

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session — Seventeenth Legislature
28th Day

Monday, March 5, 1973

The Assembly met at 2:30 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. Whelan (Regina North West): — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce to you and all Members of this House, two groups of students from Regina North West.

The first group is located in the west gallery and consists of 56 Grade Eight students from Sherwood School. Their teachers Heather Hewson and Russell Marchuk are with them. This school is very close to my home and students from my immediate neighborhood are in this class and are in attendance in the gallery.

The second group consists of 20 adult students from St. Pat's Annex, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Arts and Science. They are located in the Speaker's Gallery with their teachers, Ruth Coulter and Bill Lewchyshyn.

On behalf of all Members, a warm welcome to these citizens and their teachers and may their visit here be pleasant, informative, and an introduction to the democratic process.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Answer to Question on Farm Surveys

Hon. Mr. Messer (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to respond to a question from the Member for Moosomin (Mr. Gardner) in connection with the Department of Agriculture officials holding secret meetings around the province to recruit people to inform on their neighbors.

I refer to a question asked February 27 where the Member said he was receiving very disturbing reports that the Department of Agriculture officials are holding meetings quietly around the province to recruit people to inform on their neighbors.

I have a copy here of the manual and the forms being used. They are interesting and such questions as, and I am continuing to quote the Member:

"Does the farmer spend the winter in Florida?" Which is not a question on the questionnaire. "Is he living commonlaw?" Which is not a question on the questionnaire. "Does he or his wife work off the farm? Does he have some other business interest?" His age and so on He goes on and I quote:

I would like to know are these surveys and these spy schools being held with the permission under the

authority of the Minister of Agriculture?

I told him that I would bring an answer to that question to the House at a later date. I should like to state that the farm reconnaissance survey, which is the one that the questionnaire is being developed for, is being carried out by the Agricultural Board members. No Government body gave guidance to the survey. Parties interested in the survey, namely, the University of Saskatchewan and both the federal and provincial agencies assisted by only sharing the cost and other needs that the district board members felt were necessary.

The Department of Agriculture has always suffered from a lack of accurate and complete information about the types of farms and the changes that are constantly taking place. Federal census information does not supply information about the size of farms or the farmer's increasing land base, what type of operator has increased livestock production and what age group is increasing livestock production.

The survey originated from an idea by Mr. Darrel Rumpel, a Moose Jaw area farmer who is also director at large for his AG District. Working within his own RM of Redburn No. 108 a survey was done to find out if there was a problem, and if so, to what degree in relationship to age of farmers and the potential carry on of operators associated with farm units.

The information gathered by the survey was generally held to be valuable. Farm organizations and several government agencies including Health, Education, Municipal Affairs, Central Planning and Research expressed support for a survey of that type covering the whole province.

A committee of four farmers and Mr. Rumpel as chairman were selected to carry out the survey. A total of 76 RMs were selected and then approached by Mr. Rumpel and his field staff. The survey program was explained to each council member who was asked to participate. If the council decided to go ahead with the program they were left with the necessary forms. Each councillor filled out a questionnaire for each farm unit in his division. These were later collected and checked and coded by the field men.

The information collected was not of personal nature or in any way related to the fiscal nature of a farm unit operation.

1. Size and type of farm. Acreage owned and rented. Type of enterprise. Number and type of livestock.
2. Changes in operation. Changes in the last five years in land base, land use and livestock numbers.
3. Chief and additional operators' ages, family responsibilities, resident on or off the farm, amount of time operator and wife spent on farm. Number of potential operators over 16 and interested in farming.

Information which was collected is already basically common knowledge to anyone in the local area. A handbook was given to people conducting the survey in their areas. It suggested how best to answer some of the questions if some doubt did arise between those conducting the survey and those being

asked to supply the answers.

The response to the survey was exceptional and I should like to quote from a statement by the chairman of the committee, Mr. Rumpel, and he quotes:

The response has been tremendous in most areas. We completed a large portion of the RMs with many councils and AG committees doing a fantastic job of calling on every farm unit in their division. They experienced tremendous co-operation from farm unit operators. In many cases the reeve, RM secretaries, most AG committee members and councillors, and most important of all, many of the ratepayers all felt this type of approach was long overdue.

The only cause for concern among some of the farm operators is that the program is now perhaps going to be dropped and that the data that could be of great importance to farm operators will not be available.

We did encounter a few small problems where we felt an individual tried to bring into the program party politics. In such cases we left them out of the survey because we did not want to create any hard feelings. Any RM that did not want to participate in the survey were also left out of the program for the same reason.

In summary, therefore, Mr. Speaker, the questionnaire was designed to tell us what type of farm the operator was farming; what type and need of help and how many operators can we expect to participate in new programs. In the light of this information that I have made available to this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I humbly ask that the Members of the Opposition endorse and co-operate with this program which is being carried out, not by the Government of Saskatchewan or the Department of Agriculture, but by local farm organizations in the province.

Mr. Gardner (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, if I just may reply to the long delayed answer on this question by the Minister.

You might recall that this was asked last Tuesday which will be one week tomorrow and we waited very patiently for the answer. You might note also that I don't know whether the Minister has seen the survey manual, but if I may be permitted a couple of quick quotes from it.

We would like to know if this operator has any family responsibilities, if he is married or living commonlaw.

And again:

He might spend the winters in a neighboring town or even Florida. Fill in the appropriate blank.

You might note another place in this:

We suggest that you use a pencil. It is easier to erase. Thank you for your co-operation.

Mr. Speaker, we still believe that the questions and subjects in the manual and some on the form are objectionable

to many farmers. We understand that the reception has been very poor, not good, as the Minister has indicated. We understand also and the Minister can correct me if I am wrong on this, that the person that he mentioned who is responsible for doing this survey is an employee of the Provincial Government of Agriculture and as such is responsible to the Minister and this makes the Minister responsible for the survey.

Now it is one thing to have a survey done on the number of cattle in a municipality or something of this nature, and of course, we have no objection to this. This is perfectly in order. But it is quite another thing to have information of this type asked in a survey and in the hands of the Department of Agriculture, provincially, because we don't know whether this NDP Government will use these for some of the Land Bank schemes or some of the other projects that they have in mind. I don't think that he should be standing here trying to shift the blame on the rural municipalities.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Presentation of Tie to Mr. MacDonald

Hon. Mr. Cowley (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I have a few words to say on a much lighter note. On Friday we were successful in taking up a very large collection over here and we have been able to purchase a very beautiful tie which I should like a page to pick up and deliver to the Member from Milestone (Mr. MacDonald). I hope that the Member will be able to keep it in his desk and when he is in a rush to get to work sometime in the future and forgets his tie, we will have the pleasure of watching him tie his tie in the House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to thank the Minister of Finance (Mr. Cowley). It is another typical example of the NDP give-away programs.

QUESTIONS

Re: Manual of Survey

Hon. Mr. Messer: — Mr. Speaker, in response to the member from Moosomin's interpretation of the manual he referred to, I should just like for the clarification of the House to read all of what he referred to partially. It says:

I would like to know if this operator has any family responsibilities. If he is married or living commonlaw.

He is married.

If for any reason he is supporting a family.

He is married.

If he was never married or widowed, divorced or legally separated with no one left to support legally and not

including other persons.
He is single.

So it just asks what you take into consideration if you are married, as far as the questionnaire is concerned or whether you are single.

Mr. Steuart (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture can make up all the new manuals he wants but we have a copy and we tabled it.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Table it then.

Mr. Steuart: — We did, we already tabled it. And I challenge you to look at it.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Exactly what the Minister said and not what the Member says.

Tabling of all Documents Pertaining to Intercontinental Packers

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, on another point. It has come to my attention that Mr. A.E. Gedge of Saskatoon is both a member of the Board of SEDCO, the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation and has been for some months and is also the Comptroller or a senior financial officer with Intercontinental Packers. Now this is, to say the least, a serious conflict of interest and could even imply collusion between SEDCO and Intercontinental Packers. I ask the Premier if he will immediately table all correspondence and all documents pertaining to this deal. I think this is most serious that a member of the Board of SEDCO and a senior official of this company, for which the people of this province were just informed we paid \$10.2 million which I think truth will show will be an outrageous sum, sits on the Board of SEDCO.

This is a most serious situation and it casts a cloud over this sale. I think the Premier has a responsibility to table this document immediately.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! The Leader of the Opposition will note that there are six motions on the Order Paper for Orders For Return discussing different phases of Intercontinental Packers.

When a motion is on the Order Paper this precludes discussion at this time on it. The six motions for Orders for Return will give a wide range of discussion at that time and we cannot discuss it now.

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, if you look at that and you listen to what I say, there is nothing in those motions, no relationship in those motions to the question that I just asked the Premier, that is to table all documents pertaining to this deal, including what part, if any, this man who is on both boards, is with both these companies on both sides of the fence, played in this role. I think the Premier has the responsibility to

give this answer to the public.

Mr. Speaker: — I would advise the Leader of the Opposition that these Motions For Return do ask for the tabling of the documents. I don't know what all is included in these documents, but your verbal question asking that all the documents be tabled, these ask for documents being tabled. So I would rule it out of order at this time and if you don't get the information that you need at that time you can put a further order on the Order Paper for the information.

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, will the Premier then comment on this very, very serious . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! I rule it out of order. You can't comment on something that I have ruled out of order because it is already on the Order Paper.

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, I am asking a totally different question if you will listen to me.

I have asked if the Premier will comment. There is nothing in those questions that I have asked, nothing in those Orders For Return that says anything about the directorship. I am asking if he would now care to comment on the fact that this man is both on the Board of Directors for SEDCO and is a senior officer of this company and was involved or was he involved in the negotiations?

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition — question, if we can dignify it with that word — is whether or not Mr. Gedge or any other person serves both on the Board of SEDCO or is associated with the company doing business with SEDCO.

In the case of Mr. Gedge the answer is, yes. And in the case of a good number of other people in the history of SEDCO the answer has been, yes.

I want to advise the House that the current Board of SEDCO includes Mr. Turvey who is the President of IPSCO. I want to advise that House if SEDCO wants to make a loan to IPSCO and thinks it is good business, we will make a loan to IPSCO. I want . . .

Mr. Steuart: — Paid five times too much money.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — You will have a full opportunity to debate the Intercontinental deal on the Resolutions that are on the Order Paper. I do not intend to do that, I intend to abide by the Speaker's ruling. But I am now talking about this question of conflict of interest. And I am saying to you that there have been many instances where there was a potential conflict of interest. We believe there will be many others since we are frequently getting on the Board of SEDCO top businessmen of this province. They will have business interests. So long as they disclose those

interests and do not in any way participate in the decisions made by the SEDCO Board I see absolutely nothing wrong with it and I, for my part, think that the Leader of the Opposition would be better advised not to smear leading businessmen in this province like Mr. Gedge.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, they can pound all they want but they can't drown out the truth. Let the Premier name one other instance where a member of the Board of SEDCO is also a senior official of a company where they bought 45 per cent or a major interest in the company. There is not one other single instance in the history of this province. You can't name one. It is a conflict of interest and you have a responsibility to table those documents.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — You will have an opportunity to make a similar speech but that certainly was no question or a supplementary question. Of course he can say that in no case have we bought 45 per cent interest because this is the first time we have. But can he say that in a similar instance no loans have been made, of course he cannot. He knows and I know that on many occasions loans have been made to companies in which members of the Board have an interest and I review those minutes and I see time after time a director saying he is not going to participate in this decision because he may be auditor or because he may be associated. Now it may be that Members opposite assert that they ran SEDCO without any such conflict of interest. It may be. I don't know whether that's true or not. I say it wasn't true before '64; it isn't true now and I make no apology for recruiting to that board the best businessmen we can get . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — . . . and if they happen to have an interest in a company having dealings with SEDCO, so long as these interests are disclosed, there's no possible objection.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! We can't permit this any further. I recognize the Minister.

Hon. Mr. Thorson (Minister of Industry and Commerce): — I think it only appropriate that I should say a word or two since I am Chairman of the Board of SEDCO. I think the House would want to know that Mr. Gedge has been serving on the SEDCO Board as a Director since the beginning of this year, that he has attended two meetings of the Board, one in January and one in February. I think the House would want to know that Mr. Gedge did not participate in any way with the SEDCO Directors or anyone in the Government in the discussions within the Government leading to the decision to enter into negotiations with Intercontinental Packers Limited and did not participate in any way on behalf of the Government or influence the Government in

any way in making a decision or influence the Board of Directors of SEDCO in any way in entering into this very sound contractual relationship with the Mendel family to buy an interest in Intercontinental Packers.

Now the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart) is on record with his own words that he doesn't want to check any facts before he opens his mouth because then he won't have anything to say. He's living up to his own reputation. He's making accusations and allegations without any substance or fact and he is trying to blacken the name and reputation of the Mendel family as well as Mr. Gedge and he is not going to get away with it, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, if the Minister can make a statement before the Orders of the Day then I can answer it.

Let me say that I did not smear Mr. Gedge. I asked a question and if he is saying, which the Premier would not, that Mr. Gedge had absolutely nothing to do with these negotiations then I take that as evidence and I thank him and I wait for the proof when and if we get any of these documents laid on the table.

