

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fifth Session — Seventeenth Legislature
12th Day

Tuesday, January 14, 1975.

The Assembly met at 11:00 a.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

Mr. R. Romanow (Attorney General) requested leave of the House to introduce for first and second reading of an Act respecting a certain Dispute Between Saskatchewan Power Corporation and certain of its Employees.

Mr. D.G. Stuart (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to rise on a Point of Privilege before we give consent to the second reading. I should not like to be asked that we waive the normal question period to begin with and I should like to come back to this second reading when we get into the Orders of the Day. I don't want us to have to waive the question period.

Hon. R. Romanow (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, with respect to that and since I have gotten leave and first reading has been granted to the Bill I withdraw the requests for leave at this stage of the second reading. Then, as I understand it, it will be Orders of the Day and that will allow the Leader of the Opposition to ask questions. Then I will ask for leave of the House to introduce this Bill for second reading.

QUESTIONS

RESOLUTION RE LABOUR-MANAGEMENT DISPUTES

Mr. Stuart: — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I rise to ask a question of the Premier and it has to do with this Bill and this Special Session. We were requested to waive the normal notice so that this Session could be called. We agreed, we co-operated. We were asked to waive the normal motions and the normal time for the introduction of this Bill and we agreed. I say now that we will, if certain questions are answered and I presume they will be answered to the satisfaction, I hope, of this House and the general public concerning this Bill and the necessity of this Bill, continue to co-operate.

I also point out that this is Private Members' Day and the normal rights for Private Members we are also prepared to waive. But I would request the Premier to give consideration in view of this to a question I have that if we can conclude this Bill today that he would agree that we would not adjourn the House but come back tomorrow and if necessary the next day to give consideration to a resolution that we wish to introduce and we will not introduce it, we will not even ask for permission to introduce it until we have concluded this particular piece of business, this Bill. I want to make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that when I make this request, and I ask your indulgence, because I feel it is necessary to state certain things and make certain statements before I ask the question, I will make it very clear that our co-operation is not, and I repeat, not conditional on the Premier agreeing to what I am

going to ask him. It is not. We intend to proceed if our questions are answered in the proper way with this Bill. We will not obstruct this Session, this Special Session. But I want to aim to consider that tomorrow or as soon as we have concluded this particular Bill, if he would agree and on behalf of his Members on that side of the House, to agree that we would be allowed to introduce and have debated this Resolution:

Whereas during the last 18 months there has been a series of labour-management disputes that have seriously affected the economy of the Province of Saskatchewan; and whereas the people of Saskatchewan require protection from strikes and lockouts that could adversely effect their general health and well being; and whereas the only method of settling deadlock labour-management disputes deemed to endanger the health and safety of the public is dependent on the passage of Legislation by a special session of the Legislative Assembly; and whereas this method is subject to obstruction and delay by any individual Member of the Assembly for as long as one month; now therefore be it resolved that the Government forthwith establish a commission composed of representatives of labour, representatives of management and a representative of the general public to act as chairman, to determine a method of settling industrial disputes between management and labour where the general public is affected, through a negotiation procedure that provides an alternative to strike and lockouts but maintains the principle and integrity of free collective bargaining.

I would ask the Premier if he would consider then allowing this Session to continue so we could introduce this resolution and have it debated?

Hon. A.E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Leader of the Opposition for his co-operation in this matter and I thank him particularly for making his offer not a condition upon our disposition upon the resolution which he has just read to us. I have not had the opportunity to consider the resolution. I am initially favourably disposed to the request that he makes. I should like to have a look at it and discuss it with my colleagues to see whether or not we can accommodate him. I think he will concede that we provided him with a copy of our Bill yesterday afternoon so he would have an opportunity to consider his position on that and we haven't had a similar opportunity to consider his resolution. But I think that if he is prepared to provide us with a copy and let me give an answer on our behalf after the noon break at 2:30, then I should be happy to do that.

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, I should have had a copy for the Premier but the Xerox machine out here has withdrawn its services temporarily. I will do this because I think it is important that we came out of this Session with something positive. What we are about to consider in this Bill here is in the form of a negative action, if we pass it. My proposal I think would be something positive and would, I hope, receive broad endorsement throughout the province and it must if it is to succeed so I will give the Premier a copy and make copies available as soon as I can.

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Mr. Speaker: — I would advise the Leader of the Opposition at this time that it may be advantageous if he would discuss the wording of that resolution with the Clerk because the ‘whereas’ are not permitted in the House and it could be that it would spoil the resolution for the Speaker to strike out the ‘whereas’. Maybe it could be incorporated into the body because this is a situation today that is not the normal trend and the Chair doesn’t want to be too sticky on these things but I hope we can get it as close as possible to comply with the rules.

RECORDING OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Mr. J.G. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, while we are getting into this discussion, I don’t know if this is the proper time or not, it seems that there would be certain advantages in having the Committee proceedings recorded. I wonder if the consent of the House would be in order to have the proceedings in Committee recorded?

Mr. Speaker: — The Hon. Member for Lumsden asks if the House will agree that the debates in the Committee of the Whole on this Bill be recorded as has been done on previous occasions in the past. What is their pleasure?

Mr. Romanow: — What did Mr. Speaker say about the previous - I didn’t hear?

Mr. Speaker: — There have been previous occasions in past years when the House has agreed certain Bills would be recorded in debate in Committee of the Whole. It is not a new principle, it has been done before. The House must decide whether they want this one because recording and typing only takes the debates while the House is in Session not when the House is in Committee. The House can if they wish have the Committee recorded. What is the wish of the House?

Mr. C.P. MacDonald (Milestone): — I should like to point out if my memory serves me correctly, the last time a Special Session was held in relation to an essential service in 1966, the Leader of the Opposition did request the Committee proceedings be recorded and there is a precedent in a Special Session of this kind.

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, if I may, I should like to just check the precedents on this and advise later. I certainly don’t want to refuse it. Just in passing, I should like to remind the Hon. Member for Milestone that 1966 was not the last time that we had a Special Session dealing with essential services. I recall June 29th and 30th, 1971, you know on the eve of the New Democratic Convention, you all remember that.

Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, if I may comment, special permission was granted during the last proceedings that the Premier refers to, by request of the Leader of the Opposition and it was unanimously agreed to by the House.

Mr. Blakeney: — We will check it.

Mr. Speaker: — The request has been made and the Premier has agreed to check it and give an answer before they go into Committee so I don't think we want to debate it further at this time.

TAXPAYERS PAYING MORE THAN 40 PER CENT

Mr. E.F. Gardner (Moosomin): — Before the Orders of the Day I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robbins). I believe in recent days it has become obvious that thousands of Saskatchewan taxpayers will be paying to the Province of Saskatchewan more than the intended 40 per cent of the federal tax rate. The rate by some of these people could be 90 per cent or 150 per cent or more. Because the low income earner is most affected by this and the fact that the poor will then be paying at a higher rate than the rich, I wonder if the Minister would tell us what steps he has taken to alleviate this very unjust situation?

Hon. W.A. Robbins (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, I think Members of the House are well aware of the fact that that condition held true last year and it holds true with respect to all of the provinces which have an agreement with the Federal Government in relation to the income tax agreement and it will still hold true in the current year. We are aware of the problem, he is aware of the problem and answers will be forthcoming eventually.

Mr. Gardner: — Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Minister indicated in the paper that due to the lateness of the federal reductions in November the Government didn't have time to act. I should like to ask the Minister in view of the fact that the Legislature is now sitting, we are here on our side and we are willing to stay here if he will bring in the necessary legislation to correct these injustices, would the Minister consider immediately bringing in these changes at this Session so that this can be corrected now?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Robbins: — Changes cannot be made without the agreement of the Federal Government.

TEACHERS AT ILE-A-LA-CROSSE

Mr. H.E. Coupland: — (Meadow Lake) Before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Minister of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan (Mr. Bowerman). Due to the fact that we find the concerned parents of Ile-a-la-Crosse had just cause for their concerns in the fact that a couple of the teachers have been charged with the possession of drugs in the school up there, and that 19 teachers have now threatened to resign by the 24th of this month causing more unrest in that area, I wonder if the Minister could tell us whether he will back the local government up there? That Government made a commitment to the people in the North that they would give them local control and I was in touch with them this morning and the local board thinks they have things under control but this control has been

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taken away by the Government and the northern school boards. They are ready to advertise for 21 teachers after the 24th. I wonder if the Minister could tell me what the position of the Government is at this time on that?

Hon. G.R. Bowerman (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — The position of our Government since taking office in 1971 to the people of Northern Saskatchewan is that we will support their elected organizations and that is the northern school board. The northern school board has been given the responsibility in this respect and we have attempted to follow them and to support them in the actions which they have taken in respect to Ile-a-la-Crosse. We will continue to do that until a situation presents itself and then will have to give further consideration to it.

Mr. Coupland: — Mr. Minister, it seems to me that the Government took the control away from the local board last June when this trouble first started and it was supposed to be given back to them on January 1st. Now to date I don't think the local board has got that control back.

RAIL LINE ABANDONMENT

Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, a question before the Orders of the Day to the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow). The session in 1973 and December of 1974 and in a major speech by yourself in 1972 in this Chamber, and Return No. 16 of 1974 indicates that the province has spent a little better than \$500,000 on a study. Along with your speeches prior to Christmas, December of 1974, a major policy statement was made by the Federal Government on the matter of rail line abandonment. Attempts were made, I believe, by the Press to get in touch with the Attorney General and the only answer that came back, 'no comment'. That is not typical of the Attorney General in light of the record in this Assembly and it is not typical of the public's perception of the record of the Attorney General in not having any comment.

Mr. Speaker: — What is the question?

Mr. Lane: — Now being the Minister responsible for transportation in Saskatchewan, are you now prepared to table the policy of the New Democratic Party and of the Government opposite in this Assembly as to rail line abandonment in the Province of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, the position of the New Democratic Party on rail line abandonment is clear and I am sure has been made clear to the Hon. Member and to all the people of the Province of Saskatchewan. We oppose rail line abandonment as proposed by the Federal Liberal Government and the railway companies. We oppose the proposed policy of the Hon. Mr. Lang which appears to add an approximate additional 1,200 miles for possible rail line abandonment during the one-year freeze. The Hon. Member may say there is no credibility, but the simple facts of the matter are that 1,200 more miles have been added for possible abandonment that weren't included at the time of the Calgary Western Economic Opportunities Conference. As far as we are

concerned we realize that there has to be a rationalization of the system. Not every branch line can be maintained but we adamantly oppose the proposition of the Liberals in Saskatchewan and in Ottawa that there should be massive rail line abandonment as they propose in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — It is very clear that there is no rationalization coming out of the Government opposite. By way of a supplementary question, does this mean that the Government opposite favours the maintenance of the rail line from Melfort to Thaxted of two miles at an annual subsidy cost of \$17,259 and a subsidy application has been made. No rail cars have gone over that line for the past five years and in addition the line from Luxton to Blewett out of approximately a subsidy of \$23,617, again no cars have gone over . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, I think we are getting into a debate on this instead of just a question because Resolution No. 2 on the Order Paper will supply a place for a full debate when we get to that Resolution but we cannot have debates on questions.

Mr. Lane: — A supplementary question, where on two particular lines in light of the policy announcement just made by the Attorney General, the second line has a subsidy of \$23,000 and no rail cars have gone over that for five years. Does the Government opposite favour the maintenance and the continued subsidization of those two lines?

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, there is only one way that these things can be looked at. They cannot be looked at in isolation or piecemeal in the interests of the railway companies. They cannot, they must be looked at in the totality of Saskatchewan, they have to be looked at in the interests of the individual communities, not of the railway companies and the elevator companies. The Hon. Member comes and says, do we favour the abandonment of this particular line and that particular line, that is simply not possible. We have been asking that this matter should be looked at in the interests of the people and the farmers of Saskatchewan, something that the Liberals in Saskatchewan and Ottawa today refuse to do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SECOND READINGS

Hon. R. Romanow (Attorney General) moved second reading of Bill No. 28 - **An Act respecting a certain Dispute between Saskatchewan Power Corporation and certain of its Employees**

He said: Mr. Speaker, with respect to this Act I beg to inform the Assembly that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor having been informed of the subject matter of this Bill recommends it to the consideration of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this Legislature has been recalled to deal with an urgent and important matter of public concern, namely the settlement of a strike by certain employees of the

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International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 2067, against the Saskatchewan Power Corporation.

The decision to reconvene the Legislature and to present legislation, this Bill, for the ending of this dispute was only taken after many hours of careful deliberation by the Premier and the Government. As Members will know this Government has fought for and believes in the principles of free collective bargaining as the best way in our society . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — . . . for working men and women to determine matters relating to the labourer.

Mr. Steuart: — When it suits your purpose.

Mr. Romanow: — Yes, I tell the Leader of the Opposition that we do believe in free collective bargaining, we do not support the Bill 2 approach of my friends opposite, the Liberals opposite. We do not approach a situation which in effect puts a sword over all of the working men and women of Saskatchewan as the Liberals opposite did. Not a chance.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that they feel very touchy about Bill 2. Mr. Speaker, the intervention by Government in a labour-management dispute is obviously a very serious matter, to be made only when serious circumstances warrant it. In some provinces governments have chosen to prohibit strikes, even in areas where no threat or potential threat to life or safety could reasonably be anticipated - as for example, in the case of government employees generally as a class or in the case of teachers. This is not the case in Saskatchewan. This Government's belief in the principles of free collective bargaining was confirmed in the very early years of the CCF when the civil servants of this province were among the nation's first to receive the full rights of collective bargaining.

Mr. Speaker, I have always subscribed to the view that any just and effective system of industrial relations must recognize three basic and fundamental rights of employees. The first is the right of freedom of association. Workers must have the right to organize into associations or trade unions and, of course, to participate in union activities. Second is the right to engage employers in bargaining with the union or association, in other words, the right to bargain collectively. Third, the employees must generally have the right to invoke meaningful economic sanctions in support of their bargaining position. They must have the right to withhold their labour, that is the right to strike.

All three of these rights which I regard and the Government regards as basic have won a wide measure of acceptance. With respect to the first two rights that I have mentioned, that is the right to organize and the right to bargain collectively, I'm of the view that they in principle are entitled to recognition without any qualification. However, in the case of the right to strike it is universally recognized that there are certain very special situations in which the public interest must take precedence. In some cases the life or safety of the public could be jeopardized by a work stoppage. Of course, there will be differing views as to which situation is

sufficiently grave to warrant such a legislative interference, to warrant a legislative interference with this basic right to strike.

In a democracy the responsibility of determining the gravity of that situation falls upon the shoulders of the duly elected Government and the duly elected Members of this Assembly. In this case we are dealing with employees engaged in providing a vital service in a vital public utility.

Mr. Speaker, where the free collective bargaining system has broken down and the public interest is not adequately safeguarded, there are differing views as to how the problem is to be overcome.

Mr. Steuart: — Depends on what side of the House you sit on.

Mr. Romanow: — Well, yes it does depend on what side of the House you're sitting.

At one pole my friends opposite advocate the philosophy of the Saskatchewan Liberals as evidenced by the notorious Bill 2 - an Act so wide in its powers as to enable a government to decree almost any strike anywhere illegal and to impose compulsory arbitration with massive penalties against the working men and women. That's one perspective, that's one approach. We'll come to that in a moment, that one. There was no need for the present Leader of the Opposition, then in power, to consult the Legislature under Bill 2 if it was in session before taking away the right to strike, much less to even call an emergency session if it was adjourned. Under Bill 2 and the Leader of the Opposition and Liberal Party, all that it took was a simple stroke of the pen of the Premier to take away this right. That's one way that you can handle it with respect to difficulties in these very important areas where the public interest overrules the rights of working men.

I want to tell the Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) and the Member for Lumsden (Mr. Lane) that the position of this Government is not that of the Liberals. With the repeal of Bill 2 there is presently no statute in this province which entirely withholds the right to strike from any class of employee. Most jurisdictions prohibit strikes, for example, by police and fire fighters. That's not the case basically in Saskatchewan. While it is true that with respect to police and fire fighters there is a provision for binding arbitration, that arises only when there is a no-strike clause in the constitution of the union. Similarly, there is no general legislation on the Statute Books with the repeal of Bill 2 which prohibits a strike of say medical or hospital personnel or other people employed in the provision of public utilities, even though sometimes the interruption of those services in a particular case might jeopardize the health or the safety or even the lives of the citizens of the province.

Now, no doubt, there is a body of opinion that would argue that there should be a permanent severe limitation on the right to strike for these classes of people. Mr. Speaker, this has not been and is not the policy of this Government. We believe, as I have said, in the principle of free collective bargaining.

Mr. Speaker, I have already stated that it is universally

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accepted that in certain special situations the public interest comes first, that it is paramount in the judgment of the government such as is the case in the current dispute between the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 2067.

Mr. Speaker, there comes a time in the field of labour relations rarely when the duly elected government of the people must say that no one group has the right to continue its right to strike when in the judgment of the elected government it conflicts with the overall public interest. In my view we are at this stage in this particular dispute and I'll have more to say about the particular dispute in my remarks to follow.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate that when the public interest overrules the rights of workers, special steps must be taken before that right is taken away. The right to strike is of such fundamental importance that it warrants the careful examination of each individual situation on its merits by the Legislature whenever it is alleged that a strike by a particular group of employees at a particular time would be contrary to that public interest.

If it is necessary to call a special session of the Legislature in order that Members may consider the balancing on the one hand of the public interest as opposed on the other hand the right to withhold services, then in our opinion that is a small price to pay to ensure that there is no unnecessary, no unwarranted erosion of the freedoms of working men and women in this province. In this framework the question for the Government, the question for every Member in this House today whether the disruption of electrical services in the middle of a Saskatchewan winter so jeopardizes the safety and well-being of the citizens of Saskatchewan that there is no alternative but to order the termination of the strike. Mr. Speaker, in my opinion that question admits of only one answer.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me just turn for a moment or two to discuss the history of this dispute in the light of the public interest and the statements that I have made.

On or about October 9, 1974, the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, 2067, began contract negotiations with an exchange of proposals between the parties. Approximately twelve, perhaps even more, subsequent meetings were held between the negotiating committees. The last such formal meeting took place on or about December 12, 1974. The Union's opening demands included the following:

1. Wage adjustments for all classifications, averaging about 16 per cent to achieve what the Union considered to be parity with 1974 wages in the electrical utilities in the Province of Alberta.
2. 20 per cent across the board increase on top.
3. A four day, 32 hour work week which amounted to a reduction of 20 per cent from the present 40 hours per work week.

The foregoing items, Mr. Speaker, compound to an increase in take home pay of approximately 39 per cent of the initial demands and an increase in hourly rate in excess of 67 per cent.

In addition to these direct wage items, the union asked for a cost-of-living adjustment clause which would result in an \$8.70 per hour increase to every employee for each one point increase that the Regina-Saskatoon consumer price index rose above the level that this index was on September 30, 1974.

In addition, the Union further asked for the following significant, and in some cases in the judgment of the Corporation in any event, costly changes in fringe benefits, they were as follows:

1. Improved annual vacations.
2. Payment for unused sick leave on retirement.
3. Extended benefits in the event of injury on the job.
4. Additional payment by the Company of group life insurance premiums.
5. A system of banked time off in lieu of 50 per cent of overtime pay.
6. Additional standby pay.
7. Improved subsistence rates.
8. Increased shift differential.
9. Increase in Saturday, Sunday and statutory holiday premium pay.
10. Increase in height pay.
11. One additional statutory holiday.

And several other less significant items. That was the position.

In its opening statement, Mr. Speaker, the Corporation proposed to revise the article on vacancies and new positions to permit the Corporation to advertise positions prior to agreement being reached on the titles and the rates of pay and also proposed to revise the hours of work article to allow the Corporation more flexibility in establishing hours of work to best suit the needs in the work location concerned. In addition, the Corporation said that it would make a wage proposal as the negotiations progressed.

At various times during the negotiating sessions, both sides made concessions in some of the minor and less contentious issues.

On October 24th, as promised, the Power Corporation tabled a general wage offer to the Union of six per cent and on November 21st . . .

An Hon. Member: — Six per cent!

Mr. Romanow: — Six per cent. On November 21st it increased its offer to ten per cent across the board. Six per cent, perhaps in the eyes of the Liberals opposite is not much but certainly a lot more than the zero that the Liberals offered when the Power

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Corporation was under their control when they were negotiating with the unions. That's certainly a lot better than the four or three per cent maximum that was offered by the Liberals in their negotiations. So the Liberals can snicker all they want about the offer made by the Power Corporation but their record is nothing to boast about to the people of Saskatchewan or the workers. So, Mr. Speaker, I can tell why the boys . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Mr. Romanow: — . . . opposite are so touchy about this, because their record, of course, is a very disgraceful one. Let me just continue by saying that on November 21st - Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could have just a little bit of silence. On November 21st the Corporation increased its offer to ten per cent across-the-board. I know, perhaps to the Liberals, this might not be a serious matter, but I hope that they view this with some degree of gravity.

Still later, on December 12th, the Corporation presented to the Union a package proposal which included the following main provisions:

1. Adjustments of from 6 cents to 13 cents per hour for specific classifications. The adjustments were estimated to cost approximately one-half of one per cent total payroll.
2. Ten per cent across-the-board increase for all classifications.
3. A cost of living adjustment formula which would provide an increase in wage rates of three cents per hour for every one point the Regina-Saskatoon consumer price index rose above 159.3. I'd say, Mr. Speaker, that the present rate of increase in the index, this provision, this offer by the Corporation would result in an estimated increase in wage rates of about seven per cent during the one-year life of the proposed agreement.
4. Improvement in subsistence rates.
5. Increased shift differentials.
6. Minor changes and improvement to several other items.

That was the situation.

Mr. Speaker, I am advised that the only change in wage proposals made by the Union during the entire period of direct negotiations with the Corporation was a reduction on or about November 5, 1974 of their demand for a general wage increase from 20 per cent to 18 per cent across-the-board. Translated another way this was a reduction of approximately two percentage points on the total package, amounting to approximately 70 per cent.

On November 22nd the Union reduced their cost of living formula from \$8.70 per month per point change in the Regina Saskatoon consumer price index to \$6.95 per month per point. On December 23rd the Union advised the company that the company's offer of December 12th (the one that I have just outlined) had been rejected by its membership in a secret ballot vote and that:

The membership was giving the negotiating team a mandate to take whatever action they deemed necessary.

The following day, on December 24th, Christmas Eve, the Corporation asked the Union in writing if they intended to make a counter proposal to the Corporation's latest offer and indicated that it remained willing to meet the Union at any time. I am advised that no response was received from the Union. The Corporation followed up again on December 31st, on New Year's Eve, and again suggested a meeting between the negotiating committees and this time added the additional wrinkle that if the Union did not wish to meet with the Corporation that the Corporation and the Union might get together to seek the services of the mutually acceptable outside mediator.

