

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session – Eleventh Legislature

Thursday, March 17, 1949

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

RESOLUTION RE SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

Mr. D. H. R. Heming moved, seconded by Mr. Gibbs:

That this Assembly urge that the Dominion Government, in co-operation with provincial and municipal governments, take immediate steps to devise and institute a large-scale programme of subsidized housing, whereby citizens in low income groups might purchase homes on a thirty-year repayment basis at low rates of interest, or lease housing accommodation at rentals within their means.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in moving that his Assembly urge that the dominion government, in co-operation with provincial and municipal governments, take immediate steps to devise and institute a large-scale programme of subsidized housing whereby citizens in low-income groups might purchase homes on a 30-year repayment basis at low rates of interest, or lease housing accommodation at rentals within their means, I would say that throughout the whole of this world today the governments of all nations are much concerned with a common problem: the problem of shelter of its peoples. The problem no longer belongs to any one particular nation and is receiving consideration at the hands of international bodies of thought. The International Labour Office, of which Canada is a member, in a special report brought down last fall by the Housing Committee, asserted that four of the largest member states of the world need 2 million house increase annually from now on in order to house their people adequately. Canada, equally as other nations of this world, is deficient in housing. We have 5 million people in this country of ours who are known as the civilian labour force. Of this 5 million, 2.6 million or thereabouts are known as the urban working class. Of this 3.6 million, approximately 40 percent are people within the low income classes.

The Dominion of Canada has lagged – from 1921 to 1931, for every 100 houses they built per capita, Great Britain built 190, the United States built 160. It became easily apparent when the House of Commons in 1935 brought in a report stating that the Dominion Government at that time was 35,000 houses behind in their building. Since that time, 1935, the situation in Saskatchewan became worse. Then we entered into war. During the first years of war men, who in the thirties had been unemployed, suddenly found employment in the armed forces and in our industrial war work. From 1939 to 1945 there were 795,000 marriages consummated within the Dominion, a 50 percent increase over the previous seven. This, however, did not make it obligatory to build houses at that time because the majority of these marriages were made by men who were proceeding overseas and left their wives with parents while they were on duty with various forces. When these men came back, however, the government had made arrangements whereby there would be constructed in this Dominion 487,000 houses for the people.

March 17, 1949

There were supposed to be 78,000 houses the first year after the war, and 100,000 each year after that. But there seemed to be an obstruction. The programme as laid down by the federal government was unfulfilled, so that in 1947 there were only about 60,000 houses built; in 1948 they figured they might do 80,000; in 1946 about 60,000. The programme fell down so badly that at present it is estimated the Dominion Government of Canada requires at least 150,000 to accommodate their people adequately in sanitary dwellings. During that period too, Mr. Speaker, our immigration has gone up by leaps and bounds; whereas before the war our annual immigration was 15,000 annually, our immigration these days is getting to be approximately that number every month. That, with the birth rate of 28.5 per thousand, indicates that annually, taken on a basis of 4.5 of a Canadian family, we should have annual construction of at least 100,000, aside from the fact of any backlog which we may have, caused by a deficit in the past.

I might illustrate the point better by quoting figures from my own home town. In the city of Moose Jaw approximately 25,000 people live in 6,700 housing units. Sixty percent of these are single dwellings, 40 percent are suites; 47 percent are individually owned, 53 percent are rented quarters; 77 percent live in the same place for 11 years; 88 percent of the houses have six rooms or less, averaging 4.3 rooms per unit; 23 percent of the houses have no sewer or water; 22 percent of the domiciles are living more than one person to a room; 66 percent of our heads of families are wage earners, earning on the average \$2,000 a year, but one-third of these earn more than \$2,000 a year, indicating that 40 percent of our heads of families in my city are earning between 25 and 35 dollars per week. We have a birth-rate in Moose Jaw of 29.3; a death-rate of 8.5, indicating that by natural increase alone potentially we shall need shortly 150,000 a year from that cause only. We also have our share of immigration; we have 68 returned men from the R.A.F. living in Moose Jaw who previously served in the Air Force south of the city.

Within this picture there is another one, one which has greater priority. From my area there were 3,914 enlistments, and of those men, there were 3,687 who came back, for whom the government presently has constructed 300 homes, wartime houses, with a little less than 100 still under construction; but we have 394 applications for housing under wartime housing for returned soldiers, and that number would be easily doubled if it were known that just by asking these houses would be coming to the veterans. Within that picture again, Mr. Speaker, there is an up and coming group of young people, the younger brothers of our veterans who served overseas, too young to enter into the armed forces, but now steadily engaged, drawing their money regularly, unencumbered by the embarrassment of the thirties when their elder brothers were unemployed; they are now getting of an age when they are getting married. They do not have the same claim as the veteran does, but they do have a claim, as a young Canadian citizen, to live in normal, sanitary, modern surroundings. They are hoping now that in some manner they will be found housing, adequate for their family needs as time goes on.