As far as smearing the name of the Mendel family, again, I dispute that. I have not smeared the name of the Mendel family. I have said that they are a very respected family in this province, in this community. All I said is that when the facts are all out we're going to find out that they sold an interest in this company to this NDP Government, they sold it for about two or three times what it was worth and you're the suckers. They are the people that made a good deal for themselves and I don't blame them and that's not smearing them. If you people are so stupid that you paid \$10.2 million for something that's worth about \$4 million, it's not Mr. Mendel's fault, that's your fault.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! I think this has gone far enough. The Minister of the Environment . . .

ANNOUNCEMENT

Foam Lake Curling Champions

Hon. Mr. Byers (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, last Monday I advised all Members of the House that the Foam Lake Composite School girls curling team would be one of four teams competing in the Provincial High School Girls' Curling Final. This Provincial Final Curling competition was held at Foam Lake last Friday and Saturday. High School rinks competing included Moose Jaw Central Collegiate and Saskatoon Nutana Collegiate, Meath Park High School and Foam Lake Composite School.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to announce to the House that the rink from the Foam Lake Composite High School, where I taught for a number of years, emerged as the Provincial Champions in the Provincial High School Curling competition to win the trophy donated by the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Byers: — This rink consists of Miss Susan Madill, Gloria Springer, Sarnia Scutchings and Angie Madill. At this time I would ask all Members of the House to join in congratulating this Foam Lake rink and the coach, Mrs. Ella Reynolds, on their victory, as well as all the young people who participated in this curling classic.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Yorkton Psychiatric Centre

Mr. Grant (Regina Whitmore Park): — Before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Hon. Premier.

In light of the weekend announcement of the resignation of three out of four psychiatrists at the Yorkton Psychiatric Centre and the possibility of additional resignations (there's only one left, I believe, up there who could resign) and apparent unrest in Weyburn and Saskatoon, would the Premier indicate to us whether he is prepared to activate a legislative committee to enquire into the situation, that apparently is deteriorating, in the psychiatric services.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any proposal for a legislative committee other than the one dealing with North Battleford which I think is not relevant to the question asked by the Hon. Member. He referred to the situation at the Yorkton Psychiatric Centre where, according to reports, resignations have been tendered. The reasons given were, I think, dissatisfaction with salary and working conditions. I want to assure the people that I have been advised by the Deputy Minister of Public Health that the psychiatric services in the Yorkton area are being maintained and will be maintained. Senior departmental officials have already met with the Regional Director, Dr. El-Deiry and we will be meeting with him again on Wednesday to discuss these problems. If any Members of the House are interested, the salary runs from about \$21,000 to \$39,000. They rise fairly steeply depending on whether or not a person has a full Canadian specialist certification. The last increases were effective October 1, 1972 and were approximately 7.6 per cent. So I think that regard is being had to the salary aspect of the working conditions. I do not know whether or not there are other aspects of the working conditions which are being questioned by the psychiatrists who have apparently tendered their resignations and I say it is not the first time that this has happened in the Psychiatric Services Branch. It's a fairly stormy area one way or another but I think that the Member for Whitmore Park (Mr. Grant) does raise a good question with respect to the apparent difficulties in the Psychiatric Services Branch of the Department of Public Health and I will ask the Minister of Public Health to look into them and make a report at the appropriate time.

Mr. Grant: — A supplementary question. I wonder if the Premier

would be prepared to inform the House, tomorrow or whenever he is able to discuss it with the Minister, what provision actually is being made to supply services in Yorkton because it is quite evident that one man cannot carry on where there used to be four.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Well, I'll see if I can do that. The Minister is down in Swift Current today at a function associated with an opening of a Level IV institution there, Palliser Hospital. I have spoken with the Deputy Minister, Dr. Skoll, and I will raise this question to him and see if we can get an answer.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Ladies' Curling National Victory

Hon. Mr. Romanow (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, just before the Orders of the Day, I, too, would like to draw to the attention of the Members of the House an accomplishment over the weekend with respect to curling. It appears to be a sport that Saskatchewan people in some way or another have a monopoly in many areas. I refer to the winning of the national championship of the ladies' curling title by Vera Pezer of Saskatoon. Vera Pezer's victory is the third consecutive win. She won it first in 1970. Prior to that time Members of the House will know that this area was dominated by Miss Joyce McKee who had a very strong team and I'm advised now that Joyce McKee, in fact, is the lead on the Vera Pezer rink. I say, for the third time. It's a tremendous accomplishment for the City of Saskatoon, for Vera and her curling team, and I'm sure all Members of the House would join me in congratulating them.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacMurchy (Minister of Education): — I, too, want to extend congratulations to the Pezer rink. My seatmate indicated to me that this was just another routine announcement of accomplishment from Saskatoon but my input is because of Lee Morrison who is part of that rink. She's from the old home town of Semans and while we produce some pretty fine athletes we are particularly proud of Mrs. Morrison.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTION

Unemployment in Saskatchewan

Mr. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, on Friday last the Minister of Finance (Mr. Cowley) stated that with regard to the question on unemployment that, yes, we have estimates. He also made the statement, and I have a transcript if I may quote from the verbatim statement he made in the House . . .

Mr. Speaker: — I don't think we can debate back and forth . . .

Mr. Lane: — No, I'm not. I have a question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! We've had more than the required three today.

An Hon. Member: — No, we haven't.

Mr. Speaker: — Oh yes, we have. We've had and we've spent an hour at it.

Mr. Lane: — No, Mr. Speaker. We've only had two questions, one from the Leader of the Opposition and one from Mr. Grant.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! I rule that we've had enough oral questions for today. We have no provision for it, it is done by courtesy and we've spent half an hour today.

Mr. Lane: — Are you stating now, Mr. Speaker, that we are only allowed half an hour of oral questions a day?

Mr. Speaker: — I'm stating that the rules of the House do not provide for any oral questions. It is done just by courtesy and we have now spent half an hour and I rule that we have had enough today.

Mr. Steuart: — On a point of order. To begin with, oral questions have been allowed in this House for many years. They were allowed when we were the Government and to say that in parliamentary procedure oral questions are not allowed, you might find that in some book, Sir, but you go look in Ottawa, you go to Westminster . . .

Mr. Speaker: — I'm not debating it. I am ruling that the oral questions, we've had enough for today. They are done by courtesy. You check the report of 1970 that was handed down and you will see right in that report, no provision was made for oral questions and the Speaker of the day said that they would always consider it to be a courtesy.

Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, the first . . .

Mr. Speaker: — We've had two plus replies to others and I am ruling that's all the oral questions I will permit today because we are now getting a further extension of them.

Mr. McIsaac: — Mr. Speaker, I don't wish to quarrel with your ruling but I should like to have a point clarified. It seems to me that it has been custom and customary for up to three questions for a number years. It is true that it is not written into the rules, this is correct, but by the same token it is a pretty well accepted custom and I think the impression shouldn't be given that it hasn't been customary for oral questions. This is my only point.

Mr. Speaker: — It has been customary for a number of years to allow two or three questions but I said there is no rule which provides

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for it. It has just been a courtesy of the House which has done so. I feel that we have had that courtesy today to the extent of half an hour. We have gone longer than usual.

Mr. Lane: — On your ruling — is there any relationship between the fact that the Government has no policy on unemployment and your ruling me out of order?

Mr. Speaker: — Order! I think the Hon. gentlemen know that question was not called for. There are no questions on the Order Paper so Government Orders.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Briar Curling

Mr. McPherson (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, I have something and I think the whole House will agree with it. As you know, the MacDonald Briar is opening in Edmonton today. The Saskatchewan men's representative is a rink from Regina, the Harvey Mazinke rink and I know all Members here will join me in wishing Harvey every success and we know that Regina will be proud of him when he brings the Briar home.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT ORDERS SECOND READINGS

Hon. Mr. Messer (Minister of Agriculture) moved second reading of Bill No. 60 — **An Act to provide Financial Assistance to Encourage and Promote the Development and Expansion of the Agricultural Industry in Saskatchewan. (FarmStart)**

Hon. Mr. Messer: — Mr. Speaker, it is again with pride and satisfaction that I speak to another Bill that the New Democratic Government is bringing in for second reading at this Session. This Bill, The Agricultural Incentives Act, 1973, will establish this Government's new FarmStart program. It is my belief that this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is one of the most important pieces of legislation to be introduced in this Session.

My colleagues and I, on previous occasions, have referred to the important need to develop Saskatchewan agriculture and more specifically, to create new farm units and increase total agricultural production in this province.

Such development will benefit farmers with low income and inadequate resource bases. It will create new opportunities for the young people of this province to be gainfully employed in an occupation of their choice. It will provide unlimited benefits to all Saskatchewan residents through the increased economic activity and through the increased employment opportunities which will be created in service and processing industries related to agriculture.

Assuming that the need for agricultural development is accepted and needs no further elaboration, I would like to turn to the details of this Government's agricultural development program and particularly on how The Agricultural Incentives Act

fits into this program.

Saskatchewan agriculture is faced with many problems peculiar to the industry. For a farmer to be fully employed today in a modern efficient agricultural enterprise which will yield an adequate income requires resources worth many thousands of dollars. The accumulation of the capital necessary to establish a viable farming operation forces farmers to save a large portion of their net income, to borrow money and in a short period of time repay loans resulting in the traditional pattern where farmers continue to live poor and die rich.

The tremendous capital requirements have made it all but impossible for young people to start farming operations without extensive financial backing from parents or from other sources. The thousands of young people who have been forced to leave this province to obtain employment, the many who have accepted employment in jobs that they do not enjoy, and others who are working with parents but on unacceptable incomes, are to my mind and to the mind of Saskatchewan farmers and other people ample proof of the problems faced in developing new agricultural enterprises.

A brief look at statistics will indicate the magnitude of this problem that we are now confronted with. In Saskatchewan in 1971 we had a total of 76,970 farms. Of this number only 22,603 farms sold over \$10,000 worth of agricultural products. If we assume that roughly 60 per cent of the gross sales are needed to recover expenses, then only 22,603 farms in this province in 1971 had a net income greater than \$4,000.

The 1971 census also shows us that 23,840 farms had total agricultural sales between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Another 16,487 farms had agricultural sales between \$2,500 and \$5,000 and 13,773 farms had total agricultural sales of less than \$2,500. It is evident, Mr. Speaker, from these statistics that the majority of Saskatchewan farmers need increased agricultural production if they are to achieve satisfactory income levels.

To achieve satisfactory income levels it is necessary that farmers have adequate resources, resources at their disposal to establish an efficient production unit. The 1971 census figure on capitalization of farmers are not yet readily available. However, if we take a brief look at the 1966 census figure we will have an indication of what the capitalization of Saskatchewan farms was at that time.

In 1966, of a total of 85,000 Saskatchewan farms, only 11,338 had over \$100,000 worth of productive assets at their disposal, not necessarily owned but at their disposal. Another 27,807 farms had between \$50,000 and \$100,000 worth of assets for use. 31,479 farms had between \$20,000 and \$50,000 worth of assets while the remaining 15,062 farms had less than \$20,000 worth of capital employed. These statistics, Mr. Speaker, are ample proof that a great many of our Saskatchewan farmers have an inadequate resource basis and inadequate incomes. Many other people have indicated a strong desire to establish farming operations but have been unable to develop satisfactory farm units. They have been unable to develop satisfactory farm units because there is an important need for diversification but the money is not available for them to get into that field. There is an important need for intensification of agricultural production but they have no resources in order to achieve that.

This province with its high dependence on wheat has for too long been vulnerable to the ups and downs of international farm markets. Wheat production is particularly adapted to mechanization and extensive types of farming operations.

With new farming practices it is conceivable that all of our grain production be produced on 12,000 farms with a total of 24,000 people gainfully employed. Grain production with its need for an extensive land base has exceptional high capital requirements. A basic problem in production requiring an extensive land base is that profits tend to be capitalized into land values. As incomes increase profits are used to bid up land values. Land values are, generally speaking, established by large farmers adding a half or a quarter section to an existing farm unit. These farmers can afford to pay high prices for their land because they have machinery, because they have buildings and equipment and they can obtain their living requirements from their present farming operations. All revenue generated from the new land acquired is available to repay loans on the new land. Farmers attempting to buy a whole farm unit who must meet all expenses including personal living from the unit cannot afford to match the high prices offered by established farmers.

Mr. Speaker, the real potential for beginning farmers lies in livestock production and in any type of intensive production which requires only a limited land base. In hog production period of high prices do not increase the value of hog farms as the price of land is increased when prices are high. Any farmer can acquire a new hog barn at the current cost of construction. For this reason livestock operations give new developing farms a much greater opportunity to compete with established farm units. Additional livestock production will increase our domestic markets for feed grains thereby reducing the dependence of our grain farms on international grain markets. Livestock production is labor intensive thereby creating employment for farmers. Increased production requires increased inputs, more processing, transportation and services, will create employment opportunities and incomes in yet other sectors of the economy in this province.