On the morning of December 31st, 1974, the Union advised SPC that they were prepared to meet with the negotiating committee at approximately 2:00 p.m., Thursday, January 2, 1975 in order to discuss the question of mediation.

At that meeting the Union agreed to participate in a mediation effort and agreed to the mediator from the Canada Department of Labour, who had been suggested by the Corporation. This person was Mr. Bill Kelly of Ottawa, an Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour of Canada, in charge of arbitrations and conciliations - a distinguished and experienced labour relations man, and he came to Saskatchewan.

Intensive mediation efforts took place during the period between the evening of January 6th and late on the evening of January 10th, Friday. Throughout the mediation process, in which the mediator and the Deputy Minister of Labour for Saskatchewan, both participated, some concessions were made by the parties. However, the mediator was unable to bring forth a package, a package of all of the offers, which was acceptable to both the Union and the Corporation. The negotiations and the negotiating committee stopped meeting, a mediator was called, some concessions were made on points, but there was a failure to present a package to which both parties could agree.

A meeting was called by the mediator early on Friday, January 10th, four days ago. At that meeting I am advised the President of the Union, Local 2067, told the Minister in charge of the Power Corporation (who had at that time involved himself in an effort directly to settle peaceably), told the Minister in charge of the Power Corporation on Friday, January 10th, in the presence of the mediator, Mr. Kelly, the General Manager of the Power Corporation, the Deputy Minister of Labour of Saskatchewan, and the entire Union committee, that since an agreement had not been reached at that time the Union was obligated to phone their unit chairmen around the province to tell them that agreement had not been reached. The President of the Union advised further, those in attendance, that the day workers would leave their jobs at the end of the normal working day (on Friday), and that shift workers would remain until they could safely turn over the operating equipment to management of the Corporation, which would be more or less concluded on or about noon on Saturday, January 11th, the following day.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in spite of what I would characterize as a very strong strike threat, if not in fact an actual strike,

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the mediator was successful nevertheless in arranging two subsequent meetings in the hopes of achieving some settlement. At the end of the last meeting, late on January 10th, after the discussions took place and the mediation took place, the President of the Union advised the Minister in charge of the Power Corporation and others present, that as of Saturday noon, when all the Union members would in fact be totally on strike, all offers made by either the Union or the Saskatchewan Power Corporation in negotiations while they were still going, and after negotiations, in the mediation, would be 'off the table'. In effect, he told the parties, the Union stated that all the issues of the dispute would be outstanding, thereby reverting the parties to their original positions that I have outlined. And we know about the 1:30 p.m. call to unit chairmen.

The Saskatchewan Power Corporation acknowledged that statement that all offers would be off the table, and, Mr. Speaker, that in fact is the result, the offers were removed, the parties were restored to their original positions and that was the situation late, very late Friday evening when the efforts of the mediation failed.

Upon finding themselves faced with a serious strike threat Friday afternoon at 1:30 p.m., and with the extremely bad weather forecast for the next day, and as it happened it began on that day, Friday, the management of the Power Corporation had no other alternative but to dispatch all available non-union, out of scope personnel to the power stations and other important field locations to be ready to take over operations of the system.

By late Friday evening, 200 office personnel of all supervisory and professional categories were on their way through extremely high winds and blowing snow, to their assigned locations to join the additional approximately 150 field management staff, because the strike was on. The negotiations were off, the parties were back at their original positions. Most of these out of scope employees made their destinations Friday night, but several carloads were delayed by the storm, and in fact one carload finally reached its destination only Saturday morning.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as the blizzard reached maximum intensity on Saturday morning and Saturday noon, the time when the strike would be totally complete, the supervisory staff assumed operation of the total system. I don't need to tell anybody in this House, or anybody in Saskatchewan about the weather conditions in Saskatchewan in winter, period. I don't need to tell the people of Saskatchewan about the normal and usual winter conditions, let alone exceptional ones, as it so happened occurred on Friday, Saturday and into Sunday as well. Members know that weather conditions are normally severe, most Januarys in this province, and I can tell the Members of this House, those who perhaps weren't here, that on the weekend of January 10th, they were as deadly as any experienced in the past ten to twenty years. That's not to try to overdramatize the situation. Temperatures of 30 degrees below zero, combined with the wind velocity gusting to 60 miles per hour produced chill factors in the range of 110 degrees below zero. That was the situation on Saturday.

The Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy) says (as the surrogate Member for Rosthern says) - it's pretty cold. And it certainly

was.

During Saturday, Mr. Speaker, there were numerous reports of power outages, reported to the Corporation management. In widely scattered areas of the province - the worst being in the Estevan area, in the area around Prince Albert and the area in the Carrot River Valley. In total, the Corporation estimated that approximately 20,000 customers were out of service for varying periods, from a few minutes up to approximately 24 hours in these conditions. In the face of the weather conditions that existed, it would have been extremely difficult to repair the broken power lines quickly, even if the normal staff complement had been available, let alone the situation that was before us.

Many of the breaks were repaired by the field management staff who are qualified tradesmen, promoted to the ranks of out of scope, or management over the years. Some of the incidents, including the more serious ones where larger crews were necessary were repaired by the union members themselves, after they were able to obtain approval from the union office in Regina. All of these union employees, those that came out and out of scope, worked under very severe conditions of extreme cold and near zero visibility. Some union members helped in the crisis, some did not.

With the weather reports indicating that the extreme weather conditions were likely to continue, as happened to be the case on the weekend, and that similar winter weather of Saskatchewan could continue for a few more weeks anyway, the General Manager of the Power Corporation strongly expressed his concern that to continue to rely on the operation of the Corporation's electrical system, in a strike situation, with a limited number of staff, over any substantial period of time, was to court disaster.

Cabinet convened approximately at 10:00 o'clock on Saturday in the morning and met continuously until about 5:00 p.m. or so to consider all aspects of this problem - to receive the reports. It was at this stage that the Cabinet decided to recall the Legislature. Only after careful consideration of all the issues, the Premier acted in the public interest.

During the strike, the Corporation was unable, because of shortage of staff, to operate all power stations at full load and they, therefore, requested all customers to conserve electrical energy, particularly over the peak load periods at noon and in late afternoon and early evening. All of the Corporation's customers, including homes, commercial businesses and large industry co-operated to the fullest possible extent. It is estimated by the Corporation that large industrial loads which were dropped during peak load periods reduced the total load on the system by approximately 200 megawatts and that residential and commercial customers resulted in a reduction of another 50 to 75 megawatts of load. Mr. Speaker, in the strike situation and in the particular weather circumstance, without this co-operation and reduction in load, I am told that it may not have been possible for the electric service to have been maintained and a major province-wide power outage could certainly have been the result. That was the situation facing the Government Saturday noon, early Saturday afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, the hazards of interruptions to electric

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service anywhere under these conditions, to hospitals, to homes, to individuals, requires little elaboration. I don't need to paint the picture for the Members of an isolated farm home or a small hamlet with blocked roads and a vision of zero and no electricity.

Surely, all Members will agree with me that this was a clear case where the public interest was and is paramount to the interests of either the Union or the Corporation. That the need to act under these circumstances was clear and the duty on the Government was clear for all to see.

Mr. Speaker, was the free collective bargaining process given a full and complete chance to bring about this settlement without the introduction of this Session and the Bill? I think that has to be answered as well. I think I have answered and made out the case about the public interest, now I want to talk about the question of whether or not we have given the free collective bargaining settlement its full range to bring about the settlements as it does normally and usually in labour-management areas.

I answer to that question clearly 'yes' that the free collective bargaining system was given a full opportunity to settle this dispute. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that negotiations began early in October, 1974 and as I have outlined. Over three months have now transpired. There have been many negotiating sessions; there have been many proposals and counter-proposals. When the negotiations broke off we brought in the services of a highly skilled mediator, someone outside of Saskatchewan, impartial to any of the interests, one who is experienced in this area. After meetings and persuasions some progress was made, mediation continued that didn't produce results. The offers were off the table; the parties were restored to their original positions and even when the Minister in charge of the Corporation himself entered at the last hour to try to salvage an agreement, the situation was, as I have outlined, the withdrawal of services by the Union.

Mr. Speaker, I reiterate to the people of Saskatchewan and to the Members opposite, the scenario of negotiations, of mediations, of the attempt by the Minister to get a solution if at all possible, and the fact that the Union President told all present that all offers are off the table and the parties were restored to their original positions; at that stage, the operation was over.

On Sunday, January 11, 1975, the Cabinet, Mr. Speaker, met again in yet another lengthy session, to receive reports and to take a look at the overall story. At that time the Union had made another proposal which actually suggested more money to some employees in some categories than the amounts which had been discussed on Friday, the night that all the offers were removed from the table, and there was a cessation of the operations. Clearly, this was difficult to act on. It was based on the erroneous assumption that something was still left on the table after Friday. On Monday a suggestion was made to arbitrate some items of the package that were discussed or a form of a package that was discussed. Again, the idea was well motivated and well intentioned, but based on the wrong assumption that the items were not cleared off the table, as agreed to by the parties late Friday night.

As late as last evening, Mr. Speaker, the Minister in

charge of the Corporation proposed a voluntary agreement to binding arbitration on all aspects of the dispute. The original position of the parties as had been agreed to - if that had been accepted the Session and the legislation would not have had to be proceeded with. This was not acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, has the free collective bargaining been given an opportunity to operate? Yes, I say! Every fair-minded citizen would agree that full and free collective bargaining was given a thorough opportunity to bring about a peaceful settlement of the dispute. Still, the result is no agreement and a strike; those are the facts in this vital public utility at this critical time of the year.

There is no other avenue left open to the Government, but the Session and this legislation, this special legislation for the special circumstances that I have outlined. The Government having determined the public interest, and the Corporation having exhausted the avenues of collective bargaining fully, the Government had no other alternative but to act, and act decisively. That is our duty, and that is why the House is sitting today.

Now, Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Steuart: — Also there is an election!

Mr. Romanow: — Well the Leader of the Opposition can think in terms of political matters, but we are not thinking in terms of political matters.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — The Leader of the Opposition can talk about politics. He is a master of the political aspect.

Mr. Speaker, you see how the political thinking of the Liberal Party is that somehow the calling of the Legislature and a Bill to end a strike with compulsory arbitration is politically good. Somehow the Leader of the Opposition says that this type of legislation is good. He argues that this is the type of thing we should be doing to win votes. That is what he is saying to the people and the workers of Saskatchewan that we should be doing this to gain votes. I reject that concept and I think everybody in Saskatchewan should reject that concept of the Member opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I want now to turn to the question of the Bill. This Bill is carefully drafted so as to not encroach on the rights of unions any more than is absolutely necessary to deal with this one situation. Before a detailed review of the Act, permit me a few general comments about the Act.

First, the scope of the Act is limited. I underline and reiterate 'limited', limited only to the issue of the present dispute. That is to say, the Act does not cast a wide net to catch other employees and other employers.

Secondly, the Act by its nature is a 'one-shot' Act, if I can describe it in those terms. Once the procedures are completed under the Bill, it is no longer the law of the land.

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It cannot be resurrected to be used against other employees and employers as a matter of general course. That is clearly written into this Bill.

Thirdly, the arbitrator is given free hand to hear and determine all the matters before him. We have tried to be extra careful not to prescribe limitations on him and have specifically stated in Section 9 that he is not to consider any previous proposals by the parties so he can have the full freedom to make the decision he thinks is just and proper. We are extremely fortunate to have had His honour Judge Benjamin Moore of Swift Current of the District Court of the Province of Saskatchewan, agree to act as arbitrator of the Bill. He is experienced and I am sure all Members agree, impartial.

Fourthly, the penalties are reasonable. This Bill does not carry with it penalties of huge daily fines against individual workers. It does not threaten the decertification of the union for non-compliance with the Act.

Mr. Steuart: — I should think not.

Mr. Romanow: — He didn't think that when he introduced Bill 2, Mr. Speaker, but now he thinks not. We don't want any statements by the Liberal Opposition with respect to this matter, unless they can explain to us the decertification provisions, the \$1,000 per day for every continuing day or part thereof that was in Bill 2, if they think these provisions are too harsh. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that these penalty provisions are modest to say the least, but reasonable. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to everybody in this House, that this legislation in terms of this section is correctly based on the assumption that Saskatchewan trade unionists are peaceful and law-abiding citizens and will obey the law of the land. We work on that assumption.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the proposed legislation does not give the Cabinet wide and general and sweeping powers to pass an Order-in-Council, to declare an emergency in an essential service, so-called, in a particular area, that has been the case in previous legislation in the history of this province. The very nature of this Bill demands that any curtailment of the right to strike, the very nature of this Bill that the curtailment of that valuable right to strike be fully and adequately explained to the people of Saskatchewan through their elected representatives, not by Order-in-Council and Cabinet meeting privacy. We have to come to this House to explain our case to you, the Members of the House and the people of Saskatchewan. This Bill and indeed this debate gives Members the full opportunity to debate, as I have said, the balancing of the public interest on the one hand as against the interests of the right to strike on the other hand. I am confident that the people of this province agree with their Government, agree with Premier Blakeney and the Cabinet, that a case has been made out in favour of protecting the public interest in this instance, that this action gives an opportunity for all to cast their vote on this very difficult and weighty decision.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to move into detail. I am going to be somewhat detailed because of the importance of the Bill

and give a clause-by-clause review of the Act. Members may want to ask detailed questions and, of course, full opportunity will be given in Committee of the Whole.

Sections 1 and 2 of the printed Bill set out the short title of the Act and definitions which are required for the Act. I might say, Mr. Speaker, that the very nature of the argument that I have been making out, the paramount public interest is, I think, embodied in this short title of the Act. Definitions are also included in Section 2. Corporation, of course, means the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Employee, is an employee of the Corporation who is in a unit for which the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local Union 2067 has been certified as the bargaining agent. Union, of course, is the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 2067.

Section 3 requires that immediately upon the coming into force of this Act, that is when the Act is assented to, the employees are required to return to work and the Corporation is required to resume in a normal way the employment of the employees.

Section 4 requires the officers or representatives of the Union who are the actual bargaining agents for the Union to notify the employees that any order or declaration they may have given to them to go on strike has now become invalid as of the time the Act comes into force.

Section 5 is a section setting out certain prohibitions dealing with the resumption of work of employees and, for example, it prohibits any officer or representative of the Union from in any manner preventing any employee from resuming his employment after the Act comes into force. On the other side of the fence, the Corporation is similarly prohibited from refusing to allow an employee the right to return to work or to discharge that employee or in any way discipline that employee who is on a strike when this Act comes into force. The obligations on both parties in this type of situation falls, I think, fairly.

Section 6 extends the old collective bargaining agreement from the time of the expiration of that agreement to the day on which a new agreement is entered into by the Corporation and the Union. Mr. Speaker, I want to stress the following remarks. This new agreement may come about by reason of the Corporation and the Union agreeing and concluding a collective bargaining agreement before the arbitrator has rendered a decision under the Act. If that doesn't come about then of course the agreement can come about by reason of the Corporation and the Union entering into a collective bargaining agreement incorporating the decision of the arbitrator under the Act. Section 6 also provides that the basis on which the employees were employed under the old agreement continue for the period that the old agreement is extended under this Section.

Section 7 sets out certain prohibitions respecting the period during which the old collective bargaining agreement is extended. This Section prohibits any lockouts by the Corporation or any declaration by union representatives for a strike and also prohibits an employee from participating in a strike during the period of the extension of the old agreement.

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I will take Sections 8, 9 and 10 together because they flow in that way. These Sections provide the arbitration procedure for the dispute between the Corporation and the Union. Section 8 requires the Corporation and the Union to submit to final and binding arbitration under the Act of the whole dispute before them. Within 15 days after this Act comes into force the Corporation and the Union are required to send a notice to the arbitrator under the Act setting out the matters that they want the arbitrator to examine and to decide. Section 9, as I have said, names specifically in the legislation for the approval or the rejection by the Members of the House, of his Honour Judge Ben Moore of the District Court as the arbitrator, who shall examine into and decide the matters that are to be arbitrated and which are set out on the notices which he receives from the Corporation and the Union and any other matters which he thinks are necessary to bring about a just and proper settlement. In the event that Judge Moore is unable to act for any reason or is incapacitated the Cabinet then has the power by Order-in-Council to name a substitute. The arbitrator may determine his own procedure but he has to give the parties, that is the Corporation and the Union, every opportunity to present evidence to him, to make submissions respecting that evidence and to be represented if they desire in the arbitration by legal counsel.

Mr. Speaker, I want specifically to draw to the attention of you and the House that the arbitrator is not to consider any proposals made prior to the time that the Act comes into force in examining into and deciding the matters of dispute between the Corporation and the Union. Obviously this gives him the widest latitude to make what is the proper and just settlement or conclusion under all of the circumstances before him. The arbitrator is further required to examine and decide the matters in dispute within one month after he has begun the arbitration proceedings. This period may be extended by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council where it is clearly necessary or absolutely necessary for the purposes of the arbitration on these very clear grounds being made out.

Section 9 contemplates that the Corporation and the Union might agree on some or perhaps even all of the matters in dispute before the arbitrator renders his decision as I have outlined. If this should happen, the parties will notify the arbitrator and the arbitration is at an end. When the arbitrator has rendered his decision, however, the parties are required by Section 10 to conclude a new collective bargaining agreement incorporating the terms of the decision of the arbitrator.

Section 11 is an enforcement section which allows the Corporation to apply to a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench to secure an order from a judge requiring an employee who has not returned to work, to return to work in the unlikely event that that should happen. As well, Section 11 allows the Union or the employees on their side to make a similar application to the Court of Queen's Bench to secure an order from that court requiring the Corporation to resume the employment of a worker or an employer involved. However, we hope that Section 11 will never be required.

Section 12, Mr. Speaker, is the offence and penalty section of the Act on which I have made some comments. I should like to elaborate a little further here. This provides that persons contravening the Act are guilty of offences and it sets out the penalties for an offence created by the Corporation or

person on behalf of the Corporation. An offence committed by the Corporation or an officer or a person of the Corporation is punishable by fine of up to \$1,000 and a continuing fine of \$200 per day. Where the offence is committed by an employee, the employee is liable to a fine of not more than \$100 and a daily fine of \$25 a day. Where an offence is committed under some special section of the Bill, the fine is \$250 as the maximum and a further fine of \$50 per day for a continuing offence.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply tell the House that penalty provisions in any Bill are distasteful and particularly in this Bill but in order to give the Bill meaning such a provision is necessary. As I have said in my remarks I believe the penalty section is very modest and reasonable. They are in almost all cases substantially less than any of the employees could suffer or an employer could suffer under the provisions of The Saskatchewan Trade Union Act, both as it was under the Liberal Government and as it is under our Government. Someone might say well what happens if someone doesn't pay the fine? I don't believe that we will get to that stage; I hope that we won't get to the stage of a fine and I am confident that we won't. In the highly unlikely possibility that that does come about, what happens if there is a default of payment of fine? Well, in the event of default, the person is not liable to imprisonment for failure to pay the fine. In default all that is done is that a copy of the judgment assessing the fine is filed in the District Court and enforced as a judgment of the District Court. By judgment of the District Court is meant the normal civil remedies which a judge of the District Court has with respect to a writ of execution or things of that nature.

Now, Mr. Speaker, those are the provisions with respect to penalties and I know the Members opposite will act responsibly in this debate. But I say to the Members opposite that under all the circumstances these provisions are very reasonable indeed.

Section 13 sets out that Corporation and the Union shall each bear its own cost of the arbitration and the arbitrator shall receive an allowance for travelling and other expenses as may be specified by the Cabinet. This is to conform with the Judges' Act and the requirements there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I want to say a word or two about Section 14 because I think it is especially important. Section 14 is a coming into force section and provides for the Act to come into force on the day of assent and hereafter follows what I think is an important provision for Members to keep in mind. It comes into force on the day of assent and it remains in force until the day on which the arbitrator files with the Provincial Secretary a notice that the agreement has been concluded between the Corporation and the Union. As I have said that agreement can be concluded one of two ways; either by the parties agreeing and concluding an agreement prior to the arbitrator and without reference to the arbitrator, or if that doesn't work, after the arbitrator has held and determined and concluded the issues. This Section provides that the moment that happens the arbitrator gives notice to the Provincial Secretary, he files a notice in the Saskatchewan Gazette of that report and the Act ceases to operate. It does not exist as the law of the land, it does not exist again, it has completed the task to which the Members of this House have been

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assembled to deal with the urgency of the public interest and this unresolved dispute can be dealt with and dealt with at once.

Mr. Speaker these are the provisions of the Bill. I am sorely tempted to talk at length about the provisions and the approach of this New Democratic Party Government in this very difficult situation, an approach as contrasted by my friends opposite and their approach. I am sorely tempted to do so but I don't think that is as important as the speedy resolution of the situation before us here.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I ask the co-operation of all Members of this House for the speedy passage of the Bill. Let's get the Corporation operating in its usual normal fashion as quickly as we can. Let's get a contract for the men and women as quickly as we can. In closing I repeat again this Government's commitment to the principles of free collective bargaining, make no mistake about that. I repeat also, Mr. Speaker, this Government's, any government's, overriding duty and responsibility is to act in the overall interest of the public. This Government has been elected, has the honour and privilege to serve on behalf of all of the citizens of Saskatchewan. I believe that this Bill achieves both objectives.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 28 be now read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. J.G. Richards (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, the Minister made the case that this is a dire emergency based on the statement to him by the head of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. I think that that evidence is of direct impact as to whether we should or should not vote for this Bill. Would the Minister be willing to see the Bill referred to the Crown Corporations' Committee wherein representation and testimony could be made by the relevant authorities of the Power Corporation and the Union as precisely what is the situation is to whether this is an emergency?

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I regret to advise the Hon. Member that I cannot agree with the suggestion. I believe that the responsibility rests on the Government and on the Members, all of the Members of the Legislature in second reading and in Committee of the Whole and through the third reading procedure, to make the decision that we have and to have it approved or rejected. Accordingly I believe that the danger of further delays, the dangers which are attached to that outweigh any possible advantages suggested by the Member.

Mr. Richards: — I appreciate that I don't want to delay the proceedings by using procedural means in that we could all of us as individual Members have prevented procedure with this Bill by not giving unanimous consent. I should like to ask the Minister, is he willing to permit a second question?

Mr. Speaker: — The motion before the House now is that the Bill be read a second time. I think the Hon. Member's discussion would be better raised at the time that the Attorney General has it

considered in Committee.

Mr. Richards: — Mr. Speaker, I am not attempting to dispute your ruling on this, but we have allowed special procedures to proceed with this Bill hastily and it is in that context that I should like before voting in principle to have the maximum information available. If the Minister is willing I should like to address one final question to him.