One of the reasons that the housing situation has not progressed apace has been that costs have been too high, and the ability to buy has not been there. It is estimated that 20 percent of the taxpayers of Canada have incomes of over \$3,000 a year, and probably ten percent have incomes that would permit them to build houses; but this group, a preferred group, have not gone

into the construction of homes; they have remained constant in their own house because the cost of construction generally throughout Canada, both for depreciated houses and for new construction, has advanced from 175 to 200 percent. This advanced cost has not gone where it possibly should go. The carpenter, bricklayer, decorator, plasterer, labourer, all the human elements that go into the house building have had advances in salaries or wage rates from 30 to 70 percent, but we find that the profits of the people who are dealing with the goods which go into houses have increased in some instances up to as much as 800 percent. There is no question but what the whole situation, under private enterprise, has fallen down. They deal with the rich men who buy houses for cash, but the poor man they will not touch as there is not sufficient return on the investment at today's prices.

I might possibly quote the extreme instance: a big lumber company in British Columbia, one of the biggest in Canada, with \$10 million capitalization, in 1939 had met their depreciation and interest debt, taxes, and the company made \$1 million profit, or ten percent on the \$10 million investment. In 1947, after having given their employees a 70 percent increase in rates of pay, this company, with the same capital set-up of \$10 million, made \$7 million profit. In 1948, still paying their employees a 70 percent increase in rates of pay, this company made a profit, after taxes and depreciation, of \$8.4 million, which means, as far as I am concerned, that ten or 12 years ago you could buy drop-siding for \$25 or \$30 thousand, today it costs \$235 per thousand. That, Mr. Speaker, is the reason, together with other companies of a similar character, which makes the building of houses difficult. By the removal of controls the building of houses is prohibitive to everybody except the very, very rich.

In the city of Glasgow, a few months ago, there was a survey held in regard to the ill effects of bad housing upon the area involved in the dockyards. They found out that in homes where there were more than two people living, that the death-rate was 20.14 per thousand; in homes, however, where one person had two rooms or more to themselves, the death-rate was 10.7 – just half.

There are many reasons why this resolution should be adopted, and this report particularly from the International Labour Office, issued last September, says this: "The I.L.O. researches declare all the evidence from the past and investigation of present conditions emphasize that the housing problem cannot be solved by private enterprise along." That indicates that they, too – an international body with international authority – say that private enterprise could not alone solve this problem. They say further: "To a great and dangerous extent the supply of houses to low-income groups has been left to depend on the vacating of depreciated houses by the higher-income groups." This committee made that particular remark here, in the publication of the Winnipeg Citizen on February 22. It says: "Private initiative in the United States, Republican Senator Taft of Ohio declared recently, has failed to solve this housing problem. I am a great believer in free enterprise, he added, but this happens to be one field where it has failed to find a solution." There is no question about Senator Taft being a private enterpriser, but he admits that this one particular phase has failed.

I might also say, in connection with housing in Great Britain, in four years they have provided housing for 3.5 million people, but they have it

March 17, 1949

on this basis: the municipalities have to assume responsibility that any government-subsidized house planning will be for the low-income groups, and they insist that 80 percent of all construction of housing shall be for the common people, and they are very successful.

There is another item that came to my attention, too, handed to me by a man in Moose Jaw, from a paper called the Ensign, published in Kingston, Ontario. This paper, too – a free enterprise paper – says this in an editorial: “How much suffering, how many delinquent children, how much disease and illness, how many broken homes, how much immorality can be directed to inadequate housing? And yet we tolerate this situation because we lack the determination to take drastic measures which alone can cure it. Despite the dangers of its abuse, we see no remedy to Canada’s housing crisis save a large-scale, long-term scheme of subsidized housing.”

There have been many suggestions put forward by committees, who have been working with the government at Ottawa, as to what should be done. They say that research should be undertaken into the prefabrication business, that the government should subsidize companies who would go into the prefabrication of houses. They say, too, that money should be made available to provincial and municipal governments at a low rate of interest for public housing. They also suggested that there should be a national housing reduction rent front. They also say that loan facilities of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation would be made available to local committees, appointed by municipalities, to deal with local housing.

When we see that the United States of America recently, although President Truman asked for 1 million low rent housing units of Congress, passed a Bill whereby there will be constructed in the next five years in the United States of America 800,000 low-rental units for the common people. This is in addition to what will be constructed by private enterprise.

I might say, too, that even in this country, as in the United States, individual areas have gone into the co-operative movement. In Washington, D.C., Bannockburn Co-operative Housing project has just been started, right outside of Washington, D.C., where they figure on having, eventually, 300 housing units on a co-operative basis. But one of the most striking co-operative ventures, outside of the province of Saskatchewan, is one which was started in a small parish at Three Rivers, Quebec. This area is a factory area, and a parish priest named Camberland three or four years ago was sent there to that little parish. He saw the people living in attics and cellars, garages, and living almost like animals rather than human beings, so he organized, under the Rochdale plan, a co-operative amongst these workers in the eastern manufacturing plants. In four years he has constructed, under the co-operative plan, 90 duplex housing units, costing three years ago \$3,000 apiece, but currently costing probably nearer \$5,000 than \$3,000. The only obligation that a man in this particular area had to have was that he did not have to have any money. If he had any money then he was told to build under the private enterprise.

