

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session — Seventeenth Legislature
43rd Day

Monday, March 26, 1973.

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

WELCOME TO AIR CADETS

Hon. N. E. Byers: — (Kelvington) Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to introduce to you and to the Members of the House 17 members of the Foam Lake Air Cadets Squadron No. 542, seated in the Speaker's Gallery. They are accompanied today by their leader, Second Lieutenant Ray Howe; Civilian Committee man Mr. Jock Cruikshank; RCMP Constable Brian Potter and their bus driver Harry Obtosoway. They arrived early today. I understand they have toured a number of interesting points in the city. This squadron makes its annual visit to this Legislature during the mid-spring break, while other students either relax from their studies or do whatever young people do in days off, this group makes their annual trip to this Legislature. I hope that all Members will join with me in welcoming this cadet squadron to our Legislature today and hope that their experience here today will be worthwhile and a memorable one for them.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO SCOUTS

Mr. J. G. Richards: — (Saskatoon University) Mr. Speaker, I also take pleasure in welcoming a group here today, a group of scouts from Sutherland, and their leader, Mr. Stevens. I am afraid that I am not the most worthy of people to be introducing scouts, I managed to survive for approximately six weeks at the age of eight as a boy scout. They didn't give me the kind of preparation I needed for the wilds of politics. I hope that they come here 'well prepared' (according to their motto) and manage to survive the political jungle of the Saskatchewan Legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Purchase of 45 Per Cent of Intercontinental Packers

Mr. D. G. Steuart: — (Leader of the Opposition) Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Premier in regard to the purchase of 45 per cent of Intercontinental. Did the Government or SEDCO obtain an option on the balance of the shares or on any other shares or did they obtain a agreement giving them the right of first refusal and if so was there an agreed price and under what conditions?

Hon. A. E. Blakeney: — (Premier) The agreement does provide for the acquisition of shares

by the Government of Saskatchewan under certain circumstances — it is a private company and that aspect is common enough with respect to private companies. With respect to the price there is the usual sort of arrangement whereby shares can be offered. If an existing shareholder wishes to offer shares he shall give notice of that and the remaining shareholders have the right to meet the price. That is quite a common arrangement. In addition with respect to a certain parcel of the shares a price was agreed upon, a price at which the Government could exercise its option was agreed upon.

Mr. Steuart: — A supplementary question. When is the Government going to table that agreement? Surely we don't have to put an order on the Order Paper to expect the Government to table that agreement that they have already entered into and signed, so we will know exactly the terms.

Mr. Blakeney: — Certainly, if we are going to follow the practice in the future that we followed in the past, I think the best course of action would be to put something on the Order Paper. I really think that is the procedure we should follow.

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, that . . .

Mr. Speaker: — We are not debating . . .

Mr. Steuart: — I am aware of that. I just want to say that we will do that if we have to, but that is nonsense. When we introduced the Bill for the Pulp Mill, we then tabled the agreements. If the Government wants to withhold this from the public . . . we asked a question, then when we ask a question . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order! Order!

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, is the Member going to make a speech, and if so I want some equal time. We stood in this House time after time and put Motions on the Order Paper asking his government to table documents and were stonewalled and stonewalled. Don't tell me they tabled them all the time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — I am telling you exactly when we had the pulp mill we tabled those agreements.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! I think there is a proper way of asking questions in our procedure and I think Members are acquainted with this. I hope we can follow it rather than get into disruptions.

RESIGNATION OF JUDGE TILLIE TAYLOR

Mr. J. G. Lane: — (Lumsden) Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Hon. Attorney General (Mr. Romanow). Her Honour Tillie Taylor, as Judge of Magistrate's Court in the Province of Saskatchewan has spoken at and is scheduled to

Speak at regional meetings of the New Democratic Party. Is it government policy for a judge of the Magistrate's Court to speak at political meetings?

Hon. R. Romanow: — (Attorney General) I am not fully familiar with the details of this from the Hon. Member. I have heard of the report, I assume in her capacity as chairman of the Human Rights Commission, if she is asked by members of political parties to talk, go ahead and ask her.

Mr. Lane: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Hon. Attorney General has condemned the Opposition for criticizing Judge Taylor in her capacity as chairman of the Human Rights Commission. We have been condemned for criticizing her as a Judge of the Magistrate's Court even in her position — I am prefacing my question — even in her position as the chairman of the Human Rights Commission. My supplementary question: In light of the fact that she is the wife of a well-known and perennial NDP candidate and is speaking at NDP meetings and the Attorney General will not let us criticize Judge Taylor, is the Attorney General prepared to ask for the resignation of Judge Taylor either from the Magistrate's Court or as chairman of the Human Rights Commission?

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I do very much resent the allegations by the Member from Lumsden, made in the question, the implications about the political bias of any Judge of the Magistrate's Court affecting his or her duties as a Judge of the Magistrate's Court. That's exactly what the Hon. Member from Lumsden is doing. I am saying to the Hon. Member from Lumsden that I will take it under advisement to see exactly whether she is speaking to the NDP or not in her capacity as chairman of the Human Rights Commission. If she is, I would see no danger or any detriment to her speaking to the Saskatchewan Liberal Party about human rights.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — In fact to be very honest I think it might do some good for the Saskatchewan Liberal Party if she spoke about human rights.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I get sick and tired of the Liberal Party criticizing magistrates of the Saskatchewan Magistrate's Court when they have been appointed while there have been Attorney Generals under the CCF or NDP making appointments. Somehow they are not looking into any of the appointments that any of their Federal friends make with respect to judicial appointments. I only want to say this to the Member from Lumsden, that we will look into the facts and circumstances of it. Please don't bring into what I say is unfair, a judge's activities with respect to the Judge of the Magistrate's Court, the implication being that she is not able to divorce her political feelings or his political feelings from her judicial duties. That is surely not the case with Judge Taylor. She has been a member for now 13 or 14 years in the Magistrate's Court. She was kept during Mr. Heald's terms and I think that is an unfair implication. I am sure the Member would not want me getting up and asking questions about

appointments to District Court and Queen's Bench and Court of Appeal judges not made by us.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

I think this is beyond questions on the Orders of the Day.

SPEAKERS FOR LIBERAL ASSOCIATION MEETING

Mr. K. R. MacLeod: — (Regina Albert Park) Mr. Speaker, if I may before the Orders of the Day, I wonder if the Hon. the Premier could explain to me a letter which I received from the Minister of the Environment, dated Regina, March 23, 1973, as follows:

Mr. Ken MacLeod:

I wish to advise that neither Mr. Al Schuster nor Mr. Stan Blackwell from the Department of the Environment are available as requested to address your constituency association on Sunday next.

I gather from the remarks of the Hon. Attorney General that commission heads and board members can speak only to New Democratic Party functions and not to Liberal functions and I have the letter to prove it.

Mr. A. E. Blakeney: — (Premier) I would be very, very happy to attempt to explain that. Although I doubt very much whether any explanation would likely penetrate the Member for Albert Park. I simply want to point out that the Minister says that neither of those gentlemen are available. He didn't in any way suggest that public servants shouldn't speak at political meetings. He didn't suggest that they would not speak on some other occasion. The member gave them a date, neither was available. Surely that does not suggest that under no circumstances would they speak to a Liberal Association. I think that is not the case.

Mr. MacLeod: — To clarify the position, a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I spoke personally to Mr. Al Schuster who is the Director of the Qu'Appelle Basin Study Board and asked him if he would be available for this coming Sunday and he said he would have the time and would be available. I then received this letter. I wonder if the Hon. Minister understands what's happening and whether or not the left foot is aware of what the right foot is doing?

Hon. N. E. Byers: — (Minister of the Environment) In reply to the Hon. Member's question I want to draw to his attention that I understand that Mr. Schuster was approached to speak to your group some time ago. Mr. Schuster, however, is presently on holidays as I understand. I was advised on Friday morning that he was not available to speak to your group on Sunday, nor was the other gentleman to whom you extended the invitation. I thought that the Hon. Member would appreciate

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the courtesy of a reply from my office advising him that the two gentlemen, who are civil servants, were not available to speak to a political gathering on a Sunday. I think it a bit uncharitable to suggest that it was unkind to advise you in what I thought was a fair and proper way to advise the Hon. Member from Albert Park.

