

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Seventeenth Legislature
6th Day

Wednesday, August 4, 1971

The Assembly met at 10:00 o'clock a.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

FORTHCOMING PREMIERS' CONFERENCE

Mr. D.G. Stuart (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I should like to say a word on the forthcoming Premiers' Conference. I understand the Premier, and I presume some of his Cabinet, will be leaving tonight or tomorrow for the Premier's Conference and since this is the first Premiers' Conference that Mr. Blakeney will be attending as Premier of this Province, on behalf of the Liberal Caucus I wish him and his Ministers well.

We all know, unfortunately that there are many things that are dividing this country, many forces attempting to divide this country, but having attended some of these Premiers' conferences, I recognize that these conferences do have a good effect on our country and they tend, in the larger scheme of things, to help unite Canada. And in fact, they have proven in the past to have strengthened the fabric of our nation. And so we very sincerely on behalf of the Caucus — and I'm sure speaking for the people of this Province — wish the new Premier and the Cabinet representation that he takes with him, every success in this Conference and good luck.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. A.E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his good wishes. I look forward to a fruitful conference. As he indicated by inference, this will not be my first conference. I have been at two previous ones "in loco primus", or whatever the appropriate Latin word is — I defer to the Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) on that — but I have found such conferences to be very useful and I look forward to this one being equally useful.

QUESTIONS

Highway Program

Hon. N.E. Byers (Minister of Highways): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, the other day the Hon. Member for Rosthern (Mr. Boldt) raised a question . . .

Mr. Boldt: — Not yesterday, it was . . .

Mr. Byers: — I said, "the other day," pardon me, . . . Raised a question pertaining to cutbacks in the highway program in the current year. For the information of this House, the Department of Highways and the Government is proceeding with those programs that were authorized to be done by government crews in the current year. In that schedule of projects, I believe there are no

cutbacks, perhaps with the exception of one weigh scale where there are further discussions taking place.

With respect to other contracts that were scheduled for the 1971 building program, one area where there has been a minor change is in the vicinity of Wilkie on Highway No. 14. There tenders were called for an 11.3 mile stretch of road running south from Wilkie, I believe. There was only one bidder and in the estimate of the Minister and our Department the bid was too high. We did not award a contract on that piece of road. However, may I say that we are proceeding with the building of the new highway between Biggar and Wilkie, four contracts have been awarded on the road for the construction of the grade from Biggar to the approximate area of Landis, in that vicinity. And the contractor who was not awarded the contract in the first case I mentioned has been awarded a contract on the new section of road, so that he does have work for the summer.

There is one other minor cutback and that is with respect to the application of an Amos treatment on Highway No. 14 west of Unity. I have no doubt that when this was included in the 1971 program that it was thought the road would be in condition for the application of the Amos treatment this summer. However, with the unusual weather we have had and the fact that we are applying an Amos treatment here — an Amos treatment by the way is between and oil and a standard pavement. It is an application that is considerably less expensive than pavement. We feel at the moment that the present condition of the subgrade is not in good enough condition to apply this Amos treatment. We want to apply this on a good firm roadbed because we are experimenting with Amos as another form of dustfree treatment and we should like to apply it under the most ideal circumstances. And therefore we will not be proceeding with that particular project this year. I have discussed this privately with the Member from Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac) and I think that he understands the situation there.

Apart from those items of the original program for 1971, we will be proceeding with contracts. I have awarded ten contracts in the last month since I became the Minister and I should like to advise the House that we are proceeding with projects that were advertised such as the dustfreeing of the road from Avonlea to Corinne in the Hon. Member's riding of Milestone (Mr. MacDonald). We are proceeding with the paving from Unity to Wilkie. There are several other programs that we're proceeding with. We are honoring all contracts tendered and awarded prior to June 24th.

I might say that we are also proceeding with a number of programs that were extras in the program such as the Muenster to Lake Lenore oil treatment on Highway No. 368, the grading of Kenaston east, 8.51 miles. These were extra programs.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that we are this week calling for tenders on Highway No. 135 for the completion of a tote road on the road from Pelican Narrows to Sandy Bay in the constituency of Athabasca. This tote road reached Pelican Narrows in 1967 or 1968. There has only been work done north of Pelican Narrows, I believe in 1970, and it's the intention of this Government now to call for tenders on Highway No. 135 and we shall attempt to proceed with the construction of the tote road into Sandy Bay to give these Northern people and outlet to the world by road at an early possible date.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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Mr. Boldt: — Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Minister of Highways that he has given us the assurance that highways will be continued to be built, that there will not be a 25 per cent reduction in the highway program.

I also should like to ask a further question but in view of the statement that the Member for Redberry (Mr. Michayluk) made last spring that if the NDP were elected that there would be a highway constructed in that seat from the north to the south. Will this highway be built this year or are you shortchanging him?

Mr. Byers: — To this point in time I would advise the Hon. Member from Rosthern that I have not put in any new additions to the 1971 highway program as of this date, and we haven't considered the road that he has in question any more than any other one.

Mr. Boldt: — One more question, Mr. Speaker. What is the Government's position on the Wollaston Lake Road?

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, the Government's position with respect to that matter will be announced in due course.

Mr. J.C. McIsaac (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, may I address a supplementary question to the Hon. Minister of Highways with respect to his statement. I realize perhaps you're stressing a point, Sir, but with respect to Highway No. 14, I appreciate the comments about Saskatoon west to the border, but did I understand that the Minister does not plan to attempt to re-tender this fall that one portion, Wilkie south?

Mr. Byers: — We, at this point, have not made a decision that we would re-tender from Wilkie south to join up with the proposed construction. The Department has it under consideration but we have no definite statement to make on that at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tax Exemption Policy on Grain Storage Facilities

Hon. A.E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to make a brief announcement.

This has to do with the policy which had previously prevailed with respect to providing relief from sales tax for grain storage facilities which policy expired on December 31st last. I should like to announce that that policy will be reinstated, effective January 1st, 1971 . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — . . . and will continue from January 1st, 1971 to June 23rd, 1971, and from June 23rd, 1971, to December 31st, 1971 . . .

Mr. Steuart: — Thought you'd do it forever, Allan!

Mr. Blakeney: — We will make an assessment at that time. Perhaps we'll be in office forever — I don't know — I thank you for the compliment.

QUESTIONS

Report on Cancer Commission Study

Mr. G.B. Grant (Regina Whitmore Park): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Hon. Minister of Health (Mr. Smishek).

Hon. J.R. Messer (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, before the . . . I believe we're still on Orders of the Day, or before the Orders of the Day . . .

Mr. Speaker: — The Member for Regina Whitmore Park was on the Orders of the Day too.

Mr. Grant: — Mr. Speaker, last year the Government commissioned an inquiry into a study of the Cancer Commission operations in Saskatchewan under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Johnston. As I anticipated that that Commission would be reporting in July, and I was wondering if the Hon. Minister of Health could tell me whether he has received the report and if not, when he anticipates receipt of it?

Hon. W.E. Mr. Smishek (Minister of Health): — Mr. Speaker, I met with Judge Johnston a couple of weeks ago and asked him when we might expect the report from the Committee. He apologized that the report is not yet ready. We expect the report to be in the hands of the Department by about the middle of September. We have also met with the Cancer Commission, because they are very anxious to get the report and we advised them to that effect as well. The study has been completed, it's a matter of some of the statistical information being pulled together but the report should be received around the middle of September.

STATEMENTS

Bertha Army Worms

Mr. Messer: — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to thank the Hon. Premier for his continued recognition and assistance to farmers and agriculture in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — I also have a statement to make.

A wide infestation of Bertha army worms in rapeseed across Saskatchewan has developed. This outbreak was unexpected and first became evident toward the end of last week. Infestations are reported throughout the rape-growing area of this province. The limitation of the use of DDT has left rapeseed growers

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without a clear-cut recommendation of a satisfactory chemical for control of army worm and beetweb worm in rape. The chemical Dialox is approved but it is manufactured in Germany and it appears out of the question to get supplies in time.

However, tests this year by the Canada Department of Agriculture Research Station at Saskatoon have indicated that a chemical known as Lannate gives good control at a rate of two ounces per acre. The Pest Control Products Division of the Canada Department of Agriculture at our request have granted a provisional registration of the product on rapeseed if used at least two weeks before harvest.

Accordingly, we have placed an order for 15,000 pounds of Lannate to be dispatched by air from Texas today . . .

Mr. Steuart: — Texas?

Mr. Messer: — Yes, Texas. The plane is expected to arrive in Saskatoon tomorrow. This 15,000 pounds will treat about 110,000 acres. In this emergency situation it appears to us that the Supplies Division of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool with their systems of warehousing and distribution offer the best means of getting the material into the hands of farmers with minimum delay.

Accordingly, this material will be transferred to the Wheat Pool and farmers can get their supplies from there. The cost to the farmer will be \$9.75 per pound or a cost of approximately \$1.40 per acre. We are conducting further surveys of the situation to determine whether additional supplies are needed.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Planning and Policy Research Branch

Mr. Messer: — Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a further announcement. And it is my pleasure to announce the establishment of a new branch within the Department of Agriculture.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — It will be known as the . . .

Mr. T.M. Weatherald (Cannington): — On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I believe that after one statement, it is customary that we get an opportunity to make a comment, before he makes two.

Mr. Speaker: — The Minister has the floor and you will be permitted to make a short reply in all or in part of what he . . .

Mr. Weatherald: — He's now making a second statement . . .

Mr. Messer: — If the Hon. Member opposite would like to question the first statement — fine, I'll hold the second one.

Mr. Weatherald: — I just wanted to say that I

am sure we welcome any assistance that can be given in this regard, Mr. Speaker, to rapeseed growers. However, we would comment that I hope that the Minister will give consideration to other interested groups that may wish to sell the chemical and I am sure that other than the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, like the United Grain Growers' have supply depots, a number of other organizations in this regard as well, and we hope that he will, if they can make satisfactory arrangements, give consideration to other organized groups that would possibly like to dispense the chemical once it is available.

Mr. Messer: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Hon. Member's question he will realize that the control has to be applied within two weeks of harvest and that time is fast approaching. Due to the expanding infestation of the Bertha army worm, farmers have ten days or two weeks to make the application before the crop is completely destroyed. We therefore had to make a choice as to what the fastest channel would be in getting this product into farmers' hands. We chose the Wheat Pool for the first supplies that we have made available, if we need more, we by all means will make it available to all those who wish to have the supplies to disperse or distribute throughout the province to those farmers who need those supplies.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if I may continue with the second statement.

The branch that I have made mention of will be known as the Planning and Policy Research Branch. We visualize that the branch will be a comparatively small branch comprised of four professionals specializing in agricultural economics as well as a supporting staff. Although numerically it is not large its importance cannot be underestimated. This branch will bring a level of expertise and depth of resources that the Agricultural Department has lacked in the past.

I am certain that all Members of this House are aware of the acute agricultural crisis which Saskatchewan faces today. This situation demands new approaches, new ideas and new policies to be implemented. The Planning and Policy Research Branch will not only concentrate its efforts on this, but will also critically analyse existing as well as proposed Federal agricultural policies. With the scope and depth of our new branch we feel that constructive suggestions as well as sound alternatives will be forthcoming in response to Federal proposals. The branch may also be able to expand its efforts and conduct further research for various farming organizations in order to aid them in determining their own position on various agricultural matters.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to announce that we have been indeed very fortunate in securing the services of one Mr. Douglas MacArthur to head this branch.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — Mr. MacArthur was born and raised on a farm in the Watrous area and completed his primary and secondary schooling in that area. On graduation he took a Bachelor's degree in agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan where he was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship. He presently holds a Master's degree in economics from both Oxford and Toronto and obtained substantial experience in the agricultural policy field while

he was employed by the firm Hedland, Menzies Economic consultants.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Weatherald: — Mr. Speaker, we welcome the announcement that the part of the agricultural department economic division will be strengthened. We hope, however that while this strengthening takes place that it doesn't solely concentrate on policies of devising ways and means to just get more money from the Federal Government. We hope, Mr. Speaker, it will concentrate on putting something concrete forward for the Provincial Government. I have long had a heartfelt feeling for economists and I am very pleased and hope that the Department of Agriculture — I agree with the Minister when he says that it needs strengthening — we'll wait to see what is forthcoming.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: — Before I call on Questions put by members, I should like to introduce to the House some guests who are in our east gallery, the Society for our Heritage of Canada. They are headed by a Mr. Tripp, from Toronto. The party contains about 50 people and are on their way to the West Coast. We all wish them well.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

Address-in-Reply

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. B. Dyck (Saskatoon City Park) and the proposed amendment thereto of Mr. D.G. Steuart (Leader of the Opposition).

Mr. J.C. McIsaac: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday in speaking to this motion I made reference to some of the remarks by the Hon. Member for Last Mountain, the Minister of Education (Mr. MacMurchy). This morning I shall be referring to some other remarks that he made during the course of this debate.

The Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, is a very revealing document, revealing because it shows how premature this Government was in calling this Session and because it shows how little they intend to do.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McIsaac: — I think it is revealing also because it is demonstrating pretty clearly who is calling the tunes in this party opposite. I think we have no better illustration than the announcement by the Minister of Agriculture this morning, the first move they have taken for agriculture during the course of this Session, and what is he doing? Setting up a new small planning branch. That's all so far for agriculture in the course of this Session, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Messer: — . . . nothing!

Mr. McIsaac: — Very little better than nothing, very little.

We have had also the extension of a good Liberal policy, the removal of sales tax on grain storage facilities. We have had also, I understand, the extension of another Liberal policy prior to calling of the Session, to extend back the payment of hog premiums, but so far nothing really, no new policies, no new money from this Government on behalf of the farmer of this province.

They are bringing in legislation, Mr. Speaker, brought it in as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, which we have supported to remove utilization fees. The interesting thing about this, Mr. Speaker, is that a session didn't need to be called to accommodate this particular policy. A session called sometime later this fall, I suggest would have been a good deal more appropriate. By that time the Government and the Cabinet would have had time to plan properly and bring in some meaningful legislation for the farmers and the farm economy of this Province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kramer: — . . . better deal!

Mr. McIsaac: — Yes, hopefully a better deal for veterinarians too, the Member for North Battleford says, I'll appreciate that at that time too.

This fall would be plenty of time for them also to enact the legislation to abolish the premiums for those people over age 65, and by that time also the Minister of Public Health could have found ways to include those people over age 65 with dependents, one category of older citizens whom I am sure all of us would like to see receive this kind of assistance. But they are making an attempt to help senior citizens of this province and the Liberals will and have supported these moves. So we have a new deal for senior citizens.

Well, what about the new deal for the younger taxpayers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? Because there is a new deal for the young taxpayer of Saskatchewan under this Government. There is a new deal for the tradesmen, the working man, there is a new deal for the farmer who pays taxes and there are many farming who still pay taxes. There is a new deal for every wage earner and it is higher taxes. The highest tax level of any group of people in Saskatchewan and in Canada will be the family man 25 to 40, 45 and 50 who is trying to raise a family at today's prices and today's stage of inflation under this Government.

Now in short, Mr. Speaker, there is a new deal for the taxpayer, but what's new about that? More taxes. That's an age old deal if there ever was one for the taxpayer of this province. What about the new deal for education? We have heard about the new deal for older people. What about the new deal for the educators, teachers, students of the province? Now the educators as a group generally were obviously unhappy, Mr. Speaker, with Liberal policies. Or perhaps more particularly the Liberal approach to some of the policies implemented in the field of education. I fully accept the decision of the electorate on June 23rd in that regard. I fully accept the fact that many

educators worked hard and successfully at unseating the former Liberal Government. I think the ranks of Members opposite certainly demonstrate that just about as well as anything.

If the Liberals were tossed out, Mr. Speaker, should not those Liberal policies be tossed out also? Just let me point out to my friends opposite, to the Minister (Mr. MacMurchy) and I am sorry he is not here this morning, that the system today is not in a state of disrepair the Member for Elrose (Mr. Owens) referred to earlier in this debate. Let me tell the Government also that the problem of maintaining and improving the quality of education and of paying for it, Mr. Speaker, certainly isn't going to disappear now that they have the ball and it is their prerogative to make those decisions. The new Minister, Mr. Speaker, is obviously hard working and energetic. He is going to need most of those faculties and many more. I very sincerely wish him well in his many heavy tasks and duties as Minister of Education. I am sure he will be helped and assisted by many of the people directly involved in education opposite.

The new Minister has had a good deal to say so far in these first few weeks the NDP have been in the Government. One of his first releases, first comments, was a statement saying that the Government would not make any change in teacher-pupil ratios this year. I think he said, "one of the rather bothersome issues of education" as I recall it, I believe he put it rather aptly enough on July 10th. Now a major promise of the NDP, Mr. Speaker, was to reduce that ratio. As a matter of fact, the Deputy Leader of the Government, the Member for Riversdale (Mr. Romanow) got carried away in the course of a speech in Saskatoon and said, "We are not only going to lower it, we are going to abolish it!" Wipe it out completely. Now there will always be some ratio, Mr. Speaker, regardless of the wishes of the Hon. Attorney General or any Member opposite. There is always going to be some ratio on staff and students whether it is in school or university, community college or what have you.

But did the new Government or the new Minister lower the ratio, Mr. Speaker, or abolish it? Well, if he did, he hasn't yet notified the school boards. He mentioned in the House that it no longer existed, school boards haven't been notified or other operational agencies. He hasn't cancelled any of the directives that went out from the Department establishing the guidelines of one teacher to seven, up to eleven students in special and retarded classes; from one teacher to fifteen students as a maximum for the vocational classes and one to twenty-five for the remainder. These directives have not yet been cancelled. If the Government opposite intends, as they have said they would, to abolish these guidelines, what are they going to replace them with, Mr. Speaker? Because there is simply no way they can operate the school system in this Province or any other province without some kind of guideline, some kind of policy, some kind of planning to distribute the millions of dollars that are needed to support education in the province.

Are they going to go back to the old structure of no guidelines? Are they going to go back to the old days of not very many years ago when we saw ratios developing of one to sixteen, one to seventeen in some places, one to twenty-four, twenty-five in others? High school programs . . . my friend the Hon. Member for Prince Albert with a high school ratio up there, one to thirteen, down here in other high school districts one to twenty. Is this what they are going to go back to, where we saw mill

rate variations of 29 and 30 down in this part of the Province and some of the higher assessed areas of southern Saskatchewan, as opposed to 55 in the Yorkton area, 55 in the Meadow Lake area and mill rates and variations of this kind?

I wish them well in trying to improve upon the grant structure and the distribution — I again point out, Mr. Speaker, that the problem isn't a simple one, it isn't an easy one. Before they throw out all of the old policies, and all of the old guidelines, and the old approaches, I believe they had better look very carefully at what they are going to put in its place.

Now the Member for Saskatoon Nutana South (Mr. Rolfes) I believe it was, spoke the other day of greater co-ordination between the various government departments and agencies that are involved with students and with education. He spoke of the Department of Education being involved in many cases with the Department of Welfare, the Department of Health and so on. I wish him well very sincerely in this Mr. Speaker, in greater co-ordination between these various government agencies that come to cross the paths of the students and teachers as the case may be. But I can tell him that it is not going to come easy, and it won't come by creating another super bureaucracy to impose upon those various agencies. Now the Member for Nutana South is employed by one of the largest school systems in this province, I believe the fourth or fifth largest, if memory serves me correctly. It is also a separate school system, Mr. Speaker. One of the many separate school systems in this Province today that are enjoying and have enjoyed the best kind of financial support that they ever had in the history of the Province. The best kind of program development ever accorded separate schools in the history of Saskatchewan under Liberal legislation, under this same legislation, the same grant's Act and the same formula that went along with implementing teacher-pupil ratios.

It wasn't very many years ago, in fact, I believe about three years ago that the separate school systems which were set up by separate school high school districts, the secondary districts that were set up by unanimous consent of this Legislature in the spring of 1964 came to this Government and said under the present grant structure they were going bankrupt, they were going broke. So that in the course of new grant legislation, Mr. Speaker, separate school systems have been receiving since that time the same level of financial support available to other school districts in this province. I am sure that the Member for Nutana South is aware of this but I just ask him not to forget it and that this is one more of the many good features and good policies and good developments that came about under this Administration. I'm sure also that my friend is aware that the ratio of students to staff in his system today is lower than it has ever been under any former administration or any previous years up until now, lower under those same Liberal policies, those same staff-student guidelines. And this is the case for other separate school systems in the province and for other smaller, less well off systems, rural and urban, separate and non-separate. Now if these features and many other good features of the school system are not protected, Mr. Speaker, then merely standing up in this Legislature as the Minister for Education (Mr. MacMurchy) did the other day and blithely announcing that he is abolishing a few policies on teacher-pupil ratios is merely another piece of window dressing and nothing more or less.

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Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McIsaac: — Now he's had a good deal to say, as I mentioned — I'm sorry to say that he is not here this morning. He has a release here, July 10th, saying that the ratios are staying for this fall. He says it is too difficult to remove one of these rather bothersome issues in education. Well then on July 18th he said, he had second thoughts by this time, Mr. Speaker, some of the 14 Members opposite of the teaching profession have obviously been getting to him. Perhaps the Member for Cutknife, the intended Minister up in that area of mine. Anyway this headline, July 18th says, "MacMurchy says we will review the ratio." He made another statement here, Mr. Speaker, I quote from the press but I'm sure it must be a misquote. I'll read it.

MacMurchy said a major concern of the New Democratic Party Government will be quality education with emphasis on programs, not finances.

That's fine, that's good, that's understandable and we can accept that. He says:

We must decide the kind of education we want in the province and allocate resources accordingly.

Again, that's fine.

We cannot afford to build an educational system to fit our financial system.

Mr. Speaker, I think he must be misquoted here when he says, "We can't afford to build an educational system to fit our financial system." Does this mean, Mr. Speaker, I wonder, that he is going to try and redevelop the entire financial system to fit the needs or the demands of the educational system. I'm sure he must be misquoted here.

The NDP are going to maintain programs and quality in education and new policies and new directions in the field of community colleges and more opportunities for technical school students. Mr. Speaker, that kind of planning has to go hand in hand with financing whether the new Minister likes it or not and they will find that out soon enough when that \$90 million kitty runs dry. And that wouldn't be very long at the rate they are going.

Mr. Speaker, on July 10th again, the Minister had a press conference, that morning, I believe. He announced another program here, the young voyageur programs. One would have thought in hearing it on the radio — I was driving along somewhere on the road — that he not only invented this thing but developed it as well. The young voyageur program is another Liberal policy that he is carrying on and he is extending it and, I'm glad of it. It is one that has been there for five years. The names of these students were selected, Mr. Speaker, long before the election and everything was made up and arranged for those students to take those trips. I hope he continues this as well.

He mentions a bursary report being studied and this is fine, again Liberal legislation that was brought into this House last spring, Mr. Speaker. He has taken some action on this since that time. I commend him for that action. He's added funds to

what we had originally intended for this and again I commend him for this action, Mr. Speaker. Liberal policies I'll have you know. Liberal policies, Mr. Speaker, once again is all that he has so far been able to develop. Here is another press release, July 14th, the Leader-Post. "Additional phases of the third institute in Regina being approved." The third institute in Regina, which was announced was begun with the support of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, by the Government while we were still in office. A Liberal program, a Liberal plan, being financed largely I may say, Mr. Speaker, by Liberal dollars from Ottawa. This really is where the bulk of the money is coming from.

Another release that I don't have in front of me, Mr. Speaker, deals with teacher accreditation. The policies respecting teacher accreditation in this Province were initiated, supported and developed by this Government largely during the time I was Minister. This program and this policy is going to be extended and I'm glad again to hear this because this is another good policy; it is another good kind of development in the field of education and one, I hope that will be continued and extended in one form or another.

The community colleges, Mr. Speaker. The Minister yesterday made reference to some clandestine planning and discussions that I supposedly had with Lloydminster people. Certainly we did tell the people in the planning committee from Lloydminster to go ahead and proceed with the planning. The Alberta Government told us they were interested in building a community college on the Alberta side of Lloydminster and we said, "Go ahead, we will support you with students from this side of the border, from the Saskatchewan side, when that school is built and developed because by that time we will be building and developing community colleges all across Saskatchewan." Nothing really clandestine, nothing underhanded, nothing so devious about this kind of policy or this kind of planning, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sorry if the now Minister (Mr. MacMurchy) wasn't aware of that at that particular time — he probably wasn't watching.