There is one other phase. The Chief Medical Officer of Great Britain in a previous administration, Sir George Newman, made an assertion. He said that in the field of preventative medicine there was nothing in which the evidence was more sure or incontrovertible than was the ill effects of bad housing upon the human organism. Possibly the human demand would be better expressed by a letter sent in by a woman to The Ensign, dated February, of which I would like

to quote parts: "We have health clinics, social welfare centres, hospitalization insurance, but we have no homes for our new young families. Again and again the health authorities berate us for neglecting the health of our children. Can't they realize that where living space is cramped or where two families of young children are housed together, it is absolutely impossible to give them guidance so necessary to grow up happy and healthy. And yet we have not homes for our new young families. I hear many homes are being built, and many others contracted for, but these are only for those who have cash to make a down payment, and whose job or income will ensure settled monthly payments over a number of years. But there are thousands whose income just barely covers living expenses, and a minimum amount for rent, particularly those with five or six children, where the need for housing is greatest. Maybe sometime, 20 years from now, we will provide means for bigger and better mental hospitals or jails. But I close this letter with the hope that there are Canadians worthy of the name who can and will do something to assure the future of Canada, for what are our children but Canada's future?"

Mr. Speaker, I would move the resolution before you, seconded by Mr. Gibbs, as on the Order Paper.

Mr. Gibbs (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, I am sure that my hon. friend and desk-mate, the member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Heming) went into this housing project pretty extensively, so I have no desire to belabour this House with a long speech, but I would like to draw some facts to their attention.

This afternoon I want to put forward a concrete and practical proposal for a combined federal and provincial housing scheme. Much that is theoretical has been written on the question of housing, but coming from a constituency in which large numbers of city people lack even the basic amenities, I think it is high time that consideration be given to some realistic proposal concerning housing. What is required first and foremost is low-cost houses. The people who are able to spend \$10,000 on the construction of a house have little or not trouble today in finding materials and contractors able to oblige them. It is the wage earner whose salary has shrunk to an extremely small size as a result of inflation who is without an adequate roof over his head. It is to his problem that we should direct our thinking. It is my proposal that federal assistance should be solicited and secured for the purpose of building several provincially-owned and operated apartment blocks.

A number of years ago, when I was a member of the Swift Current City Council, I advocated a similar plan of going into what we would term in those days 'council houses', something like they did in the Old Country, but, of course, my appeal was not borne out, and nothing was done about it. Then when the Second World War was in action, the Liberal federal government of Canada sent out questionnaires to practically, I believe, every town, city and hamlet in the Dominion of Canada, asking for briefs and suggestions on rehabilitation for when our boys and girls came back out of the armed services. I remember that quite well. I thought we were going to do something about this housing, but evidently up to the present time very, very little indeed has been done regarding adequate housing for our veterans who returned from the last war.

March 17, 1949

On this scheme we should have located in each of the province's cities, and while these would not, in themselves, solve the entire housing shortage they would go some distance in so doing. In addition, they would point the way to further work along the line suggested. I propose the building of apartment blocks of 100 units each which it is estimated would cost in the neighbourhood of \$5,000 per unit, or \$500,000 and would require within the price limit today some cost saving planning such as small rooms or bed-sitting rooms. The financing of the project would be on a basis of federal loans and grants, the loans to be made for a period of 30 years at a low interest rate of any three percent. It is estimated that even on the basis of four percent interest, on the money loaded, it would be possible to rent such units at around \$46 per month. This is not exactly low rental I must admit, but it would give to our city people a type of accommodation so immeasurably better than anything they have had to date, that the improvement would be applauded, I am certain, by the vast majority of the people of the province.

The financing of such a project is, of course, the major problem. The interest on a loan sufficient to finance the project at four percent would alone be \$20,000 per year. A sinking fund established for the purpose of paying the capital indebtedness in a period of 40 years would require approximately \$5,300; taxes would approximate \$70,000 per year; insurance would cost approximately \$750; repairs would total \$7,000 per year, and servicing would be approximately \$10,000 per year; the annual cost of one such project is estimated to be approximately \$57,000.

Such a project, if begun in only one locality, would further prove the value of publicly-owned and operated housing. I might say that in Swift Current, and we know this provincial government has done quite a lot with regard to housing, remodelling the various buildings of the Air Force, and we have in Swift Current 68 to 70 families housed in suites in one of the airport buildings about five miles east of Swift Current. We can do these things, I believe, if we get down to it, and according to the Assistant Treasurer or City Clerk in Swift Current a few weeks ago, he made some remarks regarding housing in an address he was giving to the Rotary Club at Swift Current, and he stated at that time that the shortage of houses in Swift Current alone, independent of the new houses which have been built within the last few years since the war, is in the neighbourhood of 160 or 170 houses short.

I know the province has done a great deal today in housing veterans and in providing accommodation to students at the university. This is the only province which unaided has made so many housing units available to people in low-income classes who are most in need of homes. More than 600 housing units in all parts of the province are being provided now by the Department of Public Works, and 185 families are being housed in the community apartments at Saskatoon. This is all helping our people materially, but with federal assistance, the good work that has been begun by this government can be carried still further, and temporary housing units may then be replaced by the permanent units so desperately required at the present time.

