

Stores charged for defying law on Sunday trade

By The Canadian Press

A Toronto furrier with about 250 charges on his record was among at least 26 storekeepers charged with breaking Ontario's Sunday closing law on the last Sunday before Christmas.

Large grocery chains like Dominion, A and P and Loblaws shut their doors for the first Sunday in months because of the Supreme Court of Canada ruling on Thursday upholding the Ontario law.

But many supermarkets tried cordoning off all but a 223-square-metre space in efforts to meet exemptions under the Retail Business Holidays Act.

In Kent County, there were no reports of stores being charged with opening Sunday.

In Metropolitan Toronto, 13 small businesses — mostly fashion and stereo retailers — were charged with opening illegally, said Supt. Jack Webster. And in the rest of Ontario, at least 13 other stores were charged.

In London, Ont., the Crown attorney will review the case today of Marc Emery, charged with opening his City Lights Book Shop. Emery took a unique approach Sunday in an attempt to make a point while keeping police from laying charges: he gave away his books instead of selling them.

ALLOWS BBROWSING

Before police turned up, he gave away about \$1,500 worth of books. The police told him that by allowing people to browse in his store, he was technically breaking the law — and he was charged.

And in Toronto, Edward Borins held a "read-in" at his Edwards Books and

Iranian fled

Art store in Chinatown.

Celebrities such as author Margaret Atwood, actor Don Harron and publisher Jack McClelland, as well as lawyer Edward Greenspan, were in the store to support Borins' fight to have book stores included in the list of businesses that may open on Sundays.

"Even a government of philistines, of moral lightweights and cultural basket cases, could hardly dare challenge the place of reading in today's society," Borins told a dozen reporters crammed into the back of his store.

Also in Chinatown, it was business as usual at Paul Magder's shop, despite pleas from the furrier's lawyer to obey the decision.

And like they have over the last 3 1/2 years, Toronto police officers promptly laid yet another charge against the furrier.

"My lawyer is advising me to close," Magder told reporters, who outnumbered customers at the shop on the Spadina Avenue shopping strip.

"I'll keep fighting (the law) as long as I can, until the government puts me out of business," said Magder, who initiated the Supreme Court appeal.

Magder already faces fines of up to \$10,000 for each charge.

When he finally gets to court — no dates have been set — Magder will fight the charges against him on grounds that the law violates the equality provision under Sec. 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, said his lawyer Tim Danson.

The Sunday closing law is complicated in Toronto by a municipal bylaw that allows businesses in designated tourist areas to open Sundays.