Mr. Speaker: — As long as you make it short.

Mr. Richards: — Agreed. The second question to the Minister is: You have given the information of the negotiations up to the end of the year 1974, would you give us the relevant information about the details of negotiations that occurred during the period of mediation in the preceding weeks? We have the information as to what were the negotiations and the counter offers in the year 1974, we do not know what were the offers according to the Government during this week of mediation.

Mr. Romanow: — I can't say a blanket yes or no to the Member. There were just too many offers and counter offers and packages that were shaped and reshaped, rejected and argued about and so forth and so it would be impossible for me to give a blanket yes or no. The situation was in my judgment, and this is subject to debate, and the judgment of the Government's late Friday night when all was said and done that at the request of the Union, all offers were dropped.

Mr. D.G. Steuart (Leader of the Opposition): — "Mr. Speaker, this Bill is a confession of failure on the part of the Government. It is a confession of the Government's belief that coercion is the way of the world. It is a declaration to all employees in this province who bargain for their salaries that this Government has little sympathy or concern for their position. It reveals that the Government is a government wedded to pressure and coercion."

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, those aren't my words, those are the words of Premier Blakeney when he was talking in this House September 7th, 1966 on the occasion of the introduction by the former Liberal Government of Bill 2. That's what he said at that time, that's the exact position which he has reversed with the introduction of this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, before I go into the body of my remarks this afternoon, I think we have to question very briefly why the Attorney General is introducing this Bill and not the Minister in charge of the Power Corporation (Mr. Thorson), nor the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder). Or in fact why the Premier himself doesn't face his responsibility in a very serious situation like this and introduce the Bill and guide it through the House. He has some skill, we are informed, as a lawyer, he is the man who made all the statements on the

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television, on the radio and in the newspaper, or almost all of them, leading up to this Special Session, leading up to the introduction of this Bill. Now I presume he will sit strangely silent And let some of his other Members carry the ball. This, of course, is typical of the Premier, he keeps that low profile, hides behind his desk, and then if anybody gets in trouble, it's fine to let Roy get in trouble, it's fine to let Kim, who is always in trouble, I think he was born in trouble, or anyone else as long as the Premier presents that nice Mr. Clean image to the public, he wouldn't do any harm to anyone at any time. The truth is he hasn't got the intestinal fortitude to stand up here and introduce this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Why not Mr. Thorson? He is the man who first got rid of the Roumanian Tractor Factory, next he brought the oil industry to a halt and now by God he has got the Power Corporation on the brink of grinding to a halt. He has been an absolute total and abject failure at everything he has taken on for the Government. It is no wonder they don't want him to pilot this Bill through the House. The only other reason I can think of is that they must consider that Roy Romanow has the safest seat. You know he was on television the other night doing one of his usual performances and he loves to use the word 'scenario'. He says, "That's the scenario today." He loves that idea of the scenario because to him it is all play acting. That is why he brought this Bill in today because they can't find anyone else on that side of the House. They are sitting there in stunned silence, even when he turned around and gave them the old signal, come on fellows, start clapping, I am thumping dirty Liberals. They sat there and they looked as if they were candidates for a transfusion from somewhere. I don't know where but I have never seen them looking sicker or sadder and I don't blame them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — I look forward to hearing from the Minister of Labour. I am going to quote this afternoon from some of his great speeches, when he stood up so proudly to say that he would fight anywhere in the province on behalf of collective bargaining.

I wonder where Mr. Smishek is? He may be the first man admitted to the new hospital over there. I think he's so sick he was afraid to show up today and I don't blame him.

Mr. Speaker, why Mr. Romanow, why the Attorney General? Well I think the Attorney General is the champion twister on that side. If there is anybody who can take a bad case, and, believe me, if the NDP ever had a bad case, this is it, and try to put a good face on it, it is Mr. Romanow. They must try to come up with something that is politically acceptable to what they want to do, which is to convince the public that they are ready to act against the labour union: or against anyone else in the public's best interest and still hold on to their basic support that elected them, elected the Premier, elected him the leader of the New Democratic Party. If it hadn't been for the trade union movement Mr. Romanow would have been sitting there and Mr. Blakeney somewhere else. Also if it hadn't been for the trade union movement and the people they brought in

from all over this country, they may not have been there at all.

The Assembly recessed until 2:30 o'clock p.m.

Mr. Speaker, before I begin the Premier wants to speak on a Point of Privilege.

STATEMENTS

RECORDING OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition directed two questions to me this morning, one dealing with the Debates and Proceedings and the recording of the proceedings in the Committee of the Whole. I have done some checking and that has been done at times in the past and accordingly I would suggest that we do that and instruct the staff of the House to proceed on that basis.

RESOLUTION RE LABOUR-MANAGEMENT DISPUTES

Mr. Blakeney: — The Leader of the Opposition directed a resolution to me indicating that he would like to introduce a resolution and debate it, as I understood it, following the disposition of the Bill before us. I have now had an opportunity to look at the resolution. I must say I don't agree with the statements of facts contained therein or the alleged facts contained therein but that is not the point. The point is whether or not we should debate it. The resolution calls for a commission to be set up to find negotiating procedures that provide an alternative to strikes and lockouts and that maintains the principle and integrity of free collective bargaining. That's a proposition which has baffled people in Canada and in the western world for a good number of years and I know that if a commission could solve it, it would have been solved at the Federal level long ago because they have the same problems.

The point I am making is that it is not a simple problem that he raises. The simple appointment of a commission will not solve it. The commission, if we appoint one, should have the benefit of the views of all Hon. Members and when I say views I mean the considered views of all Hon. Members and not one that they will put together on the back of an envelope tonight. I, therefore, feel that we would be contributing more to the solution of this problem if the Hon. Member would put his resolution on the Order Paper. It would then be known to all Members; perhaps the Clerk could send out copies of the blues or the whites so that we all would have it so that when we resume in a few weeks we could have a debate on the matter, all Hon. Members having had an opportunity to consider the matter and offer such views as they think should be considered by the commission. Accordingly, holding that view, I am not prepared to offer the accommodation to debate it following the Bill before us.

Mr. Stuart: — Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed in the attitude of the Premier although I am not particularly surprised. Of course it has eluded a great many people who have tried to find a better solution for labour and management relations than those that now exist. Of course it is recognized that such a commission set up by this or any other Legislature may not be able to

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come up with any solution that is better than the one we have now. As Churchill said about parliamentary democracy to paraphrase him:

It is a terrible system, it's full of weaknesses, it doesn't work very well and the only thing to recommend it is that it is much, much better than anything else that has ever been found so far.

This may be true of the present system of open collective bargaining. However, I will deal with that later but I just want to say that when we were the Government we tried to find some method and I am talking now about those industries, those services that affect the actual lives of the people of this province, where a withdrawal of services endangers the well-being of the people. Those are the kind of services I am talking about and I think there is a good and sufficient reason why we should deal with that at this present time. As I pointed out then and I point out now, there needs to be no haste, the Session is called and we are prepared to stay and debate it. I see nothing wrong with starting the debate and if it was felt after a considerable length of time, several Members having been heard and we wanted to adjourn it and give it second thoughts until we come back later on this year, that would meet with no objection on this side of the House I am sure. The point is that we are in this situation now and it is possible that having arrived in this very unfortunate situation we may find people, not just people in political parties, not just people in the trade union movement, not just people in management, in the general public, it may be that all parties and this includes everyone in our society might be ready to take a new and another look. A solution someday will be found I am sure, a better solution than we have now and people are looking for it. People in the trade union movement are looking for it. People in management are looking for it. Hopefully people in all political parties are looking for it. It has escaped certainly our political party and very obviously it has escaped that political party up to this point. However, I intend to try again to bring this resolution in. I hope that the Members on that side have second thoughts about it and allow us to debate it now when the subject is before us in a most pertinent and a most devastating way, as a matter of fact.

The Assembly continued the interrupted debate on Bill No. 28 - An Act respecting a certain Dispute between Saskatchewan Power Corporation and certain of its employees.

Mr. Steuart: — I said before noon, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill, and I can do no better than to quote the Premier when he was then in the opposition, "Is an admission of failure of this Government." When the NDP went to the people they received the support, not just the passive support but the active support of the labour movement, of men and women in the union movement and the working people, a great many of them, all over this province. They worked I think probably harder and more dedicatedly than certainly I had ever seen them work in any election. They worked to defeat us, a negative approach, but they did something else, they worked to elect the NDP. And they did it because the NDP had promised them something. I mean this in the best sense of the word. They had promised there would be a new deal for labour. There would be labour peace. Now let's look at the record. Let's look at how they accomplished this. Let's

look at how they have kept this promise.

In 1971, the last year the Liberals were the Government of this province, there were 1,924 man days lost in the Province of Saskatchewan due to strikes. The year before there were 54,000; the year before 32,000; the year before 45,000; the year before 15,000. In 1966 there were 24,000 and in 1965 there were 19,000; and in 1964 there were 4,620 man days lost. They averaged a little under 25,000 man days lost due to strikes during the seven years we were the Government.

Now let's look at the record for the NDP.

I am sure Mr. Snyder, the Minister of Labour, will have a chance to speak and explain his changed attitude about collective bargaining and compulsory arbitration. A change, a metamorphosis has taken place in the last three years since he became a Minister. He is not a railroad engineer any more, he is now a big Cabinet Minister with a big salary and a big car. He has changed his attitude, he has changed his station in life. He has changed his attitude.

Let's look at their record. In 1972 - 74,894 man days lost because of strikes in the Province of Saskatchewan. In 1973 - 32,970. In 1974 - in nine months in 1974 from January to September 30th, 1974, in the Province of Saskatchewan 300,727 man days lost due to strikes, over 300,000 in nine months. It is the worst record in the history of this province and I am sure that when you make a comparison between Saskatchewan and any other province it probably is one of the worst records in this whole nation.

Well, that has been the record of this NDP Government who went up and down the length and breadth of Saskatchewan saying, "There is labour dispute. The Liberals are divisive, they set management against labour, we are going to come down on the side of labour and see that the working people get a good deal. We're not going to touch collective bargaining. We are not going to use force, we are not going to use compulsion and we will bring labour peace to this province." The record speaks for itself, it speaks louder than any Member on that side, it speaks volumes. They have failed and they have failed miserably.

To do them credit up until this point in time they have never used force. In fact most of the time, not only did the Minister of Labour not use force, he didn't use anything. In fact it was almost difficult to determine whether he was moving or not. He makes Lionel Coderre look like a giant in the Department of Labour, I can tell you that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — The only man he moved faster than was the other unfortunate Minister involved in this dispute and that is the Minister of Industry, Mr. Thorson, who doesn't move forward at all, in fact he goes backwards.

Mr. Speaker, this strike should never have been. It should never have taken place. Why did it? Well, the Attorney General says that the Union was responsible. The Union was greedy, the Union didn't bargain in good faith. He put the blame squarely on the Union.

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An Hon. Member: He didn't say that.

Mr. Steuart: — Oh, you can talk what you want but the union fellows are here, they can listen. You may think you are smarter than they are, Mr. Attorney General. You may be a slick city lawyer, you may be able to fool some of the people, but the words came out of your own mouth. I can understand them and I am sure they can understand them. You placed the blame for this unfortunate strike squarely on the back of the union membership. Now maybe it belongs there I don't know. Maybe it belongs there, but you've got some explaining to do. The Minister of Industry has some explaining to do. The Premier has some explaining to do. Why did this strike take place? Maybe the Union was misled. I wouldn't blame them if they had have been misled. The IBEW may have looked at the record of this Government and I am sure they did and said, all we have to do is rattle the sword or shake a fist and get tough and Mr. Blakeney and his Government will fold up like a deck of cards. They haven't stood up to anybody yet. In fact I think that is why we are here today because he has finally decided, little Allan has finally decided that he had to take a stand. He backed up and he backed up and he looked around and there was the election. He was on the edge of the cliff. Somebody's voice said, "Allan you had better take a stand, you've got to quit running, you've got to stand up." So what happens? Well, I think that the IBEW union membership could be forgiven if they misinterpreted the acts of the Government, misread them, and were led to believe that if they sat down and said, we may strike, we will strike, then this Government would give in.

Just take a look at their record. The Department of Highways, February 4, 1974, 30 technicians and some other people called a study session and walked out. They wanted certain demands. What happened? The Government collapsed, gave in to them. Two thousand, five hundred SGEA members walked off their jobs for one day in support of their union's demands for a 40-hour week. They got what they wanted. The university staged strike. Let the Government not try to pretend that they weren't at the back of that in the negotiations. They were and they got what they wanted. Approximately 300 DNS employees on September 3rd, 1974 walked off their jobs and called a so-called study session because of the Government's delay in negotiating special Northern Project Allowances. And again the Government rushed back to the table and give them what they wanted.

Again the Saskatchewan Government Employees Association on November 9th and 250 Saskatchewan Liquor Board employees staged a one-day walkout demanding a \$50 a month cost of living increase. Again what happened? Again there was quick, rapid negotiation and a settlement was made. Twenty one SGEA members walked out for half a day working for the Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Commission. That was settled. The Saskatchewan Telecommunications, over 300 SaskTel employees walked out January 23rd, 1974, a half-day study session protesting delays in bargaining. The Government smartened up and that was settled to the satisfaction of that union.

Department of Highways in Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert, staged a half-day walkout protesting contract offers in February, 1974 and the Government very quickly settled that one. Really the only one that I can find that didn't get settled when they walked out, were 50 paramedical employees in

the Health Science Association in Saskatoon. They have been protesting now for a year because they want to form their own union. They believed what the NDP said, that any group of people could form a union and have their own collective bargaining unit. But these people, there are only 50 of them, they were turned down.

As I say, the IBEW could be excused if they were convinced that a little show of strength and the Government would collapse. Why didn't they? It happened with everybody else so why didn't they? Well, let's see what the head of the Union has to say. He was interviewed and he pointed out that they had an agreement, or thought they had an agreement. Alf Hill, president of Local 2067, IBEW, said and I quote:

Our reaction is that we don't feel it is necessary even to have this strike, that we had a verbal agreement basically settled Friday night at 7 o'clock. This was with top management officials of the SPC and Kim Thorson, Cabinet Minister in charge. The Cabinet turned this down therefore in doing that, basically they forced us to go on strike and since then with the way things have gone I am publicly challenging Premier Blakeney to give Kim Thorson, Minister in charge of the SPC, the authorization to sign the verbal agreement that we had. If he would do this I am quite sure our Members would be back to work on the vote and the settlement that we arrived at at that point in time.

I think it needs a little examination. I understand very clearly the Cabinet has the final word of authority in regard to Crown corporations and must have, won't give it up and shouldn't give it up. I also understand the principle of a responsible Cabinet and the principle behind putting a Cabinet Minister as the Chairman of the board for these various Crown corporations. But surely in a responsible government, with a responsible Minister, when he goes to bargain in good faith and he arrives at a verbal agreement, he can expect and the union can expect that that agreement will be ratified and backed up by the Cabinet. In fact, I can't understand Mr. Thorson's silence unless he needs all this time to think up some excuse, some reason for his misleading the Union, and I think that is what happened, or for his failure to tell the Cabinet, or for what I think is closer to the truth, the fact that it could have been a setup from day one. When the Cabinet rejected the agreement Friday night knowing there would be a strike, knowing that storm warnings were out and that it would be the worst blizzard in probably two or three or four or five or maybe ten years, I say that they used this crisis of the blizzard, of the weather conditions to strengthen their position with total disregard for the welfare of the Union and absolute disregard for the welfare and the safety of the people of the province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Why did they turn down that agreement? Why did he make that agreement? Did they double cross him or in fact did he know very well when he went into that meeting, almost regardless of what was agreed to, unless the Union or those men representing the Union were prepared to give in totally to Government demands, did he know very well that when he took it back to the

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Cabinet that they were in fact prepared to go all the way with this fight and there were hoping that this Union, at this time, both weatherwise and January, 1975 election year, would give them this opportunity. I wonder who in Cabinet voted against this? I wonder how many of the Cabinet Ministers voted against it? Well, it's hard to say. Did the majority vote against it? I wonder if they took it to the caucus. By the look of the sad faces over there I've never seen them sitting so quietly and so sad - I'm not sure they knew anything about it. I am not sure they weren't just as surprised as we were and the public was when this strike happened. It was just like that and the Session was called.

Now let's see if Mr. Snyder (I understand he is going speak later on in the debate), I couldn't find it believable that he could stay silent - let's see what he had to say. I want to read into the record of this House some of the statements he made when he so proudly came in to rescind Bill 2, some of the commitments he made, and he did make commitments, Mr. Speaker, I am quoting Mr. Snyder, speaking in this House, the Minister of Labour, August 2, 1971 and here's what he said:

I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that it may be considered somewhat out of the ordinary but the first legislative act of the new Minister of Labour should be to introduce a Bill to repeal a labour law. However, I make no apology at all. If there ever was an occasion I wish it was possible to be constructive by destroying something, this is that occasion, and I feel certain the overwhelming majority of Saskatchewan citizens will agree.

The Essential Services Emergency Act, Mr. Speaker, has been at best unnecessary, an unnecessary statute and its worst, it has been a mechanism which has undermined the entire concept of collective bargaining.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, it is doubtful if other action in my career, can be the source of greater satisfaction than the repeal of this particular piece of legislation.

Well, he goes on to say this:

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that no genuine emergency has arisen since the passing of this statute in 1966 . . .

It was passed at the time that the SPC were on strike, the same as they are now. I just put that in:

. . . nor is one likely to develop in the future. I go on quoting Mr. Snyder:

In no case has there been a refusal to make provisions for service, the absence of which would place life or property in jeopardy. The Act was originally introduced in 1966 to terminate arbitrarily a strike of employees of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Since that time the former Liberal Government has consistently employed scare tactics designed to delude members of the public into believing that the Act was necessary in order to safeguard their lives. It has been implied for instance, Mr. Speaker, that strikes could result in the elimination of heat and power in midwinter.

I stop there for a minute. I just go back a few minutes ago when Mr. Romanow spoke, when he implied the very same thing, in fact, that we have to save the people of Saskatchewan in the dead of winter. He said, "Can you imagine what would happen to poor little farmer out in the country, his electricity shut off, his road blown in." Who is using the scare tactics? I go on and quote Mr. Snyder:

It has been suggested that people may die because hospital facilities are unavailable. I suggest to you tonight, Mr. Speaker, that that is not only blatant nonsense, but it constitutes an insult to the integrity of all Saskatchewan working people, both in unions and those who are non-unionized.

Now get this, Mr. Speaker, this is Mr. Snyder still speaking:

Surely, Mr. Speaker, no honest person could surely entertain the belief that any responsible Saskatchewan citizen, union member or otherwise could in any way knowingly contribute to the death or injury of his fellow man. Union leaders have consistently made it clear that genuine essential services will be maintained in the event of strike action in every case in use in this province in which life or property has been endangered. This has been done often at considerable inconvenience to the union members involved.

Exactly what the union leaders and membership said to the NDP when they said:

This action of the Government is unnecessary, there is no danger, our members will go out and they will protect life, limb and property.

Exactly what they said today, yesterday and the day before.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Let's see what else Mr. Snyder had to say about collective bargaining. In the same debate, in the same speech, and I quote:

To be effective, Mr. Speaker, and to permit the orderly and progressive development of the Canadian economy the collective bargaining process must be allowed to operate in a free and unrestrictive way. Its success is dependent upon an independent trade union movement. If bargaining is to be fair and meaningful each side must have some bargaining power and each side must be unimpeded by domination by each other or by other outside influences.

What did Mr. Snyder say in the Cabinet? Did he vote against it? Well if he did, then I don't know why he hasn't resigned. If he didn't vote against it, then he has broken faith with the union people that put him there - if he did vote against it, then he has no other course but to resign. Let's see what else he said:

If employees and employers disagree on matters of wages and working conditions, the employees may refuse to work or the employer may refuse to offer employment on the

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grounds that terms are not acceptable. The right to strike amounts, Mr. Speaker, to a simultaneous exercise of rights of the individual workers to withdraw their labour if they regard conditions of work to be unsuitable.

What happened to your belief, what happened to your principles? What happened during 1971 when you made this statement and today, or yesterday, or the day before when you obviously voted in favour in the Cabinet to go back on the word given by one of your colleagues and forced the IBEW bargaining team into this situation and now come into this House and support compulsory arbitration, the very thing you talked against in this speech.

Mr. Snyder went on in the same debate:

This is not to suggest, Mr. Speaker, the strike weapon should be used casually or irresponsibly. It represents I believe, a very serious failure on the part of negotiators to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement. It is not a step to be taken lightly and it is not regarded as such. The employees are only too aware that immediately when they walk off the jobs their income ceases. However, it must be accepted that there are circumstances under which an employer will sometimes refuse to consider justifiable improvements in working conditions and under those circumstances and on those occasions members have no resource other than to withdraw their labour.

This is Mr. Snyder three years ago. Where is he now? Let's see about some other Cabinet Ministers - oh, they went on and on and I could quote pages and pages. The Minister of Labour, telling all and sundry then and before he was elected as a Member of that Government, how he would protect the unimpeded right of open, free collective bargaining without outside interference by any party, especially the Government.

I see Mr. Cowley is away. Mr. Cowley is a Member of Cabinet, but he wasn't then I wonder if he voted in favour of this strike. I wonder if he voted in favour of turning his back on the Union demands. Let's see what he had to say back then. I am now quoting Mr. Cowley:

Mr. Speaker, Bill 2 must go. I would like for a minute to turn to the whole question of compulsory arbitration. The strike is as important a part of the collective bargaining system as has been mentioned. The threat of strike and the threat of a lockout is what enables a system to function. If the working man does not have the right to withdraw his services, I ask the Members opposite what he has left to bargain with. Compulsory arbitration won't work. When you make it known that the decision can be left to an arbitrator bargaining in good faith stops.

That was the same Mr. Cowley, in 1971. I wonder if he voted for it.

Let's turn to another fearless labour leader, Mr. Smishek. What did Mr. Smishek have to say? Mr. Speaker, Mr. Smishek said on that occasion:

I want to underline a few important points that we would do well to consider. I want to emphasize that compulsory arbitration is never (that's the word - 'never'), a good

answer to the resolution of labour-management problems. Studies and experience over many years in other countries have clearly shown that compulsory arbitration will not work

Then he went on to say:

While Saskatchewan has had very few strikes, the Liberals are always raving about strikes. Time lost in strikes in the Province of Saskatchewan is negligible.

This is Mr. Smishek in 1971:

Time lost is negligible compared to time lost through illness or accidents or unemployment.

Mr. Romanow: — It is!

Mr. Steuart: — It is? I wonder if Mr. Blakeney thinks that 300,000 days, man-days lost in nine months in the small Province of Saskatchewan is negligible? He says it from his seat that it's negligible. I think he believes that. What he is saying is, so what if you are on strike, who cares! 300,000 man-days lost to the working people of Saskatchewan . . .