Now, I am in favour of such a project which, financed with the assistance of the federal government, can be self-sustaining. Our people do not wish to receive handouts from the government; they are perfectly content to pay their own way, but in the case of houses, such very large financial resources

are required, most wage earners are powerless to meet the problem alone. They must rely on assistance that government can give them, and the plan that I propose will meet such a need; it will assure repayment of the money advanced for construction, and it will constitute an investment upon which rich returns may be expected to accrue. The returns from good housing are not to be measured in money terms alone, more important are the dividends in good health, both mental and physical, which adequate housing makes possible. If we wonder today why our children spend most of their time away from home, that answer can be found in poor housing. If we wonder why sickness threatens our families, why they lack the necessary sunshine, why they suffer from respiratory diseases, of ten that answer can be found in poor housing. If we wish to make the home the centre of family activities, if we wish to keep our children close to us, to develop understanding and to provide them with the advice and guidance which only parents can give, then it is important that the homes in which our families grow should be healthful and adequate, that there should be air and light for them to enjoy, space in which to play and work and sleep, and an environment which will assist in improving their characters and attitudes. This can be done by providing our city people with apartment blocks in which life can be made easier for our working folk, by modern conveniences and appliances, and in which life can be more pleasant and happier for our children through recreation rooms and playgrounds.

The government has made a start in this direction by establishing the community apartments in Saskatoon, and by converting Air Force buildings into apartments in all part of the province. More, much more has yet to be done, and this can be done only with the help of the federal government. I, therefore, call upon the government to shoulder its share of the responsibility to our people and assist in such a programme.

A few days ago, I understand, the Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada, Mr. St. Laurent, gave an announcement over the air that he thought, coming down in this session of the federal House, something would be done about housing. I sincerely hope, Mr. Speaker, that they don't forget, and that they do give the province, and individuals if necessary, financial assistance in building good homes once again in this Canada of ours.

In the session of the House a few days ago, the C.C.F. member Sandy Nicholson, C.C.F. member for Mackenzie, was speaking, as we are doing today, on the housing problem in the federal House. I am not going to read all he said, but I will just quote a few words which that member said:

The C.C.F. member said men who had fought overseas for Canada found it difficult to understand why a nation that could display such ingenuity and productive capacity in war could be so helpless in dealing with the housing problem. The time had come for Canada to tackle slum clearing and home building programmes in the same way Canada tackled defence in the time of war.

And he goes on to say:

Dealing with rural housing, farmers were not receiving a fair share of the national income, and so could not get a fair share of materials needed to modernize their homes.

March 17, 1949

I believe, Mr. Speaker, I am in agreement with what the Federal member for Mackenzie said. To bring it closer to home, you were a member of a group of members of this House that went to Weyburn last Saturday to visit and go through the mental institution down there. We saw for ourselves, we did not have to be told, we saw the congested and crowded conditions of both the patients and the men in white and the nurses and attendants who are doing such a great work in those institutions, and I would say to this House that if it was at all possible, after what we saw in Weyburn last Saturday, to help those people down there to expand the work and expand their housing, I think I would heartily support a vote of anything as far as monetary power is concerned, from \$1 million to \$5 million in order to give those people adequate housing and a real place; to do away with that basement, the basement there where they had those patients, and give them cottages or something like the psychiatrist told us was needed down there.

That is the thing, and we know, as far as this province is concerned, the housing is inadequate, and, Mr. Speaker, I sure would like to see things to on. Other nations are putting on big housing projects; we can see what the Labour government in the Old Country is doing in that regard. They are making great strides and building to great capacity. By the way, Mr. Speaker, as one socialist labour government to another, I would just like to draw to the attention of this House that once again the socialist Labour government of the Old Country has won another by-election for labour yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in seconding the motion.

RESOLUTION RE MARKETING OF COARSE GRAINS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed resolution of Mr. Brown:

That his Assembly:

- (1) go on record as strongly urging action by the Government of Canada to prevent the speculative trading in grain futures by closing the Winnipeg Grain Exchange:
- (2) endorse the principle of marketing through a Canadian Wheat Board, and
- (3) recommend that, to achieve a more stable method of marketing their produce than through the medium of speculative trading, the scope of the said Board be extended to include the marketing of oats, barley, rye and other grains.

Mr. W.C. Woods (Kinistino): — Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this motion I want to say, before I go any farther, I am not opposing the resolution, but I do find fault with the wording of it, and the way it is drawn up. The first is:

That this Assembly go on record as strongly urging action by the Government of Canada to prevent the speculative trading in grain futures by closing the Winnipeg Grain Exchange.

Well, as far as closing the Grain Exchange is concerned, that part of the resolution should be directed to the Manitoba Legislature. The Winnipeg Grain Exchange is situated in Winnipeg, and will come under the jurisdiction of the Manitoba government, so it hardly looks right to have that part of the resolution in with the balance. The second clause is:

That this Assembly endorse the principle of marketing through a Canadian Wheat Board.

Well, of course, we are doing that now. We are marketing our wheat through the Canadian Wheat Board, and that does not say it has to include coarse grains, but I take it that is what the mover of the resolution intended. The next paragraph:

That this Assembly recommend that to achieve a more stable method of marketing their produce than through the medium of speculative trading, the scope of the said board be extended to include the marketing of oats, barley, rye and other grains.

This side of the House demonstrated about three weeks ago that we were for that Board to be set up, but we went further; we asked for a Producers' Board, and I think that the farmers of the province would be back of us in asking that it be a producers' board. The telegram which was sent by the hon. member for Rosthern (Mr. Tucker) read as follows:

Believe overwhelming majority Saskatchewan farmers favouring handling coarse grains by a Wheat Board exclusively, acting solely as an agency of the producers of such coarse grains. Hope it will be possible to work out plan whereby this may be possible in respect of the 1949 crop.

