

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session - Seventeenth Legislature
57th Day

Wednesday, April 24, 1974.

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

QUESTIONS

FLOOD CONDITIONS IN FISHING LAKES

MR. K.R. MacLEOD (Regina Albert Park): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to a Minister, if I can find one in the House. I wonder if I could direct this to the Acting Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Messer). It relates to the flood situation and I specifically have in mind the fact that the flooding is now going to pass into the Fishing Lakes, the Qu'Appelle system, and with the consequent danger to cottage owners.

My question is this: I assume that sandbags have been provided without cost to people in the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, and I presume also to the people in the town of Lumsden. Are sandbags available to people, to the cottage owners, along the Fishing Lakes to protect their property?

HON. J.R. MESSER (Acting Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, in response to the Member for Albert Park, I don't think that I can completely answer that question. Certainly everything is being done to make sandbags available to all persons and all communities who are in need of them. As to whether or not sandbags will be made available without any cost to those cottage owners along the Fishing Lakes, is something that I am not able to answer.

I had a conversation with the Minister of Environment (Mr. Byers) who is responsible for co-ordinating the flood activities and he informed me in that conversation that they were doing everything possible to inform cottage owners along not only the Fishing Lakes, but other lakes where there might be flood waters diverted in order to offset more severe damages in other areas. I would assume that along with informing them of the problem, they would also be attempting to provide whatever corrective measures can be taken to offset the damage to themselves as cottage owners along those lake fronts.

MR. MacLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might enquire. I assume if these are available that directions will be given on where they may be picked up. I wonder if the Minister can tell us today whether this is possible in the next 24 hours and if so where they might be picked up, that is if he has the answer.

MR. MESSER: — Certainly if there has not been direction made in this point in time to those people as to where they may be picked up and if they are required we will certainly see that direction is given so that these people will know.

I know that we have attempted, through the Press, to convey all the information possible in regard to the problems that some cottage owners might be confronted with in rising water levels in the lakes, in fact, I believe in the Monday paper there was an extensive article in regard to what they thought the water levels might be. There was some serious question whether that really told cottage owners anything because they don't have anything to relate to, so we are attempting now to relate to what the water table was in 1971 and say that it is going to be two feet or 2.5 feet higher than the highest level in 1971. Then I think they will know as to what their situation will be because they recall what the water table was then. So we are trying to get to them a picture of just how serious the problem may be to them as individual owners of cottages or whatever, and certainly if they are not now informed as to where they may find assistance, we will certainly see that that is extensively broadcast.

TAX ON SAND BAGS

MR. G.B. GRANT (Regina Whitmore Park): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could make a comment on this subject. I don't know whether I am allowed to or not, but if I am not I shall ask a question of the Minister of Finance.

For the direction of the House, the sandbags are available at the cost of 22 cents apiece. And in the case of Echo Lake they are available at the municipal garage at 22 cents apiece.

But the question that I should like to direct to the Minister of Finance is: Is there education tax being charged on these bags? I am told that there is and I denied it. I said that I just can't believe it. The rumor is around and I think it would be just as well to squelch it if it is not correct because I would hope that they were not adding one cent to this.

HON. W.A. ROBBINS (Minister of Finance): — I don't know that we are, I will have to check and find out for you.

QUESTION PERIOD

MR. A.R. GUY (Athabasca): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the acting Premier, whichever one of the very limited number of Ministers that are in the House this morning, has assumed that position. The question period has always been very important in the working of this Legislature. It has always been started, as you know, before the Orders of the Day. This morning as the Orders of the Day started, there were eight Ministers out of 18.

Well, the question is to the Acting Premier, whichever one of the bright lights over there might happen to fit into that category: Is this a deliberate attempt to destroy the Question Period by making sure that the Ministers are not in their seats at the opening of the Session in the morning? It is the Government who wanted to have morning sittings and surely they should have the courtesy to be in their seats so that the Question Period could follow an orderly fashion.

MR. MESSER: — On a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker, if the Member wants to make a fool of himself he can do that outside of the House. If he wants to ask a question, then ask a question.

MR. GUY: — A supplementary question.

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The Minister of Agriculture may think that the question period is a very foolish part of this Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I don't think that this is called for at all.

HON. K. THORSON (Minister of Industry and Commerce) — Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that I think it is really a privilege of the House. I am sure that the Member for Athabasca didn't want to misinform the House, but my memory goes back further than his, sitting in this Legislature, and there was a time when there was no question period at all in this House. He shouldn't suggest that there has always been a Question Period because there was not.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! This is another debating point and I don't think we want to get into that debate.

SECOND READINGS

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General) moved second reading of Bill No. 104 — **An Act to amend The Industrial Development Act.**

HON. K. THORSON (Minister of Industry and Commerce) — Mr. Speaker, the amendment to The Industrial Development Act which is proposed by the Bill before us is simply to change the total amount which SEDCO can lend from the present \$150 million maximum to \$300 million maximum.

It was not anticipated that we would be making this amendment possibly until the next session of the Legislature, until the fairly recent developments with respect to iron and steel and particularly the agreement with the Federal Government and the Provincial Government.

In anticipation of a fairly substantial demand upon the resources of SEDCO, we now propose this amendment, not only to deal with what we anticipate will be a demand arising out of the expansion of the iron and steel industry in Saskatchewan, but also because the rate at which SEDCO is making loans has doubled in 1973 as compared to 1972. That is, the number of loans has doubled and the value of loans has doubled, as will be known to those Members who have looked at the last annual report of SEDCO.

With that explanation, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I think in general the Members of the Opposition agree with the Bill to increase the lending power of SEDCO. We have some specific questions which we think would be better directed in Committee of the Whole, and therefore, Mr. Speaker, we shall leave them until that time.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Education) moved second reading of Bill No. 105 — **An Act to amend The Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1970.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, this Bill incorporates changes in the teachers' superannuation structure as a negotiated item in the Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act, 1974 and for 1975. It also enlarges the scope of teacher's superannuation to include teachers who are employed in Community College programs.

I believe these amendments give Saskatchewan the unquestionable leadership in teacher pension plans in Canada. They reflect the success of provincial bargaining in reaching agreements in the best interest of teachers and the public they serve.

I believe that three of the changes are especially important. One of them Mr. Speaker, is the provision for the retirement on full pension at the age of 55. Any teacher who has contributed to the pension fund for 30 years will be able to retire with no reduction when he is 55. This is an improvement over the change made last year whereby teachers with 35 years of contributions could retire at 55.

Let me for just a second review the Liberal record in this area. In 1969 they introduced a pupil/teacher ratio and mandatory budget reviews. They refused to pay grants unconditionally as we do today. Instead they forced school boards to cut teachers, they created a large surplus of teachers in this province. You might expect that if the Liberals made it harder to get into teaching that would at least make it easier to get out, so new graduates could find jobs. But they didn't do one single thing to ease the retirement rules. In fact, Mr. Speaker, they made it more difficult and more costly to retire.

In 1970 the Liberal Government raised the pension reduction factors to make it very expensive for a teacher to retire. They raised the reduction factors for early retirement so steeply that a teacher retiring at age 55 would lose a full 20 per cent of his pension. For every year of early retirement, the Liberals took away 4.3 per cent of the teacher's pension.

Now this increase didn't save the province any appreciable amount of money. It was not necessary to keep the pension plan solvent. When we took office in 1971 we abolished the Liberal deductions and restored it to former rates. Today, Mr. Speaker, under the negotiative agreement, and this Bill, we are abolishing the reduction factors altogether for teachers with 30 years contributions.

Not only is the reduction factor being abolished, Mr. Speaker, but this Bill will also make good on the provisions of those who were victimized by the Liberals. As of January 1, 1974, all teachers who retired under these reductions had their full pension restored to them.

I want to point out to the House that the 30 years required for the full pension are contributory years, not necessarily teaching years. War veterans are allowed to count their service in the Armed Forces the same as teaching service, provided they pay up their contributions for those years. There is no deadline on paying up war service contributions.

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The second and third major changes are included to help superannuated teachers whose pensions are affected by inflation. This Bill includes provision for major increases to existing pensions, ranging from 40 per cent more for pensions awarded before 1954 to two per cent for those taken eight or ten months ago. And it is really unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that the former Member from the constituency of Lakeview is not in the House to hear the vast improvements in this Bill for existing pensions because he was a tireless fighter on behalf of retired teachers.

For example, a teacher who retired on June 30, 1964 — 10 years ago — will get a 20 per cent boost in his allowance. A teacher who retired on June 30, 1970 will get an eight per cent boost. These increases are based on the standard single life plan and similar increases are provided for the survivors' benefits.

Beyond the percentage increases, this Bill provides that the minimum monthly pension payable to a superannuated teacher will be no less than \$8 for each year of service up to 35 years. This means that if a teacher retires after a full career he is guaranteed no less than \$280 per month. For many teachers who retired many years ago on small pensions, this floor will mean a substantial increase in recognition of service during years of low salaries.

These amendments represent the third teacher pension increase under the NDP Government, each year that we have been in office. Mr. Speaker, until this year the only protection that a retired teacher had from inflation, was the benevolence of the government. All he could hope for was that the government would grant an arbitrary boost in allowances.

Under the NDP three boosts have been given, as I said, in each of the three years. The Liberals made only three increases in their seven years. That is not really a very reliable record and certainly one that a pensioner could count on.

As of July 1, 1974 a permanent cost of living escalator is built into the teacher's pension plan. From now on, effective January 1st of each year, pensions will be increased by the escalation and national pension index. No retired teacher need to fear a hardship from inflation.

This Bill has guaranteed a fair and reasonable protection from rising living costs.

Retiring teachers may choose one of two plans for their pensions. They may choose a single life plan and draw a full pension until they die or they may choose to take a slightly reduced allowance but with a guarantee that their survivors will be eligible to continue to draw support after the death of the pensioner.

Until this year, the survivor's pension was only 50 per cent of the total paid to the original pension. With these amendments that level is raised to 60 per cent and will be paid to the surviving spouse, not merely to the dependent widow or widower.

Mr. Speaker, each of the provisions in this Bill are the result of successful negotiations on The Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act. These changes put Saskatchewan, as I said at

the forefront of teacher pension plans in this country. They prove that provincial collective bargaining can work for teachers and it can work for the people of the province, too.

None of these provisions will cost us all that much money. None are excessively expensive, yet, each item represents something important to every individual teacher in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, if these changes lead to a better relationship between teachers and employers; if they lead to higher morale — and I know they do — then we have brought a good deal of good for education at a very low price. This is not a change for its own sake, this, Mr. Speaker, is progress and I am pleased to commend it to the Legislature and to the public.

