LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session – Eleventh Legislature

Wednesday, March 23, 1949

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

SECOND READINGS

Hon. Mr. Darling moved second reading of Bill No. 99 – **An Act respecting Rural Electrification**

He said: Mr. Speaker, in moving second reading of this Bill, an Act respecting Rural Electrification, I feel that it will serve a useful purpose to outline, as briefly as may be, the problem presented by farm electrification in Saskatchewan.

I took an earlier opportunity this session to outline the progress of the development of the Saskatchewan power system to date, and to draw some comparisons between the development in our province and the development in the province of Manitoba. I felt at that time, and I still feel, that the Saskatchewan accomplishment compares very favourably with the accomplishment in Manitoba.

The Saskatchewan Power Commission system in 1944 contained one area, centrally located in the province, where there was a mitre of cohesion in the development at that time. With the exception of that one area, the lines of the Saskatchewan Power Commission were scattered, unconnected local developments. In addition to the Saskatchewan Power Commission lines in 1944, there were in the province the privately-owned lines of the Prairie Power Company, the Dominion Electric, the Canadian Utilities and the National Light and Power. The immediate problem at that time was the integration of these variously controlled projects, and their incorporation into a single system. This was not an easy task. It involved the purchase of the privately-owned systems. This was accomplished with the exception of the system of the National Light and Power, which still remains in private hands. I might say that the existing relationship between the Saskatchewan Power Commission and the National Light and Power is a very happy one. It involved also the construction of many miles of rural power lines to develop the grid system which has now taken form.

The criticism has many times been levelled at the Power Commission, and the Power Corporation as it is now, that while progress had been made in that development of a power system, farmers had been neglected in the course of that development. The reason upon which this criticism is based is that while we have something fewer than 2,000 farm connections in the province, we have some 50,000 urban customers, with the exception of some of our larger cities – 50,000 outside of those cities.

The deduction has been made from this that the Saskatchewan Power Commission has not been interested in farm electrification. Mr. Speaker, I wish to deny emphatically any such assertion, and to state, with equal emphasis

that every mile of line outside of our cities has been an essential first step towards farm electrification. The construction of our primary grid which, although not yet complete, has already taken form all the way from the city of Prince Albert in the north and south to the International Boundary, has brought electric power within measurable distance of thousands of our farm homes. To suggest that farms can be electrified without the development of such a grid is, of course, nonsense, and no non who has any knowledge of the development of a power system could for a moment entertain such an idea. One cannot start out from a central generating plant and call in the farms along the way like a salesman selling brushes. There has to be a system, and from that system the branch lines to the farm homes.

It has sometimes been said that we have given special consideration to the residents of villages and towns, because installation has been made in their homes and business places free of charge, whereas the farmer has always been required to pay a portion of the cost of his connection. The fact is that the cost per customer in the villages and towns is very small when compared to the cost of a farm connection, and the proportion of the cost of a farm connection, and the proportion of the cost of a farm connection borne by the Power Commission or Corporation in connection with any single installation in a town or village. Even in a town or village where the cost of making an installation exceeds a minimum of $50, then the resident of the town or village has to pay the additional.

As I stated previously, everything which has been done outside of our cities has been an essential first step towards farm electrification. It would have been nonsense to proceed with the construction of a primary grid without connecting towns and villages, because those towns and villages have been supplying the pay-load which has been taking care of the capital charges on the system. For several years past, the Power Commission has been effecting such farm connections as were practical to farmers living in proximity to main transmission lines. From this time forward, under the provisions of this Bill, our programme of farm electrification will reach further a field, but our development will continue to be four-fold as it has been in the past. We cannot consider leaving aside all other development and concentrating upon farm connections. That is obviously impractical.

Our four-fold programme will include the following development: firstly, we must consider the gradual concentration of power generating plants for power generation into strategically placed power plants of high capacity. This will be an expensive operation and can only be undertaken gradually; but it will, in the end, contribute to lower generation costs, which is an essential to the success of any farm electrification scheme. As it progresses, these larger plants will displace many small diesel plants upon which we now so largely depend. That is one phase of our future development.

Secondly, the construction of high voltage transmission lines will be another phase, and from those high voltage transmission lines, the primary grid will be fed. A beginning has been made in the 69,000 volt line which is under construction from Estevan north to the Melville—Yorkton area.

Thirdly, we must continue to expand our primary grid connecting villages and towns, and, in some case, to increase the carrying capacity of

existing transmission lines to take care of the load growth since they were originally constructed. I am told that a considerable proportion of the existing power grid is becoming overloaded because of growth in the towns and villages and the few farms along the way. This development will be a continuous process for many years to come and, as in the past, will bring power nearer to many of our farms.

Fourthly, the fourth phase will be the construction of purely farm lines in rural power districts, and it is to provide the machinery for this fourth development that this Bill is designed.

The whole represents a large undertaking, and one which obviously can only be completed over a considerable length of time. Any factor which may serve to expedite this development can surely be regarded with favour.

Differences of opinion have already been voiced in this house as to the proportion of the capital cost which it is reasonable to expect the farmer to bear. In the past, the ration of costs has been, roughly, 60-40, with the Power Corporation bearing the heavier share. Those farmers who have been lucky enough to get the service on this basis, and to get it so early in the development of farm electrification, are indeed fortunate. Many of their brother farmers, whose right to the service is equal to their own, may have to wait some years. This is unfortunate, but unavoidable.

Speaking is the Legislature about a year ago I said that, in my opinion, it would be 15 years before a substantial showing in farm electrification could take place. Comments made recently on this statement would seem to indicate that this is regarded as excessively pessimistic, but even today I see no reason to change my original estimate.

Let us suppose for a moment, for the purpose of illustration, that we undertake a more speedy development of farm electrification, and let us suppose we undertake the electrification of 80,000 of our farms over a period of eight years. Some people, I think, would still regard that as long term of years. Eighty thousand – we have 123,000 farms in Saskatchewan – but we will suppose we were to undertake to complete the electrification of 80,000 of those farms over a period of eight years. This would involve the extension of the service to an average of 10,000 farms annually.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Rural Electrification Administration Co-operatives in the United States have made outstanding progress in supplying electric power to farmers. In 1930 only ten percent of the farms had power available; today 60 percent of the farms in the United States are served by power lines. This outstanding accomplishment was possible because co-operative groups could obtain capital requirements from the federal government at a rate of two percent.