I have another press release here, Mr. Speaker, that is rather indicative of some of the problems of my hon. friend, the new Minister. It is dated July 27th, the headline reads, "School for unwed mothers seeks aid." This group came in, and with the Minister had a very favorable hearing, I understand, as I believe most delegations and groups have from the Minister so far, but I think it is indicative of the difficulty he is going to have getting around and trying to meet all the staff in that department. If he is going to be able to meet each and every group that comes to see him he's going to get no end of requests, Mr. Speaker, and indeed most of them like this one, valid enough. But somewhere along the line he is going to have to go back on that statement that there is no concern about finances, either that or he is going to be unable to deal and consider with these many, many requests that he is going to receive in that office.

Mr. Speaker, all of these policies that I have referred to here, all of the releases from the new Minister so far, are Liberal policies, Liberal programs of education that were there that are being extended and developed and I'm glad to hear of it. But this isn't good enough, Mr. Speaker. This isn't the new deal for education because it is the Liberal policies that the people voted out. When are they really going to abolish

the teacher-pupil ratio in Saskatchewan? A two-line memo to school boards as I mentioned yesterday is all that is required to cancel those directives and to abolish it and another two lines again advising school boards to go their own way with respect to budgeting, with respect to spending, to the good old days that the Members opposite are referring to.

With respect to good old days, it is interesting, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure some of my hon. friends have noticed this too. The NDP refer to the good old days, the last seven years, largely as going back to the thirties. Now you may have noticed, Mr. Speaker, that this time we don't have so many of them going back to the thirties to — the same degree we used to listen to here. We've got a few that are talking about today and about the future, and hopefully this is good, hopefully this is good, Mr. Speaker, and maybe they will get redirected and get that party sorted out for the good of the province. I'm glad to see that they aren't continually harking back to the thirties.

This Government, the new Government, Mr. Speaker, is committed to reducing that pupil-teacher ratio. Now there are two ways this can be done. Either by increasing the number of students or by increasing the number of teachers, or the number of staff. I suggest that the simplest way and the most direct way, the one that will get them there quicker will be to increase the number of staff employed by boards. It is a good deal more sensible to hire more staff and to do it now because there are a number unemployed, perhaps up to 500. The actual number of teachers seeking employment today is pretty difficult to determine. Some want jobs only in Regina or in Saskatoon, they won't take a job elsewhere and so on, some will take a job if they can get it and if it is convenient and so on and so forth. But I think it is probably fair to say that there are up to 500 teachers seeking employment today in Saskatchewan. Incidentally, not the 1,500 new graduates who are seeking employment in the Province of Alberta, Mr. Speaker, there are 1,500 new graduates in Alberta with no jobs, no teaching jobs in that province this year. But I think we have about 500 here. Surely the new Government could very easily send out a directive asking boards, advising them, to take on these people, that they look after them in the process of abolishing ratios and give employment, particularly to the younger teachers in this regard.

Mind you I'll say one more thing, the Government or the Minister shouldn't kid themselves that merely by adding more bodies, more people to the teaching staff that they are going to improve the quality of education necessarily, the quantity yes and very likely some improvement in quality but not necessarily.

Another Liberal policy that I should like to mention and suggest to my friends opposite to consider because it would require a very simple amendment, one piece of legislation, and that is an amendment to the present Teachers' Superannuation Act, and I make this suggestion in all sincerity, Mr. Speaker. Now the present Teachers' Superannuation Act provides for retirement at age 60 with 30 years or more of service. It also provides that for teachers with 35 years' service under the age of 60 may retire as early as age 55 subject to an actuarial reduction of about 4.1 per cent per year. Now this reduction, Mr. Speaker, I suggest should be waived for one year to allow any of those older teachers who have the time in, the 35 years in and wish to retire, the opportunity to do so. This would take maybe 300 or 400 people out of the teaching force. If

they took up this option — and again is another means of allowing this Government opposite to bring in some of the new graduates about whom they were so concerned prior to the election and during the course of the campaign at any rate — it would give them an opportunity to give these new graduates employment in the school systems of the province. In the meantime the Act could be studied again and reviewed. It was two years ago when that Act was reviewed and with some adjustments made in the percentage level of contribution. Perhaps this kind of option if you like could be a permanent part of the Teachers' Superannuation Plan from here on.

An Hon. Member: — Why didn't you do it?

Mr. McIsaac: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you very simply why we didn't do it. We were considering just such a move. The Teachers' Superannuation Commission was commissioned last spring to do a study on this very thing. If the new Minister was here, he can check this out, some of you other teacher Members you can check that out. We were concerned about that very fact and this suggestion had been made to us by the Federation last winter. It wasn't made two years ago when the Act was then revised because nobody was really seeing this kind of situation. At that time it wasn't asked for by the Federation, it wasn't even thought of. But may I again suggest that such a move would certainly make room for the young graduate whom they are concerned about and indeed we are all concerned about, Mr. Speaker. They will find support for it from this side of the House. I'm sure the STF will support it; I'm sure the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association would support it; and I am sure that the people of the Province generally would support such a move.

Now I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, that this Speech from the Throne revealed the priorities of the NDP. We've had the repeal of Bill 2; we've had other labor legislation in here, and until this morning we didn't have one single move or measure on behalf of the farmers and the farm economy of Saskatchewan. We've had the labor union leaders get their piece of the pie, their share of the legislative menu. What about the educator? Nothing as yet except more Liberal policies. What about the farmer? Nothing again except a new planning branch, a new policy planning branch, Mr. Speaker, and one other very hastily conceived piece of legislation that we see here on the Order Paper and it has been on their desk, a piece of legislation called an Act to Protect the Family Farm.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is an Act that is forcing, not the Government, but the implement dealers and every other small businessman dealing with farmers to help carry the farmers. It is forcing the credit union, the bulk oil dealers and others to carry the farmers. Not the Government, not my farm friends opposite, because they, Mr. Speaker, are doing nothing. They call this act The Family Farm Protection Act. I hope the Minister when he introduces this Bill or the Attorney General or whoever does, will define a family farm unit for us, Mr. Speaker. We've heard them talk in the course of the campaign and other times throughout the Province about the family farm. Well now, how large a unit is the family farm? I wonder if the Minister considers he has a family farm? Well I don't know. Is his a family farm or is it one of those corporate farms we hear so much about? I don't know, Mr. Speaker, I'm very seriously interested in having comments from the Minister and all Members

opposite as to what really constitutes a family farm.

Now, the Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Bowerman) seems to have some ideas. I'll be glad to have his ideas when we get into the debate on that legislation or any other piece of legislation that gives them an opportunity to tell us, how big is it, this family farm; how small is it? Now as I say, does the Minister operate a family farm or a corporate farm? I don't know and I'd like to know. I'm anxiously awaiting the introduction of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, because, on the surface this Bill merely transfers the farmers' obligations to another hard-pressed group of people in this Province and that is the small businessman. We are certainly concerned, Mr. Speaker. We are certainly concerned in helping farmers, just as interested as they are. But their average so far, so far they have brought in a new branch in the Department. Yesterday we heard them move a motion to urge the Federal Government — the old Minister of Agriculture's tactics again — to spread \$100 million around more quickly than ever. Is this the new deal for the farmer? Why wasn't this \$100 million spread before. Because, Mr. Speaker, these Members opposite were partners with their Federal counterparts in delaying that legislation.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McIsaac: — Otherwise we should have had that \$100 million injected into the farm economy of Western Canada today. Is this the kind of priority they give the family farm that they would hold up the \$100 million from the hard-pressed farms the Member from Touchwood and others were speaking about. I know he is concerned. We are just as concerned as he is. Is this the new deal for the farmer in the province, Mr. Speaker? Is this the priority the NDP are going to give the family farm? They repeal Bill 2 to meet the pressure from the union leaders; they cancelled Choiceland; they cancelled Athabasca; but for the farmer they say, 'take a year off from your debts'. Well, Mr. Speaker, because the Speech from the Throne offers nothing whatever for the farmer, for the unemployed, particularly the unemployed teachers in the province, I will be supporting the amendment and not the main motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. W.A. Robbins (Saskatoon Nutana Centre): — Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to engage in prolonged debate relating to the Speech from the Throne. However, there are a number of things I should like to say on specific matters. Before doing so, Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend the mover, the Hon. Member for Saskatoon City Park (Mr. Dyck) and the seconder, the Hon. Member for Yorkton (Mr. Carlson) for their contributions in the Throne Speech Debate. They made commendable contributions in public debate in their maiden speeches in this House. I wish also to extend my congratulations to all elected Members and to all those who stood for election.

Mr. Speaker, this is Homecoming year for Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — When, Mr. Speaker, the former Liberal Government

designated 1971 as Homecoming year, no one in Saskatchewan, including themselves, really knew what they were going to celebrate. It wasn't the 50th anniversary of the Province or the 55th or 60th, and, therefore, no one could quite figure it out. No one in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, including themselves realized what great powers of prophetic clairvoyance they possessed. They evidently foresaw the return of a New Democratic Government to power well in advance of the actual event. Yes, 1971 is indeed a Homecoming year. A Homecoming year for a reasoned rationale in government. A Homecoming for discussion and dialogue. These are necessary prerequisites in the democratic process, a Homecoming for a changed atmosphere, politically and economically.

Mr. Speaker, last winter I happened to walk down the street in Saskatoon on a blustery, cold day, and stopped at a street corner where a number of individuals were in discussion. I really wasn't too familiar with most of these people but I heard them berating the climate of the Province of Saskatchewan and I thought I should come to the defence of my native province. I made the comment, that well it might be pretty cold in Saskatchewan, but we do not have hurricanes, earth quakes or floods. All that we have to put up with was the cold and the Liberal Government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — And one of the individuals immediately remarked, 'the cold I can stand'.

Mr. Speaker, I possess a very simplistic political creed. I believe in the rule of reason and the helping hand to my fellow man. I do not believe in forcing my views on anyone, not by brainwashing or by repetitive jingles, rhymes or slogans but by the simple expedient of reason. Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague, the Hon. Member for Saskatoon Nutana South (Mr. Rolfes) that the educative process should not simply involve filling people with facts, however, interpreted or misinterpreted.

Perhaps Members have heard the story of the fellow who suffered the shakes. He was in poor health. He had to go to the doctor and his hands were shaking very visibly. The doctor questioned him and said, "Do you drink much?" And he said, "No, I spill most of it." It depends of course on the interpretation.

If one has a completely open mind one is confronted with the dismal prospect and the eminent danger that Liberals will throw a lot of garbage into it. As an MLA I propose to do what I feel is right. In this manner I will please my friends and astonish the rest.

I should like, Mr. Speaker, to thank the voters in Nutana Centre who elected me in celebration of this Homecoming year, and returned me to this Legislative Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — The duties and responsibilities of an MLA should not be taken lightly. Mr. Speaker, in the recent election, we in Nutana Centre, had to overcome a very substantial majority.

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We were up against a Cabinet Minister who was a creditable candidate and we were in a gerrymandered seat. Why was this seat gerrymandered? Why were some 600 voters in four polls on the western end of the Nutana Centre constituency taken out and put in Riversdale? Did the Hon. Member for Riversdale require more voters to ensure his election? No really, he won with a majority of 6,348. Was Riversdale a small constituency? No, it had 1,080 more voters than we had in Nutana Centre. Did the incumbent MLA not feel safe with the 1,282 vote majority achieved in the 1967 election? Well, I guess he shouldn't have been. Could the fact that I had a majority of 151 in those four polls over the Liberal candidate in the 1967 election have any bearing on that decision to move those polls over to Riversdale? Obviously all of this is conjecture, Mr. Speaker, but could it be that the redistribution committee, headed by the Hon. Member for Prince Albert West (Mr. Steuart) that picayune little pixie from Prince Albert, was attempting to ensure that the Liberal Government would win four seats in Saskatoon by conceding they could not win in Riversdale and Mayfair?

Mr. Speaker, why did we have a clean sweep in Saskatoon? Essentially, Mr. Speaker, there were three basic reasons for this.

One, the voters were angered by the gerrymander — and they should have been. They reacted strongly against a government attempting to perpetuate itself in office, in a manner hardly less subtle than the approach utilized by a former Saskatchewan Liberal Government in 1943, when it perpetuated itself for an additional year in office by legislative enactment — to an unprecedented six-year term.

Secondly, because they were angered by the attitude of that Government. We had in Nutana Centre 183 young people — I always remember that when I was in this House formerly, the Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) talking about all of the young people supporting the Liberal Party. There were 183 young people in Nutana Centre who worked very hard long hours, completely on a volunteer basis to ensure that the Liberal Government, which it so richly deserved received a stunning defeat.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — The Hon. Member has asked if we are going to have any poetry. Well, we might get a little of that.

On June 23rd, the people were heard
They made their views very plain
For some 20 Libs were put on the skids
Their broad highway reduced to one Lane.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — Thirdly, urban people realize despite the divide and rule tactics of the Liberals that we cannot have a prosperous economic climate in our cities unless the agricultural industry is viable and has a reasoned degree of economic stability.

I believe that those were the three basic reasons why the

Liberals were defeated. Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting to note that the Hon. Member for Rosthern (Mr. Boldt) who currently isn't in his seat, blames the New Democratic Federal Members for holding up the so-called \$100 million Agricultural Stabilization Bill in Ottawa. In the next breath he asserts all the New Democratic MPs were in Saskatchewan helping to elect a Saskatchewan New Democratic Government. Now how could they hold up the legislation in Ottawa if they were out here working in the election?

The Hon. Member for Moosomin (Mr. Gardner) re-echoed this contention. Even the Hon. Member for Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac) re-echoed that contention this morning. It is interesting to take note, Mr. Speaker, of this type of political gymnastics. They excel at that, Mr. Speaker. They excel in two things — gymnastics and gerrymandering. Give the Hon. Member for Rosthern the party line and he will propound it with conviction and vigor. Change the party line and he will propound it with equal conviction and vigor, not only contending that the first line was right, but that the second line was right also and that the party was right in changing from the first to the second. Political gymnastics, Mr. Speaker!

Mr. Speaker, Opposition speakers contend that the elimination of Bill 2, which we were discussing in this Legislature, will result in more strikes amongst dockworkers, railworkers, and grain handlers, and thereby hurt the agricultural economy of this Province. They know, Mr. Speaker, that Bill 2 has no effect whatsoever and no control whatsoever with respect to curtailing strikes in any one of those categories, and therefore it was simply window dressing simply grandstanding.

Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member from Prince Albert West, that noisy little nuisance from the northern woods, that Lilliputian leprechaun, is another Opposition Member, who, Mr. Speaker, engages in strange and unpredictable antics. He temporarily leads — he had some difficulty getting here and we had to introduce a special Act in this Legislature to get him here — and he will have difficulty leading the shattered remnants of the Liberal Party.

Mr. Speaker, a number of the Members of this House are aware that I have some aptitude in economics, mathematics and statistics. The Member for Prince Albert West (Mr. Steuart) says he left \$90 million in the Provincial Treasury when the Liberals left office. That is simply more grandstanding, more window dressing. I hold in my hand the latest edition of the Saskatchewan White Paper — Saskatchewan Financial and Economic Position — issued by the Hon. D.G. Steuart, former Provincial Treasurer. It proves, rather conclusively, Mr. Speaker, that all the things they said in 1964 about debt, expenditures and taxes being too high, and everything they said in 1967, Mr. Speaker, about 'the new Saskatchewan', was mere grandstanding, mere window dressing. By the time they left office in 1971, expenditures had doubled, gross debt had increased by more than \$186 million and surpluses had dwindled significantly.

The former Provincial Treasurer says that he left \$90 million in the Treasury. What he really did was, just left. In 20 years of the former CCF Government the average yearly surplus attained exceeded \$5,100,000 per annum. In seven years of Liberal rule it average some \$2,800,000. They were pleased to term the 20 years stagnation years and the seven years the

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prosperous years. They are the alert businessmen, they contend. It is a matter of interpretation or misinterpretation.

Last night in this House the Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) went back to this old song about stagnation. I recall sitting in the gallery of this House back in 1948, when a Liberal Member, then in Opposition, rose in this House and said, Mr. Speaker, that as long as there was a CCF or Socialist Government in this Province there wouldn't be one oil well discovered in this Province. And when the CCF Government left office in 1964 — there were 5,337 producing oil wells.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — Mr. Speaker, only a Liberal could be wrong 5,337 times on one statement.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — They claim all the credit for the potash development in this Province. Anyone who will read the record knows that we had a potash mine at Patience Lake, we had a potash mine at Esterhazy, we had a potash mine at Belle Plaine. We had commitments in terms of potash mines at Lanigan and at Allan before 1964. Regardless of which government was in power, potash development would have occurred in this Province. They know it and we know it. In fact, Mr. Speaker, if we had more reasoned, logical planning in relation to the potash development we wouldn't have six mines around the city of Saskatoon right now.

The first three should have been started, a five-year lapse should have occurred in between, then perhaps a start made on the next three. This was known well in advance in terms of markets and yet the previous Government, the Liberal Government in this Province, must bear a considerable amount of the responsibility. They are responsible people. When anything went wrong they were responsible. They were the people who bear some responsibility in this respect which brought to the city of Saskatoon a boom and then a bust-type of cycle in its economy.

I warned this Legislature in 1966, and the Members may check that, in the Debates and Proceedings, that we would be in for difficulties in Saskatoon. This doesn't mean that you had to have a crystal ball. These people opposite contend that planning is Socialism. I don't care what you call it, Mr. Speaker. Planning permits you at least to be approximately right rather than being exactly wrong. I will give some credit to the previous government for bringing a pulp mill to this Province. That was a difficult thing to do. Frankly, I don't think the deal was a good one. However, the fact remains that the pulp mill is here. We should scrutinize the situation in relation to that pulp mill. Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Athabasca mill was cancelled.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — I may assure the Members opposite that, that the Waffle had no influence on me in relation to this fact. All I have to do is look at the economics related to it. Economics related to paper and pulp mills across this country.

Mr. MacDonald (Milestone): — Have you looked at the projection for . . . for the next 10 years?

Mr. Robbins: — Yes, I have, Mr. Hon. Member from Milestone.

Mr. MacDonald: — What did they say?

Mr. Robbins: — I'll tell you what they say. Let's have a look at some of these things. In terms of the pulp mills across Canada, the pulp mills on the West Coast have certain distinct advantages. They are on tide water, they have proximity to reasonably large markets — San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver, across the ocean to Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

Pulp mills across the Great Lakes area have proximity to major markets in Chicago, Detroit, Toronto. Pulp mills in the Gaspé Peninsula and in the Maritimes have proximity to major markets in New York, Baltimore, Washington, Boston and across the ocean to Britain and to Europe. Where have we proximity to markets? We have proximity to markets in Missoula, Montana, and Minot, North Dakota. Obviously this creates real problems for us, regardless of government. Obviously the freight structure creates real problems for us. Obviously, if we are realistic in terms of economics, we look at all these facts in advance. I think that by looking at these facts in advance it is reasonable to say that it would not be reasonable to proceed with the Athabasca mill.

I quote, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Eric Kierans who happened to be a Liberal and still is a Liberal, I think. I am not absolutely sure of that fact. I think he is classified as one in any event, but one who objected very much to the \$12 million incentive grant to be given by the Federal Government for the Athabasca pulp mill, because this meant investment in a capital intensive industry which would not provide the jobs that the then Members of the Government contended it would provide. I will admit that in the capital construction phase, obviously it does create a goodly number of jobs, but when you are past that stage you are then in difficulty.

This is proved again in terms of the potash development around the City of Saskatoon. I should like, Mr. Speaker, to draw to the attention of Members Opposite the fact that McMillan Bloedel, perhaps the largest pulp, paper, lumber producer in Canada withdrew from a four million acre licence in Alberta recently, at Hinton, after they had expended one and a half million dollars in terms of surveying the scene. They said it wasn't economically feasible.

Does the Hon. Member from Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) think that the people in McMillan Bloedel haven't read the newsprint records and the prospects for pulp and paper in Canada in the next 10 years. Mr. Speaker, these people opposite assert that they are businessmen. Their record doesn't prove that to be so. The last year the CCF was in Government in 1964, we had a surplus of \$9,324,344. The last year in which the Liberal Government was in power they had a surplus of \$130,270 — average in 20 years under the CCF \$5,100,000; average of the Liberals in seven years \$2,800,000 in round figures. We even have the old, old horror story — you know they couldn't run a peanut stand.

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They bring up the tannery, the shoe factory, the woolen mill, the fish filleting plants and the box factory. Add them all together, look at the record, \$1,675,220 in deficits from those industries. One industry that was started by the CCF, SGIO has returned \$9,649,244 to the Treasury of this Province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — It has also put \$33 million into assets in terms of bonds, building hospitals and schools and roads in this province. Not one dollar of that money would have been available in this Province had we not had a CCF Government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — Saskatchewan minerals returned \$8,291,110 to the Treasury of the Province, perhaps, the most successful commercial enterprise in this Province. "Sodium Socialism," some of the Members used to call it, but very, very useful.

Even the little printing plant which doesn't print very much of the Government business, has returned \$1,238,084 to the Treasury of this Province. STC, the transportation company, which Liberals said was a horrible thing to be doing to the people of the province, has returned \$2,632,039 to the Treasury. Total, over \$30 million. Yes, they talk about a tannery, a shoe factory and a woolen mill and a fish filleting plant and a box factory that lost \$1,675,220, but they refuse to talk about the five Crown corporations that returned over \$30 million to the Treasury of this Province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — I asked the people in the civil service staff if I could get copies of the Crown corporation reports this morning. I have got them in my desk. One they forgot to give me, in error, instead of giving the Timber Board, and I think the returns on it were \$8 million in earnings to the Province so far, they gave me Saskatchewan Pulpwood instead. The one Crown corporation that the Liberals started while they were in office. Now we hear a great deal about the \$1,675,228 in deficits from the fish factory, the box factory, the shoe factory and the tannery, etc. but this one is signed by the former Provincial Treasurer, the Hon. D. Steuart, \$898,350 in losses. It only operated for three years, far more than half of the amount lost in those five other operations. I might say, Mr. Speaker, I can't recall seeing the shoes, the tannery and that sort of thing. I know they were very small operations and the total loss was very small and no one expects when they go into business to be always successful. But I can say that I bought an automobile robe, and that mill has been out of operation for a long, long time, and that was an excellent automobile robe and it is just as good as the day I bought it. A product of a Crown corporation.

Mr. Speaker, in 1964-67 when I sat in this Legislature, I used to engage in a bit of verse to express opinions. Some Members contended I was the poet laureate of the Legislature.

Mr. MacDonald: — . . . word . . . contend poetry!

Mr. Robbins: — No, I didn't! I didn't contend it was poetry, I merely contended it was verse.

Mr. MacDonald (Milestone): — . . .

Mr. Robbins: — I contended I was forced to continue to use this approach, because the record of the government of the day bound to get 'verse and verse'.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — The contention proved to be substantially correct. Now perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the House would give me a little bit of indulgence and I might use a bit of verse on the Opposition in this debate.

Mr. MacDonald: — . . . legislative secretary!

Mr. Robbins: — Would the Hon. Member for Milestone like to go out and call the Members so they might hear this.

Here's to the Opposition
That valiant band
With the grease on their mind
And the pen in their hand.

They are just few in number
The situation is grave
But don't worry about that
Just leave it to Dave.

For Dave is their leader
A gassy wee goat
But a heart of pure gold
Beats beneath his grey coat.

They swear and they sweat
But they end with a song
For when the Government's right
They know they've been wrong.

And when they depart
And to 'hades' draw near
I feel certain, Mr. Speaker,
They'll feel mighty queer.

When the devil looks once
Turns them back from his door
Saying — keep on going up boys
You've been through here before.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — Mr. Speaker, Members opposite are attempting to make much of promises made by individual Members on the Government benches during the election campaign. I have a pamphlet we issued in Nutana Centre, it stated that I would work for a number of items, seven in all. Some are already in process in this current Session. Mr. Speaker, I made a mathematical

calculation and I find that 30 per cent of the points I said I would work for are already in process of being achieved. One month after we attained office or approximately 2 per cent of the four-year life of the Legislature. Not a bad track record, Mr. Speaker. I shall vote against the amendment and support the main motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. T. Hanson (Qu'Appelle-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the constituents of Qu'Appelle-Wolseley and take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Speaker of this Assembly. Your judgment and integrity thus far displayed in this Session do justice to the office that you now hold.