One final word in closing, Mr. Speaker. The Liberal Opposition has attacked our record for pensioners and senior citizens. They say it is no good. I challenge them to take this Bill and to attack it before our superannuated teachers. I challenge them to tell the teachers that provincial collective bargaining is no good. They say our record is poor so I challenge them to vote against this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 105.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. C. MacDONALD (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, just a few comments. First of all I want to mention a word to what the Minister always likes to get up and bring up the pupil-teacher ratio. I should like to read a preliminary budget as sent out by the Department of Education officials to one of the school units in the Province of Saskatchewan. Let me read what it says:

In view of the fact that enrolment continues to decrease it is considered advisable to re-examine the present staffing plans. It is suggested that staff requirements might be reduced by four. If kindergartens are to be continued it is possible that two staff members would be required.

Yes, possible! But the point is that the Member for Saskatoon knows that they pay on a per student grant and as the student population decreases they don't give them any money. You can hire 150 teachers and all you have to do is increase the mill rate but the Department of Education reduces the expenditure and they are doing more to force up their rates and cut teachers than any pupil-teacher ratio ever did in the past.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I should like to get back and talk about the Bill itself. First of all as the Minister has indicated the amount of money involved here is not that significant but there are some very basic and fundamental changes in this Bill that are certainly going to meet the general approval and commendation of most members of the teaching profession and certainly the superannuates in the Province of Saskatchewan. I think it is a general recognition of all governments right across Canada from the Federal Government to the provincial levels of the fact that galloping inflation is eroding the dollar, particularly of those who are already on pension benefits. And, of course, I think it also is an indication that it will receive not only support from Members on this side of the House or both sides of the House but receive general support of the people of Saskatchewan.

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I should like to comment on a few of the changes. First of all, the expansion to include community colleges is more of a housekeeping nature because certainly community colleges or members of the teaching profession being involved in the community colleges either had to join with the existing plan or set up one of their own. I think this makes sense as it prevents a duplication of services.

I also support the retirement age to 55. I think that this is a progressive step and I think that in Canada governments right across the nation are going to have to take the leadership in making it possible for earlier retirement. I think the expanding number of people going into the labor force, automation and technology, is making it increasingly difficult to provide job opportunities for the young, and most Members of this House are aware that whenever we find the unemployment statistics in Canada it is the young people in most cases who are experiencing the greatest difficulty in finding employment. Therefore, by reducing the retirement age after the service and contributions have been made, it certainly makes sense.

Removing the deadline for war veterans paying up past pension benefits, I think is a small item. It probably only involves a few teachers in the Province of Saskatchewan but for those it does involve, I think that they will welcome it. The increases to superannuates, as I said, is certainly a recognition of inflation. It is certainly a recognition of the need of all governments and every company and corporation in Canada to re-examine their entire pension scheme and the pension benefits paid not only to those about to retire but those in the past and surely there is some obligation. The whole concept of averaging pensions over the period of service is now becoming one that should be generally looked at because certainly, inflation is now eroding that very concept.

The survivors' benefits, by expanding them from 50 to 60 per cent, I think will be welcome. I don't think that is sufficient. I think it should be 75 per cent but at least it is a step in the right direction. And also, the cost of living escalator is one that is now becoming recognized because of inflation. In fact it is an urgent requirement of any pension program today in 1974 and until we can bring inflation under control, until at least we can recognize that somebody who has contributed 30 or 40 years to teaching and to the young people of Saskatchewan retired 10 or 12 years ago on what they felt was a comfortable pension, now find themselves in extremely difficult positions and an escalation clause should be considered.

I should like to make one suggestion to the Minister and I think he has had this made but I don't know if he has considered it. Many of the superannuate teachers in the Province of Saskatchewan as the Minister is aware, have formed their own organization and they would like a voice in the negotiation of their own individual pension benefits. As the Minister has indicated superannuated teachers are now being adjusted periodically. The Minister mentioned that we only did it three times in seven years and they have done it three times in three years. Well there is no question about it, because of inflation it is a requirement. But the superannuates would like a voice in the negotiations in the collective bargaining process. I am not suggesting that the superannuates necessarily become a part of the provincial team when it comes

to generally looking after teachers' salaries and fringe benefits for the existing teachers, but I do think that in those areas of negotiations and collective bargaining which do affect the superannuates in the province, that they would welcome an opportunity to sit down as a member of probably the policy-making team or the planning organization and become a part of the collective bargaining process in those areas which affect them. I know that the Minister has had representation from the superannuates and I am sure that he is considering it. I think it is a good idea because I think any time a change in benefits are made to people, that those people who are affected should certainly be involved in the discussions, in the negotiations and in the planning of such changes. I would suggest that on the collective bargaining team the superannuates be involved, be made part of the collective bargaining team on those areas that affect or are specifically related to their particular needs and problems.

The only other comment I can make, Mr. Speaker, is that I welcome the changes in this Bill. I think it is great to see them being brought up to date and I hope that this will be continued with all members of the Civil Service.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. K.R. MacLEOD (Regina Albert Park): — Mr. Speaker, Members of the House may well recall that I spoke on several occasions in connection with teacher superannuation. As a matter of fact I taught for three years so to answer the Hon. Member's question, I did teach in a rural school for three years and I am not convinced that that teaching experience many years ago is in itself adequate to deal with this problem sufficiently. But to revert, before I was interrupted, I wanted to mention to the House that I have, of course, spoken on previous occasions about teacher superannuation and if Members do recall a question was placed on the Order Paper, I believe it was a year ago, asking for information concerning the contribution of the province to the Teachers' Superannuation Fund.

Approximately 45 years ago the province took over the responsibilities of the school boards to provide for the superannuation obligation of the school boards. The teachers have continued throughout to make their contribution to the superannuation fund. The answer to the question, however, as to the contribution of the province was rather enlightening. Since that day about 1930 when the province commenced taking over the obligations of the school boards, the teachers have made contributions to the superannuation fund, many millions of dollars in excess of the contribution of the province. I do not have the Return in front of me but my recollection was that in the last year reported, something in excess of \$5 million was contributed by teachers and I believe \$2 million or perhaps less was contributed by the province. The point I wish to make is that quite frankly the teachers have almost entirely to date been carrying their own superannuation fund and it is, therefore, not surprising in fact that the superannuation has not been adequate for teachers. Now I must say that I do not agree with some of the asides that I hear that teachers ought to be carrying it themselves. Quite frankly in business employers generally in Canada today make a matching contribution with the employees. And quite frankly I do not think that teachers have received fair treatment from governments and since 1930 the only governments

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of Saskatchewan have been the Liberals and the CCF-NDP governments and I would presume that that grand tradition will be continued and that for the next 30 years we are unlikely to see any government other than these two traditional combatants form the Government of Saskatchewan. That little aside seemed only to be necessary having regard to the mumbling that goes on around here.

It does seem to me that the Liberals and the CCF-NDP quite frankly have not got a good record to stand on. I think that the Members of the New Democratic Party and the Members of the Liberal Party would be well advised to rush this one through the House and do as well as we can with a minimum of chopping at each other because, quite frankly, the record of both the Liberals and the NDP is not exactly something to be proud of. As an example you may recall that in 1972 the pension of Mr. Campbell who taught in excess of 40 years in this province, a principal of a high school, a man so well regarded in the community that Campbell Collegiate was named after him, was receiving a pension of approximately \$134 per month. After that length of time in 1972 it was brought to us in the House, and some of the Members who saw that cheque of Mr. Campbell's will recall it. What I am saying is that that example is rather a sorry record and I, therefore, am pleased that the Hon. Minister of Education has seen fit to bring in this Bill. It certainly is going to receive my support, there is no question about it. I also acknowledge with appreciation his kind words about the late Member for Lakeview who in fact did work very hard for an increase in pensions for teachers.

With that I indicate my support totally of the improvements in this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. H.H. ROLFES (Saskatoon Nutana South): — Mr. Speaker, just a few words on Bill 105. Let me say first of all that I welcome the moves taken by the present Minister in regard to superannuated teachers in this province. I have had the opportunity to meet with the provincial executive on several occasions. I have met with them not as a unit but individually since the negotiations have been completed, and they are virtually satisfied in having received almost everything that they had requested in their platform.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Member for Albert Park that the records of both Governments haven't been that good but I think all of us do remember the vicious attack that was levelled against superannuated teachers just a few years ago. I am certainly pleased or was pleased last year when the Hon. Gordon MacMurchy removed the actuarial reductions and this year is giving full pension to teachers with 30 years of service. I am also inclined to agree with the Member for Milestone that the 60 per cent for survivor benefits is possibly not high enough. I should like to see it higher than this but from now on superannuation is a matter of negotiations and I am certain that the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation will see to it that the survivor benefits will receive high priority in future negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, the package that we have before us today on superannuation is sufficient reason, at least for me, to support provincial bargaining at the provincial level. For the first

time the superannuated teachers can go to the STF and ask them to negotiate a provincial package which would benefit all the superannuated teachers of this province. Mr. Speaker, I think we as elected Members certainly have to bow our heads in shame when we notice that many of our teachers who have given 40 or 45 years of service were not able to survive on the pensions that they received both under the CCF Government and under the Liberal Government just a few years ago. I am also very pleased to see that now we are able to get pensions with 30 years service and at age 55 because I do believe that we must encourage people to retire earlier so that we can make room for the more vigorous and dynamic young people who want to get into the teaching profession.

Mr. Speaker, salaries of teachers, although they don't compare with other professions like the doctors and lawyers, dentists and chiropractors and physiotherapists are now reasonable. I think that young people who want to serve their society and serve their community are clamoring to get into the teaching profession. I again welcome these moves in superannuation to improve the lot of our superannuated teachers and to encourage our teachers to early retirement in the future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. W.A. ROBBINS (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a few brief comments with respect to this particular Bill. I am sorry the Member for Albert Park (Mr. MacLeod) has left the Chamber. I sometimes wonder if he works on the basis that he makes a speech for each of his 4,000 constituents each session.

The one thing I think our Members have not accepted and people have not accepted generally is that we are not going to solve the pension problem until we get lock-in and vesting or ownership of pension contributions and earnings so that an individual gets a pension for his period of employment with each of his individual employers at the time he becomes pensionable. I think it is essential that we think very seriously about that factor — unless that factor is included in the pensions set up we are going to have people ten years from now or 20 years from now or 30 years from now with inadequate pensions. It is just a fact of life that when you have people moving out of positions and taking their contributions they are defeating themselves in terms of their final pensions. The money is set side for pensions and should be utilized for that purpose. If for example, an individual is paid \$6,000 a year and his employer puts up \$300 a year for him for pension, it should be considered that his salary is \$6,300; \$300 of which is a deferred wage which along with accrued earnings will be used to look after him when he is no longer able to work. The earning capacity of that sum of money based on a long period of time is a major factor in the final analysis in terms of the pension received.