This resolution does not say whether it is to be a producers' board, does not say it is to be a compulsory board, and it might be taken that it is to be the same as the board of earlier years where you marketed through these boards or through the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, whichever you saw fit.

Premier Douglas: — It would be hard to do that if you had closed it.

Mr. Woods: — Well, of course, the direction to close the Grain Exchange is going to the wrong place.

Premier Douglas: — Oh no.

Mr. Woods: — If the Grain Exchange is to be closed, then we must have a compulsory board. If it is not to be closed, if that part of the resolution, providing it were the federal government's duty to close or keep it open, if the first part was not fulfilled, then the board might be a voluntary board, or a compulsory board. To go further, why is it necessary to send the first part of the resolution to the federal government if the third paragraph is acted on? There will be no necessity for closing the Winnipeg Grain Exchange; as they would have no business to do I imagine they would close up themselves. I do not think the resolution

March 17, 1949

could be much better worded, but I don't see it is going to do any harm as it is and will not harm the resolution we have already sent – the telegram which the hon. Leader of the Opposition sent some little time ago.

As I said when I started, I am supporting the resolution.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Mr. Speaker, I just want to add a few words to what has already been said regarding the closing of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, and the marketing of coarse grains through the Wheat Board. I am very glad that the opposition has indicated that they are in favour of the spirit of the resolution, although some exception was taken to the wording of the resolution. I can quite readily understand why some exception might be made to the wording of the resolution, revolving around this whole argument that this board ought to operate in the interest of the producer. Now, I have heard that argument so much in the last year that I have gotten pretty tired of it. It seems to me that that argument has afforded a convenient opportunity for some people to dodge the issue. First, when the legislation was passed Ottawa, and suggested to the provinces that they pass complementary legislation, we noted that the government of Manitoba took the stand – at that time represented by Premier Garson – that there was a constitutional question involved. They thought that the federal government had full jurisdiction and they wanted a constitutional ruling on the matter. Well, I notice now, since Premier Garson of Manitoba, the former Premier, is not Minister of Justice, he has not come forth with any ruling on the matter at all. I think he should do so. But he did quote on the whole thing as to whether this Board should operate in the interest of the producer or not, and, as we all recall, he wanted some definite assurance at that time from the federal government that this board would operate in the interest of the grain producer to the extent that they did not pass the complementary legislation. The province of Alberta took a similar attitude, and expressed the attitude too of opposing two marketing boards as being too socialistic, and preventing the farmers from having what we term, and have heard so often, the freedom of choice as to where they should market their grain. The farmers of Saskatchewan know a considerable bit about this freedom of choice. At one time they did not have any choice as to any place where they could sell their grain at a remunerative price.

It is because of those factors, and the ups and downs that are part and parcel of the speculative system under which conditions no farmer can intelligently plan his agricultural production programme, and because of all of that, and in order to ensure some stability of price, and in order to be able to follow a good, sound agricultural policy, the farmers of Saskatchewan have repeatedly asked that coarse grains be put under the Wheat Board. As a matter of fact, the voice of the organized farmers is unanimous in the Dominion of Canada that this be done.

We have had two conferences held here in Regina, called at the invitation of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, at which were representatives of the Alberta and Manitoba governments. Their attitude at the first conference was that they had to have definite assurance, even written into the Act, that this Board would operate in the interest of the producer. At the second conference that was called this fall, they finally boiled their arguments down to

a statement from the federal government that the board would operate in the interest of the producer.

Mr. Tucker: — When was the conference held that the hon. gentleman is referring to?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — The conference I am referring to was recently held, this fall.

As a result of this conference, and after a whole lot of quibbling, and after the representatives of these two provinces were put on the spot by the farm organizations, they finally agreed that they would go to Ottawa and participate in the conference there. That conference was subsequently called, at which Mr. Howe, Mr. Garson and the Hon. J.G. Gardiner were in attendance. Again this matter came up as to the policy of this Board. To me it seemed that there was a good deal of quibbling, and a good deal of opportunity, provided there for not only the federal government to slip out from under the responsibilities, but an opportunity as well for the other two provincial governments to slip out. Subsequent reports we see in the press confirm the thing I was suspicious of right along. I certainly would not want to re-word this resolution one iota on that account, because it seems to me that the Wheat Board is going to be thrown back as a political football, and the opportunity is going to be afforded the provincial governments of both Manitoba and Alberta to say this: now, because the federal government takes the attitude that they don't agree that the Board operate in the interest of the producer, and they don't agree that any such statement of policy, and the provincial governments will say that because they have not that assurance they will not pass the complementary legislation. They give them both, it seems to me, a convenient way out.