As a representative of a constituency bordered on the north edge by the Qu'Appelle Valley I must speak on behalf of many people worried about pollution and flood controls as well as the vast number of farmers and people servicing those farms. Some of the first co-operative actions were initiated at Sintaluta and Indian Head so I am very proud to represent this progressive constituency in this Legislature.

I must commend this Government for the legislation presented before this Session and I am especially pleased with the Land Bank and Farm Protection legislation. The establishment of a Crown land bank will be the most important single act that we as a Government can do for the young and old farmers of this province. Having been represented in the past by the former Minister of Agriculture (Mr. McFarlane) the farm vote in Qu'Appelle-Wolseley clearly spoke out in favor of our new deal. They were sick and tired of the 'goody' programs offered by the Members sitting opposite which simply put them deeper in debt with no guarantee of markets or prices. I was going to refrain from speaking in this debate because the economic situation in Saskatchewan warrants action, not frivolous debate and many of us new Members are disturbed at the progress made thus far.

To me the Opposition has made this Session nothing more than a preliminary leadership convention. May I please remind the Hon. Members opposite to show the Speaker and this Chamber the courtesies they deserve so that we, as new members can learn the proper procedures and actions rather than duplicate the arrogant attitude of the Hon. Member from Milestone who seldom bows to the Speaker and uses the word honorable less often when addressing the Government Members.

We have been criticized for not implementing all of our platform at this Session. I feel we can compare Saskatchewan today to a farmstead after a tornado. Yes, a tornado, Mr. Speaker, that lasted seven years and nearly destroyed 20 years of good planning and building. An act of nature or government can destroy this province to such a degree that the rebuilding may take four or five years. But they want action in six weeks.

However, I have every confidence in this Government's ability to tackle the situation by initiating programs like the Land Bank and Debt Moratorium legislation to hasten the recovery. My thanks to the Hon. Member from Cannington (Mr. Weatherald), who isn't present right now, for his concern over the farm land being purchased in my area by the American millionaire.

As some of you may know, I farm at Fillmore and the holdings of this millionaire are kitty-corner to my brother's farm right now and one mile from mine. The availability of land to rent in the rural municipality of No. 96 is virtually non-existent. The two corporate type farms in this municipality control nearly 30 sections of land and are a major contributor to the paralysis in our towns and related businesses. The Land Bank and restrictions on ownership are our only hope of remaining as young farmers in this area. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that the Hon. Member from Cannington is committed to vote with us when the legislation comes before the House to correct this situation. Let me at this time make one point clear. To me and to our party members it matters not whether the giant is an American, Canadian or Russian, as long as he is an absentee or non-resident of the farm or farms and simply hires his work done, we feel that he has no right to purchase Saskatchewan farm land in the future.

I congratulate the Government for its health and labor legislation and particularly for halting the Dore Lake Pulp Mill. The money saved can be better used in the agricultural segment for programs like the Land Bank.

Mr. Speaker, along with this idea we must re-instate the AMA or Agricultural Machinery Administration and promote implement manufacture in Saskatchewan. Some of the best machines on the market today are built right here in Saskatchewan, yet these companies lack the funds to expand production and infiltrate the North American market. Let's give our small manufacturer some real help, as the benefits will surely be passed back to the farmers of Saskatchewan.

We must also shift the burden of taxation onto income and off of the land. The Farmers Union of Saskatchewan did a survey recently while the election campaign was on and the facts that they uncovered were that the average farm family in Saskatchewan now pays \$600 taxes towards education per year, while those families in towns and cities average about \$340 a year. I have every confidence that we as a government will tackle this problem with all the necessary speed.

I'm not much bigger or taller than the Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart) yet I was referred to in the Leader-Post as one of the giant killers who knocked off the popular Cabinet Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hanson: — Let me point out that it is not how popular you seem or how loud you bark that wins the seats, but rather the policy and past performance that the electorate bases their decision on.

Some Hon. Members: — The Hon. Members opposite really defeated themselves and we were just there offering a sensible humanitarian alternative.

If we in the back benches are to be the conscience of this Government, I am very proud to do so. We shall not turn a deaf ear on the people in trouble, whether farmers, businessmen or

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laborers, child, teenager, provider or senior citizen.

Before I conclude my remarks, I should like to thank the former Attorney General (Mr. Heald) for the help that he gave some of my constituents, myself included. I had trouble receiving all of the materials needed to finish construction of a steel quonset that I had bought with a guaranteed delivery date. After haggling for about two and a half months with Christmas fast approaching, I finally consulted with the Attorney General and got immediate action, as did some of the other farmers whom I advised. I should like to thank him at this time for the action that he took. I think this points out the need for an agricultural Ombudsman to be established whom farmers could contact without fear or cost and get action on their complaints.

The future of this Province will be promising if both sides of this House devote themselves to serve the people, all of the people without favoritism to corporations or unions, or any other select group in Saskatchewan.

I commend this Government for the Throne Speech and congratulate the mover and seconder on a job well done. I will oppose the amendment and proudly support the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The amendment was negated on the following recorded division:

YEAS — 13

Messieurs

Steuart	MacDonald	MacLeod
Coupland	(Milestone)	McPherson
Gardner	McIsaac	Lane
Grant	Loken	MacDonald
Boldt	Weatherald	(Moose Jaw N)

NAYS — 39

Messieurs

Blakeney	Matsalla	Faris
Brockelbank	Robbins	Dyck
Byers	Pepper	Cody
Wood	Michayluk	Feduniak
Smishek	Whelan	Mostoway
Romanow	Brown	Comer
Messer	Kwasnica	Rolfes
Snyder	Carlson	Lange
Bowerman	Tchorzewski	Hanson
Kramer	Richards	Oliver
Kowalchuk	Owens	Feschuk
Baker	Larson	Kaeding
Thibault	Taylor	Flasch

Debate adjourned.

MOTIONS

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Hon. A.E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I propose and do now move

That when this Assembly adjourns Wednesday, August 4, 1971, it do stand adjourned until Monday, August 9, 1971, at 10:00 o'clock a.m.

The reason for this, Mr. Speaker, I think have already been alluded to. The Deputy Premier and I shall be leaving this afternoon to attend the Premier's Conference at Victoria, concerning which the Leader of the Opposition was kind enough to direct a few words to this House earlier today. In addition to that, Members opposite have at the time that the Motion was introduced last week concerning the sittings for this week expressed the view that they needed more time to study a number of the bills. In particular one Member expressed the view that he would need some time to consult people outside the House. It occurred to us that we have been sitting fairly continuously these last three days, starting early in the morning and going into the evening; that Members opposite have doubtless been burning the midnight oil getting their speeches ready and their research done and that all of us could do with a break of two days while we prepare ourselves for the remaining business on the Order Paper. I should anticipate that there will remain on the Order Paper primarily the debates on the Labour Standards Act, which are unlikely to be concluded today. All of that may well require some research. There are, in addition, one or two other items such as the liquor resolution and the private Members' motions. It seemed to me that we can probably best organize our time by adjourning today, having Thursday and Friday and the weekend off and coming back on Monday morning and seeing whether we can deal with the remaining business with dispatch having had the opportunity to fully prepare.

Mr. D.G. Steuart (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, while it is true that we on this side of the House certainly recognize, first, that the Premier of course should and must attend this conference and we wish them well — and he has announced now that he is taking the Deputy Leader, the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) with him. However, we think that the House should carry on. For example, we have the farm credit Bill, the so-called Protection of Farm Property Act before us — I think it is going to be the ruination of the Farm Credit Act — and we see no reason why this House should adjourn. We think because two of the Members out of 45 have gone, surely the Premier has enough confidence in the balance of his Ministers and the balance of his Members to allow them to carry on and debate this and other Acts.

We intend, for example, when we are in second reading, if we ever get to second reading of the Act concerning the farm credit, the so-called moratorium on farm credit, we intend to ask the Government to urge the Government to do everything we can to convince the Government to refer that Bill to the Law Amendments Committee or any other appropriate committee that will give the general public, the farmers, the farm organizations, the credit granting associations, credit unions and so, on the opportunity to come in and discuss this Bill and

make their wishes known. Now this could be done in the next two days. This could be done. Then that Bill could be given second reading. The Minister may have some amendments, we don't know. He might indicate those amendments when he speaks. Then we intend, if the Government doesn't intend to do it themselves, we intend to move a motion of referral to give the public, the farmers, the farm organizations a chance to speak on this Bill. This could be done in the next two days. Many of these organizations are ready now; we have discussed it where the Government failed to discuss it, failed to alert them about this Bill, to give them any information about this Bill. We have done it, we've contacted some 17 organizations. The indications we get from them is that they want to come in and they want to talk about this Bill and they want to be heard on this Bill because this Bill could have the most serious ramifications of anything that's been done at this Session, or anything that has been done in this Province for a long time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — The next few days could be usefully used and there wouldn't have to be any conclusions drawn. It doesn't mean that when the Premier is away or the Attorney General is away that these Bills would be finalized. But the other Members of his Government, the other 43 Members of his Government and his Caucus, along with our Members and the outside public could be given a chance in the next few days thoroughly to discuss this piece of legislation and these outside groups could be heard. This, to us, is participatory democracy that those people like to talk about in the election. So I see no reason why this House should adjourn. I think this House should carry on and there's no reason why the Premier and the Attorney General can't go away.

Speaking on behalf of our side of the House, we regret that again they are going to interrupt this so-called emergency Session, again they are giving us another indication that there really isn't any hurry; there isn't any emergency about this Session at all, about this Special Session. They are not in any rush obviously to do some of the things for the farmers that they indicated earlier in the week that they were. I urge the Premier and the Government to reconsider this motion. Let us carry on in the next two days. Refer this very, very vital Bill to a committee, an appropriate committee to give outside interests a chance to be heard and then when the Premier and the A.G. come back on Monday we shall have advanced that far and hopefully they would be prepared to then consider any amendments due to changes that might have been brought up by these various farm groups that have been listened to and heard and had a chance to make their presentations and we should get a better Bill as a result and we should get it on the books faster or get it off the books faster whichever is the case.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. R. Romanow (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words in reply to the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart).

I think it is important to bear in mind that the Premier as the Leader of the Opposition has indicated, has a very important function in responsibility obviously at this conference in

Victoria. This is, after all, the first conference he will attend as Premier of a new government. Doubtless there are a number of very important issues that he will want to raise for the consideration of the first Ministers there, important issues that relate to farmers, relate to the economic health of the Province of Saskatchewan and I think that all the people of Saskatchewan would want to be sure that the Premier has full opportunity to have his views and the views of Saskatchewan impressed upon the other Minister who are there so that the Saskatchewan point of view is firmly communicated. We want to see what common ground can be established. At the same time I think the Leader of the Opposition would agree with me that it may very well be that the Family Farm Protection Bill, being such an important Bill, and I do agree with him that it does have very wide consequences throughout Saskatchewan, is a Bill that the Premier himself may want to make comments on, to listen to the observations of the Members opposite, to hear representations and he obviously can't do that and be at Victoria at the same time. It is not a question of confidence or non-confidence, it is a question of a very important piece of legislation designed, we think, for the protection of family farmers. It may be in some areas deficient, if so, we are prepared to listen to the submissions of the group opposite but we want to give the Government and obviously the Premier, a chance to consider what discussions and what observations are made. So here we have a conflict. A conflict between the conference and the Bill.

The Leader of the Opposition says we are anxious to get farm legislation on the books and the answer to that is Yes, we are anxious. But we want to remind Members of the House the operative date of the family farm Bill is July 31, 1972, whether the Bill is passed in second reading and fully today or whether it is passed four or five days from now or on Monday or Tuesday. The people of Saskatchewan know now or ought to know and we are reiterating again that it concerns itself only with respect to debts incurred prior to July 31, 1971. That's the operative date of the Bill. So that in the sense of rushing it through, whether the Bill is passed today as I've said or four or five days later, the effect of the Bill, the legal effect on the Bill on the people of Saskatchewan, will be, in my respectful submission, the same. So it is not a question of trying to dodder or drag our feet on the farm legislation. This farm legislation, the effect of it, I submit, is already before the people of Saskatchewan.

Now further, Mr. Speaker, if I may make a comment on it. I'm frankly confused as to what the Opposition really wants when it comes . . .

Mr. Steuart: — Yes.

Mr. Romanow: — Yes I am and you are contributing to my confusion because the Leader of the Opposition gets up when we introduced the Bill. We wanted first of all to have special sittings of the House, have the rules changed so that we could sit from 10:00 in the morning until 9:30 p.m. so we could expedite the business of the farmers. What does the Leader of the Opposition do? He gets up and says, "Oh, no you are trying to steam-roller us, with a small group of 13 people you are trying to use your heavy handed majority. We need time. We want to consider outside help on this Bill. We want to get the feelings of the

parties of Saskatchewan. There are only 13 of us, we won't have time to consider it." So now we have the Premier's Conference which from our standpoint and from the people's standpoint, would be of benefit to have the Premier at, and now we have happily a concurrence which would be of some assistance to the Opposition, giving them time to study the Bill and he comes in the House and he says, "Oh no, don't adjourn the House." One time he says adjourn it because they want time to consider it and the next time he says no don't adjourn because we are ready to vote on the thing.

Now they come around to us with respect to the Essential Services Bill. We are ready to go with the Essential Services Bill, Mr. Speaker, that was Bill No. 6, it is in Government Orders, Committee of the Whole, Item No. 5 and we are ready to go but who gets up and adjourns Bill 6? Members of the Liberal Opposition. A two-sentence Bill repealing Bill 2 in Essential Services, and these people say we are not ready so they are not ready with respect to Bill 6. The same situation with respect to the Medical Care Insurance Act amendment. Yesterday, the Minister of Health tries to get the Bill into second reading and who gets up and adjourns it and says we aren't ready? The Liberal Party opposite. The former Minister of Health says, "We are not ready to go." So here we have the legislation and we are trying to co-operate with them. They want time to consider the legislation. They have the time, two days in which to consider and now they come back to the House and they say that somehow we are using stalling tactics and that this attendance of the Premiers' Conference is not important.

I want to tell the Members of this House that this motion in my short experience in this Legislature is not without precedent. I recall when I was in Opposition a resolution introduced by the then Premier and the Deputy Premier, the Member who is the Leader of the Opposition now, that adjourned the entire business of the House in February of 1971 at the time when the farmers were in deep economic crisis, for the Winter Games in the Province of Saskatchewan. I recall the time when the now Leader of the Opposition was part of the Government when he adjourned the entire business of the House, not only for the Winter Games, but for another form of games, a Liberal Convention in Ottawa when the farmers were in deep stagnation and crisis. Now he says that the Government of Saskatchewan shouldn't adjourn this House to attend this very vital and important Premiers' Conference. Now he says the Premier should be denied the right to be present when the business of the House is being conducted or at the same time be denied the right to express our views to the first Ministers of the Dominion of Canada. I say, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, if there are any stalling tactics the stalling tactics are due to the Leader of the Opposition and the Members opposite.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — If there are any costs that are being attached to the taxpayers of this province as a result of this Session, I say those additional costs can be due to the Leader of the Opposition and the Members opposite and their delaying tactics. The simple fact of the matter is that they are playing games with this House. They are playing games with the people of Saskatchewan. They are trying to find a political niche for themselves somewhere after their defeat on June 23. Somehow they

are trying to find a home whereby they can start to build their political base and when they oppose this resolution, make no mistake about it, that's precisely what's behind the Leader of the Opposition's attitude. It is strictly and purely a political ploy which will stall the business of this House and hamper Saskatchewan's effectiveness of the Premiers' Conference and the Leader of the Opposition has brought disrespect to the House by his stand taken on the Premiers' Conference taken this morning in this manner.

Mr. C.P. MacDonald (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I should just like to add a comment or two. You know it is a funny thing, last Thursday or Wednesday, the Premier of the Province brought in a motion asking this House to sit at 10:00 o'clock Monday morning, Friday night and Saturday of this week, then all of a sudden he found that we opposed the concept of sitting Monday night, or Monday morning, Saturday and Sunday and every night, so he decided to spank us a bit. He decided to spank us a bit so he said, "I'm going to leave this House and therefore we are not going to sit, we are going to adjourn the House for two days," and I think it shows a hopeless lack of confidence in the new Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) and the other Ministers sitting over there. A hopeless lack of confidence. The Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) stands up and says, "Why, we delayed the Medical Care Bill." Well what utter nonsense, the Medical Care Bill never had to come to this House. Then he says we delayed Bill No. 6. Well I want to tell him I hope we can delay it from now until 1980 because we don't believe in it now or we don't believe in it ever.

Then he says the Farm Protection Act is pretty important but you know it is going to be retroactive, it is going to be inclusive 'til August 31st next year. Well I want to tell him that until that Bill is passed there is a heavy cloud hanging over the head of every farmer in this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — I suggest today that the farmers' credit in this Province even today is jeopardized because the people and the creditors of this Province, the small credit unions, the man who wants to sell cattle to his neighbor, the implement dealer, don't know what is going to happen on that farm implement dealer's Bill, and therefore it is vital and it is important that this Bill move along in this House and as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, the real issue here and the real point that the Opposition is making is that we want to wish the Premier well, on this Conference. We want to wish him well because he is there representing the Province of Saskatchewan, not the NDP Government, and we hope he makes a very valid and important and significant contribution.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is another problem in the Province of Saskatchewan, and they just have to pick up the Leader-Post this morning, they just have to look at some of the telegrams and letters they are receiving, and that is that every small businessman in the Province of Saskatchewan, and every farmer in the Province of Saskatchewan is concerned about a piece of legislation that is before this House and they want the opportunity to come and discuss this legislation, to put their

viewpoint before this House and before the people of Saskatchewan. They have not been offered that. The Leader of the Opposition said, "We contacted 17 farm organizations and people of the business community who had not been consulted they had not been discussed." And as I pointed out this morning if this had been a labor Bill, they'd have had labor organizers here from Washington to San Francisco and they would have sat in this House. The other night they had the whole tribe down here on a celebration, they thought they were going to finish with Bill 2. All I am saying is that these people want to discuss this Bill. They want to know what the Government's intentions are. Mr. Speaker, by putting this House off until Monday and then throwing it off until next week, the possibility of getting those representations into the Law Amendments Committee is delayed again.

All I'm suggesting and all the Opposition is suggesting is that if the Premier and the Attorney General wish to go then we say, bon voyage and good luck but then move to have the Farm Protection Act, put into the Law Amendments Committee, give these people an opportunity to come forth and make their representations and then, after the Premier and the Attorney General come back, they can look at the briefs and the representations. So all we are saying, Mr. Speaker, is we don't disagree that the Premier should go and that this is not an important Conference but we think there is an important matter here before this House and we think that this is just an opportunity to stall those business people and the other organizations like Credit Unions across this Province, in putting their representations regarding the Farm Protection Act.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. K. MacLeod (Regina Albert Park): — Mr. Speaker, I just have a word or two on this. What concerns me most is that the timing of the sittings of the House seems to be at the whim of the Government. I suppose with all the Members that they have, there is nothing we can do about it.

But what troubles me, Mr. Speaker, is that we shall be given time when we don't need time, and we shall probably be denied time when we do need it.

I think in fairness we should have The Family Farm Protection Act brought to the second reading stage. We should hear what is to be said by the movers of the Bill. And then it should be referred to the Law Amendments Committee.

Then I think proper representations by all interested parties should be made. At that point we will probably need some time. At that point we shall have to consider the remarks not only of the mover of the Bill, but of all the people who speak either for or against the Bill, weighing their reasons for it, weighing their arguments against.

Then we shall have to determine as Her Majesty's proper and loyal Opposition what our position ought to be. And that is when we shall need the time. I can hear the argument now, Mr. Speaker. They will say, "We gave you Thursday and Friday." We don't even have the amendments yet. Next week when we say that we should like some time to consider these matters, they will say, "We gave you time. We gave you two days. We gave

you Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday."

But when we shall need the time, shall we get the time? No! They will pick the time that we can have and after having picked it out, showing us nothing, then they will ram the thing through again, giving us no time at all.

Mr. Romanow: — You weren't here when we were rammed.

Mr. MacLeod: — Oh, I wouldn't ram you. I would never ram the Attorney General. If he wants to be rammed he can get rammed from someone else.

You fellows called this Session. You are the off again, on again, come again Johnny. My suggestion is this: we need time, but not today and not tomorrow. We need it the very minute we get this thing to the Law Amendments Committee. Then we do need some time.

Mr. Romanow: — Who runs this House?

Mr. MacLeod: — You do. Don't blame us. So, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to oppose the motion at this time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I really don't have very much to add to what has been said, except to make it very clear — if it wasn't clear before, that Members on this side of the House are not Members of the Liberal Party, since we certainly don't seem to understand their requirements.

Well, I think that some Members opposite might be able to handle it with another lawyer but I think the Member for Rosthern (Mr. Boldt) would take quite a bit more tutoring than that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — What I am saying is that our first discussions with the Opposition with respect to this Session were that it would be a two-day session and this was entirely satisfactory to Members opposite. Then the next thing was that the Opposition were not going to be steamrollered and they were going to come out fighting, as I recall the headlines. Then they wanted a full debate, a complete debate . . .

Mr. Steuart: — The Government crossed us.

Mr. Blakeney: — Then the next thing was that we were going to wind up in three or four days. They ask why we should stay any longer than three or four days because this Session was an unnecessary session, it was just grandstanding anyway. Then the next move was that, "we don't want to wind it up in three or four days. The very idea of sitting on Monday morning and on Wednesday night. We'll fight this to the death." And they did that last Friday and said they didn't want to be hurried up.

Mr. Steuart: — All very consistent.

Mr. Blakeney: — Now they consistently said that they needed more time to study this absolutely vital legislation which was going to be passed in this "unnecessary grandstanding session." They asked for some additional time, and we said that we would consider it. And then it appeared that we could provide that extra time at the time when the Deputy Premier and I would be away at the Premier's Conference, when they would have all the opportunity to consult with their constituents and with others who might be interested in this, now vital and no longer 'grandstanding' legislation.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — We are about to find out, a little later, when the vote comes just how many want it and how many don't. But until that time, Mr. Speaker, if this is unnecessary legislation, then it won't take much time to study. But I suggest that it is very necessary legislation and will take considerable time to study. I believe that to offer to the Opposition two days of sitting time and one weekend is a fair and reasonable proposal. It is one totally consistent with what they said last Friday and totally inconsistent with what they are saying today.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — I don't apologize for not being able to respond to their message of today. If we are responding to their yesterday's message we can only agree with them on one day, not on two, because they never have the same opinion on two consecutive days. We are, therefore, sorry that we are agreeing with their position of last Friday and not with the position of Wednesday. But that position of last Friday was a reasonable position on their part presumably, or they wouldn't have taken it, and accordingly we intend to accommodate them and I invite the House to support the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF MR. R. GROSS MEMBER FOR GRAVELBOURG

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might rise on a Point of Privilege of the House, to introduce to the House the new Member for Gravelbourg who has just taken his seat.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — I know that Members on both sides of the House welcome the new Member. He is one of the youngest — he may well be the youngest — he is certainly one of the youngest Members who has ever taken a seat in this Legislature, at the age of 22 years. He has, one would hope, perhaps with different degrees of intensity, a long political career ahead of him. We, I know, join in welcoming him and expressing the hope, on his behalf and on behalf of his constituency, that he will enjoy his stay with the House and make a worthwhile contribution to our deliberations.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

SECOND READINGS

Hon. G.T. Snyder (Minister of Labour) moved second reading of Bill No. 7 — **An Act to amend The Labour Standards Act, 1969.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased at this time to move second reading of a Bill to reduce the legal standard of work in Saskatchewan to 40 hours with no reduction in pay.

This, Mr. Speaker, is the first of what I hope will be a number of legislative measures which will restore Saskatchewan to the position it occupied prior to 1964, when it was the home of the most progressive labor legislation in North America.

Prior to that time a number of the Labour Statutes enacted in this Province were hailed as unique, Mr. Speaker, when passed and were subsequently duplicated by other Canadian provinces. When the CCF took over from the previous government in 1944, the post-war industrial expansion in the West was in its infancy. Despite Saskatchewan's traditional dependence upon agriculture the new government had faith that the province would have a bright industrial future.