It is obvious that the teachers have made considerable progress through the bargaining process in relation to their pension set-ups. That widows for instance have a 60 per cent level of pension is a measurable step forward in relation to their pensions.

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The Member for Albert Park made a remark about the Government not putting up as much money as the teachers do and that is true. I think pensions should be on a matched basis and retained for that purpose but I note that he was out a million or so in his calculations. He said something like \$2 million contributed by the Government last year, it was \$3,020,000. It was a good deal less than the amount contributed by the teachers.

The Bill itself makes considerable progress in terms of pension arrangements and I certainly am pleased to support it, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. J.C. McISAAC (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, just a comment or two on the legislation and on the Bill itself, on the principle of bringing this legislation before us this year and in future years.

I want to suggest to the Minister and the House that the legislation should be reviewed and the Act, as we know, reduced quite considerably. It seems to me if the Government has gone with negotiating pensions along with salaries and other benefits to teachers that it is rather ridiculous for us in the Legislature to then come along a few months later and sort of rubber stamp approvals and agreements that were reached at the bargaining table. That is the place where those agreements should be hammered out and I agree with that, but by the same token I don't think we need amending legislation each and every time that takes place.

If the legislation on teachers' pensions was reduced to a very few essential principles that have been there for years and worked up on from starting back, there is a long history to the development of teachers pensions, the several types there were and so on, that gives us the present Act. But if there was a law stating essentially that the Government shall contribute their half and perhaps incorporate the suggestion just made by the Minister of Finance, that that half be put into the fund each and every year and go on from there and invest it, rather than the present method of put in what is required, when it is required, but be responsible for putting that in for the guarantee, then I think that all of the details of the pension plan, the age limit, the years of service, this kind of thing that go to make up the plan, which are now the subject of negotiations, leaves them as the subject of negotiations. Surely an agreement with the Government with respect to salaries, with respect to any of these things, and pensions is one — surely no one in the Teachers' Federation or any other group for that matter, is going to quarrel or suggest that provincial agreement isn't just as good and just as valid as legislation on the Statute Books.

I just make that suggestion to the Minister because it seems to me ridiculous for the Government which has decided to negotiate these things, that fact I have no quarrel with, but to then in turn bring these details to the Legislature, each and every year following each agreement for approval, is making, I suggest, not a mockery perhaps but it is certainly using the Legislature as a rubber stamp, in this case for something that has been negotiated. I suggest that to the Minister for consideration for another year and I commend it to Members opposite to examine that point and see if in another year this legislation couldn't be reduced to its bare essentials and leave the

negotiating items completely out of legislation, leave them to be incorporated in an agreement and left there along with all other aspects of that agreement.

I see no reason why the STF and teachers at large would not accept that and to me it would be a much better route to go.

Mr. Speaker, there are a few other smaller points in some of the amendments put forward by the Minister. Generally speaking there is no quarrel with the Bill. I think some of the other points with respect to details of the Bill can better be handled in Committee. I, again, want to add my words of support to the general principles contained in the Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, just two very brief comments with respect to suggestions made by the Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) and the Member for Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac).

Before commenting on those two points, I am pleased to see that there is unanimous support for the amended changes, and of the agreement that was reached between the two bargaining teams with respect to superannuated teachers.

With respect to the suggestion made by the Member for Wilkie it is an excellent suggestion. It is one that we discussed when we were in debate on The Teacher Collective Bargaining Act one year ago. We just simply did not have time at that time to enter into a thorough review of The Superannuation Act prior to this round of negotiations and this settlement.

The fact that it is a two-year agreement for 1974 and 1975 will provide the commission the opportunity to review the legislation and I very much agree that the items that are on the table should become part of a collective agreement and it should not become necessary to bring forward amendments to the legislation each time there is a collective agreement. So we have asked the commission to begin the review of the Act so that we can amend it to provide for The Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act.

With respect to the comment from the Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) that superannuates be involved at some point in negotiations for increases for retired teachers, I think is an excellent point. One of the developments we see out of our experiences of The Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act for both 1973 and this round of 1974-75, is to examine approaches to arriving at the agreement. Some of our thinking is along the following lines, that yes, we have two bargaining teams negotiating the full agreement, but it would not be unwise to break off into subcommittees, a subcommittee of the bargaining team to look at, for instance, superannuation. A subcommittee to look at group life; a subcommittee to look at administration allowances. And if a decision is made, agreement is reached to go into other areas, other fringe benefits, to the agreement such subcommittees be established to do that. And then those subcommittees then report to the main negotiating team.

Now that is one idea we see the collective bargaining developing in this important area of teacher negotiations. If that is a scheme that is followed then we could well see the

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subcommittee dealing with superannuation, having a representative from the Superannuated Teachers' Association in that level at least, having some input.

Now, granted that the Committee's recommendation to the main bargaining team would still be subject to some saw-offs, some trade-offs, when it got there, but at least they would have some inputs. I think that the legislation under The Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act has the flexibility to provide that kind of approach. It is one that should be considered and I agree some inputs from that group would be advisable. Having talked to them, they are very pleased with the improvements provided in this collective agreement and this legislation, but that doesn't mean that at some place they shouldn't have a voice.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that all Members are in support of these amended changes to this Bill.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

HON. W.A. ROBBINS (Minister of Finance) moved second reading of Bill No. 110 — **An Act to amend The Fuel Petroleum Products Act.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, these amendments will give effect to major steps which the Government has announced to relieve additional financial burdens being felt by our taxpayers as a result of inflationary pressures. They are related, of course, to The Fuel Petroleum Products Act and the reductions in the tax on gasoline and diesel fuel.

First the tax on gasoline is being reduced from 19 to 12 cents per gallon, a reduction of 7 cents. And the tax on diesel fuel from 21 cents to 16 cents, a reduction of 5 cents per gallon.

As the Premier indicated earlier these decreases will offset or nearly offset, the anticipated increases in the price of these commodities. This amounts to a tax reduction of approximately \$21 million for the motoring public of Saskatchewan and reflects our Government's determination to help prevent the erosion of the consumers' purchasing power.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that the Government has also announced its intention to introduce a farm cost reduction program, under which farmers will be compensated up to a level of 7 cents per gallon, for the increased costs of purple gasoline and diesel fuel used in farm production. This program will cost an estimated \$14 million and will reduce farm operating costs by approximately 3 per cent.

The Members opposite have complained about the lack of tax reductions, Mr. Speaker. These two measures will place approximately \$35 million additional dollars in the hands of Saskatchewan taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, the second amendment provides for an amount equal to three cents per gallon of tax to be transferred for use in making expenditures pursuant to The Automobile Accident Insurance Act.

Mr. Speaker, it is an indisputable fact that there is a direct relationship between the number of miles travelled and

the incidence of accidents. Therefore, it is appropriate that the premium paid for automobile accident insurance should bear some relationship to the number of miles which any particular vehicle may be driven in the course of a year.

The simplest and most effective method of achieving this result is through a designation of a portion of motor fuel tax as premium moneys.

Mr. Speaker, not only is this method of financing insurance costs a fair one, it will serve an extremely important purpose. It will make it possible to avoid increases in accident insurance premiums and this will save purchasers of automobile insurance almost \$9 million additional dollars in the 1974-75 fiscal year. By preventing the reduction in purchasing power which higher premiums would involve, it is a significant further step in this Government's effort to assist our citizens in coping with the inflationary spiral.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out that although three cents on each gallon of gasoline and diesel fuel purchased will be transferred this does not mean that every vehicle which consumes gasoline purchased in Saskatchewan will be covered under The Automobile Accident Insurance Act. It is spelled out in the amendment that only owners of motor vehicles registered in Saskatchewan under The Vehicles Act may claim insurance coverage.

Mr. Speaker, let me summarize the very significant ways in which these measures, worth some \$44 million in total, will help to protect the purchasing power of Saskatchewan consumers. The reduction in gasoline and diesel fuel taxes will save motorists an estimated \$21 million; the farm cost reduction program will provide an additional \$14 million to our farmers; the transfer of 3 cents per gallon for the Automobile Accident Insurance Act fund will save purchasers of accident insurance almost \$9 million.

I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that these actions will win the widespread approval of the motoring public of Saskatchewan and I challenge the Opposition to oppose them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. J.C. McISAAC (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to debate either Second Reading or debate the Minister's challenge whichever way he wants to put it. I am happy to challenge his motion in that regard to stand up in this House and have us believe that a Bill on a proposal that will return, I think, about \$44 million out of a windfall of \$200 million, and try to have us believe that that is real generosity and real intelligence on the part of the Government is pure nonsense, Mr. Speaker.

There is nothing wrong with the two moves with respect to the reduction in the gasoline tax and the reduction in the diesel price. I doubt if the diesel reduction will keep diesel costs at the level that they have been insofar as trucking and transportation in this province is concerned. One would have thought that they would have made a greater reduction in the diesel tax than the 5 cents. This Government is hollering to Ottawa to ease and rectify transportation injustices and here was an opportunity in the Province of Saskatchewan for them to show some concern themselves, and reduce the rising costs of

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trucking and all forms of transportation. This was one that was within their power and I doubt if that 5 cents will enable our truckers to keep operating at the same cost they have been.

Mr. Speaker, the farm rebate program, perhaps the Minister has given details at other times and I suppose we can get details in Committee on this Bill, or indeed, in his own Estimates. He did not mention whether or not there are going to be any limits to farmers in this regard. Are they going to apply the Foreign Ownership Bill and will certain people or certain corporations of farming or whatever it be, be excluded, or is it available there for everybody, using fuel, purple fuel, on farm land in Saskatchewan with no strings attached?

I hope that is the case and I trust that is the case and the Minister could clarify that and other points when we get into Committee.

With reference to the move with respect to the transfer of 3 cents to the AAIA fund, Mr. Speaker, I should like to see the Minister produce figures to demonstrate that claim, that the driver who drives the most miles is involved, indeed, in the most accidents. I have yet to see figures to substantiate that. They may exist, I would like to see them at some point in time and I would suggest to the Minister if those figures are available from AAIA that he bring them to Committee because I don't believe that this move, Mr. Speaker, is a good move. I don't believe this move is a good move, to transfer \$9 million to the AAIA fund to, in essence, reduce the cost of automobile insurance premiums. At a time when the Member for Kinistino and other Members on both sides of this House are giving very serious study and consideration to the accident rate, fatality rate on our highways, I just don't think any move like this designed to sort of cover up the actual cost of insurance, is a good move.