A significant fact in connection with the repayment of this capital advance to the federal government in the United States is that although the repayment is extended over a 35-year period, no repayment of any amount whatsoever is required for the first five years after construction. This deferment of payment, I think it is fair to assume, is not an unnecessary gesture of generosity towards the power co-operatives, but is based on the experience that

it takes a period of approximately five years before revenue can be expected from farm construction lines which will be adequate to take care of the retirement of any portion of the capital advance.

That the increase in consumption in farm homes is a gradual one is borne out by the experience in Alberta. In an experimental area there, in a dairy district, consumption in 1945 was 1,200 kilowatt hours per farm. By 1947 this has increased to 1,800 kilowatt hours per farm. In a mixed farming experimental area in Alberta the consumption in 1945 was 700 kilowatt hours per farm, and in 1947 970 kilowatt hours per farm. This increased consumption was, of course, reflected in the revenue per mile of line during those years.

The situation, then, is that it takes the farmer some years after he had obtained power to secure appliances and equipment and to accustom himself to dependence upon power. It follows, then, that we may expect several years to elapse – five are allowed in the R.E.A. projects in the United States – before power consumption will develop to a paying basis among farmers.

Now, to return to our hypothetical eight-year project involving the electrification of 80,000 farms. At the end of a five-year period – that is the first five years out of the eight-year programme – we would have a total of 50,000 farm connections, the vast majority of which were not on a paying basis. This, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, would undoubtedly place a heavy burden upon the Saskatchewan Power system, and one which might conceivably return us to a position of deficit financing which we have struggled so long to escape, and from which we have so recently emerged.

As I stated a few moments ago, it has taken from 1930 up until the present time in the United States to increase farm electrification from ten percent to 60 percent, and the Americans do not generally waste time in carrying forward a project once undertaken. I think that we, too, must resign ourselves to a protracted period of development, far beyond the eight years of our hypothetical illustration.

Various factors operate here in Saskatchewan to increase the difficulties which have to be met. The most apparent of this is, of course, the sparsity of our rural population. In no area on this Continent, nor anywhere else I know of, has a farm electrification scheme been undertaken where the farm density is so low. For example, the average density per line mile in the province of Ontario is 3.5, in Quebec 5.88, in Manitoba 1.96, in Alberta – which approaches closest to our own – 1.27. In the United States the average line mile densities are: in North Dakota 2.04, in South Dakota 1.95, in Montana 2.4, in Nebraska 1.9, in Iowa and Idaho 2.4, and in Kansas 1.9. In Saskatchewan the average farm density is 1.18, and approximately 50 percent of our 123,000 farms are in areas where the farm density is below this average.

Farm density is not the only factor affecting the economic farm electrification. In some areas of this province, where the farm density is the greatest, the small size of the farm and the productivity of the soil is such as to render electrification impractical. Again, in other areas where farm density is not so great, the financial condition of the farmers might comment that area for development. It can readily be seen that this factor alone adds greatly to the capital costs per rural customer.

A second factor with which we have to reckon is the high cost of generation in this province. At our present stage of development we are forced to depend, as I said previously, upon steam and diesel generation and, to a very small extent, upon natural gas. The diesel plants, of course, constitute the greatest factor in the high cost of energy production. Again, the type of farming followed in many parts of the province is of a character which does not lead to high energy consumption. The size and type of farm bears a significant relation to farm electrification in terms of prospective energy consumption.

Practically the entire province can be defines as a grain-producing area, with the major portion constituting an area of specialized wheat production. No areas can be defined as predominantly livestock areas, and there are only limited areas in which 25 percent of the income is derived from the sale of livestock and animal products.

The fourth factor is the income status of our farmers, and perhaps this is the most important single factor in determining the level of electrical energy consumption. Income determines the ability of farmers to avail themselves of electric power by determining their capacity to undertake power line connection, and to sustain the service once connected. It determines, too, the ability of the farmer to undertake progressively more advanced uses of energy. It limits capital for appliances. It constitutes the primary factor in consumption for farms in which energy uses are mainly limited to farm home purposes.

I would be sorry to give the impression that these obstacles are more serious than they are. The do indicate, however, that prudence must be observed, and that our development must take those factors into account.

In Alberta, where farm density most nearly parallels our own, power development is being carried on by the Calgary Power Company Limited and the Canadian Utilities Limited. Much of the power required is derived from hydro-electric plants, and the remainder is generated at steam and diesel plants. Generation costs are, on the whole, lower in Alberta as a result of the hydro development.

The Calgary Power Company has a Farm Electrification Department, and supplies power in bulk to rural electrification co-operative associations, and also furnishes power to farmers individually. I believe there are in the neighbourhood of 40 rural electrification co-operative associations in Alberta.

Under the favourable economic conditions of the last few years, farmers have, in many cases, been in a position to pay their share of the cost of the necessary lines. Associations, however, have the power in Alberta to borrow money for construction costs, and the government guarantees repayment of monies borrowed to a limited extent. I understand that the Calgary Power Company Limited has formed a subsidiary under the name of Farm Electric Services Limited. Ten or more farmers may form a co-operative association. After a preliminary meeting – I would ask the House to notice how nearly their procedure in the formation of those co-operative resembles the provision in our own Bill – a survey is made of the proposed area in which the co-operative is to function, and the information gathered is forwarded to Farm Electric Services Limited, which then makes a study of the proposal, and an estimate of the cost of the proposal as submitted or revised. Farm Electric Limited builds the lines at cost and undertakes to operate them at cost, making use of

Calgary Power Company facilities and personnel where it is economical to do so. This may not be quite such an altruistic undertaking on the part of the Calgary Power Company as it appears. Their concern is simply to supply the energy. The farm co-operatives bear the entire cost of the construction of their lines and the Calgary Power Company assists them to construct those lines, and it will make its profit from the wholesale sale of energy to those co-operatives.

This government's policy for farm power development is set out in Bill No. 99. Part I of the Act concerns, first, customers not within rural power districts. This policy of extending power to individual farmers who are not, and are not likely to be members of rural power districts or power co-operatives, will be continued. Contributions towards the cost of this type of power extension, as between customer and the Corporation, are apportioned in the same way in which costs are apportioned between the Corporation and members of the rural power districts.