They knew that the provincial economy was undergoing a fundamental change and that it was essential to create an environment which would be favorable to the development of an effective and democratic participation in the life of the province, by the fast-growing important wage earning urban segment of the labor force. This was the philosophy, Mr. Speaker, behind the comprehensive program of new and improved legislation introduced in the 20 years between 1944 and 1964.

The measures related to labor-management relations, to labor protection, to labor standards, apprenticeship training and industrial safety. The Trade Union Act of 1944 was intended to regulate labor-management relations and to facilitate collective bargaining. Among its important provisions were those dealing with union security, voluntary conciliation and the rights of civil servants to bargain collectively, all unprecedented at that time in Canada.

Other features of this labor legislation, Mr. Speaker, include the prohibition of unfair employment practices, the highest basic minimum wage in Canada, equal pay for men and women doing comparable work, a guarantee against the loss of pay for eight statutory holidays, two weeks annual vacation with pay after the first year of employment and three weeks after five years service with the same employer. And additionally, Mr. Speaker, the highest workmen's compensation benefits in the whole of Canada.

These, and many other legal rights and benefits of labor which are nowadays taken for granted, were practically non-existent when the first CCF Government was formed in 1944. The action of government to establish labor standards as we know it now, was inspired by the sweat shop conditions of the industrial revolution in 19th century England, Mr. Speaker.

During that era, workers discovered that they were at the mercy of profit-seeking industrialists who regarded them as

merely faceless instruments of production. It was widely believed that hard work and long hours and low wages was a national blessing inasmuch as it would prevent idleness, drunkenness and criminal activity. There was little thought of recognizing these workers as social beings entitled to a degree of social and economic equality. They were, in fact, nothing short of industrial slaves.

The concept of minimum standard wages and working conditions set by a government emerged as a consequence of these circumstances, Mr. Speaker. Progress, however, was very slow. As late as 1908, for example, Winston Churchill was still saying that we must strive, and I quote:

For the universal establishment of minimum standards of life and labor. We want to draw a line below which we will not allow persons to live in labor yet above which they may compete with all the strength of their manhood.

The question which governments have sought to answer over the years, Mr. Speaker, relates to the point at which this line should be drawn. Generally speaking it is the view of the Government of Saskatchewan of today that the line should be as near as possible to prevailing conditions of employment.

In Canada, the principle of shorter hours of work was first acknowledged generally in 1898 in the report of the Royal Commission on Relations of Labour and Capital. The report indicated that it was advisable and necessary to permit a worker leisure time in which to acquire the knowledge required to fit him to be a more useful tradesman, a more reliable citizen or a more intelligent being in which to pursue amusement, recreation and relaxation.

Nonetheless it wasn't until the 1920s and the 1930s that hours of work legislation of general application were enacted, Mr. Speaker. The extension of the franchise, the need to protect unorganized workers, economic conditions and the general acceptance of humanitarian ideas, combined in this period to move governments to positive action.

In 1944 straight time, overtime, or straight time hours in Saskatchewan ranged from 48 hours a week to well over 60 hours a week, and overtime after these limits if payable at all was seldom paid at a rate better than straight time earnings. The 44-hour a week and basic 8-hour day with the same take home pay was a Saskatchewan first in Canadian labor legislation. It was introduced in 1947. At that time the Hours of Work Act made provision for maintenance of take home pay wherever previously longer hours had to be cut to 44.

The 8-hour day and the 44-hour week provision now cover practically all employees in the larger centres, in which a substantial portion of the non-agricultural labor force resides. Employees required to work overtime, after 8 hours a day, or 44 hours a week, are paid at time and one half the regular rate, varying exemptions are allowed in the smaller centres and the rural areas.

Since 1964, Mr. Speaker, the trend to a shorter work week has become more and more pronounced and the reduction in the legal standard of work, I suggest, is long overdue. In June of

this year it is estimated that more than 70 per cent of Saskatchewan employees covered by the Saskatchewan hours of work orders, were working a normal work week before overtime of 40 hours or under. Let me repeat, 70 per cent of Saskatchewan employees are presently working 40 hours a week or less.

Accordingly, it appears to us only fair and just that the remaining wage earning segment of the labor force can be, and should be, afforded the same opportunity to enjoy the benefits of increased leisure.

We find ourselves today, Mr. Speaker, in the midst of another revolution, this time a technological revolution, in which the processes of production are, to an increasing extent, being taken over by large scale mechanical and electronic equipment relieving many thousands of workers of the tiresome repetitive manual jobs. As a result the same quantity of goods can be produced in less total working time. It seems reasonable to expect that all employees are entitled to their share of the benefits accruing from this automated age of which one is a reduced number of hours of work.

Most union agreements, Mr. Speaker, now make provision for a 40-hour week and the vast majority of large business establishments are on the 40-hour standard as well. The Government considers that it has an obligation to establish appropriate minimum standards for these employees who do not have the protection of a union or who are not employed by the larger enterprises. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, it is proposed that The Labour Standards Act now be amended to provide for the introduction of the general standard 40-hour work week, after which overtime, at the rate of time and one half regular pay must be paid. Where previously longer hours are reduced to 40 in conformity with the legislation, the amendment provides that there shall be no loss in take-home pay.

We estimate that just under 40,000 employees subject to hours of work orders are presently working more than 40 hours per week and will be directly affected by this change. In line with the new trend, the amendment also permits a four-day week, 10-hour day, without overtime, where the majority of employees and employer will agree.

I should point out, Mr. Speaker, that the 44-hour week after which overtime must be paid applies under current legislation and regulations to cities, to offices and shops and 71 specified towns and villages and to all factories and mines in the province. The 48-hour standard is in effect in establishments other than the offices and shops in 71 specified communities and to all other establishments in the balance of the province outside cities, with the exception of factories and mines.

It is very difficult, Mr. Speaker, to quantify accurately the economic impact of the introduction of the 40-hour work week at this time. Although this is not our intention and it is not especially desirable, it may be the effect of the change in some cases will be that employees will continue to work the same number of hours but have overtime rates after 40 hours a week. This, of course, is the employer's prerogative to arrange and will result then in higher take-home pay for employees in that event. I suggest that a more acceptable consequence of the amendment and perhaps a more likely consequence of the amendment

would be for the employer to opt to engage new staff to fill the extra hours previously worked by existing employees. This, I suggest, in time of high unemployment would spread available employment over a large number of members of the labor force. The extent to which the amendment will function as an employment-creating device will largely depend upon the size of the business and the nature of the industry and certain other seasonal influences. In any event a direct effect on employment would stem from the fact that with increased leisure time, resulting from the reduction of hours of work, the demand for certain groups and services used particularly in leisure time may also increase. Another desirable effect would be a reduction in the employees' working time with no corresponding decrease in production, no increase in employer costs or boost in prices. There is considerable evidence, Mr. Speaker, to indicate that a shorter working period is often more productive than a longer one. It may, therefore, be possible to increase productivity to a sufficient extent to permit employees to produce during the shorter standard work week a level of output equal to that created before the change in the hours of work. At the same time with careful investigation employers may discover that the impact of the shorter work week may be offset by new-work methods designed to increase efficiency that does not have to be followed automatically by a price increase or a drop in profit margin. A number of businesses today, I suggest, are not operated in perhaps the most efficient manner and their management will, I am sure, attempt to realize a more competitive position in the streamlining of their business. We realize that there may be special problems, Mr. Speaker. In the service industry, for example, it is difficult to increase productivity. However, hours of business might very profitably be re-arranged to eliminate dead hours and therefore in some cases absorb the impact of this amendment.

As is well known, Mr. Speaker, there are also substantial social benefits attached to shorter hours of work. The most obvious of these relate to the benefits of increased leisure. Adequate leisure is a necessary condition for leading a full, useful and satisfying life. Sufficient leisure for rest and recuperation is necessary for health and well being. The need for leisure, I suggest, is increasing as a result of the complexities of our modern society and the accompanying increase in fatigue and nervous tension. The worker of today, Mr. Speaker, is called upon to perform a growing number of duties in his leisure time. In addition there are new opportunities to make valuable use of leisure time for cultural education and enjoyment, for vocational and professional training, for sports and for travel. These opportunities, Mr. Speaker, which in the past were confined to a privileged few, are now being made more readily available to the ordinary man and woman. But they compete for the limited hours of leisure, with the need for rest and the task of running a household, bringing up a family and being a good citizen. A multitude of ways of using leisure time helps workers to lead more balanced lives. This has a positive influence on productivity and output that enable the employees to make increasing contributions to economic and social progress.

Another benefit which may be cited involves the effect of shorter hours on absenteeism, sickness and occupational accidents. Fatigue is likely to increase absentee, sickness and injury rates. The United Bureau of Labour Statistics Inquiry has revealed that the longer the hours the more work

time is lost through absenteeism and that work injuries increased disproportionately as daily hours of work are raised. Absenteeism seems to fall off when hours of work are shortest because the worker has more time to cope with his non-occupational and family duties which often account for absenteeism.

In this age of automation, Mr. Speaker, a special problem, the solution of which requires shorter hours concerns the development of what is referred to as perpetual fatigue. This arises when a worker is not required simply to exert himself but must give constant and undivided attention to a machine and be ready to take immediate action when something goes wrong. Many other specific benefits could be mentioned, Mr. Speaker. Shorter hours tend to minimize the effect of labor displacement and to some extent stabilize employment and maintain prosperity.

Shorter hours make it possible for the older worker to compete more effectively with the younger one. Shorter hours enable a husband and wife to share household duties in families where both husband and wife are obliged to work. Shorter hours enable the workers to devote time to study and in this way keep up with the change in technology. There is no doubt that a reduced working period provides a more satisfactory combination of the production factor and the leisure factor and thus contributes to the cultural process of society.

Before I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I want to stress that we intend to proceed very carefully with this piece of legislation. Special consideration may be given to employers in exceptional circumstances under which the change is unduly prejudicial to the interest of employees and employer and is seriously detrimental to the operation of a particular industry. The categories of employees excluded from the coverage of the Act or regulations will remain unchanged for the present. This will also hold true in the case of the employee who is currently partially exempted by regulation. In addition, special cases, I suggest, will be dealt with by a system of exemptions, deferments, the averaging of standard working hours over a specific period and special authorizations. This question will be examined in the near future in conjunction with the deliberations of the Minimum Wage Board which I am attempting to reconstitute, and have called together, in order that they may determine the appropriate level of minimum wages in Saskatchewan.

From several points of view, Mr. Speaker, hours of work and minimum wages are closely inter-related and it would seem logical to study all of the implications of this relationship before specific measures are initiated. For this reason, Mr. Speaker, the present amendment which I am proposing today to The Labour Standards Act will not be proclaimed in force until the Minimum Wage Board has completed its review.

Mr. Speaker, the passage of legislation in Saskatchewan providing for a 40-hour standard work week is in accordance with the recommendations of the Woods' Task Force on Labour Relations, the report of which was issued in 1968. I am pleased to report that it will be the first general enactment of its kind among provincial jurisdictions in Canada. Only the Federal Canada Labour Standards Code now provides for a 40-hour week. It's a clear indication that the Government intends to honor its pledge to ensure that the working people of this Province enjoy their rightful share of prosperity which

we in this country are fortunate enough to be endowed.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased then to move that Bill No. 7, an Act to amend The Labour Standards Act, 1969, be now read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. B. Dyck (Saskatoon City Park): — In Saskatchewan it is estimated 6.3 per cent or 8,600 workers are subject to the 48-hour week. All of these are outside the cities. The 44-hour week applies in varying degrees in the cities of the province, in fact throughout the province and in offices and shops in 71 larger towns. There are presently 22 per cent or 31,200 employees working a 44-hour week in 5,200 establishments. It is estimated that 96,400 employees are working a 40-hour week or less. This represents 71 per cent of the employees affected by the hours-of-work legislation. The immediate argument in passing this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is implied in these statistics. That is to say there is a need to equalize to a larger extent conditions for working people throughout the province.

Mr. Speaker, there has been no reduction in the legal hours of work in this Province of Saskatchewan since 1947. At that time it was passed by the then CCF Government. For almost 25 years we have not seen any significant changes in this area despite the fact that during this same period of time we have been going through a virtual technological revolution in the areas of agriculture, industry and commerce. These changes in technology have significantly reduced the labor component, particularly in manufactured goods. As a result of these technological changes and other changes an excellent case for reduced hours may be made at this time. However, Mr. Speaker, what has been the position of the party represented by the Hon. Members opposite in this area? As with so many other areas they have taken a rather ambiguous posture with respect to hours of work. On the election hustings they are friends of the poor, the aged and the working man but in 1965 when we wanted to reduce the hours of work they voted against it. In 1966 when we wanted to reduce the hours of work, they voted against it. In 1967, when we wanted to reduce the hours of work, they voted against it.

The House recessed from 12:30 until 2:30 p.m.

Mr. Dyck: — If I might recapitulate briefly, Mr. Speaker, I was saying before 12:30 that a very large percentage of the labor force in Saskatchewan is currently working 40 hours and less per week. There were still, however, a number of people in the province working 48 and 44 hours a week and I felt that the statistics provided a fairly fundamental argument in themselves for the reduction of the work week to 40 hours. I was suggesting too, Mr. Speaker, that we haven't had any basic changes in this area since 1947 and at that time, of course, the changes were initiated by the CCF government.

As with so many other areas, Mr. Speaker, I found that the party represented by the Hon. Members opposite have taken a rather ambiguous position with respect to labor standards. During elections on the hustings they talk about their concern for the poor, the aged and the working man but in 1965 when we

wanted to reduce hours of work, they voted against it. In 1967 when we wanted to reduce hours of work they voted against it and in 1968 when we wanted to reduce hours of work, they voted against it. Mr. Speaker, Members opposite have a very unenviable record when it comes to the field of labor standards.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is pertinent and I should like to suggest and provide a brief, historical perspective with respect to hours of work. In Europe, in the middle ages, guilds, municipalities and statutes often specified hours of work, commonly from sunrise to sunset with limited breaks for food and rest. Over the years the average was probably about ten and one half hours a day with a six-day week, with the yearly hours reduced by various religious holidays and so on. Although the number varied from time to time and place to place, they had as many as 90 or 100 days off per year for holidays. Yearly total of about 2,750 to 3,000 hours were worked on an average of 54 hours per week. When you look at Saskatchewan in 1944 this is not all that bad but with the advent of modern industrialization in the late 18th century in Europe and the United States the hours of work were extended significantly. The motive was to use as fully as possible the greater capital per worker the new methods required. Employers were able to enforce longer hours because of the increase in the job-seeking population.

At this juncture in history the 12-hour day became common and there were few holidays outside of Sunday. Total annual hours of work could be put at 3,500 to 3,750. Those were the days, Mr. Speaker, when we had women and children in the mines and in the factories working 12 and 14 hours a day in very hazardous and unhealthy conditions. But the entrepreneurs, the owners of capital had an investment and they intended to realize a high return on that investment, irrespective of the cost of human misery and degradation. It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that the actual hours completed by the average worker were often reduced by sickness and absenteeism. What the owners gained in long hours of work they frequently lost in productivity. As a result of collective bargaining and some labor legislation the hours of work in the industrialized economies have been slowly reduced since the 1830s and I emphasize the word slowly. The reduction was effected mainly through limiting the normal daily hours, shortening the work week and extending the annual vacation. The change was indeed very slow, Mr. Speaker, and often many years would pass before there were any changes.

When our party took over the Government in 1944 the 72-hour work week was not uncommon and it was in 1947 that Saskatchewan took the lead in labor legislation by passing The Fair Employment Practices Act and The Hours of Work Act which reduced the hours of work in urban areas to 44 and 48 in rural areas. Introduction of the Act provided for an 8-hour day with no reduction in pay as a result of the Act coming into force. The 40-hour week with minor exceptions applied to all employees within a radius of 5 miles of the city. There was some flexibility in the Act to provide for a 9-hour day under certain circumstances but the principle of a maximum 44-hour work week was firmly established by that Act.

Well, Mr. Speaker, very little has been done in this area of labor legislation since that date and I believe the time is overdue.

As mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that an excellent case can be made for this Bill at this time. It is generally recognized that shorter hours of work frequently lead to increased productivity. Over the years many employers have reduced hours of their own volition but clearly, Mr. Speaker, in a profit oriented society these decisions were not made because of the altruism or generosity of the employer. They were made because they believed that increased productivity and better employee relations would result. I believe it is clear that historically, longer hours of work have resulted in higher rates of absenteeism and time loss through illness. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that shorter hours could result in less absenteeism and greater employee productivity.

Additional leisure is of greater importance in light of the increase in fatigue and nervous tension in the modern work place and in society generally. Highly sophisticated business machines and production machinery and equipment often set the pace and the worker is forced to keep up. This is an important contrast to the much slower pace of the old work place. I need not elaborate for the Hon. Members of this Chamber on the demands and tensions that seem to go hand in hand with modern industrialized society. There is a simple example of travelling from home to the work place. Because of the increase in size of our cities, more and more people are forced to live in suburbia. Not only does this require more time in travelling but it often involves manoeuvring in heavy automobile traffic.

A shorter work week would make it possible for the older people to compete more effectively with the younger worker. Many older people have a great deal of job experience but simply lack the endurance to work for longer periods of time. I am quick to point out, however, Mr. Speaker, that young people today are affected as a group more than any other, in terms of unemployment. I am sure that this Government is already dealing with the matter although much of the responsibility must be placed at the doorstep of the Federal Government.

The most satisfactory working week is not that which provides the greatest amount of goods and services, but one that provides the happiest combination of the production factor and the leisure factor. There is a definite tendency on the part of many people to prefer more leisure to increased income which really means increased consumption of goods and services.

In the longer term there can be much more leisure for many more people. As a result of automation and cybernation the labor component in manufactured goods will become less and less in the years ahead. This is quite feasible in Canada because we have the natural resources and we have the technology. It is just a matter of greater economic planning, planning which will involve government, labor and business. Economic planning, Mr. Speaker, are words that are taboo and almost seditious in the corporate board rooms of our nation. Nevertheless until such a time as we do accept economic planning we shall continue with our boom and bust economy and during the bust period it is not the \$50,000 a year executive who suffers but the ordinary working man who suddenly finds he no longer has a job.

In summation, Mr. Speaker, permit me to review the main arguments advanced so far: (1) it is generally recognized that shorter hours of work frequently lead to increased productivity;

(2) with shorter hours there would be less absenteeism and again greater productivity; (3) additional leisure is of greater importance today in the light of the increase in fatigue and nervous tension in modern society; (4) shorter hours enable the worker to improve his qualifications in order to keep up with the changing technology; (5) the most satisfactory working week is not that which provides the greatest amount of goods and services, it is one that provides the happiest combination of the production factor and the leisure factor; (6) as a result of automation the labor input in production is more efficient and productive.

In ending, allow me, Mr. Speaker, just to comment on two other areas. Of secondary importance, in the pressure to cut hours of work is a desire to reduce the total supply of work hours to redistribute more equitably the total available hours of work in order to permit the absorption of the unemployed into the gainful working population. Advocates of shorter hours generally agree that the reduced work schedule should be achieved without a reduction in take-home pay. A reduction in the earnings of workers would slacken consumer demand and thus defeat one of the purposes of reducing hours of work.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is particularly important for many working people who are currently unorganized and therefore do not have access to collective bargaining process. As a result, many people not only work long hours but work at a very low salary. I am thinking here particularly of waitresses, workers in senior citizens' homes and so on.

Mr. Speaker, all people under Federal jurisdiction work a 40-hour week and less. The tendency in Western Canada is to the 40-hour work week.

Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to support this Bill and to suggest to you that it is long overdue.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. K.R. MacLeod (Regina Albert Park): — Mr. Speaker, I have a number of remarks to address to the Bill that is before the House. I should prefer to do it at another time, but just before moving adjournment, I note that the Hon. Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) read from a report, purportedly a study done in the United States. I didn't quite catch the report from which he read and I wonder if he would be good enough either to file that report or to make it available to me immediately. I should like to know what it was he read from and if he has a copy I should like to have it made available.

An Hon. Member: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacLeod: — Oh, I see, he isn't even in the House.

Mr. Romanow: — What is that again?

Mr. MacLeod: — Well, to the Hon. The Attorney General, I repeat, that during the course of his remarks the Hon. Minister of Labour read from a report. It was a U.S. study on work accidents and it presumably had figures, charts and graphs. He read it rather quickly and consequently I didn't get the name

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of the report. I'm not able to identify what he was reading from. I wonder if he would make that available to me or file it.

Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Attorney General has been good enough to undertake that this will be dealt with, and I should like to move that this debate be adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

Hon. R. Romanow (Attorney General) moved second reading of Bill No. 9 — **An Act respecting the Protection of Farm Property.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to move second reading of this Act respecting the Protection of Farm Property, 1971. Before describing in detail the relevant provisions of the new Bill, I should like to beg the indulgence of the House and make a few general comments respecting some of the circumstances and history which have led this Government to introduce this Bill today.

Now as Hon. Members well know during the last 20 years or so, Saskatchewan has witnessed some considerable changes in its economic life with the discovery of oil and gas, potash and minerals in the province. These have resulted in some new industries coming to this Province. For that we are all thankful. But notwithstanding the development of these industries, I'm sure that the people of Saskatchewan will all agree with me that still the most basic and most important industry in this Province, the prime industry of this Province, has always been and will continue to be that of agriculture. This important industry of our province has in its history been buffeted and beaten pretty badly from time to time. It has been the victim of changes in weather, changing economics, changing marketing conditions, changing Wheat Board regulations, yes, even the victim of the Liberal Party opposite, yet it survives.

Anyone who lived during the so-called Dirty Thirties, for example, will remember that those years were years of heartache for all, for almost 12 years, from 1930 to 1942 no commercial crops were grown in this Province. During one or two of those years, I am informed, when the small crop was grown and harvested, the bottom dropped out of the market and in most instances the proceeds realized from the sale of crops were not sufficient to pay the cost of production. The net result of the situation was that the farmer simply had no money. He was unable to pay his debts, taxes accumulated, in short, his future looked hopeless. To the credit of the Government of that day, they attempted to react to the situation to help this most basic and important industry, farming. It is not my intention to detail at length the legislation passed at that time, other than to say that most of the legislation — at that time the Liberal Party was in power in the Province of Saskatchewan — most of the legislation in Saskatchewan and elsewhere in the Prairies was challenged by financial institutions of this country. The banks, the mortgage companies, the lending houses, the highest court of the land ultimately declared most of the legislation beyond the legislative powers of this Provincial House.

Now since those early attempts to curtail the effects of creditors acting against farmers, legislation has been enacted which has restricted the right of the creditors to seize and

sell implements, for example, and also to curtail the action respecting mortgages and agreements for sale. All Members will be familiar of course with The Land Contracts Actions Act and recent efforts where amendments were made to The Limitation of Civil Rights Act introduced by the former Attorney General, a Member of the Liberal Party, the former Government.

Now as I have said during the Dirty Thirties there were no crops worthy to name. During the last number of years, however, the situation has been completely reversed in many regards. Hundreds of millions of bushels of grain have been harvested each year during the last five or six years. The grain has become a glut on the market and now wherein the Dirty Thirties the farmer was unable to pay his debts because he had no grain to be sold, now, today, he finds himself in the position where he cannot pay off his debts because of world conditions, Federal policies and the like. But today the problem is one of over abundance as opposed to the one earlier of the lack of grain. Hundreds of millions of bushels of grain are stored in granaries and elevators at the Lakehead or the Coast. Even when as a result of the Federal Government policy in 1970, wheat acreage was reduced by 45 per cent, Saskatchewan still produced last year a crop close to 400 million bushels. Statistics for 1971 show that there has been an increase in wheat acreage by about 30 per cent over last year. Wheat Pool reports, Department of Agriculture reports all indicate every prospect of a bumper crop to be harvested in a few weeks in the Province of Saskatchewan adding to the glut already. Accordingly, if farmers are unable to sell their crop grown in each year, it is more than likely that they would be able to meet most, if not all, of the debts that they undertook to pay each year, the debts that were part of their operation.