This is a fund that has for 20 odd years or more stood on its own feet. Everybody knew and realized and recognized that their insurance rate, their driver licence cost was a direct reflection of their driving record. From here on they are not going to know that, that responsibility in that fund is now gone. We don't know, and I don't know, whether this legislation limits the Government to increasing or changes this amount in a year of election. Perhaps it does, and a memo will have to be brought in.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, once we begin playing with this fund and stepping away from that principle where the insurance rates were always a reflection, maybe they were a year or so in catching up, were always the reflection of the driving record of individuals in this province. I think it is a bad principle coming at a time when we are trying to take steps to bring about an improvement in driving safety, traffic safety, and a reduction in traffic deaths and highway deaths in the province. I think it is a wrong move, wrongly timed. I think there are a dozen other things the Government might have spent money on to improve highway traffic safety to improve our records in that regard which can be discussed through debate at another time.

There are a few more points, Mr. Speaker, that I should like to examine in this particular Bill and I beg leave at this time to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Agriculture) moved second reading of Bill No. 111 — **An Act to amend The Department of Agriculture Act.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, the Government is proposing amendments to The Department of Agriculture Act to increase the statutory limit of both the Agricultural Supplies Advance Account under Section 12 and the Construction and Maintenance Equipment and Supplies Advance Account under Section 18.

I should like to deal first with the Agricultural Supplies Advance Account. This account is designed to allow the Department of Agriculture to procure necessary agricultural supplies which are not adequately available to farmers through commercial channels, to be resold to farmers and to municipalities at cost.

It is essential to have funds available to handle emergency programs necessary for the immediate promotion, production and protection of livestock and field crops in Saskatchewan.

The funds, in the past, have been used for the purchasing of carload lots of seed potatoes to allow farmers to take immediate steps in potato production in the South Saskatchewan River development area. Without this immediate action farmers would have been faced with the difficult task of trying to procure their own supplies.

It has been used to purchase fababean seed to stimulate the development of production of this crop in the South Saskatchewan River development area as well as in other areas of the province.

It has been used for the purchase of dairy cattle in eastern Canada for resale to farmers in order to assist in the movement into the industrial milk production in Saskatchewan.

It has been used for the purchase and resale of fodder to farmers in areas of critical fodder shortages in order to maintain cattle production in those areas.

It has been used for the purchase and the ultimate resale of pesticides for emergency outbreaks of insects. For example, the account was used to purchase emergency supplies of chemicals for the outbreak of Bertha army worms which occurred in 1970. With the fund readily at hand, it was possible to bring in the required supplies within three days. Within two weeks of the first indication of a major outbreak approximately 700,000 acres had been sprayed.

The present limit on purchases under the Agricultural Supplies Advance Account is now \$1.7 million. With the anticipated outbreak of grasshoppers this spring, it is essential that the department be provided with the necessary funds to meet the expected requirements. In order to do so, the limit of the Agricultural Supplies Advance Account must be raised to \$5 million.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the amendment to Section 18 is to increase the amount of the Construction and Maintenance Equipment and Supplies Advance Account by \$2,250,000; from \$1,250,000 to \$3,500,000 to purchase at least \$1,500,000 worth of heavy equipment, such as crawler tractors, draglines, and

earth movers, and support equipment required for the department's program of drainage and flood control, development of land for irrigation, forage development and to provide for the future expansion and interim financing of those programs.

The Operations Division of the Conservation and Land Improvement Branch has undertaken the physical development since its inception in 1949 of forage, pasture and small irrigation projects as well as some work on drainage projects. In 1953, the advance account was set up within the Branch to facilitate cost accounting for project development and to enable the Branch to purchase stocks of supplies and materials for construction work. These are resold to the projects as they are utilized. The advance account owns and operates all the construction equipment. The equipment is rented to the projects on a utilization basis to give more accurate project cost data. It also operates some types of equipment to do work for farmers and/or for local organizations.

In recent years, the main department programs involving the advance account have included the following:

1. Development of community pastures and dryland forage projects by clearing, breaking and seeding tame grasses, by fencing, construction of corrals, bull wintering and watersite facilities.
2. Development and maintenance of irrigation projects, by construction and maintenance of distribution systems on irrigation projects other than the South Saskatchewan River Irrigation Project. This involves the construction of distribution channels and canals, drains and structures often combined with a land levelling program on adjacent lands; by land levelling for gravity irrigation on Crown lands and on privately owned land within the smaller irrigation projects and on individual farms. The specialized equipment used for this program is not usually available from local contractors. It has been used for construction and maintenance of head ditches for gravity irrigation as well.
3. Development and operation of irrigation storage projects: by development of irrigable lands for gravity or sprinkler irrigation on the South Saskatchewan River Irrigated Forage Project and the Miry Creek Project near Cabri. The hay off the South Saskatchewan Project is sold to the Alfa Cubers Mutual and the hay at Miry Creek is allocated and sold to farmers and ranchers in the vicinity of the project.
4. Emergency pumping of water: by filling urban centre reservoirs on a cost basis when the service is required; by filling farm dugouts under the emergency farm dugout pumping program.
5. Maintenance and development of drainage projects, by installation of structures and seeding of draining ditch banks as required to supplement the work contracted.
6. Processing accounts for shared programs. The advance account has been utilized for paying all accounts incurred under programs in which the Conservation and Land Improvement Branch shares the costs with other agencies. It charges these costs to the user agencies such as the Conservation and Development Area Authorities, Department of Municipal Affairs and the

Conservation and Land Improvement Branch on the basis of their involvement in the program.

The present maximum draw on the advance account of \$1,250,000 has been adequate to the present. The expanded community pasture and grazing land improvement program in 1974 will tax the fund to the limit if not beyond. If earth moving equipment for flood control is acquired, additional funds will be needed not only for the acquisition but for operation and interim financing cost of additional equipment and interim financing of the expansion planned for the on-going programs in 1974. These on-going programs, Mr. Speaker, include purchasing of equipment and operating one additional large breaking and seeding crew on forage and pasture development, purchasing and operating of two additional earth moving machines for land levelling and construction or irrigation projects. This work has fallen behind because there are not enough private contractors to meet the present and future work loads. The purchasing of additional farm dugout pumping equipment. The department has had to utilize PFRA and Canada Agriculture Research Station equipment in an attempt to meet peak demands for the service. Their equipment is not always available and is subject to recall for their own needs, making the arrangement a rather insecure one for most farmers and small urban communities. The Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture is now the sole government agency supplying this service since July 1972 when PFRA discontinued their program.

The purchase of additional equipment to enable the department to carry out part of their drainage and flood control program is essential at this time. For the past three years this program has been falling behind schedule partly because of the lack of availability of contractors for the construction of drainage ditches and structures. Expectations are that enough contractors will not be available in 1974 and in future years to meet the requirements of conservation and development areas. Unless government equipment is made available soon, there will be numerous complaints from the conservation and development areas and the farmers affected by the delays and loss of production in the agricultural sector. I might say, Mr. Speaker, that it is not only in the area of construction that this problem arises, but also in the area of maintenance. The increase in the maximum draw of the advance account is required to enable the department to purchase the required earth moving equipment, interim financing of the work and provide sufficient reserve for the immediate future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Members of the House to support this measure which will enable the department to meet its commitments and increase production in the agricultural sector in the Province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. E.F. GARDNER (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, The Minister spent a good deal of time on Section 3 of Bill 111 indicating the need for more maintenance

equipment and the work they were doing and I don't think anyone would object to this. He did move rather quickly over section 2 which increases the advance account for supplies, much more substantially from \$1,750,000 to \$6 million and I believe this is the part that we should be taking a fairly close look at and perhaps there is some cause for concern. No one would object, I believe, to having an account available for purchase of fodder and seed, emergency supplies such as has been done in the past. This is perhaps needed in the Department of Agriculture. I'm not too sure what the need is, that we need an increase from \$1,750,000 to \$6 million just for this purpose and this leads us to wonder if there are some other motives behind this. I would hope that the Department of Agriculture is not going into the business of supplying material to farmers who are presently supplied by some of our local suppliers, particularly in rural areas. I'm sure the Minister would agree that there is a pretty fine line when you get into such products as weed chemicals, livestock feeds and other supplies of this nature. And they are at present being supplied quite adequately, by businessmen throughout the province and I would hope that this large increase in advance money doesn't mean that the Department of Agriculture is expanding into some of these products. I think in Committee that we shall want to ask the Minister about this because even at the moment, as I mentioned there is quite a fine line.

The Family Farm Improvement Branch for example, as you know, for many years has supplied some various plumbing and well products to farmers, from the Department of Agriculture. It has been on a rather small scale and there has been some objection to this from people in the business community but it has been rather controlled and hasn't got out of hand and I don't think the objections up to this date have been very great. But if the Department plans on moving into any large number of other products except those of an emergency nature, I think it would be cause for a good deal of concern among the people who are in that business now. If there is one thing we can't afford to lose, it is some of these business people in the rural areas who are at present supplying the various types of livestock feeds and supplies, weed chemicals and this type of thing. They are needed in the rural areas and I hope the intention is not to go into competition with them.

We will certainly not hold up the Bill on second reading but we perhaps would want to question the Minister on some of these points when we get into Committee.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER: — Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a brief response to the remarks by the Member for Moosomin (Mr. Gardner). I am somewhat disappointed that he has attempted to read something other than what I said were the reasons for the amendments to the Bill. In regard to the Government moving in and perhaps directly competing with private suppliers of agricultural goods, in the Province of Saskatchewan, I want to assure him that that certainly is not the intention of the amendment to section 2 of the Bill. I know that the increase in the advance from \$1,750,000 to \$6 million seems like a tremendous amount of money, but I am sure the Member is well aware that the prices of chemicals especially, have increased significantly in the last two or three years. We are expecting a grasshopper outbreak in the Province of Saskatchewan which may be three or four

times as large as we've had in the last five or ten years. I believe, and perhaps I can answer the question more accurately in Estimates, but I believe we have already committed ourselves to purchase somewhere in the area of \$3 or \$4 million worth of chemicals for grasshopper control, indicating that we would have had to increase the advance account under section 2 by \$2.25 million, simply to meet our present obligation in regard to chemical purchases. It may be that we will have to make further purchases, depending on the seriousness of the outbreak. I think it indicates under the present increasing costs of inputs to the agricultural sector that certainly we have to prepare ourselves to be able to meet the commitments that we have met in the past. The increased prices of those commodities and inflation creates these kinds of significant increases.

Certainly this year again, is a good example in regard to shortage of fodder and the need to have this section expanded so that we shall be able to continue to purchase fodder in various parts of the province, wherever there may be reserves in order to move that fodder to areas of shortages and resell it to farmers.

I simply want to say, Mr. Speaker, in summing up the second reading and rebuttal to the Member for Moosomin, that there is no attempt of any kind on behalf of the Government to move into an area that is going to cause adverse effects on the private industry who are supplying supplies and inputs to farmers at this time; it is solely and principally to provide services to farmers which they are not able to get from the already established institutions that are providing those inputs to them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General) moved second reading of Bill No. 116 — **An Act to amend The Legal Profession Act.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move an amendment to The Legal Profession Act, Bill No. 116.