I think that is what the whole thing was working up to because we have seen the spectacle of the Hon. J.G. Gardiner last summer running around this province, and in Rosthern constituency particularly, repeating over and over that it was not necessary for this government, or any provincial government, to pass complementary legislation. He said the whole thing could be done under a Natural Products Marketing Act. He said: "You have got one in Saskatchewan. Other provinces can invoke their powers under those Acts and, in doing so, they can place coarse grains on the Wheat Board." Either Mr. Gardiner was speaking for himself or he was speaking for the government at Ottawa, or both. To me it sounded like double-talk again. It looked to me that he was preparing the public for exactly the situation that has developed right now: They will wash their hands of the Wheat Board entirely, and provide a convenient opportunity for the Manitoba government to get out from under, and then go through the motions of passing a Natural Products Marketing Act, and saying to the farmers: "Well, we passed the legislation, now you can do it that way.", when in the first place we were advised to pass the complementary legislation. As all the hon. members know, this is the only province that passed that complementary legislation, and I can say to the credit of this House that it was passed unanimously here. This House, as I pointed out, did not quibble then as to whether this Board would operate in the interest of any particular group. It is beyond question that the Wheat Board is going to operate in the interest of agriculture. It simply cannot operate in the interest of any particular group of agriculturalists. It cannot be that way because the price of coarse grains must bear some relationship to the price of livestock, dairy and poultry products. That goes without saying. Maybe the resolution that was taken to Ottawa

March 17, 1949

was not worded as well as it should be worded, but I think it was worded in a manner that would be suitable to the governments of Alberta and Manitoba, and the whole principle behind that resolution was, and I have heard it stated and restated over and over again by all of the farm representatives there, that this Board should operate in the interest of all agriculture. Surely, they said, coarse grains should be marketed to the best possible advantage. Well, anyone would naturally say that, but that did not mean the dominion government was to go out into the export field and sell grain at exorbitant prices as against the needs of the livestock producers of the Dominion of Canada. So a qualifying clause was inserted that due regard would be taken towards keeping adequate feed reserves within the country, all of which indicates the whole spirit and intent of that resolution was that the Wheat Board operate in the interest of agriculture. With that we are satisfied.

I have repeated our stand at the conference we had in Ottawa, stating that as far as this province was concerned we had implicit confidence in the Wheat Board to handle both wheat and coarse grains, and that we knew that, as a matter of policy, the marketing of coarse grains, and all grains, would be in the interest of everyone concerned. So this whole matter of whether this Board is going to operate in the interest of the grain producer, or the interest of the livestock producer, is a whole lot of political eyewash in my opinion. As I stated, it has provided an opportunity now for some people to dodge this issue again, and I am going to serve notice, Mr. Speaker, right here, that if there is any more pussy-footing on this question, the people of this province are going to be told about it in no uncertain terms. Neither the Hon. J. G. Gardiner, neither Howe, nor our hon. member for Arm River (Mr. Danielson) who a few days ago tried to tell this House, almost tried to prove to this House that they gain more benefits under the Grain Exchange system of marketing than any other system. That is what he said, in effect, when he quoted figures stating, in fact, that the farmers have made money in that decontrol period from August 1 to October 21, which is pure nonsense when you examine the facts of the case. Now the hon. member, on the other hand, I know will stand up and support this particular resolution. I don't like to see people talking at cross-purposes in this House, and I think that the hon. member for Arm River should be consistent. First he said that hog production was never more prosperous than since the decontrol took place, which is pure eyewash and nonsense. Everybody knows that the marketing of hogs and hog production because the relationship between feed and livestock is coming into line once more, and that is exactly the way we want to keep it.

For those reasons the farmers of the entire Dominion of Canada are today unanimously behind bringing coarse grains under the Wheat Board, and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, you are certainly going to have my whole-hearted support of this resolution, and I hope there is no more quibbling in this House. If the hon. member for Saltcoats (Mr. Loptson) wants to wait for more information, I hope it is good information in favour of bringing these coarse grains under the Wheat Board. Don't worry, if there is any more quibbling, I am going to remind everyone concerned, and the hon. members opposite, too, that they backed this proposition. Don't quibble on whether this thing is going to operate in the interest of the producer any more. I have heard enough of it. I have listened to it now for a year.

Mr. Tucker: — You'll hear lots more.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — What we want now is some action on this, no more squirming, and when we do that the Winnipeg Grain Exchange will automatically close, regardless of what the government of Manitoba wants to do about it. I hate to pin my faith on this coalition Tory-Liberal government in the province of Manitoba to close the Winnipeg Grain Exchange because it will never be done.

I should remind the hon. members opposite that the support you have given this whole thing by your own wire, you should stand behind that wire and see that this is done in Ottawa. Don't quibble any more; see that the Hon. J.G. does not come around here with any more Natural Products Marketing Acts for the purpose of marketing coarse grains under a board. I want to remind the hon. members of this: there is only one board today that has jurisdiction over the elevator system, and that is the Canadian Wheat Board. They have taken over these handling organizations as working in the public interest. How in the world could you market coarse grains in any other practical way, other than through the Wheat Board? Surely it could not be done under a Natural Products Marketing Act, as long as we have the statutory machinery set up to do the job as it is.

With these few remarks, off-hand references, Mr. Speaker, I suppose I have indicated to the House that I am going to whole-heartedly support this resolution.

Mr. G. H Danielson (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, I had not intention of taking part in this debate at all until the Minister of Agriculture worked himself up into a frenzy over there about certain things that have been discussed in this House, not this time but for the last two or three years.

I am glad I was an inspiration to you.