So, Mr. Speaker, here we have a situation where there is a very high productivity of Saskatchewan farm lands. Tremendous crops have been grown due to the skill and the diligence of our people. Another tremendous crop is around the corner yet our farmers find themselves in the sorry position of being unable to sell their grain and pay their debts as they become due. I know this to be the case because of the many letters that I have received since I have assumed office as Attorney General looking for some form of relief, letters from farmers who explain to me circumstances of their plight, decent, honest hardworking farmers who simply want time to catch their breath, economically so to speak, to make it easier for them with respect to those debts until such time as the proceeds of their hard work are returned to them. I'm sure that there are many more who don't write to myself, that don't write to the MLAs of this House and somehow find it difficult to make ends meet. I'm sure that the Hon. Members will realize that sales in the province, general sales in the province, dropped by about 30 per cent last year, quite a few local businessmen went bankrupt, several businesses were discontinued, very few new businesses have been established. In short, Mr. Speaker, the farmer is prosperous, everybody is prosperous. It proves to us that notwithstanding the establishment of all these other industries I talked of at the beginning, agriculture is still the primary industry of this Province, the mainstay of our economic existence, the bulwark and the hope for the future of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, our Government, the former Government, any

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government can give support to other industries other than agriculture. They can give support by financial grants, bringing in pulp mills or what have you, but in Saskatchewan any government that fails to act to give support to our farmers fails the entire province.

Now since taking office, Members of this Government have given anxious consideration of the economic conditions which have existed now for 18 months or so and certainly are existing now, the conditions of overabundance and the hardships that result that I've described. As a result of the recent election campaign and representations that I've said that I have received, the Government has concluded that legislation is absolutely necessary to protect our basic industry, farming, and the basic worker in that industry, the family farmer. We must protect the family farm lands, we must protect the family farmers' personal property against strict enforcement by creditors and accordingly, in response to that need, this Government today takes this dramatic and bold step of introducing Bill No. 9 to help relieve the plight of the family farmer.

Now I come to consideration of the Bill itself. The Government feels that whatever protection is granted should only be granted for one year, roughly until July 31, 1972 — it is roughly a year. We are now at August 3 or 4, but from August 1, 1971 to July 31, 1972.

The second point I wish to emphasize is that it applies only to farmers, a person, that is to say, whose principal occupation is farming as is defined in the Bill. It also, of course, includes the executor or administrator of a deceased farmer as well as the person appointed under an Act of the Province, say for example, the Administrator of Estates. It should also be pointed out that there is dealer protection for dealers of farm implements and I'll have a little more to say about that later on.

The third point to emphasize is that this Act affects only those debts contracted prior to the coming into force of this Bill. There has been some discussion that I have read about the credit of farmers being affected by this Bill. I wish to emphasize again to all Members, and to the people of the Province of Saskatchewan that this Bill only relates to those debts as defined in the statute contracted prior to the coming into force of this Bill. Any contract which is entered into by the farmer and another person during the force of this Bill is not covered by the provisions of this Bill. The normal and usual remedies exist for the creditor in that situation. The rationale of the Government is that if a farmer has the money to incur new debts in the area of machinery or land or livestock then he should be subject to the normal remedies if he fails to meet his obligations.

The fourth point I wish to emphasize is that the Bill will only affect mortgages of farm land, agreements for sale of farm lands, sales of implements, including farm trucks and livestock and charges or encumbrances on those items that were incurred prior to the coming into force of this Bill. It also covers judgments entered into against the farmers before the coming into force of this Act. The Bill provides that no creditor of a farmer may start an action or proceeding to enforce payment of debts owing under mortgages, agreements for sale, lien notes, chattel mortgages, condition sales contracts

or livestock security incurred before the bill becomes law. I want to re-emphasize that for all other debts action can be taken in the usual and normal way. The Bill also prohibits any judgment in favor of a creditor who has obtained a judgment against the farmer to enforce payment of the judgment if it was recovered before the Bill becomes law. If writs of execution have been issued, for example, and filed with the sheriff and registered in the Land Titles Office, such execution remains in force. However, the sheriff may not seize the farm lands, the goods or chattels. Seizure of the farmer's land, goods or chattels are prohibited. But certain provisions are made with respect to such judgments. If for example, a farmer's land has been sold already by the sheriff under a writ of execution or if a farmer's grain or other personal property has been seized by the sheriff and sold as required by law, then the sheriff is authorized to distribute the proceeds of the sale according to the law. This provision is felt to be necessary because if the land or goods or chattels are sold by the sheriff they have become the property of the purchaser and he has vested rights which are not and should not be interfered with and this Bill does not interfere with those rights.

Then if the mortgagee or vendor of land of a farmer has commenced action and obtained what is called an order nisi for foreclosure of the mortgage, an order for cancellation of the agreement, then the farmer will have until July 31, 1972, to pay the arrears due under these securities. Thus he will have the opportunity to put the mortgage or agreement in good standing. After July 31, 1972, the farmer will still be able to apply to the Court under The Land Contract Actions Act for further time which he may receive or may not receive depending upon the judge and his discretion.

If an action for foreclosure or cancellation is pending when the Act comes into force, that action is automatically stayed until July 31, 1972. No further proceedings may be taken in that action until that date. It may be that applications are pending in the Court by a mortgagee or a vendor for leave to commence action to foreclose. If such applications have not been disposed of when this Bill becomes law, the application is automatically stayed or adjourned until July 31, 1972. As frequently happens a mortgagee or a vendor has obtained leave to commence action but has not issued the writ. In that case, the right to issue the writ is postponed until July 31, 1972.

Now the rights of an implement company or a dealer of implements to serve notice to take possession of an implement or truck sold are also postponed until July 31, 1972. But if the implement company or lien holder has lawfully seized and taken possession of a truck or farm implement, but has not sold or otherwise disposed of it before the Bill becomes law, then that dealer has the following option: of making an application to the court to continue the seizure and the possession in the normal course and he must make that application 30 days after the Bill becomes law. The court may then fix terms either for the return of the implement or allow the credit to continue as seizure. So he has the option to make an application to continue the seizure and the possession within 30 days. Or in the alternative if he does not make such application, then he must return the farm implement or truck to the farmer. Where an implement company has served notice of intention to repossess an implement but has not succeeded in doing so, the notice is cancelled. If an order has been obtained from the

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Court authorizing the taking of possession the rights to take possession are postponed until July 31, 1972.

Now in another area, the right of a rural municipality or local improvement district to obtain title to land sold for taxes is postponed until July 31, 1972, according to the Bill.

Then in the case of 'share of crop mortgages' or agreements for sale, the rights of the mortgagee or vendor are limited to a maximum of one-third of the crop. If the farmer pays the year's taxes to deduct the amount paid on the third share, the farmer is also entitled to sell sufficient grain out of the 1971 crop to pay costs of harvesting, costs of living until the next crop comes off and costs of putting in the 1972 crop and after that has been taken care of, the remainder of the crop is divided one-third to the mortgagee or vendor and two-thirds to the farmer.

Now I come to a section, special provisions for the dealers of farm implements. The problem of implement dealers calls for special consideration, along with the plight of the farmers. A dealer sells a farm implement on deferred payments frequently. He has bought that implement or a number of such implements from the distributor or manufacturer on terms requiring him to pay the wholesale price as and when it is sold. The Bill prohibits any distributor or manufacturer from enforcing payment of the purchase price, if the dealer remits to the distributor or manufacturer the amounts he collects on account of the purchase price from time to time during the period ending July 31, 1972.

I have so far dealt with the Bill as far as it interferes with the rights and remedies of creditors and also certain rights of the farmers. It is realized, however, that there may be circumstances or conditions affecting an individual farmer or a group of individual farmers where those restrictions or limitations on the rights or remedies would not be allowed to prevail. In order to meet such conditions or situations, the Bill contains what may be called an escape clause, or an exclusionary clause. In other words a creditor of a farmer with respect to the type of debt already defined in the Act may apply to the court, creditor, farm implement dealer, upon notice of the farmer for an order of the Court that the Bill or any one or more of its provisions shall not apply to the individual farmer. If such an application is made by a creditor, a creditor covered by the Act, then the Bill, in short, requires the Court to make a very comprehensive inquiry dealing with the reasons why the farmer has not paid, the reasons for his inability to pay. Here is another new addition to the Act, including the consideration of such factors as the absence of elevator space for grain, or restriction by the Canadian Wheat Board of the sale of grain. This principle is a principle based similarly as an Alarm Contracts Actions Act, which a few Hon. Members who are members of the legal profession know I am sure, with regard to land mortgages and agreements of sale of land. And also with respect to the repossession of farm implements by implement companies, that amendment was introduced by the former Attorney General, Mr. Heald, on the Limitation of Civil Rights. This is a simple extension from this outstanding legislation.

The principles of those two Acts are well understood by the Courts, are well understood by the farmers and the implement dealers, as having been administered by the Courts during the case of land contract actions for over 30 years, and since the amendment, whenever it was, 1969 or 1970, the Limitation of

Civil Rights. The point to emphasize here is that an additional principle has been added, namely, that even if the court is otherwise satisfied that a creditor should get an order rendering the Act inapplicable the Court must still go one step further. This is the new feature. The Court must go one step further and decide if it would be just and equitable in accordance with the spirit of the Act to grant the order. If the farmer has one or more farm mortgages or one or more agreements for sale of lands, for example, but only one mortgage or one vendor applies for the order excluding the Act, so far as he is concerned, it may be inequitable or unjust for one mortgagee or vendor to be allowed to enforce payment of his claim while another creditor who is patient and willing to extend time to the farmer does not wish to force him to pay.

To allow one mortgagee or vendor to proceed to collect and the other to allow to continue to carry the farmer, may in the opinion of the Court be built in this principle of unjust equitable consideration, namely, in the opinion of the Court if it is unjust and inequitable and contrary to the spirit of the Act, which as I have tried to outline already, is intended to protect the farmer against creditors as mentioned in the Act. That is only one example, there may be hundreds of different instances where this just and equitable clause may apply.

Now, Hon. Members will be interested in knowing that the Bill provides for an appeal from this application process that I described to you. This application to be excluded from the Act, provides for an appeal from the decisions made by the judge, by either the farmer or the creditor, if made against the decision made by a judge of the district court or a local master, the appeal is then to the judge of the Queen's Bench in Chambers and a further appeal is allowed to the Court of Appeal. So there are several avenues for appeal and no abridgement of rights there. The judge or local master hearing the application as well as the judge of the Court of Appeal, on the appeal, are required to decide the appeal and the rights of the party according to their own views as they see the facts, based on the situation with respect to each individual farmer's needs and circumstances.

The Bill also give the Attorney General the right to intervene on any application or appeal if he decides to do so. Then also special provision is made in the case of the odd farmer who is not entirely honest. He may sell or dispose of his personal property for example, if he happens to be dishonest or treat an implement or a truck in such a way that its value as security is lost. We don't want this, or he may abscond all with the intentions of defeating his creditors, generally or defeating that of a particular creditor. In such a situation, there is provision whereby the Court is given power to make an order that the Act does not apply to that farmer and the creditor's former rights and remedies are restored and he can prosecute under the normal courses of the law.

Then there is provision that any agreement between a creditor and a farmer, that this Act shall not apply, will be null and void. This is not a new principle of course, similar provisions are contained in other acts, restricting a creditors rights. To allow such agreements to be valid of course in spite of the Bill would be to defeat the very purpose of the Act. Special provisions are made that the Act will apply to all mortgages or agreements for sale that have been made in

favor of the Canadian Farm Loan Board, the Farm Credit Corporation, as well as any security on livestock by those agencies. A further provision is made that if a solicitor acting for a farmer consents to an order being made that the Act shall not apply, then the creditor involved may proceed as if the Act has not been passed. By so providing, the solicitor shall give his consent for the farmer, to protect the farmer against pressures of collectors or salesmen visiting the farmer at his home and inducing him to sign a consent. In other words, a solicitor is given a role to play in determining whether or not the rights of the farmer are given up.

I want to emphasize to the Members of the House and the people of Saskatchewan that there is a penalty clause in the Bill. If a person violates any of the provisions of this Act, he is liable to a penalty of not less than \$500. Every director, officer or agent of a company is also liable to the same penalty, if he is in any way involved in the company committing such a breach of the Act. Since the Government of Saskatchewan is involved in many deals with the farmer, the Act provides that it is also bound.

Finally, and I think very importantly, the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council is given certain powers to exempt or exclude a certain farmer or certain farmers given power to exempt or exclude a creditor or certain class of creditors or mortgagees etc. from the operation of the Act. That is to say that an application or the Order-in-Council may be made by the Cabinet excluding a class of creditors upon which this Act may be working an undue hardship. Something that we haven't foreseen if that should arise. An Order-in-Council is made by which to exclude a particular creditor, exclude a particular farmer or exclude a particular class of creditor. This is important, because those who have expressed some fear in the press from the Implement Dealers' Association about the undue hardship of the Act — I think if they read the Act carefully they will see that it does not create for them an undue hardship — will know that the Government of Saskatchewan has Section 29 in the Bill allowing the protection or the possibility of protection on the circumstances being shown.

In conclusion. I have tried to outline briefly and suppose all too quickly some of the provisions of a very difficult and legally complicated Bill. I want to say to Members of the House and the Province of Saskatchewan that I fully, and this Government fully recognizes that this legislation has very far-reaching and drastic consequences. It is not without some anxiety that the Government presents this legislation, this drastic legislation, but these are drastic and critical times demanding actions by this Government.

It is not the Government's intention unjustly or unfairly to deal with any person or class of persons in the province of Saskatchewan by means of this Bill. This Bill provides protection for our farmers and our implement dealers at all levels. We hope that the farmer . . .

Mr. Steuart: — Nonsense!

Mr. Romanow: — Well, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition says, nonsense. I presume that of course he will be getting into the debate, pointing out to the Government where the Bill fails to provide

protection to the local family farmer and where it fails to bring out protection for the implement dealer. I'll be very interested in how the remnants of the Liberal Party opposite react to this Bill which is designed for the family farmers of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I'll be very interested to see if the Liberal Party opposite falls into its traditional role of defending the large lending corporations and financial institutions of Eastern Canada, or the family farmers of our province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I'll be interested in seeing whether the Leader of the Opposition gets up when he gets to vote for this Bill, or whether he is going to vote because that's what it will be for, a vote to take away farm land of a family farmer or whether he stands for the Saskatchewan family farmer.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I'll see who the friends of the family farmer are, those who sit on the opposite side, the five or six, that are still left.

Mr. Steuart: — . . . Happy Jack, family farmer farmer!

Mr. Romanow: — Now, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying before I was interrupted by the Leader of the Opposition . . .

Mr. Steuart: — . . . you were interrupted!

Mr. Romanow: — Oh, you just gave me a new thought, Mr. Leader of the Opposition at the time. It hadn't really occurred to me that the Liberal Party was tied in with the financial corporations, but your interjection sort of raised that possibility.

As I was about to say, the Bill has provided protection for our farmers and our implement dealers at the local level. We hope that the farmer if he received excess proceeds as a result of harvest and sales that the farmer will use the money to pay off all his local debts, such as debts to the local merchant, debts to the implement dealer. Mr. Speaker, I say and the Leader of the Opposition sort of, I detect, doesn't agree with me, but I say that 99 per cent of the farmers of this Province are honest, hardworking persons who will not use this Act to defraud the creditors who are their neighbors in many cases, and will in fact make their payments. I say the Bill is for those who don't have the money to pay their creditors, to pay their neighbors, to get protection by stopping action from being foreclosed and having their implements seized. That's what the Bill is for. Those who have the money will make the payments, I am convinced 99 per cent. To suggest that somehow this Bill is going to set up a whole class of family farm defrauders, I am not prepared to accept, and I doubt if the people of Saskatchewan are either.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I say the farmers who are able to make their payments even during this crisis, have shown that they have done it and show that they will continue to do it. Needless to say the Government urges them to do so, because delay will only catch up with them, they still owe their debt, they still owe the principal and the interest, they would only ultimately be responsible to the creditor so they have the money to pay.

I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill will allow farmers that much needed time whereby they can consolidate their cash position, pay local merchant obligations. I think it will inject more money into the economy that way and help the local merchant who has had the farmer on credit for a long time. I am confident this money will generate more capital to the Province of Saskatchewan and make it easier for our local communities because we shall see the local farmer paying off the local merchant who has also had to wait for a long time in many cases.

Now a word to the large companies, machinery companies and banks and lending institutions and I should like to say this. I say to them it is our intention to deal with them fairly as we do with anybody else. I say to them, and I don't think that they would object to me saying it, with respect, that you have made good money, I say to them, from your investments in Saskatchewan during the good years from the farmers. You've had a right to make that money, however, when you have had the good times and you have made the money from the farmers all we ask, and all the family farmer asks, is that you stick with them and the implement dealers now in these difficult times. That's not too much to ask to be the good corporation citizens that the Liberal Party opposite and certain Members believe. This legislation is experimental in its approach.

Mr. Speaker, I say this. This legislation is experimental. I frankly admit that. It is experimental in its approach to combat a very serious problem which the Government recognizes.

The Government is interested in hearing the submissions of concerned people. This is an experimental Bill. If there is any hardship unduly created on a creditor or a class of creditors or the people of the Province of Saskatchewan, I want to assure the Province that this Government will act immediately to rectify that undue hardship.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I hope this Bill won't be needed after July 31, 1972, because I hope the farm economy will turn out to be buoyant, as we have every indication to expect. The Government is hoping that the situation with respect to farmers will improve in the next months so that the purpose of the Bill will, in fact, not be needed. But it is our purpose to protect our family farmers over this critical harvest and seeding period coming ahead and on the advice of farmers and the urgings of various citizens, this Bill is being implemented to give them protection.

One final word, Mr. Speaker, respecting whether or not this Bill is ultra vires because it's been bandied about in debates, I have read in the newspapers, in this House, and other debates. Mr. Speaker, it is my opinion and the opinion of my law officers that the Bill is intra vires of the province. I suppose that

it could be challenged in the courts as being ultra vires, and that's the right of any creditor or solicitor, of course, to do so. We are confident, however, that a new Supreme Court in today's circumstances — if it's taken that far and I hope that it isn't — will rule this Bill to be intra vires.

I have reviewed not only the principle but considerable details of this Bill but in view of the importance of the Bill, I felt that it was desirable.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to move second reading of Bill No. 9 — An Act respecting the Protection of Farm Property.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. J.R. Messer (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise and speak in favor of Bill No. 9 — An Act respecting the Protection of Farm Property, or a Bill which will be more commonly known as the Family Farm Protection Act, 1971.

I, however, if I may, Mr. Speaker, with leave of yourself and the Assembly should like first to recognize and congratulate you as Speaker of this Assembly. I have known you as an interesting and knowledgeable parliamentarian, I therefore conceive that your decisions in regard to the conduct and procedure of this Assembly will be just and fair. I hope that we, as Members of this Assembly, as Members have in the past, endeavor to conduct ourselves in a parliamentary and democratic manner when debating and moving legislation of this Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General, on introducing this Bill, I believe, did a most thorough and adequate job in enlightening and informing us in regard to the legal aspects of this legislation.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — I know that for many of us and for many farmers, because it may well be termed a technical Bill, will conclude that it is highly complicated and therefore will not be accepted as a solution to present economic difficulties encountered by farmers and businessmen in Saskatchewan today. That, in fact, Mr. Speaker, is not the case.

In the drafting of this Bill a number of people have tried to lay out a format so that farmers would be protected, but by protecting them we also have protected the implement dealers and other creditors to whom farms may be indebted. In order to avoid hardship to any one group, the legislation grew in size to what it is now in front of you.

We are not saying, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill will solve all the problems that farmers are confronted with in the province today, but it will give a year's grace or relief to those who are committed to pay debts that they cannot now pay. We hope that during that year's time, the Provincial and Federal Governments will not only recognize but will have enacted legislation assisting farmers and also have established markets providing for better returns to them.

If this year's grace is not provided, Mr. Speaker, if it is not provided, the Province of Saskatchewan can see nothing but an exodus of a large number of family farms, that at one time were economic and viable units and which still have the potential of being economical and viable units if recognition is given to them.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — If this year's grace is not given, the absence of these farmers compounds itself to the point of depopulating our rural communities. Fortifying these rural communities is need in itself for such a Bill, as the Province of Saskatchewan's backbone is made up and is dependent on, not only farmers but those small communities spread throughout this great province, servicing agriculture.

We do not simply assume without evidence that there is need for such a Bill. The economic difficulties which thousands of our farmers in the province are finding themselves confronted with are most evident. In the three-year period from 1967 to 1970 the realized net income dropped from \$483 million to just over \$200 million. This is a drop of nearly two-thirds in that period of time, Mr. Speaker. At the same time, farmers' costs have skyrocketed and inflation has continued to eat away at the value of the dollar. The cost of basic necessities to continue a viable farming operation have climbed to an unbearable point, while the prices for the farmers' produce have continued to fall. He is in an economic straitjacket which is getting tighter by the day. In many cases a farmer's economic breathing space vanished some months ago.

The cash short position is revealed in current statistical data about loan repayments. The Farm Credit Corporation under The Farm Credit Act has released the following information:

March 31, 1968, number of loans outstanding, 18,066. Total number of arrears 879 or 4.8 per cent in 1968. March 31, 1969, number of loans outstanding, 19,186. Total number in arrears 1,403 or 7.3 per cent. March 31, 1970, number of loans outstanding, 19,637. Total number in arrears, 2,555 or 13 per cent. March 31, 1971 — only several months ago — number of loans outstanding, 19,808. Total number in arrears 3,997 or 20.2 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, what is especially significant are the figures of the percentage of arrears. When they are compared for the year ending March 31, 1970, to March 31, 1971, we see that while the number of loans increased by only 171, the number of loans in arrears increased by 1,442. What this indicates is that farmers are experiencing greatly increased difficulty in repaying their debts.

If we also examine the latest figures available from The Veterans' Land Act, the number of loans in arrears as a percentage of total loans outstanding as of March 31, 1971, reached over 27 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, these are the figures. These are the facts and when you compound them with the all too frequent letters and calls we receive in regard to farmers who are losing their machinery, who are losing their land, who are losing their livestock, any responsible government . . .

Mr. Steuart: — How many?

Mr. Messer: — . . . any responsible government, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, even the Hon. Members to your left, Mr. Speaker, if they were the government would consider presenting such protective legislation.

This Bill by alleviating the major debts is a year's grace or stop-gap to seek stability in Saskatchewan. As I have mentioned, farmers will from their incomes be able now to meet commitments in regard to family living costs, farm operating costs, and the repayment of back debts to businessmen and in these communities which are confronted with arrears that are forcing many to bankruptcy if those arrears are not met.

Businessmen, Mr. Speaker, such as the farm implement dealer who has been one who has suffered every bit as much as the farmer has in the past three or four years, in the past several years in most cases, if not all, the manufacturing companies have continued to pressure him to achieve sales and increase his business volume. This has been a tremendous task for them to carry through, because of the decreasing income of the farmers and the continuing spiralling cost-price squeeze. His only means was to sell machinery financed to a greater degree than machinery was sold for in the past. As he is the responsible collecting agent for this machinery, he has been confronted with great pressure and hardship from both finance companies and machine manufacturers to collect monies owing that farmers cannot repay. While he is struggling with this tremendous problem, we find many of them have extensive accounts in arrears for parts and repairs and service provided by himself or his business.

We say that if this Bill helps in one major area, it will be here. Due to the relief provided to farmers in not having to pay major debts, he will be able to meet these commitments, that are a more local nature thereby stabilizing not only his own operation but the community that services him as well.

I say the community that services him as well, Mr. Speaker, because it will not only be the machine dealers that will find their accounts paid more promptly, but all businessmen — the grocer, the hardware merchant, the garage man, the welder — one could go on and on. It simply means breathing time for the backbone of this Province.

In my conversations with some Members opposite and by their remarks, it's evident that they have pre-assumed that if this Act is passed, there will be continuing hardship of another kind, hardship in the way of a shortage of money, difficulty for lending agencies, credit unions and banks, and so on, due to lack of loan repayments, the discontinuation of loan capital provisions by these agencies. This we do not believe to be the case, Mr. Speaker.

There should be no shortage of money. It will simply have shifted to better use. Where lending agencies will not be receiving repayment for loans on land, machinery or livestock, they will be receiving payments on loans that were made for other purposes. The case being that the same amount of money, if not more, will be circulated in the farm economy so that small businessmen will be able through farmer repayments to pay

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out loans that they have incurred in order to cover their accounts receivable and continue the operation of their business.