Mr. Speaker, under the existing provisions of The Legal Professions Act as amended by Chapter 55 of the Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1973, solicitors holding money in trust are required to pay not less than 75 per cent of the least amount of the money so held during a 12-month period into an interest bearing trust account. The interest earned from the trust accounts is subsequently paid over to the Law Foundation which was just recently established for the purposes of legal education, legal research, legal aid, law libraries and law reform. The members of the Law Foundation with the concurrence of the benchers of the Law Society of Saskatchewan have suggested that the provisions of subsection (1)(a), (b) and (c) of Section 44E should be amended so that in the future all trust moneys earning funds for the Foundation will be deposited in interest bearing accounts rather than merely a percentage of such funds as is now required by these subsections.

The complexity of record keeping, the cost of determining compliance with the existing provisions could be eliminated to a very great extent if all moneys were so deposited. This

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amendment will allow simplification in the method of determining the amount required to be kept by solicitors in interest bearing trust accounts and will place the Law Foundation in a more advantageous position with respect to rates of interest and is expected to simplify the necessary records kept by solicitors and the necessary audit procedures.

The proposed amendment to subsection (1) (a) of Section 44E and the repeal of the existing subsection (1) (b) and (c) of this Section will do away with the percentage and minimum deposit presently prescribed in these subsections so that the section will thereafter simply require solicitors to deposit all trust money in interest bearing accounts. The Law Foundation will then be able to standardize procedures by making rules with respect to these accounts under the existing provisions of subsection (3) of Section 44E.

I would point out also that these provisions do not alter the existing right of a client under subsection (4) of Section 44E where any arrangement in writing is made between the solicitor and his client as to the application on the client's money or interest earned thereon, nor do the amendments affect the right of the client with respect to money deposited in a separate account for the client at interest where it is agreed that such money shall be and shall remain the property of the client.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that these amendments are fairly straightforward and routine having been recommended by the Law Foundation and the profession itself. I would, therefore, move second reading of Bill 116.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. K.R. MacLEOD (Regina Albert Park): — Mr. Speaker, I am in sympathy with the intention of the proposed amendments to The Legal Profession Act. I have one or two comments.

First of all I hope that everybody realizes that this is not taking money from the hands of the lawyer but is in fact taking money from clients. It is the clients' money which is being put into trust accounts. It is being used for purposes of the general legal good in Saskatchewan. A good answer to that of course has generally been that in most cases this money has not been at interest for anyone's benefit, including the client. And in cases — and I understand there have been cases where lawyers have put this money at interest and have taken the interest for their own benefit. In those cases, in my judgment it was probably illegal and they were taking a profit and if they did not report it to the client then they were doing something which was unlawful.

Nonetheless there are one or two problems in relation to this whole area.

First of all, as I say, I sympathize with and support the intention of the Bill, and will vote in favor of the Bill.

I wonder what the banks say about this accounting procedure. And particularly I wonder what this going to do so far as the costs of lawyers of doing business is concerned. Up to now

the moneys of lawyers' trust accounts generally have been placed in banks and held by the banks. The banks have had the use of the money without paying any interest at all for that money. They, as a service to the lawyers, did not make any charge for the administration of the fund. Lawyers were able to write trust account cheques for their clients on these accounts steadily without any cost at all. If in future the banks do make charges to the trust account that charge of course will have to be passed on to the client and the client will be in the unenviable position of having to supply the money on which interest is charged and then be forced to pay the bank charges of handling that money while it is in the trust account. Consequently, I would hope that whatever arrangements are made do not involve an additional charge or cost to the lawyer and consequently and additional charge or cost to the client. That is the first concern that I have with respect to the Bill.

The second one is with respect to an amendment which was previously brought to The Legal Profession Act and the one that we are now dealing with. That is the exemption in those cases where there is an arrangement in writing between the client and the lawyer. I believe generally that that is not an adequate arrangement for the protection of the lawyer or the client. Many clients send money to the lawyer and then ring up the lawyer and say, what are you doing with the money, it looks like this deal isn't going to go through for a week or a month, and the lawyer says, I will put it at interest for you, in which case the lawyer obligates himself to set the money aside in an interest bearing account and in fact pays the money over to the client. This happens very frequently in our practice. We have found it a very difficult thing to meet the requirement that the arrangement be in writing. Because so frequently it just is not in writing and I believe that a House amendment taking out the words "in writing" from that Section would be appropriate. The requirement would then simply be met quite adequately, the intention would be met. Up to now it has not been a serious problem because the obligation to pay interest was limited to 75 per cent of the minimum amount in the trust account, therefore we didn't have to concern ourselves with it. In future we will have to concern ourselves with it and I ask the Attorney General to bring in that House amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief in reply. My department has indicated no difficulties to me with respect to the banks on the existing provisions or on the proposed amendments.

The Deputy Attorney General is on the Law Foundation and I am advised that they have considered this matter very carefully in terms of the relationships that currently exist between solicitors and banks.

I am not sure however that this might not mean an increase in the cost of doing business because of the obvious advantage that has accrued up to now to the banks as has been indicated by my learned friend. All that I can say is that we don't anticipate such on the best information that we have.

As to the House amendment, Mr. Speaker, I will look into this to see if I can bring it in. I must not build up the hopes of the Hon. Member because of the late stage of the Assembly.

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I think the best that can be done is to take this suggestion under consideration with a view to amending it at the next session of the Legislature, if we can't do it by way of an amendment at this Session.

All I can say is that we will look at the point made by you and I will see if we can develop an amendment but there are certain time limitations that exist upon us at this stage in the Legislature.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General) moved second reading of Bill No. 117 — **An Act respecting the Consolidation and Revision of the Statutes of Saskatchewan.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, Bill 117 is an Act to establish the Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan Act, 1974.

The Revised Statutes Act, 1974, will make provision for the establishment and confirmation of a committee to revise and consolidate the statutes of this province. The Committee has already been appointed by Order-in-Council. The Order-in-Council must be ratified by legislation. The Bill is in the same form as previous legislation in regard to the 1965 Consolidation and Revision.

It is about nine years since the last consolidation of statutes. As it takes about three years for this work to be completed, it is deemed advisable to establish the committee at the present time. The new revisions will be known as — The Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1976.

The Statutes of Saskatchewan, as the Members will know have been revised previously on four separate occasions, namely 1930, 1940, 1953 and 1965. With this Bill we hope to have a new revision and consolidation dated 1976.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 117.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENT

FLOOD SITUATION

MR. J.G. LANE (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House and begging the indulgence of the Members, I have an announcement to make with regard to the flood situation, if I could make it now before Bill 117 is dealt with, I would prefer to do so.

MR. SPEAKER: — I think it is setting a bad principle. I think if the Member concerned would discuss this with the House Leaders first, then perhaps permission could be given. It would be a bad principle to have Members stand up and say they want to make a statement before the Chair has any knowledge.

MR. ROMANOW: — I wonder if I might just speak on this. As far as

we are concerned we will give the Hon. Member leave to make the statement. The only worry that I have about it is the precedent and the other worry is that — please don't misinterpret this — but the accuracy of the reports. Nevertheless let's go ahead and hear what the statement is.

MR. SPEAKER: — I will permit it because the House is agreeable due to the emergency situation we have in the province. But I don't want Members to take it as a precedent for future occasions.

MR. LANE: — I thank the Attorney General and yourself, Mr. Speaker.

It was announced this morning that in the town of Fort Qu'Appelle flooding could be three times as great as the record floods in 1969. There is a very distinct possibility in the town of Fort Qu'Appelle of serious flooding within the town limits itself. There is a distinct possibility that the hospital, a trailer court and some homes could be in serious danger. I know that the municipal officials are taking every possible action but the danger is very, very great and should not be taken lightly.

We should also like to call attention because there has been some concern expressed by the Department of the Environment that the people along the Fishing Lakes and the people on the Indian reservations take very possible precaution because there is a strong possibility of serious ice damage and there is also a very strong likelihood that lake waters will rise at least five feet. There is some concern among the department that people are waiting until the weekend to do something about it and they themselves are urging in the strongest possible language that the people not wait until the weekend and take every possible precaution immediately because the danger is very great.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, again this is totally irregular but if I might be permitted to make one brief response on behalf of the Government.

This matter has been under review certainly by the officials and by the Cabinet for the last couple of days at least. My information is that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Byers) and the Emergency Measures Organization people have been in contact with officials at Fort Qu'Appelle about this very serious danger that the Member for Lumsden points out.

The estimate to the best of my recollection, as outlined by him, is that the estimate that we have is certainly very high and I think that one ought not to underrate this. It is very possible even that it might be higher. We are doing all that we can by way of assistance to the local towns involved with respect to highways equipment and sandbagging operations and general organization which I think has been witnessed in the town of Lumsden the last few days or so. I should also like to echo the concern that the Member has mentioned — the damage to cottages, potential damages on the beaches and shorelines. As I said, the Minister of the Environment, I believe made this announcement yesterday officially, and prior to that there had

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been some communication with the townspeople and the cottagers involved. So indeed, Mr. Speaker, we are very far away from a resolution of this very critical situation that exists in Saskatchewan at this stage.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

The Assembly resumed the interrupted debate on Bill No. 117.

MR. K.R. MacLEOD (Regina Albert Park): — Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Bill and of course I support the Bill.

At the time when this was discussed previously, I drew the attention of the Government to another consolidation that I thought ought to take place and I would hope would be afoot in the department, namely the consolidation of our regulations. So many of the laws of the people of Saskatchewan are contained not so much in the red books that are down there, the Revised Statutes and the Annual Statutes passed in this House year by year, but in the regulations which are passed weekly by the Government of Saskatchewan.

Over the years these regulations and amendments have built into quite an extensive package. In our law firm we have then going back for many, many years. The people cannot really be said to know the law unless they have some ready access to a form of knowledge of the law. Even Members of the Legislature are finding it more difficult from time to time and day to day to go to the place where the law is, namely, in many cases, the regulations.

I would ask the Attorney General to give serious consideration to the establishment of a similar committee for the purpose of bringing up to date the regulations of the Province of Saskatchewan and having them bound. I know it is going to be a massive job but once that job is accomplished, it will be far less of a problem to keep them up to date.

While I am on the subject of the laws which the people have to face I must comment on one other kind of law that the people face day to day and that is the set of laws passed by municipal governments of Saskatchewan. These laws have been building up over the years and I do not know of one municipality in Saskatchewan which has a consolidation of its laws. The city of Regina some years ago hired a retired city solicitor to undertake the task of consolidating the bylaws of the city of Regina and he actually passed away to his great reward before he got the job finished and so far as I know the entire project has languished and fallen into a corner and is no longer being dealt with. I should like to see the Government of Saskatchewan take steps immediately to have arrangements made for the municipalities of Saskatchewan, particularly the large cities, to have all their bylaws consolidated and brought up to date.