Provision is also made for the formation of rural power districts. That is in addition to the provision for the extension to individual farmers and small groups of farmers. Groups of farmers – a minimum of seven is prescribed by the Act – may make joint application to the Power Corporation for the extension of power into the districts in which they are located. The Power Corporation will review these applications and will conduct a survey "of the proposed district and lands in the vicinity thereof, and relevant inquiries for the purpose of determining the cost of the necessary rural distribution system; the cost of necessary run-offs; the number of resident occupants of lands in the proposed district who are willing to take electrical service; the estimated cost of operating and maintaining the rural distribution system and run-offs, and of supplying electric power and energy in the proposed district; the estimated revenue to be derived from the proposed district; and all other relevant matters."

In other word, the Corporation will determine: first, whether or not the proposed district constitutes a feasible unit of power development; second, the estimated contribution on the part of applicant farmers towards the cost of extending power in their district; and, third, the estimated contribution that the Power Corporation will make towards the construction of power lines in those areas. When those surveys have been completed, power will be extended into those districts approved by the Corporation.

The cost of materials necessary to extend electric power along road allowances from Power Corporation high lines to the extremities of the district will be borne by the Corporation. Other costs, including the labour required to construct road allowance lines, and labour and materials required for tap-in lines, will be borne by farmers.

This scheme of apportioning costs, which is similar for costs involved in extending power to customers not within rural power districts, which I mentioned a few moments ago, has been devised after careful consideration. Every encouragement will be given to farmers to undertake the construction of lines they require themselves – that is, to do the actual work insofar as they are able to do it. This will be carried on under the supervision of Corporation engineers, and all labour provided by the farmers themselves will be credited to their cost of contributions. It is anticipated that this will

reduce to a minimum the actual cash contribution that customers will be expected to make. The scheme is also intended to keep the contribution of the Power Corporation at a level which will not require a large amount from each customer each month – over and above revenues required to cover energy and maintenance costs – to meet the cost of capital which will be required to keep the projects in the realm of economic feasibility.

Further, this scheme of apportioning costs will result in the maximum utilization of Power Corporation capital that will be available for rural power development, in terms of the number of farms that will be hooked up each year.

In order to enable farmers in areas where cash contributions are not readily available to participate in power development, this Act provides for s system of deferred payments. Payments may be made over a period of five years through the process of a power-line levy. This means that farmer may provide their cash contribution to the Power Corporation through Rural Municipality or Local Improvement District offices. Provision is made for these offices to 'have all powers conferred upon them to perform all the duties imposed upon them by statute with respect to the levying and collecting of taxes".

This Act establishes the Power Corporation as the owner of rural power district lines after the district development has been completed and the lines energized. This provision removes from the rural power districts the responsibility of servicing and maintaining the lines, and providing reserves for the replacement of the lines, and for repair of the lines in the event of storm damage. These become the responsibility of the Power Corporation.

Rural Power Co-operatives Associations have been very effective in the extension of power into rural areas of the United States. Power developments by similar associations are also to be found, as I have already stated, in Alberta. This Act provides that where farmers consider it to be in their own interests to avail themselves of power through their own co-operative associations, they will have the option to do so. The Power Corporation will construct the lines that the co-operative associations require, at cost, and energy will be supplied to the associations in bulk.

Mr. Speaker, to sum up this Bill in very brief terms: it provides an opportunity to the farmers by means of self-help to provide themselves with one of the greatest contributing factors to the amenities of farm life. A great many of those things which have entered into community building in our rural communities have been the result of such co-operative effort, such sharing of costs, as are incorporated in this Bill. I feel that it should receive the favourable consideration of the Assembly, and I, therefore, move second reading of this Bill.

Mr. W.A. Tucker (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, the Bill which is before us today, I feel, is the most important Bill we will have to deal with this session. Therefore, I think it merits very careful study, and I hope it will be approached in a very non-partisan way because we are dealing here with something of very great importance to the farmers of our province. We are after all, basically a farming province, and it is, therefore, most important that the farmers receive consideration in any bill considered by this Assembly.

I agree with the hon. Minister introducing this Bill on the importance of electricity on the farms. Its importance has been realized all over the western world, to the extent that they have almost complete rural electrification in most of the countries of western Europe. Its effect, of course, is not only economic but social. There is no question but that it tends to reduce drudgery on the farm. It will tend to increase income because by such things as milking machines, and so on, production which, owing to rising labour costs, has become economical as electricity is put to work in place of labour. I have seen some very striking figures as to the importance and efficiency of electricity. One little horse-power motor, running and discharging energy for one hour, can do as much work as 13 strong men in the same time. That shows the terrific significance of electricity.

One feature or rural electricity which strikes me as very important is the effect it will have on the farm homes. We know that on the farm today, farming, so far as the farmer himself is concerned, is quite a but different from what it was 20 years ago. In other words, a great deal of the drudgery has been removed from the work of the farmer himself by virtue of the machinery now available to him. As a result farming, so far as the farmer himself is concerned – especially where he is growing grain – is a much nicer occupation than it used to be 20 years ago. The average woman, in many cases, however, is still up against just as much hard work, just as much drudgery as she was 20 years ago. Certainly, the introduction of electricity into the farm home will tend to put the farm woman in the same position, in being relieved of drudgery, as her husband has been put in his farm work. That, of course, is of very great importance in this day and age. For that reason, we should not hesitate, it seems to me, to go quite a distance to bring that boon to the farm woman.

There is another important consideration. Even though the farmer may find farming much less of a drudgery than it was 20 years ago, if his wife finds that her sister who may live in the city or town has all the modern conveniences, and that she has not got them, there is a tendency for her to feel that the sooner they get to a place where they can enjoy those amenities the better. The present lack of those things tends to drive our people off the farms, and that is going to be more and more the problem in Saskatchewan - the preventing of our province's farm population from being depleted. I think that consideration also merits our being ready to spend some public money on this most important matter.

In the short time Canada has had farm electrification, a tremendous number of uses have been found for electricity on the farm. A vary useful work on this matter was prepared in Manitoba in 1942 by the Manitoba Electrification Enquiry Commission. I intend, because their subsequent experience has demonstrated the findings of that report to be largely correct, to refer to it in the course of my remarks. In this report it indicates that the Rural Electrification Administration in the United States has published a list of 325 uses of electricity on the farm. Some of the most important ones occur in this farming province of course, and we should not be satisfied with a different standard of living entirely between the person who is the very foundation of our economy, the farmer, and the people living in the towns and villages. We should be ready, as I say, to spend some public money on redressing that balance. Take refrigeration and what that means in the farm home today; or having water

under pressure, obviating the necessity of carrying water, and all that sort of thing, and what they mean in eliminating drudgery for the farm wife.