As the Act applies only to past debts and further that the Act will be in force for only one year, there should be no deterrent in regard to future or current loans. In fact, the legislation will provide for a more desirable climate for future debt repayment.

I make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill does not simply provide blanket coverage or protection to all farmers, and maybe that's why the Opposition is concerned. There are, in fact, many who are in a position to meet their commitments and will have to continue to honor those commitments. If not, there are provisions in this Bill for those to whom money is owing to make collection.

There are also provisions in the Bill for the creditor or his agent to take action where farmers are attempting to remove, conceal or damage the property that is involved. We have, Mr. Speaker, in short, endeavored to draft a Bill that would, as I have stated: (1) provide protection to farmers who are unable to pay past commitments in regard to the three heavy debt areas — machinery, livestock and land; (2) by doing so, money would be made available to meet living expenses and farm operating costs, keeping in mind that all other monies would go to debt repayment; (3) consider all parties involved and avoid undue hardship on them during the one year's time or thereafter.

We have asked that a special committee on agriculture sit inter-sessionally so that representation may be made to them by individuals or groups respecting the effectiveness of The Family Farm Protection Act and make recommendations thereon.

The committee on agriculture will also move about the province to major farming centres so that they may be more available to any problems if they so arise. The committee, which Members of this Assembly know, will be made up of both Government and Opposition Members and will surely be able to encounter a mutually arrived at solutions of problem areas, if indeed there are any.

We have in the Bill tried to take all avenues into consideration. We, however, have provided for amendments in regulations where warranted and needed to be done by Order-in-Council.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, I should also like to state here that the Standing Committee never once — never once — sat during the former Government's administration. Our Government believes that this Committee, through personal participation and communication with farmers in the farming community, will be able adequately to solve problems arising from this legislation if problems, in fact, do arise from it.

I might further add that it is the Government's intention to provide information through various channels of news media — pamphlets and so on — so that those who will be affected by this Act will be as well informed as is possible in regard to its effects.

I could go into further detail on this Bill, Mr. Speaker, but I believe that it would facilitate matters for Members of this Assembly if we waited until Committee of the Whole and its

clause by clause approval, but before closing, I do want to say to those that may assume we are passing undue hardship on to the machinery companies and finance agencies, that these companies — as the Hon. Attorney General has pointed out — were enjoying good sales, were enjoying good returns, were enjoying good profits during the mid-sixties and when times were most prosperous for farmers, and they are, to a large extent, still enjoying those profits now but the earning power of farmers has deteriorated most drastically. We, therefore, ask them to recognize the need for this breathing space, to tighten their belts along with the farmers and those who service them. We ask them to do these things so that the agricultural industry can again enjoy prosperity, prosperity based on a rural-urban family farm community that is beneficial to both social and economic climates that are desirable for Saskatchewan and Canada.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, if there were no other pieces of legislation other than this Family Farm Protection Act, 1971, it would have warranted this Special Session of the Legislature. It is not, as some Members to the left have stated, a grandstanding session, a session for which there is no need. Evidence of the Opposition's actions, some asking for more time to study the proposed Bill, other saying that there is no need for a Special Session, no need for the Bill, in fact, shows, Mr. Speaker, that they are the grandstanders.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — They are in chaos in regard to what performance is the best to follow during their leadership race. I believe they realize that the three days that was provided to them was ample time to acquaint themselves with the legislation. I hope that they will be giving their approval along with the rest of us in the Assembly in regard to this legislation. However, I thought best to provide them with an additional four days to further peruse this Bill and be able to comment further in regard to the implications of this Bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as the new Member, the Hon. Member for Lumsden (Mr. Lane) made some statements in the Assembly several days ago pertaining to this Act and myself, I wish to make some comment on this. It is purported he stated at that time and if I may quote:

I would suggest that the Government be very careful with this legislation . . .

Meaning The Family Farm Protection Act. I go on to quote:

. . . because the previously mentioned legislation was one of the factors that caused many of the implement dealers to leave this Province or go out of business. This has led to the problem of farmers not being able to obtain parts and having to wait for parts during an equipment breakdown.

One may ask, Mr. Speaker, what legislation was he referring to? Well if I may I should like to quote further as to what legislation he was referring to. He quotes:

Amendments were made to The Limitation of Civil Rights Act which gave to the farmer substantial protection

against seizure of his farm equipment and he merely had to make an informal court application and he would be heard by a judge who was empowered to make such order as he saw fit.

Mr. Speaker, what the Hon. Member was saying is that the decisions of the Court or the judge presiding over those cases could be somewhat unfair, being biased in favor of one party. Unfair to the point, as he states and if I may quote:

One of the factors that caused many of the implement dealers to leave this Province or go out of business.

As a Member of the legal profession himself he should be ashamed and censored for making such statements. That, Mr. Speaker, is bad enough in itself for has he forgotten that it was his former Liberal Government that made these amendments. The former Liberal Government, the Liberal Party that he saw fit to run under in the last provincial election. In fact as it has been pointed out by Members on your right, he was employed by the Attorney General's Department at the time that legislation was drafted. Why didn't he bring forward his views before June 23rd during the provincial election in regard to the farmers and what protection he thought they should have in regard to the Civil Limitations Act.

Mr. Steuart: — He did, he just told me.

Mr. Messer: — He did. In my closing remarks, Mr. Speaker, I want simply to say that this Bill provides the breathing space needed not only for farmers but for businessmen in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — It provides for and gives hope to small urban and rural communities.

Mr. Steuart: — Bless your heart!

Mr. Messer: — Bless your heart! They are all anxiously awaiting the vote of this Bill, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, to see where you stand on it. We want farmers here to receive the benefits of the future which we are sure will come because of the Government that is now in power in this Province. This Bill, Mr. Speaker, gives us an opportunity to encourage more Federal Government action in the changing of their policies in regard to family farm and urban rural stability. It gives us time as a Government of Saskatchewan to institute such programs as the Farm Land Bank Commission on which there is a resolution on the Order Paper asking for this legislation to be enacted as soon as possible. It gives us more time to legislate and provide and improve for a more extensive crop insurance program. It gives us time for our agricultural committee not only to handle problems in regard to the Bill but to do far more than that, it gives them time to cope with other farm problems that went unsolved in this Province for seven long years. It gives us time to provide in total for a better future for Saskatchewan people. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that Hon. Members opposite realizing

this will therefore give us their co-operation in this Bill and support it on its second reading.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. C.P. MacDonald (Milestone): — Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all I am going to refrain from replying in a political vein to the Attorney General at least for a few minutes because I consider this a very important Bill and I think it is worth some very serious discussion in the House.

Now first of all I want to say that the Opposition has received this Bill with more than the usual interest usually accorded Bills introduced or placed before the House. The Opposition is convinced that this Bill is bad legislation and in fact it can have very drastic effects first, on the credit facilities of the farmers of this Province and second, on the stability of the small business community in rural Saskatchewan. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, like the Attorney General, most of the Members on this side of the House are very aware of the agricultural situation as it now exists in the Province of Saskatchewan. I think that most of us are aware that the past few years have provided a very bountiful harvest for the majority of our farmers; that wheat bins are filled to capacity and that grain sales have not kept pace with this capacity to produce. I think they are also aware of the fact that not only are our granaries filled and our wheat sales down but the fact that this wheat-surplus situation exists in most areas of the world. They are also aware that the price of wheat and the price of grain has slipped in the past few years and that the farmers are not receiving the same price for this commodity. They are also aware that the operating costs of the farmer have been increasing; that his property taxes are increasing, and yet at the same time he still has mortgage payments and machinery payments that must be made.

I think that this side of the House and all the people of Saskatchewan would be willing to support any Bill that would provide protection for the farmer to maintain those very vital implements of his vocation and to protect the land that he owns and that he is now making payments for. They would support any Bill that the Government might bring in which would offer that protection. But they are not and we are not agreeing to support a Bill where this Government sitting opposite takes absolutely not one bit of risk and that risk is placed upon the small lending institutions like credit unions, implement dealers and farmers themselves.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, that we do have some reservations about this Bill and I should like very briefly to enumerate them for you. I think the first reservation that we have is that we are convinced that this will seriously jeopardize the credit of the farmers of this Province. All of us are also aware that the credit of a farmer is the biggest asset he has. A farmer in 1971 cannot subsist unless he can obtain credit because, by means of the quota system, his financial remuneration comes at rather indefinite periods of time and during those intervals it is absolutely necessary for him to obtain the credit that he requires in order to continue with his

operation and to pay his bills. But also credit is based on collateral; credit is based on the assets that a farmer owns; and also on the contract or the honor he pledges when the farmer makes a contract, and when he signs that contract he agrees to make that payment to the best of his ability.

But, Mr. Speaker, what is the attitude of a credit union to be when a farmer who owes it \$10,000 and all of a sudden that contract is suspended and then he comes in and asks for another \$4,000 or \$5,000 for additional machinery or parts. What is the attitude of a lending institution, big or small, particularly a rural credit union whose majority of accounts are farm accounts to the threat that if this situation does not improve in 1971, what will happen in 1972, 1973 and 1974.

Mr. Speaker, let me also say this, the second reason that we have serious reservations about this Bill is, Mr. Speaker, it does not offer any solution to the farmers' problems. It doesn't offer him another five cents of revenue. It doesn't increase his production; it doesn't expand his sales. It in no way puts more money in his production; it doesn't expand his sales. It in no way puts more money in his pocket. It doesn't offer one single iota of a solution to his problems. What it does, it takes a drowning man, pulls his head out of the water, gives him one breath of air and then stamps him to the bottom just twice as long. Here is a farmer who owes a \$3,000 bill in 1971, has that bill suspended for one year, and then at the end of that year he doesn't owe \$3,000, he owes \$6,000 plus the interest. Instead of having a problem of 50 per cent of the proportion in 1971, in 1972 he has double the size of the problem, and in all farm indications, at least according to The Canadian Wheat's forecast, they forecast a seven bushel quota in 1971. There appears to be no solution to the problem so what they are really doing is saying, 'have a breath of fresh air, have a year of grace, and then we'll destroy you forever'. This Bill could have the effect of not assisting the family farm but actually advancing its destruction by turning around and posing twice the problem in 1972. Because this Bill, doesn't, Mr. Speaker, in any way, shape or form provide any kind of a solution to the farmers' problems, all it does is say take a year's grace and then we'll kick you twice as hard next July 31st.

A third objection, Mr. Speaker, and a third reservation to this Bill is the threat it has to the small business community in this Province. As you know the Bill provides that no action can be taken against the farmer in relation to land or machinery or cattle but at the same time, Mr. Speaker, all of you know that when an implement dealer sells an implement, he does it on recourse. I should like to explain very briefly to Members of the House and record it that when an implement dealer sells a machine to a farmer, and finances that deal through one of the finance corporations, whether it be IAC, or GMAC or John Deere Finance or Allis Chalmers, or International, or whatever they may be, the problem is this, the farmer usually puts one-third of the purchase down in his down payment, the balance is financed by the finance company and the farmer makes payments to them. The paper is counter-signed by the machine dealer and if there is a repossession, the implement dealer gets the machine back in his yard and he must pay what is owing on the machine to the finance company. Now let me take an example. Supposing a machine company was now in the process of a repossession on August 20th of this year because of a failure to make a payment over the past year. If that was the case in all probability the

farmer had not made his payment the year previous and had renegotiated the deal or made arrangements, so that means up until August 20th he hadn't paid for two years on his machine. He then gets a year's grace until August 1st, 1972, which means he hasn't made a payment for three years. He then runs that machine for that three-year period, the paper value on the mortgage or the finance deal might be \$10,000 and the real value of that machine is \$5,000. There isn't one single thing in this Act to protect that implement dealer. Two or three deals, Mr. Speaker, of that kind for an implement dealer in this Province and that poor implement dealer could be broke and on his way out of business.

Now, Mr. Speaker, another thing, whom will this Bill apply to? The newspaper this morning in the article which all of you read stated that the Farm Credit Corporation hadn't made a repossession or foreclosure since 1957. I think also the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) indicated the number of loans that were in arrears and yet in none of those thousands of loans he referred to was there foreclosure action taken. In other words, for the majority of farm land, by the major lender in this country, there is not a problem of foreclosure. For the livestock dealers in the Province of Saskatchewan, the Provincial Government guarantees the Livestock Loan Act. Therefore, the farmer does not have to make a payment on that because first of all the principal isn't even due yet. But who might be subject to this Bill? Let's take a small farmer with a half section of land. He turns around and he sells that half section of land, he sells it for 20 per cent down and a cash payment for the next four or five years or ten years, whatever the case may be. He then moves into the town, he takes his old-age pension and then what he can add to by the payments on his land, all of a sudden that is his living. But what happens to that man when the farmer says, I can't pay that bill. The small retired farmer has to pay the penalty, not the Farm Credit Corporation or the Provincial Government.

Let's take a livestock dealer, a man who raises 50 cows and has a cow-calf operation. That man turns around and perhaps raises 50 or 60 calves a year. That is his livelihood. He sells those calves in the fall or as yearlings and he sells them to his neighbor or around the province on credit and that is his livelihood. What protection is there in this Bill for that small cattle dealer? There is no protection for the small operator, there is no protection for the small livestock dealer, there is no protection for the implement dealer. The only protection there is, is for the large mortgage company and for the Provincial Government, which contributes nothing.

The fourth reason, Mr. Speaker, that we are very concerned about this Bill is the fact that it doesn't guarantee or the Provincial NDP Government doesn't contribute one five-cent piece to this problem. Here, Mr. Speaker, is a government and a political party that stormed up and down the Province of Saskatchewan saying that we, the NDP, will be the saviour of the family farm. We will provide the answers. Oh, those terrible Liberals in Ottawa. And we heard the Member from Arm River (Mr. Faris) stand up and say we want a resolution demanding that \$100 million, and they won't even give a five-cent piece to the protect the farmers' debts.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — And you know whom they are asking to do it? The implement dealer and the small operator and the small businessman. If you want to protect the farmers' debt, all you have to do is guarantee — guarantee the farmers' debts — put the credit of the Province of Saskatchewan behind this thing. Put the credit of the Province of Saskatchewan behind it instead of the credit of the small credit union or the implement dealer or the small operator.

If you, as the Government, are standing up here and asking the implement dealer and the small operator, to stand all the risk and all the loss and say that we, the saviours of the family farm, are willing to contribute not one five-cent piece, then I say it's a hypocrisy and that The Family Farm Protection Act is a hypocrisy. If you're going to save the family farm, stand on your feet and commit some funds from this Provincial Government and you'll have the support of this side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — And if you want to guarantee the credit of the farmers of this Province, you'll have unanimous support from this side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — And don't suggest that the Liberals are standing for the mortgage companies, or the Liberals are standing for the bankers. We're standing up for the implement dealers and for the small credit union and the small operator.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — And I want to ask you whom are you standing up for? And I'm going to tell you, Mr. Speaker, answer this question, Mr. Attorney General: whom are you standing up for?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — You're not standing up for anybody! You're not even putting a five-cent piece into this Act — not a five-cent piece, no risk, no guarantee, no insurance — no nothing! The Provincial Government, the NDP Government, standing on their feet and saying we're going to protect the family farm and they are doing absolutely nothing. But you read it, it's the little implement dealer, the little small operator, they are the men who are guaranteeing the farmers' debts and not you. Now I want to also say . . .

Mr. Romanow: — Read Section 14!

Mr. MacDonald: — You read it! We've read it. Now, Mr. Speaker, we have one more serious reservation and the serious reservation is this, Mr. Speaker: that this is probably the piece of legislation that will have the most far-reaching impact on the farm community in Saskatchewan of any piece of legislation that has been

advanced in this House for some time. This effect will be good or bad depending on the eventual results of this Bill. We are suggesting, on this side of the House, it is bad legislation simply because they aren't doing anything about it. But, Mr. Speaker, if it is important legislation, then surely those people that are most affected should have an opportunity to consult and to discuss this Bill.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) stood on his feet and said, "We're going to have the agricultural committee travel all around the province." You know, that's like after he hangs the man, he takes the scissors and cuts the cord.

Let's give these people an opportunity to express their views now. What effect is it going to have on the Automobile Dealers' Association? What effect is it going to have on the implement dealers? What effect is it going to have on the Saskatchewan Rural Municipalities? What effect is it going to have on the Real Estate Association of this Province. And yet, Mr. Speaker, you haven't consulted any of them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal caucus decided that we would find out exactly what the NDP . . . and you know the funny part, Mr. Speaker, is that I have sat on that side of the House for the last seven years and heard the people talk about participatory democracy . . .

Mr. Romanow: — Oh, no!

Mr. MacDonald: — Consultation! Don't railroad anything through — dialogue is the answer.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — This is the thing. Oh! And we listened to the Member for Saskatoon University (Mr. Richards) stand on his feet and say, 'public support and public dialogue'. You know, that's hypocrisy — that's only when they are on this side of the House.

Here are some of the associations, Mr. Speaker, that we contacted: the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, the Credit Union Association of Saskatchewan, the Automobile Dealers' Association, the Real Estate Association, the Livestock Breeders' Association, the Farm Credit Corporation, the Implement Dealers' Association — and we must say that the Member for Elrose, Mr. Owens, contacted his old buddy, Leo King, but it seems that he didn't go and get a hold of the man, Mr. Larter, the president from Estevan because — at least from this press report — the implement dealers are violently opposed and want an opportunity to present a discussion.

We contacted CCIL (Canadian Co-operative Implements Limited), the Farm Machinery company, the Investment Dealers' Association, the Canadian Farm Loan Boards, the Industrial Development Bank, the Meat Packers' Association, the Cattle Dealers' Association, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, the Saskatchewan Farmers' Union — we saw old Roy (Atkinson) roaming around the hall so we think you've probably consulted him — the Palliser Grain Growers', the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture.

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Some of these gentlemen — the presidents of these associations — said to us, "We are very concerned about this Bill. We want the opportunity to be consulted. We want the opportunity to find out the effect upon our association and our business and our clients, the farmers of this Province."

Mr. Speaker, we believe that this is an absolute requirement before this Bill passes this House, and unless you do this, and unless we find out what these people think, there is no way that this Opposition will support this Bill, and I say this right now.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — We also, Mr. Speaker, got a copy of a letter from Mr. Leo King, the Secretary-Manager of the Saskatchewan-Manitoba Implement Dealers' Association and the Premier got it, the press release was in the paper this morning. I don't think I have to repeat it, all I am saying is that it is the hope of the Opposition of this House that a Bill of this magnitude and this importance and this far-reaching effect upon the people of Saskatchewan, and particularly the farmers of Saskatchewan, that every single organization in this Province have the opportunity of coming forward and expressing their opinions. Also, Mr. Speaker, I should like to repeat what the Attorney General said that because there is no rush for this Bill because it's retroactive, that we are willing to stay here in this House as long as the Law Amendments Committee or any other committee wants to meet, in order to hear the representations of these people, and we will — if it takes the next three months — we think this Bill is that important.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I also want to say . . .

Mr. Steuart: — They want to go to Alberta . . .

Mr. MacDonald: — They want to go to Alberta? Oh, that's right, they've got an election campaign.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — Well, you never can tell! So, Mr. Speaker, I only hope that on this occasion that the Government — we want to make this assurance to the Government and to the farmers of Saskatchewan — if the Government of Saskatchewan is willing to stand their credit and their resources behind the credit of the farmers of Saskatchewan, we will support this Bill, but not without that amendment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — And secondly, if the NDP Government of this Province is willing to stand up and provide consultation and discussion with those organizations of the Province of Saskatchewan that are affected, we will support this Bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in order to provide that vehicle of discussion, in order that these people may have this opportunity to come and make representation, I should like to move, seconded by my seatmate, Mr. McIsaac, the Member for Wilkie,

That all the words after the word "That" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

This Bill be now read a second time, but that the subject matter thereof be referred to the Select Standing Committee on Law Amendments and Delegated powers.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

The debate continues on the motion and the amendment.

Mr. T.M. Weatherald (Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this amendment and to this motion, I want to begin my remarks by saying that it is unfortunate the Party opposite built up the expectations of the electorate to such a great extent about salvation of the family farm that they felt that they must do something immediately, and have hastily conceived a Bill which has a great many defects.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go into some of those defects. I don't want to go into the old political hassle of salvation of the family farm. I'm in favor of it. I'm sure that there isn't a Member in this Assembly that isn't in favor of it . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Weatherald: — Well, I have lived there and my family since 1883, so you can't tell me any different, Roy!

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

Mr. Weatherald: — So, we're not going into the old political hassle about salvation of the family farm, I mean I can make a speech, too.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the Government opposite has hastily conceived a Bill that I honestly believe from the statements made that they do not themselves know what is actually in it or what its repercussions could be.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Weatherald: — It's an experimental Bill, as the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) suggested when he introduced it, and because I so strongly feel that it either needs wholesale amendment or complete withdrawal that I intend to go into it in some depth to bring to their attention so that they will have some time, Mr. Speaker, to bring in amendments and make some suggestion.

I hope to use my notes because of the technical aspect of the Bill.

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, provides for a moratorium, as the Attorney General suggested, of all debts on livestock, machinery or land, including farm trucks. As the Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) so accurately said, Mr. Speaker, and the Members opposite obviously still do not believe, there is very little, if any, protection in this Bill for the small implement dealer in Saskatchewan.

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It is obvious, as the Attorney General so adequately announced and told us, as did the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) that this expires in 1972. The facts of the matter, Mr. Speaker — and I want to make this point clear — that on repossessions or co-signing of notes by implement dealers financed by a finance company, there is one year in which the dealer cannot repossess and it is true that the farmer is not forced to make payment to the company. It is also equally true that many of the people who will benefit under this Act, if they do benefit, Mr. Attorney General, is that in one year many of those people will still not make their payments and many repossessions will be made in one year hence, at which time the implement dealer has no protection whatsoever.

One year hence, Mr. Speaker, after the person benefitting under this Act has not made payments, a repossession of a machine will frequently still be made, the machine itself will be of little value in many cases, the company still will ask for the payment from the dealer because the dealer will owe the money. This Act then is no longer in effect.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the Party opposite is not aware that the implement dealer has no coverage whatsoever once this Act expires and he will be liable for the payments that are owed upon this machine.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Weatherald: — Unless a substantial change is brought in, this can be an absolute disaster for practically every farm machinery dealer in the Province of Saskatchewan. There is also a . . .

An Hon. Member: — Section 14.

Mr. Weatherald: — Section 14, my colleague tells me. So I hope you seriously consider a great change here because in one year when many of these payments are not made by people qualifying under this Act, you're going to have a lot of repossessions, and these repossessions mean the dealers are going to start putting up the money.

I have a great fear, Mr. Speaker, for the small implement dealer and a great fear that they themselves share.

Mr. Romanow: — Not very much faith in the farmers. You have no faith in them.

Mr. Weatherald: — Okay, okay. No, I'm going to try and deal with something technical, Members of the Government. We listened to you so maybe you'll listen for awhile.

The facts are, Mr. Speaker, regardless of what the Members opposite say that this puts fear into every small implement dealer in Saskatchewan, and rightly so, because he's going to be stuck for the bills once he has to make a repossession, in a number of cases one year hence and his repossession will be worth very little.

I want also to go into the other subject of repossession

and why many of the small dealers are so fearful of this particular Act. Let us take, for example, the case of where a small dealer has repossessed a machine and he owes the money on this particular machine, Mr. Speaker. He now has paid to the company what is owing and if he has not made a contract for resale of the machine, then he is apt to have to give it back to the farmer he repossessed it from.

Now let's also take this, Mr. Speaker. Suppose that that dealer has invested \$600 or \$700 in that tractor to put it in good condition — and I understand the Member for Elrose (Mr. Owens) is a machine dealer — and just suppose that he has invested, and many of them have, many of them have. Many of them have repossessed a tractor two or three months ago, reconditioned the tractor, and they are intending to resell it.

Now, under this Act the person he repossessed it from has the right to come and get the tractor back, but the dealer has put \$400 or \$500 into it. Now where does he get his \$400 or \$500? The farmer walks in and says, "You've fixed this tractor up but under this law, I have the right to take the tractor back." And in the meantime the dealer has put new tires on it, a new engine in it, maybe has spent \$500 or \$600. There are hundreds of those tractors sitting around here that can be repossessed and taken back by the farmer under this Act. The dealer has got a lot of money into it already.