We are today looking at laws which are in many cases years and years old and in many cases bylaws which have actually been lost to clerks of the cities and towns in rural municipalities. The fact is we are probably subject to laws which have simply been lost and the citizen cannot know laws he must obey unless he has some way of getting at those laws. So in support of this

Bill I would urge the Attorney General to do two things: (1) Give consideration to bringing up to date and consolidating the regulations of the Province of Saskatchewan and (2) Begin a program to have the bylaws of the rural and urban municipalities brought up to date throughout the province.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General) moved second reading of Bill No. 48 — **An Act to provide for the postponement of the Tabling of Certain Documents.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, this Bill is in effect a housekeeping Bill. As Members will know, there is requirement on various Crown corporations and departments for the tabling of documents and the like. This Session, because of the split, there was difficulty with one or two of the Crown corporations in getting their reports down within the statutory period of time. I don't believe this prejudiced any of the consideration of the Crown corporations by the Members because they were considered in due course before the Committee. Questions arose out of that. But, however we do feel we have to in effect validate what has been done thus far and Bill 48 as the title indicates the postponement of the Tabling of Certain Documents, in effect validating those that have been tabled late.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. K.R. MacLEOD (Regina Albert Park): — Mr. Speaker, just a quick word on this and I'm not sure that my remarks are properly set forth here. I maybe should be bringing it in another Bill that is to be brought before this House, Bill 120. But the point I wish to make is that I am in agreement with this Bill. I understand it and I don't think we are prejudiced by the things dealt with by this Bill. The fact is that in dealing with Crown corporations the Members of this Legislature do not have the same ready access to information or to examination and scrutiny of the affairs of the Province of Saskatchewan as is the case with respect to departments of the Government. We have quite frankly rather a good and full opportunity examine the Ministers and put them to the test of explaining themselves and their departments to us in this Legislature. That is not true so far as the Crown corporations are concerned and I, quite frankly, feel as a individual Member that I am isolated from the Crown corporations of the Province of Saskatchewan. This does not imply in any way that they are not doing their job fully and effectively, not at all. It does mean, however, that as a Member of the Legislature attempting to do his duty as well as he can I feel that I am handicapped severely every time a Crown corporation is created in the Province of Saskatchewan. I only on one occasion had the chance to sit in Crown corporations and I was rather pleased with the opportunity presented to examine the Minister and his officials at that time. But I did so as a substitute for another Member. I have been there on one day only so far as I can recall. My duties on another committee prevent me from being on Crown corporations. Quite frankly, I think we must try to examine and discover, if possible, a better method for bringing to the Members of this Legislature affairs

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of Crown corporations. Therefore, I view from that point of view with considerable alarm the creation of additional Crown corporations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Messer that Bill No. 79 — **An Act to Regulate the Ownership and Control of Agricultural Land in Saskatchewan** be now read a second time.

MR. D.G. STEUART (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I want to say a word or two on this particular Bill, not very many because a great many words have already been said about it.

To begin with I think it is bad legislation. I think it bad Canadianism. I think, as has been said before, we are in the process of building a wall around this province. What if our example in Saskatchewan is followed by other provinces in other fields of endeavor whether it is ownership of land, the investment of money, the ownership of business, the transfer of work? This could well happen. The people of British Columbia could decide that they don't like the influx of Saskatchewan people and they have had this for 20 to 30 years to find jobs, especially in the winter time, you could see them justified in passing a Bill confining work to those natives of British Columbia and exclude people from the prairies at certain seasons of the year or all year. In other words we could see building up in this nation a series of obstructions for the free flow of people, the free flow of ideas, the free flow of capital and I think this could be a tragedy. We could end up balkanizing this nation, we could end up pulling it apart and so I oppose this Bill on that ground.

I also think that no one should be under any illusion that this is a Bill that the NDP Government really wants. The Bill the NDP Government really wants is the Bill they brought in last year and tried to pretend it was a White Paper and after the outcry came, led by the Liberal Opposition and followed through by tremendous numbers of people all over this province and all over this country, they withdrew the Bill, had the hearings, and then brought in this patchwork. But this isn't their real intention and people should be aware of this. If they come back into power after the next election they will begin a series of amendments to get back to the position that they want.

The position they want is control of who can in fact buy farm land. Against that it poses a question. Why? I think the reason should be obvious and the reason is that the more they can control farm land, the fewer people that can buy farm land, in fact to be the only effective buyer. So this gives them the opportunity to buy more and more farm land under the terms and conditions that they want to set. There is no question in my mind that the NDP plan to own and control farm land in this province totally and this is a companion piece to the

Land Bank. For some of the Members opposite to say, oh, you're waving the old bogey man of socialism, we're not waving the bogey man of socialism! In fact, the Government of Saskatchewan under the Blakeney administration now owns over \$30 million of prime farm land, they have budgeted another \$20 million, so we are not talking about something that might happen 10 or 15 years down the road, we're talking about something that is taking place right now. And this particular Bill is without a doubt a companion piece to the Land Bank and for the Members opposite to say that they are solving a problem is, of course, nonsense.

To begin with they have never identified the problem. Surely if there is a problem about the ownership of land, total land, all land, then the first study that should have taken place is to show to this House and to the public who in fact owns the farm land. Are the Americans coming up here and buying any great amounts of farm land? There was one study done by a Professor Brown, I think it was. It indicated in the southern part of the Province of Saskatchewan there was some ownership by Americans of farm land but even there it wasn't serious. There is no study to indicate whether even the relatively small amount of farm land owned by bona fide foreigners in the southern part is true in the rest of the Province of Saskatchewan.

There has been no study done to show how prevalent corporate ownership of farm land is. That's another one the NDP like to wave. They are going to save our farmers, they are going to save someone from those big bad corporations who, according to them, are buying up our farm land and carrying on vertical integration which is the greatest sin in the book of the NDP politicians. Again no proof, no studies, that it is in fact happening.

Absentee ownership; how serious is this? Does it really prevail in all parts of the province? If it does, will this Bill in fact do anything about it? Again we don't know because there have been no studies. The committee that was set up, like all the other committees that were set up, basically as a good idea. The idea of having MLAs go around the province and listen to people, go outside the province to study problems to see how people do things in other jurisdictions is sound, if in fact they really tackle the problem. Too often the purposes of the committees have been diverted from the original intention, the original terms of reference, they really have become political sounding boards for the Government opposite, with the result that we have wasted a great deal of the time of the MLAs. Now, that's not important if you are an NDP MLA because whatever they do most of the time they're wasting their time anyway, but it is important for the Liberal MLAs who have a great many other things to do and they are very, very important and very busy people.

Now, the utter weakness of this whole Bill, the weakness of the NDP approach to the whole question of land ownership is that it's too narrow. The only serious complaints that I have had about the ownership of land or land being bought up outside our borders is not farm land. I don't say that doesn't exist, if studies were carried out to show that it does exist then I would think you would find Members on this side of the House much more sympathetic to what the NDP are trying to do or at least what they pretend they are trying to do in this Bill. I have had complaints about people buying up recreational land, hunting land. We have got one now from Torch River. I don't

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know if it was mentioned in this debate or not of a Canadian real estate firm buying up a great deal of land, for Americans, and they intend to set up some hunting lodges, hunting preserves, hunting areas that will be confined to the members or to the people that own this and all other people including the people of Saskatchewan will not be allowed to hunt and to shoot in these areas.

So I think that if we are going to look at our basic resource which is our land, this is sound. But I believe that we should have looked at the whole picture. The ownership and the use of farm land, recreational land, forest land, industrial land and land for housing. What we really need much more than deciding who owns the land, we need to look at whether the time has come to have provincial zoning. Maybe the time has come to have provincial zoning. Now I have gone through zoning bylaws when I was in municipal government and they are very difficult and I would think that any provincial administration whether it be NDP or Liberal should approach the problem of provincial zoning very carefully. Because zoning laws by their very nature are restrictive and mostly saying what people can't do with land and most of the time it is land that they own. So I recognize that to come in with zoning laws covering the whole province may be premature and without a doubt would be very difficult. However, if we are talking about land use then I think that to bring in a Bill that says who can own land and how much land they can own is not really tackling the problem. The way to tackle the problem is to say, how are we using the land that we have? Are we gobbling up good farm land that will be gone forever, and that is needed in a hungry world to produce food, are we letting that go for the development of industry, for the development of housing where with little planning and little foresight we could direct the building of the development of those houses, the development of that industrial park into some other area or some other land that was much more suited to that use and was not suited to the use of growing food?

This we are not doing. This is a whole area that this Government is not tackling. It is an area that we didn't tackle when we were the government but this is what needs to be tackled, not this half-baked piece of legislation that we are considering today. So I oppose this piece of legislation because it is a bad Bill, a Bill that makes John Diefenbaker a foreigner and someone who live 14 miles south of Canada in North Dakota, or 19 miles south in Montana in fact a Canadian as far as the Saskatchewan Government is concerned. An Act that says that if you live 21 miles into Alberta or 21 miles into Manitoba you are restricted as to what you can do in the Province of Saskatchewan even though you are a Canadian. But if you happen to live two miles closer to the Province of Saskatchewan you then have certain rights. To me this is bad legislation.

I oppose this Bill because it builds an iron curtain or some kind of a curtain or the beginning of a wall around this province and if this is duplicated by other provinces then we could be in trouble in this nation. And I oppose this Bill because it does not get to the root of a problem that is prevalent in other parts of Canada and a problem that we will be faced with in this province and that is the proper use of all our land, our basic resource.

So for those reasons on top of the fact that they have never even brought forward a case to show that there is in fact a

problem with the ownership of land, for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I oppose this Bill and I oppose it very strongly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. J.C. McISAAC (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, a few comments on this Bill.

Certainly the Leader of the Opposition I think put the case pretty well on this Bill, in that this is a case of legislating to protect people against a bogey man that was set up by the NDP, by the NFU and a few others. First of all it is supposed to deal with American ownership of farm land in Saskatchewan and the Bill doesn't really deal with American ownership of farm land in Saskatchewan. If that is a problem and I submit, Mr. Speaker, studies to date indicate that it is not the problem. It is also supposed to deal with ownership of Saskatchewan farm land by Canadians living outside the Saskatchewan borders. I don't know if that is a serious fact, to what extent Saskatchewan farm land is owned by people living outside the province. I am sure there is a percentage of that, how seriously that fact has prevented, or hindered, or harmed the development of farming and the development of rural Saskatchewan has not been demonstrated. I want to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the entire question of absentee ownership of farm land which is perhaps at the root of our problems in trying to maintain rural Saskatchewan and rural communities, is not affected or touched in any way by this Bill, in no way. And that is a much more serious problem insofar as the concern of both sides of this House with respect to maintaining rural communities rural life as we know it.

