

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**Fourth Session — Tenth Legislature**  
**22nd Day**

**Friday, February 28, 1947.**

The Assembly met at 3:00 o'clock p.m.

On the Orders of the Day.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION — CONSTRUCTION OF SASKATCHEWAN LANDING BRIDGE**

Mr. H. Gibbs (Swift Current) moved, seconded by Mr. Willis (Elrose):

That this Assembly urge the Dominion Government to commence immediate construction of a bridge at Saskatchewan Landing, as a part of the South Saskatchewan River development programme, in order that existing facilities of transport across the South Saskatchewan River at that point may not be interrupted when the proposed Dam at Elbow is completed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in dealing with this Resolution, I am appealing on behalf of the good people of my constituency which as you know is the constituency of Swift Current; and also on behalf of all the good people of southwestern Saskatchewan, for the construction of a traffic bridge across the South Saskatchewan River at Saskatchewan Landing, northwest of Swift Current. A short while ago Mr. Gardiner went on a speaking spree throughout the western provinces and the nature of his various addresses was on irrigation and the proposed construction of a PFRA dam at Elbow, or near Elbow. Well, I have no fault to find with a measure of this nature because I am 100 per cent behind any irrigation plan for Saskatchewan. In fact, I am for any and all measures that will bring to the people of our province larger production, better life and comfort and happiness. And my appeal today, Mr. Speaker, is for the continuity of this ideal. In the past, as a matter of fact for decades now, Members of the Federal and Provincial Houses representing Swift Current constituency and also Boards of Trade, bridge committees and various other organizations have been appealing and asking for the construction of a traffic bridge at the point I have mentioned. But up to the present all their efforts have been futile and evidently their appeals have descended on deaf ears. Now, to me, Mr. Speaker, this sort of thing is not conducive to good business of government because, surely if this bridge was not necessary, myself and others would not waste our time and breath talking about it. The flood surface level at the proposed dam near Elbow is 1,825 feet and the completion of the dam will raise the low water level at Saskatchewan Landing a distance of 53 feet. Consequently, the proposed water level at Saskatchewan Landing will be 32 feet above the floor level of the bridge, which has been designed for this particular location. I might say, Mr. Speaker, we had had a bridge designed before the mention of a dam going in at Elbow. However, this has altered the old set-up now. The construction of the proposed dam will render useless the existing traffic bridge at Dunblaine and the traffic attachment of that bridge cost the Department of Highways and Transportation the sum of \$196,895 and it will . . . Pardon?

**An Hon. Member:** — What traffic . . . ?

**Mr. Gibbs:** — That was the traffic attachments of that bridge at Dunblaine and it will also render useless and obsolete about 11 ferries along the route of the river. Now I think you will get an idea, Mr. Speaker, just what that is going to do to the people of southwestern Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Provincial Government in a brief to the Dominion Government offered to pay 50 per cent of the original proposed structure, which would have cost approximately \$200,000. Now, Mr. Speaker, a new bridge after construction of the proposed dam will raise the cost to around \$2 million, so you can hear the cry going up once again. Mr. Speaker, of the tremendous cost it's going to take in order that we can get transportation facilities out in that neck of the woods which has been the forgotten land for decades now. However, independent of cost, I am concerned about the transportation for the people of southwestern Saskatchewan and it is about time something was done for the people out there in this connection.