Mr. MacLeod: — Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. Just in case there is any misunderstanding over there, I did not write to anybody, I spoke personally . . .

Mr. Speaker: — That's not a Point of Order, that's a point of information.

Mr. MacLeod: — It's a matter of privilege, he is implying that I wrote a letter and I did not.

Mr. Speaker: — That is not a Point of Order.

Hon. Byers: — Point of Order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — What is your Point of Order?

Hon. Byers: — The Point of Order is that the gentlemen were not available and I was advised.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! That is not a Point of Order.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

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. J. C. McIsaac: — (Wilkie) Mr. Speaker, a few very brief comments before sitting down on this particular Bill. We had asked the Minister to hold up on second reading of this Bill until we discussed the entire question of this Government moving into the field of Cablevision. Personally I was not on the Crown Corporations Committee, but I do understand an hour or so was spent to very little avail insofar as information from the Minister was concerned as to intentions and the Government's intentions with respect to their plans in this field. I do think, Mr. Speaker, at this point in time we can carry on further debate if you wish in Third Reading of this Bill. Accordingly we are prepared to let it go for now.

Hon. G. MacMurchy: — (Minister of Education) Mr. Speaker, we have had a surprising amount of discussion and debate over this amendment to The Department of Education Act relating to educational broadcasting. I say it is surprising because certainly there was nothing sinister in the minds of the department people, or myself as Minister, or

the Government in bringing forth the changes in the legislation. There are no communists over in the Department of Education, there are no bogeymen over there.

May I repeat the reasons for the changes. The need for this amendment results from the way the Federal Government defines educational broadcasting. The term itself is no longer adequate to describe the rapidly growing number of means of distributing educational information. The CRTC has encountered legal problems in regulating some of the media that do not conform to what we mean by broadcasting. This amendment will overcome that problem by applying a more comprehensive definition to allow the province to enter the field of educational communications on a broad front whenever such entry may be appropriate. Mr. Speaker, in July of last year by Order-in-Council the Federal Government permitted the provinces to develop corporate entities to go into educational communications. Several provinces have taken advantage of this to legitimize their operations. The federal action recognizes that educational communication is properly a provincial matter just as education itself is. Their decision is welcome as it will now permit rational development. The present amendment to our legislation in fact corresponds to the federal move in that the province is hereby moving to take advantage of the leeway given to us by Ottawa. Now that's the reason for the amendments and there is certainly nothing sinister in bringing them forward.

I was interested, Mr. Speaker, in the comments with respect to the video-tape proposition that was put forward and the opportunity for boards to participate in an offer made by the Department of Education. It is interesting that there was opposition coming from the Members opposite. Certainly there is no opposition by school boards. I went through the list of boards participating in the program. I can't recall one board which didn't make application, which didn't receive the grant to purchase the equipment. As a matter of fact last week the Eston-Elrose Board were in, supported the program, said we have an opportunity through the program to purchase three sets, we in fact out of our Budget purchased a fourth. That's how we feel about the program put forth by the Department of Education. It may be, Mr. Speaker, that the Members opposite felt a little bit left out, since there hasn't been any such program provided by the Department of Education since 1963 when in fact television sets were provided in a similar manner to all boards.

Now Mr. Speaker, it would seem from the debate and the discussion that there is some opposition to the program of educational broadcasting. I find that very interesting. Initially when I introduced the amendments to the Bill I talked about the kind of program that is presently going on under Miss Gertrude Murray, the Chief of Educational Resources Branch in the Department. I talked about one television program. Let me talk a little bit more about two other programs that have come forward from the Department of Education.

The annual Ohio State Competition is open to entries from North America. The Department of Education won awards for an educational television program and an educational radio broadcast in that competition.

An award in the area of education television was presented to Miss Murray for 'Some Like It Cold'. This is a Division III program in a three part series on outdoor education in

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Saskatchewan. The producer was a CBC producer from Winnipeg. The Glen Elm elementary students in Regina participated in the program. The script was written and narrated by Mr. Jack MacKenzie, Co-ordinator of Fitness and Community Resources for the Board of Education here in Regina.

The program takes a Grade Eight class to a coulee in the southern prairie. And it describes beautifully their activities. Let me read the citation, "One of the most motivating pieces of instructional television we have seen" was the comment of several judges as the program concluded. In the area of radio broadcasting an award was presented to Mr. Garth Hendron, Radio Consultant in the Department, for Proud Heritage, Bold Destiny, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Maybe the Leader of the Opposition would be interested in this program.

Let me comment on the citation.

A well written and unusual script. Authoritative, entertaining, combined with excellent application of audio affects enabling this production to effectively achieve its purpose and to encourage the interest of students in local history.

Mr. McIsaac: — On a Point of Order, I don't wish to interrupt the Minister's recitation of his awards but I believe this is new material he is bringing in, he is closing the debate and certainly isn't within the rules of the House to bring in a whole list of new material in closing the debate.

Mr. Speaker: — That rule is quite well established. He can only bring in material to answer questions and not enter new material into a debate.

Mr. MacMurchy: — Mr. Speaker, I was adding to some of the points that I had raised earlier in delivering second reading, and replying to some of the criticism that came forth from the Opposition.

Now, if I can go on, Mr. Speaker. We took note of a suggestion coming from the Member for Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac) with respect to establishment of a committee to look into educational broadcasting. And I report to him that we do have an ad hoc committee established. Miss Murray has arranged for two meetings already with interested people in the province. The ad hoc committee has been formed to enquire into the use of the ETV through the schools. Out of this ad hoc committee will be formed an educational broadcasting committee to advise us on the program as we develop further. If there is any question, Mr. Speaker, a lot has been done in education broadcasting in the Department. The amendments will provide new opportunities for us. It makes me proud to close debate on these amendments to educational broadcasting, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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:

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 abandonments be authorized until 1980.

And the proposed amendment thereto by Mr. Gardner:

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. J. C. McIsaac: — (Wilkie) Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before us dealing with rail line abandonment brings up a subject that certainly isn't a new one in this Legislature.

I think it was the Member for Rosthern (Mr. Boldt) who spoke in this debate a couple of weeks ago. He pointed out through the years the number of resolutions dealing with this question that have been introduced into the House over the last 8 to 10 years.

Not only, Mr. Speaker, is the issue itself not a new one but it certainly struck me in listening to remarks made by Members opposite with perhaps one exception. We have not heard any new ideas in connection with this whole question of rail rationalization in the time that I have been in this House.

The one exception was the suggestion by the Member for Assiniboia-Bengough (Mr. Lange) that the Government of Saskatchewan buy out the major Canadian railways.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, we are indebted to the Hon. Member for Bengough for a thorough and factual presentation that he made in the first half of his remarks on this particular motion and I cannot give him the same credit for the suggestion and his contention that our only solution to the problem is the purchase of the two major railroads.

Mind you, there is no doubt in anyone's mind I am sure, on either side of the House, that these two railroads and their truck subsidiaries have what amounts to complete control of transportation in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that it is practically impossible to discuss this whole question of rail line abandonment, branch line abandonment in Saskatchewan without touching on a number of other issues and questions, such as alternative transportation, such as trucking, pipelines and indeed airlines. I think some Members may be aware that a good deal of research has been done by the Saskatchewan Research Council on the very question of slurry pipelining. Indeed more research in that field has been done by the Saskatchewan Research Council than any other similar agency in this or any other country. Not only alternative transportation routes need to be discussed in discussing this topic but the complete aspect of grain handling, including farm to elevator, elevator to terminal, whether east or west or whether to Churchill.

Another important aspect, Mr. Speaker, is the entire pattern of community development or re-development perhaps we should say in rural Saskatchewan. And that list is by no means a complete one nor is it by any means in any particular order of priority.

I think when we look at any of those points, Mr. Speaker, and when we realize the changes that have taken place over the years in the size of farms today as opposed to 5, 10, or 20 years ago; the size of trucks; the degree of rural road construction that we've seen completed; the growth of certain urban communities in rural Saskatchewan and the decline on the other hand of many more, it seems to me it should be obvious to all of us that the problem is not only a complex one but it is one that is subject to change and indeed has been changing while we have been talking about it these last 10 years in this House.