Mr. Romanow: — Who did?

Mr. Steuart: — Out of the mouth of the Premier of this province, it's negligible. Who cares! He doesn't, obviously.

I want to turn to some other little points that Mr. Smishek made in that debate. He is talking about us, the Liberals. He said and I am condensing his comment here:

Who are they trying to protect in this Bill?

And then he went on to answer his own question. He said:

The American owned potash companies, Parsons and Whittemore, Mr. Landegger, are these the interests that they are trying to protect?

Who is Mr. Smishek? He accuses us of trying to protect Mr. Landegger, Parsons and Whittemore. Well, let's take a look at Parsons and Whittemore. They own a sawmill in Meadow Lake. A sawmill which incidentally is 30 per cent owned by the Government of Saskatchewan, as now represented by the NDP. International Woodworkers of America represent those workers, I believe, and they have been on strike for several months. Why doesn't the Government try to settle it? Why doesn't the Government use their good graces, their good offices to try to give those people their jobs back? Why didn't they do it over the Christmas holidays, why did they callously leave them on strike? I'll tell you why. For two reasons: (1) the lumber market has gone to pot and they probably would lose three times as much money, or four times as much money in that sawmill if they were open than if they were closed down by a strike. There's another reason - and if you examine the wage rates that are being asked for by the International Woodworkers of America, for the workers at Meadow Lake, owned by Mr. Landegger, that terrible American who is now your partner. I notice you haven't got

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rid of him, you are still just as cozy in bed with him as we were and you don't mind the fact that he's making all kinds of money and the pulp mill doesn't smell any more and Mr. Landegger isn't such a terrible man any more, but when the workers who are in effect working for you are forced out on strike, you have them for the winter on strike and you ignore them for months. Why? Because the wages that are being asked on their behalf would embarrass you? They would embarrass the wages that you are paying your own workers in the Saskatchewan Forest Industry, better known as the timber board. So just ask yourselves and let the public ask, who is protecting whom in this labour policy, or labour attitude of the present Government?

Then Mr. Romanow spoke (not in that debate, but he spoke in that session). He spoke in the Throne Speech about Bill 2. He said:

So what did we have, the spectacle of the Leader of the Opposition, the Member for Milestone, the Member for Wilkie, getting up during this campaign in every town, village and city, name-calling our working people – name-calling our working people, trying to bring them to heel with legislation such as Bill 2, using pamphlets about labour courts, using every bitter and mean speech about our working people, not because they really believed that was a solution to the labour problem although some of them may have, not because they really believed in that, but because they hoped that it would get them some cheap political advantage in the country.

He went on to say:

The seeds of mistrust and misunderstanding were planted. In 1944 to 1964, Mr. Speaker, the Province of Saskatchewan had one of the best records, if not the best record in terms of hours lost due to strikes of any province in the Dominion of Canada. Whenever we did have strikes the Government and the employers, the trade unions, were able to explain the differences to the farming people, explain the purpose and the rationale behind the strikes and try to get the two parties around the whole table and negotiate a final and complete settlement, and it could be done, Mr. Speaker, because the climate in Saskatchewan was ripe, we didn't have divisiveness.

He was talking about the old CCF, and that probably was true, but I pointed out earlier, and I pointed out to people all over this province, the old CCF and the new NDP are two different breeds of cats.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — They may have had the best record in regard to labour-management disputes, or the lack of them, or management-labour peace in this province. They may well have had. I can tell you this - you look at the record and the Premier can call it negligible, say he doesn't care about it, but 300,000 man-days lost in a small province such as Saskatchewan is a tragedy. It's a tragedy for those people involved, and it's not negligible.

Mr. Taylor couldn't have voted against it. What did Mr. Taylor say when we asked him on December 13th, 1974, how the negotiations were going with the Saskatchewan Government Employees Association? Mr. Malone asked the question whether the Government was willing to give 13,000 members of the Saskatchewan Government Employees Association an across-the-board cost of living increase they were demanding. Here is what Mr. Taylor said.

I am not going to interfere with the bargaining process to say what the Government is going to do.

To desk-thumping support from other Government Members he said:

Under this Government all employees have the right to take strike action.

I wonder where Mr. Taylor is. Maybe he's in a twin ward over at the new hospital, feeling a little ill right now, with our friend the Minister of Health, Mr. Smishek. Funny, I didn't hear any desk thumping today, and no wonder, you're caught clearly out, and I don't think your little plan which may have looked so good in the blizzard of last Friday looks so good now when you see these people come to face you, when your own backbenchers realize they have to go back home and talk to the people who elected them. They are all silent now. They are prepared to support compulsory arbitration. What about those people in the backbenches? Was it caucus, was the caucus made aware of this, were they asked if this is what they wanted to do, were they given an opportunity? I doubt it! I imagine they were summoned, herded into the caucus room, sat in their places and told - 'you go in that House and none of you will speak, you'll keep quiet'. He forgot to tell you that you should applaud once in a while when Mr. Romanow got excited and started thumping the Liberals. 'You keep quiet and you vote as you are told'. Now we'll find out if any of you have got the intestinal fortitude to stand up and take the same attitude in 1975 that you took in 1971 just after and just before the election.

I wonder about the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and I hope we hear from them. The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, when we put in Bill 2 attacked it bitterly and that was their right. I never questioned their right. I would have much sooner they had supported it, but they didn't, they attacked and then when the election came they joined with the NDP and they were very effective.

I say that if compulsory arbitration was bad under the Liberals if it stunk under the Liberals, it stinks just as badly under the NDP. The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour have a responsibility to speak out and I am sure they will just as strongly against that set of politicians as they did against what is left of this set of politicians when we were on that side of the House. If they do, you people may find that you are back over here and you wish you had redecorated those offices when you had the chance.

Mr. Romanow: — Now you are getting real mean, Dave!

Mr. Steuart: — Well, the paint is falling off the wall, I don't think it can last another year.

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Now, Mr. Speaker, another reason suggests itself as to why we are in this position, why we are in this strike. I say that maybe that reason is that Premier Blakeney and three or four of his key advisors set this strike up. I am sorry, but I understand why Mr. Snyder is leaving, because if there was anybody that helped to set this up, I am sure it had to be the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Health, those people whom he would depend on for advice about the reaction he would get or the lack of it, and the violence of the reaction and how long the reaction would last in the trade union movement. Why would he do this? Why would anyone go out and deliberately provoke a fight with a trade union, especially when it is well known that a great many if not a majority, certainly those trade unions and most of them are on record as supporting that particular philosophy, that particular political party or that particular government.

I think I can understand the reason. We have lost 300,000 man-days in strikes. There have been strikes in every sector of our society. Government walkouts, study sessions, government strikes, teachers' strikes, strikes in radio stations, strikes in sawmills. There have been strikes across the length and breadth and every corner of this province, the worst record in the history of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Not only that, our people have been affected by strikes in other parts of the nation. Just as our farmers are ready to move their grain there seems to be a strike at the West Coast or there seems to be a strike at the head of the Lakes or there is a strike somewhere. People are fed up with strikes, they have had it up to here with strikes. The public are the innocent victims of strikes. I think that most people in the trade union movement are fed up with strikes. It hurts them far worse than it hurts management.

Who is going to be hurt by this strike if it was allowed to continue besides the public? Saskatchewan Power Corporation? Dick Keith, I imagine he's going to get his salary. The Premier, Mr. Romanow? I'll tell you fellows - the Opposition? We'll all have our hand in the cookie jar right up to our elbows, we'll be getting ours. Make no mistake, the people will be hurt by this strike. So the public are looking back and they are trying to judge with an election coming up whether they should give the NDP another vote of confidence or turn to someone else. They have good times; all kinds of money pouring in, money from the oil industry, money from wheat, business is up, unemployment is down. Mr. Blakeney even claims he's got more people back in the province - mind you he had to put most of them on the payroll to get them here - but he says he got more of them back, no matter how you skin the cat, as long as the skin comes off it doesn't matter!

One of his weaknesses is the labour situation, the strikes. So he would like to do two things. I think he would like to bring the labour movement to heel, show how tough he can be because he doesn't want any more strikes. He is going to say to the labour movement if you want to re-elect us the best thing you can do, boys, is settle, don't strike. You had a field day in 1974, now it is election year. So maybe, just maybe there is one way to show them he can be tough, if he can put

compulsory arbitration down their throats whether he likes it or not. So he turns Mr. Romanow loose, the little hatchet man, and says okay we'll show them. That's one reason.

There is another even more distinct possibility and that is that he wanted to show the farmers and the rural people. Maybe a very small percentage of our people are unionized, you can't win an election in this province based on union support alone. You have to have broad support from farmers, broad support from business groups, from small businessmen and people who are not engaged in the trade union movement. So maybe if he showed how tough he could be with them it would be a feather in his hat. I think that is the prime reason why we are here and why there is a strike on.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — It was pointed out that the union president challenged the Premier and Mr. Thorson to tell the whole truth about these union negotiations. I find it hard to believe that on Friday with the blizzard apparently almost on us that a government that didn't want this confrontation wouldn't have said to a union, look let's kind of cool it, it's cool enough outside, let us cool it over the weekend. Let's see if we can find another solution. I find it hard to believe that a government that settled a wage package and made those fantastic offers as Mr. Romanow pointed out in his speech, why you would have to wonder that they have lost their heads not to jump at all those wonderful offers as laid out by Mr. Romanow. I get a funny feeling there is another side to this story. However, there was no apparent request to cool off, no request to the Union to stay their hand. No, the Government got together and the Cabinet and I think they said, "This is what we are looking for. Once and for all we can prove to the people of rural Saskatchewan that Premier Blakeney and Roy Romanow are not in the hip pocket of the labour movement." You have been accused of that ever since you formed the NDP. Here was a chance just six months before the election to refute that statement or that feeling and make heroes of yourselves.

So the Cabinet sent their errand boy to do the job knowing that they would cut the feet out from under him or else when he came back they refused to go along with him. Why pick him? I think he's not a bad choice. Why pick the Member for Estevan (Mr. Thorson)? I'll tell you why they picked the Member for Estevan, he's got such a mess down there that he can't win anyway. Premier Blakeney who wasn't a bit worried about sacrificing the Speaker of the House, who wasn't a bit worried about sending his people out to knock out the dean of this Legislature when he couldn't even go out of the House to fight for his own constituency. You tell me that the Premier would hesitate for one minute to set our friend up from Estevan - I can hear him now saying we can only lose the seat once - he couldn't win it, Mr. Thorson couldn't win that seat if they let him count the votes for the first three hours with the lights out all by himself. He couldn't win it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Blakeney decided he'd show some courage . . .

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Mr. Romanow: — The lights went out long ago on you, Dave!

Mr. Steuart: — I'll tell you Roy when you've been in the House as long as I have and light that old candle, then you can get up and say it.

But after listening to that speech I think a lot of these trade union members who aren't quite in your pocket, who aren't quite so docile as you think they are, who aren't quite so stupid as you think they are, who have a little feeling, a little guts, a little courage. You haven't got them under your thumb as much as you think you have. They might decide to go up there and see what they can do about Mr. Romanow. I suggest they do, you are pretty cocky. You think you have the safest seat in the province. Maybe you have, maybe those people will take the blinders off their eyes and find out what is really going on.

Mr. Speaker, why did the NDP pick on the trade union movement? Why did they pick on their friends? Because they think they own them. If any of you people in the galleries in the trade union movement think I am wrong, think again. The NDP think they have got you in their pocket. They think they own you lock, stock and barrel. After all you are all locked up, you are committed, your money goes to them. You may not know it, but take a look at that wage package. Your money now goes to them whether you like it or not. You didn't get a vote. Oh, you can opt out, you've got freedom, real freedom under the NDP. You can walk up to your union chief and say, count me out. What does that tab you? It tabs you as a Liberal or a Conservative. In some circumstances it is like catching leprosy or tapeworm, I don't know which is the worst. You have that chance, that's your freedom to say I am literally a scab, I won't support my good NDP union oriented party.

You have another little freedom that I might tell you about handed to you by Mr. Snyder, your great friend, and Mr. Blakeney in the NDP. Do you realize, you union members, that if you get up and criticize your union or if you decide that you want to get a different union, if you dare to speak up openly in union meetings and your union top brass decides that they didn't like it, they can expel you. When they expel you, by the law of the land your company has got to fire you. Take a look at that in the Trade Union Act and talk about freedom of choice, talk about protection for the working man given to you by your so-called friends over there.

Mr. Messer: — Did Bill 2 resolve all that?

Mr. Steuart: — Never mind Bill 2, gum chewer. You get back out to the farmers, they are so busy looking for you on the land grab and on the Hog Marketing Commission that right now 90 per cent of them would give you a pitch fork and not a vote! I want to tell you that they think that the trade union movement is their pigeon. Where have you got to go? Well, you can go to the Wafflers, that's like going nowhere on a one-way ticket. You can go to the Liberals, God forbid, you wouldn't go there, they don't think you would even look at a Liberal. You can go to the Tories, nobody else is, why should you. What are you going to do? They got you locked up, they got you tied up body and soul. They think they have.

Well, there have been a few other people in the history of this country and the history of this world who had their working men tied up or any other group tied up and they found out that they haven't and this NDP Government over there might find out exactly the same thing.

Mr. Smishek and Mr. Snyder assured the Premier I am sure that you don't have to worry, sure they'll be mad, they'll come up in the galleries, they'll raise a little Cain, they'll give us 'hail Columbia', they'll threaten us, but what are they going to do? My God, they are not going to vote for Steuart, they wouldn't be caught dead voting for Steuart. There is no use voting Tory, and poor old John Richards he won't even be back himself after the next election. What are they going to do? They said, don't worry Mr. Blakeney, you can make a hit for yourself, we'll weather the storm, uncle Roy will make the speech, Smishek will go to the hospital, Snyder will say little or nothing as usual, Thorson is going to mess the whole deal up and he's going to lose anyway, we have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Well I am going to tell you what it really shows, I see the Minister of Co-ops shaking his head. I hope when he shakes his head he gets more out of it than when he opens his mouth because nothing comes out that way. I hope you get a chance to speak, tell us, Mr. Minister of Co-operation how the brothers and sisters back home will feel about this. Get up on your feet and tell us - you will? Good, we look forward to hearing from you. That's what this Session is all about, isn't it!

I'll tell you what it shows, Mr. Speaker, it shows the real contempt that the NDP have for the union movement. It shows as well the weakness of the union movement tying themselves up to any political party. I say the union movement has their first total responsibility to the membership to get them the best working conditions, the best wages possible. If they can get them out of the NDP good, if they get it out of the Liberals better still and if they can get it out of the Tories that's fine. But when they tie themselves up, then I say they close out the serious option and this is exactly what is happening. Once you married that gang, you gave up more than women's lib they're worrying about, you gave up far more than you thought or realized and you are finding it out now. You look at the fine print, you look at what they've really done to you. You look at what they are prepared to do for you, then you find out if that was a wise decision.

I say that you need to give the NDP a lesson, sure you gave us a lesson., that's democracy. We went to the people and we were defeated, the trade union movement played a key role in that defeat. These people gave you certain promises and they haven't kept them. They haven't kept faith. I'll tell you something the union people and the working people are learning, something that the business community learned, that you can't trust the NDP. Why can't you trust them? I'll tell you why. They have a plan, they have a philosophy, they believe with every fibre of their being that if they can only get socialism where the state owns and controls the means of production and distribution, if they could only get that utopia then all else will fall into place. In pursuit of that dream and philosophy they'll do anything, they'll sacrifice

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anybody because their planners may convince them in the long run - oh, you may suffer for a while, one or two generations of working people or business people or farmers may have a little difficulty - when you look ahead down the years when this great socialist plan unfolds, then it will all have been worthwhile. I don't think it is worthwhile to lose one iota of your independence, one iota of your freedom of choice as Canadians just to advance the cause of whom? Your own cause? Take a look at it. Who's living fat on the hog? You guys or they? Well, compare your salaries and your working conditions to theirs. I'll tell you who is living high on the hog, they are, they are living on your back, don't let them tell you anything different.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — The farmers found out how they could trust the NDP. They are going out with our own money and they are buying and grabbing section after section - they say we are not going to socialize the farmers. Well, I want to tell you they have already got a quarter of a million acres of prime farm land. They haven't sold an acre, they won't sell an acre, give them long enough, every farmer in this province will be a tenant of the state, they can laugh, they can giggle, they are either too stupid to realize what those boys in the centres are doing, or they don't care. I think the latter is the truth. They are moving in on the farmers and the hog market, the compulsory land grab. The farmers have come to, the businessmen and the farmers have found out that you can't trust the NDP. I say today as never before they have shown themselves for what they are. The working men are finding out, union people, men and women who belong to the trade union movement who supported these people in good faith and are finding out that you can't trust the NDP.

I believe this strike must be settled. I think regardless of how they got into it, whether they got into it out of stupidity, whether they got into it in good faith, or whether they got into it by design, and how they got the people of Saskatchewan into this mess, it has to be settled.

I think we should do more than this, that is why I am disappointed in the attitude of the Premier. He says let's discuss this later on and of course we will, why shouldn't we discuss it now, tomorrow or the next day. I'll tell you why we should discuss it now. Because the attention of the people of this province is focused on this situation now. We are never going to find a better way if indeed there is a better way to carry on labour-management negotiations unless there is a great deal of good will. You are not going to find it with NDP crashing head-on with Liberals, you are not going to find it with management and union banging head on, you are going to find it if there is an area of good will. If people have come to the conclusion, forced to a conclusion by a situation like we are, by a crisis, by the worst labour-management mess in the history of this province culminated by this terrible strike that we're into now. Maybe at a time like this people are ready to think differently about this situation. That is number one why I think we should talk about it now.

Number two, I think the public are demanding something better of the politicians than we are offering.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — I get after the NDP for what they are doing because they have broken faith. They will get back up and say, oh, look what those rotten Liberals did. They were worse. If the Conservatives were here they would say, a pox on both your houses. God knows what our friend down here would say, but he wants to change not only the whole system, he wants to change the way you spell it and who stands up in it. So the politicians have tried and they have failed. We tried. We put Bill 2 in. Why? Because we wanted to be defeated? We put Bill 2 in because we were convinced that in certain emergency services the public had to be protected for exactly the same reason you say you have come here today. Okay, maybe we went too far. That idea was rejected at the last election. That's democracy. It's over, it's done. You said you would do better, you promised to do better and you failed. I am sure you tried, I am sure you would like to stand up and say, look, we didn't have a strike; look we have got the best record in the history of the Province of Saskatchewan. Of course, you would like to say that. You didn't fail because you wanted to fail but nevertheless, you failed. I say that the public is looking for something better from politicians. I don't think you and I can solve it. I think we are too stuck in, I think we are too dug in to our respective positions. I don't know whether anybody can solve it but I would like to see somebody try. I would like to see you get someone from the trade union movement, someone from management and someone from the public because they are the innocent victims in all this mess. And let them sit down and see if they can come up with a better solution or the beginning of a better solution. I know that any solution that is found, any change that is found will have to have broad acceptance in the trade union movement. The working people would have to have a great deal of confidence in it or it wouldn't work. They had no confidence in Bill 2 and it didn't work. And they have no confidence in what you are doing and it won't work. Management has to feel the same way and management is on the other side of the table. They have got to be convinced that they have a fair shake in this bargaining. And then the public who are too often forgotten have got to have a chance to have their say.

So I am saying go out of the political arena, get away from the NDP and the Liberal circle and ask some other people to take a new, a fresh, a non-partisan, an independent and a non-political look at this. I'll say then we have to come out of this short session having done something positive. What we are doing here may end the strike. It may. I found it very amusing after Mr. Romanow had laid out all the dos and don'ts and no-noes in the Bill, he came to the part where if you don't follow the Bill this is what happens. What he really said is, "Boys, I want to make it very clear, we ain't really going to do anything to you if you don't follow this Bill. We are just really not going to touch you." Well, that is up to you. I think they will follow the Bill and I think they will obey the law. I am sure they will. What we are doing is negative. I asked the Premier to reconsider and let us at least start on the road to considering a group of people looking for a better solution. We don't have to settle for the next day or two. He doesn't have to pick the commission in the next day or two. It is a simple proposition, find three or four or five people of good will and let

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them go out and look. We have had commissions on everything under the sun and some stuff that is not under the sun, surely this rates significance or seriousness enough that we can take a look and take some time to find a fresh view. I hope you will reconsider this proposition, I hope you change your mind, because what you are doing here is not good enough. You have broken faith, you have shown yourself for what you are and all you are doing is mending. And this isn't a good enough solution. Do you realize that that strike could have carried on and if those Union men hadn't gone out and management and that blizzard would have carried on for a few days, and one Member on either side had decided he didn't want to come back, we wouldn't have been sitting here for another seven or eight days. If this House happens to be prorogued any one Member could stall a solution to this kind of a situation. The situation might be far worse than this.

Mr. MacDonald (Milestone): — For a month.

Mr. Steuart: — For a month, for 25 or 26 days. So let's not pretend that what you are doing here does anything but get us past, if it does in fact, this little hump in the road. I am suggesting, for once, that you bury your political partisanship and try to join with us to find a better solution.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. K. Thorson (Minister of industry and Commerce): — Mr. Speaker, in the interests of the urgency of the situation before us in Saskatchewan now, I am not going to take time to deal with all of the misconceptions and misstatements of fact of the Leader of the Opposition who has just taken his seat. But I do want to correct him on two points. He suggested that in my discussions with Mr. Alf Hill, president of Local 2067 of the IBEW, that I may have misled the Union. I want to categorically deny that. I did not mislead him or any member of his Union at any time.

The second point, Mr. Speaker, is that the Leader of the Opposition in quoting what he purports to be a statement made by Mr. Hill, the Leader of the Opposition attempted to mislead this House and I want to correct that. In last night's edition of the Regina Leader-Post there is a story about the dispute between the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and the Union. In part of the story in quotation marks attributing the statement to Mr. Hill, this statement is made:

Mr. Thorson told us he had to get approval from his colleagues. He went, came back and said his colleagues did not agree with the terms.

That is the end of the quotation marks. That is a statement attributed to Mr. Hill and I think it is an accurate statement of the situation as he understood it and I understood it last Friday night. That is a correct statement.

Mr. Steuart: — On a Point of Privilege. Mr. Speaker, I was quoting from a transcript from CKCK. I will table it and I was not quoting from the Leader-Post. I don't doubt what Mr. Thorson just quoted was from the Leader-Post but what I quoted was from

a transcript of an interview on CKCK taken off the tapes. What I quoted was an accurate reading of what I was handed from tape.