Then there is the question of the use of electricity in regard to other matters such as heating water, cooking, the various cooking utensils, the electric range, and so on. Then there is the improvement in regard to heating. There has been a complete change in that regard. I find it so much different myself. In days gone by I had to be away a great deal during the winter, and my wife had to worry about stoking the furnace with coal, but in the last three years I have been able to introduce an oil-burning system, automatic, operated by electricity. I would like to see as many farm hones in Saskatchewan as possible, and as soon as possible, able to have the benefit of such things as that. Then there is the question of washing machines, and all the items that can be used to make the work of laundry lighter. We know that very often the woman on the farm has a very heavy task in looking after the washing of the clothes, and so on. The use of electricity would make the wash day much less of a drudgery.

Then we take the use of electric light itself. When I go through our province, I often think what a difference it would make if our farm homes had the benefit of electricity so they could have even electric light, and what that would mean in the greater enjoyment of life, not only on the part of the grown-up members of the family, but on the part of the younger members in having good light in order to do their farm work and their school work. Every now and then we hear of terrible tragedies due to the use of coal oil, and so on, in the farm homes, and we must think of how that could be avoided by the use of electricity.

Then there are the other amenities such as sewing machines and the use of the vacuum cleaner. It always seems to me that my wife gets more pleasure out of running that vacuum cleaner around than she does out of anything else, and I would like to see as many farm women as possible have the use of the vacuum clearer, sewing machine, electric fans, and so on.

Then you come to the situation outside – and I speak on this with some considerable experience, because I was born and brought up on a farm myself, near the city of Portage la Prairie in Manitoba. The farm where I was born and brought up was one of the first farms electrified by the Manitoba hydro-electric system. Every time I go back and visit my brother on the farm, I marvel at the difference the introduction of electricity has made upon farming and the conditions in my old home there. The yard is lighted with electricity; the barn is lighted with electricity; he cleans with electricity; he saws his wood with electricity. There is a different situation there altogether from the way I knew it when, for example, one of the tasks, especially in the cold winter weather, was the watering of the stock, pumping of water when the water was sometimes so cold the stock would not drink as much as they should. Now the water is heated automatically with electricity, and on some of the neighbouring farms, where cows are kept, they have milking machines, and so on. The feed is ground with electricity; and in the raising of poultry the incubator is run with electricity. Now they do not have to be watched almost night and day as they used to be watched. Then you have the electric brooder, and so on. That avoids, again, the danger of fire which you run into when you are trying to operate with coal oil.

Then there is the difference with regard to the community itself; the ability to light our churches and to have electricity in the various establishments in the smaller towns and villages; the advantages garages have with regard to the running of their equipment. There is the question of electricity in halls with the use of electricity for lighting and motion picture equipment. In the schools we know the great advance that has been made with regard to the use of radio and audio-visual equipment, which certainly improves the work done in the schools. I would like to see that made available to as many or our rural schools as possible, just as quickly as possible, so that the rural school children are not at the disadvantage they are today, in not having these things as compared with children in the towns and cities.

So electricity, as we can see, is of great importance. In Manitoba, were they have cheaper electricity to the various parts of the province, there is a tendency to build up the smaller centres. There is a tendency for the smaller centres to engage in some small amount of industrialization, and that, again, tends to keep the population from drifting to the cities or leaving the province. As the hon. Minister said, we see the recognition of this in other parts of the world

In the United States, the Rural Electrification Administration started out with only ten percent of their farms electrified; today the percentage has been brought up to 60 percent. The Rural Electrification Administration in the United States, I understand, intends to bring electrification up to 90 percent. I have only the detailed figures for 1942, but in the United States it is interesting to see what the figures were in regard to electrification in 1941. The number of farms electrified in the United States in 1934 was 10.9 percent; in 1941 was 38.6 percent, and now approximately 60 percent. They you have the experience of the various states: In Nevada, for example, the number electrified in 1941 was 45.4 percent; Iowa, the number electrified there in 1941 was 50.9 percent; Indiana, 67 percent; Wisconsin, 50 percent; Nebraska, 24.9 percent in 1941. In Canada, as a whole, according to the census of 1941, the number of farms electrified was almost 20 percent, or one-fifth – 19.8 percent to be exact. In Nova Scotia, it was 26 percent, more than a quarter; in Quebec, 23.3 percent; Ontario, 37 percent – there has been a great development since then in Ontario; British Columbia, 35 percent; Saskatchewan 4.7 percent; Manitoba, 7.3 percent – there has been a great development since then in Manitoba, Alberta, 5.4 percent.

It must be clear to this Assembly that this is an important matter, and we should be ready as a province to devote some of our resources towards it. That brings us to what is pretty fundamental in this Bill. I followed as closely as I could what the Minister said, and I gathered there is very little in this Bill in the way of subsidization of the cost of rural electrification. That is the thing I think is very important. A member of the Power Commission, Mr. Phelps, speaking on that matter, was reported in The Leader-Post of March 21 last as stating what he understood the policy was. He stated the government's policy in the matter was that any rural electrification plan ought to be self-supporting. For this reason the Power Corporation's contribution must be limited. There would be a separate division set up for rural electrification, as the Corporation would be happy if the division broke even on its operations. I take it he was setting out the policy of the government, that this activity must be self-supporting, and that they are expected to break even.

That brings up the very important question as to whether that is the right attitude toward this important problem of rural electrification. Is it to be self-supporting, and must there be no contribution in a very substantial way, by the people as a whole towards bringing this great boon to the farmers of our province?

First of all, is a substantial bonusing of rural electrification necessary to make a success of it? That is the first question we should ask ourselves. In this report by the committee in Manitoba, that went into the matter very carefully, on page 71 it says: "In addition to tax abatement, farm electrification has received direct state aid in most areas where it has made substantial progress. Where subsidies have not been provided the development has been slow, and is generally regarded as unsatisfactory, though there was some exceptions to the above statement. Where a high density per mile of line can be secured (which the Minister says cannot be secured in Saskatchewan) subsidies have not been necessary. In England, for example, subsidies have been granted sparingly. In France, the state subsidized rural capital cost, the subsidy ranging from 30 percent to 50 percent. In addition, the majority of countries furnish some subsidy. R. Prioux, the Minister of Agriculture in France, justifying the aid, said: 'The state defends its interests in fighting against the desertion of the countryside'."