Now in the course of this debate one of the Members opposite I forget just who, reviewed the fact that about 10 years ago, 1962, the former Government had conducted a public study and some public hearings on this entire question. Very little was said as to the outcome of that study. For good reasons very little really did come out of it.

I wish at this time to point out some of the developments that took place subsequent to '64 and '65 and up until approximately '70-71. One of the first moves of the Liberal Government in 1965 with respect to this question was the establishment of a liaison committee between the Department of Municipal Affairs, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and the Saskatchewan Urban Municipal Association. That committee met regularly throughout the years. Municipal people were involved directly with the Government in many, many efforts and many, many questions of policy in that particular period. The committee functioned for many years, Mr. Speaker, and it functioned I may say very effectively.

In the early 1960s the Federal Government introduced a Bill the predecessor of the one that is now law as far as transportation goes and that Bill was called Bill C-120 at the time. It was a new transportation act and upon very limited study by almost anyone, it looked at that time as though the railroads had almost written that Bill word for word. That Bill, as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, died on the Order Paper and never did become law. Largely, I think it was a result of efforts made by the Province of Saskatchewan and in this respect the former CCF Government deserves some credit for that as well.

There was a section in that Act known as Section 314 which set out provisions that were to be considered by the Transport Commission before granting the railroads permission to abandon any branch line. And as a direct result, Mr. Speaker, of the efforts of the Provincial Liberal Government at that time, those provisions were completely changed and broadened to provide for a measurement of the social significance of any such branch line abandonment. And these changes I may say were made over the strong opposition of the railroads at the time and with seemingly very little enthusiasm on the part of many Federal officials.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that mention must be made of two men in particular in this connection. When we talk about rail line abandonment legislation pertaining thereto and moves along these lines throughout the years, there are two men whose help has been, I suggest, invaluable to this province. One of them, Mr. Keith Setter is still employed by the Provincial Government and the public of Saskatchewan. The second name I think, Mr. Speaker, that deserves mention in debate on this particular question is that of Gordon Blair, an Ottawa lawyer, a native of Saskatchewan who was initially retained by the NDP Government in previous years, was kept on as a consultant with respect to rail matters, transportation matters by the former Liberal Government. I must say that his knowledge and his attention to the entire question of rail abandonment, freight rates and his proximity to Federal officials in Ottawa has also been invaluable insofar as these questions are concerned and insofar as many of the changes that come about in affecting the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that that 1960 Bill, Bill C-120 died on the Order Paper in Ottawa and it died as a result of representation from Saskatchewan and the prairie provinces primarily. That Bill was replaced by Bill C-231 which was eventually drafted and re-drafted and I think probably went through more re-drafting than the teacher-trustee negotiating Bill that is before us today, before it was finally proclaimed law on February 1, 1967. There may well be other provisions that could have and should have been changed in that Bill. But I want to say to the Members of the House and the Government opposite particularly that the Provincial Liberal Government at the time was responsible for the scrapping of that old Act and the complete re-writing of the Act that's before us, deficient though that present Act may be in certain respects.

Mr. Speaker, we did not take the approach then and indeed do not take the approach today that every mile of railroad as it was laid down originally in Saskatchewan must and should remain exactly where it was originally placed. We took an approach, I think, that allowed for the possibility of change. In other words, Mr. Speaker, we recognized that as Saskatchewan developed the style of farming changed, the size of community needed to serve the rural areas has indeed changed, Mr. Speaker, that we were embarking upon a major provincial and municipal road improvement program, all of these facts were taken into consideration.

Now I believe the next significant happening, if you like, in the history of events with respect to rail abandonment, was a pre-hearing conference called in the summer of 1967 and held

in the city of Winnipeg. And it was at that conference that more specific criteria were to be established and spelled out by the Transport Commission before proceeding with any rail abandonment. One of the key concerns of Saskatchewan for which the Federal Government at that time came under fire (at that pre-hearing conference) was the entire question of costing procedures of the railroads. And that was an issue that took considerable time. In short, I refer here to the manner and the method by which the railways established their actual costs of operation.

The prairie provinces, the maritimes and eventually Quebec and Ontario, the governments thereof agreed to come together and support an independent study to try and determine on what basis rail costs should be arrived at. We didn't have the co-operation of the railroads in the sense that we weren't getting the kind of figures we felt we should from them. And this step was taken to initiate a study in the States and other places by all of the various provinces that I mentioned. Trying to determine what factors they were taking into account, we had the feeling that they were considering such things as depreciation on worn out railroad lines, depreciation on old buildings that had been written off, as we suspected, many years before.

Several meetings were held, Mr. Speaker, over 1967 and '68 including one in Washington, D. C. on this question, which culminated eventually a year and some months later in a seven week hearing in October of 1968. Then the results of those studies and the findings were presented to the Canadian Transportation Commission. And following that the CTC did set out its procedures on rail costing.

And now I think, Mr. Speaker, comes one of the most interesting developments. There have been no hearings on any branch line abandonment, any question thereof, since that Act was passed,. And the fact that there hasn't been has been due in no small measure to pressures from the former Provincial Liberal Government and the Federal Liberal Government on the Commission to give first of all further study to the entire question of grain handling in the prairies.

The Canada Grains Council was set up a few years ago and a report eventually made comprising a number of technical papers and a paper dealing with the sociological aspects of rail abandonment. In this very month as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, a public discussion of that question was held in the city of Saskatoon.

In the interim while that report was being prepared for the Grains Council, the railroads through the CTC agreed to a moratorium on any hearings. And it is interesting to note again, I think at this time, Mr. Speaker, that the only two hearings ever held were by the Board of Transport Commissioners under the old legislation when the NDP was in power and both of those hearings resulted in the abandonment of the two lines in question.

Mr. Speaker, I give you this bit of history on the development of the new transportation Act which I note the Premier is saying and I think with some validity that it's perhaps already out of date on the basis for which they are judging whether or not lines shall or shall not be abandoned in this

province. I should like to look now at the question of what the railroads are really deriving by way of income and business in this province. And it is a difficult figure to estimate and we can only estimate it. But I think a figure of between \$175 and \$200 million is one that has been estimated by some authorities.

Mr. Speaker, there is another section of the railway Act, Section 262, that states as follows:

The railroads must provide service in this province whether or not there may be a loss on freight, express service on certain lines.

The Crows Nest rates for years provided a source of base revenue if you like for the railroads in the prairies and it is interesting to note lately that we haven't heard that much hollering from the railroads that indeed they are losing money on those rates, in fact, it's quite likely that they are not. We do hear noises to this effect when such things as the lucrative potash haul begins to grown in volume that the Crowsnest rates are losing them money.

Now there is no doubt that the potash haul, which is a very significant aspect of railroad revenues in Saskatchewan, the haul where a locomotive hooks into a unit train, if you like, of boxcars and then proceeds to haul it to a terminal and unhook is certainly a good deal more lucrative than the grain haul.

There is no doubt also, Mr. Speaker, that the advent of the block system of moving grain to the terminals has definitely resulted in a more efficient grain haul operation, insofar as the railroads are concerned. The block system has not only been an advantage insofar as moving grain generally through our terminals and into the export market, but it has been a real advantage to the railroads.

Now, in short, Mr. Speaker, and these are only some of the points, there have been many, many changes and developments since the entire question of rail abandonment has now come to the fore in rural Saskatchewan. There have been changes, not only from the point of view of Saskatchewan itself, but from the point of view of the railroads themselves.

We have heard a good deal, Mr. Speaker, in recent years from Ottawa and from the majority of Canadian provinces, and from all political parties on the question of regional disparities in Canada. It certainly isn't a new question. But I think it is true to say that in the last eight or ten years that greater efforts have been made than has ever been the case before. I refer to such programs as ARDA, DREE and many, many others that have been put forth as the maiden's prayer insofar as correcting regional disparities in this country is concerned. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that at long last we are seeing some evidence in Ottawa at the Federal level that policies with respect to transportation and freight rates will hold the key to correcting regional disparities in western Canada, far more so than any series of 'band-aid' programs that we have seen emanate from Ottawa in recent years. I think there is evidence, I think the evidence I refer to can be stated in

the fact that no abandonment applications have been proceeded with, despite the fact the legislation has been there. I think another move by the Federal Government to spend \$50 million to move hopper cars, put them in at the railroad's disposal to assist in the grain movement is one more indication that they recognize the transportation problem and I think thirdly, Mr. Speaker, the recent announcement by the Minister of Transport the Hon. Jean Marchand, that indeed no abandonment will take place in Saskatchewan without consultation with the provincial government, and that's been reported in several papers in the province.