Increased livestock production will require major capital expenditures on new facilities which will provide major stimulus to the construction industry. Now what this province needs, Mr. Speaker, is increased gross agricultural sales per acre of farm land. To achieve the goals of improved opportunities to develop economic farm units and increase livestock production, four basic needs of farms must first be satisfied:

1. A farmer must have access to a package of resources which will enable him to operate a modern, efficient production unit.
2. A farmer must have some equity or net worth. Owned assets give a farmer an incentive to better performance and provide a cushion against periods of low income. It has been shown that farmers with little or no equity face difficulty in obtaining a decent living in periods of depressed product prices or low yields and, on occasion, are faced with bankruptcy. A farmer who uses only borrowed capital and must pay interest and principal faces extreme difficulty if returns are low.
3. A farmer must have the necessary experience and expertise for his type of production or must have access to

adequate training programs.

4. The farmer must be able to obtain information and counselling regarding the alternatives available to him to enable him to select the best package of programs for his particular circumstances.

The New Democratic Government has long recognized the needs of farmers. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in February of 1971, the New Democratic Party published its election platform in the form of a booklet called "New Deal For People" as proof of this Government's intent to alleviate some of these problems. I should like to quote briefly from the "New Deal For People". The first page of the document deals with provincial agricultural policies and I quote:

The continuing degradation of Saskatchewan agriculture and the related decline of our rural communities are the most critical issues for the people of this province. The primary objective of the New Democratic program will be to create the conditions which will promote the maximum number of viable farms in Saskatchewan.

I continue to quote, Mr. Speaker:

As first steps in the New Democratic Party Government we will establish a Land Bank Commission which could purchase land offered voluntarily on the market at competitive prices and lease this land, guaranteeing tenure on the basis of need with the option to buy, with the objective of promoting the maximum number of viable family farms in Saskatchewan, and provide capital credit to farmers on terms at least as favorable as those offered to industry. Specifically to enact an Agricultural Incentives Act which will make available low cost credit with loan forgiveness features similar to those provided to industry for young farmers entering agriculture, for farmers making major shifts in production and for undercapitalized farm enterprises.

In the section dealing with the federal agriculture policies the "New Deal For People" states and again I quote:

The New Democratic Provincial Government will press the Federal Government to provide capital grants to assist farmers as is done for industrial development.

I think you will find, Mr. Speaker, that these program and policy objectives are embodied in the new Agricultural Incentives Act which is now before you. This Government is now introducing a FarmStart program which will provide credit to farmers to assist in agricultural development and the establishment of new farm units.

A second feature of the program will be the provision of capital grants to developing farms. It is hoped by this Government that the Federal Government will see fit to enter into cost-sharing agreements for the program. It is my sincere belief that the Land Bank program and the FarmStart program offer a comprehensive farm development program for this province which, Mr. Speaker, is unequalled anywhere else in Canada.

Part of our agriculture development program is now in

operation and is meeting two major objectives. One is to assist farmers desiring to dispose of land to obtain a fair and equitable price for their assets. Two, is to assist farmers in need of land but unable to buy land, to acquire land under long term tenure or lease arrangements. Such agreements make land available at an annual cost of five per cent compared with seven per cent or higher if the farmer were to buy the land, and in addition relieve him of burdensome principal payments.

The response to this program has been overwhelming. More than 10,000 farmers attended public meetings about the operation of the Land Bank program. Over 1,500 farmers applied to sell land and at the end of the 1972-73 fiscal years the Commission will have purchased in excess of 400 farms. Some farms purchased will be leased to the owners' sons. 300 of the farmers did not indicate a preference for a particular lessee and this land has recently been advertised for lease. The demand for leases has been even more astounding than the demand for selling. The Land Bank offices have been besieged with applicants. Forty agricultural representatives of the Department of Agriculture have been temporarily assisting the Land Bank counsellors to meet the demands. Some Ag Rep offices have reported as many as 40 inquiries by 9:00 a.m. the day after the land was advertised.

I think, Mr. Speaker, the response to this program is a true indication of the need for such a program. However, the Land Bank program was never intended to stand alone. We can only develop a healthy agricultural industry with a combination of development programs. The package of programs that we are introducing will go a long way toward establishing new farm units, increasing the economic activity in this province. The FarmStart program is designed to be complementary to the Land Bank program and I am sure that it will prove to be equally popular.

Turning specifically to The Agricultural Incentives Act, Mr. Speaker, I should like to outline briefly the major points of the program which this Bill will introduce. The Agricultural Incentives Act, 1973 will establish a Crown corporation operating under the name of FarmStart which will administer the new FarmStart program. The FarmStart program as its name implies will start new farms and start existing farms moving in an expanding direction which will lead them into the main stream of agricultural production. The program will specifically encourage diversification and intensification of Saskatchewan agriculture. The FarmStart program is a comprehensive program with credit, grants, counselling services and management training. The specific objectives of the program are to assist farmers and potential farmers with low income and low equities to develop economic farm units and to stimulate a major increase of income and employment in the province by increasing livestock production.

FarmStart credit will be available to persons who are receiving a loan, intend to make farming their principal occupation, who are Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, who after receiving a loan intend to establish a permanent residence in Saskatchewan for the duration of the loan, who have a net worth of less than \$60,000, who now utilize productive agricultural assets valued at less than \$100,000, who are now earning less than \$10,000 per year and will use borrowed moneys for one or more of the following purposes:

1. The purchase of breeding livestock where such purchases will result in a net increase in the breeding herd.

2. For withholding female livestock for a net income in the breeding herd.
3. For clearing, breaking and regrassing of grazing land to increase grazing capacity.
4. For seeding of cultivated land to perennial forage crops to increase feed supplies for increased livestock production.
5. For the construction and/or renovation of buildings, improvements and facilities and the purchase of equipment to be used in the establishment or expansion of livestock enterprises.
6. For the withholding of calves until they can be sold as feeder cattle.
7. For the purchase of feeder hogs for hog finishing operations being established or expanded on a permanent basis where the farmer has shown evidence that he has access to a continuous supply of feeder hogs.
8. For a limited amount of refinancing of existing loans bearing high interest rates and short repayment terms where such refinancing is necessary either to improve the cash flow of the farm business or to obtain better security, providing such refinancing leads to the development or expansion of a livestock operation.

Provision will be made under the Act to meet the special needs of the irrigation farmers in the South Saskatchewan River Irrigation Project. Because of heavy investments in land development and irrigation equipment, and because of the depressed conditions facing all farmers in the period 1969 to 1971, many of the irrigation farmers have found that they are unable to get credit for specialty crops, livestock enterprises and other activities which are needed to raise the returns from their irrigated land. We must recognize that irrigated production requires larger amounts of capital than dryland farming. Efficient irrigation units must have several enterprises dove-tailing together. FarmStart will, therefore, recognize the special needs in that area and have special provisions for that need.

For the general FarmStart program, the amount of credit available to an individual will be that amount necessary to bring the total value of productive assets available to him up to \$100,000 provided the maximum loan does not exceed \$60,000. Each loan applicant will be required to submit a detailed budget which indicates his potential to repay loans and develop an economic farm unit. Repayment terms will be a maximum of 15 years with special flexibility of repayment related to the prices of products being produced. Within a range of normal prices, normal repayment rates will be required. In periods of unusually low prices payment of principal, and in extreme cases, interest will be delayed and rescheduled. In periods of unusually high prices repayment rates will be accelerated.

Depending on the nature of the farmer's enterprises repayment may be made on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payment basis. In livestock operations involving a breeding herd, the farmer will have the option of making monthly payments starting on the 19th month of the loan. In other types of livestock operations the farmer will have the option of making

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monthly payments starting in the 13th month of the loan. Interest rates will be six per cent for the life of the loan.

Security requirements will generally be lower than those of existing credit programs. The objective of taking security will be to ensure that the borrower has an incentive to make a business a success.

At first glance some may question the upper limits of loans and say that they are too restrictive. I should like to point out again that in 1971 the total farm assets in this province were valued at \$4.6 billion with approximately 90,000 persons in agriculture. This amounts to an average of about \$55,000 per worker. I think that most people are used to thinking in terms of a land base which requires relatively higher capital investments. I believe that while it may in some situations require more than \$100,000 worth of land to provide full employment for an energetic worker in grain production alone, I believe that in the majority of farming operations involving livestock a farmer will be fully employed with \$100,000 worth of assets.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the program will encourage the establishment of multiple operator farm units. When you think of a three man unit which may be a father and two sons having total assets of \$300,000 you can see the potential for some large efficient co-operative organizations and operations. Some may criticize the limit of \$60,000 net worth on eligibility. The truth is that the vast majority of Saskatchewan farmers have a net worth of less than \$60,000. It is the belief of this Government that those farmers with a net worth in excess of \$60,000 can obtain adequate credit from the Farm Credit Corporation or from other commercial sources.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the credit program will be particularly advantageous to those farmers who are capable of using credit to develop successful farming operations but who are unable to obtain the necessary credit because of rigid short term repayment schedules and high security requirements.

FarmStart grants will be available to persons who are eligible for credit but who do not have sufficient equity or net worth to develop an economic farming operation. Such persons will be eligible for a grant of up to \$8,000 provided that it can be shown that with the grant there is a potential to develop a profitable farming operation. A person with a net worth in excess of an upper limit yet to be established will be eligible for a grant of a lesser amount. A person in the higher net worth range will have his eligibility for grants reduced by \$500 for every \$1,000 his net worth exceeds the limit set for a maximum grant. The upper limit on the net worth will be established after further research taking into account the limited funds available and the large number of people who will apply for grants. An attempt will be made to use the funds where they are, in fact, most needed.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to illustrate eligibility for grants by using some hypothetical figures. If we assume, and I underline "if we assume", the upper limit on net worth is established at \$20,000 then any one with a net worth of \$20,000 or less is eligible for the maximum grant of \$8,000. A person with a net worth of \$24,000 has a net worth which exceeds the upper limit by \$4,000 and would have his maximum grant reduced by \$2,000 from \$8,000 to a \$6,000 figure. At a net worth of

\$26,000 the maximum grant would be \$5,000. A net worth of \$30,000, the maximum grant would be \$3,000. And at a net worth of \$34,000 the maximum grant would be \$1,000.

FarmStart will not issue grants of less than \$1,000 which in the example I have given means that anyone with a net worth of \$34,000 is not eligible for a grant.

The Government believes that \$8,000 or less will not have the necessary impact to start a farm on the development process. Therefore, grants will only be given where the applicant applies and receives credit of at least twice the amount of the grant received. This means that to receive a full \$3,000 grant, the applicant must also be approved for a loan of at least \$16,000. Grants must be used for purposes consistent with the use of the loans. To ensure that recipients of grants do, in fact, intend to be full time farmers, grants will be conditional to the extent that a person must continue to farm one year for each \$500 of grant received to earn his grant. A person who discontinues farming before fully earning his grant will be required to pay the unearned portion. It is my sincere belief, Mr. Speaker, that the FarmStart grants combined with the FarmStart credit will enable the development of many economical farms in this province which would not have developed without the FarmStart program. And the resulting increase in livestock production will benefit all residents of Saskatchewan both rural and urban.

Negotiations are presently underway with the Federal Government regarding cost sharing on the cost program. I am hopeful that Ottawa will see the importance of the FarmStart program to this province and offer financial support.

Mr. Speaker, this Government has said in its initial negotiations with Ottawa that if they do not see fit to contribute to this grant program that the Government will go on its own providing those grants to farmers which are so badly needed.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Messer: — This Government, Mr. Speaker, is determined that it will not see the FarmStart program establishing farmers to remain on uneconomical units. For this reason the Department of Agriculture will be re-defining the role of agricultural representatives to make the local agricultural representative a counsellor and a credit advisor to the FarmStart Program. Farmers wishing to obtain information on development assistance available or wishing to apply for assistance, will contact their local agricultural representative who will provide them with the information they need to make such decisions as to what type of farming enterprise would be best for their farm, what scale of operation should be selected and will the operation be profitable.

The Department of Agriculture will be employing 12 new regional agricultural development counsellors who may be called on by the agricultural representative to assist farmers to develop plans for proposed farming operations and also for supervising on an on-going basis. Some of the Members to your left, Mr. Speaker, say they believe in that. I hope that they will have the courage to express their willingness to support

this legislation or be so bold as to tell the farmers in Saskatchewan that they oppose it. In due course we will be anxiously awaiting their remarks in regard to that.

The Department of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker, is requesting the Federal Government to give special recognition to participants in the FarmStart program by providing special training under Canada Manpower training programs. If access to training programs is not guaranteed then this Government will take steps to provide any necessary training on its own.

To round out the package, the Department of Agriculture is upgrading the level of many of its existing services. Additional livestock specialists will be available to assist all farmers to obtain the latest information on new production practices. Additional farm management specialists will be available to assist farmers in the planning and organizing or multi-operator business arrangements in planning for transfer of farm businesses from father to son and in budgeting and planning where new types of enterprises are being considered.