The fact is that 30 odd per cent of the farmers in an area around Moose Jaw, between Regina and Moose Jaw don't live on their farms or even in the little communities where they used to farm from. This is a much more serious factor insofar as rural Saskatchewan is concerned than one half of one per cent of the owners living in North Dakota or Alberta or anywhere else. That fact isn't even recognized or dealt with whatsoever in this Bill.

Another of the problems that has long been talked about by the NDP and by the NFU is the question of corporate farms and what this Bill is going to do to prevent corporate farming. Mr. Speaker, here again no one has been able to demonstrate that corporate farming is a problem or is a threat to farming and to the use of land in this province as we know, but it isn't. We haven't seen the kind of development of corporate farms that has occurred in the States, both in California and other states down in the cattle country. It has been there and I will agree with that but it certainly hasn't been here. The term has been imported into Saskatchewan and, again, a bogey man has been created through the years, in fact, it is not a problem in Saskatchewan.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that this legislation is not even a beginning in solving any of the land use or land utilization problems in this province. It is not even a beginning let alone a good beginning or a good start.

The problems in Nova Scotia, the problems in Prince Edward Island, with respect to farm land utilization is a totally different thing than any problem that may exist here in Saskatchewan. Down there most of the land that has been bought

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and most of the legislation is aimed at preserving land for farmers yes, but there is a large resort area aspect involved in any legislation in the Maritime Provinces. In the Province of Ontario the whole question of utilization of farm land, it may be too late for them to worry about legislating because for 20 or 25 years we have seen good farm land used up in urbanization and urban development in that province. And while we would perhaps like to have the problem here with greater urbanization, I don't say I would, but that has not been the problem here in Saskatchewan, that has not been the problem of good farm land being used up by concrete, pavement and bulldozers and so on.

I suggest that we are trying to legislate, as I say, not even a good beginning of a problem that really does not exist. The major problem with respect to rural Saskatchewan and the problems of our rural communities and that is the question of absentee ownership of farm owners living in larger centres, that isn't even tackled, isn't even mentioned, isn't even discussed in this Bill.

My concern about this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that once we put this kind of legislation on the books there is no danger as far as I am concerned with what is in this Bill, I don't like it, it is not what is in it, it is the fact that such a Bill is now going to be a statute of the province and is therefore going to be easy to amend or to squeeze down the limits from \$15,000 to \$1,500 and so on. I don't think that the Bill does anything that the Government opposite really wanted it to do. It doesn't come close to the Bill they brought in two years ago. I suggest that if the Legislative Committee did prove one thing to us, it proved that many of the problems that were envisaged in that previous Bill didn't really exist in the Province of Saskatchewan when that Committee made its study.

I take exception to one section that hasn't been mentioned, I don't think, by any of the comments from Members on either side of the House, the limit of \$15,000 assessment to a non-resident of Saskatchewan, doesn't apply to many other residents of the province. They are restricted even more so. I refer to the non-farming corporations. This is, I realize, Mr. Speaker, a difficult area to define, but it seems ridiculous to me that two people such as myself and the Minister of Agriculture if we went together to form a company or a partnership and we engaged in raising cattle or any other farming occupation, we are restricted, I would assume, by this Bill to owning and operating 160 acres of land as I read this Bill. As I say a non-resident of the province who could be a lawyer, an employee of a hospital or anything else in the Province of Alberta or Montana or Manitoba, can own and operate up to \$15,000 worth of assessed land in the province, a good deal much larger.

I know and I realize that it is difficult to define who is a farmer as such, but a corporation which is not more than 50 per cent farmer owned can only hold 160 acres of land. This to me is an unfair restriction when you look at the provisions that are available to other individuals both living in the province and living outside the province.

I want to ask the Minister to comment on this either in his reply to this particular debate or in Third Reading, because I really believe this is an inequity and an unfairness in the Bill, even though I disagree with many other aspects of the Bill,

if we are going to have legislation let us try and make it as equitable as possible. That to me is one of the great inequities in this Bill, in the fact that we are dividing people into groups, both inside our boundaries and outside of our boundaries we are grouping and categorizing foreigners and non-Saskatchewan residents and I don't like it when it comes to dividing Canadians into groups depending where they are living, what they are doing for a living and so on.

I would ask the Minister to comment on that. I can only say, Mr. Speaker, in concluding, the Bill will do nothing to solve problems of land utilization or any other problems affecting the farmers or farming in this province. It is a bad precedent to be putting on the books because it is a do-nothing Bill as it now stands. We know very well it doesn't meet the wishes and the desires of Members opposite. We know very well that in its present form it doesn't and that is the part that disturbs me because if this same Government does get back into power, and God forbid that they will in the next election, you can see this Bill, the limits and the restrictions really being tightened and it is disturbing to me, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER: — Mr. Speaker, this Bill has two overriding objectives and I want to review them, again, before I turn to rebutting some of the remarks that have been made during debate by Members opposite, in response to Second Reading of this Bill.

Those two overriding objectives are: 1. To keep control of Saskatchewan farm land in the hands of Saskatchewan residents. I say, Mr. Speaker, that is what farmers in Saskatchewan are asking for and that is what farmers of Saskatchewan deserve and that is what this Bill intends to do. 2. To keep that control in the hands of people whose chief concern is farming. Again, Mr. Speaker, for a province such as Saskatchewan which is mostly dependent on agriculture as its primary industry and is dependent on that primary industry to bring its rewards to the people of this province. It is most important, it is in fact, essential that we retain the control and the ownership and the farming of that resource in the hands of the residents, the people living in the Province of Saskatchewan.

The problems to which these objectives are addressed, first, the danger of large tracts of farm land being owned by absentee owners or by operators who move into the province only for brief periods of each year. And second, the problem of farm land being used to serve the interests of large corporations whose concerns are not primarily agricultural. Neither of those problems have gotten out of hand yet but that is precisely the point of this Act, to ensure that the problems never do reach serious proportions.

While statistics for the whole province show a small portion of our agricultural land in the problem category, we get quite a different picture when we look at particular communities. To say to the people of some of these communities that after all only a small percentage of Saskatchewan land is held by non-residents is like trying to console the soldier's widow by saying that there was only a one per cent casualty in the action in which the husband was killed.

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In the matter of ownership, Mr. Speaker, by large corporations, the motivation may be tax advantages, speculation, or vertical integration to increase their economic power. It does not matter what the particular mode of motivation might be, if it is not a commitment to best land use and the welfare of the whole agricultural industry. My Government, this New Democratic Government, is prepared to say this is undesirable and if a minor privilege for a few people must be curtailed to meet the legitimate needs of the many, we are prepared to stand behind that judgment. And this is what this legislation, again, does, Mr. Speaker.

There has been a lot of loose talk about creating second-class citizens, second-class Canadians. Mr. Speaker, if we were to allow Canadians living in other provinces to own half of the farm lands in Saskatchewan, we would in fact, be creating second-class Canadians with a vengeance in the terms of the loss of freedom to Saskatchewan farm people and the loss to all Saskatchewan residents in terms of a massive drain of Saskatchewan production for the benefit of those absentee land owners not located in this province.

There are two excellent reasons for basing the Act on residents, not on citizenship. First, as I have mentioned, the problem is absentee ownership, not just foreign ownership. And, second, the power of the province to legislate anything on the basis of citizenship is seriously open to question. Until the Prince Edward Island case is settled there remains some slight doubt about the constitutionality of The Farm Ownership Act. But our advisers say that controls based on residence have a much greater chance of standing up in court than ones based on citizenship.

Critics of the Act, therefore, are urging a partial solution to the problem by, to say the least, very questionable means. No one has suggested that farmers living in Manitoba and Alberta, but close to Saskatchewan, be prevented from owning land on both sides of the border. To allow them this privilege while ruling out Dakota farmers would put the whole Act in jeopardy. Some of the Members to your left, Mr. Speaker, in asking questions like, why 20 miles? Why not 10 or 50? My answer is, there is a problem and there is no perfect solution to that problem and there will not be.

Are the Members opposite saying that no problem should be tackled until a perfect solution is found? Have they a better figure to suggest than the 20-mile area? There has also been some complaint that The Farm Ownership Act will interfere with the right of landowners to dispose of it to the highest bidder regardless of consequences for others.

I should like to point out that all land use planning and zoning is based on this principle, that freedom of a few individuals will be restricted for the greatest good of the whole group. Certainly, all provinces and a good many centres, not only in Saskatchewan but in Canada, are most concerned about that today and are taking positive steps to correct that, so that we will be able to provide adequate properties for housing and recreational lands for the citizens of our communities.

Insofar as these complaints come from people with land close to the United States border, I should like to point out that losing their right to sell large holdings as units to

individual American citizens will not place them at a disadvantage, compared with residents in most parts of Saskatchewan, for whom the opportunity to sell to Americans means little because of their geographical location.

I would also emphasize that the intent of the Bill is not to restrict anyone except in ways that are necessary to ensure that our land resource continues to be used for the benefit of all of the people of Saskatchewan. Insofar as non-resident buyers can be found who are satisfied with modest holdings, who probably will rent to local farmers, then the bad effects on the community will be minimal. I am not convinced that the seller will necessarily get a lower price than if large blocks were made available to individual non-resident persons.

Such transactions, in fact, are not prohibited under the Act. In other provinces the number one concern is control of recreational land and the day will come when that is also a high priority in Saskatchewan. But today, Mr. Speaker, our agricultural land is Saskatchewan's major resource and the one in which our future prosperity will continue to depend.

The Saskatchewan Farm Ownership Act is a reasonable solution to a real problem and other provinces and states have either moved in a similar direction or at this time are considering it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few remarks in regard to the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition, the Member for Wilkie and some other Members of the Opposition who sit to your left.

They have inferred and stated in this debate that it is bad legislation; that it indicates bad Canadianism on behalf of Saskatchewan and the New Democratic Government. In fact the Member for Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac) just before he took his seat, said that we have manufactured a bogey man. The New Democratic Government in conjunction with the National Farmers Union have manufactured this concern. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Members to your left, whether or not they have talked to farmers of Saskatchewan? I suggest to you that they have not, because I know I have and I know that a good many of my colleagues have talked to individual farmers and they are most concerned about absentee and corporate ownership of land in Saskatchewan and they support the principles contained in this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Members opposite whether they talked to other farm organizations and members of farm organizations if they do not wish to believe or respond to the observations and the recommendations of the National Farmers Union. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool feels very strongly about absentee ownership of land and has on many occasions, at their annual meetings, issued statements in regard to the ramifications and the adverse effects of absentee and non-resident ownership of land in Saskatchewan. They have also, on occasion, shown concern about corporate and vertical ownership of lands in comparison to the family type farms that they and this Government supported in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition in his remarks said that we really at this time don't know what the effects of absentee ownership is or are for farmers of Saskatchewan. I ask him, Mr. Speaker, where has he been? Because he can certainly

go to a number of communities, particularly in the southern part of this province, in the Weyburn area, in the Estevan area, in the Bienfait area, where there are, yes, in comparison to the overall province, small regions that are totally owned by non-residents but when you relate them to that trading area they become very vast and very large and are most problematic.