Mr. Danielson: — I spoke on that resolution, and it was unanimously supported here. The principle of marketing coarse grains through the Wheat Board is unanimously supported here today, and he knows it. He is trying to create a false impression among the people of Saskatchewan. He said so many things I am not going to bother with them all because I don't think it is worthwhile.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — You can't explain them.

Mr. Egnatoff: — He was a mental acrobat.

Mr. Danielson: — He made some statements about what I said the other day, and seeing that you allowed him to go away from the resolution, = entirely, and onto another topic, I hope you will give me the same opportunity as he had, to state my side of the case.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — You did the same.

March 17, 1949

Mr. Danielson: — It may be a repetition of the figures I gave him a few days ago, which none of them replied to over there, and in which, during all this long debate, on two occasions in this House, the coarse grain payment and the position of the farmer who produces this coarse grain today, and for the last year and a half and what he was previous to the removal of controls, has never been raised by that group across the floor of the House this session, because they have not ground to stand on and they are making jokes of themselves. I would say something more serious than that, but I am being careful and I am allowed to say that.

There is no farmer in Saskatchewan today, or in the Dominion of Canada, or at lease in western Canada, who does not know that he gets \$1.04 a bushel for barley at the local station, against 76 cents before, and there is no farmer in Saskatchewan or any place else in western Canada who raises oats who does not know that he gets 76 cents a bushel for barley today at his local station when he got 51½ or 52 before. That is the situation and all the blustering of the hon. gentleman across the floor of the House cannot wipe that away. That is all blow, Mr. Speaker. It is springtime and we get a large amount of wind at that time of the year, and we sure had one this afternoon.

I have the figures here, and I quoted them carefully, and they are absolutely correct. I spent months to get every bushel that was marketed and every one that has been marketed since, up until the end of the crop year 1947-48. I have them here, and the gain to the farmers in the three western provinces is: on barley, \$28,420,000 as compared with what they would have got for that 1947-48 crop year if the ceiling had remained for the full 12 months of the year; on oats we have a \$33,200,000 gain to the farmers by removal of the price ceiling on them, for the same period of time. Let me repeat it again to make it clear: from the 1st of August, 1947 to the 31st of July, 1948. Let me go a little further; since the 1st of August, 1948 to the present time there has never been one day that the price of oats and barley has not been from 14 cents to 22 cents a bushel more than they were before.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Then why close the Grain Exchange?

Mr. Danielson: — It has carried on into this year as well, and what the millions of dollars gained would be I have not the figures to show. That is the whole story about that. But do not draw the wrong conclusion, Mr. Speaker, from what I said. He knows as well as anybody, and there is not a man in this House who does not know, if he wants to use his common sense and apply it to the problem, that the Wheat Board was not acting in the interest of the producer to get the biggest possible price they could for the producer, and every farmer knows it. They were there as an instrument to equalize and stabilize the cost of feed grain all over Canada, and if there was anybody who reaped any benefit from the ceiling on coarse grains, it was the feeders of eastern Canada, and nobody else. What we want to see today is this: if we are going to have a board to handle the coarse grains, we want to be sure that there is not going to be the same policy employed by the Wheat Board previous to the 20th of August, 1947. We want our share of the money. We raise the product and we want the price for it. Everybody knows that we need it and will need it in days to come.

An Hon. Member: — May I ask the hon. gentleman a question?

Mr. Danielson: — No, you sit down. You can get up and talk for an hour or two afterwards.

It is all right, Mr. Speaker, to get up and blow off, and make a whole lot of statements that have no foundation in fact, not a shadow of a foundation for them.

Premier Douglas: — You know there is, but you won't admit it.

Mr. Danielson: — This gentleman over there, called the Premier of the province, he said that the farmers have lost millions of dollars.

Premier Douglas: — And they did.

Mr. Danielson: — That is not true and you know it.

Premier Douglas: — Mr. Speaker, that statement is true, and I know it is true.

An Hon. Member: — You are not authority on coarse grains.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Mr. Danielson: — That is all right. You were going to hand over a Cabinet Minister's head if the farmers ever got any additional payment. Well, where is it?

Premier Douglas: — We know what payment they got.

An Hon. Member: — You keep quiet.

Premier Douglas: — You come over and make me.

Mr. Danielson: — There has been paid by the grain companies and the Pool, 11.9 percent per bushel on every bushel of oats marketed before October 21, 1947. On barley, 29.6 per bushel. That has been paid to the farmers. And with the government payment, it brings it up to 17 cents on oats and 25½ cents a bushel on barley. That brings it up, with the price they received when they sold it, to . . .

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Why close the Grain Exchange the?

Premier Douglas: — It is about half what was stolen from them.

Mr. Danielson: — No, no. You are wrong there. You are far out on that as you are in everything else you say.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

March 17, 1949

Mr. Danielson: — There is not half of it sold by any means. That brings the price up to 97½ cents a bushel at the farm – I want to emphasize that, the prices I quoted previously are at the local station in Saskatchewan - and 69 cents on oats. 69 cents on oats and 97½ cents on barley. Now the Wheat Board is making another payment, an equalization payment on barley of 6,780 and on oats 5,881 . . .

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — What do you mean by “equalization”?

Mr. Danielson: — I know he does not know the conclusion. I am going to show him.

Mr. Speaker: — Do I understand the hon. member is speaking to the resolution?