Now during the war years, Mr. Speaker, I think that you will acknowledge that all cities, towns, villages, hamlets all throughout this wide Dominion of ours, at the request of the Dominion Government, submitted briefs for post war work. I do not know of any problem or project that has gone ahead yet — and the war is over long ago. As a matter of fact I think they have been forgotten too, and we will have to wake up to the fact that something has got to be done in order to get some of this work started. I would submit it would be a very good time to open up these projects and put to work and provide employment for those seeking it. I might just quote, Mr. Speaker, a statement that the Minister of Labour, Mr. Mitchell, made in Ottawa on February 11th, when he stated that at the end of 1946, 84,374 persons were receiving unemployment insurance benefits. Surely we are not going to see another repetition of after the First Great War was over. I think we in this Government, each and every one of us in this House today, we realize what went on after the cessation of the First Great War. We saw unemployment, we saw relief conditions that were appalling to this country and a national disgrace to Canadians. Now surely we don't want to see that happen again and I am just quoting those figures (which no doubt are authentic) as coming from the Minister of Labour of this Dominion of ours. Are they beginning to accumulate — to go back once again to that thing that we had thought to do away with? Surely it is about time our Government started to look into the situation and put into effect the proposed projects that we understood would become in service after the war was finished. And I hope, Mr. Speaker, that in the very, very near future these projects will go ahead and come and be finished ultimately to the benefit of all the people of this province and the Dominion of Canada as a whole.

So with those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to bore the House and dwell on things I have spoken on before with regard to this bridge. It is imperative that we do get transportation facilities. It is only but right that the people throughout the various parts of our province do get modern transportation services; and that we do away with a lot of our obsolete structures which we have going under the name of transportation today. If we are going to develop — as we hope and wish to develop — along modern lines we have got to build modern structures. I think we all realize that there are many places in our province beside the one I am speaking about and the one I have mentioned that desire serviceable transportation qualities. And

I truly hope that the Dominion Government, with the co-operation of our Government here, will see the light of day at last and do something for that long talked of bridge up in Swift Current, or at least north of Swift Current. I know that in the past over a period (they tell me) of between 30 and 40 years this bridge has been under discussion. I think Members of the Opposition realize that too because members of their party have also made appeals to have this bridge constructed. As I said before, if we get a modern transportation service from north of the river it will open up our vast country clean down to the American border; and I am sure that each and every one of us wishes to see our province developed. We wish to see roads, highways and everything conceivable that we have in our power to go into effect in order to give, as I said, adequate transportation for the people of the districts, not only that we represent, but each and all of us represent.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those remarks I would move, seconded by Mr. Willis (Elrose) the above mentioned motion.

**Mr. M.J. Willis (Elrose):** — In rising to support the motion, it is with pleasure that I bring this before the notice of the Ottawa Members this afternoon. Firstly from the standpoint of the tourist trade to this province. I think and I think the Hon. Members will agree with me, that we have lost tourist trade because of our inadequate roads and bridges. We have many lovely spots in this province but our facilities to get to these spots are not adequate. If we can encourage the tourists to come to this province from the country to the south of us only then will there be a greater understanding between these two countries. Today we read on every hand of misunderstandings that exist between these countries and I think that is one of the ways that we could and break down many of the misunderstandings between ourselves and the people to the south. Moreover I believe much of the misunderstanding that exists between these different provinces of this fair Dominion of ours could be broken down if we had facilities and roads, bridges over streams to have a steady flow of the people from the eastern provinces to the West and from the West to the East. Too often our differences are not so great if we had the pleasure of having those people visit this province and so I believe for international goodwill that we should provide those tourists a means in which to enjoy the great parkland known as the Waskesiu. Moreover some of the older provinces have already found the benefits of good roads to encourage the tourists. We in the West of course are younger and consequently we have up to the present not had the same ability to build these roads that they have in the eastern provinces. We have in this province 13 points of entry on our southern boundary. I believe that six of those points of entry, namely, Willow Creek, Treelon, Monchy, West Poplar, East Poplar and Big Beaver would be served if we had facilities that those people could use. But as it stands now, there is no bridge across the South Saskatchewan, consequently many of our tourists have only limited time and therefore go to other provinces where they can spend their time to more advantage. At these six points of entry last year there were 1,653 motor car entries. In the 13 points of entry there were 9,723 motor cars entered, or in other words even with the facilities we have there was approximately 16 per cent in those six points of entry.

Now, I am not for one minute saying that all the people that entered were going to our parks but I do say and I quite

sincerely believe that if a bridge were built there more of them would go to the north than in the past. In the annual statement submitted to this House, the Department of Highways report that 1946 shows that the ferry at South Saskatchewan Landing handled 10,785 automobiles, more automobiles than any other ferry in the Province of Saskatchewan. With two exceptions, it almost doubled any other ferry in the province so that I am firmly convinced if a bridge were built there would be triple that number of motor cars heading northward to visit our parklands of the North.