That is exactly what we are up against in Saskatchewan. The state as a whole must take an interest in preventing the desertion of the countryside as a whole.

Your have subsidization in the United States. The provision of money at two percent is subsidization as compared with us because our money probably costs us between 3½ and 4 percent, and so getting the money at two percent is a very substantial subsidization in itself, besides all the other things that are being done in the United States.

In Nova Scotia the Power Commission created in 1920 is serving a substantial area of the province. I ask the hon. members to note this from a report: "Little progress in farm electrification was made, however, until a system of subsidies was established in 1937." It goes on to say: "Aid from the general revenues of the province up to $9 per customer per year is provided to meet the service charge, in order that no domestic consumer shall pay $15." Then it goes on to speak about Ontario, and the subsidization that has gone on in Ontario. It says: "The real impetus to farm electrification was provided in 1921, when the province agreed to pay one-half the capital cost of rural lines. This had the effect of reducing the service charge to farm customers from $6.20 to $5.07 per month net."

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is not a great reduction, as you would think on the face of it, from $6.20 to $5.07, but it goes on to say: "There was an immediate response which necessitated construction of a very considerable mileage of rural lines, an event that really marked the beginning of rural service throughout the province." In other words, the subsidization of lines to the extent of 50 percent with the resulting reduction in costs of a little over a dollar per month, made all the difference in promoting real expansion in rural electrification in Ontario.

In Manitoba, our neighbouring province – and we should try to benefit by their experience – their system has been this: they take the electricity right to the farmer, the same as they do to the consumer in the city or town. The province of Manitoba itself pays half the cost of taking that electricity to him and the other half of the cost is paid by the farmer over a period of 25 years, in the dues which he must pay. All the farmer in Manitoba has to do to get rural electrification, upon the benefits from which we are all agreed, is to wire his house and put in his fixtures. That is all. That is the kind of system I think we should have in Saskatchewan, and I do not think the system we are setting up here, no matter how well it looks on paper, will be successful until we have some similar method of subsidization.

I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to note the difference. If a farmer in Manitoba wants rural electrification, all he has to do is wire his own home and buy his fixtures. What does he have to do in Saskatchewan? I will deal with that – it is set out in the Bill. In short, all that is provided in this Bill to be done by the Power Corporation is that they will pay the costs of materials only upon the rural mainline system. Even the cost of labour in setting that rural mainline system must be paid by the farmer; the cost of the run-off from the mainline, both labour and materials, must be paid by the farmer. So the only contribution proposed to be made under this Bill is the cost of material in the rural distribution system as to main lines only. That is all. In addition the money has to be raised or provided for all – the farmer must pay before anything is done whatever. Not a thing can be done until this large amount of money is raised or provided for by the farmer. That is what this Bill provides. So far as the co-operatives are concerned, there is no further help whatever; they must show they have the money on hand to pay the cost of installing electricity before they are permitted to start doing anything. Truly a generous measure, especially from people who pretend to be anxious to promote co-operatives. To me it is a most amazing thing – such generosity. Let me read something from the Bill itself to bear out what I say – it is not my intention now to refer to the clauses of the Bill:

> When a rural power co-operative association has been incorporated, and has satisfied the Corporation of its ability to pay for the construction of the rural distribution system and run-offs, including all materials, work and labour, the Corporation shall construct, or cause to be constructed, the distribution system for the association, and certify to the association the amount of the cost of the construction.

In other words, they have to show they have the money before the Corporation will move a finger. Now that is real generosity for you, Mr. Speaker. Just compare that with what is being done in Manitoba.

Premier Douglas: — We do not live in Manitoba; we live in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Tucker: — It is quite a plain, from experience all over the world, that some bonusing is necessary, and surely in Saskatchewan, where we have a lesser density of population per farm, there is even more necessity for bonusing than in places where you have a greater density. The very argument of the Minister indicates how totally inadequate this Bill must be, is bound to be, when you have no provision

for any real, substantial bonusing. They have not had any substantial rural electric development under similar conditions anywhere until they had some system of bonusing. So, if the situation in Saskatchewan is as stated by the Minister, then surely this Bill is not going to be worth very much. Real rural electrification is something our farmers have been looking for. It is something the Manitoba farmers have been getting, and will be getting at the rate of 5,000 per year during the next three or four years. When it gets down to the actual working of the Bill, our farmers are going to find that it does not mean very much. I do not see how anybody representing a farming district in this Legislature can be satisfied with this Bill. It was well explained by the Minister. On the face of it, as far as the machinery is concerned, it is satisfactory, but lacking the very essential necessary to breathe some life into it, namely, some measure of subsidization which has been found so necessary in other countries.

The Bill itself, outside of co-operatives to which I have already referred, what does it propose to do? The farmer must pay for his current; he must pay the entire cost of the run-off from the mainline; he must pay for the wiring of his buildings; he must pay everything including the labour and the cost of installing. In short, the only thing proposed to be paid under this Bill by the Corporation is the material used in the mainline rural distribution system. The farmer must pay the labour of putting even this in, and the only contribution by the Corporation is the material. Nothing is done until every cent of that is raised or provided for. The Bill provides in Section 22:

> The Corporation shall not proceed with the construction of a rural distribution system and run-off . . .

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. We are not dealing with the clauses of the Bill now. These can be dealt with in committee. The general principles can be dealt with at this time.

Mr. Speaker: — That is not a point of order.

Mr. Tucker: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is quite obviously not a point of order.

As I was pointing out, the basic principle of the Bill is that the Corporation is not to proceed with any construction of any system and run-off until 75 percent of the total amount for which the owners are responsible and 50 percent of the amount for which each owner is responsible has been paid to the Corporation, either deposited in the bank or to the satisfaction of the Corporation, and the remaining amount, apparently, can be raised over a period of five years.

Mr. Speaker, look what a burden that puts on our farmers before there is anything done whatever. What do they get when they have raised all this money? The administration comes in and pays only the cost of materials. The farmer has to provide all the rest of the money – and this is called ‘a rural electrification plan’. Well, it does not go far enough, it seems to me, to merit that appellation.