I would hope, Mr. Speaker, in supporting this resolution put forth by the Premier, that it will result in strengthening the hand of the Government opposite on behalf of Saskatchewan people, as they proceed to discuss transportation, freight rates, with sister provinces in the prairies and then in turn with the Federal Government in the months ahead.

To me, Mr. Speaker, there is only one clause that I do not like in this resolution — one disturbing clause — and that is the request that no abandonment take place until 1980. Surely the present grain handling system need not wait until 1980 for improvements to be made. I hope that policy changes will have been made long before that date, that will result in greater efficiencies in grain handling.

Now, Mr. Speaker, earlier in the Session we received, on our desks, an envelope with a whole list of figures, dollars, rail lines across the prairies, indicating, when you added them up, that a subsidy of something in the neighborhood of \$33 million had been paid to the railroads over the last two years as a result of losses on branch line operations. And most of this money, of course, was paid on behalf of lines in the Province of Saskatchewan. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, this is an example of the kind of public money, from the Federal treasury, that is now being spent and that should be, and could be, directed to the farmers' pockets if sensible changes were made. At least a good deal of it could be directed there.

The Government opposite, Mr. Speaker, is proposing in this resolution to leave things as they are until 1980 and one of the results will be to continue pouring millions into the railroads' pockets in this regard. I suggest this question of rail abandonment needs to be discussed openly, rationally, not emotionally and we need some leadership from the Government opposite and we haven't seen it yet, in my opinion.

This entire debate, Mr. Speaker, has largely been a farce, because Government Members opposite continue to look backwards instead of forwards in dealing with this question. They cry over communities that Saskatchewan people and farmers themselves have abandoned; they refuse to recognize, in my opinion, the trends that have been going on and taking place for years, and there is no indication that they have been concerned about revitalizing the rural communities we do have left. There has been no indication in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, that they wish to give any kind of positive leadership on behalf of the rural people of the province.

Now I will support the resolution, Mr. Speaker, but I do say it is with regret that I support the reference to the year 1980. I can only conclude the Government is showing their true

colors in this respect when they include such a clause. I don't think it is necessary, I suggest that the issue will be resolved much more sensibly, much more rationally, if that clause were not in the resolution and if we proceeded to sit down with farmers, with rural people, with grain companies, railroads and get on and deal with the issue of rail abandonment and the whole question of grain handling.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Amendment agreed to.

Hon. A. E. Mr. Blakeney: — (Premier) Mr. Speaker, I just want to add a few words to those which I made at the time of introducing the resolution. I don't want to rehash too much of what has already been said, but I think some points made by Members on both sides of the House should be underlined and some I think should be refuted, or in my judgment, at least clarified and corrected.

The Member for Moosomin, Mr. Gardner, seemed to be telling us that all is well so long as the Liberals are in Government. No rail lines will be abandoned, he says. Then he points out that even if lines are abandoned, as they were when a Conservative Government was in power in Ottawa, in his own constituency that the towns along that line were hardly affected at all. He referred to the towns of Kennedy and Wawota and Windthorst and he said they are still thriving. And I congratulate the people of Kennedy and Wawota and Windthorst, and I am glad to hear they are still thriving. But certainly it is not because of, but despite, rail line abandonment. But in the case of those particular towns they had an alternative railway within a very few miles. I remember visiting Kennedy and seeing the elevators being moved from Kennedy over to Langbank, and it's about three miles away. I'm hardly surprised to hear that Kennedy didn't wither by reason of the fact that the farmers had to haul their grain another perhaps two or three miles. You can see the elevator at Langbank very clearly. But that certainly will not be the situation everywhere in this province if the current proposals are proceeded with. In the south country down around Mankota, Wood Mountain, there would be hauls of 40 miles, in the Kyle area there would be hauls of 50 miles or more. Other communities, therefore, will not fare as well as Kennedy and Wawota and Windthorst. I think that if all Liberal Members exhibit the same relatively nonchalant attitude to this problem as the Member for Moosomin, then we are in for some serious trouble. In part because of the attitude of the Member for Moosomin, I think the passage of this resolution takes on a little extra importance.

I don't want this House to forget that the proposals start coming up for review in two years time. But when we in this Party, try to focus attention on this fact, when we try to get a firm commitment from the Government at Ottawa that the railways won't have their way, some people at least say that we are merely playing politics. They say we really have nothing to fear because we have election pledges from the Hon. Otto Lang and the Hon. Pierre Trudeau that no abandonment would occur without consultation and indeed, one of them said, without the agreement of the provinces. Well once those commitments were made, as I told the House earlier, we have tried and tried to get commitments in writing from the Federal Government — from Mr. Trudeau — as to whether or not those commitments stand.

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We have nothing in writing, notwithstanding letters requesting a confirmation or a qualification or a denial of the Press report.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, because of some pretty bitter experiences in the past, our faith in the promises of the Liberal Party is not what it might be. Some people remember medicare, promised in 1919 and coming about in 1965, but some closer to home will remember a government which in 1967 campaigned that there would be no increase in taxes, there would be a drug program, that no small hospitals would close and so on and once safely back in office they levied new taxes of \$35 million in 1968, they closed small hospitals; they introduced no drug program and so on.

Mr. Speaker, before we accept the assurances of Liberal government, we want to have these assurances as clearly set as we can and we want to have as much ammunition as possible so that we may put that Liberal Government in a position to honor their pledges, not because they made them, but because the consequences of not honoring them will be too damaging for them.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — That's certainly one of the purposes of this resolution.

May I make only one more comment about statements by Members opposite. The Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) after suggesting that the debate was a waste of time, went on, I thought, to prove his point. I wondered particularly when he suggested that nothing had been done during the years 1962 and 1963 about rail line abandonment. I wondered whether at that time he was in Saskatchewan, whether he possessed a radio, or a TV set or whether he read a newspaper. Here's what he said and I'm quoting from his remarks earlier in this debate:

That the CCF Government of the day at no time rose to the defence of rural communities or the farmers affected.

Nothing, Mr. Speaker, could be farther from the truth.

The Member for Touchwood (Mr. Meakes) pointed out the government of the day, the CCF Government of that day fought tooth and nail against the abandonment of rail lines.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — That government was instrumental in forming committees of people all across this province to try to put pressure on the Federal Government to halt these plans. There were petitions and letters and phone calls and submissions of every kind and these were supported and encouraged by the CCF Government of the day. New Democratic MPs at Ottawa fought and fought hard against rail line abandonment in Parliament at Ottawa. I'd suggest that the Member for Morse do more homework before he makes a statement like that about what happened some ten years ago.

Mr. Speaker, may I make a few final points.

I believe that the railways haven't given up their plans for massive abandonment of rail lines on the prairies, they have merely postponed them. They are proceeding with plans to close down some 3,000 of the 8,500 miles of railway track in Saskatchewan. They are proceeding with plans which, if all of them went through, and I'm not suggesting that all of them will in fact come through — 800 of our 2,500 elevators in this province would be slated for closure.

Now our basic point is that not nearly enough by way of cost studies has been done. Cost studies to date have been far from adequate. This is the point we are trying to make in this resolution. And we believe that if a proper job of cost studies is done and if judgments are made, as I think they will be, that some lines should be abandoned, then in order to compensate for the social dislocations which will be caused by abandonment, other things will need to be done. Roads will need to be constructed, connecting rail lines will need to be built, and I don't see all of these things happening, — the studies, the roads, the connecting rail lines being completed — before about 1980, even if we decided now that we were going to do something about rationalization. Surely abandonment is only one facet of the overall transportation problem. Our Government tried to highlight some of the problems that the prairies face in transportation at a transportation conference last week and I think that Members who were in attendance at the conference would reach the conclusion that it was a worthwhile conference and that it was aimed at bringing out information. It was not aimed at making political points. Certainly there were some points made on behalf of Saskatchewan people, but I believe that the statements made by political figures in Saskatchewan would have been endorsed by Members opposite as well as Members on this side of the House. They were not in any sense partisan, except that they were partisan in a prairie or Saskatchewan sense.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — And I make no apology for that. I believe that a good bit of information came out and I believe that the conference provided a focal point for people in Saskatchewan to assess what the transportation problems of this province really are. I believe it was very much worthwhile.