Now provincially, of course, the benefit of a bridge to those people that have to use the ferry at the present time, six weeks in the spring of the year and six weeks in the fall, there is no means of crossing the river whatsoever. As our transportation system in this province, not talking of rail transportation, is mainly east and west there has been very little provision for north and south transportation. I contend that if this bridge were built, since we are in the motor age, it would help all southern Saskatchewan to travel on that road northward which at the present time and with bad road conditions we have had in the past that they have a long roundabout way in order to get to the larger centres. Then I am firmly convinced of the tourists that now visit Waskesiu that if we had a bridge there it would encourage them to take a shorter route because many of our tourists are people that have a very limited time for holidays and therefore when they survey a highway map they carefully look it over to see where they can go in the shortest time and by the building of this bridge it would encourage them to visit our parks, to have their holidays with us, to cultivate true friendship, goodwill and moreover the province would gain shekels in our pocket that we spend. I am firmly convinced that if this bridge were built we in turn would financially be better off and would encourage tourists to visit this province. With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure in seconding the motion.

**Hon. J.T. Douglas (Minister of Public Works and Highways and Transportation):** — In rising to support the motion, I feel that we are asking for something that is not incalculable in this province but has been suggested by the Hon. Member for Swift Current this date has taken on somewhat a new complexion. The problem in the past possibly was not so great as it is today. I also hope that this has not banned a question that I wish to add any difference of opinion among the great political parties in this province. I note that in 1944 the Hon. Mr. Taggart, speaking at his nominating convention in Swift Current on March 24th, made the statement that his Government was prepared to see this bridge was built as soon as materials were available. If we go back a little further to 1933, I find that Senator Markott, as reported in the 'Swift Current Sun', August 28th, 1933, took some pictures of the Landing and that the Federal Government was considering including this as part of their vast relief program. Then again a little over a year ago this Government in their presentation to the Dominion-Provincial Conference included this as one of the projects which we thought should be proceeded with immediately. At that time we also proposed that we were prepared to spend 50 per cent of the cost of the construction of this bridge, however at that time, like you are aware, we were not able to interest the Federal Government in this project. Unable

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to do so we then commenced to canvass the possibilities of building this bridge ourselves but when we commenced to canvass the difficulties and the need for it we found there was a possibility of the PFRA constructing a dam at Riverhurst to a height of 120 feet. Should this be the case it meant that the plans which we had prepared for this bridge would be obsolete and we thought that we could not, in fairness to the public, proceed with this protest although we knew the need for it was very great. My two colleagues this afternoon have pointed out the need very clearly but I would like to add one or two things to what they have already told you.

We find that about two years ago bus service on this route was taken care of by a medium sized bus. Last summer the Saskatchewan Transportation Company had in operation over this route one of its large 41 passenger buses and we found that to be totally inadequate to carry the traffic all over this route. As a matter of fact we found it quite frequently necessary to add overload buses as far as Biggar or Rosetown and in this coming year 1947 it is our intention to add to this run another bus, leaving Saskatoon in the morning and returning back from Swift Current during the afternoon. That gives you some idea of the increasing need or the increasing amount of traffic that is using this crossing.