Mr. Thorson: — I certainly invite the Leader of the Opposition and anyone else to examine the transcript of the radio broadcast in its entirety including the part he quoted, and to examine the story in the Leader-Post from which I quoted in its entirety and particularly the portion which I did quote, and I think they will get a balanced picture of what the actual situation was. I wanted to set that on the record so that there could be no misunderstanding about it, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the issue which is uppermost in everyone's mind, is what are the risks to the public and the consumers of electricity in Saskatchewan when the members of the Union in the Power Corporation's electric system are on strike? In my view the risk of disaster is very serious. Any electric system, the one in your house or mine, or the one that serves the whole province, all its industries, all its farms, all its households, is always subject to failure. In the summertime thunderstorms can result in serious outages of electricity over a very widespread area. The consequences in the summer are not so serious. The temperature is above freezing, even with muddy roads or other uncomfortable conditions, usually the only consequence of a power outage is inconvenience and some slight discomfort. In some cases it has economic consequences that are very severe in certain farming operations and industrial operations but generally speaking we can say that the risk of a power outage in the summertime brings with it virtually no serious risks of danger to life or to limb. That is not so in the winter months. I needn't stress how serious it is for households and farms in this province to be without electricity when the temperature is below freezing. And not only is there a greater and more serious risk of consequences of power outage in the winter time in Saskatchewan but the very weather conditions that make those consequences more grave also increase the risk of an outage. I ask the Members of the Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan to consider on what our electric service depends. First of all, of course, are the transmission and distribution lines, and as the wind velocity increases, as the temperature declines, the risk of breakage, of outages as a result of losses on the distribution lines, is very great indeed. And we saw last Friday and last Saturday in those very severe weather conditions with wind chill factors of below 100 degrees F. that there were a great many outages around the province. Now that is not a result of the strike, that is a result of the weather. One hundred and fifty farms in the Carrot River area were without power most of Friday night. In the southeastern part of Saskatchewan, particularly in the Lampman area 30 to 50 farms were without power and, in that case, up to 24 hours. All of the province is in a much more vulnerable position of loss of its electric system through failures on the distribution lines and more serious failure on the major transmission lines. For instance, ever since the line has been installed from Squaw Rapids leading down to connect with the major grid at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, that line has been subject to very severe vibrations. Occasionally it has broken and as the temperature declines and as the wind increases, the risk of that happening also increases.

Now, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to consider the situation in the power plants themselves. I won't take time to describe the whole system, but I remind you that the Boundary Dam generating station has in it five units. There are two of 66 megawatts and

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three of 150 megawatts each a total of 582 megawatts capacity of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation at the Boundary Dam Station. The total capacity of the whole system, all of the power plants, the other thermal plants and the two hydro plants is less than 1600 megawatts, so that more than a third of the capacity of the system is in the Boundary Dam Station and up to 40 per cent of all of the electricity consumed in Saskatchewan comes from this single station in the ordinary course of a year.

Mr. Speaker, it is serious enough even today when the weather conditions are much more moderate than they were last Saturday, when we have today a fairly acceptable kind of weather for a January day in Saskatchewan but I am informed this morning by the management of the Power Corporation that at the Boundary Dam generating station we have one of the 150 megawatt units out of service entirely because of a slagged boiler. We have a second 150 megawatt unit out of service entirely because of a burned out fan motor. As it turns out this particular motor weighs some tons. It is the desire certainly of the people who are now in charge of the station to get at least one of these 150 megawatt units on stream and in service again and they could do that if they could move the fan motor from the slagged unit over to the one where the motor has failed, but it takes a good deal of manpower and it takes some extra equipment to do the lifting and the moving. The people who are running the plant simply haven't got the manpower or the equipment to put this unit back on line or to put one of these two units that are down back on the line.

Mr. Speaker, that illustrates the kind of risks we are running in the power plant of being short of electricity in capacity to produce and, of course, it is combined with the more severe risk of inability to distribute this electricity to the places where it is needed. In my mind there is no doubt whatever that the risk is too grave to continue attempting to provide electric service in these winter months, in these conditions and in the circumstances of our system, without a full complement of workers and employees available to deal with whatever emergency arises, whether it is due to weather or due to mechanical problems or whatever the difficulty may be.

We have, Mr. Speaker, aside from those difficulties in the power plants and the risks for the lines themselves, a further risk that in the switching stations where there is very sophisticated remote control equipment, some failure can result in the section being tripped out. That could happen automatically just as your fuse in your house or your circuit breaker in your house trips out when there is a surge of power or something goes wrong and so it can happen in one of the switching stations and whole sections of Saskatchewan can be without electricity, not because there is anything wrong in the power plants or anything wrong on the lines themselves, but because something goes wrong in the switching stations and the switch yards. In order, Mr. Speaker, to deal with these kinds of risks the Saskatchewan Power Corporation has been organized on a decentralized basis with people employed all over the province able, when weather permits, to get to wherever there is difficulty in the least possible time. It is impossible, Mr. Speaker, to assure anyone that tomorrow even we can guarantee safe and satisfactory electric service to every home and farm and industry in the province in these circumstances. There are risks even with all of the workers available but the risks are much greater with

only skeleton crews and the management staff looking after the system. In my view, Mr. Speaker, the decision about whether or not people should return to work is made in these winter months by any examination of the risks we are running if they do not return to work.

Now, Mr. Speaker, because of the consequences of a decision to introduce legislation requiring electrical workers to return to work, it is not taken lightly. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, It is the most difficult and serious matter and particularly so, if I may say so, for all of us who are now sitting to your right, Mr. Speaker. As my colleague, the Attorney General, so ably put it, we believe in the principle of free collective bargaining. We are grieved that that process did not result in a settlement of outstanding disputes. We are grieved that the employees of the Power Corporation felt it necessary to withdraw their services. We came to the conclusion, with reluctance, but with no doubt that it is the will of the people of Saskatchewan and, therefore, our responsible decision to tell these workers that they should return to work.

Now, in case there may be any doubt in the mind of any Member of the Opposition, or in the mind of anyone else, Mr. Speaker, this is a decision in which all of us on this side of the House concur. I include, not only my colleague, the Attorney General, who has spoken in this debate introducing the Bill, but my colleague, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder), my colleague, the Minister of Health (Mr. Smishek), who is today attending, in Ottawa, at a Federal-Provincial Conference of Health Ministers, a conference which was planned many weeks in advance, to which it was his duty to attend. Let no one feel that somehow as serious as we take this situation, as grieved as we are by the circumstances in which all of us find ourselves, that we are at all divided about the decision which we have to make.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that if this Bill passes that it's clearly the express will of the Legislature. It is my belief that it will clearly be the wish of the majority of responsible citizens in Saskatchewan, that these electrical workers should return to their regular duties. If the Bill is passed so that it is clear that that is the law, supported as I believe it is by the vast majority of the people, we are still faced with the issue which separated the Union and the Corporation and which brought about the strike. Having expressed our desire on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan that these workers return to their places, we have a further responsibility to find a way to settle the dispute which brought about the work stoppage and a still further and more serious responsibility to do it in such a way that we do not jeopardize the effectiveness of collective bargaining as the most desirable means of settling such disputes.

Now some may ask, is it possible that this dispute could still be settled by agreement, by negotiation? Of course, it is possible, that is still possible, and under the terms of the Bill it is quite clear that if the parties reach an agreement and file it with the arbitrator, there is no need for him to do any work or make any decisions. But, of course, the risk is very great considering the efforts that have already gone into an attempt to settle this matter by negotiation, that it cannot be done in that method now.

I just remind the House that the negotiations between the

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Union and the management of the Corporation began on October 9th. There were meetings held between the negotiating committees of the two sides, not only on October 9th, but on October 10, October 11, October 22, October 23, October 24, November 4, November 5, November 6, November 21, November 22 and December 12th. Formal meetings of the negotiating committees, at the table, dealing with the issues that had been raised in the course of the discussions and in the exchange of proposals for a new contract had taken place from when the parties had first met on October 9th. At that stage, mid December, it was clear that there was a wide gulf between the two sides. The Union had tested the opinions of its members at mid December and gained from them authorization to take whatever action the Union negotiating committee thought was appropriate.

As the Attorney General related this morning, on December 23rd, the Union informed the Corporation that the Corporation's last proposal was not satisfactory. On the 24th the Corporation asked if the Union would make a counter proposal. The Corporation repeated that enquiry on December 31st and also suggested that since it seemed that there was an impasse after there had been so many meetings, that perhaps the employment, if jointly agreed upon, of an outside mediator would be of assistance to both parties. On January 2, 1975 the Union agreed with the management that they should call upon the services of Bill Kelly, an Assistant Deputy Minister of the Government of Canada. The Union-Corporation committees, with the assistance of Mr. Kelly, Robert Mitchell, the Deputy Minister of Labour for Saskatchewan, through intensive meetings all through the evening of January 6 to the evening of January 10th, sought to resolve all outstanding issues and come to an agreement that could be rendered in writing and signed by both sides. After all of that effort, Mr. Speaker, the significant issue, the significant fact is that they did not reach an agreement, and that the work stoppage, the strike began on the afternoon of Friday, the 10th and by Saturday noon of the 11th of January, all of the members of the IBEW were on strike against the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and we were faced, as I say, with this grave risk of serious disaster because of a lack of a full complement of people.

So, Mr. Speaker, it seems clear and obvious that we must discharge our responsibility to settle this particular dispute in the terms as set out in the Bill before us, that is to say, that all outstanding issues will be referred to a responsible and independent third person for his decision. I say 'responsible' in the sense that he is a man, his Honour Judge Moore, who by the very nature of his occupation as a judge of our district court, must carry out grave responsibilities and weigh the competing rights of various citizens, daily, in the course of his work. Independent, Mr. Speaker, in the sense that he owes nothing to either side and he is not in any way obliged to either side, nor they to him.

It is characteristic of our democracy that when citizens or parties, be they in collective groups or individuals, when they come in conflict that we have institutions and methods for them to settle those conflicts in peaceful ways. We prefer, in the matter of collective bargaining agreements between employees and employers, that they work that out by negotiations between themselves, without reference to any third party. But where, as it is in this case, clearly unlikely that a satisfactory resolution of the differences can be made without the intervention of

a third party we, I think, all support the idea of employing such an outside person. So, the Bill makes provision for that. But still, I think it respects our confidence in the democratic principle that there should be the widest accommodation of conflicting interests between people and they should be accommodated in peaceful ways. This particular dispute, this particular conflict is to be resolved by arbitration. In my view, this Bill, this isolated case of dealing with the labour-management dispute by arbitration, does not do general damage to the structure of our democratic institutions, or to the rights of employees. We want always, Mr. Speaker, to seek reasonable terms of settlement for employment between employer and employee. We prefer, as I said, to do it by collective bargaining. If that has failed and that failure has jeopardized the rights and the safety of large numbers of citizens, then there is, in my view, no choice but to settle it by reference to an outside, independent and responsible arbitrator.

Mr. Speaker, I said that we prefer the collective bargaining route. I want to make two more points before I sit down. The good faith of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and the IBEW Union members, I think, was demonstrated in 1974 where we had very protracted and sometimes difficult negotiations, culminating finally in February in a one-year contract for the year 1974, resulting in its major provisions of a general increase of 15 per cent in wage rates and the first in recent months cost of living allowance clause inserted in a collective bargaining agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear when I say that those negotiations were difficult. There was a stage prior to reaching the final agreement when the parties at the negotiating table, committees on behalf of their respective principals, had reached a point where each was recommending to those principals a settlement. When the Union took that package to its members it (the Union) could not get ratification and the members rejected it and we were back to the bargaining table again. Again, through further discussions, we worked out a package which was ratified by both the Union and the managements and owners of the Power Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I look, as I say, to that larger responsibility beyond the emergency of providing normal electric service, beyond the necessity of finding a way to settle this particular dispute, to the circumstances in which the Power Corporation and its management staff, the Power Corporation and its unionized staff will find themselves in the future. And I say without hesitation that I believe that in the future agreements on employment terms between the Union and the Corporation can, and should be achieved by collective bargaining. We have set out in our stated objectives of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation that we will pay reasonable wages. I want to make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that since I have been Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, I have stressed to the management staff and I stress to the Union staff that whatever the difficulties of past negotiations, and whatever the difficulties of this year may be, there will for the future be no recriminations. We will simply look to what is reasonable and proper in the circumstances in which we find ourselves in the future.

We have, Mr. Speaker, adopted a couple of guidelines in collective bargaining so far as the management of the Corporation is concerned since I have been Minister - Chairman of its board.

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First of all, that those people who speak for the Corporation at the bargaining table will never say, until it is finally agreed, that that is our last position, or our final position. We say that is our latest proposal and the spokesmen are to defend it and advocate it. But to take a position that is rigid and arbitrary, defeats the whole purpose of collective bargaining where it is essential to try to make accommodations to the other side and try to make your own position acceptable and flexible in the eyes of other people.

Another guideline, Mr. Speaker, which we have tried to follow in the past and will follow in the future is that no one on behalf of the Corporation is ever to suggest directly, or indirectly, to the people at the bargaining table for the Union that ability to pay is the major consideration of the Corporation. The major consideration is reasonable wages with reference to the industrial rates in Saskatchewan for the kinds of tradesmen and employees that we have. I have said on many occasions to the management people, in my view they are just as responsible for being able to have sufficient revenue to pay reasonable wages as they are responsible for being able to pay for equipment which is necessary in power plants or on power lines.

Mr. Speaker, despite the difficulties of last year's negotiations and the impasse we reached in this year's negotiations, I want to assure the House and the public that in my view the atmosphere between the Union and the Corporation is a good one. People speak straightforwardly to each other about issues on which they disagree. They are honest men, honestly advocating their positions to each other. But there will not be recriminations and there will not be bitterness in future collective bargaining sessions.

I have one final word, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I commend all the people who have been involved and affected by this dispute in the last several days, particularly the members of the public who are electric consumers, who have willingly reduced their use of electricity to essentials. That is particularly true of householders, farm users and, of course, of industrial users, some of whom, by contract, could be interrupted. The others were all on a voluntary basis. I want to commend them for the difficulties they have had to face in being without power. Some of them for only a very short period and an inconvenience, some of them for very long periods, measured in hours, where it was more than inconvenience.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to say a word of commendation to all of the employees of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, both management staff and unionized staff. The management staff have had, in these last few days, to take up duties and responsibilities beyond their regular and routine work. Many of them are putting in 12 hours and more a day, at jobs which they do not do regularly, in power plants, in answering trouble calls, in maintaining the operations of the system. I particularly also want, Mr. Speaker, to commend the leaders of the Union and the members of the Union for their conduct in these difficult situations. I know we have disagreements, but I must say that their personal conduct is altogether commendable. I said they are characteristically straightforward in their statements. I said when I began that it is wrong to suggest that I have misled them, it would be equally wrong to suggest that they have attempted to mislead the Corporation or myself.

I give one example, Mr. Speaker, before I sit down, of the kind of approach which the unionized members of the Corporation staff have shown in these difficulties. On Saturday, a management person had to answer an outage call in a rural area, in the Moose Jaw rural area. People who were here in Saskatchewan on that day will know how severe the weather conditions were, the high winds, the blowing snow and the very low temperatures. The man was gone for many hours with no one in his headquarters having heard from him.

Two unionized members were asked if they would take a vehicle and go and search for him, which they readily agreed to do and when they found him he was almost unconscious and in collapse in his vehicle through sickness and also because of the severity of the weather conditions.

We are very fortunate, Mr. Speaker, in these difficult times of this withdrawal of regular and normal electric service, not to have had any tragedies in the way of loss of life. But the fact that we escaped it in this particular instance I think is entirely due to the humanitarian spirit of the members of the Union itself.

Mr. Speaker, I will support the motion.

Mr. J.G. Richards (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, today is a day of ironies. The Liberals on this side of the House are gloating to see the NDP Government introducing back-to-work legislation, NDP Ministers are writhing what they have to do, introducing back-to-work legislation and it would be easy to dredge up the quotes and the past references which NDP Members and indeed myself have made in opposition to back-to-work legislation, compulsory arbitration and one could have a field day at playing upon the ironies of reversed positions. But surely, Mr. Speaker, the events involved are far more serious and far too important than to enjoy the indulgence of going back through the Hansards and the public speeches to drag up the quotations.

The essence I take of the Government's position in introducing back-to-work legislation is that there does exist an emergency that could endanger life and property. We have in substantiation of that claim the statements by the Attorney General this morning and repeated this afternoon by the Minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation (Mr. Thorson) that the management of the Power Corporation claims the system could break down at any time and we could have a major power failure. That is the evidence that I as a Member of the Legislature, not privy to the details of information about either the union side or the management side, have from the Government to date. On the other hand the Union's position, I think, could be summed up very simply from what one of their members told me earlier today: "We too have children and we wouldn't let them freeze."

I think I could go on, I could cite what the Leader of the Opposition cited from the 1971 speech made by the Minister of Labour when he repealed Bill 2, in which he made reference to the traditions and the responsibility of the trade unionists of this province, that faced with a strike in an essential service Industry he, the Minister, was confident that the workers, at considerable expense to themselves and without pay would provide essential services to prevent loss of life in a situation such

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as we are facing today.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think I could go on and state the position as given by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour. Normally on the weekend SPC has about 100 workers in the field. This past weekend there were well over 200 union workers doing voluntary emergency work without pay in a valiant effort to maintain power supplies to Saskatchewan homes and hospitals. More union people are out working than usual because of the weather and the Government calls it a crisis. No such crisis existed.

Mr. Speaker, I have cited evidence as given by trade union movement in this province, I have cited the evidence as given to the House this morning by the Attorney General and this afternoon by the Minister in charge of the Power Corporation. Maybe the Union people are wrong in their claims, maybe there does exist imminent likelihood of a breakdown of the system which does justify compulsory arbitration, but if the Government is so confident that it is such a situation why did the Attorney General refuse the relatively simple procedure of referring this Bill for an afternoon to the Crown Corporations Committee where we could hear testimony from the Union people and people working in the Power Corporation as to whether there really does exist the crisis as claimed by the Government.

To be fair, in my opinion, the Union acted hastily after the breakdown of negotiations. In my opinion, the Union should not have called a strike, have gone on strike last weekend, given the weather conditions, given the fact that there obviously exists some degree of danger and given what inevitably I think it has done to the image of labour and trade union movements across the province in providing fodder to those who would want to attack the labour movement.

But because I, as an MLA disagree with the tactics which were pursued by a legally constituted trade union with a strike vote in its belt, do I have the right to enter into this Legislature and vote them back to work? I think I would only have that right if I had before me solid evidence, first hand evidence that there really was the emergency which is endangering life. I don't have that evidence. In fact, to the Union's credit I think they have done a creditable performance, in fact, were praised therefore by the Minister who has just taken his seat. The Union members have shown their concern for the maintenance of essential services during this strike, as witnessed the number of people who have done maintenance work without pay. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I find it impossible to support back-to-work compulsory arbitration legislation. However, carefully drafted that legislation may be, however quickly it will self-destruct, to use the colloquialism as the Minister referred to. It remains as a precedent to be used and to be used by future governments which may have far less concern with the rights of workers to strike, to free collective bargaining.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I fear that the introduction of this legislation by a nominally progressive government of the left, further alienates working people and the general public from politics and the parties of the left, increases cynicism about us as politicians.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I should like to relate to the House what I have been able to piece together of the history of negotiations from SPC and other union sources which I shall not, of course,

name.

Up to the Conclusion of 1974 I think the Attorney General adequately summarized the events, but he has failed to make and draw one important conclusion therefrom. According to the offers made by SPC management in October and November, namely six and ten per cent, according to those offers as related by the Attorney General this morning at six and ten per cent, the SPC management until December was asking the IBEW to go back to work with a net loss in real wages, assuming an inflation rate of 11 per cent as prevailed in 1974. The Premier is shaking his head, the Attorney General this morning cited figures of six per cent offers by SPC in October, ten per cent in November. He did not quite cite the cost of living allowance in October and November. In the December figures there came in the cost of living allowances.

Mr. Romanow: — It's in his speech.

Mr. Richards: — All right if I've got it marginally wrong it's marginally wrong. But I think it strikes anybody listening that the SPC management up until December was dragging its feet, and that needs to be brought into public knowledge.

But whereas the Attorney General was clear and cited all the details of the offers and the counter-offers made in the calendar 1974, as soon as we cross into the new year, calendar 1975, a great cloud covers the story. If the Minister can be so crystal clear as to what transpired and what passed during calendar 1974 why can't we have a little more clarity as to what happened in 1975?

Now, I don't claim to be privy to all that transpired in the previous days of this year, but as I understand it by last Friday when Cabinet and caucus were meeting, the Government was desperately worried to avoid a strike in an election year. I trust this brings the Hon. Leader of the Opposition down to earth from his fantasy world, and in order to try and avoid that strike the Government's offer had gone up to a 25 per cent increase in take-home pay, plus a reduction in hours from forty to thirty-seven and one third. The tail end lift on the Government offer, I understand, to be in the order of 30 per cent. In other words the Government was offering as of last Friday a package which would result in the hourly rate in December of 1975 being in the order of 30 per cent above the rate in effect in December of 1974. The Government was offering, obviously a very generous package, a 25 per cent cash increase plus reduction in hours of work, all for a one-year contract. And this as a political gesture to try and avoid a strike in an election year. That's where the Government's position had got to under mediation by last Friday.

Now, I understand that the Union position had come very close and all that separated them of substance apart from some mention of holiday pay, was the question of reducing the hours further down to 36 hours a week. A further reduction in December of 1975 from thirty-seven and one third to thirty-six.

All right I challenge the Union people, and the Government to say whether I've got these facts essentially right or wrong. As I understand it what was being argued about last Friday, was that offer. That's what it finally got to. The Government was willing to give 25 per cent cash increase, 30 per cent tail end

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lift, the Union wanted the extra reduction in hours of work which would have increased the tail end lift somewhat.

Now, it's here I suppose that Alf Hill's statement comes in to the effect that he thought he had a verbal agreement. It may well have been that the Minister in charge, Mr. Thorson, went back to Cabinet and caucus at some stage agreeing to try and get the additional 36 hours. It seems clear that Caucus balked at that point and caucus said no.

But, now if this is the situation and this is what my evidence from countless hours on the telephone in the last 48 hours is, and if the Government is so concerned to avoid as it says it is, compulsory arbitration legislation, why did it go all the way but not that final little bit? There are a number of sexist analogies which come to mind which I won't use because this being International Women's Year, but if the Government was willing to transform a regular business oriented management union negotiation into a political one in which the Government was willing to sweeten the pot in order to try and avoid a strike in an election year, why did they stop at the final tail end lift?