Mr. Phelps said in his speech that about half of our farmers could expect to receive electrification, and he went on to say that the cost would run up to $120 million. Well, that amounts to almost $2,000 per farmer. We should be told what is involved in that. They made a careful study of the situation in Manitoba and page 113 of their report shows the cost there. They found they could pretty well do the work on the basis of those costs, and the average cost per farm was $798.17, almost $800 per farm. Dividing that up: there is $419, line on road allowance; the main line – the tap-off and service, $310; additional rural network cost, $27.50; miscellaneous, $41.64. Under the plan proposed here, what share, in actual figures, is the government going to pay? The Minister did not say, and what I say in this regard is subject to correction in dealing with it in Committee of the Whole.

I want to put the matter before the Assembly, based on the Manitoba figures which should be somewhat similar to our costs. As stated, the farmer pays the entire cost of tap-off and service, $310. Then of course, the $41.64, under this Bill, would be paid by the farmer. That brings his amount to $351.64. The cost of labour on the distribution system itself, putting it roughly at half – the labour costing the same as materials – brings the amount the farmer would have to pay, on the basis of Manitoba experience, to $574.20. They found their average cost of appliances was $563, so that under this scheme the farmer would have to pay $1,137.17, while the Manitoba farmer pays $563. In other words, our farmer is going to have to pay, on the basis of Manitoba costs, just a little over twice as much.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Would the Leader of the Opposition like the figures that have been estimated as to costs by the committee on farm electrification?

Mr. Tucker: — I suggest you give that when I am through speaking because I think the Assembly should have it. I would like to go on with this part of the argument but I do want those figures. I am sorry you did not give them in your opening speech.

The appliances that can be obtained with this amount of money would be the cost of wiring the house and outbuildings, two washing machines, some small appliances, a refrigerator and fractional – horse-power – motors and adapter. That is what will be bought for the amount I just cited. It does not include a radio, range or pressure water system or vacuum cleaner. If you are going to have that the cost would be $1,382, instead of $563, and which, added to the $574, as you can see would be almost $2,000 the Saskatchewan farmer would have to pay to get a fairly complete set of appliances. Yet the government thinks it is contributing a fair share by contributing only a fraction of the cost of the distribution system itself. About $225 out of a total of $2,225.

I wish now to deal with another feature of this Bill. In Manitoba they take the capital cost of the system, and the Manitoba government pays half the cost. The other half is collected in the bill which the farmer pays over a period of 25 years. I submit that it is a much sounder system than our system here, where nothing is done whatever until 75 percent of the money is raised. That is going to be an obstacle against very much being done; but in

Manitoba, all the farmer has to do is indicate his willingness to wire his house, have the electricity and buy the appliances, and the electricity is brought in. Here he is confronted with raising at least 75 percent of the cost before they will even look at him. I do not think that is good enough for our farmers, when they were able to do so much better in Manitoba.

In addition, in Manitoba all he has to pay is half the cost of fetching the electricity to him; the rest is taken care of by the province as a whole. If Manitoba values its farming industry to that extent, then I suggest that Saskatchewan should do at least as well, particularly when the burden of taking electricity to the farmer is going to be somewhat more costly in Saskatchewan than in Manitoba. In Manitoba the cost of the energy itself is about ¾ cents per kilowatt to the farmer. I figure the cost of generation of electricity in a good steam plant in Saskatchewan will be approximately one cent. Assuming 50 percent loss in the rural electrification scheme, it means that Saskatchewan, in order to pay for the cost of the energy, is going to have to pay about two cents a kilowatt. In other words, the farmer is going to have to pay in Saskatchewan about two cents a kilowatt as compared with his Manitoba neighbour who is paying .75 of one cent per kilowatt. His being up against that, Mr. Speaker, is another reason why the government should be at least as generous in charging the cost of installation as the Manitoba government is with their farmers.

It will be asked, what is the cost to Manitoba of their scheme? Well, they have it in this book, and it is borne out by experience. They figured on 25,000 farmers to begin with. In Manitoba they ultimately plan to electrify 50,000 of their 58,000 farmers. How many we can electrify, I think, will only be shown by careful examination and experience, but I presume Mr. Phelps and his associates have given the matter careful consideration, when they put the amount at around 60,000. I am not quarrelling with that figure, because I do not know whether it is right or not. If correct, it looks as if the total number of farmers we can hop to reach in Saskatchewan is about 60,000 as compared with 50,000 in Manitoba.

After ten years, in Manitoba, for providing the 25,000 farmers there, providing the lines and all the rest of it, it is estimated the cost will be $16,831,000. The bonus or subsidy there of 50 percent that I have just mentioned, if there is a 60 percent saturation in a district –that is, 60 percent taking electricity – the bonus that the Manitoba government pays amounts to $23 per annum per farmer, or about $2 per month. There is no talk about making this thing break even; no talk there about not being willing to spend some money to help the farmers. They are ready to spend almost $2 per month in order to cut down the cost of electricity to the farmer in Manitoba. They lay out the entire cost of connecting the farm up and only plan on collecting half of it back.

I said during the election that a government which has increased its expenditures by almost 100 percent, brought it up to the high level it is today, which is spending very little on agriculture of that amount, and is not willing to go as far as the province of Manitoba is to help our farmers and the women in the farm homes, is not doing its duty by this essentially farming province.

Mr. Kuziak: — Come back to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Tucker: — I know my hon. friend from Canora probably does not like this, but he should at least be good enough to sit and listen.

The difference in having a bonus and not having it is interesting. In Manitoba, with this bonus they are able to provide electricity to the farmers for eight cents per kilowatt hour for the first 50 kilowatt hours and two cents per kilowatt hour for all additional energy. The minimum bill is $3.60 per month. If they did not have the bonus, the current charge would have to be ten cents per kilowatt hour for the first 50 kilowatts, four cents for the next 50, and two cents for all additional, with a minimum charge of $4.50 monthly.

On the Manitoba figures, which are based upon 1939 prices and an 80 percent saturation, the cost of connecting 60,000 farmers would be less than $40.5 million. On the Manitoba basis, the province would assume one-half of this, and the balance would be collected over 25 years in the monthly accounts of the farmers. Spreading the cost of retiring this subsidy over 25 years, allowing for interest at four percent per annum, the annual cost to our province would be $1,383,750.

If Manitoba can afford to assume such an obligation to help their farmers, why cannot we do so too? When we consider the amounts spent in other ways, the money wasted, the extravagance . . .

Premier Douglas: — Name the extravagance.

Mr. Tucker: — The woollen mill, the tannery, the brick yard, the Planning Board, the sodium sulphate plant.