I believe what the Member for Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac) said, that we have to consider the possibility that rail lines will be abandoned. I think some will be abandoned, and some should be abandoned because a number virtually parallel each other. I think if some are abandoned, there will need to be connecting lines so as not to leave whole communities without service, when the construction of ten or fifteen miles of track would provide them with service. I believe that before rail lines are pulled up the railways have some questions which they should answer for the people of Saskatchewan. Anyone who now knows how grain is moved in this province, and indeed across western Canada in some instances, will know that the railways have some questions that they need to answer. They'll need to answer why they require one rail company to dead-head trains over another company's tracks for 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 miles, simply because the piece of track bears a sign CN or CP as the case may be. They'll have to explain why they don't rationalize their operations.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — They'll have to explain why they back-haul grain over extensive distances so that the grain can go to the West Coast over a CNR line rather than a CP line, or vice versa. They will have to explain why grain comes from south central Alberta back into Saskatchewan and then north to Edmonton so that it can go over the CN line through Jasper, rather than going west by a very much shorter route, indeed hundreds of miles shorter, by CP. They better answer some of those things before they ask farmers to rationalize.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the House that the railway companies have an obligation to put forward plans that are reasonable and rational, something different than their current plan of wholesale rail line abandonment. Surely they have an obligation to offer to the people of western Canada a proper grade of public service. Surely they have an obligation to do something more than simply put forward a proposal for wholesale abandonment knowing that many of their proposals will not be met, but hoping that if they ask for a great deal by way of abandonment they will then, by negotiation by some process of negotiation, be permitted to abandon some lines and keep others.

This is not good enough. They have most of the research material in their files. They have the staff who are most familiar with these problems,. It is their primary obligation to put forward a rational program for a rail line service to rural prairie centres and that they have not done.

So I think, Mr. Speaker, there is every reason why we on both sides of this House should combine in support of this resolution. We have already disposed of the amendment of the Member for Moosomin (Mr. Gardner). It is harmless enough and it is now a part of the Motion.

I am pleased to note by the comments of the Member for Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac) that Members opposite propose to support this Resolution. I think all of us could quarrel about one phrase or another in the Resolution and amendment. I might think that parts of the amendment are redundant, he thinks some of the words in the original resolution are ill-advised. Fair enough! But basically all of us agree that this is a vital issue for rural Saskatchewan. Basically all of us agree that we must speak with united voice in this Legislature, on this issue.

Accordingly I invite all Members to underline the feeling of unity in Saskatchewan in this issue. I invite all Members on both sides of the House to support this Resolution so we may pass it unanimously.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Motion as amended agreed to on the following Recorded Division:

YEAS — 51
Messieurs

Blakeney
Dyck

Kwasnica
Carlson

Feschuk
Kaeding

Meakes
Smishek
Romanow
Messer
Snyder
Kramer
Thibault
Larson
Kowalchuk
Baker
Brockelbank
MacMurchy
Pepper
Michayluk
Oliver

Engel
Owens
Tchorzewski
Cowley
Taylor
Matsalla
Richards
Faris
Cody
Feduniak
Mostoway
Comer
Rolfes
Lange
Whelan

Steuart
Coupland
Loken
Guy
Grant
McIsaac
Gardner
Weatherald
MacLeod
McPherson
Lane
MacDonald (Moose Jaw North)
Wiebe
Byers
Flasch

NAYS — 0
Messieurs

Nil

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

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

Mr. D. G. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, I should like to take up my remarks where I left off.

Mr. Romanow: — Are you against orderly marketing?

Mr. Steuart: — I am against orderly dictatorship or any other kind. I should like to deal with the amendments brought in to The Natural Products Marketing Act by the Minister of Agriculture last year.

We supported those amendments and we supported them mostly because the Minister misled this House and misled the public. I suppose we should have known better to trust him or to trust any NDP for that matter. I have on the record here and I want to read into the record of the House this year, the remarks.

An Hon. Member: — Take it as read.

Mr. Steuart: — You would like to take it as read wouldn't you and I don't blame you, but I want to read the remarks by the Minister of Agriculture when he talked on second reading of the Bill last year to amend The Natural Products Marketing Act. This is page 2,033, April 27, 1972. He went on to say, talking about a commission. He said:

Regulations, which I am sure the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and the Members opposite will appreciate

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we are now prepared to put into legislation — part 3 introduces a new basic principle in the Act by providing for the establishment of marketing commissions. These agencies, Mr. Speaker, are basically government appointed marketing bodies, as compared with producer boards where the members are elected. They (that is the Commissions) will have many of the powers of the producer boards, but will not have any power in relation to supply control.

He went on to say:

I want to make this clear. They may control deliveries or grades, prices and the like, but they do not have the power to prohibit marketing of a product nor to control the production of that product in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we come to the amendments this year and we also check on the speech made by the Minister. He is not only attempting to mislead this province and the farmers, again, in Saskatchewan, but he succeeded unfortunately in misleading some portions of the Press.

In the column “Under the Dome”, March 24th, I want to quote:

The Opposition apparently overlooked one of the key paragraphs in that speech by Mr. Messer. These agencies, marketing commissions, are basically government appointed marketing bodies as compared with producer boards, where the members are elected they will have many of the powers of producer boards but will not have any power in relation to supply control.

Mr. Messer has attempted to put over that the commission still won't be able to control production of hogs or of any other product that is placed under The Natural Products Marketing Act. This just isn't so, in fact, he is either ignorant of the provisions in this Bill and the power that he has taken unto himself and into his own department, or else he is trying to mislead the public again.

Let me now go to this Bill that we are now considering, Bill No. 50, Section 4, Section 23 as amended. Under this amendment, Mr. Speaker, the Government is taking unto itself, or giving to the commission, vast new powers.

Among the new powers that are being given to the commission are the powers to license people not only who sell natural products — and in this particular case we are dealing with hogs, and I suggest very soon cattle and anything else that is produced by the farmers. But it also gives them the right to license all persons producing or marketing. And nowhere in this Act can I find where the powers of that licensing board are limited.

In other words, when a farmer gets a licence he can be told how many hogs he can sell. The Market Commission will decide each year, how many they can sell.

An Hon. Member: — . . . does not.

Mr. Steuart: — Well read the Act. They will say to Mr. Farmer we can sell 100 hogs for you. Now that is all that they will sell for him. It would be even stupider than Mr. Messer thinks they are, to produce 200 or 300. So it is very clear in here that when they license the farmer to produce hogs they can set the terms and conditions.

Well he is shaking his head. You stand up Mr. Messer and explain to me where the powers in this Act are that say that licence shall be given for thus and thus reason. You read the Act and it says that they can set the regulations. Read it, it is right there. By adding subsection (d), Section 4 that amends Section 23, that outlines the powers of the commission. It says:

(n) to market as principal or agent any regulated product, and grade and insure such product;

(o) to cancel or suspend any licence for violation of any part or provision of a plan or any order of the commission or of the regulations.

Now you show me in this Act where the regulations they may set, in regard to how many hogs or what they will sell in any one year for any one farmer, are set and they are nowhere in here.

In other words, this Commission, under this Act, will definitely have the power to control production because they can tell Mr. Farmer: (a) whether he can have a licence by the very fact that you give a board or a commission the right to license anybody you therefore also give them the right to withhold the licence. So they can decide if there will be 100 hog producers in this province, or 1,000 or 10,000. If they decide that there is an overproduction and there are 10,000 hog producers in one year, they can reduce the number the next year. There is nothing in this Act that prohibits them from cancelling anyone's licence. There is nothing in this Act that prohibits them from setting the regulations they want as wide as possible. There is nothing in this Act that says when they give a man a licence and set up the plan, that they cannot also say he will sell only so much of the product. No guarantee that they will buy every hog that the farmer produces. Nothing, nothing in this Act at all.