And to be fair on the other side, if this is what the Government was willing to offer why did the Union feel that it had to go on strike immediately when there was that generous an offer sitting on the table to be picked up? I think there could be considerably better communication between the leadership and the members of the IBEW. Why was not that latest Government offer communicated back to the membership? Because I was being told by IBEW representatives as late as yesterday that the Government was merely offering ten per cent which may well have been the figure at some time when the strike vote was taken. And now since the Government has had to face the ignominy of proposing back-to-work legislation positions have hardened.

I understand that the Union is now prepared to accept that final offer of last Friday, but the Government is no longer prepared to make it. The Government feels that having had to face the embarrassment of coming before this House with compulsory arbitration legislation, it no longer should be willing to make such a generous offer.

I, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure, have missed details, got certain perspectives wrong, but if this is in some sense a rough recreation of the negotiations that went on and were it a situation arrived as of Friday the 10th of January, I think the people of Saskatchewan can quite justly ask that there be better negotiation. It's not easy, I don't think that the blame all lies on the Government, I think personally the Union acted over hastily in calling a strike on what turned out to be the coldest day of the year to date. I could understand this to a certain extent, emphasized with the fears of the Government of breakdown, but I don't think that the evidence has been presented which is strong enough to justify the odious precedents of back-to-work compulsory arbitration legislation.

In some sense there is even a broader point to be made, Mr. Speaker. If we merely nationalize industries and the Power Corporation is one of the largest nationalized industries obviously in the Province of Saskatchewan, if we merely nationalize these industries and we continue to manage them and run them precisely as if they were private corporations in which the

workers have no substantive voice in the running and direction of these corporations, it is inevitable that the employees will view the management of these corporations precisely as if they were private corporations and the employees will not think that it is their power corporation and accordingly they will engage in the process of trying to maximize their wages no matter what, which is legitimate union tactics faced with all the inequalities and the corruption and inequalities of wealth which characterizes our capitalist society in 1975.

It is a sorry situation which we arrive at, this fourteenth day, January, 1975 in considering compulsory arbitration legislation, in considering the processes of negotiation as they transpired, in considering the inequalities of wealth in our province, in our country and in the world, I don't think that Bill 28 solves the problem and accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I shall vote in principle against Bill 28.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. Wiebe (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the seriousness of this debate, I will try and keep my remarks as brief as possible.

I agree in part to some of the story which the Member for Saskatoon (Mr. Richards) spoke about in terms of what took place from January 1st to that fateful Friday evening of last week. He seemed to stop there and say that the full intention of this Government was to avoid a strike in 1975 and yet the facts certainly do not lead in that direction. I think we have to ask ourselves today who caused the strike and why was the strike called. These are two very important questions and I think the people of Saskatchewan want an answer to that question which hasn't been furnished by the Members opposite.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — We, in this Legislature, want an answer to that question and I believe that Union and management want an answer to that question as well.

The Premier and Members opposite in their speeches repeatedly have talked about the rights of labour and of unions to negotiate and their right to bargain. We have witnessed that this negotiation has only been going on for 11 days after the expiry of the contract. It is true that negotiations took place for two months prior to the end of the contract, but it seems rather strange that a strike would be called only 11 days after the expiry of a contract. You take the strike at the West Coast in terms of grain shipping this summer, it had gone on for eight months after the expiry of the contract. The Government of Canada was not prepared to have a strike, they wanted to avoid a strike and they attempted to keep negotiations going for as long as possible in order to avoid that strike. In light of the weather on Friday, January 11th, what was the rush for the Premier of this province to say No and end negotiations.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — Why did he decide after 11 days to end negotiations?

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I say without any fear of contradiction that it was the Premier and Cabinet who caused this strike. I say, as well, that the Union negotiated and bargained in good faith. SPC and Kim Thorson, I believe, negotiated and bargained in good faith and a verbal agreement had been reached. Mr. Thorson, the Minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, the representative of Cabinet, came back to his colleagues and said, everything is okay if we endorse this. It wasn't endorsed by Cabinet. The Cabinet said, No. Why did they say, No! It is just exactly, what the Leader of the Opposition has just said and what the Attorney General has just said. I think the evidence points more and more as we hear more speakers in this House and more evidence is brought out that it was a plot on behalf of the Premier of this province and Cabinet to try and get some kind of political advantage out of this strike and they had no concern whatsoever for the Union, no concern for the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — Here again, it is hard to understand why after only 11 days . . .

An Hon. Member: — Keep a straight face.

Mr. Wiebe: — It is not difficult to keep a straight face in this debate, Mr. Minister of Public Works or whatever you call yourself. This happens to be a very serious situation and that situation last Saturday was extremely serious and I ask you what warmth and what comfort was the thought to someone out in the rural area at 2 o'clock in the morning when the temperature in his house happens to be 10 below zero, what comfort was it to him to know that the Premier of this province was going to call the Legislature together four days later to get the power back on.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — And the Attorney General, what would have been wrong, Mr. Attorney General, if it was necessary to call the House together, to call it on Saturday. The Members here would have been quite willing to go but let us ask ourselves, why was the strike called in the first place? Why was it necessary to call the Members back on Saturday or today and I say it wasn't necessary.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Mr. Wiebe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure that the Attorney General will have his privilege of speaking again when he closes debate on second reading.

I should like to know, Mr. Attorney General, what is your position in this regard. Why is it necessary for us to be here today, why did you call the strike?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — The Members opposite think it is funny. Okay, then I hope that when the Attorney General gets up that he will explain to this House and to the people of the province the events that took place from January 1st to January 11th, why has he refused to make that public today. Why did they say No, to an agreement that only dealt with hours, wages had been settled, hours was not that vital. I am sure that negotiation on hours could have been continued until after the weekend, until after the storm was over. Mr. Speaker, the decision that was made by the Premier and Cabinet has two possibilities. One of them has been mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition that it was a design to play politics with the lives of the people of this province. And as I said, the strike was not necessary. But I think basically it was an error in judgment on behalf of the Premier of this province. And I think the people of Saskatchewan should realize this, that it was an error in judgment on behalf of the Premier of this province. Did he think that he had the Union in his back pocket, that he could say No and that they would not go on strike. He may not have had any sympathy for the rural areas and the fact that the winds were 40 to 60 miles an hour and it was cold. I think he was banking on the union members to have some sympathy for the farmers in the rural area. The Premier thought he could quite safely say No and that the Union would not go on strike. That they would say, look we will look after the people of this province and eventually that is what they did free of charge and at personal cost to themselves. The Premier at that point, on Friday night, had no concern for the well-being of the people of this province. He was prepared to say No to an agreement, to a verbal agreement, when the temperature was around 23 below zero and the winds were quite strong. One of the worst storms in the history of this province. It was an error of judgment on his part. Or, maybe, the Premier may have thought that the storm was going to blow itself over within a couple of hours and the sun was going to be shining the next day and if the Union did happen to go on strike then the people of the province would not have suffered by it.

I must ask the Premier as well, what did that error in judgment cost the people of Saskatchewan? And as the Minister of Industry (Mr. Thorson) has said, thank heavens there were no lives lost in those three days. The financial cost to rural Saskatchewan was exceedingly high. What about the farmer at Parkbeg whose power went off at 11:30 in the morning. It was a very simple matter to fix that particular outage, it would have taken an hour and one-half, and the farmers in the rural area of Parkbeg would have been back on stream. It took them eight hours. A handful of supervisory people could not go out and fix it because they were busy working somewhere else. In two hours the temperature in their houses had dropped to 30 above, it was freezing, water bowls were freezing, livestock equipment was freezing, ventilating fans in intensified livestock operations were not working. There was extreme hardship in that area. They could have stood the hour and one-half but they couldn't stand the eight hours. The only reason they were back on stream after eight hours was because some of the employees who were on strike in the Moose Jaw area decided to go out on their own time and help fix that situation.

As well, what about the people in the Lampman area? We know what happened there. How about the individuals up at Cabri whose power was out? After two hours, as I said, the

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temperature was down to 30 above in their homes, below freezing. Before the power was turned on it dropped lower than that. What about the flooded basements today because of ruptured water lines because the power wasn't on.

When there is a power outage due to a storm like we had that weekend, that is an act of God and it is not the responsibility of the Power Corporation in case there is damage that occurred because of it. But I maintain, Mr. Speaker, that that strike was not an act of God, that strike was an act of Premier Blakeney.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiebe: — Had the Premier not said, No, to the normal process of bargaining and asked for that bargaining to continue over the weekend those losses that occurred throughout Saskatchewan would have been kept to a minimum because the crews that were available could have gone out and would have been able to prevent a lot of that damage. One has the desire to ask the Premier of this province because of his decision and his actions over the weekend to pay compensation to those who suffered losses but this would be an extremely difficult task to undertake as to determine who suffered a loss and who didn't and yet I think it is something that should be seriously considered. The storm may have been an act of God but the strike was an act of that Government opposite and, therefore, any damage that occurred after a two-hour outage had there not been a strike could have been solved and a lot of this damage would not have occurred.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me say that I regret very much the decision of the Premier not to allow the resolution to be presented and debated. It is an opportunity for us in this Legislature to tell the people of this province that we do have something positive to offer to them. We may not have the answer as the Leader of the Opposition has stated, we didn't have the answer when we were the Government and after four years you people haven't got the answer, so let's try something. We may not be able to find the solution within one day or one week, or one month or six months, but at least we should be able to try. Let's tell the people of Saskatchewan what we are willing to try. Just like that old parable about the spider which tried seven times. Just because Canada and the provinces tried a number of times in the past, doesn't mean that we can't try again. And it would be very simple. What is the rush, why can't we sit tomorrow to discuss that resolution? What about the Members opposite, what is their rush? I know the Premier wants to get down to Hawaii but other than that, what is the rush? Let's sit tomorrow and let's discuss that resolution.

Mr. Romanow: — Cheap shot.

Mr. Wiebe: — Okay, you call it a cheap shot. I call what you did last Friday a cheap shot. A cheap shot on the people of this province and I call the fact that you are refusing to debate that resolution tomorrow another cheap shot. What's the rush? What do we have to do tomorrow that we can't sit down, what do we have to do tomorrow that is more important than to debate the future of labour and management in this province. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the Attorney General will have time to make remarks when he closes debate on this. He made a rotten speech

the first time and I am sure it will be just as rotten the second time.

With that Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this legislation

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. E.C. Malone (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, I was not intending on entering this debate at this stage. I had hoped to reserve some comments and remarks for Committee of the Whole, but I am moved by the spectacle that we have seen today to get to my feet and say a few remarks.

Let's review what has happened over the last few days, Mr. Speaker. We were called to this Assembly by the Premier because of the alleged emergency that had arisen in the Province of Saskatchewan. We were told that it was a very serious matter and that the only way it could be dealt with was by the Legislature through the normal channels of debate. I point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Government has offered exactly two speakers in support of the legislation that is before you. One of the speakers being the Attorney General, a Minister who was not involved in any manner whatsoever with the proceedings to date; the second speaker being the Minister in charge of the Department of Industry and Commerce who was most directly involved with these negotiations. I may say, Mr. Speaker, that there have been a number of questions raised today in debate that have not been answered. They are questions that need to be answered and I am going to make a few remarks now about those matters, Mr. Speaker.

Firstly, why did we have the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) presenting this legislation to this Assembly? He has nothing to do with negotiations, his department has nothing to do with industry or with labour and yet we are shown the spectacle of the Attorney General rising to his feet this morning, speaking for an hour about legislation, speaking about Bill 2, speaking about the weather, giving a detailed summary of the legislation, talking about just about everything under the sun except the matter that has brought us here today. So I ask the Attorney General, are you presenting this legislation because you are afraid that the Minister of Industry (Mr. Thorson) can't answer the questions in Committee of the Whole? Why are you doing it? I say to the Minister of Industry, there are questions that you did not answer when you rose to speak.

Firstly, the gentleman who is in charge of negotiations with the Union has made serious allegations. He has said that you agreed to the negotiations that had taken place, that you agreed and that you intended on going back to the Cabinet to get their approval. Now, Mr. Minister, who was conducting negotiations? You, or was it the Cabinet? What was going on, I should like to know this? These questions have not been answered. I should also like to know, Mr. Minister, whether there was an emergency over the weekend or not. The Union says there wasn't. The Union says that they had workers out every day. I believe the Member for Saskatoon who sits to my far left, indicated that there were twice as many people who were out working over this

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weekend. Where was the emergency? Do you say that the spokesman for the Union was lying or misleading? I should like to know that, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Malone: — There have been serious allegations as well that this is merely a political ruse by the Premier and his Government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Malone: — Nobody has replied to these allegations — the Minister of Industry didn't, we haven't heard from the Premier, hopefully we will.

I should like to hear from some of the other Members of the Government. I should like to hear from the Minister of Health (Mr. Smishek).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Malone: — He, unfortunately, is away to day and I accept that.

I should like to hear from the Premier. The Premier called this Session.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Malone: — The Premier explained to the public why this Session was necessary, and he hasn't had the courtesy to enter the debate and state his position on it.

Particularly, Mr. Speaker, I should like to hear from the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Malone: — We have heard many remarks read by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart) as to previous remarks of the Minister of Labour, made in this House. His record is well known as being a spokesman for labour. His record is well known as being opposed to compulsory arbitration, but he sits there. We have not heard from him yet. Are we going to?

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Government, if they want to justify these proceedings, if they want this legislation to be passed in a hurry, that they enter into this debate, give us some explanations, tell the public, tell this Legislature what is going on.

I will be supporting the legislation when we get to that stage, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. A.E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I wish to enter the debate and deal with some of the matters which have been raised by previous speakers because some of them deserve comment and accordingly I look forward to the opportunity of addressing some comments to them.

First, with respect to the matter of the so-called agreement on Friday night, and the negotiations which took place between the 1st of January and last Friday night, the Attorney General has outlined in some detail what formal offers had been put on the table by management - by the Power Corporation, and the Minister in Charge of the Power Corporation (Mr. Thorson) has added to those facts. The Attorney General alluded to offers, formal offers, which had been made by the Union during the course of negotiations. Those offers are what is on the table - indeed the formal offers may not be on the table, but those were in writing.

This happened up to the first of January. After that time it was clear, or it seemed clear, that we were not arriving at a settlement and as has been outlined the Corporation suggested and the Union agreed to the parties using the services of a mediator. A very skilled mediator, Bill Kelly, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Labour Department in Ottawa, came onto the scene and he proceeded to mediate.

Now, what is the process of mediation? It is to explore all possibilities of settlement, to get suggestions and proposals, all of which are understood to be not binding unless they are accepted. They are all tentative and they are all there as a basis for the mediator's trying to find one set of proposals to which both sides will agree. No one denies that that process went on and no one denies that during that process it was intimated to the mediator, Mr. Kelly, by management that they would make a movement from their formal position. It was intimated by the Union that they, too, would make a move from their formal position. He tried to get one position which both sides would agree to. He failed. And then the Union, very properly, said that all offers were off, and the management said, that goes for us too. That is a common position to take during the course of mediation. People make propositions in contemplation of settlement but if the settlement is not there the proposition is off. Both sides did it. Both sides pulled back. The Union made the point first, but that doesn't matter. Those propositions are off the table and nobody has put them back on.

The Member for Saskatoon University (Mr. Richards) asks us to review each one of those propositions to see whether or not there might have been a basis for further negotiation. I say that that would be unfair to the Union, unfair to management and would be a perversion of the mediation process. Because I say to you, if we use mediators and have them explore areas of possible settlement and the effort breaks down and if people are then asked to say what they had said to the mediator, what commitments they may have made to him, what they would have been willing to settle for had the other party moved, then you destroy mediation, and mediation is a key part of collective bargaining. For my part, I think it is unwise to trot out everything that may have been said to the mediator during the course of mediation.

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Now, this point was made - that there was an opportunity for both sides to settle before each side said the offers were off the table. Once they were off the table then it was clear there was no settlement there and that is what happened. For good or ill, it happened. We come to some other points but that is what happened. Later views of one party or the other indicate that now they would be willing to settle, and I am not saying that that is the position of either party, but if it is, it's not relevant, not relevant to the process of getting a settlement.

Now let me come to this next point - this point about so-called agreements. I think here we have to nail down what we are talking about when we talk about 'free collective bargaining'. In the 1973-74 process the Union negotiators said that they were not able to agree to something without taking it back to the membership. They took it back to the membership and it was rejected. Now there is nothing wrong with that - nothing wrong with people at the table saying: 'Look, I cannot accept this on my own authority, I will take it back to my principals.' And that was done and there was no obligation of the principals to agree, because the people at the table have to exceed their mandate very frequently. That's how the process works - each side gives its negotiators room to move - 'you can settle for that, not less than that, not more than that'. In the end they find that there is no settlement and then they start playing around in the area between. Call it what you like. You can call it mediation; you can call it discussion. Call it what you like, but that's the process. And when they might find some area that they think offers a possibility of settlement each side has to go back to its principals. All right, that is the process and that process must be preserved.

Each principal must be authorized, must be able to say "No" and last year when the Union went back to their membership they did say "No," and that is perfectly proper and part of the process. This year the Minister came back with a proposal and the Cabinet said "No," and that is perfectly proper, that is part of the process.

Now you may well say that we should have said "Yes." That is another argument - that we should have offered more. It is always the argument - that we should have offered more. It is always the argument - that somebody else could do the job better. We have seen how the Member for Prince Albert West (Mr. Steuart) conceives labour peace; we know just how well he did it in his seven years, so we are able to measure the present performance of people against the performance of some others who are now the critics. I am perfectly happy and satisfied with the performance of the Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — I am confident that he explored every possible area and I am confident that he kept negotiations open as long as he could.

I will now deal with the point raised by the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe), who somehow suggests, quite wrongly, that it was open to the Corporation to say, not "Yes," not "No," but "We will keep talking." That alternative was not open and I think if you put it fairly and squarely to the Union they will say the same thing. On Friday the Union wanted a "Yes" or a "No;" they didn't want a "Maybe." That was their judgment and

I don't criticize them for it. But that was their position, and the suggestion that somehow we could have kept negotiations going endlessly is simply not the case. The negotiations had been going on [if the Member for Moose Jaw North (Mr. MacDonald) had been listening] since October.

Now let me deal with some of the comments which the Member for Saskatoon University (Mr. Richards) very properly characterized as fantasy - the suggestion that somehow this was all a great plot. Just get that picture - that somehow we have a plot going and the idea is to draw the Union in and somehow get them to have an impasse, then a strike, then this legislation, all this. And we were doing this by remote control and we somehow led around a group like the IBEW who are able, competent and independent trade unionists, and somehow we conned them. And then there's this little chap, Bill Kelly, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour from Ottawa. We conned him into being part of this operation. He would not recognize that sort of thing. I think that that sort of comment by the Member for Morse is hardly worthy of rebuttal, but for the record I will say there is not shred of truth in any suggestion that the Government of Saskatchewan in any way tried to precipitate this strike, none whatever.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Any suggestion that the Government or any other employer should always say "Yes" to an offer by a trade union, I am sure would be rejected, would not be agreed with by any Member of the House. There are sometimes "Yes's" and sometimes "No's." And if there is a "Yes" or a "No", it may indeed be a wrong judgment. I do not think it was a wrong judgment in this case (although it may be a wrong judgment) but it cannot be ascribed to any plot or any malice, because there was none there.

Now let me turn to some of the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. He talked about man-days lost, and there were a good number of man-days lost last year in this province and in other provinces. Many, many of them were lost as a result of the construction strikes. Of the 300,000 man-days lost, 225,000 or so were lost because of the construction strikes. Now we would have liked to settle the construction strikes, but we did not go so far as the route which members opposite went to settle the construction strike; we did not call upon Bill 2; we did not say that every construction worker in this province should be sent back to his job by legislation because we said there was no emergency. In my judgment there was not an emergency, and in my judgment, legislatures should not legislate people back to work unless there is an emergency.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Now, Members opposite did not take that view. If we had taken that view we could have cut down those man-days lost (so-called), we could have legislated an end to the construction strikes. That is their method; it is not ours, and we shall suffer whatever consequences may ensue for not using Bill 2 to end construction strikes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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Mr. Blakeney: — What took the place of Bill 2, as will be well known, is the process of free collective bargaining.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — I am going to turn now to the Bill and I want to talk, in particular, about what the Bill does and why we think it is necessary. It provides two things, as you know - for the resumption of regular work by the electrical employees of the Power Corporation, and for a method of resolving the dispute between the SPC and the IBEW.

I say to you and I say to everyone in this House and in this province that the legislation is only introduced with a great deal of reluctance by the Government. The reason for our reluctance is clear. We believe that the best method of settling disputes between employers and employees is through the process of collective bargaining. I say that this is the best method. It is not perfect, it does not succeed on all occasions, but year in and year out it works better than any other method in our society. It works a great deal better than some of the other methods which have been suggested, such as the labour courts in Australia, which always find attraction for Members opposite.

I am very far from saying that collective bargaining cannot be improved. Certainly the system can be improved. Certainly it can be modified. Indeed, I am becoming persuaded that more vigorous efforts to work out modifications should be made. Modifications, however, would need to be generally acceptable to both management and labour. I was interested in a proposal for modifications . . .

Mr. Malone: — How about talking about that tomorrow?

Mr. Blakeney: — . . . Mr. Speaker, the Member opposite is now wishing to make another speech. I must say, if I had made that first one I would want to make another, too.

Let me return to what I was saying about proposed modification in the collective bargaining system. There are some proposals around for modifications in the collective bargaining system as it relates to employees in the public sector. I was attracted by a recent magazine article, by a man by the name of Ed Finn who is the Public Relations Director of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers, and it appeared in the November, 1974 issue of the Labour Gazette which is the publication of the Federal Department of Labour. The article is called "A Proposal for Labour-Management Peace in the Public Sector," an alternative to the adversary system. This was also the subject of a TV show, a national TV show a few weeks ago with the Hon. John Munro as one of the participants and a number of experts in the labour field participating as well.

Mr. Finn's proposal is for a Labour Peace Commission which would not be an arbitrator. It would be hoped that it would have great persuasive powers for several reasons. It would have top-notch people with a top-notch staff, it would be fully informed on fringe benefits, wage rates, cost of living, and other things

which affect bargaining and it would keep this material up-to-date and available to the parties. It might, or might not, carry on a regular campaign of public education. I think that this idea is worth further consideration. I have looked at this with a good deal of care; I have listened to some of the comments on it. I think that it simplifies some of the problems a little too much, but this is not to suggest that it should not be further considered. I say this because the collective bargaining system can be improved. But even as it is organized now it is the best system available to us for dealing with a broad run of labour management disputes.

It serves us well. But it has had some failures. Now, it does not fail simply because there is a work stoppage. Work stoppages, strikes and lockouts are part of the process. It is a process which involves each side creating pressure on the other side. The process fails when, in the course of a strike or lockout, overwhelming pressure is created, not on the other side - be it employer or employee - but on the public, in a manner so as to threaten some vital public interest.