So there is another problem that the small dealer is presented with, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that the Government opposite — I hope that the Attorney General, Mr. Speaker, will answer in closing the debate. I hope that if he intends to pass the Bill — and he says there's no danger for the small dealer — that he's going to go ahead and pass some provisions that there is no danger for the small dealer. Because I can tell you right now that the smaller dealers in Saskatchewan are scared stiff. And rightly so.

Mr. Speaker, to come to another group of people that it is obvious can be very drastically hurt under this Bill are the credit unions of Saskatchewan. If the Minister of Agriculture's (Mr. Messer) facts are to be taken as correct, we're in the worst agricultural crisis of income since 1935. We have many small credit unions in Saskatchewan and if they have a lot of clients that are going to qualify under this Act, Mr. Speaker, they are going to suffer for one year with no repayment of either principal or interest, and the result is that no repossession can be done, they themselves will find themselves in very much similar positions that many of these smaller dealers do.

There are many credit unions which may have a lot of clients who will benefit under this Act. These credit unions will receive no principal or interest from these clients and could find themselves in a great deal of financial difficulty.

It is well know, Mr. Speaker, that the repossession of equipment even under today's laws, in practically every single case involves a loss on the deal to the implement dealer. I understand that the Member for Redberry is a machine dealer, and also the Member for Elrose (Mr. Owens) and I am sure that the Member for Redberry can give the Attorney General . . .

An Hon. Member: — Turtleford!

Mr. Weatherald: — Turtleford (Mr. Feduniak) sorry . . . the Attorney General information on how this situation actually works in practice.

It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that the Government opposite has brought this legislation in in such a rapid and hurried manner. I have mentioned only two particular instances where the difficulties will be very great for many of the smaller dealers.

Mr. Speaker, there are many more sections of the Act that bring about equally difficult problems for small businessmen. In summary, the net effect of this Act is that the financial loss from the moratorium of debts will have a serious effect on many financial institutions including credit unions and small businessmen and implement dealers in the Province of Saskatchewan. It will not, Mr. Speaker, help farmers to any great extent, because it will not improve his net income position whatsoever. And I would predict, Mr. Speaker, that without a substantial improvement in net income — I must admit I don't have the same confidence in the Government opposite increasing that income in the next year, they may have. So I would suggest that the agricultural situation won't be too much different next year and that this Act does nothing whatsoever to improve the net income position of most of these people; that many of the people who would benefit under this Act will be in a very similar situation of being hard-pressed to meet bills in the coming year.

It will, as my colleague from Milestone has suggested, put many farmers in a very difficult situation for obtaining credit. I have been assured by many credit union operators that in most cases, where they think the farmer has a reasonable chance of success in the year, despite setbacks of possibly hail, drought, crop loss, but despite the fact that he had a setback, many credit union operators have told me, Mr. Speaker, that in all these cases they have tried to help this man and extend credit to the very utmost, to assist him to get started to repay his debts.

But one of the most fundamental things in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, which I think could prove to be a disaster and will certainly result, Mr. Speaker, in every lawyer being fully employed in the coming year, I am convinced, in that the onus of this Bill is practically totally on the creditor to prove that the farmer is able to pay.

If I understand this Bill correctly, Mr. Speaker, and my colleague from Regina Albert Park (Mr. MacLeod) says that this is the way that he understands it as well, is that if a farmer goes to the implement dealer or goes to the person to whom he owes the money, the creditor, and he says, "I am unable to pay," and he doesn't pay his debt, then the obligation, Mr. Speaker, is on the creditor to prove that he is able to pay. We are opening the way, tremendously, Mr. Speaker, for people if they wish, to suggest they are unable to pay and then we have the person who is the creditor in the local community having to go to court to prove that that person is able to meet that debt obligation.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that this should employ just about every lawyer in Saskatchewan, full time, in the coming year. I would also suggest that despite the moratorium of one year on this Act, that many repossessions from the people whom

we are trying to assist, will still take place. The asset in many of these cases on repossession will be of little value.

This Act does not protect small businessmen or implement dealers but puts the full onus of responsibility, in many cases, on their shoulders. It is our sincere hope, Mr. Speaker, that the Government opposite will realize how faulty they have drafted this legislation and they will give it close and careful consideration in the next two or three days, Mr. Speaker.

The Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) has suggested that we need time and I am convinced that we have all seen that they need a lot of time to do a lot of doctoring on this Bill. We hope you have a lot of amendments. We hope that you will let it go to the Law Amendments Committee, Mr. Attorney General, because as this Bill now stands it will have very, very serious repercussions on many, many small businessmen in Saskatchewan; many small businessmen in Saskatchewan who were your supporters and it will put them in very substantial difficulty.

Mr. Speaker, in its present form, I cannot support this Bill. This Bill is the beginning of a little bit of the iceberg and the iceberg is still under the water. We got a little bit standing out. Many of the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, not too long ago, suggested that sometimes it is the duty of the Opposition to hold up legislation so that the people of Saskatchewan can get a good look at it. I think this is a good case where the Opposition can hold legislation up, and they rightly are doing so. I think the people of Saskatchewan need more time to look at this Bill and make more representation. Mr. Speaker, I wish to beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Hon. A.E. Blakeney (Premier) moved second reading of Bill No. 8 — **An Act to amend The Mental Health Act.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to move second reading of The Mental Health Act.

This Bill essentially repeals the changes to The Mental Health Act which were made in 1968. It is not possible to discuss the changes which are being brought in at this Session without considering the changes which were introduced in 1968, and which are now being repealed.

Mr. Speaker, in 1968 I objected, and objected very violently to the changes which were made in The Mental Health Act. I had a number of basic objections. The old arrangement — and by old arrangement, I am going to refer to the pre-1968 arrangement — was that an estate was free from any claim for the cost of mental care where the patient was a patient in a mental hospital and where he subsequently died, in the hospital or out of the hospital, if the estate passed to the father or the mother or the husband or the wife or the child or a brother or a sister, of the deceased patient and if such beneficiary was residing in Saskatchewan. And it was similarly free from any claim by the Province of Saskatchewan if the estate went to a dependant regardless of where the dependant lived.

That was a very wide exemption. In only a few cases, therefore, was the estate of a mental patient charged with the payment of the cost of the care rendered to that mental patient in

Provincial Government institutions. Please note, Mr. Speaker, two things about that range of exemptions. The number of people who could inherit the estate so that it would be free from any claim by the Crown was substantial. The class was large. Father, mother, husband, wife, child, brother, sister, any other dependant. And secondly, the exemption applied to the whole estate, not just to a portion of the estate, but to the whole estate.

Now keep these points in mind. The class of people who could inherit without claim by the Crown was large and the entire estate was exempt. In effect, then, the Act provided for free mental health care, provided by the citizens of Saskatchewan, for the citizens of Saskatchewan. It is true that in certain cases where the estate went to a non-dependant, who was a non-resident of Saskatchewan, there was a claim against the estate. And it is true that under some circumstances there could be difficulty in applying this resident, non-resident rule.

But there was a way to get around that problem. It was to provide for ministerial discretion. Obviously, where a family was permanently resident in Saskatchewan, and where mental health treatment was provided to one of the relatives, it seemed to the previous Government, the pre-1968 Government, reasonable that that part of the estate which went to the family which lived in Saskatchewan should be exempt.

The basis of this was that mental health care was provided by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan; paid for by tax dollars, and those residents of Saskatchewan were among the taxpayers who paid for that care.

It seemed to us in those days that it was reasonable to provide that this health care would be without charge against the patient while the patient was living or against the patient's estate when he died. Now, if the estate was to pass to people outside the province, then it was entirely consistent with the theory that a charge should be made against that estate, because the people who received the benefit had not contributed to provide the free mental health care since they were non-residents and did not pay taxes to Saskatchewan.

Now, I will concede that if a person had been a resident and moved away from Saskatchewan, there was a possibility of an inequity. As I indicated earlier, this could be dealt with by ministerial discretion. Perhaps that wasn't the ideal way to solve the inequities, but it was available. The number of cases was small and it operated effectively.

And note, that if a patient died in Saskatchewan, and let us say an elderly parent had moved to British Columbia and was a dependant, the entire estate moving to that parent would be exempt, because that parent was a dependant, even though he lived outside of Saskatchewan.

It was further provided in the pre-1968 Act that where the estate was not going to any member of the family, or any member of the classes mentioned, and I emphasize that those classes included almost everybody who normally takes an estate — then a stranger could lose some money. A stranger could have the estate made subject to a prior claim by the Crown. And you might argue that that was inconsistent with our theory that the taxpayers had paid the care and accordingly there should not be a second fight by the Crown.

I am prepared to admit that there might have been a measure of inconsistency. The theory here was certainly that if a stranger was getting a windfall gain, it was perhaps not unreasonable for the Crown to get a part of it.

Well, those were the principles which applied prior to 1968. To any father, mother, brother, sister, child or any dependant mental health care was free if the beneficiary lived in Saskatchewan. Contrast the principle introduced by the then Government in 1968. That new principle was that mental health care was no longer free. It must be paid for out of the estate of the deceased patient. Now it might be argued that it is all a matter of degree, but the change brought in in 1968 by the previous Government was so substantial that the degree of change, in fact, changed the principle. They said that in every case the estate should pay the full cost of mental care, save one exemption, one only, and that is if an estate passed to a husband or a wife the first \$10,000 should be exempt, and that is all. That is such a very great change in the basis of paying for mental health that it is certainly a reversal of the previous principle.

That principle, the principle introduced by Members opposite when they were in Government in 1968, was in effect to go back to the pre-1945 principle — the old Liberal principle — of saying that mental health care was not free.

Note, Mr. Speaker, that they provided for an exemption only for husbands and wives, not for dependent children; not for brothers; not for sisters; not for dependent parents, and then only \$10,000. That \$10,000 is a lesser figure than is everywhere else in legislation, both federal and provincial, thought to be a minimum amount which must pass to a spouse. The Intestate Succession Act of this Province says that the spouse will get the first \$10,000 plus one third of the balance. Under the legislation introduced by the Government opposite in 1968 the spouse got \$10,000 and the Crown got 100 per cent of the balance.

What is the justification for this? Health care of all kinds is provided essentially free of direct charge against the estate of a person if that person is physically ill. If a person is in a general hospital we don't charge him — we did subsequently apply deterrent fees but now that is gone — that was a relatively smaller charge. If a person was in a geriatric centre we don't make a charge against his estate. No suggestion in either case that the estate of a deceased patient who is physically ill should pay anything. Now what is the distinction between the physically ill and mentally ill?

I don't know. Perhaps Members opposite really feel that the principle that estates should pay should be applied to the physically ill. People in TB sanatoriums and the like will be glad to know that these people are out of office, if that is their view.

Just see how their principle operates, Mr. Speaker. If a person entered a mental hospital in 1950 and he died in June of 1968, what is the situation? Suppose a man had a small farm and he left a wife, some children, in 1950 when he went into a mental hospital. This woman has worked the farm for 18 years. She has hung on to it. The children have grown up; she has raised the children without the benefit of a breadwinner. And suppose that man died in 1968, and the farm was worth, say,

\$35,000. What did the Liberals then say? What did they say was the appropriate disposition of that farm? What did they say should go to this widow, who raised her children without a breadwinner? What did they say would be an appropriate disposition of that farm in so far as the children were concerned, who had lived their life without a father, except that he was in a mental hospital? Liberals said that the first \$10,000 should go to the widow and they wanted all the rest, all the rest. They said, "Never mind that you have done this yourself. Never mind that for 18 years you paid taxes like everyone else. Never mind that your children have lived without the benefit of a father's counsel and advice and earning power. We want all of that farm but \$10,000.

That's what they said. And almost in the same session, Mr. Speaker, they came in and introduced proposals to give estate tax rebates. They said that if someone died, and left \$1 million to his son and there only was an exemption of \$50,000 or \$60,000 for this son, and then tax started to apply — not at 100 per cent, but at 10, 12, 15 and 18 per cent — it was absolutely unconscionable to make the son pay part of his million dollars, and they were going to rebate it all, and they did. To some estates they rebated as much as \$150,000, to people had inherited \$400,000, \$600,000, but to the sons of this widow who had raised her children while the father was in the mental hospital, nothing, and to the widow \$10,000 only.

That was their legislation. So at that time I made a second point against that legislation. I complained about its essential retroactivity, because that legislation not only provided that care rendered after April 1968, when they brought in the legislation, should be paid for out of the estate of the deceased patient, but the legislation provided retroactively that care provided any time between 1945 and 1968 should be paid for out of the estate of the patient. People who had been getting care between 1945 and 1968 in the belief that this care was rendered free of charge against the estate found, at least their dependants found, that care rendered for that entire period of 23 years was now subject to a charge. For this period when people had every right to believe, because that was the law, that mental health care was free of any unjust burden on the relatives of the mentally ill, they found that this entire period was now subject to a charge.

I want to say again that in our judgment that care had been paid for by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan and there was no justification for the Crown retroactively to reach back 23 years and take a bite out of an estate. At that time, in 1968, no one had been predicating the budget of this Province on going back retroactively for 23 years, or 20 years or 15 years. Everybody had assumed that care had been bought and paid for and didn't need to be recovered from anybody. I said then and I say now that that type of retroactive taxation legislation was and is wholly indefensible.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I want to summarize what I have said. I considered then that the Bill was a retrograde one, I considered it an unfair distinction between the mentally ill and physically ill people. The Minister himself at that time effectively said he agreed with that because he was going to

move people out of the mental hospital where their estates would be subject to a charge and move them a few doors really, in the same building, down to the corridor and call it the Souris Valley Hospital, and there the estates wouldn't be subject to a charge, but they are the same people you understand. This was his proposal. The Minister admitted that this was what he proposed to do, admitted that if he could get Federal sharing that he wouldn't make this charge against the estates.

I suggested then and I suggest now that an allowance of \$10,000 for a widow is grossly inadequate. I don't believe anybody in this House would suggest that if a man left his widow \$10,000, and that's all, that he had adequately provided for her. We all know that The Estate Tax Act provided at that time for an exemption of \$60,000 for widows, and that was considered outrageously small by Members opposite. Now the Estate Tax provides for an unlimited exemption for widows, and that change I agree with.

Mr. Speaker, it was altogether too characteristic of the then Government that they would decide to finance their program by attacking the budgets and the estates of the mentally ill. This is altogether too characteristic of their priorities. Altogether too characteristic of the fact that they financed program after program by underfinancing health programs and overfinancing other programs. I think that this whole Bill was an outstanding and conspicuous example of an unfair tax, an unfair charge against people who are among the least able to bear these extra burdens. I opposed that Bill strongly, and it gives me the greatest pleasure to be able to move — that we throw out this Bill, throw it out entirely — to be able to move that we start Saskatchewan once again on the road to be a leader in mental health care in North America . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — . . . and that we are able to offer once again fair play to the mentally ill, as we have offered fair play in this Session to the physically ill. Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this Bill.

Mr. D. Faris (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is significant that the former Minister of Health (Mr. Grant) finds himself sitting virtually alone on his side of the House at this time. I am sure that the other Members of his Party do not wish to identify themselves with this disgusting piece of legislation which we are about to remove from the Statute Books.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Faris: — I am pleased to see that some of the Members have come into the House to hear this speech. Mr. Speaker, some Hon. Members in this House have implied that the former Government was without principles; some Members in this House have implied it in their arguments and some of the Members on the other side of the House have apparently tried to demonstrate it. But it was not in fact the case. The taxation of the estates of mental patients is proof of a principle that underlies Liberal taxation policies.

The principle is that there is no group so sick, or weak, or poor, or helpless that they should not be taxed. A government which came to power and found that the estates of mental

patients were being taxed could be excused for necessary delay in removing this legislation. But a government that came to power, after 23 years of free treatment for mental patients, had no excuse for taxing their estates. It was done purposely. It was done intentionally, it was done ruthlessly. It was done at the same time that that former Government began to roam around this Province, boasting of rebating the Province's share of the estate tax.

Yes, they rebated their share of the estates of normal people. Yes, they rebated their share of the estates of millionaires, but when it came to the estates of mental patients — oh, no, this was a different matter. Here was a group of people who had no votes. Here was a group of people who could not complain. Here was the perfect target for taxes based on that Liberal principle that there is no group, so sick or weak, or poor or helpless that they should not be taxed.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Members opposite for standing and speaking for what they really believe in. They believe in taxing the physically ill. They spoke for it but they voted against it. They believe in taxing cancer patients. They spoke for it, but they voted against it. They believe in taxing mental patients and finally, finally we ask, will they have the courage to vote for it in this House?

Who knows? How can we tell? But we do have the words of the former Minister of Health (Mr. Grant) speaking in the Legislature in 1968, and he said:

In the long run the costs of mental hospitals in Canada will become sharable under the federal cost-sharing legislation. If, and when, this comes about our provisions for charging estates will be terminated. However, in the meantime this provision will remain, since although it is a rather peculiar provision, it must be continued to be recognized as an effective method of raising revenue.

He makes two points here, he calls it a rather peculiar provision. We call it a rather disgusting provision. He calls it an effective method of raising revenue and we agree that if it is based on the Liberal principles of taxation, that is, that there is no group so sick, weak, poor or helpless, that they should not be taxed — then it makes sense!

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Faris: — A wise man long ago said, "Like the dog who returns to his vomit, is a fool who repeats his folly." It must be clear that if there is ever again a Liberal Government in this Province, they will tax the estates of mental patients. Their speeches have told us this. They did it before and they will repeat their folly, they will return to their vomit. And those who tax mental patients, will again tax cancer patients. They did it before and they will return to their vomit. And those who tax mental and cancer patients, will tax sick people. They did it before and they will return to their vomit. And what do you with a dog who keeps returning to its vomit? Well, you can clean up the vomit and that is what we have started to do at this Session. But it is better to get rid of the dog. And that is what the people of Saskatchewan did on June 23rd.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Faris: — Mr. Speaker, I am proud to speak in this Legislature at this time in removing this disgusting provision from the law. I am proud to support this motion, to take the taxes off the estates of mental patients, who cannot speak for themselves.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. G.B. Grant (Regina Whitmore Park): — Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member from Arm River (Mr. Faris) may be proud to support the Bill that is before him. I am sure that he is not very proud of what he said.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Grant: — I have been proud to be a Member of this House for over seven years, but, Mr. Speaker, that was the greatest demonstration of disrespect for this House that I think that I have ever seen for some time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Grant: — Surely all Hon. Members agreed with you last week, Mr. Speaker, when you said that it was our duty to set a good example of decorum and proper behavior — in fact we should be setting an example for the people of the Province. I assumed that the Members of the Government agreed with this statement. I am sure that if we weren't concerned along this line that we shouldn't be here in the first place. But I am astounded at the words that this Member from Arm River used. "The Liberals will return to their vomit." I tried to keep track of the number of times he used that revolting word 'vomit'. I think it was six times.

The use of the word 'dog' is not a very complimentary word. The word 'vomit' has always been very revolting to me and I am sure it is most revolting to the people in this House, because of what it brings to your mind. What he has said has been just as revolting to me as the expressions he has used. He was so busy trying to avoid stepping in his own vomit that he didn't say very much.

Mr. Speaker, I think that a Member of this House should be reprimanded for the use of such questionable language . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Grant: — . . . particularly an ordained Minister — an ordained Minister of this Province, who held himself forward in the election campaign as Doctor Faris. I thought he was a medical doctor, but I find now that he is an ordained Minister, a member of the United Church, my church. I am sure that my Minister of Westminster Church would be very pleased to hear the language he used. I am sure that the presbytery will be and all those associated with the United Church. I am sure they are very proud of the Member. Surely we can discuss the business of this House without such unparliamentary expressions as he used.

Mr. Speaker, let's look back to 1944 and 1959 in regard to the proposed amendment to The Mental Health Act. In the Throne Debate the Member, I am afraid I can't call his Hon. Member from Arm River, said it took a lot of arrogance to tax the mentally ill. Well that shows what happens with youth. You know, they don't know what has happened in the past, they are not acquainted with the past. He is so young that he doesn't realize, and I wish he would listen — if the Hon. Member from the Battlefords (Mr. Kramer) would mind his business and not distract him — I wish the Hon. Member from Arm River would listen because it did take a lot of arrogance to introduce this tax on the estates of those mentally ill. Who introduced it — your Government, your predecessor, the Hon. Tom Douglas. I can't find the record of the debate of this House back in 1945 but in all likelihood it was the Hon. Clarence Fines who supported him, or some of those stalwarts of the day. I doubt whether Mr. Brockelbank, Sr., would have done it because I have too much respect for Mr. Brockelbank, Sr. but that's when it took place back in 1945. Now the Hon. Premier (Mr. Blakeney) said that there were only a few cases and he made small of the fact that the legislation existed prior to 1968. He was honest to that point, he admitted that the tax on the estate of the mentally ill was in existence prior to 1968. I sometimes feel that if I am ever charged with a serious crime and I want a good lawyer I am going to hire the Premier because he can squirm around and change facts so adeptly that I am sure that he would be able to get me off even if I were guilty of the serious crime. But he did a lovely job here of whitewashing what his predecessors had done in taxing the estates of the mentally ill, saying, well we had so many exemptions that the Minister had powers to waive the tax that it really didn't mean very much. Well to use the immortal words of the Hon. Minister of Health, "It was only money." \$300,000 that the former Government was collecting annually and this is a pretty rough guess because I believe it was in excess of \$300,000.

Now let's look at the relationship of \$300,000 to the money that the previous Government was spending on the mentally ill. The saviours of the mentally ill, the people who kept 1,100 patients locked in unsuitable conditions in North Battleford, dietary facilities that weren't fit for pigs, and you asked the mentally ill to eat in those facilities and you had your staff eating in those facilities. Well, in fact, it was about \$11 million back in those days and we'll say that \$8 million of that \$11 million was spent in the care of the mentally ill and we shall disregard what was spent for administration and the likes of that. So, they were collecting about 4 per cent of what they were spending from the estates of the mentally ill. Well today we are still collecting about \$300,000 from those estates, the Mental Hospital budget this year is about \$17 million. So we'll say the equivalent amount to the \$8 million is about \$14 million, so we are collecting about 2 per cent. So those evil Liberals were collecting about half of what the NDP were collecting prior to 1964.

And then the Premier says, "Well, yes, we'll have to admit, there might have been a little inconsistency." Oh, boy, a little inconsistency! There sure was!

Let's look back to see what happened in 1945, because the Hon. Member from Arm River (Mr. Faris) — he was still running around in diapers back in those days, he wouldn't remember — but I'll just read it. This is what was passed in 1944 and I'll read it.

Well, they were very careful to use beautiful words — subject to Section 4 — and I'll read you Section 4:

All persons heretofor committed to and now in an institution, shall hereafter be entitled to care and maintenance at the expense of the Province.

Big words — well-sounding words! And the next clause, Section 3 says:

Anyone committed to an institution after this date, their expenses will be paid by the Department.

But what does Section 4 say — this is the hooker:

Where a person is hereafter admitted to an institution and who receives care and maintenance at the expense of the Province, dies, all expenses incurred in connection with his apprehension, examination, committal, mental examination, custody, transportation, care and maintenance, shall subject to the exemptions . . .

(Which have been cited)

. . . be a charge upon and payable by the Executor or Administrator of an estate.

There, Mr. Speaker, is the source of this legislation which the uneducated Member from Arm River was blaming us for. And I believe there are others contributing to this misleading information. It was out during the election campaign. As I have said before, they are so busy making promises, they don't even know the facts, they don't go to the trouble of researching the material that is available for them and thus get out on a limb.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that they will realize now that it was not the Liberals who introduced this tax on the estates of the mentally ill. Because the Hon. Tom Douglas and others said that 'while they'll receive care and maintenance at the expense of the Province while they're alive — Heaven help them if they die! — then the beneficiaries will be assessed, except for a few exceptions'.

Well, the few exceptions amounted to \$300,000 or \$400,000 a year. I don't think that's peanuts. I am sure the Hon. Minister of Health (Mr. Smishek) wouldn't include that in his peanuts or just money.