You can chew your gum or chew your cud and you can't name a section and I will wait until you name the section. Well you can't name it because it is not here.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, there is no question that this Commission has been given the power, not only to say who can produce hogs, where they can produce them, what kind they can produce, but, in fact, how many they can produce and how many they can sell, and who, in fact, can take them to market and exactly where they can sell them.

This last part becomes interesting since the Government purchased 45 per cent of Intercontinental. This is a question that is raised in the minds of many farmers. Will the Commission, in fact, say you can only sell to Intercontinental Packers?

Well, I say, Mr. Speaker, that I don't think there is any question that the farmers would not want to have a free choice, if it is left to the farmers. The packing houses, Burns and Company are in a very strong position in this province and Canada Packers buy in this province, and I say right now that it is common knowledge that Canada Packers, with the aid of a very substantial DREE grant from the Federal Government, are going to build a packing plant in Moose Jaw, probably valued at \$3 million or \$4 million. They are going to build one.

Mr. Messer: — Why?

Mr. Steuart: — Why? Because like they say in "The Godfather", I think they got an offer from the Federal Government that they couldn't refuse. That is why they are going to build one here.

Burns and Company are also, I am convinced, going to get a very, very substantial grant from DREE and they are going to rebuild in the city of Regina. And this isn't speculation as I think this is a fact. Now if the farmers are left alone there is no question they will have the choice of at least three agents to whom they can sell their hogs and cattle; Intercontinental, Burns and Company, Canada Packers and probably many others.

The question that has to come with the powers that are given under this Act to the Commission is: Will the farmers be allowed their free choice of market? They are not, under this Bill, being given a free choice in how they sell. They are not being given a free choice in what kind of plan they have. They are not being given a free choice in who will control this Commission, as has been done in Alberta and as was done under the Liberals.

The Liberals, when we were in office, set up three different plans. In 1966 we set up the Broiler Chicken Board, in June of 1967 a Turkey Board, in August 1969 the Egg Board.

In regard to the Broiler Chicken Board, 65 per cent of the producers had to vote in favor and, in fact, 83 per cent voted in favor.

Again, 88 per cent voted in favor of the Turkey Board and 78 per cent in favor of a commercial Egg Board. The old CCF even took a vote back in 1950. 72 per cent of the honey producers in this province voted in favor of the Saskatchewan Honey Board and, in fact, by the regulations put in under the old CCF they demanded a 66 2/3 vote.

It has only been this NDP Government, under this Minister of Agriculture, under this Premier Blakeney, that have said to producers of our natural products, you are going to have a board whether you like it or not and you are not going to be given a vote.

So, Mr. Speaker, Commission or Board . . .

An Hon. Member: — . . . commission . . .

Mr. Steuart: — Well, I do know the difference, but you had better read it and you will find out that stinkweed by any other name smells

just as bad when it is pushed down the throats of the hog producers, and I suggest that some of you fellows go out to that sale out there and find out from the real producers just how unpopular this piece of legislation that you are ramming down their throats really is.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that if the Attorney General goes out to the hog barn and keeps his hat on so that the rest of his Members will know him. Anyway, I say this, that this piece of legislation is vicious and is bad legislation. It is the second part of the Act that was brought in last year. An Act that was introduced by the Minister who succeeded in misleading a great deal of the public. He said one thing and in fact he had something totally different in mind. He's attempting to do the same thing again. Under this Act, make no mistake, this Commission will be given the power to say who can raise hogs, how many they can raise, how many they will be able to sell, whom they can sell them to, when they can sell them, how they will take them to market and who will, in fact, buy them. So I say it is bad legislation, not because we are against orderly marketing, not because we are against boards, but because we are against any arrogant dictatorial powers like this being given to anyone, any government, NDP, Liberal or Conservative, without giving all the facts to the producers and then allowing them a democratic vote. So I will oppose this Bill and I will oppose it with everything I have.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. J. C. McIsaac: — (Wilkie) Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 50 is a Bill, I think, that represents, if we needed another demonstration in respect to this Government's attitude, and that's their attitude that they know best in each and every case.

Mr. Romanow: — We were elected on that.

Mr. McIsaac: — It's a dictatorial approach and you weren't elected for that, Mr. Attorney General. We have seen that dictatorial approach develop from the very first day they were elected. The Members opposite, Mr. Speaker, and the Minister of Agriculture, (Mr. Messer) seem to think it is their responsibility completely to control and direct the welfare of the livestock industry of the province. Now we have heard Members opposite tell us in this debate that the powers they are seeking in this legislation are not new powers. In this respect they are completely wrong because they are new powers. Not only are they new but they are being used in a new way by the NDP. I think it was the Member for Pelly (Mr. Larson) who said, Mr. Speaker, that similar powers have been in effect with respect to the Wheat Board for a number of years. Now the history of the evolution of the Wheat Board is one that goes back a long, long time and it is one, Mr. Speaker, that Members opposite are well aware that involved the producers at every step of the way and that is something this plan does not involve, it does not involve the producers at any step of the way. This certainly cannot be said for their plan here. Producers haven't been involved in the development or the planning of this legislation and indeed they are not being involved in the development and the plans of the new marketing commission that the Minister is

sending around the province.

Now the Minister can talk all he likes, he can tell us that he is holding meetings but it is an absolute misrepresentation, Mr. Speaker, to say that these meetings constitute consultation. If he had wanted to go out and consult with hog producers surely he would be going out with a specific plan and a specific proposal and spell it out in some detail and present that plan for possible changes, possible suggestions, and in turn hoping to sell it if he thinks it is good. He hasn't done that. Mr. Speaker, the history of this Bill has been reviewed by Members on this side and I will go through some of the key points again.

I think it is interesting to note that this Bill and amendments to it were brought in last year in 1972. In 20 years under the NDP administration, Mr. Speaker, only one producer marketing board was ever established and that was the honey producers in Tisdale or something and I don't know what happened then. The Minister obviously felt that boards were not going to work. Under a Liberal administration that total came up to four producer boards. They were organized, they were voted in and they are still operational in this province and they are operated and run by the producers themselves. We have the Commercial Egg Producers Board, the Broiler Marketing Board and the Turkey Producers Board. They are operating and they flourish and anyone who says in this House that the Liberal administration hasn't promoted orderly marketing, there is the answer to them, Mr. Speaker, in those boards. Mr. Speaker, I think that producer marketing boards flourished under the Liberal administration and they would have continued to flourish. Especially in view of the fact that Federal-Liberal legislation now permits a tie-in of provincial boards with national boards.

Now the NDP, Mr. Speaker, and the only conclusion I can come to, at the 1972 Session, felt that things weren't happening fast enough for them and so the Act was amended and the major changes were brought in to allow for the establishment of this commission. A government appointed Commission could be established by Order-in-Council for any product under the Act. About the only power the Commission wouldn't have is the power to limit production. As the Member for Prince Albert, the Leader of the Opposition, pointed out they didn't need to worry about that because they were going to license producers or not license them as the case may be, method of shipment, number of animals shipped. It all amounts to the same thing as controlling and limited production. Export marketing, all the powers related to research, method of shipment, manner of marketing, were and are within the competency of this commission.

Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying and it needs to be repeated inside this House and out, that the Minister of Agriculture indicated to us then that only in special or adverse circumstances would the Government take action to establish such a Commission. In the event I think he said, of a suddenly worsening situation, price decline or other deterioration when time was of the essence and there wasn't time to get producers organized, when the machinery to implement a board would perhaps be too slow, he was going to then go on and establish a Commission.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what was the situation last August when the Minister announced the establishment of this Commission?

Were pork prices on the decline? Was there any catastrophe in the hog industry in Saskatchewan? Certainly not, Mr. Speaker. Pork prices were not 16 cents or 18 cents or 28 cents, they were about 40 cents, the highest they had been for a number of years. They have since reached about 50 cents, Mr. Speaker, in that time. Six months ago the Minister made that announcement at a time as I say when the hog industry had never been healthier for years and years. Now what kind of an announcement did he make, Mr. Speaker? Well, he has had six months since that time to give us some details, to give us some reason as to why he made it and I haven't heard from him or seen it in the Press and I certainly haven't heard it in this House. He announced no sound or no valid arguments about why the move was being made at that time and he has had six months since to tell us or to spell out details of a plan and we still don't have any details.