In this area, Mr. Speaker, the former Liberal Government proposed or said that they had programs to establish farmers in intensified farming operations or diversification to livestock, yet they had no professional staff in the field to assist farmers in developing those kinds of enterprises. None whatsoever, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Messer: — We will also be up-grading veterinary services. Engineering efforts for the design of farm buildings and equipment will be increased. Marketing research and development will receive special priorities to ensure the availability of adequate markets for increased production. Marketing activities will be aimed at increasing the level and stability of income to all farmers. Mr. Speaker, the Member for Cannington (Mr. Weatherald) says there is nothing new there. There may not be anything new there since June of 1971 but there was a complete vacuum in that area prior to that time. Saskatchewan farmers were frustrated as to what they were expanding into without any guarantee that there were real endeavors being made by the Provincial Government to establish markets for their products. These items and many other additions to programs, establishment of new programs and re-direction of existing programs are all designed with the common objective of creating a sound agricultural industry in and for this province.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to conclude by saying that I believe that the FarmStart program complemented by the Land Bank program and other activities by the Department of Agriculture will provide the most comprehensive agricultural development program that can be found anywhere in this continent.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Messer: — My colleagues, Mr. Speaker, and I are extremely proud of the package of programs and I look forward to the support of every Member of the Legislative Assembly in endorsing The Agricultural Incentives Act. Having made these remarks, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of The Agricultural Incentives Act.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner (Moosomin): — It appears, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) is bringing in an Act to set up a corporation which will bring together a number of incentive plans which have been in operation in the province over the years.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — And mostly plans that were brought in by the Liberal Government. Now it may be a good idea to get these all together. This is perhaps something that should be done. We are not too sure that it requires a Crown corporation to do it. You will recall, for example, that the previous Liberal Government brought in The Livestock Loans Guarantee Act. This was a tremendous success. We subsidized the interest rate at a cost of about two per cent. The NDP refused to continue this two per cent subsidy although they did continue the livestock loans plan with no subsidy during the last year. Now I understand the loans under The Livestock Guarantee Act total something over \$45 million. I believe the Minister announced this the other day. This plan certainly appears to have been far greater in magnitude than what he is talking about today in the FarmStart program.

He announced that they are going to have loans, grants, counselling and management services for farmers. Well, of course, this is certainly nothing new. I don't know where the Minister has been over the years. We have had all of these before. We had, for example, very substantial loans which provided grants for hog barn construction, hay shelter construction, grants for clearing and breaking, grants for construction of dugouts, tax rebates on grain storage facilities, grants for irrigation projects, farm water supply, grants for converting land to forage, grants especially to help people of native origin, many other types of grants over the years.

Probably the major difference between the grants we have had up to now and the ones the Minister is announcing that in the past most of these grants have been available to all farmers. Now he appears to be putting some pretty substantial restrictions on who can get these particular grants. We note that they have discontinued such worthwhile projects as the irrigation project at Outlook. As I mentioned before they have in the past year not subsidized the loans in The Guaranteed Livestock Loans Act. Now loaning money at six per cent apparently they are going to subsidize it at about one per cent. In view of the Minister's comments we will have more to say at another time. I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Messer that Bill No. 22 — **An Act to amend The Provincial Lands Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. McIsaac (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, just a few very brief comments on this

particular Bill, Bill No. 22. I regret that the Minister, in bringing in the amendments to this Act didn't see fit to assume that the Government which is now well on the way to becoming a major land owner in the Province, did not see fit to assume the same tax liabilities as any other landlord in this regard. I would agree that the step he has taken here is a step in improvement insofar as previous legislation and assistance to the municipalities are concerned but I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that was at a time when the Provincial Government was gradually getting out of the lease business and the former Government were making cultivated leases as well as pasture leases available for sale. That policy has been stopped completely and, in fact, reversed. And as I say with the Land Bank and other policies the Government opposite intends on becoming a major land owner and landlord in the province. And for that reason the provisions that are before us whereby the Government will only be liable for a maximum of two years' taxes just doesn't seem equitable to me. I would hope that the Minister would reconsider and delete that reference to two years and just make it a provision for no time limit as far as the obligation for taxes are concerned.

Hon. Mr. Messer: — Mr. Speaker, in closing debate I just want to remind the Members to your left that it was this Government that first brought in any legislation that would provide for reimbursement of any taxes that were in arrears. The rural municipalities and local improvement districts in the province during the period of 1964 to 1971, repeatedly, and I stress and repeat, repeatedly made requests to the Government of the day to give some consideration to the problems of arrears of taxes. All their requests fell on deaf ears, Mr. Speaker. It wasn't until last year with the introduction of The Land Bank Commission Act that we as a New Democratic Government in Saskatchewan said we would pay up to a maximum of two years in back taxes to local municipalities and local improvement districts. To be consistent we said that this should be extended to all lands that are under control of the Provincial Government.

I also want to make one short remark in regard to the statements that are made by the Members opposite that it is just now that the Government of Saskatchewan or the Department of Agriculture is becoming a major land owner or a major holder or administrator of lands in Saskatchewan. They know as well as we and other people in Saskatchewan that the Department of Agriculture, the Government of Saskatchewan has always been the largest land owner in the Province of Saskatchewan. It is not just now that we are moving into this field. And the reasons that we have continued through different ideological governments in the past to be a large land owner is that they know the merits of owning land and providing land to farmers who are not in a position to purchase land. So that trend is not a new one. We are simply accelerating and expanding that in recognition of the problems of land transfer in this province.

So I want to close in saying, Mr. Speaker, that it is this Government that has responded to the requests that have been made by rural municipalities, local improvement districts in regard to arrears in taxes. We feel as they feel that they are in the best position to make a recommendation as to whether a lease should be terminated because of arrears in taxes because they live in the same neighborhood with them. They know what the reasons are for this lessee to be in arrears of taxes.

If it is because of poor crop conditions or because of return related to the international markets or circumstances beyond the farmer's control, then they will make a decision and ask that the lease be extended and that termination be not requested. Because they are close to the situation, if the farmer is not legitimately trying to make a paying farming operation out of the land he is leasing from the Government and is in arrears in taxes they will make a recommendation to the Government to cancel, collect their taxes and thereby avoiding further hardship on the local taxpayers in that area and make that land available to a farmer who is in a legitimate position to make farming his full time occupation and be an asset to the community in which that farm lies.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

SECOND READINGS

Hon. Mr. Blakeney (Premier) moved second reading of Bill No. 55 — **An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly Act.**

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, these are minor amendments to The Legislative Assembly Act recommended to the Government by Legislative Counsel and the Legislative Assembly office. They are all purely technical in nature or at least we think they are purely technical in nature.

The first portion of the Bill deals with the matter of the quorum in the Assembly. It deals with a conflict currently existing between the rules and the Act and brings these two in harmony. There is another trifling matter dealing with the mileage rate at which Members of the Legislature shall be paid. Currently the mileage rate is stipulated in the Act. The proposal is to tie it to the rate that is paid pursuant to The Public Service Act regulations from time to time so as to do away with the relatively trivial amendments from time to time.

There are further provisions enabling Members to be reimbursed for the actual travel and other expenses while representing the Government of Saskatchewan. There is some little doubt as to whether or not there might be a conflict between that practice which has been going on for some years and some other provisions of The Legislative Assembly Act.

There is a further provision authorizing Mr. Speaker to set fees in respect of Hansard and other items sold. The question arose as to who should set the fees and that has been resolved by indicating that it shall be Mr. Speaker.

Other provisions clarify the basis on which amounts of money paid to Members for automobile travel to and from their constituencies shall be paid. This is also a tidying up of what we did last year. Similarly the Act contains a tidying up of the reimbursing of actual travelling expenses for Members travelling outside Saskatchewan and contains a correction of a provision setting a particular time, a purely technical correction. These are, as I have indicated, matters which do not make, so far as I am aware, a change in existing practice. They are changes made to tidy up existing practice and make it conform with the Act and the rules. I believe that the details of them can best be considered in Committee where more detailed explanations can be provided to Hon. Members.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of the Bill to amend The Legislative Assembly Act.

Mr. McIsaac (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, a few brief comments in reply to the second reading remarks of the Premier. I can certainly concur with everything he has outlined. It is primarily a question of tidying up a few things that were perhaps left uncovered from last year. I note with interest the one section that perhaps is new. I think it is a good move, the question of covering travel or other expenses of someone other than a Cabinet Minister I presume who might represent the Government outside the province. I think this is a question that should be clarified. There are others that the Premier himself pointed out that might better be discussed in Committee.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Messer that Bill No. 50 — **An Act to amend The Natural Products Marketing Act, 1972** be now read a second time.

Mr. Gardner (Moosomin): — I have only one or two additional comments to make on this Bill, then I am sure that many other Members on both sides of the House would like to speak on this very important Bill. For example, some of the Members, perhaps the Hon. Member for Notukeu-Willow Bunch, Mr. Engel and the Hon. Member for Maple Creek, Mr. Flasch, would like to speak on it. They are from cattle country. I should like to know how they are going to explain to their constituents, their farmers at home, that this Bill provides for a licence for anyone who wishes to raise livestock. Perhaps the Hon. Member from Shaunavon, Mr. Oliver, the Hon. Mr. Wood from Swift Current would like to explain to their farmers that he is guilty of an offence if the farmer has no licence and also that he must prove himself innocent if he is charged with some offence such as this or some infraction of these laws. This is certainly a direct opposite to the basic principle of British Law and I hope that some of these Members will get up and explain their position on it. The Hon. Member from Assiniboia, Mr. Lange, and the Hon. Member from Gravelbourg, Mr. Gross. I see he is there. Perhaps they would like to get up and explain that this Bill provides that the Government can tell one of their stockmen where and when he can deliver his produce, his cattle. I should like them to get up in the House and state their position on this, if they are in favor of the Government being able to tell a stockman when and where he can deliver his calves or the other products of his farm. I certainly hope that later in the day in the debate all of these Members particularly the farm Members and especially the Members who are representing areas which are largely cattle raising or stock raising areas will speak. I hope that they will get up during the debate and explain their position.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson (Pelly): — Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to congratulate the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) for bringing in this

particular Bill. I was hoping that the Member for Moosomin would stay in his seat because I was quite interested in what he had to say. He can't take it, that's about what it amounts to.

The Minister did a very good job the other day in talking about what the Bill will do, the potential of it, the real opportunity, Mr. Speaker, at this particular time and the real necessity of bringing in a Bill of this kind. I was rather amazed at the Member for Moosomin, he seems to be developing a chronic mood of opposition. He always finds himself in a very difficult if not impossible position. He talked about some of the real tough measures of the Bill. I suppose I have been around this province about as long as most Members in this House and it dawned on me that we had some kind of a natural products marketing Act dated some time back. So I went and checked it out. I found that the session of 1945, Mr. Speaker, brought in an Act respecting the Transportation, Packaging, Storage and Marketing of Natural Products. It had some very important things to say. It said in part, I am going to quote verbatim.

Marketing includes advertising, financing, buying, selling, assembling, packing, processing, shipping for sale or storage or for any other purpose and offering for sale and includes transportation in any manner by any person.

I am quoting from the Act of 1945.

Natural product means any product of agriculture, forest, sea, lake or river, animals including poultry whether alive or killed, skins and pelts of fur-bearing animals, meats, eggs, dairy products, grains, seeds, fruit, fruit products, vegetables, vegetable products, honey, tobacco, lumber and any other article of food and drink wholly or partially manufactured or derived from any such product.

I am quoting from 1945. So the fact remains that the Member for Moosomin certainly is not abreast of what has existed in Saskatchewan for a long time. I checked a little further. I found this Act had been up-dated some time in the 1950s and it included the original statements practically verbatim. If you check the 1972 records, you will find that it is again up-dated containing almost identically the same clauses, the same statements, the same powers and the same purposes as it did in 1945. It seems to me that if we have lived with an Act since 1945 it must be a pretty good Act because if it was as bad as the Hon. Member from Moosomin tried to make out the other day, then we would have suffered from it for a very, very long time, something like some 30 odd years.

Now the idea of trying to discredit this Act certainly shows that the Liberal Party is out of touch, out of date and completely irrelevant.

I did some checking on another Act, Mr. Speaker. I was rather amazed that the Member from Moosomin didn't refer to this Act. I am now holding in my hand the Canadian Wheat Board Act which goes back to a very long time. I find some very mandatory and some very compulsory and some very freedom-destroying clauses in this Act.

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The Board may, notwithstanding anything in the Canada Grains Act, but subject to direction if any . . .

Contained in an Order of the Governor-General-in-Council by order do a whole host of things.

Prescribe forms and manner of completing permit books, prescribe the manner in which application for permit books shall be made, prescribe the manner in which deliveries of grain under a permit book shall be made, prescribe a plan on a railway as a delivery point, determine whether for the purposes of this Act two or more farmers may qualify as operators, fix from time to time quotas of each kind of grain that may be delivered, notwithstanding anything in this part, prohibit the delivery of any kind of grain or receive thereof by any elevator or grain company or any individual, exclude any kind of grain of any grade or quality, require any kind of grain or quality thereof to be received by any elevator or to be delivered into railway cars.

This is the Canada Wheat Board Act. Then you have some very strong statements and some very strong regulations in this Act.