Now let's go a little further — back in 1945 when this legislation was passed, it was covered by regulation — the details of it — what did they charge? Well, the charge was \$2.50 a day, the same as the utilization fee for the first 30 days that we introduced in 1968. But remember this was 25 years ago when \$2.50 meant a lot more than it does today. Were these protectors of the oppressed and the sick and the mentally ill satisfied? No, Siree! In 1959 they doubled it to \$5.00. Collections were running, as I say, in excess of \$300,000 a year.

But, in dealing with this legislation, Mr. Speaker, they said it would be politically difficult to assess this charge against Saskatchewan beneficiaries so we'll only collect from those beneficiaries who move out of Saskatchewan, and they don't have a vote so we don't have to worry about them. The only

exception would be the case of the non-voting beneficiary living outside the province who, in the opinion of the Minister, is dependent on the estate for support.

Well, let's look at the case cited by the Premier. He used the example of the widow with a \$35,000 farm and he expounded very ably on this and in a true court-room style soliciting support for the poor widow, because, he said, according to the amendment that we brought in, we'd only leave her with \$10,000 we'd grab the \$25,000. Well, I've heard this for three years in this House now. I don't think there is any Member on the opposite side of the House who can tell of any case since this amendment has been in vogue, or any widow or widower who has lost the little old homestead or has lost the little old home. I am sure that the present Minister of Health (Mr. Smishek) is just as capable as I was or my predecessor in exercising good judgment in determining where the exercise of this waiving privilege was justified, and I'm satisfied that if the legislation had been left as it currently is, that everything the Opposition wants to do, Mr. Speaker, could have been done under the present legislation.

In 1968, Mr. Speaker, our government felt that we weren't being fair. The Premier says why should . . . where is it now . . . why should there be no charge against the estates of the physically ill but yet we charge against the mentally ill. Well, he also admitted there is inconsistency. So we felt that in 1968 a move should be made to straighten out some of this inconsistency. He says the cost of the care had been paid for by the taxpayers. There is no justification for recovering from the estates of the deceased. Well, this may be true but why didn't he practise what he preached? For 20 years you had been collecting from the estate of deceased mentally ill. He says that I personally must have felt strongly about this thing because I was instrumental in getting the Souris Valley Hospital started and to save the patients when they passed away, the estates being taxed, we're going to move them into the Souris Valley extended care hospital and thus they wouldn't be taxed.

Well, Mr. Speaker, let me remind the Hon. Members opposite that this is what took place when the Yorkton Mental Hospital Unit was opened up. You fellows conceived the idea, we opened it up in 1964. You conceived the idea of transferring the patients to a General Hospital. We didn't conceive it. I might also mention, Mr. Speaker, because I know the Hon. Member from Arm River (Mr. Faris) certainly won't know about this, but that same government of the day built 150 beds up in Yorkton and the most we have ever used since were 40 beds — that's good planning but I just couldn't help but get it in here.

The Premier said, "Throw it out, throw it out." Well we feel that there have been inconsistencies. A beneficiary may have lived in Saskatchewan for 25 or 30 years but just because he retired to the Coast or Alberta or just across to the other Socialist haven in Manitoba, the NDP said, "So sorry, no residence, no estate." On the other hand, those same guardians of the oppressed, gave no recognition as to just where the money came from that built up this estate. I can tell you from experience and the Hon. Minister of Health knows it, that in many cases the estate is built up from the Old Age Pension cheques sent out from Ottawa. The family takes very little interest in the ill person, in many cases, they haven't seen a member of the family for many, many years. They have contributed

very little to the care and comfort of the deceased during either the patient's sane period of life or his insane period. But, believe me, when Uncle Joe or Dad dies, quite often they are very interested in his estate. But the Government of the day said, that makes no difference. If they are a resident of Saskatchewan, we'll forego the \$5 a day and give the whole works to the beneficiaries.

We thought, Mr. Speaker, that everyone should be treated alike and the government should get its \$5 a day, providing, of course, that hardship to the beneficiary should not occur. To assure this we said the first \$10,000 of an estate would be exempt. You fellows didn't have any basic amount exempt for the non-resident at all. You could take the whole thing, but we said, No, \$10,000. And as additional protection, the Minister had the right to waive the entire bill and this was not new because you also had that authority.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that the Act has been fairly administered and I personally feel that as Minister I never failed to give every consideration that could be expected before denying an exemption. The revenue derived was substantial but as the Minister of Health says, "It's only money." The 1968 amendments, if properly administered, provided sufficient flexibility to ensure that no hardship was caused. This amendment — the Government's new amendment — is totally unnecessary since the Minister had the authority under the Act to make whatever exemptions he felt were just, and this is just another example of this Government's grandstand approach to the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I've heard many arguments advanced by the Members opposite for this legislation, not only today but on previous occasions. It is not new. I feel personally, and our Opposition group feel, that if there is going to be a change, the Government should go all the way. They speak of 'free mental care'. They are great for this business of things being free. Well, why don't they go all the way and give free mental care. Their original bill in 1944 said that the Province would pay the entire cost. They deplored charging estates. Why don't they get it off there then? Because they could go all the way and make it so called 'free'.

As the Premier says, "Throw it out" — using his own words — "throw it out." Mr. Speaker, as I say, some of these arguments made by the Opposition have been valid, some of the reasoning given in past years have contained sense. While we differ philosophically with the Members opposite, we're not unreasonable men. I think we've demonstrated that we're big enough to admit our mistakes. In fact, hearing some of the arguments put forward today, I can say that the Member in Opposition are prepared to vote in favor of this piece of legislation, not because we feel it goes far enough. We feel that it should go further. If I was able to make an amendment, I'd make an amendment and kick out the entire tax on the estates of the mentally ill, as they suggest, but they are not prepared to do it. So, I guess we'll have to be satisfied with a few bucks for the time being.

But, I tell all Members present, Mr. Speaker, that the disgusting remarks made by the Member from Arm River (Mr. Faris) did nothing to change my mind or the mind of anyone sitting with me on this side of the House.

August 4, 1971

I think, Mr. Speaker, that he owes an apology to this Assembly and I ask him to make the same at once.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. J.E. Brockelbank (Saskatoon Mayfair): — Would the Hon. Member permit a question before he resumes his seat.

Mr. Grant: — Certainly.

Mr. Brockelbank: — You were quoting from I believe, a Statute at the beginning of your remarks. Could you cite the quotation.

Mr. Grant: — 1944, Second Session.

Mr. Brockelbank: — What Act? What Chapter?

Mr. Grant: — Chapter 47, Page 156.

Mr. E.I. Wood (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, I really — as has been said before upon different occasions — I really hadn't intended to get into this debate, but I was a little surprised at the quotation from the Act that the Hon. Member read, who has just sat down. I don't think that he would intend to mislead the House because I have had a long acquaintance with the Hon. Member and I don't think he's that type of an individual.

He has, I believe, the copy of the Act for the Second Session of 1944 before him. I went to the library and I wasn't able to find it, but here are the Statutes of 1940 which have been corrected and brought up to date, and he is quite right in saying that Section 9(a) says:

Subject to Section 4, all persons who are resident and have been residents of Saskatchewan for a period of at least 12 months, immediately prior to admission to an institution shall be entitled to care and maintenance at the expense of the province.

And as he is entirely right in saying that in Section

. . . where a person who is hereafter admitted to an institution and who receives care and maintenance at the expense of the province, dies, all expenses incurred in connection with his apprehension, examination, committal, medical examination, custody, transportation, care and maintenance, shall subject to . . .

(Just mark these words)

. . . shall subject to Subsection 5 be a charge upon and payable by the executor or administrator out of the estate of the deceased and the Minister may recover sums so payable from the executor or administrator in any court of competent jurisdiction.

He is quite right in saying this but he didn't draw attention to the 'subject to Subsection 5'.

Mr. Grant: — Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ. I mentioned that specifically subject to Subsection 5.

Mr. Wood: — Well, Subsection 5 says that:

4 shall not apply with respect to any portion of the estate which passes to the father, mother, husband, wife, a child, brother or sister of the deceased if residing in Saskatchewan.

So, I think that this is very plain that the Government of that day made it very clear that the charges for people in mental institutions would not apply to people living in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Grant: — I didn't say they would!

Mr. Wood: — Well, this is what I gathered from what the Hon. Member said. Of course I do admit that I nipped out smartly down to the library and he may have changed it after I left but as I was listening, it appeared to me that he was saying that the Government of that day in 1944 instituted charges against the estates of the mentally incompetent in Saskatchewan. And this makes it very clear that it does not make any charge against the estates of the mentally incompetent. It's only in regard to those outside of the Province of Saskatchewan. It goes on in subsection (b) . . .

Mr. Grant: — It does that, it makes a charge!

Mr. Wood: — . . . of \$5 and says that:

. . . it shall not apply in respect to any of the said persons wherever residing who, in the opinion of the Minister, are dependent on the estate for support.

Mr. Grant: — What about the other ones, there is still another group?

Mr. Wood: — But it makes very . . . Well, the point is this, that the Government of that day made it very clear that the estates of mentally incompetent so long as they were being passed on to people in Saskatchewan, were not going to be charged. They didn't feel that it was right and proper that the people of Saskatchewan should pay for money that was going outside the province to people who were not entitled to support so far as the Province of Saskatchewan was concerned and I think that the Government of the day made that very clear and I think that this is not what I gather from what the Hon. Member was saying a few minutes ago.

Mr. Grant: — That's what I was talking about and you collected \$300,000.

Mr. Wood: — But, I think that the Act of that day made it very clear that the government was not taxing the estates of people in Saskatchewan but they were passing charges on to people outside the province who we didn't feel that we had the right to pay for, and I maintain, Mr. Speaker, that this was not what

the Hon. Member was indicating a few minutes ago.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. M. Kwasnica (Cut Knife): — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed with great pride that I rise to take part in supporting the principle of this Bill. I want to point out that if the Hon. Member for Arm River (Mr. Faris) said that he thought that the amendment in 1968 put in by the Liberals was revolting, I don't blame him in the least because that is exactly what it was.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — Now the Hon. Member for Regina Whitmore (Mr. Grant) said that the Saskatchewan Government was collecting \$300,000 annually from the estates of mentally deceased patients. The big difference is, from whom was this money being collected, as pointed out by the Hon. Member from Swift Current (Mr. Wood) . . .

Mr. Grant: — Poor beneficiaries.

Mr. Kwasnica: — Yes beneficiaries who were outside of the province, who were not dependent on the estate and that is the great big difference between what you were doing and what we are doing now.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — As most Members are aware — and if the Hon. Member for Prince Albert West (Mr. Steuart) would . . . I hope you will take part in this debate and give us all your knowledge that you have. As most Members are aware, prior to 1945 — and that was when the Liberal Party was in government — each mental patient in an institution in our province was charged for the cost of his care and treatment. This was done by Liberal Governments back in those days. In 1944 when the CCF swept the province, one of the first things that they did along with very important farm legislation, which we are also doing again, they brought in amendments to The Mental Health Act which paid for the care and treatment at the expense of the Government. At this time, as has already been said, estates of deceased patients were liable to claim by the Minister of Public Health, particularly those estates that passed to relatives of the deceased residing outside of the province and who were not dependent upon the estate for a living.

The 1945 CCF amendment exempted that portion of the estate passing to a father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister or child of the deceased patient residing in Saskatchewan.

For 23 years the people of this Province enjoyed the security of knowing that their loved ones and friends were being cared for and that estates would be passed on without any deterrents or deductions. Then, in 1968, the Liberal Government of the day for some inexplicable and weird reason saw fit to remove most of these exemptions. The only mandatory exemption to the Minister's claim on the estate was the first \$10,000 of the estate passing to the husband or wife. The Minister of Public Health has first claim on the balance of the estate. For example, if a father died in the hospital and the mother was already deceased, the Minister had first priority on the whole

estate even if it was willed to a brother, sister or child or grandmother or grandfather. Now I ask Members opposite, how did you arrive at this \$10,000 ceiling? You can't do much with \$10,000 these days. It wouldn't even buy a house for a wife of a deceased husband.

Mr. Speaker, this Liberal legislation was enough to send people to the mental hospital. It did not ease their minds in the least.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — Mr. Speaker, this amendment by Liberals was wrong for several reasons. Mental illness, like any other illness, in most cases cannot be helped. The cause, in many instances, has not really been established. In many cases it appears to be strictly hereditary. Then why should the mentally ill be treated so shamefully? They suffer enough humiliation, worry and anxiety without having to pay financially as well. This Liberal inhumanity has caused terrible financial hardship to several of my constituents. I checked on every known case in my constituency since 1968. What did I find, Mr. Speaker? In the last three years, five estates were seized for a total of \$23,237.27. In addition there is one estate against which the Department had filed a claim for \$12,240 which has not been paid yet. Mr. Speaker, this is a total of \$45,477 taken from relatives of mental patients. This is an average of about \$7,500 per case. In one of these cases in my constituency two sons of a deceased parent were denied some \$4,000 according to the present Act. These same two sons, who were farmers in debt, became rather disillusioned. They had been farming the land that was left by their parents. They had been Liberals for years, Mr. Speaker. They are not Liberal any more. I am told that both sons walked into the office of a certain Liberal candidate, a certain lawyer in Lloydminster and threw their Liberal Membership cards in his face saying, 'if this is your kind of Liberal justice, we'll have no part of it any more'.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to bring another case to the attention of this House, which proves without a doubt, that the legislation presented today must be carried out at the greatest possible speed. This case involved the father of seven children on a quarter section of land. The father was admitted to the Saskatchewan Hospital in 1942, leaving his wife and children to man the farm. The oldest son had to quit school in March of his tenth year in school to help his mother work the farm. I don't want to take time out of the House to give all the details of hardship, debt, humiliation and hard work of the whole family. However, it was wisely decided to transfer the quarter section from the father to the oldest son. There were approximately \$1,500 past taxes due on the land which the son paid off. All other six children were able to get a minimum grade 12 education, and two are now teachers and two are nurses. The father passed away in 1967. The mother after residing for 15 years in Saskatchewan moved to British Columbia where she went on welfare. When the estate was being settled it looked like this. The statement came as follows: Obligatory claim March 17, 1942 to December 31, 1944 (that's under the old Liberal legislation) — 1,021 days at 75 cents per day, totalled up to \$765.75; the second part, contingent claim, January 1, 1945 to March 31, 1959, 5,023 days at \$3.50 per day for a total of \$18,210.50; April 1, 1959 to February 26, 1967, 2,888 days at \$5.00 per day for a total of \$14,440.00 and I want to point out,

Mr. Speaker, that the contingent claim was made retroactive to 1945 by the Liberal amendment of 1968. That amendment alone would have cost the family \$32,650.00. Now I ask you, where can the family find \$32,000? Can you imagine the ridiculousness of this situation. The wife of the deceased patient on welfare in British Columbia, the son on a quarter section and he has a charge of \$32,650.00 against the estate. However, the only monies in the estate proper, amounted to some \$2,820 obtained from old age pension cheques of the deceased and accrued interest at 4 per cent.

Now I ask Members of this House, did the Liberal Government of the day feel obligated to pay that \$2,820 of her husband's pension cheques to the wife who was on welfare in New Westminster, British Columbia? No. They did not. Mr. Speaker, this is a sad commentary on the Liberal record. These are the facts of the case. I ask you, was this justice, is this the just society?

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am deeply grateful to the Hon. Minister of Public Health for bringing in this legislation at this time. It will bring an end to this blatant example of man's inhumanity to man. And I'm glad that the Members opposite see the error of their ways and have just said that they will be supporting the legislation.

But, Mr. Speaker, at the same time I applaud the Minister of Public Health (Mr. Smishek) for this forward step. I look forward to much better follow-up care for our mentally ill. I look forward to the time when a program of social preventive services will be readily available to all citizens of our province. There should be consultants and psychologists in every major centre of our province to help our mentally disturbed. I'm sure that our new Government will be looking carefully to many progressive programs in the field of mental health.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a great pride and sense of accomplishment that I support this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. J.E. Brockelbank (Saskatoon Mayfair): — Mr. Speaker, I was totally unprepared to take part in this debate but after listening to the comments of the former Minister of Health (Mr. Grant) I felt that it was imperative that some evidence of the performance of the Liberal Government prior to 1944 and from 1964 to 1971 be put on the record of this House. I have felt sickened, if I might use the word, Mr. Speaker, to see the performance of the Liberal Members in this Chamber. Never is their character revealed more glaringly than when it comes to the field of mental or health care. Today we saw a performance by the former Minister of Health which really has no parallel in demonstrating the character of the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan. The former Minister, Mr. Speaker, speaking on this Bill, the Bill to amend The Mental Health Act, stated that our Government's attitude toward mental health patients was a poor attitude. I believe at that time — and the record will show when the record appears in written form in this House — he misrepresented the position that our Government had taken from 1944 to 1964. The evidence is quite clear, citing from the same Act that the former Minister cited from, we see in Subsection 5:

With respect to any portion of the estate which passes to the father, mother, husband, wife, a child, brother or sister of the deceased, if residing in Saskatchewan. With respect to any of the said persons, wherever residing, who in the opinion of the Minister are dependent on the estate for support.

Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that was a very broad-minded approach to the estate of mental patients. It was one of the foremost, I might say, small Liberal approaches to the estates of mental health patients at that time. It was, until it was superseded by other legislation in 1964 which we are all familiar with, the legislation that the previous Government brought in to tax the estates of the mentally incompetent.

What was the picture prior to 1944, Mr. Speaker, when this Government with a heart for mental patients was in office? Well let me read from the statutes of that time. Section 54 of the Act, page 3,525, Chapter 238:

When a person is committed to safe custody or to an institution under the provisions of this Act, all expenses incurred in connection with his apprehension, examination, committal, medical examination, custody, transportation, care and maintenance shall unless otherwise provided be borne by the person committed. If on enquiry it is found that he is possessed of the means for the purpose . . .

Now here's the clincher, Mr. Speaker. Continuing from the Act.

. . . In case he is without the necessary means of providing for his care and maintenance and in case he has relatives or other persons legally liable and capable of so providing, such relatives or persons shall be liable for the expenses to the extent to which they are not paid by the patient.

So there, Mr. Speaker, we see the attitude of this holier-than-thou performance by the former Minister of Health, of their treatment of mental patients in the Province of Saskatchewan.

In my short remarks today, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I am glad and will be glad to support this Act, this Bill before us, Bill No. 8, an Act to amend The Mental Health Act. I am surprised that the Members opposite in their position, newly humbled as Members of the Opposition by the people of the Province of Saskatchewan, are weaseling around on the mental health provisions in the Province of Saskatchewan. I'll take great pleasure in supporting this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Grant: — On a point of order, are we to assume from the lack of comment from yourself that the words "dog vomit" are suitable words for use in this House?

Mr. Speaker: — I would say that they are the type of words which I should hope will not be used in this House and had they been directed to anyone as an individual, they would call for a prompt interference but when they were directed to a party as such, the

rules don't specifically say that they shall be interfered, but they are the type of words which, I agree, shouldn't be used in this House.

Mr. K.R. Macleod (Regina Albert Park): — Mr. Speaker, it had not been my intention to speak on this Bill either but I thought perhaps having regard to the words that have gone before, a few remarks from me might not be out of order. I want to put it in this context, Mr. Speaker, that few Bills which have come before the House in the experience that I have now had in this House have caused me quite as much difficulty as this one. The reasoning is partly that set forth very well and very capably by the Premier (Mr. Blakeney). He has set forth what I think, and very fairly, the inconsistencies which occurred in the Act up until 1968 and I thought he did so very well, and very frankly and very openly, and he pointed out the problems that he faced, and maybe the mental problems, I mean it in the good sense that he had to go through in dealing with the problem back then. I thought he did so fairly. I listened to the Hon. Mr. Gordon Grant outline . . . I'm sorry, the Hon. Member for Whitmore Park (Mr. Grant) set forth this situation and really the difficulty, quite frankly, is that we are wrestling and struggling with some principle because there are things that we kind of want to do but it isn't exactly what we ought to do and that's been the problem with this mental health thing for quite a while. Perhaps I'm apologizing for governments all the way back for 30 or 40 years but I'm not really because I wasn't part of that, but I came here on this thing determined to vote for it because I thought, well, and I went through the same mental exercise that the Premier went through, when he said, "Well we had difficulty with the principle because we laid a charge against the estate but then we exempted certain people but because when you have trouble with the principle, then what you have to do is give ministerial authority." Well that's what was done. Then I gather that in 1968 the then Minister of Health (Mr. Grant) said, "Well look what's being done up until now just isn't quite logical. If we are going to make charges against people let's make it against all of the people." But even there he made an exemption which was against principle. So again an illogical Act came in, the struggle we had with this stuff between what we ought to do and what we want to do. And I wanted, Mr. Speaker, to come in here to be persuaded because I thought, well, it's a good Act but the same illogic still exists.

The Premier said, "What's the difference between the physically ill and the mentally ill?" And I guess he answers it by saying "quite a bit". Quite a bit, Mr. Speaker, if you happen to be a wife who lives outside Saskatchewan. Quite a bit, Mr. Speaker, if you happen to be mentally ill and not physically ill.

Section 8(a) that's to go into the Act says:

All expenses incurred with the apprehension, examination, committal, mental examination, care and maintenance . . .

and so on.

. . . shall be charged against the estate of the mental or then deceased person.

They don't charge it during his lifetime but when he dies they charge these against the estate. Well, where does the same sort of charge go against a man physically ill? Apparently, Mr. Speaker,

we're still wrestling with this principle. And then it says here:

But this doesn't apply with respect to close relatives specified, if residing in Saskatchewan.

So, what we are doing is saying this: that if you're related to someone who is mentally ill and you live in the province we're going to let you have the money. But if you live outside the province, we may not. Recognizing again that when you have a principle, that you deviate from, you create other problems. They then had to put back in there a Ministerial authority, that is, give Ministerial discretion to cover all the problems that are created when you deviate from principle.

And as the Hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Wood) I believe it was read, this goes back not a few years. It doesn't go back to the Liberal Government. It doesn't go back to the CCF Government. It goes back beyond these periods. We've continued to wrestle with the principle and when I wrestled with this in caucus, I said, well really it isn't right but I see what they are trying to do. I saw what they tried to do back in the CCF years and I saw what the then Hon. Gordon Grant tried to do when he was Minister of Health. And I understood what they were up to and I could see the problems that they had. And I wanted to be convinced, and I realized that when you wrestle with a principle that way, the Premier had to go through a sort of verbal polka and I understood the problem that he had.

And I guess what I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is that I'm so darn disappointed when I hear the stuff that I heard today from the Member from Arm River (Mr. Faris), I wanted to be persuaded. I decided I'd vote for it but over the difficulties that I've explained. Now, he said something, he said "In the past" — and they're always dwelling in the past. He said that they spoke for it and voted against it. And maybe I'm going to give him another example. I'm going to speak against it maybe, and vote for it. I'll just do the opposite maybe.

But I want to say this, that I just wish that we could grow up a little bit. I'm so darn disappointed in that gentleman because I met him a few years ago and that intemperate language wasn't part of his vocabulary. And I'm going to vote for this despite the debating points that were made, I think rather well by the Hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. But instead of an attempt by the Government to persuade me to vote for it, it became an effort to score some debating points, and I'm disappointed in them because it used to be done one way and then it was done another way and they say, 'we're the Government, we'd kind of like to do it this way'. I say gall darn it, you are the Government and if you want to do it that way, I'll support you, but for once can't they do it without the theatrics? Just once! And that's why I'm sorry to have to go through this today. I'm a little sorry that they don't all sit through these debates, particularly when they speak on them.

Well, I'm going to vote for it despite the efforts that they have given to me, despite their very best efforts to talk me out of it, I'll still vote for it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

August 4, 1971

Hon. W.E. Smishek (Minister of Public Health): — Mr. Speaker, I had intended to speak at some length on this Bill but I don't propose to do it in view of the time. I only want to make a couple of observations. One is that much remains to be done in the mental health field. I know some of the problems. I have much more to learn. This is an attempt to remove what our Government feels to be an unfair provision that was instituted in 1968. There are still some claims outstanding. I am glad to see that the Hon. Members have indicated they will support the Bill. Perhaps during Committee in consideration of the Bill there might be some questions they want to direct to myself or the Premier, as to the actual statistics and facts in this regard. Because of the time I shall not discuss the Bill now but I would urge all Members to support this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:35 o'clock p.m.