As a matter of fact we have now reached a stage where the ferry at that particular point is almost inadequate to handle the traffic. There are times when we have seen cars backed up for at least a mile waiting their turn to get over this ferry. The need is there, very definitely so but as I stated when this Government came to canvass this possibility of building the bridge ourselves we were up against the fact that this dam might be built. Now when I was in Ottawa last April and discussed this matter with the Federal people I wasn't able to receive from them any definite information as to the construction of this dam. As a matter of fact I left Ottawa feeling that there was very little hope of this dam being constructed. I want to say that I was rather surprised when I came back to Saskatchewan a few days later and found a report emanating from Swift Current and which stated that Mr. Spence, head of the PFRA, had suggested that they were definitely going ahead with the construction of a dam that would raise the water level at Saskatchewan Landing by approximately 20 feet. Now as I stated, this was going to more or less make our plans obsolete and then a few days later I find that Mr. Gardiner spoke in the city, as a matter of fact I was present when he spoke, and speaking to the Board of Trade he said, saying that he spoke with all the assurance with which one could speak in dealing with estimates, Mr. Gardiner declared that these estimates could go through if no others do, all political parties had spoken in favor of them. Again at the same meeting he states, sometime this summer a decision would be reached on where the dam on the south Saskatchewan river should be placed. It would be on one of these sites between Elbow and Saskatoon and note this, as soon as the site had been finally decided upon the contract would be let and the work would proceed immediately. Well then a few days later Mr. Gordon Ross, taking part in the by-election at Chaplin quite enthusiastic, stated that the Provincial Government (no I'm wrong) that tenders will be called shortly for the much discussed South Saskatchewan irrigation scheme. Well now, when that appeared Mr. Gardiner was in Ottawa, he was getting a little farther away from people in Saskatchewan, people that are really interested in his scheme, so he went ahead with it and we find that in the news release from Ottawa,

May 31st, he said that there was a good chance that construction work would be started this year, no next year. Still farther away from Saskatchewan but, however, in spite of all this it is impossible for this Government to proceed with any definite plans for the construction of this bridge ourselves and then I find that Mr. Gardiner again in the House of Commons, August 15th, again rather indefinite, discussing the projected diversion to part the waters of the South Saskatchewan River near Elbow, Saskatchewan. He said work done to date this year consisted merely of engineering work for the purpose of locating a site at which a dam could properly be built. There was difficulty in finding a foundation upon which to rest the dam. But then we came to the decision that looked like a sell out to the people of Saskatchewan. Speaking in Moose Jaw on January 1st of this year, Mr. Gardiner tells us that a site has been picked, has been located 20 miles north of Elbow and that for reasons told the Government that they would not be in a hurry to commence the construction of this dam. In this same article he goes on to say that water would be backed up for 100 miles and to a depth of 14 feet at the South Saskatchewan Landing.

Well now, when I saw that I thought there is still a possibility that we can proceed with this bridge but however, I have learned not to take too seriously reports that I see in the Leader-Post and so I had my Departmental officials contact the PFRA and get from them the exact location of this dam and the proposed height. Now as you all realize the plans they have are possibly not definite, I believe the site is definite, the possible height of the dam may not be but it is approximately correct and on that basis the rise in water level at South Saskatchewan Landing was not going to be 14 feet as suggested in the Leader-Post but 53 feet. Now that made a low level bridge there an impossibility and we found that instead of a bridge of 1,214 feet in length and costing approximately half a million dollars, it is going to be necessary to construct a bridge there approximately 3,000 feet long and costing \$2 million. Now you can realize here that that is taking the cost of this bridge absolutely without the range of this province to pay for and it is necessary that we do go to the Federal Government and ask that they assume the cost of building this bridge. Now there are a number of reasons for it, my friends, I have placed quite a few of them before you today. The building of this dam at Elbow is going to disrupt the entire north and south communications in this province from No. 19 Highway, west to the Alberta border, a distance of approximately 130 miles. Now you cannot disrupt an entire system for that area without causing a great deal of interference with the bidding of this province. We feel as if we cannot wait until that dam is built in order that we should construct this bridge. The bridge should be gone ahead with now before the water rise takes place and I also want to point out that every ferry between, well from No. 19 Highway, west of the Alberta border will be affected. Six of the cable ferries will be out of commission entirely, the rise of water will eliminate those completely. It will mean that this Department will have to arrange for a number of power driven ferries. These and their landings will cost us at least \$150,000. It will also mean that there will be heavy increase in wage schedules because it will mean that we will have to have more competent men operating these ferries, probably not more competent but men who are trained in this type of work. It is also doubtful if in a country where we have as much wind as we have here if we will be able to operate these ferries as constantly as we have the cable driven ferries. So there is going to be

quite a problem raised in that particular. Then we also find that No. 19 Highway will be submerged and we would have to eliminate, I believe it is 16 miles of No. 19 Highway and we will have to reconstruct another 28 miles to take the place of those 16 miles. We also find that No. 42 Highway will be partly submerged and we will have to abandon 13 miles of it and construct another 26 miles to link it up again with No. 19 Highway. Now this means an added construction of 54 miles of highway which will run us, when we take the rebuilding and the gravelling of these roads, I think I'd be quite conservative in saying \$175,000.