Except as permitted under the regulations no person other than the Board shall export or import grain, transport or cause to be transported from one province to another any kind of grains, sell or agree to sell wheat, oats or any products thereof situated in one province for delivery to another, buy or agree to buy wheat or what products . . .

And so on. This is a Liberal Act, good when the Liberals introduce it, terrible when we do it. Then I looked under some regulations.

No person shall mutilate or deface a permit book. Any holder of a permit book shall at the request of the police or police officer or any inspector appointed by the Wheat Board deliver such permit book to the police officer or the inspector. Where a permit book is delivered to a police officer or inspector appointed by the Board the police officer or inspector or any person acting on behalf of the Board may retain possession of the permit book for a period not exceeding 15 days. Where a permit book has been delivered to a police officer or inspector appointed by the Wheat Board he may in place of returning the permit book issue a permit to deliver and hold the book.

And so on. This is an Act that was written by the Liberal Government at Ottawa. Yet the Hon. Member from Moosomin gets all excited about amendments to an Act that has been in the province and in force since 1945.

I tried to check the records of 1945 but unfortunately there are no Hansards that record the speeches that were made. I checked some of the news releases and very interestingly a gentleman by the name of Mr. Proctor representing the Moosomin constituency made a speech in which he condemned the former CCF Government for introducing a Bill with such sweeping mandatory powers. He talked about freedoms, he talked about the very same thing that the Member from Moosomin the other day

was talking about. You know, you people haven't moved beyond 1945, you haven't thought beyond 1945. Very interesting. I happened to pick up the other day a statement by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture in their annual policy statement, under hog marketing, they had this to say:

That the Prairie Provincial Hog Marketing Agency co-operate in seeking a prairie-wide marketing agency for the marketing of hogs. That the Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Commission undertake to develop a market oriented agency for both domestic and export markets for the marketing of hogs. That the Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Commission secure the co-operation with marketing agencies in at least one of the adjacent prairie provinces and seek a prairie-wide marketing agency for the marketing of hogs.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture. They have something else to say in the news report that went out across the Province of Saskatchewan. They say, in part:

The Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture deeply regrets that it is being accused of misrepresenting its policy position developed by its members and is now involving itself in partisan politics. We are getting somewhat tired . . .

I am quoting from the newsletter of the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture.

. . . of the very obvious political manoeuvring aimed at obstructing the creation of a more rational marketing system. The hog producers of Saskatchewan must recognize the real motives of certain groups who want to scuttle the plan. Saskatchewan hog producers must dig in and begin doing something effective in the marketing field if they are to have a viable operation. There is more to raising hogs than just opting in and out.

I am still quoting from the Federation.

Depending on the conditions of grain sales, there is a great potential for viable year-round hog operations. Several countries have made enquiries, as an example, Japan has been indicating that its needs for pork supplies amount to or about one million carcasses a year. The key to the Japanese market which they themselves have made very clear is continuity of supply. In other words, not just one million hogs, but one million hogs on a yearly basis. There is a great need for an awareness of production, promotion, marketing development and supply stability. Lack of knowledge and apathy of the people is one of the real problems in all this.

And I say the lack of apathy and knowledge of the Liberal Party is the greatest of them all.

They say there is need for a wholesale educational program, to tell the full story, then the Federation is ready to go to work on behalf of the producers. I am sure they are going to count the Liberal Party out on this one.

The Saskatchewan Farmers' Union, Mr. Speaker, went out and made some . . .

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Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

Mr. Larson: — Yes, if the Members opposite are concerned about the vote there will be one in 1975. Just keep right on opposing.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — Just keep on opposing the FarmStart, opposing the Land Bank, opposing The Natural Products Marketing Act. There won't be two of you left to stand up for a count after 1975.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — You are on the right road. We are very happy to see you take this trail. What is the difference between a marketing board and a commission? A very enlightening article that I would suggest, particularly the Member for Moosomin (Mr. Gardner) so some reading about. It explains the difference between a marketing board and a marketing commission. You know, the two have some very separate and distinct roles, yet the Member for Moosomin, and I assume all Members on that side, don't know the difference. I suggest that you read the whole article.

Mr. Speaker, I would never be accused of saying anyone was a liar. I would never stand accused of saying that the Liberals are liars. The truth, Mr. Speaker, is something like a basket of eggs. You have to handle them very carefully. If you don't you will have a tragedy. I will say this, that I would be very careful turning the basket of eggs over to the gentlemen opposite, I would be very careful.

I think for too long, Mr. Speaker, the farmers of Saskatchewan have lived under this chaotic and this boom and bust business of livestock production. For too long, we have gone along without knowing where we are going. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool has taken a very positive and a very clear-cut stand with regard to what we need by way of marketing.

They have been on the record for several years for orderly marketing. The boys opposite don't seem to know what they want. The Farmers' Union in their annual convention for years have begged and pleaded for some form of orderly marketing in livestock products and all the farm products that we grow and offer for sale.

An Hon. Member: — Even Intercon.

Mr. Larson: — Yes, even Intercon, that is right. You know, for too long we have had this boom and bust situation. It has demoralized farming industry to where you are not able to tell from year to year whether or not you ought to go into one product or the other. Too many times we have seen farmers go wholesale into hog production, into cattle production, only to lose their shirts when the bust comes. This is obviously, Mr. Speaker, what the Members opposite support.

I call on them to state clearly and distinctly to this Legislature and to the Province of Saskatchewan, are you for or are you against orderly marketing? Come out clearly and

distinctly and make your position clear.

You know the other day the Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) lost his tie. I suggest and predict, Mr. Speaker, that if you keep jumping from one side of the fence to the other you are going to wind up without pants on.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — So make up your minds, Hon. Members. Are you for or are you against orderly marketing? This is the issue that is at stake. There is no point to continue to try to be on both sides of the fence.

I could go on for a long time, Mr. Speaker, but I want to say in conclusion that for the first time, and I have been around the province for a long time, I can see some hope in the direction that agriculture and farming is going. This Natural Products Marketing Act is a part and a very important part of that direction. No one knows any better than I, and several other Members sitting in this Assembly, what this boom and bust cycle can mean. Any stability that we can bring in and this Government is trying to bring it in, ought to be welcomed, ought to be supported and ought to be promoted by everyone who thinks of the future of agriculture in Saskatchewan.

I challenge the Members opposite to stand up and vote against this Act, vote against FarmStart, vote against the Land Bank, then we will certainly not see too many of you around. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kaeding (Saltcoats): — Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to follow a man like the Member for Pelly in his most capable method of telling you about orderly marketing in this province.

Farm organizations in Canada have been demanding legislation for many years which would permit them to organize their marketing in such a way as to give them added bargaining power. For too long, Mr. Speaker, farmers have been conned into believing that open markets are the only way in which their products can be sold at the best advantage.

We are not entering into a new era of marketing strategy in which larger food processors, and in many cases, foreign governments are demanding a guaranteed supply of high quality products from our farms. Without some form of organized assembly private packers have no way in which they can guarantee these long term supplies. As time goes on, Mr. Speaker, this method of purchasing food supplies will continue to become more centralized.

The only way in which producers are going to be able to have any strength at all in the market place is through collective action as proposed by this Act. Through marketing commissions provincial groups can centralize their marketing power. Through interprovincial action with other provinces they can further strengthen their position. International traders are very adept at using the divide and rule formula where they can play one market against another for their advantage. Only

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through collective action by provincial agencies can we hope to come out with a fair price for our products over any extended period of time. Because large scale international markets are demanding an ever increasing supply of red meats, we in Saskatchewan are confronted with a real opportunity to increase our production at good prices.

However, it is very doubtful whether the production required to ensure these sales can be achieved unless producers have an assurance that they have some long-term stability to encourage them to make the investments required. Obviously, to get stable production we must have reasonable assurance of a stable market which we believe can be achieved through the development of marketing commissions.

We believe that the erratic opting in and out of livestock production over the years has been the result mainly of lack of stability in the markets. This kind of production isn't good enough if we are going to have long-term markets. If we are going to stabilize our rural population at anywhere near a satisfactory level, it is essential that we search for ways and means to increase the income from the present land base.

The only real way to do this is to increase livestock production. In order to get additional farmers to make the added financial commitment required to bring this about, we will have to have a reliable market system which will not only sell what they can produce but search out new markets in both the domestic and export field.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed unfortunate that the Federal Liberal Government in their haste to hold down the cost of living has seen fit to open up our borders to imports of cheap and often subsidized red meats and poultry products. As a direct result of this action our poultry producers, in particular, are being very severely hurt. Egg prices, which are not satisfactory at best, have dropped drastically as a result of importation of cheap products from Europe and then United States.

Repercussions are so severe, in fact, Mr. Speaker, that egg and broiler producers are not placing orders for chicks because they can't afford to operate at present prices. I urge the Federal Government to immediately review their actions in this regard so that poultry producers can have some hope of recovering their costs.

Mr. Speaker, some people will say that the powers provided to the Commission in this Bill are unnecessarily severe, yet we have for many years been operating under the terms of the Canadian Wheat Board Act as very ably presented by our Member for Pelly.

These regulations are every bit as severe as those contemplated in this Bill. If the Commission is going to be effective it is going to need the administrative teeth to withstand those who seek to circumvent it.

We in this Government are dedicated to supporting farm organizations in promoting orderly farm marketing. We can only hope that the Members opposite will finally repent. I believe producers in the province are determined to have a Commission that works to their benefit. I believe they will support our action proposed in this Bill.

I will therefore be voting against the amendment and for the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, I was very interested in some of the remarks that the Member for Pelly (Mr. Larson) made. I am sorry that he is not here. He talked about a vote in 1975 and the Members opposite, of course, enjoyed that remark quite well and they laughed quite heartily.

I enjoy hearing laughter like that, Mr. Speaker, because if they remember during the last session they laughed at what the Liberals were saying. You may remember as well that the Members opposite laughed prior to the Athabasca by-election. Yes, they also laughed during that by-election, Mr. Speaker, but who had the last laugh?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — The electorate of Athabasca laughed the NDP right out of the North.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — Mr. Speaker, if they continue on with legislation like this, let them laugh. We will have the last laugh in 1975.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — As well, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Pelly went on to say that the Act which we have before us now is already in existence and this is quite right. The Act was also in existence prior to 1964. But let's look at that Act prior to the time the NDP started to play around with it.

At that time, prior to 1971, the producers must request a marketing board. As well, once the producers had requested a marketing board and before any of the limitations that are listed in that Act could be implemented, the producers were allowed a vote and that vote had to be a 60 per cent vote in favor. As well, Mr. Speaker, if 60 per cent of the producers voted in favor of such regulations then the producers themselves had the control of how those regulations would be introduced.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — Let's look at what has happened since the NDP started playing around with The Natural Products Marketing Act.

First of all they decided that under a Board, the way this Act was presently set up, there is no way that they could implement a board. We can't go to the people and ask them for a vote. This is why they are refusing them a vote now in the Commission. So they changed the Act? They changed the Act and said, "Look, we will form a commission." By adding a commission this will allow the Government to set something up. This will allow the Government to appoint the members on that

commission. This will allow the Government to implement regulations that are included in this Act. This will allow the Government to say whether the little people in the province want a commission or not. Another example, Mr. Speaker, where big brother comes out and says this is what the people want and you are going to get it whether you like it or not.

I notice the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) smiling and nodding his head. He must be in agreement with what I am saying. This, Mr. Speaker, is the difference between what the Liberals did when they were in government and what the NDP are doing now. They are depriving the producer of any commodity, whether it be hogs or cattle, the right to voice their opinion as to whether they want that commission or not.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — They are denying the people of this province an opportunity adequately to understand what is going to be contained in that commission.

You attend some of the commission meetings that are being held throughout this province now. The people that are attending those meetings on behalf of the Government are not able to answer questions because they don't know what the answer is. And yet the Minister stands up in this House and says that he is informing the people. Votes are held at each one of these commission hearings and if he would have the guts to attend one of these he would realize that there hasn't been anybody who has voted in favor of what he has asked for.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Messer: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege. He says that the Minister hasn't got the guts to attend the meetings. I have attended meetings in the province and for clarification purposes, we never told them what the commission was going to do. We are seeking some advice from the producers.

Mr. Wiebe: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister is quite correct. He did attend one. He attended one up at Tisdale in his own constituency. They gave him such a rough time up there that he is afraid to go and attend any more in this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — Mr. Speaker, as has been said there is no way that we are going to let this Government rush this Bill through the House.

The Minister of Agriculture and the Members opposite have stated that the people of this province want this Bill, that the people of this province want this legislation. I maintain that we have 44 ostriches sitting on the Government side of the House, they are just sitting there with their heads and ears in the sand.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — Why don't they go out and

listen to the people of the province? And if they have been listening why don't you allow them to vote? If you have nothing to fear as far as this marketing commission is concerned, give them the vote, let them see democracy in action, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are many more things which I should like to say in regard to this particular piece of legislation. There are many more things which I think have to be said about as vicious a piece of legislation as we have ever had before us. Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to adjourn debate.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. MacMurchy that Bill No. 27 — **An Act to amend The Department of Education Act** be now read a second time.

