opposition members have had an opportunity to speak. Very few members have had that opportunity to speak to this Bill, and now they bring in closure. And I fully expect the member from Prince Albert to stand in his place and oppose this motion with all the same strength and vigour that he showed in 1989. I would even be happy, Mr. Speaker, if that member said, in good conscience, his own NDP government should at least allow for more debate, as long a time as consideration of the measure to totally restructure health care as he and his party were allowed to discuss the sale of potash mines. Let him concede just that much decency to the debate and he'll earn our respect, at least for those kinds of words.

But I don't think he'll do that, Mr. Speaker. No, I don't think so. He'll turn his back on the people of this province just as he turned his back on his constituents in Prince Albert just a few short days ago.

Let me go back to the record, Mr. Speaker, and continue to remind this Assembly of the member's deeply held views as recorded in *Hansard* on August 7, 1989, because he continued, and I continue to quote:

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

So he said, Mr. Speaker, that this motion the government has introduced in this Assembly is the exact opposite to democracy, to democratic

principles as we know them. He is speaking from the record, speaking from just a few years ago, and he is saying that the now Premier, his own leader, is opposed to the fundamental principles of democracy by stifling debate.

And that is exactly what is happening, Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly. That is exactly what his leader now is bringing forward before this legislature. It is an attack on democracy and cannot be allowed to go unchallenged.

Will he, Mr. Speaker, have the courage to speak up, not just from the record but in person in this debate and say those same kinds of things, Mr. Speaker? I don't think he will. But that member with those famous backs speaks powerfully from the record. Let me remind him of just how powerfully indeed he did speak. I quote:

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

He says this motion of closure is an affront to democracy, is distasteful, a bitter pill that smothers the issue. That is the view of the member from Prince Albert Carlton. He was very clear about closure motions, very clear indeed. And we can only hope that he has the integrity and the intestinal fortitude, the courage, to stand in this Assembly and refresh the record with those powerful words.

He will not because he didn't mean it then and I don't think he means it now. The debate on this motion proves again that this . . . for the NDP principles are simply convenient illusions to present to the people as justification, but purely conveniences that can be discarded as soon as they interfere with their whims.

This member's integrity will be clearly and definely measured by the contribution to this debate and how that contribution measures up against his powerful words of a few years ago. It is indeed a question of integrity and this debate will be personally important for that member. I remind him of that.

But what about his seat mates, Mr. Speaker? What about the pompous fellow from Humboldt who likes to stand and lecture anyone who will listen about what is dark and sinister? He too speaks from the record and he will be measured by his contribution to this debate. But, Mr. Speaker, almost as much as the Premier, that member from Humboldt sees speeches as occasions to utter conveniences and not opportunities for honest principles.

Let us remind the Assembly of that member's words from August 7, 1989. The member from Humboldt says, and I quote:

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

He was opposing closure, Mr. Speaker, because he said it was a sign of a government drunk with power.

Well I will not comment on the drunkenness of this government, but the people of Saskatchewan are clearly seeing a government consumed by its own power. This motion is the inevitable result when a man seeks power for the sake of power alone. This motion is expected and predictable consequence of a single-minded drive for power at any expense, any cost.

All of the symptoms of this ailment have been there since well before the election actually occurred. We should have been not surprised that we are dealing with this motion today. The symptoms of this government — drunk, as the member from Humboldt discusses, drunk with power — those symptoms were there a long time ago.

For example, we had the Leader of the NDP running around this province promising absurd spending increases to everyone he met, when he told them by the Minister of Finance . . . until he was told by the Minister of Finance that it couldn't be done. Just as this motion shows, the man did not care.

There was an editorial at one point in the Swift Current **Sun** and it had the NDP collected around the member from Riversdale and he was leading them in a cheer, and it went like this: what do you want? You name it. When do you want it? Right now.

And I remember that because it was such an apt description of what the NDP leader and his party were all about — power at any cost. And this motion is a motion of those who want power at any cost. The symptoms were there when he campaigned against harmonization of the sales tax. He was told the revenues were needed to balance the budget and fund farm support. He told the people: don't worry about it, we'll balance the budget, pay for all of our promises by doing away with waste and mismanagement. No problem, don't worry, said the NDP leader.

And I remember another editorial in another paper and it observed that the NDP leader had spent the 5 million from GigaText and about 300 times over. He didn't care then and he doesn't care now. And this is the kind of motion we are dealing with — a motion from, again as the member from Humboldt says, a motion from those who are drunk, drunk with power.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, when you get that drunk, that drunk with power, you have no problem attacking the legislative process, attacking the basic

democratic process because you are too drunk to care. And that is where this government is. And that is where the government began and it is how it continues to operate. The highest order of arrogance is represented by this motion, Mr. Speaker.

And I'd again like to quote from the member of Humboldt on that score. And I quote:

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

And they should know well about the next time and the next time, Mr. Speaker, because they have brought in closure motions more frequently, more frequently than the total sum of all other governments of this province. In less than two years they've been able to eclipse the record of all other governments that this province has ever had in less than two years. The NDP had it in their minds even in 1989. And simply by doing it over and over and over it again, it could make it acceptable to the people of Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it was not the previous government that made a habit of using closure; it was this NDP government. It is the Premier that wears the mark, the mark of closure in this province in the history . . . the longest in the history of this province.

And the member from Humboldt's own assessment of the logic of this continued use of closure is to undermine the institution of this Legislative Assembly. They're repeatedly using closure because they believe if they do it often enough then the people will no longer care.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province do care. We are hearing from all over the province now that they realize that the heavy hand of oppression is being brought down on this legislature; the heavy hand of closure is now being used by this government once again in Saskatchewan. Once again they're going to force their way through this legislature. Once again, Mr. Speaker, they're going to use closure.

And that is his assessment, the member from Humboldt, Mr. Speaker. And having watched this government, watching this Premier, I can see why he has that kind of assessment.

But where is that member today, Mr. Speaker? Where is he to oppose this kind of motion? I seriously question whether he even understood what he was saying in 1989, let alone whether or not he meant what he was saying. It'll be clear from his participation in this debate whether he meant what he was saying or will we quickly find out that he did not mean what he was saying at that time.

One of the more eloquent spokesmen on this motion,

Mr. Speaker, is the member from Regina Churchill Downs. He has a contribution to make to this debate, and I'll just lend him a hand in making that contribution by bringing forward the record on his account. From *Hansard*, I quote: I sincerely hope it'll be the last time closure is ever invoked in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a relevant contribution, because I want you to note that this member for Churchill Downs was very specific in his view. I sincerely hope it'll be the last time closure is ever invoked in this province. That's what the member said, Mr. Speaker.

What is so ironic is that after making that observation, after expressing that hope, he has allowed himself to be part of that government that has invoked closure more times than anyone in the history of this province.

I wonder what that member must feel today, Mr. Speaker. They're using closure again. They're using closure in this province, Mr. Speaker, again. Once again in this province we see a government that absolutely feels it has ultimate control over this province and, Mr. Speaker, I think the people of this province want to hear more.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that we now adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

MOTIONS

Hours of Sitting

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I move, with leave, seconded by the member for Saskatoon River Heights:

That notwithstanding rule 3 of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly* of Saskatchewan, that this Assembly shall on Thursday, April 8, 1993 meet at 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., and that when this Assembly adjourns on Thursday, April 8, 1993 it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, April 13, 1993 at 2 p.m.

I so move.

Leave granted.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:02 p.m.