Then we find, as the Hon. Member for Swift Current pointed out, that the bridge which we now have at Riverhurst will be submerged and we will stand a loss there of almost \$200,000 which was spent in its construction. So you see that this project is going to interfere very greatly with the north and south transportation system of the province and it's going to cost this province a great deal of money to offset these contingencies but I do not want to raise this as an argument against this dam I want that definitely understood. If this dam is a feasible project I am all for it and I want to assure this Assembly, insofar as I'm concerned and as far as my Department is concerned, we will do everything in our power to assist the Federal Government in the construction of such a bridge. We are prepared to put at their disposal, our staff to take the necessary soundings in the designing of another bridge and also in the supervision that will be required. We are prepared to do our share but I want to point out that this thing is definitely outside the range of this province to pay for because we are going to be forced to abate the extra expense because of this project. And as has been so ably pointed out by my colleagues we cannot afford to wait, this must be proceeded with immediately. In fact, I am satisfied that had it not been for this project in the offing and had it been possible for this Government to proceed with a low level bridge at this point, I know I was prepared to go to my colleagues and ask that we assume the full responsibility and I feel quite certain that had we come to this Legislature with such a project that both this Legislature and the public would have been behind a project of that kind. So that we cannot, Mr. Speaker, afford to have this wait any longer. This bridge is long over due. I believe we will have unanimous consent of all parties in this province for its construction and I believe that we are justified in going to Ottawa and asking them to commence the construction of this bridge immediately and without any further delay.

**Mr. Wellbelove:** — I would like to ask the Minister a question before he sits down. Have you the statement made by Mr. Gardiner . . . In view of the statement made by the Right Honourable Mr. Gardiner, Moose Jaw, that it will be necessary to go forward slowly with this project. In view of the terrific speed at which it has progressed in the last five years, have you computed the time it would take to complete the project at all?

**Mr. Douglas:** — Mr. Speaker . . . and we cannot allow a project such as this to hold up any further the construction of this very needed artery . . .

**Mr. Procter:** — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### RESOLUTIONS

#### RESOLUTION — MORE ADEQUATE HOUSING PROVISION BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. D.Z. Daniels (Pelly):

That this Assembly recommend that the Provincial Government urgently request the Federal Government to provide more adequate housing in Canada by:

- (1) Granting subsidies to citizens in the lower income brackets where rental costs exceed one-fifth of the gross income.
- (2) According housing corporations, set up by Co-operatives and Provincial and Municipal Government, the same terms under the National Housing Act as are granted to the corporations set up by lending institutions; and
- (3) Extending credits through the Bank of Canada at low rates of interest to citizens who desire to build homes for themselves.

**Mr. C.D. Cummings (Souris-Estevan):** — I don't wish to take up a great deal of time of the House. I believe the ground has been fairly well covered. However, there are some aspects of this question of housing which may even bear some repetition. I view the situation — the housing situation — as being one of our major problems at the present time, and the conditions deplorable. According to a recent Curtis Report, two-thirds of all Canadian families cannot afford good housing. Sixty-five per cent of the families living in cities are renters. Two-thirds of that number have to put up with poor or slum housing. To aggravate the situation, our returned personnel, recently released from the Army, is seeking housing accommodation without any proper provision having been made for them. I won't attempt to dwell on that to any extent because the Minister, Mr. Sturdy, did so previously. However, I would just point out that I think its obvious to Members that in their home towns all across the province here at least, we see improvised housing being used by our returned personnel such as single rooms, one or two rooms in industrial or business sections, without proper sanitary conditions provided for, without proper garbage removal, lack of playgrounds for children, long distances from schools for the children, constituting fire hazards and added costs for police protection. These conditions have resulted in such serious things as child delinquency, children's diseases, social diseases, difficulty in controlling TB and so on. This to my mind is very serious and I wonder if we can appreciate just how serious it is.