Mr. Guy (Athabasca): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to make one or two comments regarding this amendment to The Department of Education Act. My colleague from Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) mentioned the other day that he thought that this Bill would be better held until we have the regulations under the new cablevision proposal of the Government opposite.

We have waited for several months since the announcement was made that the province was going to go into the cablevision industry and to date we haven't had any further details. I think the fact that this amendment is so closely linked and related to the cablevision system which will eventually be established in this province, I believe that my colleague was on a good wicket when he suggested that it should be held until such time as we see those regulations.

This is a significant step and one that is causing concern to the people of this province. We have had many groups write, phone us and tell us that they would like to know more about what the Minister is recommending because there are a lot of implications involved in this particular amendment even though it is rather short.

I don't think that the people are concerned in particular because they oppose television programming in our schools. They all recognize the value of this trend in educational circles today. They recognize that it is a growing trend, however. The concern that is being created by this bit of legislation is the fact that Minister is taking, like most Ministers opposite, unto himself unlimited power in the manner in which education television will be administered and controlled in this province.

I think the fact that the Minister announced at an earlier occasion that they were prepared to pay 100 per cent of the cost of providing this television equipment shows that they are not prepared to wait until they could make agreement with the school boards that wanted it on the normal basis that they usually participate, 50 or 60 per cent. It was evident from the Minister's statement that he wanted to be in a position of having no excuse why schools would not have this equipment

because, as he said later in his press release, it would be too bad if the schools had this equipment and didn't use it. And then he went on to say, "Therefore, we will of necessity have to go into the programming of programs." And this is where the concern among the people of Saskatchewan is being created. The fact that the Minister is going to go into the TV business. If it were the school boards that were going to have some say, if it were the parents and the students and the teachers that were going to have some say then I don't think this concern would be there. But it is the Minister who is going to have complete control over the TV programming in the schools of Saskatchewan and this is what is creating the concern today.

We all recognize that today radio broadcasting and radio school broadcasts are under the control of the CRTC and if this was true that cablevision would be regulated entirely by the Canadian Radio Television Commission we wouldn't have the concern that we have but there is nothing to say, in fact, it is obvious from comments made by Members opposite that cablevision will probably be regulated by the Province.

An Hon. Member: — You're crazy!

Mr. Guy: — No, I'm not. If it's not true then why don't you come out and say so. The Minister is not in his seat today and he has not made it clear. In fact, what's happening in television today I think is becoming the concern of a great number of people across the country because it appears that there is an upheaval in handling educational TV. It appears that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation are taking the approach of selling all educational programs to a visual education Toronto based private company. That would mean then that schools would have to purchase all their television from a private company and I think that it is regrettable with the CBC being a public company in taking this attitude. I think the teachers are concerned.

Mr. Faris: — Tell them in Ottawa.

Mr. Guy: — I don't care whether it is in Timbuctu, Ottawa or anywhere else. I say that it's unfortunate that the CBC is taking this position. If Members opposite would keep their big mouths shut, particularly the Member from Arm River (Mr. Faris) who is better spreading the communion wine up at Pine House than he is sitting here in the Legislature, we'd be somewhat better off.

Mr. Faris: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of personal privilege. I have had to correct the garbage from the Member from Athabasca in regard to that previously. I had him withdraw that once and I request that he withdraw that again. It is a completely false allegation.

Mr. Guy: — If the Minister says that he wasn't spreading it around well then obviously he must have had some other method of handling it. I'll withdraw that statement. If the Members opposite would sit still and listen instead of always trying to enter the debate things would go better. They are going to have lots of opportunity to enter the debate but they want to enter the debate at the same time that I am speaking. Even the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) doesn't do that very often.

But I said, Mr. Speaker, that it is regrettable that the CBC is going to sell all the educational TV programming to a private operation and we don't agree that this is in the best interests of educational TV across Canada. It is for this reason, with this upheaval taking place, that we believe the Minister should delay this amendment until this whole question of educational TV can be sorted out, particularly in relationship to our own position here in Saskatchewan and our own cablevision company which I understand the Government is going to move into very shortly.

Well now, of course, the other matter of concern and I am sure the Minister should recognize this, is the failure of the Government in these amendments to provide for any input by school boards, by parents, by students, by teachers or by ratepayers. Now under these amendments TV equipment can be forced upon any school system without any discussion with the school board, teachers, students, parents or anybody else concerned and I think in a day when we should be trying to get more autonomy and more local input into our educational program this is a backward step. I am sure the Minister recognizes this. There should be a provision in these amendments whereby the local people can determine the content and the use of this media in their own school system rather than having the Minister make decisions without first consulting the local schools and the local people involved. When you consider this lack of local participation and control in addition to the unknown factor of cablevision as it is going to be handled by the Government opposite, we think that the Minister would be well advised to leave this amendment on the Order Paper until such time as the whole question of the cablevision regulations and rules that are going to be followed in Saskatchewan become known and he has time to listen to some of the school boards and some of the people involved in educational circles who, I am sure, must be putting some pressure on him to have some local input rather than having everything in the hands of the Minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Faris (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to speak in support of this Bill because it is a Bill that is going to put Saskatchewan in the forefront of education and that is as it should be.

I am greatly disturbed by the tenor of the remarks of the Members opposite. I am sorry that the Member from Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) isn't in his seat because he again started off in a very hysterical manner in regard to this Bill suggesting that all sorts of new powers and so on were being given to the Minister. Anybody who has studied the present legislation and this legislation will see that, in fact, this is not true. Anybody who knows how schools operate or will operate in regard to the use of these video tape machines know that whether they use those machines or not or what they show on them, what they record and play back on them, is a local decision, a local responsibility. It is now and this legislation makes no change in that whatsoever.

I was rather pleased that the Member from Athabasca (Mr. Guy) should raise this matter of the CBC policy with regard to selling out the educational television material which it prepared — much of it prepared at the cost of all of

the taxpayers of Canada by the CBC. Now it is being sold to a private concern and if a local school should decide to record some of this material on television they will be put in the position where they will have to pay this private company to show again educational television programs that were produced at the cost of the taxpayers of Canada. This is absolutely ridiculous. Not only that but some of those television broadcasts that schools would have to pay to show again, were not only produced by the CBC but also in co-operation with Departments of Education right across Canada. In other words, here is possibly a film that has been produced partly by the CBC, partly by the Department of Education here in Saskatchewan, that Saskatchewan schools will have to pay to show again. Now this is absolutely ridiculous. This, of course, is the CBC which is a Crown corporation of the national Government. That Government is at this time, as we know, a Liberal Government, similarly the CRTC is a Liberal Government agency. Now let's be perfectly clear about this. They are laying down guidelines right now for radio and television and cablevision broadcasting. If there is anything wrong with those regulations you let your friends in Ottawa know about it because they are laying down those regulations. I think it is extremely regrettable that we should have this sort of hysterical reaction on the part of the Opposition in this field because it is a venture that takes our schools and our province into the forefront. I think that when we look at the possibilities in the area of cablevision, for instance, the tremendous opportunities in regard to education, all the Members of this House should co-operate in this regard.

When we look at the grants that made available video tape machines for the schools in this province I would think that all the Members of this House would be pleased to see this and would congratulate the Minister, particularly if you read that release carefully to see that most of these machines were put out into the rural areas where these are going to be a tremendous aid to diversify the kind of educational opportunities those children will receive. There are also exciting possibilities for this type of video tape machine in regard to our regional library system. There is a very real possibility that by utilizing the present structure of regional libraries, which this year this Minister has extended right across this province, that we will see that these video tape machines could be used in each local library. Then a person living out in some remote part of the province could order a course in some very theoretical sort of subject for which you are not going to be able to get a large number of people in order to form a class. But that person would insert it themselves in these very simply operated video tape machines and undertake an educational program in which they are very largely their own instructor. This is an exciting possibility and it is a possibility made possible by the use of 20th century technology and I am pleased to see our library system, our school system bring in this sort of innovation.

Now I think that in regard to the distribution of this sort of material it is extremely important that this power be within this province and be in the Department of Education. There is no question whatsoever that the Department of Education is not going to take upon itself a monopoly in the distribution of this sort of material. The problem is that the CBC selling out these already established educational materials to private interests, that unless the Provincial Government gets into this kind of production and distribution there is a possibility that

every time one of these educational films is shown in a classroom that school board is going to receive a bill from this outfit down there in Ottawa. Now that is completely unacceptable to us. We think that when the taxpayers have already paid for that production, the distribution should likewise be very largely in the hands of the Department of Education and through that means we hope to have this sort of media right throughout the province. I am hoping that later on in this Legislature we will be debating cablevision. We have heard very conflicting comments from the Members opposite with regard to their position in regard to cablevision. I hope that in either this debate or in a later debate they will clarify their position. It is not germane to this Bill but our position is very clear.

I am very pleased to support this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McIsaac (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, it is rather interesting to listen to the Member from Arm River (Mr. Faris) on Bill No. 27. If we listen to him then there is no reason why the Government should have this Bill before us. He says there is very little change between it and the old Act. I think Mr. Speaker, we should read the present clause that has been there for some time and is now being replaced. That clause reads as follows:

The Department will have the control and management of kindergarten schools . . . and may make such arrangements as the Minister deems necessary for the development and co-ordination of educational broadcasting and for that purpose and subject to the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council make arrangements with any person or with the Government of Canada or with the Government of any Province of Canada or the agency or any of these governments.

Now I think that is pretty broad coverage and that has been there. That is the question I ask the Member for Arm River and the Minister and Members opposite. Why are they changing that? Why? Do they want more power? We haven't yet learned from the Minister or indeed from the Member for Arm River why they are seeking the powers that are being spelled out here now.

Mr. Speaker, I would have less fear of the Bill insofar as the objectives of education are concerned were it not for some announcements earlier this year by the Minister of Communications or Government Service (Mr. Brockelbank) whichever it is, with respect to cablevision and the possibility of that in this province. I certainly have words to say in that respect and I would ask leave to adjourn the debate at this time. I would again ask the Minister if he would consider leaving this Bill on the Order Paper until such time as we see the legislation that is coming in with respect to cablevision because the two issues are very definitely related. We have seen this Government move into the land business, we have seen them into the hog packing business here last week, and I am telling you, Mr. Speaker, before they move any farther into the business of making the minds of our youngsters in this province we want to hold this Bill up and have a look at it.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. MacMurchy that Bill No. 48 – **An Act respecting Assessment and Taxation in School Districts** be now read a second time.

Mr. McIsaac (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, when I adjourned debate on this particular Bill when it was last up for debate, there were several question with respect to a number of sections that weren't clear on first perusal. I must thank the Minister for allowing me to contact a couple of his officials to clarify some of these point. There is nothing further that I have to add, Mr. Speaker, that cannot be dealt with when we come to Committee study of this Bill. Accordingly, I will support the Minister in this Bill.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

Motion – Rail Line Abandonment

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Blakeney (Premier):

That this Assembly urges the Federal Government that no railway branch line abandonment be considered in Saskatchewan before all the alternatives are thoroughly studied and the social and economic costs to producers, businesses and communities be ascertained and, further that no abandonments be allowed without the prior agreement of the Government of Saskatchewan and, specifically, that no abandonment be authorized until 1980.

And the proposed amendment thereto by Mr. Gardner (Moosomin):

That the following words be added to the motion:

And further that the railroad companies be obligated to:

1. Provide a high standard of service on present lines.
2. Provide adequate maintenance and improvements on rail lines and equipment so that a high standard of service can be maintained.

Mr. Kramer (Minister of Highways and Transportation): — Mr. Speaker, when I adjourned the debate last day I had brought some facts to the attention of this House which rather brought into question some of the debate that had been carried on in the House earlier, especially the debate by the Hon. Member from Morse (Mr. Wiebe) who stated that nothing had been done prior to 1964 and that the former Government of Saskatchewan prior to 1964 had sat on its hands and done nothing. I think this document that I quoted from and which records the minutes of a historic meeting on November 22, 1963 chaired by the former Minister of Industry, Hon. Russ Brown answers that allegation. It was opened by the former Premier at that time, the late Hon. Mr. Lloyd and there were a number of people who identify themselves clearly with our party, former New Democratic MPs, Members of the Legislature. I pointed out to this House that there was not one single well-known Liberal who attended that conference. There were none. The former Leader of the Opposition at that time, the now Senator MacDonald, who speaks very loudly even in the Senate about a deal for Western Canada, they didn't even know there was a problem in those days. The

historic fact is, Mr. Speaker, that it was the action of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Government of that day that brought about the discontinuance of wholesale railway abandonment. We have to thank . . .

An Hon. Member: — The horse was gone.