Mr. Speaker, not only did this Government and the Minister mislead this House last year when he brought in those amendments, but he misled the livestock men of the province at the same time. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that no good reasoning was obvious at the time he created this and they have gone on since that time to create today an unnecessary atmosphere of fear and mistrust of this Government among livestock producers in Saskatchewan. Absolutely, just go over to the bull sale and find out what they think of you "fellas". Mr. Speaker, this need not have happened, it shouldn't have happened and it wouldn't have happened had the Minister of Agriculture played fair with the hog producers of this province from the beginning. Oddly enough, Mr. Speaker, I believe that hog producers would have voted in favor of a marketing board anytime in the last years or so, had they been given the chance, had they been given the opportunity and had the case been properly presented by the Government opposite. I think they would have and I think, Mr. Speaker, the same could be said for a commission. I believe had the case been properly put, had the Minister indeed put a case or had a case, he could have sold it to the hog producers of the province. It still isn't too late for the Minister to go about this thing properly. Producers could be polled to determine what kind of plan they prefer, either a board or a government operated commission. When I say 'polled' I don't mean checking with one or two people from each organization as the Minister appears to have done and then go about feeling that he has consulted with all the hog producers in the province. I think that if the Government opposite felt that their efforts in this regard to seek producer opinion were adequate, then surely events that have transpired since that time should indicate that they were absolutely wrong. The Minister of Agriculture and the Government, Mr. Speaker, have mismanaged this entire move from the beginning and I want to suggest that his moves in this regard have set back the development of orderly marketing for years and years in the province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McIsaac: — Now I think it was the Member for Watrous (Mr. Cody) who pointed out some of the objectives of this particular Bill 50 that is before us. Firstly, I believe he said, higher and more stable prices. Secondly, improvement of the export market and thirdly, the lowest possible spread between packer and producer. Now, Mr. Speaker, these are the objectives surely of every marketing scheme and the Liberal Party doesn't or hasn't quarrelled with these objectives for years and years. I point

out, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal Party has been involved in marketing legislation long before the NDP opposite were ever invented. What we do quarrel with, Mr. Speaker is the manner in which this arrogant NDP Government opposite is going about implementing these objectives for a marketing plan. I wonder and we are all led to wonder what were the real objectives of the 1972 amendments. Now, Mr. Speaker, I thought at that time it was for the benefit of the producer to give him another option and I am convinced today that the amendments were not designed for the benefit of the producer but designed instead for the benefit of the NDP, so that they could avoid the democratic process of a vote which is necessary and always has been necessary to establish a producer board.

It is no wonder, Mr. Speaker, why we question the motives behind the 1973 amendments that are before us. What are the Minister's objectives in bringing in these amendments at this particular time? I listened to him give second reading of this Bill and he certainly didn't tell us why he needed these powers to licence farmers. He didn't give us any indication as to why he needs the powers that he is seeking in this particular legislation.

But oddly enough about a week ago today as I was driving down to the Legislature there was an interesting interview on CBC Noon Farm News. The Chairman of the proposed commission was asked about details of the plan by the CBC Farm interviewer. The Chairman replied he couldn't give the details now until this legislation had been passed. He also stated the plan could not go into effect until the Legislature passed this Bill that is before us. Now, Mr. Speaker, does the Minister opposite think that hog producers or cattle producers are in some way retarded that they can't know the facts before proceeding? Surely not. Does he think that these people are not capable of making their own decisions? Surely he doesn't think that or the Attorney General. Does he think that they shouldn't have the right, does the Attorney General think that producers haven't the right to decide on their own marketing plan? Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously he does think that, and he does not want to give them the opportunity to decide themselves.

Mr. Speaker, why doesn't the Minister and his Commission put forward a good proposal with some specific details clearly spelled out so producers know what they are dealing with. Then I think he could go out to producer meetings and he could come back with some helpful answers. There is little point in going to meetings with great generalities and I have had reports from meetings and they certainly don't come back to me as being that successful, Mr. Speaker. He could go out and get some answers and there would be some value to the meetings that he is now holding around the province but at the moment they are useless. He would come back with a plan then that would have some input from the hog producers. Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely incredible to me that this Government opposite can proceed in the manner they are and demonstrate, I suggest, such an absolute lack of understanding of the rural people of this province. If this is a New Deal for People well certainly there will be a new deal for the NDP, Mr. Attorney General, when that next election comes around. The people of Saskatchewan won't buy their high-handed approach and they won't be pushed around by the dictatorial approach of non-farmers like the Attorney General and the Premier and play-boy farmers like the Minister of Agriculture.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McIsaac: — I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Government should withdraw this legislation and then they should bring back a Bill that contains provisions for producers to elect representatives to these marketing commissions.

Mr. Speaker, this proposed marketing commission for hogs or any other product, cattle or anything else, will be supported we presume (we don't know) by a check off or by a levy from producers themselves. The figures are varied, anywhere from 20 cents to \$1 for a hog, in the case of hogs. It will be paid for by the producers, if not in full, I suggest, at least in large measure. Surely they should be able to elect their own representatives to the Commission that will likely be spending hundreds of thousands of their own dollars each and every year. Now, surely, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture and the NDP Government opposite will not object to employing some basic democratic principles in the establishment and operation of a marketing commission.

Mr. Speaker, in the conclusion of my remarks I am going to move an amendment to this Motion. I am going to ask that the Minister withdraw this legislation and replace it. There is no major emergency facing hog producers in Saskatchewan today, at least there wasn't until Bill 50 came along here a few weeks ago. Hog prices have never been higher in the history of the province. There is no evidence, the Minister of Agriculture hasn't put forth any reason, that there will be any severe or any sudden deterioration of the market price in the few months ahead of us. The Minister can then come back with a Bill that will restore his credibility and restore the creditability of the Government opposite in the rural people's minds. A Bill I think that will show his confidence in the ability of producers to determine their own future and to make their own decisions. A Bill that will at that time, I would hope, represent the results of some solid producer input and some producer consultation. A Bill that would provide for a plebiscite or a vote of producers themselves. Now, Mr. Speaker, if he will do that we will support it and help him sell a good marketing plan, if indeed he can come up with one.

Mr. Speaker, before moving that amendment, I want again to reiterate my complete dismay in the Government's high-handed approach in their handling of this very vital question. A very vital question, a very basic question. Last year the Minister, first of all misled the House intentionally or otherwise (I am not sure), when he brought in the provisions to set up the establishment of marketing commissions as opposed to boards. Secondly, last August he announced the establishment of a commission with no details whatsoever. We still haven't got them. Thirdly, he comes into this House this year seeking dictatorial changes in a Bill which he says he must have in order to proceed with the marketing commission. He hasn't given details of the plan even now to the House, he hasn't given them to the hog producer, he hasn't given them to the truckers, and there are all kinds of them wondering what will happen. He hasn't given them to the meat packers, to the exporters or importers. How much will the check off be? Is he going to use existing handling facilities in collecting hogs throughout the province? Are all Saskatchewan hogs going to go through Intercontinental, and many producers now fear and believe this?

If it isn't true why doesn't he say so. How are hog prices going to be arrived at? By open market bidding, the same system we now have, or is it going to be a negotiated price, weekly price, daily price, how is he going to market the hogs? There are so many unanswered questions, Mr. Speaker, that I suggest that the Minister take this Bill back and bring in a Bill that will provide producers the right to vote, that will provide for democratic representation on that commission by elected producer members. Surely, Mr. Speaker, that is not asking too much. Surely, Mr. Speaker, the Minister will consider that.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I will move that all the words after 'that' in the Motion before us be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

That this House not now proceed with the second reading of this Bill but request the Government to substitute therefor a new Bill which would;

- (a) guarantee producers the right to a vote before the establishment of any marketing commission.
- (b) guarantee elected producers representation on the commission.
- (c) Contain no "reverse onus" provisions.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just to reiterate the arguments. There is absolutely no crisis in the hog industry, the cattle industry or any other farm industry today. And the fact that there is none has been due to the fact that there has been very little or no Government intervention. We don't need the Minister's commission at this point in time. He has got all kinds of time to withdraw this Bill, bring it back in the fall session, he can then put forth what he proposes to do. He will have an opportunity to sell it to the producers and there is no reason in the world why the Government cannot accept this Motion. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I so move seconded by the Member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Coupland).