In those areas farmers can tell you — those resident farmers at least — can tell you the serious ramifications and problems that they are confronted with as farmers in competing with these absentee landlords, who bring in their machinery, on many occasions bring in their own labor, who virtually buy all of their supplies from other than those resident people servicing agriculture in the smaller urban communities in the area; virtually breaking the backbone of that community and contributing to further driving out what few Saskatchewan farmers remain.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Members why they did not, in their research if they did any in regard to this legislation, ask those farmers about the serious problems and then ask themselves if there is not some measure taken at this time to correct that problem from spreading across the entire length and breadth of this province, that it would be most serious for Saskatchewan farmers in the province as a whole.

I am sure that if they were legitimately criticizing this Bill they would have come to that deduction.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, I think all of the remarks that were made by the Members opposite, and I note some Members were, I think, deliberate in not making any speeches in relation to this Bill because they know full well that the voters, at least the rural farm voters in their constituencies would very much disagree with opposing what efforts and endeavors are being attempted by the Government and included in this legislation. But for those who did speak I suggest to you that their remarks were very weak in trying to muster some opposition to The Saskatchewan Farm Ownership Act. It was a very weak, I think, and dismal effort to give the protection and the recognition they feel they have to give to their corporate friends. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition talks about committees and they do have some relevance to this particular piece of legislation because a committee was structured to investigate the problems and the ramifications and the potential concerns of absentee and corporate ownership in Saskatchewan. But he doesn't talk about what the recommendations of that committee were, he talks about whether committees are good or bad for carrying out government work.

In fact he went on to say, Mr. Speaker, that The Saskatchewan Farm Ownership Act, having said in one breath it's bad, he goes on to say that it is too narrow. It is not broad enough. He says it doesn't really set out to solve the problem. And the examples he uses, Mr. Speaker, is recreational land. Certainly we are concerned about recreational land as well. I mentioned in my second reading speech in introducing the Bill that we have information in regard to purchases of land in the Torch River area, the same area that the Leader of the Opposition now refers to as if it is great news, after a month of concern, after a month of at least expressions of concern coming from residents in the Torch River area, that this Bill does not cover it and we should be concerned about recreational land.

We are concerned about recreational land and that land that is being sold in the Torch River area, that may be assessed as agriculture, will fall within the realms of this particular piece of legislation.

But the point that I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is that we would not have problems in Saskatchewan today in regard to the selling of recreational land which has no agricultural value if the Members that sit to your left did not between the years of 1964 and 1971 try and sell all the recreational land in this province to anyone who wished to purchase it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER: — Mr. Speaker, prior to 1964 the former CCF Government had a policy that we did not sell recreational land, we did not sell those lots and islands that may be used for recreation that were wanted by citizens other than those who were resident in Saskatchewan, by citizens who had found themselves unable to reap the benefits of their natural surroundings because investors had purchased and obtained control of those natural resources and they had to look abroad to try and find that kind of recreational land, they had to look to the Province of Saskatchewan where we had and have a great deal of those kinds of benefits. But the Liberals, Mr. Speaker, during that seven years sold innumerable islands and literally thousands of acres of lake front lots to anyone who wished to purchase whether they were resident or not. I think it is too late for the Leader of the Opposition to now get up and condemn this Government for not being able to totally resolve a problem that he manufactured himself when he was on the Treasury Benches of the Liberal Government between 1964 and 1971.

Certainly we are concerned about recreational land but we are first and foremost concerned about our primary industry, agriculture. And we are not the only single and sole province in the Dominion of Canada that is concerned about agricultural land and recreational land. The Member for Wilkie (Mr. McIsaac) mentioned a Maritime province, let me for their information tell them that I don't think there is one province in Canada today that is not now considering similar legislation or is in fact in the process of introducing similar legislation to give protection to their respective provinces. If anybody is going to manufacture a bogey man in regard to a very legitimate piece of legislation it is the Members who sit to your left, the Members of the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan.

Let me say to them that if they say it is bad Canadianism then a simple amendment by the Federal Government would resolve our problem and we wouldn't have to introduce this kind of legislation in regard to absentee and non-resident ownership but their cohorts at the federal level are of the same point of view as they are and that is, they will not respect or honor legitimate rights of the smaller farmers as landowners in Saskatchewan and in Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in relating to the bogey man that they are trying to manufacture in the eyes of the citizens of Saskatchewan, they have insinuated that this province was developed by immigration mainly by peoples from Europe who were in fact trying to get away from what we are doing here right now. They are saying that those people . . .

MR. MESSER: — . . . and the Member for Rosthern says that's true, that those people from Europe left because they could not purchase land there and because they could purchase land here. In fact, Mr. Speaker, they insinuated that these people were trying to get away from a communist system. They are trying to say that it was a system similar, is what this Bill will bring about in the Province of Saskatchewan. They were insinuating that this Bill will establish communal farms and that in fact is what those immigrants that came to this Province of Saskatchewan as pioneers were trying to get away from. Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask them to take a look at who immigrated to the Province of Saskatchewan and when they immigrated? By far the larger number of people as far as a single group coming from one particular country in Europe is concerned, they came from Great Britain. Scottish and English people, they certainly weren't trying to get away from a communal type of farm. They were trying to get to a place where they could acquire land and perhaps even buy it, which this legislation does not prohibit. But who were they trying to get away from, Mr. Speaker? They weren't trying to get away from a communistic or socialistic system, they were trying to get away from a free enterprise system which had allowed individuals, few in number to corral every acre of land in the country and they had no opportunity to establish a farming operation. They were nothing better, Mr. Speaker, than serfs.

Mr. Speaker, I've got a Deputy Minister whose family has not been in the Province of Saskatchewan that long, in fact his father immigrated from Scotland. I have discussed with him why he came to Saskatchewan. He came to Saskatchewan because up to that point in time he worked for an absentee landlord without every having any possibility of acquiring land for himself. I say that the individual is not unlike the many other thousands of people who came from the British Isles. They could not buy land because it was owned by the few and by those who were not resident on that land. We don't want the same thing to happen in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, those people who immigrated to Saskatchewan came from France and they came from Germany, as my ancestors, they came from Roumania and Bulgaria, from Poland and Prussia, from the Ukraine and, yes, a good many of them from now what is under communist rule. But, Mr. Speaker, the largest percentage of those people immigrated in the late 1800s and the early 1900s, prior to 1917 when the communists took over in Russia. They were leaving because they were under the control of a Czar who had allowed the land to be controlled by the few and those people had no opportunity to acquire land or to buy. But they came for a different reason than the Members to your left try to paint for the people of Saskatchewan because they are trying to say they came to get away from a communistic system when there was no such system in place at that time. And after 1919 certainly the immigration to the Province of Saskatchewan dropped considerably.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Opposition have again tried to misinterpret and mislead the people of Saskatchewan as to why those pioneers came here. They came here in order to establish a new life for themselves where there was land available because there certainly wasn't any in their home land and I say that we do not want that same set of circumstances to apply to our residents at some time in the future whether it be five or 10 or 15 years down the road. We want the offspring of those farmers and

our present residents of Saskatchewan to always have first opportunity to be able to control and own and set their own destiny in this province. That, Mr. Speaker, is what this legislation is attempting to do.

I simply want to close by saying that had the Members of the Opposition attempted in a sincere way to talk to farmers in Saskatchewan they would have found that the farmers are in favor of this kind of legislation to give them the protection that they need in order to control their resources. Mr. Speaker, it is with extreme pleasure that I therefore move second reading of this Bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time on the following recorded division:

YEAS - 32

Dyck	Pepper	Mostoway
Meakes	Michayluk	Gross
Smishek	Byers	Feduniak
Romanow	Engel	Comer
Messer	Cody	Rolfes
Snyder	Robbins	Lange
Thibault	Cowley	Oliver
Larson	Taylor	Feschuk
Kowalchuk	Matsalla	Flasch
Brockelbank	Faris	Richards
MacMurphy	Owens	

NAYS — 11

Steuart	Boldt	Weatherald
Coupland	Grant	MacLeod
Loken	MacDonald (Milestone)	Malone
Guy	McIsaac	

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Regina North East): — Mr. Speaker, if I may I should like to introduce to you and to the Members of the Assembly two groups of students who are with us this afternoon. Firstly, from the Dover School located in Regina North East constituency we have a group of 30 Grades Three and Four students. They are accompanied here by their teacher, Mrs. Heebner. They are seated in the west gallery. On behalf of yourself and the Members of the Legislative Assembly I extend to them a very warm welcome. I do hope that their stay with us will be an enlightening and an educational experience. I do hope that the students do enjoy themselves while they are with us this afternoon. I will meet with them a little later, Mr. Speaker.

May I also extend a warm welcome to the students from the Coldwell School. Coldwell School is located in Uplands. As they may know the school gets its name from an outstanding Canadian, an outstanding statesman, an outstanding Regina citizen at one time, Mr. M.J. Coldwell. There are 60 of them in

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attendance with us, they are Grade Six, Seven and Eight students. They are accompanied by two teachers, Mrs. Gallagher and Mr. Wittner. I wish to express the hope that their visit with us will be an educational experience for the students and it will assist them in their social studies. I propose to meet with them a little later, Mr. Speaker.

So to both groups, have an exciting afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of my colleague, Mr. MacDonald the Member for Moose Jaw, to extend a very official welcome to the Palliser Heights School from Moose Jaw. They are in Grades Five and Eight and they are accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Wood and Mrs. Montgomery. Certainly the students from Moose Jaw will have many, many stories to tell about the rather unfortunate circumstances that have befallen their home community and their home city. I am sure there are many things that they will remember in the years to come.

I want to tell you that the reason Mr. MacDonald is not here today, is that he is with Mr. Otto Lang, the Federal Minister of Justice. He has taken Mr. Lang to your home community for an opportunity of viewing your city and assessing partly the damage, so that the Federal Government will be aware of the tragedy that has occurred in Moose Jaw.

I certainly want to welcome you here on behalf of Mr. MacDonald and hope you have a very enjoyable and educational afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

The Assembly adjourned at 9:32 o'clock p.m.