The process was really designed to deal with situations where the struggle involves on the one hand an employer and his interests and his pocketbook and on the other hand his employees, their interests and their pocketbooks. It fails when the major pressure is inflicted not on the employer, his interests and pocketbook or the employees, their interests and pocketbook, but on the public. That was our situation when we called the legislature last Saturday and I suggest that it is still the situation today.

The Attorney General has outlined the general picture. On Friday last, employees of the electrical system of the SPC began indicating that they would not be returning to their regular shift. By Saturday noon it was clear that the members of the IBEW were on strike across the province. Weather forecasts on Saturday predicted a continuation of normal or worse than normal January weather. I explored with senior management at the SPC the risks which were inherent in a continued work stoppage. I explored this with some care. After considering this information I reached the conclusion that it would be imprudent and perhaps even irresponsible to delay. Accordingly at approximately 5:00 p.m. I announced that I would ask that the Legislature be convened for Tuesday morning.

I requested the Union to ask their members to return to work in the interval. I regret that they have not done so. I am advised, however, that a number of Union members reported to help when outages were experienced in the weekend blizzard. The Union itself assisted in making these arrangements and I want to thank the Union and the employees that have assisted in this way.

I regret that we were unable to give the Hon. Members the seven days notice of recall provided in the resolution we passed last month. Considering the emergency situation I felt that that was not possible. On the other hand, the difficulties of getting wires, telephone communications and other communications out and the difficulty of Hon. Members getting from where they may have been into Regina suggested that a Monday meeting would be difficult. Considering all the facts I felt that Tuesday morning was an appropriate time to meet. I am sure that Members will understand our difficulty and overlook any inconvenience experienced.

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I should like to deal with one narrow point. My information was that while it was probable that the IBEW members would provide emergency service they were unwilling to give any written commitment to that effect and I am not suggesting they should have. But this was our situation and I gather that it is still the situation. We, therefore, were operating on an understanding that those services would be forthcoming. That represents a certain hazard for a power utility and for a government to undertake over any sustained period of time.

Now this Bill intervenes in the collective bargaining process. When is such intervention by government justifiable? In answering that question I should like to quote from Hansard of April 1971:

It will be argued that in some cases, the results of a strike are so drastic that the Government must intervene. My view on that question is that intervention can only be justified if collective bargaining has been given a full and fair opportunity to succeed undeterred by any threat of impending arbitration, if opportunity has been provided for conciliation and mediation so that all avenues for a freely bargained settlement have been explored and that the strike in question is one which would genuinely lead to a social or economic crisis of substantial magnitude.

The speaker went on to say:

No case can be made for undermining free collective bargaining by setting up a system of compulsory arbitration in advance of any serious dispute. Under certain circumstances where there is genuine threat of social or economic crisis of substantial magnitude, legislative action may be appropriate. Where legislative action may be appropriate, it should apply for one dispute only, should apply only after all other methods of settling the dispute have been thoroughly canvassed.

Now that was a position that I took in this Legislature in April 1971. That was my view of what should be done in the face of a work stoppage in an essential industry. It was my view then; it is my view now. I think that fairly sets out the matters which should be considered in a situation of this kind.

Let me identify the questions to be asked. Has collective bargaining been given a full and fair opportunity to succeed undeterred by any impending arbitration? Has opportunity been provided for conciliation and mediation? Is the strike one in which there is a genuine threat of a social or economic crisis of substantial magnitude? Does the Bill undermine free collective bargaining? Does it cover one dispute only?

Now let me turn to these questions, let me deal with questions one and two. Has collective bargaining been given a full and fair opportunity to succeed undeterred by any impending arbitration? Has opportunity been provided for conciliation and mediation? We have reviewed the negotiations in detail and I am sure that everybody who bargained for either party will agree that there was no suggestion or hint that there would be any recourse to compulsory arbitration. It was very far from our mind.

The legislation that we have is one-shot legislative intervention. It is not the type of legislation introduced by Members opposite when they sat on the Treasury Benches, the legislation they introduced in 1966 which meant that every negotiation was subject to compulsory arbitration. So I say that the collective bargaining has been given a full and fair opportunity undeterred by any impending arbitration.

Has opportunity been provided for conciliation and mediation? Well you've heard the review of those negotiations. It is clear that negotiations were carried on vigorously over a long period of time. The Company made a number of firm offers while the Union position, their position was a request or a demand for a package which was something better than 65 per cent. Now one should not be alarmed at the size of the initial demands of a union. Nobody should get upset about that and I am always upset when I see in the Press somebody, some employer saying the union is demanding 37 per cent or 45 per cent or whatever it is. Maybe it would be better to couch their opening bargaining position in different terms but that is all it is and people should know that. What was alarming for us, for the employer in this dispute, was that there were very few firm Union proposals at less than their opening position. Indeed we had got up to pretty well January 1st without any firm movement of major proportions on the Union side. Be that as it may, negotiations sometimes go that way. At any rate the SPC at the new year pressed for mediation. Bill Kelly came, Mr. Kelly came to Regina early in January and began intensive mediation, really almost round-the-clock mediation. He was still meeting with the parties when negotiations broke off on Friday evening and when it was indicated again that there would be a withdrawal of service. Both parties agreed that all proposals and suggestions put forward during the negotiation and mediation process were withdrawn. Underline that, because in our judgment our obligation to the trade union, when they withdrew those offers, was to keep faith with them and not say what their last position was and in the same way we do not think people should be asking what our last position was, if in fact both agreed that they were all withdrawn. They were not positions in any firm sense of the word; they were proposals put forward to the mediator and to the parties to see whether there were grounds for settlement.

Let me be clear. Offers of a type which lead to settlement are either firm, written offers or they are part of a package which both sides agree to, and there were neither. There was neither during the Kelly mediation. There were all sorts of proposals. Surely if you can get them to agree to that, we would go this far and if you can get them to agree to that, we will go this far. If you want to call those offers, fine. But they are not the type of offers which it is fair or reasonable to ask either party to regurgitate when the mediation is closed and all offers have been withdrawn, and that was the deal. If the settlement was not there, all offers were withdrawn. That wasn't our requirement. It was agreed by both parties. That is the situation.

Now, SPC wish that the Union had acted differently. Doubtless the Union representatives would say that they wish that the SPC people had acted differently. No matter what you say, that a substantial and sustained effort was made to reach a settlement including the use of one of Canada's leading experts as a mediator, cannot be contradicted or denied. That cannot be

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denied. We gave collective bargaining together with mediation a full shot.

Now let me turn to question three. Is the strike one where there is a genuine threat of a social or economic crisis of substantial magnitude?

I do not think that any lengthy argument is necessary to show that if large sections of Saskatchewan were without power for lengthy periods of time in mid-January, we would have a social or economic crisis of substantial magnitude. I think we all agree to that.

Indeed I and other Members on this side of the House agreed with this position in September of 1966. Some of you may remember that. In the debate in September of 1966, the debate on Bill 2, a Bill which I opposed, I made very clear our position and here I am quoting my own words in Hansard on page 38:

When we have an interruption in an essential public service then a strike must be terminated and fair and equitable arbitration procedures are then justified.

That is the substance of what I said in many places and that is in fact the position.

Directed specifically to that strike in 1966, I said:

We agree that given the circumstances that have arisen since last Friday (and it happened also to be a Friday) this session is necessary . . . There is no alternative if there is a strike in an essential public utility to finding a way around it.

If that action was necessary in September 1966, how much more necessary is it in January 1975?

Meteorological people tell me that the average temperature in September is 55 degrees, the average temperature in January is 1 degree, the record low in September is 5 above, and the record low in January is 58 below. These are Regina figures.

While last Saturday was not the record cold day, it approached records in wind chill factor. Quite apart from the work stoppage, last Saturday would have been a tough day for any power or gas utility. The figures give you some idea. Last Saturday, natural gas consumption was the highest ever recorded for a single day by SPC. Electric power consumption would have been the highest ever recorded in a single day by SPC. Only the cutting off of major industrial customers like Interprovincial Steel and Prince Albert Pulp kept consumption from being a single day record.

It is clear, therefore, that on Saturday the system was under some pressure. And the system is still under some pressure. I do not mean to say that the province was or is on the brink of catastrophe. The management staff is carrying on competently and well. I congratulate and thank them.

But senior management advise me that to attempt to operate the system at a time of peak demand, when weather can create extra risks of interruptions, extra risks of outages, to try to carry on that system with a staff cut down to about one-quarter of normal size and to continue that over any sustained

period of time is to tempt fate. It is indeed, as I said last Saturday, to court disaster.

There is a further matter to consider. Union members as a matter of practice usually honour the picket lines of other unions. And I would expect them to do so. This means that the SPC gas division employees, members of another union - the OCAWIU, the Oil Chemical Atomic Workers International Union - will probably honour the IBEW picket lines. In fact I think they are now honouring the IBEW picket lines. The result is that the SPC employees of both unions will be staying away from work. Note carefully I am not saying necessarily all OCAWIU employees will be staying away from work, because I am not saying that there are picket lines up on all their work locations, but there will be employees from both unions staying away from work.

This would involve SPC supervisory personnel operating not only the electrical system but also part or all of the natural gas system at a time when each system is operating at or near peak.

Electricity supply is an essential service. Natural gas supply is an essential service. And this is the next proposition, I state. Over any sustained period of time, union members are essential to providing those services.

Clearly the strike, the withdrawal of services, does create a genuine threat of a crisis of substantial magnitude. That test is fully met and I say that the Legislature is justified in legislating a return to work.

Now I turn to the next question, question number four. Does the Bill before us undermine free collective bargaining? And the related question, is the Bill limited to a single emergent dispute?

To deal with the last question first, is the Bill related to a single dispute? The answer is clearly, Yes. This is not a Bill 2. This is not a Bill 2 which casts the threat of compulsory arbitration over future negotiations in this or other industries. This Bill deals only with this particular dispute and the emergency created at this particular time. This in itself limits the impact of the Bill on the process of free collective bargaining.

Nevertheless, one cannot legislate the end to a dispute without at least undermining the process to some small degree. The problem, where the public interest is clearly threatened, is to minimize the effect of legislative action on future collective bargaining. And the provisions of this Bill are designed to do just that.

In the first place, as I said, this Bill deals with a single dispute and ceases to have any force and effect when the arbitrator has done his work. I expect that before this Session is over this Bill will no longer be operative.

Second, the Bill leaves an absolute minimum of discretion to be exercised by any Minister or the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council after this House adjourns. This arbitrator is named; his instructions are in the legislation. The Bill leaves as few uncertainties as possible in the minds of the public or the parties.

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Third, the Bill attempts to avoid some of the more serious problems which are created when the parties in negotiation see arbitration as a possible end of the road. Let me explain this.

In free collective bargaining - I'll offer to explain to some other Members, although I don't think I can undertake to explain it to the Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy) - in free collective bargaining the negotiating parties should be able to explore all possible avenues leading to agreement, make conditional proposals, pursue tentative agreements which cannot be final unless approved by the employer or the union membership. This is the stuff of which negotiations are made and the sole purpose is to arrive at a settlement - to arrive at a settlement without a strike or a lockout. That is the name of the game. The parties should not have to look over their shoulders to consider whether any attempts that they make to get that settlement would prejudice their respective cases if there was future arbitration. If a mediator or a conciliator is used, the parties should be free to stretch their positions to the limit - to be perfectly frank with the mediator or conciliator, without having to consider whether this frankness or stretching might work against their interests in some future arbitration.

With this in mind and I think this is very important if we really are trying to preserve the prospect of free collective bargaining, the Bill makes a clean break between the negotiations which failed and the arbitration which is to come. Despite his obvious qualifications, the man who served as mediator in the negotiations, Mr. Kelly, is not named as arbitrator. If he were, this might make mediation less effective in some future dispute because the parties might not feel that they could talk to the mediator frankly, since they might indeed be talking to the arbitrator.

Further, Section 9, subsection (3) of the Bill provides, in effect, that the arbitrator shall not consider the proposals exchanged during the course of negotiations and mediation. The matters in dispute are those set out by each of the parties, and only those matters which both parties stipulate as agreed are to be eliminated. Why this provision? Because offers and proposals put forward by both sides have as their objective a settlement without a strike or lockout. This is the quid pro quo for straining every effort to get a settlement.

But once there is a strike or a lockout, there is no quid pro quo for that. You've got your strike or your lockout. The matter goes to arbitration, all proposals discussed in an effort to reach agreement should be off the table. That is what the Bill provides for. That is what the Union requested. That is what the management requested. If this is not the case, if all these tentative propositions are not off the table, then the discipline of collective bargaining goes down the drain. The pressure to reach agreement is removed. It is removed because if you are going to have arbitration and the arbitrator starts at the last so-called positions of each party, there is no pressure to settle at all. The party which precipitates arbitration has nothing to lose. That party can go nowhere but up and that will kill real bargaining. This Bill provides that the arbitrator will look at all issues on their merits.

We want to preserve that discipline of collective bargaining for it is that discipline that is the essence of the process. We are asking the arbitrator to disregard negotiations and consider the merits without prejudicing either party on any proposal that may have been put forward. That, as I say, is how

negotiations ended - with all proposals off the table - and that is how the arbitrator is to assume his new duties.

Now I turn to the terms of the Bill. We have tried to limit the scope of the Bill. We have particularly tried to limit the powers given to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, and may I say that that advice would have been well taken by Members opposite when they were drafting legislation. We have tried to make the Bill one to bring about a resumption of work, a settlement of the dispute and not a Bill which is punitive or vindictive.

This Bill stands in sharp contrast to Saskatchewan Liberal efforts at compulsory arbitration. I say Saskatchewan Liberal because this Bill follows in many respects the legislation proposed by the Federal Government to deal with the railway strike in 1973 and the grain-handlers strike in 1974. Those again were one-shot legislative interventions.

As I have said, the Bill before us limited to one dispute, the current dispute between the SPC and the IBEW. The name of the arbitrator is set out in the Bill. If you feel that this person should not be the arbitrator then it is open to you to speak, to suggest another name. Under Bill 2, Members of the legislature had no choice as to who the arbitrator was to be, that was done in the Cabinet Chamber by the Cabinet. Under Bill 2 the Members in the Thatcher Cabinet, could and did choose provincial judges who had been appointed by them. Naming the arbitrator in the Bill removes any suggestion that the Government is picking and choosing to get the result they desire.

Mr. Steuart: — . . . put that in.

Mr. Blakeney: — The name is in the Bill, but you have full opportunity to question the competency of that man and I tell you under your Bill I should have liked to have had an opportunity to address some remarks on the suitability of some of the arbitrators you chose.

Mr. Speaker, the arbitrator selected is a judge, appointed by the Federal Government, paid by the Federal Government, who owes absolutely nothing to this Government. There was the opportunity to find a man as totally impartial as possible and we took advantage of that opportunity. Members opposite I know would have been critical of any choice we made but I want them to stand on their feet in this House and say what they think is wrong with this choice. If they think it is wrong . . .

An Hon. Member: — I want Gary Lane to say it, and I want Ken MacLeod to say it and I want . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Mr. Blakeney: — This Bill is an effort to ensure that the arbitrator is someone who owes nothing to this Government, who is appointed by the Federal Government, who is paid by the Federal Government, who not only is impartial but also is seen to be impartial.

Mr. Lane: — Are you saying that others aren't?

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Mr. Blakeney: — I am saying that to appoint a provincial judge, appointed by members of the Government and paid by members of the Government, leaves a suspicion in the minds of the public that that man is not as impartial as if he owed nothing to the Government, that is what I am saying.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — That is what I said in 1966 in moving amendments to Bill 2 on these very grounds and I still have the same views I had in 1966 about having provincial judges and arbitrators in provincial arbitration boards appointed by the Cabinet.

The Assembly recessed at 5:30 until 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, before the supper break I was talking about some of the aspects of the Bill; the fact that the arbitrator is named in the Bill; the fact that the arbitrator is a judge of the District Court who is appointed and paid by the Federal Government; the fact that this removes any suggestion that the Government is “picking and choosing” to get the result they desire. I am sure that any suggestion of that would be pointed out by the vigilance of the Hon. Members opposite and that this is a sharp difference from any type of legislation which provides for the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council naming the arbitrator.

The penalty sections have already been alluded to by my colleague the Attorney General. They set out only modest penalties. Quite frankly we are relying on the respect of all parties, including all the union members, the respect they have for the law and our system of government, to see that the provisions of the Act are carried out. Penalties are provided for but for the union members at least they are very modest. For the union officials they are only somewhat more severe. All of them are very much lower than was provided for in Bill 2. The Attorney General has indicated that most or all of them and certainly the ones applying to the union membership are well below those which are in The Trade Union Act, but perhaps their level does not matter very much because we are confident they will find little or no use.

Unlike Bill 2, this Bill does not contain any effort to attack the certification of the Union. We regard it as a most serious matter to attempt to interfere with the right of working people to choose whom they wish to represent them as their bargaining agent. Unlike Bill 2, this Bill does not propose to interfere with this right of working people.

Indeed in many ways this Bill is different from Bill 2. The Leader of the Opposition in the course of his remarks suggested in his introduction, he did not pursue the matter, that there had been some reversal of position on my part. May I say that on this Bill I am happy to quote what I said in this Legislature in 1966, happy to quote what I said in 1971 and will say again in 1975. I don't know how many Members opposite are prepared to say that what they said in 1966 in the Bill 2 still stands, what they said in the 1971 Bill 2 debate still stands. Certainly what I said at that time still stands. In 1966, for example, I said:

The right to strike is a basic civil right and as other Members have pointed out, basic civil rights of employees are not the only rights around. Citizens have rights too and the citizens have a right to a more or less continuous service in essential public services. They have no right to ask management to spend huge sums of money so that there won't be a momentary interruption.

May I digress. That appears to be the position of the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe).

Citizens have no right to ask labour to give up all sorts of rights so that there won't be a momentary interruption. But basically they have the right to continued services of an essential public nature.

This means that it may be necessary for us to take away private rights to accommodate this public right and we have well recognized this in times of war. We have recognized it with respect to police, we have recognized it with respect to firemen. (I am prepared to say that under extreme circumstances we must recognize it with respect to power workers or gas workers.) All I am saying is that before we invoke this principle, we should not do that unless it is necessary. We should only do it to the extent necessary and we should do it in the fairest way possible to the person whose rights were taken away.

Now that was my position in 1966. That was my position in 1971 and that is my position in 1975.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — And I want to say that in my judgment this type of single dispute intervention is vastly different from Bill 2.

The Leader of the Opposition was suggesting that our position during the election campaign was somehow different. Let me remind this House of what I said in the House in April of 1971, less than three months before the last election. Keep in mind that we were talking about Bill 2. At that time I said:

In our judgment there is all the difference in the world between Bill 2 and the arbitration provided by the parties themselves under a collective bargaining agreement. There is all the difference in the world between Bill 2 and one-shot legislative intervention which could conceivably be required to deal with a particular major labour dispute.

That is what I said in 1971, that is what I say in 1975.

The situation of arbitration pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or one-shot legislative intervention doesn't destroy collective bargaining, Bill 2 does.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — And I went on to say in 1971:

These items which I have mentioned, arbitration pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement and one-shot

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legislative intervention do not place tens of thousands of workers under the threat of action by the Premier and his Cabinet. Bill 2 does.

That is what I said in 1971 and that is what I say in 1975.

I say these measures do not strike at the essential freedom of working people of this province. Bill 2 does. Bill 2, Mr. Speaker, is coercion, pure and simple.

And that, Mr. Speaker is what I said in 1971 and what I say in 1975.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — I said in 1971 - again for the Member for Lumsden (Mr. Lane) who takes a little bit of time to absorb things:

One-shot legislative arbitration intervention does not place tens of thousands of workers under the threat of action by the Premier and his Cabinet. Bill 2 does. They do not strike at the essential freedoms of working people in this province, Bill 2 does.

Our position has been and is that arbitration by legislation should be used only as a last resort. And if I may quote myself again in 1966:

When all else has failed, when we have an interruption in an essential public service, then a strike must be terminated and fair and equitable arbitration procedures are then justified.

It has been shown conclusively that negotiations had collapsed. It has been shown conclusively that there was a work stoppage. It has been shown conclusively that the work stoppage was a threat to public safety. It has been shown and, I believe, conclusively, that legislative intervention was necessary. It has been shown conclusively that the Bill before us is fair and equitable to the employees and interferes with collective bargaining only to the smallest possible extent. It has been shown conclusively that this Bill is the best balance, the best possible balance between the rights of employees and the rights of the public. It is fair to the employees and fair to the public. It deserves the support of all Members.

Mr. Speaker, I will support the Bill.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D.F. MacDonald (Moose Jaw North): — Mr. Speaker, I was very interested in the comments of the Premier. He said a great deal about responsibilities to the Union, responsibilities to the Corporation. He said very little about responsibilities to the general public. The Premier seemed to me to be very thrilled with the kind of academic intricacies of the bargaining process, that was the thing that seemed to thrill him most. He didn't talk much about people's lives, or people's property, or jobs or working conditions. He was very enamoured with the certain system of bargaining, that's what seems very important to him. The

practical consequences of bargaining seemed less important to the Premier.

I don't think the public want legal opinions from the Premier of this province, I don't think they want him to come in here and be a labour lawyer. I think they want him to be a man, and to represent the public, not the legal profession or that of a labour lawyer. I am not very impressed with his defence of having to bring in this Bill or the arguments for it. You know he used a very cute little process, he asked a whole bunch of questions. He set them up before us, he sets the criteria by which it would be necessary to bring about this action. Then he goes about justifying his position by fulfilling the criteria that he himself sets out. It is not the public that sets out the criteria, nor the Union, nor the other MLAs - they are his criteria - a very clever method in trying to find some defence for the position that he finds himself in today. There is no question that that speech was written by one of the academics from his planning office. I think that speech was an insult to other MLAs and to the public and to the striking employees. I don't think the strikers and the public care much about your quid-pro-quo or whatever you are talking about. I think they would like to hear straightforward answers - to hear the practical consequences of your actions today. They want answers to why you have failed in this situation.

I think the public wants security for their electrical service, I think the workers want fairness, they don't want legal arguments in this House. I would say one other thing about the remarks of the Premier. He talked about a single dispute legislation and we can bring it into the House. That is nonsense. The comments that he made before he said that, the comments that were made by the Minister of Industry and Commerce indicate to this House and to me and to SPC employees that this is not single dispute legislation. They have served notice that they will not allow SPC employees to strike at any time. There are no conditions under which they would allow strikes . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — . . . In the summertime you have got electrical storms that might somehow become an emergency. The Minister of Commerce indicated that they will never allow SPC to strike. This is not single dispute legislation. They have told us in fact that they will not in the future allow them to strike. In other words you served notice that if there is a dispute which ends up in a strike that this Bill will be reintroduced into this House at a later date. It is not single dispute legislation.