Mr. J. K. Comer: — (Nipawin) Mr. Speaker, it gives me some pleasure to rise in this House and speak on this Bill. It gives me an opportunity to do something very few of us ever have a chance to do in this House, and that is to let the Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart) tell the truth for once. As some of you may have heard he had a meeting up in my constituency a couple of weeks ago and he told the people there that I had been speaking in favor of this Bill. Well, I haven't been. But I am now, so that I can make the truth retroactive. You know from what I have heard of the meetings that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has been holding around the province, that's about the only time he told the truth.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Comer: — Mr. Speaker, we have heard a number of speakers from the Liberal Party get up in this House. We have read reports of their speeches across the province attacking this Bill. Attacking the concept of a Hog Marketing Commission. And today by a very clever sort of twisting of words the Hon. Member from Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac) attempted to portray to this House

and to the people of Saskatchewan that the Liberals actually favor orderly marketing.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Comer: — Out of these speeches we have been hearing, some statements such as “How would you feel if tomorrow you woke up to find that by law you would be told what to produce, how much you were to produce, where to ship it and what form of payment you would receive for your labors?”

This is the sort of statement they are making. This statement came from an old advertisement that was placed in the Nipawin Herald on May 24, 1944. It is the same sort of statement that the Liberals made in 1945 when the original Natural Products Marketing Act was introduced in this House. It is the same sort of statement that the Liberals made in 1948, in the ‘Tucker or Tyranny’ days. Today it has been suggested that the Liberal slogan will be ‘Steuart or Slavery’. We have had slavery in this province for seven years.

The CCF response to this sort of scare tactic in 1944 was fairly simple. They replied in the papers, “Mr. Patterson, you know it isn’t true”.

A few days ago as I mentioned, the Leader of the Opposition was in my constituency singing the same tune. The next morning I was talking to a local farmer who was at the meeting. He told me Dave Steuart stood up at the front of the hall waving a piece of paper. Waving a piece of paper which he said was the Act setting up the Hog Marketing Commission. An Act which was going to tell farmers how much to grow, where they could sell it and when they could sell it.

The farmer told me that in 1948 he was at a meeting in Nipawin, in the ‘Tucker or Tyranny’ days. It was a Liberal meeting and there was a speaker up at the front of the hall waving a piece of paper telling the people, lying to the people at that time, that the CCF, if re-elected, were going to tell the farmers what to grow, where to sell it, when to sell it. In 1944 it wasn’t true, in 1945 it wasn’t true, in 1948 it wasn’t true and today, Mr. Steuart, you know it isn’t true.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Comer: — The other day the Leader of the Opposition stood up in this House and he criticized the fact that my colleague from Hanley spoke on Bill 50. He criticized him because he was a teacher, he wasn’t a farmer. Let’s just look for a minute at some of the people who have stood up in this House and stood up around this province speaking about this Bill for the Liberal Party.

We have got the student loan artist, teacher, the Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy). We have got the Hon. Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald), teacher, small businessman; the Hon. Member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Coupland) he couldn’t make any money plucking turkeys, so they made him a Saskatchewan Government Insurance Agent. We have the Hon. Member for Regina Lakeview (Mr. McPherson) the senator from Imperial Oil. We have had the two vets, the Member for Moose Jaw North (Mr. MacDonald) and today here the Member for Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac)

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I guess he is from Wilkie, he doesn't live there any more. I guess those people know a lot about pigs so they figure they know a lot about pig farming. And, of course, the classic performance by the farmers on the other side, was the performance of the bankrupt toaster salesman, the Hon. Member for Prince Albert (Mr. Steuart). All farmers!

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Comer: — Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of things that the Liberal Party has been saying about this bill. Today the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and every Liberal speaker has said we are going to license farmers. That has been in the Bill since 1945. The Canadian Wheat Board licensed farmers, the licence doesn't cost any money but to know who is producing you have somehow to keep track of it. The best way is to issue a licence or a permit. And then the Leader of the Opposition today talked about the uncertainty in the packing houses. Burns didn't know what was going to happen, we're going to ship all the hogs to Intercon. I don't know what Intercon would do with all the hogs. And at the same time he gets up in this House and he says that Canada Packers is going to be building a packing plant in Moose Jaw. Canada Packers knows about this Bill. Canada Packers I am sure went through the Bill that came in here last year. They know what it was about even if the Liberals didn't. And they're talking now about coming into this province.

The Leader of the Opposition showed clearly that the packing houses in this province do have confidence in the Bill.

What will the Hog Marketing Commission do? I would suggest that the Liberal Members of this House look at this pamphlet put out by the Department of Agriculture on The Hog Marketing Commission. Some of the reasons why The Hog Marketing Commission is being brought into force in this province. "To obtain profitable and stable prices for Saskatchewan produced hogs . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Comer: — . . . Hog prices are presently at satisfactory levels and it is desired to establish stable market outlets while favorable market conditions prevail". The Liberals say, wait until the hogs go down to 18 and 16 cents. That's what the Hon. Member for Wilkie said. I think we should stabilize the hog market as much as possible. Not let the hog prices go down to 18 cents and up to 60 cents and back down.

Another point under the 'why' part of this pamphlet — "To co-operate with neighboring provinces in the development of export markets". Every Member of this House knows that the Alberta Hog Marketing Board and the Manitoba Hog Marketing Board have been getting the jump on Saskatchewan by getting into the international market, selling hogs for which we have no vehicle to sell to Japan.

And today the Hon. Member for Wilkie rose in his seat and moved a six month hoist. Stalling. Stalling the Bill which will stabilize hog prices. Open up export markets. Can we afford to wait those six months? I submit we cannot.

Mr. Speaker, I will oppose the amendment, I will support

the main motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Amendment negated on the following Recorded Division:

YEAS — 14

Messieurs

Steuart	MacDonald (Milestone)	McPherson
Coupland	McIsaac	Lane
Loken	Gardner	MacDonald (Moose Jaw North)
Guy	Weatherald	Grant
MacLeod	Wiebe	

NAYS — 39

Messieurs

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

Debate continues on the motion.

Mr. H. E. Coupland: — (Meadow Lake) Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to say too much on this. I thought the Members across there would go for that amendment and I wouldn't have to bother speaking.

But I couldn't let his go by — I was listening to the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Comer). I don't know whether he even knows what a hog looks like, or a turkey, or a chicken or anything else. How a person like that can get up and talk about the Marketing legislation is just got to be something out of this world.

In fact I don't know just how many of them over there have ever raised a hog. They talk about representing the farmers in Saskatchewan. There is nobody in this House who has carried as many five-gallon pails of chop and water to hogs as I have. I can tell you right now that all the time that I was raising hogs and poultry and turkeys, there was no way that I wanted a Board. In fact when they brought in the Egg Marketing Board I was raising 1,000 laying hens, producing eggs for my own hatchery. And when they got the Board I don't think the Board did anything for the egg business in Saskatchewan so I got out of it.

It doesn't help the producer. And then we come in with a piece of vicious legislation like this that is going to take in

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some more of them. There is no way that it can do any good for the producer. And they even penalize the producer with the reverse onus.

I just can't see why the Members opposite wouldn't go for that amendment that was brought in by the Member for Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac). Bring in another Bill and let the producers have a say in what they want to do. For goodness sake, it is a funny thing you know that when you bring in these Boards they have to be compulsory ones. There is no way they can operate without compulsion. This, to me, is a sign that a Board is not the proper method of marketing. I don't mind saying this.

An Hon. Member: — Even the Wheat Board?

Mr. Coupland: — Yes, even the Wheat Board. Why can't we let other fellows sell.

An Hon. Member: — Are you saying you are against it?

Mr. Coupland: — All that I am saying is that why, if these things are so good, do they have to be a monopoly?

So we move on a little further and we go into hogs in this Bill and we are going to go into cattle and it is time that people woke up and realized that the Government opposite is trying to take supreme control of all their livelihood, over everybody who produces anything or raises anything.

Mr. Speaker, because I was sure that the Members opposite would go along with the amendment, I have more to say and so I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:32 o'clock p.m.