Mr. Danielson: — Exactly what he threw in my face. He said that I . . . There wasn't anything . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order! If the hon. member is speaking to the resolution, then we want to understand that he is speaking to the resolution.

Mr. Danielson: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, he got up there and accused me, that there was not a work of truth in what I said. Let me say now, when this last payment is made by the Wheat Board the farmer will have had for the full crop year of 1947-48, the 12 months, \$1,04381 at the local station for barley instead of 76 cents they had before. Now, there is the difference \$1.04381, 76 cents before. Now we come to the oats: We have 74½ cents at the local station in place of 51½ to 52 cents.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! I am sure the hon. member knows that you cannot refer point by point to a former speech.

Mr. Danielson: — No, but another man can get up and tell me . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order! The hon. member cannot quote that speech at all. If you are speaking to the resolution and you want to tie it up with the resolution, it is okay. Otherwise you cannot, and you know that very well. The House will not allow you to repeat, word for word, a discussion that has already taken place.

Mr. Danielson: — It is already done, Mr. Speaker. I'm through.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — I'll say you are.

Mr. Danielson: — The agony is over, and I want to tell my friend over there that you cannot by any inference whatever nail anything onto this side of the House of the Liberal party in that respect. What did you do last year, before the Bill was through

the House of Commons in Ottawa? You rushed your Bill into this House, and I pointed out to you – I did not criticize you, I stood on the floor of this House and supported you. I said, and I repeat it to you, and I spoke to a resolution just previous to the introduction of your Bill: “I can speak for the Liberal party in the province of Saskatchewan, and that will have our support.” It is right in the Hansard, and you can see it anytime you like. There has been nothing taking place here today, or this session, that does not reinforce that statement I made last year, every bit of it, and you were satisfied last year to go ahead with your complementary legislation in the hope that the other provinces would do the same thing. I cannot tell the hon. gentlemen why Alberta and Manitoba have not passed this legislation, because I don’t know anything about it.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Why hasn’t Ottawa?

Mr. Danielson: — I want to say that Mr. McIvor, when he spoke to a Wheat Pool delegation here, a year ago last fall, made the statement that the Wheat Board could not handle the coarse grains without supplementary legislation. One of the attorneys who speaks for the organized farmers of Canada made the same statement. Today we have that legislation. I say to the, if everybody is in favour of it, if every farmer is in favour of it – which I don’t know, but I think the majority of farmers in Saskatchewan are in favour of it, but not all of them, then there is no reason, if they want it, that they should not have it. If they are so enthusiastic about putting the coarse grains through the Wheat Board in Manitoba and Alberta, surely the farmers’ organizations, which are very well organized, should be able to convince their own government that is the proper thing for them to do. I saw something in the press that may happen in Alberta. I don’t know anything about Manitoba. That is the situation, and when that is done there is nothing in the world to stop this thing from going through, but to get up on the floor of the House and make a big splash and throw mud and insulations and aspersions on this side of the House whose record, as far as we are concerned, is absolutely clear. I take exception to that kind of thing. There is no ground for it, and there is not one iota of truth in what he has said.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Mr. Speaker, may I ask the hon. gentleman a question? I would like to go back to his figures. He has quoted figures. Will he tell the House how much the handling companies received for the coarse grains when they sold the same in the American market, and how much of these coarse grains were exported to the United States.

Mr. Danielson: — I cannot tell him that, Mr. Speaker. I had hoped when he threw this question at me you would have given me permission to answer in full. I have it here, that the amount the grain companies paid and the Pool organization paid is practically the same. In some cases some grain companies paid more than the Pool, on some kinds of grains, and less in others. Now, if the grain companies made a killing from the coarse grains and if they played what we might call a ‘skin game’, well then you cannot evade the implication that your Wheat Pool did the self-same thing, and I certainly don’t think they did.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Will he tell us who made the largest payments, the Pool or the line elevators?

March 17, 1949

Mr. Danielson: — Just a moment – I will tell my friend. The Western Grain Company paid 13½ cents on oats, 10¾ cents on barley; the Independent Grain Company paid 14 cents on barley; the Searle Grain company paid 13¾ cents on barley.

Premier Douglas: — Tell us how much they made.

Mr. Danielson: — The Premier knows all about it. He knows that 85 percent of the grain was marketed before the 20th of October. Of course nobody else knows, and nobody can find it out today. The records show, of course, that he was only about 350 percent out.

An Hon. Member: — From the Liberal write-ups.

Mr. Danielson: — I want to say that no man would be able to say because there was no open market before the 20th of October, and the selling he had for future delivery could be done. So it just depends on how fast they sold the grain. I expect one company would have made ten or 12 cents, and another company 12 or 14 cents. Now, that is very possible.

Take your own grain company, the Wheat Pool, which we built. It does not belong to me, but to me and all the other farmers around, and we are proud of it, just as proud as anyone. If they came forward and did the best they did, and I know they did because if anyone will check over the statement I don't think they will accuse them of taking money out of coarse grains and applying it to the general account, because the profits would still be less than they have ever been, in spite of the fact they handled 101 million bushels of grain. These are things that the hon. gentleman might check up. But I state again, if the grain companies could be accused of a 'skin game' on this thing, then we must apply the same yardstick to our own organization, and I refuse to do that absolutely. That is the answer to your question.

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