Mr. Kramer: — The only thing that's gone is the minds of the Members of the Opposition. The horse may be gone as I said the other day but there is a portion still remaining across the floor, the most unsavory portion of the horse, if I may suggest, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think we need belabor that point any longer. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that farmers of Western Canada have been robbed for years, for the last 70 years by the railroad lobbies, the wealthy railroad lobbies of Eastern Canada. They have been robbed and they have been allowed to rob Western Canadian farmers and businessmen. They have been allowed to rob them by preceding Federal Governments, both Conservative and Liberal. The wealthy lobby of the CPR has continually held sway and determined what shall happen in Western Canada. The millions and millions of dollars that have been taken, duped Western Canada through these railroad lobbies, St. Lawrence Seaway lobby, the export-import companies. These are the reasons. The depopulation of Western Canada lies squarely on the shoulders of former Liberal and Conservative Governments.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kramer: — Mr. Speaker, why in this day and age do we have the meagre Port Churchill shipments, except for the lobby? Why do we not develop that tremendous harbor? Why is it that the Russians are breaking into the Arctic circle with year-round shipping? The Port of Churchill is not in the Arctic Circle. Last winter the Russians made history breaking through 20 feet of ice in 60 below zero weather.

Mr. Steuart: — Trying to get away from the Chinamen.

Mr. Kramer: — Well, that's about as wise as other remarks that have been made by the Members opposite.

They are trying to develop their North and they are developing their North, Mr. Speaker. But we, because of a few greedy, wealthy Liberals and Tories in Eastern Canada, in Toronto plus some other influences from south of the line, have allowed the West to rot in poverty because we have not been allowed to develop the resource, the great resource that is the Churchill harbor. The blame lies squarely on these people opposite who only give lip service as I said the other day, who only give lip service to the Churchill route. They give lip service to this motion and present an amendment with tongue in cheek. I say, Mr. Speaker, that once in a while somebody gets up at Ottawa and says something sensible. Once in a while even the other day the former Primer Minister, Mr. Diefenbaker actually talked about a railroad in the North and I can agree that this should be looked at rather than a pipeline. I would

say that a new railroad that would not only bring minerals from the North West Territories into the Churchill area and so on, makes more sense to me than a pipeline that will not stand up because it has to be supported from the permafrost because of the heat generated by a pipeline.

A railroad, Mr. Speaker, does not require that kind of support and a railroad in the North is feasible. I congratulate the Hon. Mr. Diefenbaker for bringing that suggestion to the House. At least it's worthy of study rather than, Mr. Speaker, the puling, quibbling, whining kind of suggestions that come from these Members in the House here and their counterparts in Ottawa.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, Western Canadians have been robbed and it's time that we stood up and were counted on both sides of this House in order to stop that wholesale robbery. It is time that we put an end to the waste and duplication that has existed in these roads. The duplication, not only in the railways, in the phoney competition that exists there at times, but there are other costs, Mr. Speaker. For instance, can you think of anything more ridiculous than a government at Ottawa continuing to pay millions of dollars in subsidies to keep the railroads going? Gradually they are withdrawing more and more services, demanding again of the Saskatchewan Government that we build better highways, stronger highways to carry that tonnage on our highways. So here we are providing even greater subsidies to the railroads, being forced to build more expensive highways at the expense of the Saskatchewan taxpayer so that the truckers can bring greater competition to the railroad so they can lose more money and we can be forced again to pay more subsidies. No one but the Liberal and Conservative Governments could contrive anything as stupid as that. That is the kind of a theatre that we've been operating in and again, I say, Mr. Speaker, it's high time that something was done about it. It is high time that something drastic was done about this costly duplication and this continuing demand for less responsibility on the part of those people who actually made billions of dollars out of the original development through the giveaways of former federal governments in this area.

Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in supporting this motion and I certainly hope that it will receive the full support of all Members of the House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, thank you for the applause. It is ironic that I have to get up right after the Member from North Battleford spoke because I resent very much that he refers us to something left over from the horse. You know, if he was apparently sober he would not say these things. I just wonder if he ever has sobered up.

The other day when the Member from Morse (Mr. Wiebe) spoke, the Member from North Battleford (Mr. Kramer) got up and told him that he wasn't telling the truth and, in fact, if it wasn't parliamentary he would call him a liar or to that extent — I'm quoting verbatim. And he said that Liberals had never done anything regarding railroad abandonment and he referred to a document that was put out by the late W.S. Lloyd which was backed by a number of NDPs. Despite that, Mr. Speaker, railroads

were abandoned in Saskatchewan. Since 1964 when you look through the Debates and Proceedings you find that in Volume 1, session of 1965, George Leith moved a resolution which says that this House strongly urge the Government of Canada to permit no abandonment. I won't quote all of the resolution. His speech and the resolution on pages 385 to 387 was supported by the Liberal Government at that time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt: — Then later on in the same session, the Member for Kerrobert-Kindersley spoke on the motion and the following year in 1966 the Minister of Labour, the Hon. L. Coderre spoke against railway abandonment. Then in 1967 we again have Mr. George Leith from Elrose move, seconded by G.B. Hooker, a resolution on page 558 of the Debates and Proceedings of the session of 1967.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

Mr. Boldt: — Mr. Speaker, you know, sometimes I think that you have lost control of the House. When I want to speak I should like to speak and when those fellows want to speak, let them come up and speak.

Then later on in 1967 the Hon. D.T. MacFarlane, the then Minister of Agriculture, spoke on railway abandonment, and later on George Leith again. So right through the Debates and Proceedings, the fact is not where are they but how effective they were when they spoke against the Federal Government. They convinced the Federal Government that there should be no railway abandonment.

Now who are really the ones who are not behind the farmers on rail abandonment? It is the farm organizations. We have the weakest farm organizations that ever existed in Canada and I want to name them. First we have and who makes the most noise, the ones that I have the least sympathy for and that is the National Farmers' Union of Canada. But this fellow Atkinson he can get up and blow and if he could suck as well as he can blow, you know, we would have every railroad in the United States in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt: — Here we have Atkinson who represents 20,000 farmers. He gets more publicity than the Wheat Pool and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. But then again, we have one of the weakest Federations of Agriculture. This man Boden, I don't know whether he is tinted or whether he is red. When he comes out with statements they don't have any effect, they appear to be so socialistically inclined. He goes after the Hog Producers Association that they shouldn't voice any opinion. He was all in favor of the Government setting up this commission and now the Hog Producers have opted out of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. All to the credit of Mr. Boden. Well, then we have the Wheat Pool. The Wheat Pool, you know, they are sitting in their offices trying to cancel out as many delivery points as possible saying that the reason we are doing it is because the railways have threatened to take out the railway. Well, that's a bunch of garbage. Over in my constituency the Carlton Line

which is a very familiar line is up for railway abandonment in 1974, maybe 1980 but the Wheat Pool has already built a tremendous elevator at Rosthern two years ago to make sure that all the farmers of Laird, Waldheim and that area are going to haul to Rosthern. They have told the CNR take it up, we don't want it and they go around and say it is the Government or it's the CPR.

Well, that's our farm leaders who should be more honest than what they are. They are just not honest with the farmers. As a matter of fact I told Mr. Boden one day in my office that the Wheat Pool was sitting in their office and trying to have about 60 to 70 delivery points in Saskatchewan. And he said that was a bunch of garbage. Well, you know it isn't. I challenged him. Their lawyer told me that this is what eventually they wanted and I told him that if he ever found out that this wasn't true that he should let me know. To date he hasn't let me know whether that statement was made or not. That statement was made.

The Wheat Pool are looking at as few delivery points as possible and you fellows all know it. They have closed out Osler, they have closed dozens of places and they bought out the Federal Grain Company and what is happening, they are closing out about 50 per cent of those elevators and farmers in many, many areas are blaming the railways for it.

The United Grain Growers is trading with the Wheat Pool, the Wheat Pool is trading with Pioneer and these are facts. I don't care whether this costs me one vote or not, I want to put these gentlemen on the spot. You people know that this is true, this is happening today and who is instrumental in having the railroads wanting to pull out. Nothing but the farm organizations themselves. Elevator after elevator has been closed and in many cases I am quite convinced that many farmers are for railway abandonment. They are absolutely for railway abandonment. We have 125,000 farmers, maybe 150,000 forty years ago in Saskatchewan and we were in the horse and buggy days. Surely to goodness I farm five times as much land as my father did with four sons and I haven't got as much work as he had. Certainly if those things applied to the farmer today, surely we are all geared for a different kind of a setting.

I agree, I agree with the principle – I don't agree with the method of the way the farm organizations are handling this situation. I agree with the Wheat Pool that many points should be closed but I don't want to go around and blame the railroads for doing it, the CP or the CN. This is a form of farm efficiency. We talk about schools, we talk about railway abandonment, then the first thing that you should have considered is why have we less farmers in rural Saskatchewan today. I think you can go back, I believe, to 1947 when the larger units came into existence. That was the first step of diminishing the rural population. That was step number one and if we want to keep the railroads, if we want to keep the station agents and if we want to keep the elevator agents, it is also fair to say that we should want to keep that little red school house out on the farm. That's the only way we are going to keep the population in rural Saskatchewan.

I don't care how many Bills the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) brings into Saskatchewan about FarmStart, or you can call it SEDCO or Hog Barn Grants, that won't keep one more

farmer on the farm than it does today. No, Sir. There is a trend away from the farm. We have unemployment today in the country second to none, six or seven per cent in Saskatchewan. I have neighbors who are in the dairy business and they want to get some farm help. They can't get it. No. As long as the Federal Government with this great sin hanging over their heads about the Unemployment Insurance and the Provincial Government's sin hanging over their heads that we would sooner pay welfare. So a farmer can't get any labor, no, he can't get it. This glorified manpower situation that is provided for us, set up there to give some civil servants a high-paying job, they are not worth the salt they eat. We've got to pay for it, nobody gets any help from them.

These are the problems that we are facing today. The railway abandonment resolution, I can say this with sincerity, that if the farm organizations were honest with the railroads and the farmers there would be no abandonment. But they give a public appearance that they don't want any railway abandonment and behind the doors and under the tables they have made all kinds of deals and the Wheat Pool is supposed to be a farm organization run by farmers. Well, I believe I have told this at one time but I will refresh the memories of those who haven't heard it.

My father organized the Wheat Pool in 1928 at Osler. Forty years later my brother, president of the Wheat Pool at Osler was informed by the hierarchy in Saskatoon that they wanted an executive meeting of the committee in Osler for the next day. This was set up, the Pool officials came down and do you know what they told him? As of September 1, 1969 or 1970, I forget the year, there will be no Pool elevator in Osler. This is a farm organization. You know these things happen in Russia and they happened with the Wheat Pool. I'm a member of that Wheat Pool, I have no vote. They just closed it out and this is the way they are closing out station after station. If you recall what we see in the Western Producer, the great big ad – 'you buy wheat flour, you haul to the Wheat Pool elevators and you haul to the mill at Saskatoon, this is farmer-run, farmer-decision and farmer-owned'. Baloney! It's no more farmer-owned than Intercontinental Packers.

So when we talk about railway abandonment I think we should get some sense into it. There is reason to believe that there are railways in Saskatchewan that need to be abandoned. I know that if the Attorney General was the owner of the railways in Saskatchewan he would pull up half of them and I think I would do the same. I certainly would. It only makes sense, you have done it with the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, those lines that were not beneficial or were not making any returns, you dropped them. Why? I have every reason to believe that the Saskatchewan Transportation Company should also give service, non profit service. But where you didn't see profit you dropped them and I think it was the right thing to do. Are not the railways the same? Why should we pay subsidies? The Pool is looking at it, the United Grain Growers and other companies are looking at inefficient lines. When you have an elevator agent who is buying 100,000 bushels of grain a year when he could be buying a million, why pay his salary? It costs at least \$10,000 to operate an elevator. The farmers have to pay for it. So there are many areas where railway abandonment is in order. In all of these commissions that have been set up, commission after commission, and this Government is certainly one of the

ones that believes in commissions. When they bring in a report, I'll bet you Mr. Attorney General doesn't read half of them. You don't implement one per cent of the recommendations. And I would quit setting up commissions. As a Government you should have the guts to do what you think is right and if it is wrong the people will kick you out and let somebody else run it for you. With all of these commissions, they are not worth the paper they are written on. I can refer to the Johnson Commission on the administration of Government which was set up in 1965. It cost way over \$100,000 and the only thing that was brought in was the Central Vehicle Agency. I don't think half the Cabinet Ministers read the report.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt: — I am right. If I read all the reports that I got in the mail from the Federal and Provincial Governments, I would be reading till kingdom come. There is no way how I can read all the garbage that this Government is sending out. There is no way how I can read all the garbage that the Federal Government is sending out. Plus a lot of other corporations that are sending out garbage, it isn't worth the paper it is written on. Let's do what is right in our opinion. You know, my thirteen year old daughter knows which railways should be taken out. No problem at all. You start from the south, you leave one, and you take one out, you leave the other one in. In the north the same way and you are going to have a happy medium.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt: — There is no problem whatsoever. But here we have commission after commission. You read the reports. You know I remember when Mr. Hooker told us about a meeting they had in the south where they had a meeting about railway abandonment. They told them, oh, there were so many cans of cream that were shipped out of this area, so many cattle. The railway people they are not fools, they had their accounts with them. Out of 1,000 head of cattle the railways got one. Out of so many cans of milk the railways maybe got ten cans a year. There is no argument whatsoever. How many hogs are raised in a certain area is no reason because hogs are not shipped by rail in general. Cattle aren't shipped by rail, most of them are flown out, first class.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt: — So there are many, many areas where we need just the ordinary farmer's common sense. Things will straighten out. Let's not always get these commissions that cost the public piles and piles of money. And I think we would have a far happier country if we did this.