When it is seen that, in other countries where the rural population is not even so sparse as ours, no scheme has had any success without some such subsidization scheme, and when there is no provision whatever for any subsidy in the Bill, I cannot feel that much success will attend this plan. The Bill sets up a plan which is a step forward so I shall support it, but cannot be enthusiastic about it.

To sum up: the lack of subsidy will mean that the farmer in Saskatchewan is being asked to pay at least $223 more for being connected up than the farmer in Manitoba. He must pay or provide the other $223 at once, whereas the Manitoba government pays it and recovers it over a period of 25 years. To have the appliances he should have, the Saskatchewan farmer is going to have to be ready to pay around $2,000 to benefit by this programme. It is unfortunate, when rural electrification would be such a boon to our farmers, that a Bill which would provide real rural electrification rapidly is not now being introduced.

Looking into this thing and realizing all the hon. Minister said about the uncertainty of our income, and so on, are the farmers going to embark on this when they hesitated in Manitoba, with more of a mixed farming area, more certain income, until they got the cost down much lower than provided in the Bill?

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that is surely must cause some heart searchings on the part of the government when they are driven to bring in a Bill like this, when they see what is happening in the province of Manitoba, where they are going right ahead with the rural electrification scheme.

Mr. Kuziak: — Why don't you go back to 1944?

Mr. Tucker: — I am here now, and I would like to make this just as good as that of Manitoba.

Premier Douglas: — It is a lot better.

Mr. Tucker: — I am just asking that you people do as well. There is not hope with you people in office. After we get there we might be able to do better. There is no hope with your plan as I proved earlier this afternoon. My hon. friends across there went to the province and said how much better they would do than had been done in the past, and the province, as a whole said: "all right, go ahead and do it." They seem to think it is a complete answer for their not doing something worthwhile to say: "Look what happened in that past." We say they were elected on the promise they were going to do some great things, and this Bill should be one of them. If Manitoba is able to go ahead and do what it is doing, and have plans whereby they can hope that 50,000 out of their 58,000 farms – only 8.000 not electrified – inside of ten years, and we bring in a Bill like this from which there is going to be very little result, as any expert who has examined the situation here and in the United States must know. They must say, if they tell the truth, that this is a Bill which had to be passed because public opinion demanded it, but three years from now some plan that follows something the same plan as Manitoba, is going to have to be passed. In the meantime the government has got by for another three years, perhaps they will then be able to bring in another fine new plan to dangle in front of the electors, just before the election three years from now.

Were we in office, we would have immediately embarked on a plan similar to that of Manitoba, under which we could have hoped to have had at least 5,000 farmers . . .

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Oh yes?

Mr. Tucker: — My hon. friend, the Minister of Agriculture says "Oh Yes". He somehow seems to think that we cannot do as well as Manitoba. I say Saskatchewan can do as well as Manitoba if not better.

Some Hon. Member: — What about the Liberals? 25 years from now?

Mr. Tucker: — I am not surprised at you trying to laugh it off. It has been the stock tactics of some of the C.C.F. party and the government, whenever they cannot answer logical and reasonable arguments, to jeer, tell jokes, smear and attack motives and character.

I want to say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill is a hoax on the farmers of this province. It is a shame, when farmers all over Canada are getting rural electrification, that this should be offered as the answer to their wishes. Surely, I thought as I read this Bill, of the saying: "They asked for bread and received a stone."

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed very much listening to the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I see we are making some progress. I see that the Liberal party is now making some progress. They have now got to the talking stage with regard to rural electrification; but I cannot place much faith in getting rural electrification if, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition says, 'they sat on this side of the House', for two reasons. In the first place, it is extremely unlikely they ever will sit on this side of the House, and, in the second place, we have had them here before, and we know what they did with respect to rural electrification.

An Hon. Member: — Just wind.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: — One of the former leaders of the Liberal party in the province of Saskatchewan, the Rt. Hon. J. G. Gardiner, comes right out for wind electric now. I already quoted him from Hansard in this House this session, but I really did regret today that the hon. member for Cannington (Mr. Patterson), the former Premier of this province for a good many years, and the Rt. Hon. J. G. Gardiner, also a former Premier of this province for a good many years, could not have been here to listen to the eloquence of the present Leader of the Opposition on this question or rural electrification. I think if there was anybody in the world who needed to be talked to about rural electrification, it was those friends of his who happened to be absent on this particular day.

The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that in 1941 – I am not sure I got these figures correct – in Nova Scotia there were 26 percent of the houses or farms electrified; in Quebec, 23 percent; in Ontario, 37 percent; British Columbia, 35 percent; Saskatchewan 4.7 percent; Manitoba 7.3 percent, and in Alberta 5.4 percent. That is the percentage of the farms electrified at that time: 4.7 percent of the farms electrified in Saskatchewan in 1941. That is why I say that the Hon. Mr. Gardiner and the hon. member for Cannington should have been here listening to this talk today. It will not have done the hon. member for Gravelbourg (Mr. Culliton) any harm to have heard this talk today because he had some responsibilities in this question, and he surely did not do very much about it.

Mr. Culliton: — I hope it did you some good anyway.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: — In 1940, what did they do? They electrified four farms. In 1941 – that is the year they went to town – they electrified seven farms. In 1942, three farms.

Mr. Tucker: — Does that justify you in doing nothing?

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** In 1943 they got up to five farms again, and in 1944, eight farms.

Premier Douglas: — Election years!

Mr. Egnatoff: — Very funny, very funny.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** They must have all been in Rosthern.

Mr. Tucker: — So you do nothing.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** In 1945 to 1948, 1,912 farms electrified by the Saskatchewan Power Commission.

Mr. Tucker: — At their own expense.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** The hon. Leader of the Opposition now says: "At their own expense." This is one of the optimist days of the Leader, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, or the day before, he was talking about the budget being to big, spending too much money: where are we going to get all that money and how can we pay for it? Today he blossoms forth to the Legislature of the province of Saskatchewan with a great plan – it is a sure sign of spring, I think – for rural electrification in Saskatchewan, and a whole lot of theoretical wanderings, and a proposal to add another $3 million to the budget. This is the kind of stuff we have been getting from the Leader of the Opposition all through this session.

Mr. Tucker: — It is worthwhile. What about the Fish Board?

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** This is the kind of stuff, Mr. Speaker, which makes it impossible to put very much stock in what the hon. Leader of the Opposition says.