I want to quote from a report entitled 'Social Cost of Bad Housing' that was prepared for Alderman Margaret McWilliams of the city of Winnipeg. This report concerns a comparison as between 14 per cent of the bad housing conditions in the city of Winnipeg as compared with the balance of the city. Dilapidated houses for 10,000 — 27.9 for the 14 per cent as compared with 5.9 for the rest of the city. The result of that is venereal disease clinic cases per thousand — 16.5 for the 14 per cent compared with 1.8 for the rest of the city. Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria, annual cases per thousand — 15.7 as compared with 7.5.



Tuberculosis is alarming: annual death per 10,000 population — 7.9 compared to 2.9. Infant death per thousand of live births — 52 per cent as compared with 43 per cent. Juvenile Court cases in public schools per thousand pupils — 23.7 per cent as compared with 11.5 per cent. Social Welfare active cases per thousand — 17.7 compared with 14.8. Police arrests — 52.2 per cent for the 14 per cent of the population as compared with 6.5 per cent. Finally, the costs of Municipal Hospitals — Winnipeg General Hospital, St. Boniface Outdoor Clinic, Social Welfare, Children's Aid, Children's Bureau and Police — \$381,000 for the 14 per cent as compared with only \$612,000 for all the rest of the city. I think those statements are significant; I think they indicate the seriousness of the housing situation. These remarks have had to do with urban housing. I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps our rural housing is even worse. I think that the Members will agree with me — who have travelled through our rural areas and have been in and out of the rural houses in our Province of Saskatchewan — that the condition there is really deplorable. The fact that through the 1930s there was no money to renovate houses and rebuild, while there has been a major prosperity more recently, materials have been unavailable; so that leaves our rural housing conditions very bad.

Now the Dominion Government has made a feeble effort towards a housing program. All Members are familiar with the fact that loans are made to the insurance companies who have put up what is known as the Central Housing and Mortgage Corporation — money which is loaned back to those who wish to build houses, at high rates of interest. I wish to submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that this method of providing housing is not adequate. It is more suited to providing profits for corporations and that is exactly what has taken place. We find that the houses that have been built have been built at such a cost that only those with a higher income are able to avail themselves of this housing program; and two-thirds or more of our people who most need houses cannot afford to do so. To aggravate the situation still more, of course, there is the shortage of materials, he just took for granted that there was nothing that could be done about it. There was a shortage of materials for building houses and that was that.

Now I want to quote some figures, Mr. Speaker, that will prove that there has been material available but that instead of having it used for housing it has gone elsewhere. For each \$100 spent on construction last year, only \$32.28 has been used for housing. The other \$67.72 of the \$100 spent was used to construct hotels, theatres, bowling alleys, service stations, machinery depots and so on; many buildings that aren't really essential as compared with housing. I have noticed a trend even in my own town, where about 12 large buildings were erected. Mainly machinery company depots for the purpose of housing and repairing machinery, while house builders had to drag in shacks from around the country wherever they could get them and put up with the poor left-over material in the lumber yards in order to have a home of any sort in which to live. I want to refer too to the possibilities, as I figure they were, to provide some emergency housing at least by making available the discarded buildings from the airports and from the army depots. Now, of course, our Minister of Reconstruction has carried out a program along that line and I want to commend him very highly for what he has done. In the town of Estevan, there are 20 families