I must say that I will support a reasonable railway abandonment. As I said, I think it is quite simple for any thirteen year old to find out which ones they are. I would support that kind of a program.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, it is a little difficult to follow the usual lucid address by the Hon. Minister from the Battleford (Mr. Kramer) We note that the Hon. Minister now has his cast removed from his hand. If he got it the same way that the NDP have done anything about rail line abandonment, he broke his hand by sitting on it.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution proposed by the Government opposite, moved by the Hon. Premier (Mr. Blakeney) it's the first admission in this House that the NDP Government favors rail line abandonment in Saskatchewan. This resolution makes it quite clear that the Government opposite is asking for help of the Federal Liberal Government to help it out in the next two elections by putting off rail line abandonment until 1980. But after that the NDP say it is okay, Mr. Speaker. They say then after 1980 go ahead, we will have complete control at that time. We won't have to worry about the issue. It is the first admission, Mr. Speaker, it is the first admission that the NDP are trying to stir up a political issue to try and cover up their own sins. Because it was under the NDP, Mr. Speaker, that rail lines were first abandoned in Saskatchewan. It was the Liberal Governments in Saskatchewan and Ottawa that stopped rail line abandonment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP are trying to fool the people of Saskatchewan and cover up their own mistakes and their attempts at political sleight of hand should be of interest to every Saskatchewan voter. Because the only time that rail lines were torn up and abandoned in this province was when Members opposite were the Government prior to 1964. Mr. Speaker, they didn't help the farmers then and they are not helping the farmers now. They are trying to pass the blame for their own mistakes onto someone else. They are the only party that closed down rail lines in Saskatchewan.

The resolution which the Premier of this province proposes will allow the railroads to abandon after 1980 and further, Mr. Speaker, will allow the railroads to not maintain their lines until that date.

Mr. Speaker, we have proposed an amendment to this resolution. The only Member opposite who is going to vote in favor of it is the Member from Touchwood (Mr. Meakes). Does this mean, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier and Members opposite favor rail line deterioration in Saskatchewan? Certainly it does, Mr. Speaker. That is what they are going on record as favoring. Does this mean that the Premier favors rail service deterioration? Certainly it does if we take this resolution, Mr. Speaker. Does it mean that the NDP favor planned obsolescence of rail transportation in Saskatchewan? Certainly it does. That is what this resolution asks us to support.

Mr. Speaker, we urge the Government, the Members opposite to support our amendment and to show that you are really sincere when it comes to rail line abandonment in this province. We ask the Member for Qu'Appelle-Wolseley to support our amendment and go on record as being opposed to rail service deterioration. We ask the Member for Gravelbourg (Mr. Gross) to support the amendment, to show that you are opposed to rail service

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deterioration. Because if you are not then the cost of buying the CPR will probably be only about \$2 million if things deteriorate at the level they are going. We ask the future engineer of the Roy Romanow Railway to go on record as being opposed to rail service deterioration. And above all, Mr. Speaker, we ask and we urge the new president of the RRR to go on record and vote for the amendment of the Members in Opposition and show that you are really concerned about rail line abandonment, and that you don't want to see rail service deterioration.

Mr. Speaker, the Government's resolution says that they favor rail line abandonment but not until after 1980. They say that they are in favor by that resolution of rail service deterioration. That resolution says that the Members opposite favor obsolescence of rail transportation in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the Members opposite are really concerned, really concerned about the rail line abandonment problem in Saskatchewan they will heartily endorse the amendment proposed by the Members on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member from The Battlefords (Mr. Kramer) made the comment, "Can we think of anything more ridiculous". Well, can we think of anything more ridiculous than the Government motion, Mr. Speaker, that asks this House to go in favor of rail line abandonment? That is the most ridiculous resolution that has come before this House.

We have heard comments, Mr. Speaker, by the Minister for Northern Saskatchewan (Mr. Bowerman). He kept saying when the Hon. Member for Rosthern (Mr. Boldt) kept referring to people who had brought resolutions before this House. What happened to them? We will certainly be interested in watching what happens to all the people on the Government side who spoke in favor of this resolution of the Premier's. Because if history is a good teacher it certainly will indicate that there will be very few Members opposite back after 1975.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, we hope and we urge that the Members opposite will put some thought when they bring this resolution before the House next sessions. We hope that they will put some thought into their programs on what their position really is when it comes to rail line abandonment. We hope, Mr. Speaker, that common sense is going to be the governing factor when it comes into the rail transportation system in the Province of Saskatchewan. We hope that there will be common sense brought in a resolution next session or the Government again will try to work its way out of a problem they created.

Mr. Speaker, the Government's policy now favoring rail service deterioration is against the interests of the people of Saskatchewan. We urge the Government opposite to show that they really care and support the Liberal amendment and reject the foolish position taken by the Hon. Premier. We hope they will come forward with some common sense proposals and we can discuss this on a rational basis in the next session. We hope that the Government opposite quits this cheap political approach to this problem. Mr. Speaker, I have some more comments and I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Smishek that Bill No. 34 — **An Act to amend The Hospital Revenue Act, 1966**, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Smishek: — Mr. Speaker, during debate on this Bill the Members of the Opposition raised primarily two questions. One was that in our development of the Community Health and Social Centres there was a lack of consultation on our part with the nursing profession and the medical profession. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that all of a sudden the Members of the Opposition are concerned about consultation. You know, when it came down to hospital closures during 1968 and '69 the word consultation didn't appear in the Liberal dictionary.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Smishek: — I ask them when they were closing those hospitals one after the other, did they consult the nursing profession? I ask them when they closed hospital after hospital did they consult the medical profession? Mr. Speaker, they did not even consult the boards of the hospitals? What they did is issue an edict and ordered those hospitals closed. Now they are concerned about consultation, Mr. Speaker. Now they are concerned about consultation. What they did is they dictated the closure of the hospitals one after the other.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Smishek: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder who the Hon. Members from Whitmore Park (Mr. Grant) or the Hon. Member from Moose Jaw North (Mr. MacDonald) were talking to when they were making enquiries about consultation. Because certainly whoever they were talking to they were not talking to the people with whom we have had consultation. Very meaningful consultation. Let me draw to the Hon. Members' attention that back on August 27 we had a session with the medical profession where we discussed the Community Health and Social Centres. We asked for their views on the Health and Social Centres. Mr. Speaker, on October 2 I had a joint meeting with the Saskatchewan College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Saskatchewan Medical Association and the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association. At that time consultations were held and their views were sought for and were given. They asked us to provide them with a manual and it was provided. Mr. Speaker, the only question that the nursing profession raised when we discussed the Health and Social Centres was the new role that the nurses would have in working in the Health and Social Centres.

Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Members say that we did not consult the medical profession. Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, how is it that the whole program of Health and Social Centres is reprinted in the Quarterly Medical Journal? They received copies and they made comments to us and they made representations. Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of the Members the comments and the views expressed by the medical profession in regard to the Health and Social Centres.

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In a letter submitted to myself on December 8, signed by Dr. Bergen, what do they say? They say:

We endorse this effort of co-ordination and hope that it will soon also occur throughout the total health system.

In summary they say:

The Community Health and Social Centres concept is an alternative method of providing co-ordinated health and social services to communities by the provision of an out-patient department without a hospital. We think the concept is good.

Mr. Speaker, this is what the medical profession said about the community clinics.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Smishek: — They endorse the concept, but, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Members say we haven't consulted. We did consult the medical profession. We did consult with the nursing profession. We also discussed the matter of the Health and the Social Centres with the Pharmaceutical Association because they, too, are interested and concerned about it. But most of all, Mr. Speaker, we consulted the people in the community. And community after community endorsed the proposition. True there are those who were reluctant. They would have preferred to have the hospitals opened. But we did not feel in those communities where the Health and Social Centres were offered there was a need to open the hospitals at this time based on the population and based on the problems of getting physicians recruited in those communities.

Mr. Speaker, the other argument that was presented by the Opposition is in regard to the financing of our hospitals in the province. During the month of January we were reviewing our budget and reviewing the budgets of the hospitals. After taking the total review we found that the hospitals in the Province of Saskatchewan asked for an increase in their budgets on the average of 16 per cent over the year previous. I might point out, Mr. Speaker, that in 1972 we increased the budgets to the hospitals in the province on the average by over 13 per cent. We reviewed the budgets of the hospitals. We felt that in a number of instances their requests were not justified. In fact, I can tell you that one hospital got carried away with itself and asked for an increase in their budget of 55 per cent over the year previous. We called meetings in the City of Regina and the City of Saskatoon and we invited all the hospital board chairmen and the administrators to those meetings and we discussed with them their budgets. We advised them that we are prepared as a Government to increase the budget for this year for hospital operating costs by nine per cent. We thought that this was a reasonable figure. We thought that at this figure we can provide a good level of care in all our hospitals. Interestingly enough, in my discussions with all the hospitals during the two meetings that I held no one questioned our proposal for a nine per cent increase. We did say that there may be, in some cases, a need to take a look at the hospital employee staffing. This question is not a new one that I have raised with the hospital. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I draw to the

attention of the Member for Whitmore Park (Mr. Grant) when he was Minister of Public Health in 1970 when I spoke on the hospital question I made reference to this in my speech.

I note with interest some of the figures the Minister has quoted. In 1963 the last full year of CCF Government administration of the hospital plan, there was a total average staff complement of 9,290 for that year.

In 1969 this figure rose to 11,111, that is the figure that he provided me with when we were considering the Estimates. I note, Mr. Speaker, that after a further check on that the figure wasn't that high, it was 10,858. An increase, at that time I quoted 1,823, the actual figure was 1,568, an increase of 16.9 per cent in the number of employees in our hospitals. This must be contrasted with the number of hospital beds and patient days of care. At the end of 1963 the number of hospital beds in Saskatchewan stood at 7,307, the number of beds increased to 7,410, an increase of 103. I noted that the number of days of care had declined and the average length of stay had dropped but the significant thing was the sharp increase in the employment while the number of hospital beds and length of stay had been declining. I raised the concern at that time that there was a need for us to take a look at the constant increase in the number of employees.

Mr. Speaker, I can point out that in one of the hospitals, for example, in 1961 they had 968 employees, by 1971 that hospital increased its staff to 1,373 employees, an increase of 42 per cent. In that ten year period, in fact, there was a reduction in the number of beds, there was no reduction in the hours of work. I'll give you another example, one hospital employed 150 employees in 1961, ten years later the number increased to 245, a 48 per cent increase with no increase in beds and no reduction in the hours of work for employees.

The story repeats itself in a number of other instances. In fact, in Saskatchewan during the last ten year period we have seen the staff in the hospitals increase by 26 per cent, the nursing staff has been increased by 40 per cent. Mr. Speaker, particular reference has been made to Saskatoon. I want to point out that in the Saskatoon hospitals they have had over the years a larger complement of nursing care than any other hospital in the Province of Saskatchewan. The City Hospital had as direct hours of nursing care to patients 4.5 hours per patient per day, compared to St. Paul's 4.12, compared to Grey Nuns of 3.62, Regina General 4.14. All that we have asked the City Hospital in Saskatoon to do is come down to a level where other hospitals are providing care of the same nature. It is as a result of this that there may be some reduction in the nursing staff. Mr. Speaker, during my meetings in January I specifically asked the hospital to review the matter of staffing. In saying that, I also advised the hospital that we are not going to be asking them to cut staff, to create lay-offs, but to take a look at whether some of the vacancies that exist should be filled.

The Members of the Opposition have asked how many reductions there will be throughout our entire hospital system. The best that our people are able to determine, based on the money that we have approved, perhaps 160 in total, which I believe is not a large reduction in staff that we are proposing and, in fact, there will be no lay-offs in the hospitals. The only thing that will be taking place is that some of the vacancies that

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existed for a long time will not be filled. At the same time, I want to advise the Hon. Members who have raised the question in regard to Regina General Hospital, while there are going to be some reductions in some areas, on the other hand because of new programs that are being introduced, there will be increases in the number of staff.

Mr. Speaker, we will be providing \$116 million to operate the hospital system in the Province of Saskatchewan. we are going to be providing over \$11 million more this year to operate the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan than was provided last year. One other area that we are concerned about is that the employees who are working in the hospital earn a decent income. I need not remind this House of the kind of conditions that prevailed in the hospitals and the kind of wages that were paid to the hospital employees during the Liberal administration. Last year when we took office that was the first item we had to deal with. We did provide for substantial wage increases for the employees. Today most minimum wages in the hospital are \$2 an hour in unionized hospitals. The hospitals are back in negotiations this year and we will be providing funds to improve the wages and the working conditions of hospital employees.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I am going to make every effort to ensure that our hospital system is efficient. I am going to make every effort to ensure that there is no waste. I am going to make sure that there is no duplication, also that there is no unnecessary buildup of staff. I think we owe it to the people of the province to ensure that we are operating a most efficient hospital system in the Province of Saskatchewan. This is what we propose to do in the year ahead. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the Members support the Bill that is before us.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:29 o'clock p.m.