Mr. Egnatoff: — Pretty weak, pretty weak.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** I agree with what he said about the importance of this Bill and the benefits of electricity on farms. I agree with all those things; there is no question about it, but when he begins to tell us that we should be putting in $3 million a year in subsidization, then he certainly is casting a very serious reflection on what some of his colleagues did not do in the past.

Mr. Tucker: — We believe in progress.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** I believe the hon. Leader of the Opposition believes in progress. I hope he is not offended because I admitted first thing today when I got up to speak that some progress was being made, that the Liberal party had got to the point where they were talking about I, and it is worthwhile taking note of that.

Mr. Tucker: — But you are going backwards.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** I wish we could have in the province of Saskatchewan rural electrification and urban electrification free to everybody, and that they get it put right in. Everybody would like to do that, but there are not very many who bank so strongly on the gullibility of the general public that they are going to suggest anything like that can be done. It is not very often we hear that, but we came very close to hearing it today.]

Mr. Tucker: — On a point of order. Nobody suggests that at all, that electrification should be supplied free. The Minister should be ashamed of himself for saying a thing like that.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** Mr. Speaker, I was almost ashamed of myself when I was listening to him this afternoon, and had it not been I was able to look up these figures and see the record of the unlamented Liberal party in rural electrification, it would have been pretty serious, but then I realized where this was coming from. It was not coming from a place where they consider it very seriously at all.

The Hon. Leader of the Opposition seems to be worried for fear nobody will want rural electrification under the plan set out in this Bill. I can assure him that that is the last thing in the world he need worry about. Without any question we will have all of the applicants, and more than we can take care of. Of course, if we were going to give electricity to only eight farmers during the year we could pay for all of it, and even buy their fixtures, and that would be very easy. We want to see rural electrification really take place and see thousand of farms, in the next few years, with electric power.

On the question of costs, I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition was a little bit out too. The best estimate we have at the present time as to the sharing of costs – and I would point out to the House that this share will fluctuate from time to time because at one time you may have material higher in price, and at another time labour may be the high cost factor in the picture – according to our figures is about $487 to $286; that is $487 for material, $286 for the labour and engineering in laying out the lines.

Mr. Benson: — Is that per mile?

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** That is per mile.

Mr. Tucker: — That does not take into account the run-off, of course?

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: **—** If the hon. Leader of the Opposition will compose himself for a moment I will give him that.

The tap-in costs are all paid, as has been mentioned, by the subscribers. The share only goes to his gate, and the best figure we have on the average there is approximately $368. Together with everybody else, I would like to see those costs lowered. No one realizes more than I do the need and the great benefits that will accrue to farms when they have electric power.

Mr. Speaker, for the first time in the history of the province of Saskatchewan we have a plan laid out, and a plan that will work, and I am very glad to be here at this particular time to support the second reading of this Bill.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Mr. Speaker, I must say I am a little surprised that, after all the effort I have exerted both on the occasion of the throne speech debate and this afternoon, I have not been able to get the elementary facts in connection with farm electrification across to the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Tucker: — Very funny. You should have a record to put laughter on over there.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Perhaps I am just not a good teacher.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Poor student.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — It is perfectly obvious that while the Leader of the Opposition was perfectly willing to compare our Saskatchewan problem with the Manitoba one, he ignored, to a very great degree, the extreme difference in the Manitoba Commission's problem form the problem of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation here. He overlooked the great similarity between this Bill – in fact the great generosity of this Bill, as compared with similar projects in the United States and Alberta. He concentrated upon Manitoba. Some of the statements he made with respect to the Manitoba Power Commission, I do not agree with. I would ask the hon. Leader of the Opposition to examine as to whether or not his statement that the Manitoba government is paying half the capital cost of the power line expenses is correct.

Mr. Tucker: — It is absolutely correct.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — My information is that they are paying the interest on half the capital.

Mr. Tucker: — Mr. Speaker, there is no question that is correct. They pay half the interest and half the amortization cost. I confirmed it with the Deputy Provincial Treasurer in Manitoba no later than this morning.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Mr. Speaker, I have to accept the hon. Leader of the Opposition's word since I have not had that opportunity.

With respect to this Bill. If the hon. Leader of the Opposition had sat in my office during the past few months, he would realize that the farmers of this province, when they have the money, want electrical power, and are perfectly willing to come in and take care of almost any portion of the capital costs that they are capable of taking care of. I have had men come into my office and say: "we must get the power. We do not care if we have to pay for the whole thing, but for Heaven's sake let us have the power extension."

It is to take care of these men, principally, that we have in the Bill Part III which provides for the co-operative power associations. Farmers in groups, who may be in an area which does not immediately commend itself to priority under Part I of the Act, may form themselves into a co-operative, and by putting the money on the line get the extension.

Mr. Tucker: — It does not help the poorer people in the provincial very much, though.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Insofar as the contribution of the Corporation is concerned – unfortunately I was called out at the time the hon. Minister of Natural Resources was speaking but I believe he did indicate the contribution of the Corporation in terms of dollars per mile of line. Actually, up to the farmer's gate, the Corporation bears a much heavier proportion of the cost than does the farmer. The farmer, if he is able to do so, may contribute labour instead of money, and very greatly reduce the capital expenditure.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I say I was very greatly disappointed in the speech of the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I had hoped we would face facts in this debate, and that we would leave the political considerations out of it. I am not going to suggest the Leader of the Opposition brought political consideration into it, and I do not think I need to go as far as that; but I am very pleased indeed to hear his high praise of the Manitoba system and the effort that is being made in Manitoba. I am sure it will please him very greatly to learn that only last night I telephoned to the home of the Assistant General Manager of the Manitoba Power Commission acceptance of his application as General Manager of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation.

Mr. Tucker: — You have a good man for once.

Premier Douglas: — He does not think this Bill is good, apparently.

Hon. Mr. Darling: —Mr. J. W. Tomlinson, according to those whom we have contacted down there in Winnipeg, has been the spark plug behind the Manitoba development. We are going to have him here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Tomlinson has been five years with the engineering department of the Winnipeg Electric Company as construction inspector. He has been 12 years with the Manitoba Power Commission, and Assistant General Superintendent for six years, engineer in charge of construction two years, chief engineer two years, and Assistant General Manager and chief engineer for two years – a very fine record of service to the one Corporation which the hon. Leader of the Opposition commends so highly. I think we are to be congratulated on getting him to assist in our development here.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore move that his Bill No. 99, an Act respecting Rural Electrification, be now read a second time.

The motion was carried unanimously.

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