housed there now who wouldn't have a home to live in only for that program. Twenty more will be housed when further renovation work can be done but the question in my mind is why in the world has it been left to our provincial Department to do these things? Do you mean to say that those buildings remained idle for a couple of years without anything having been done and no use could be made of them until such time as our Department, our Minister was able to purchase them from War Assets. Well those facilities were in the hands of the Federal Government, I see no reason why they could not have taken and been made use of long before. As a matter of fact at that particular point all the facilities were stripped of the place previous to the Minister of Reconstruction taking it over. Such as chairs, benches and chesterfields, kitchen equipment and all that sort of thing was taken out. As a matter of fact a couple of months before we purchased those facilities, carloads of that equipment were shipped away from the Estevan Airport. Even more, still there was a very fine hospital there lying idle, nor could it be put into use until all departments of Government were able to secure that hospital and again the hospital equipment has been stripped. But as soon as Sturdy's Department got control of it action was taken, as I said many families are being housed and the hospital has been in use now for some months, which is a blessing to the town of Estevan where there was such a great shortage of hospital facilities. The previous speaker referred to the Minister Howe's statement regarding his inability to take care of the situation. He said it is beyond the administrative ability of any group of government officials to decide what is essential and what is non-essential in houses. I want to point out however that he could easily decide as between what was essential or non-essential when it came to providing profits for the corporations. I want to point out that he could easily decide it was essential to provide \$400,000 — what he calls incentive bonus to the Crane Company to add, to put an addition to their factory. Insurance companies of course have benefited by way of profits through this scheme and I think that it has been proven that while profits are being paid, it cannot provide houses to people.

I wish to quote from an authority on that subject. This is the National Construction Council among whose constituent organizations were the Canadian Manufacturers Association, the Building Trade Unions, the Building Material Manufacturers Associations and the Architectural and Engineering Institute. Here's what they say:

Our investigations of houses for low income groups show that provision of this class of housing cannot ultimately be profitable to private enterprise. Responsibility of housing these groups have been in the final analysis the responsibility of the state.

They even recognize that if they are to have their profits they cannot provide this necessary housing, therefore, it is the responsibility of the Government to do so. There are several reasons why the profit motive cannot enter into the program of providing houses cheap. In the first place it is a matter of land on which to build those houses. Land speculation has entered into the picture, rendering the cost of land entirely out of reach. Contractors are often out of reach. Interest charges on the money, as mentioned before, high cost of the material, material is up perhaps an estimated 65 per cent in cost. Now again referring to the Hon. Member for Arm River, his

talk the other day attempted to lay the blame for this high cost of housing on labor. Of course we are used to hearing that sort of thing from that side of the House.

I wish again to quote a few figures that will perhaps disprove that contention. According to reports the cost of labor in the last year has dropped slightly, in other words, the wages to the working man overall have dropped slightly. In 1945 the average weekly wage for industrial workers was \$30.71. In 1941 it had dropped to \$29.53. It doesn't look very much as if the cost of labor had very much to do with the increased cost of houses, as compared with the cost of living for the laboring man due to these all-round increased costs. In 1945 the index figure was 119.5, in 1946 it was 127.1. On the other hand, let us view the picture from the angle of the corporations. Twenty-eight companies have net profits in 1946 of \$22 million or a 55 per cent increase over 1945. Seven hundred and nine corporations had a total profit for November 1946 of \$273 million. I think it should be clear, Mr. Speaker, to all Hon. Members why the high cost of providing houses for our people. While the Minister of Reconstruction at Ottawa has no plan by which to provide adequate houses for our people, there are other people who have and many authorities have been giving this matter very serious consideration, from whom our CCF Members at Ottawa, our organization here in Saskatchewan including our Government. They have been considering ways and means of providing low cost housing at a price which the average wage earner can pay or to provide subsidies to make it possible for the average worker to live in proper houses.

I wish to quote from other authorities as well in regard to this matter. I know that the Opposition are always unwilling to accept any gesture that comes from this side of the House, from the CCF Party and the Members, but here is a quotation from Marion Bowley, a housing authority in Great Britain and she says this:

We have reached the same results as before, the necessity for some new type of authority capable of resolving the conflicts of interest between local authorities planning building schemes on a wider basis of interest than those of local authorities needing housing for its surplus population. This will involve at any rate regional authorities.

**An Hon. Member:** — This was quoted in News Comment of . . .

**Mr. Cumming:** — June 1st.

**An Hon. Member:** — June 1st, 1946.

**Mr. Cumming:** — I omitted to advocate, omitted to cover the ground in advocating what we are suggesting by way of a housing plan. Just briefly I think the most accepted proposition is that money be made available, from the Federal Government to local housing authorities, local housing groups. The plan that is most popular seems to be that a local housing authority, housing commission be set up with representation from the Dominion Government, Provincial Government and local municipal authorities for the purpose of planning with groups such as co-operatives, municipal association, for the purpose of purchasing land and planning neighborhood housing schemes. This is the plan I

believe that is being advocated by this authority across the line to the South of us, "The underlying problem is the whole question of the form and function of a modern urban area." This may not be in the process of evolution. If this is true then neither slums nor blight can be overcome without some larger and fresher guiding concept some kind of regional commission with authoritative powers delegated by the state and local governments is now more likely. Then further, in regard to providing subsidies for a plan of this kind. I wish to quote the statements of Senator Taft of Ohio. He points out that free enterprise is nothing freer than the way the building business has been operated in the past, has never eliminated the slums and it never will. Housing costs are so high that 50 per cent of the nation's families can't afford to buy new homes. In most cases they can't even afford to buy second-hand houses. He says, referring of course to the situation in the United States, "Before the war, eight million families paid less than \$15 per month rent. Six or eight million lived in houses distinctly substandard." He says: "Private interests either can't or won't build houses to rent at a price people can afford so government subsidies are the only way to provide decent housing for millions of families in the lower income group."

Now, speaking of subsidies, some people view that matter with alarm; but I wish to draw to the attention of the House, Mr. Speaker, that it is not a new practice in this Dominion of Canada to pay subsidies. As a matter of fact we have seen down through the years, our Government subsidizing such as the CPR, the Hudson's Bay Company, and many other such corporations through the tariff structure. Recently the steel industry has been subsidized. Excess profit taxes have been paid back to the extent of \$70 million in 1945 and \$68 million in 1946. In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I was very interested again in listening to the Member for Arm River (it looks as if I'm picking on him a little but he had a great deal to say about housing) and I was puzzled all the way along through his remarks as to just whether he was supporting this idea and the principles involved in the Resolution or not. I wondered why previously as to why one of the Hon. Members got to his feet and asked the other day which he was going to do, whether he was going to support or oppose this Resolution, after he sat down. I didn't get the drift just then but, however, when he did sit down he said he was going to support the Resolution. So, Mr. Speaker, I believe if he can support the principles involved in this Resolution, I think that all other Members in the House probably will. I have much pleasure in seconding the Resolution.

Debate adjourned.

## SECOND READINGS

Hon. J. Phelps (Minister of Natural Resources) moved second reading of Bill 41 — **An Act to amend The Forest Act.**

He said: I beg to inform the House that the purpose of this Bill is to provide for the deletion from certain areas, land that is now included in forest reserves. Another part of the Bill is to provide for adding certain lands to existing forest reserves. One point, Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of this House is that in order to take land out of these reserves, or put land in, it requires an Act of the Legislature. I believe maybe that is a good idea. There hasn't

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in the past, been enough stress made on the importance of creating sufficient forest reserves in the Province of Saskatchewan. Rather than take land out of the reserves, I think in time we might be persuaded to add some land to it. In providing for the exchange of some of the reserves we find that land in two or three instances particularly, is privately owned, right in the middle of the reservation. We don't think that that is good business and it certainly creates a fire hazard. As a result we are recommending that this land — we have arranged for exchange for other lands and this land will be now included, if the House sees fit to pass this Act, will be included in the forest reserve. The provisions of the Act make some corrections in the Candle Lake Provincial Forest, some additions to the Meadow Lake Provincial Forest and to the Moose Mountain, and, Mr. Speaker, I think no other principle is involved in this Bill. The details can be taken up in Committee and thus bear with some further discussion. I would move the second reading of Bill 41, An Act to amend The Forest Act.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

The Assembly adjourned at 6:00 o'clock p.m.