Mr. Romanow: — You tell us about Bill 2, Don.

Mr. MacDonald: — We have very much Bill 2 by the words and actions of the Minister of Industry and the Premier of this Province.

Mr. Romanow: — Let's hear from the friend of the working man now.

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Speaker, one of the

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things that we were called into this special Session was to consider this legislation that is going to force the SPC workers back to work and to impose a settlement to this dispute. I think one of the questions that all of us should answer and especially the backbenchers on that side of the House, is why is it necessary that we are back here to bring in this legislation? I think we should clearly understand it. I think that the backbenchers on that side should acknowledge the reason that they are back in this House. I think we must ask the question why we are here to settle a strike that should not have occurred. That is the important thing. Why in fact do we have a strike?

There is no question in my mind that we do have a strike because the Blakeney Government has caused it to happen. It has caused it to happen just as surely as if he had ordered IBEW to stop work. Different people have questioned the motives of the Blakeney Government, some people in this House. I heard some people on the hot line this morning questioning the motives of the Blakeney Government. I am not going to question his motives, I'll let other people decide on that. Maybe it was some kind of carefully planned intricate thing and maybe it was sheer stupidity. I don't know. But the Blakeney Government has caused this strike because it has been inexpert, it has been inept and it has been inappropriate . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — . . . both in this single instance of this strike and in the whole field of labour relations in general. The Government opposite has fumbled and fumbled and have directly caused the situation that causes us to be in this Legislature today.

It is funny. We supposedly have an NDP Government that is opposed to compulsory arbitration. I remember the Minister of Labour, Mr. Snyder. I keep expecting him to speak in this debate, it seems very odd that the Minister of Labour would not introduce the Bill or at least speak on it very quickly to outline his thoughts on it as the Minister of Labour. I think possibly he was told to sit on his hands as he has been doing the rest of the year. When he spoke in the 1970 debate, they were discussing Bill 2 and he quoted a statement. I want to repeat the statement that he quoted.

Compulsory arbitration is a dictatorial solution which is really not a solution at all.

That was what he said in 1970. I think he should surely still believe that today. Yet now today, this Government which opposes a dictatorial solution has created a situation which Mr. Blakeney claims demands compulsory arbitration today. The Blakeney Government has created the atmosphere that has caused this strike to happen. Honest and meaningful collective free bargaining in Saskatchewan where the NDP are concerned and is involved is dead. I believe that free collective bargaining in Saskatchewan under the NDP is dead. I said meaningful collective bargaining is dead. I believe that very sincerely. It is dead because the NDP can't stop meddling in the free collective bargaining process. It is dead because of the attitude of the various activities of the Blakeney Government. The labour relations record of the NDP is a record that draws the envy of no one in Canada.

We have heard a great deal about 1964 to 1971 from Members opposite and they used to refer to the grand old record of the CCF in labour relations and that it was the best in Canada, that they indeed had a record that they could be proud of. Maybe that's right but the NDP of 1975 in Saskatchewan have indeed a record and I don't think they are very proud of that record. Over 300,000 man days lost in the first nine months of 1974. You know we have debated this before and in 1972 the Minister of Labour stood on his feet and he said, oh, we've had quite a lot of man days lost, but we can blame that all on the seven bad years and this is our catch up period and that is why 1972 is so bad. Not bad because of anything I've done, it's bad because of seven years of Liberal Government.

And in 1973 the Labour Minister said the same thing again. You know it is taking us two years to catch up for all the bad things you did for seven years. And yet in 1974 when they supposedly had all these ills corrected they had the worst record in Saskatchewan's history. Four times as bad as the previous record high in man-days lost. Whom are you going to blame it on now?

Then in 1975 they come in with compulsory arbitration legislation. Some record for the NDP opposite to be proud of.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — The NDP Government opposite has lost control, they have totally lost control in the field of labour relations.

Not only are they unable to assist anyone in the field of labour relations but in fact, a Blakeney Government and the Minister of Labour have created dissent and unrest. The construction strike was a good example. I believe and I said it in this House before that the Minister of Labour abetted dissension and helped to cause that strike. He created unrest, in the construction industry.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — When that strike occurred the Minister of Labour did nothing for a very long time, absolutely nothing. Then he finally reacted after a long time and a lot of man-days lost, a lot of hardship, finally he reacted and he sent in a mediator. But there was no longer room for meaningful negotiations when that mediator went in. At that point the contractors were willing to accept any settlement. They were down and out, they received no help, no guidance, they were ready to settle. At that point the mediator went in and a settlement was based on what was acceptable to the union and that the contractors said was fine, they wanted out of it, after all the public purse pays for just about all the construction costs in the Province of Saskatchewan and they weren't going to be the scapegoats any more for inactivity of the Blakeney Government.

Collective bargaining process in construction industry is absolutely dead. It died during that strike and it will not be resurrected as long as that Government is around.

I'm told that in the future there will be no attempt at collective bargaining in that industry. They will likely settle

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on the basis of Alberta or whatever, but there will be no meaningful negotiations in that industry.

Collective bargaining of course, died in the public service in this province last year. SGEA (Saskatchewan Government Employees Association) government employees are mocking and ridiculing the Blakeney Government and its attempt at negotiations. Collective bargaining in the public service is just a pretense in this province now. Public employees have found that to go through the process of negotiating and bargaining is a waste of time. They found that what you need with the Blakeney Government is a study session, a walkout, a strike, whatever, that's what gets them results. They found this out. The record is absolutely clear. It has not failed in any instance to get the results that they want. Negotiations are a waste of time in the public service and government employees in this Province know it. That is not free collective bargaining. The process is dead in the civil service.

I don't think the nurses believe that collective bargaining is viable in this province. Why even the Minister of Labour interfered in the Times Herald strike in Moose Jaw and I predict that the interference of the Blakeney Government in that dispute may find a dispute that will never be settled, ever, partly and mainly because of the interference of the Blakeney Government. I'd be very surprised if that dispute is ever settled.

Mr. Romanow, when he got up, the Attorney General, says that in Saskatchewan in this situation the free collective bargaining process was given a full, clear chance to solve the dispute, was exhaustive, unrestrictive, that's absolutely nonsense.

The Premier asked as one of his criteria whether or not collective bargaining was given a free chance to succeed in this case.

An Hon. Member: — Nonsense.

Mr. MacDonald: — That's not what Mr. Hill says. Mr. Alf Hill, the local President of IBEW says that there was interference by the Cabinet. Ask Mr. Hill if there was any meddling or interference by the Cabinet between the negotiating teams. Don't tell me that there was not a ghost at the bargaining table, there was a real live ghost, the whole assembly of them on that side of the Assembly.

I'm sure that Members opposite have read the news release from the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and I should like to quote briefly from it:

The IBEW has been put into the completely untenable position of having to negotiate second hand with the whole of Cabinet and at times the whole Caucus.

Neither Cabinet nor Caucus was at the bargaining table, they merely stayed in the background to veto the recommendations of their own negotiators. This dispute could have been settled Friday night had SPC management and the Minister in charge been given the power actually to bargain instead of just transmitting messages to Cabinet.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — But don't ask me to believe that that is free, unrestrictive collective bargaining. It's nonsense to make a statement like that in this House.

I spoke to a number of the local members in Moose Jaw of IBEW. They told me, and I think it is widespread, the impression that was left with them by the Premier and Cabinet that really the Premier and the Cabinet might go along with their demands and their requests except that they really couldn't do so without having a mandate from the people. That they couldn't accede to their requests without having a mandate from the people. And I asked these employees, how does he get a mandate? Well I don't know, they said. I don't know how the Premier would expect to get a mandate. What are the union members to think about this impression that's left with them? May I add that this is exactly the same impression that's left with Saskatchewan Government Employees. When they talked about striking a couple of months ago and they had a study session, you could ask any one of them. I had several of them suggest to me, well this is the kind of game you have to play you know, Mr. Blakeney would like to give us the money, but he has to somehow justify this to the public so that if we have a strike that will make it look as if it's justified. This is a game that is being played. They somehow have to get . . .

An Hon. Member: — Conspiracy.

Mr. MacDonald: — Yes, that's right. It's a game, it's not a collective bargaining. Well the union members of IBEW whom I spoke to know how to get a mandate. Seems to me that the only option open to these people was to go on strike. That would give the Premier a chance to have a mandate from the people and from this Legislature. What other action could IBEW workers do in the face of the actions by Mr. Blakeney?

I believe that Mr. Blakeney forced the men to strike in this way and that this is a very shameful act by the Blakeney Government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — It is most shameful in this particular case because we have involved a Crown corporation. This Crown corporation provides an essential service to the people of this province and this Crown corporation holds a monopoly position. Because of these two facts I feel that it is up to the Government to do everything possible to accommodate a solution. I don't think you can stick to the exact letter of the law or the way he reads, negotiations in a textbook. We have an essential service involved, we have a company with a monopoly position involved. I think negotiations under those circumstances must take a slightly different direction if it is necessary.

This is a special case and it needs special effort and I think again of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and I'd like to read from their quote once more again to prove that everything was not done, in my mind nor the Saskatchewan Federation's mind to accommodate a solution and I quote:

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It is clear to us from our involvement (this is the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour) with the matter that the Government, since Saturday, has had absolutely no desire to settle this problem in a reasonable way.

That's what the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour says and I say it. I don't think they have any desire to solve that problem in a reasonable way. As I say I completely find the Blakeney Government to blame, I want to say that I was disappointed by the actions of the provincial bargaining committee of IBEW. They have the legal right to strike, I don't deny that nor anyone in this Legislature deny them the right to strike. They have it by law.

After the treatment they received from the Blakeney Government, I'm sure they felt they had a moral right to strike and I don't argue that. But because of the same facts as I charged Mr. Blakeney with having an added responsibility, the fact that it is an essential service and the fact that they are employed by a company holding a monopoly position, I also think that the IBEW should have taken the most reasonable approach to the problem and I wish that they had assumed different tactics. I wish that they had, for one thing, taken the Members of this Legislature into their confidence and the public through the press and said something like:

We find ourselves at an impasse with the Government, to lay out their problems and say that if a solution is not reached within a week or whatever time limit they want to choose, then we will be forced to strike.

I think that this is a fair approach because as a Member of the Legislature I think I have some responsibility for Crown corporations. I think, as a public company the general public feels that they have some responsibility for finding a reasonable solution. Quite possibly the MLAs who are in this Assembly and the public may not have been able to put pressure on the Cabinet to have a reasonable solution, but at least I, and other Members of the Assembly, and the public, should have been given the opportunity to try and put pressure to solve this before a strike occurred. That is the tactic I wish they had adopted. I think these are the tactics that were used last year successfully, fairly successfully, when the locals informed the public, they informed myself, that they would be taking action if nothing was done, and I think it put pressure on the Power Corporation and the Cabinet to come up to a reasonable solution. That was done at the local level and I wish the provincial level had done the same thing this year.

As I say, you can hardly blame the IBEW for assuming that a strike would produce results. Every other public employee has received what they were asking for by either threatening a strike or having a strike. The Power Corporation a year ago had study sessions and so on and achieved basically what they were after so it worked last year. How were they to expect the wrath of the Blakeney Government this year. It was unprecedented.

I do want to say a word of commendation to the members of the IBEW who did volunteer their labour. I think they did a very reasonable thing in the situation. That is the kind of action that I would expect from them, but I do want to commend them. I think it was the Minister of Industry and Commerce who

said that he also wanted to commend the general public for the appeals made by the Power Corporation to use less energy and so on. I would suggest that the general public did co-operate. I wonder if the Minister of Industry and Commerce happened to look at the Cabinet cars parked in the circle outside this morning. A beautiful sunny, warm winter morning and the heaters are plugged in the MLAs' cars, Cabinet cars, Provincial Treasurer's car plugged in at 11:00 o'clock when the Power Corporation is spending public funds asking the general public not to use any unnecessary electricity. I wonder if he noticed Cabinet cars and MLA cars plugged in?

An Hon. Member: — Where is your car?

Mr. MacDonald: — My car is out there. It wasn't plugged in. No sir, it was not.

I want to say in closing that the Blakeney Government, in my mind, has created an impasse that will not be soluble by negotiation at this point. I think the good faith has been lost. Obviously it has been lost. Mr. Blakeney says that now the only solution is arbitration. He is likely right. The impasse has been reached. I should like to say that I condemn the Government opposite for forcing us to make this decision today and I put this blame entirely on their shoulders. If good faith, if honesty and sincerity had been used by the Government opposite then we wouldn't be here today. There is no question. As Mr. Thorson put it, that the majority of people want this strike settled. There is no question that it has to be settled and I think with the impasse now arbitration at this point is the only method of solution.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. K. Thorson (Minister of Industry): — I rise on a question of personal privilege, if I may, Mr. Speaker. I didn't want to interrupt the Member for Moose Jaw North when he was speaking, but I don't want to leave the impression that his interpretation of what I said about the summer storms and the inconvenience we suffer with power outages as a result, is any way comparable to the situation we are in in the winter time and I think a careful reading of what I said will make it quite clear that I drew a very distinct difference between the two situations.

Mr. C.P. MacDonald (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, there is just no question the Minister of Industry has a guilty conscience. After rising on that kind of a point of privilege to attempt to justify the very drastic measures that he has taken and introduced and been responsible for in this House, it is certainly an indication of what has happened.

Mr. Speaker, I only want to speak very briefly on this and then I would like to propose a step for this Legislature and the people of Saskatchewan which is a little different than is now before the Legislature at this time.

There is really only one question: Is this a political negotiation, or a negotiation between management and labour? No one questions the responsibility of the Government of the day for the Treasury Board to make the decisions as to what are

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the overall guidelines of negotiations between the Government of Saskatchewan or any government in Canada, and the civil servants or Crown corporations. But the story and the scenario, as the Attorney General likes to call it, is entirely different. That we are not today discussing negotiations between management and labour, we are discussing negotiations between the Cabinet and the caucus of the NDP and the employees of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — How often as I sat on the right of you, Mr. Speaker, did I hear Members of the Opposition at that time talk about the ghost at the bargaining table as the Member for Moose Jaw has indicated. The influence, the sledgehammer, the fourth degree tactics, the dictatorial terms of those people who are negotiating, implemented by the people when we were the Government.

All of a sudden today what we find is management and labour have come to a verbal agreement which is not contrary to the overall guidelines of the Government. In fact when the Government of the day agreed that the hours of work should be reduced, they agreed that there should be some changes in holiday legislation, but all of a sudden it was the fractional difference. Are we to suggest today that the Treasury Benches are to become involved in the specifics of negotiation. Are we to suggest that after months and months of hard and difficult negotiations that that is to be cast aside for specific items of negotiation not on the overall guidelines of the government.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that every union member in the Province of Saskatchewan who has a responsibility to work for a Crown corporation or a Government body should be concerned.

I wonder what the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, for example, thinks, when the Government has seized control of their negotiations and put a controlling interest and a control in the numbers in the negotiation team and suggest that every morning they have to go back to the Cabinet or the caucus of the NDP to determine the hours of work, the pension benefits, you name it. Is this free collective bargaining that the Premier is talking about?

An Hon. Member: — No way.

Mr. MacDonald: — No way, Mr. Speaker. Let us examine a Crown corporation in Saskatchewan.

First of all, there is a Minister in charge who certainly represents the Treasury Benches of the political party of the day who happens to be the government. Poorly, but he does. Then you have a board of directors. Many of them civil servants who also are appointed to represent the government's viewpoint. They also then have some of the general public who certainly are there to represent the public interest. Then the Crown corporation has an industrial relations department which looks after the negotiations and the discussions with union on all labour-management relations. Then we have a union which certainly is there to represent the employees. But in months and months, and perhaps years, or a year of hard and difficult negotiations, all of that work of that body is to be cast aside for the political

considerations of the Cabinet or the Treasury benches or the caucus. Can you imagine the ridiculous situation of Friday last when after management and labour had come to a verbal agreement that the messages ran back and forth to the NDP caucus. Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that every group in this province that has any responsibility to work for that particular government will wonder tomorrow whether or not there is free collective bargaining with those people who are responsible for the bargaining itself.

Mr. Romanow: — Just like in Bill 2.

Mr. MacDonald: — That's right. And the Attorney General talks about Bill 2. After listening to the Minister of Industry and the Premier talk about the risk involved in the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, it reminds me of Premier Thatcher when he introduced Bill 2, talk about the hospital workers, talk about the firemen, and the police. No, let's not try and separate compulsory binding arbitration in an artificial situation created by the Cabinet.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Speaker, let us not forget that the difference between management and labour was one hour and one-third per week, not the overall principle or guidelines established by Treasury Board. Not the overall guidelines established by the Government in any negotiative process. They became directly involved in negotiation itself and I am sure that the members of the Union are beginning to wonder why should we sit down with management of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, why should we not sit down with the Cabinet itself? And I am sure that that is one of the major responsibilities or causes of 300,000 man-days lost in the Province of Saskatchewan over the past year.

The second item - was this mismanaged? The Attorney General got up and accused union members of being irresponsible.

Mr. Romanow: — On a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. The Member is speaking totally falsely. I did not say irresponsible.

Mr. Steuart: — That's not a Point of Order.

Mr. Romanow: — Yes it is. He said that I accused . . .

An Hon. Member: — Will you both sit down.

Mr. Romanow: — He said that I said . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, on a Point of Order. He said that I accused the members of being irresponsible. That is false.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! That is not a Point of Order. It should be a Point of Privilege.

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Mr. Romanow: — On a Point of Privilege.

Mr. Speaker: — The Attorney General rises on a Point of Privilege and says that he did not make that statement and Members must accept the statement of an Hon. Member.

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General would like to get into a semantics debate and I don't blame him. But after standing up for half an hour and talking about what the Union did in a particular crisis situation, and not referring to the Cabinet and the caucus and what they did, is certainly accusing the members of the Union of being irresponsible and let him not deny it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, on a Point of Privilege. The Member can categorize that or characterize it if he wants in that fashion, that's up to him, but he said . . .

Mr. Lane: — This is a debating point . . .

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, do I have the floor, or does the Member for Lumsden? I am making my Point of Privilege.

Mr. Speaker: — In raising a Point of Privilege it must refer to the statement made and not add anything else to it. Order, order!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, we don't expect much more from the Members opposite, but I am trying to make a Point of Privilege and the Point of Privilege I'm trying to make is that the Member said that I said that the unionists were irresponsible. I did not say the Union demands or the unionists were irresponsible. I categorically deny that and if anyone wants to check the *Hansard* record they will see that that's the case. If he wants to characterize the actions or the decisions of the Government, that's up to him, but please, the Point of Privilege I rise on I did not say, nor do I maintain, irresponsibility. I do not, to the contrary.

Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, speaking to the Point of Privilege, the Attorney General spent half an hour in this House this morning saying that the Union demands were too high, or they were not to be accepted by . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

Order, please. A Member, if he has been, what he feels, really grossly misquoted, has a right to rise on a Point of Privilege and state his case and Members must accept any Hon. Member's word that he didn't say it. If the transcript is available then he can produce the transcript. I think the Hon. Member for Milestone, he can put his interpretation what he felt the intention was, but you must accept another Hon. Member's statement and I think the Hon.

Member for Milestone is prepared to do so.

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Speaker, in semantics the word ‘irresponsible’ was not used, but let me suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and the Attorney General that the interpretation by Members of the Union will interpret the Attorney General’s words that they will certainly agree with me . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — . . . that he accused them of being irresponsible.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Speaker, I want further to point out was there mismanagement? Let me say, Mr. Speaker, when a Cabinet and a caucus determines at 7:00 p.m. on Friday night that they will flatly reject and then goes home to bed, or wherever they may go, and leaves the people of Saskatchewan to find out the next morning or when that their power is cut off, I say that it is they who are irresponsible, and it is they who have mismanaged the whole affair.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Speaker, if there has been one thing in this strike that has been clearly demonstrated it is that the Union has not been irresponsible. It has been the Cabinet and the Government that have been irresponsible. Let no one on that side of the House stand up and tell me that they have suggested to the Union we would like three or four days to consider this, we would like to go home and consider the proposals which you have made, and what are the alternatives which are involved, on the eve of a storm in Saskatchewan. The Union would have been glad to wait three or four days, but, Mr. Speaker, that is not the action of the Government. I know where I was, I was in a home in Francis, on Saturday morning. I didn’t know what was going on, I couldn’t move out of the house. That’s right. Oh! Mr. Speaker, let them go ahead and laugh, but I want to tell you that the whole Province of Saskatchewan didn’t know what was going on until they woke up the next morning, either, and let me tell you, the expectations of that Government to have Union members go out and fight that storm and protect the public interest, was far more illuminating than their interest in the public interest.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the mismanagement of this is a clear indication, not only of this specific labour-management dispute, but of the entire labour-management relations that have occurred in the last three years since 1971. Don’t let anybody - for example when the Minister of Welfare stood on his feet and said – “I am proud to belong to a political party that will let strikes go on” and believe me the Minister of Labour has let them go on, and on and on. You take those woodworkers in northern Saskatchewan. What efforts are you making for them? They have lost their salaries and their families are suffering. What efforts are you making? Mr. Speaker, sure, he is the Minister, maybe he is just handing them out welfare, because by now they certainly need it. The labour-management relations in the Province of Saskatchewan have been a disgrace and a disgrace

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to any government. They have forced unions to go out and go on strike and go on strike for as long as two or three months, like the construction industry, at a loss of valuable salaries because no initiative was taken by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) and that particular government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — And let us also not forget that it is not the union that benefits from a strike. I am sure that all the Members of the IBEW will tell you it may take years for the majority of strikers to ever make back lost wages and lost benefits. They are there to fight for what they believe in and certainly it is the responsibility of government to ensure that every step that is made to settle that strike and to settle that dispute, but more important, to create an atmosphere. To create an atmosphere where a strike can be settled. And that is the failure of the NDP. They have disassociated themselves with management, they have frightened business, they have encouraged expropriation and seizure of private business, they have failed to permit private development. Let me tell you what has happened in the oil industry, the potash industry, is going to cause thousands of Saskatchewan working people good jobs and good working wages.

Mr. Speaker, because of all this something occurred tonight at seven o'clock, or this afternoon which was announced at 6:30 to 7:00, where once again the Union expressed and showed the kind of responsibility they have. I expected the Premier to come into this Legislature and adjourn the debate, or withdraw this legislation, because now the crisis has been settled, at least for the time being. The Union has, in reality, extended an open invitation to return to the bargaining table, they have gone back to work.

The crisis that the Minister of Industry is talking about, the crisis that the Attorney General is talking about, the crisis that the Premier is talking about is no longer in existence. Mr. Speaker, whether the Attorney General or the Premier or the Minister of Industry or those Members opposite want to admit it or not, this is establishing a precedent in Saskatchewan which is an outright denial of the very principles that that political organization across the way has pretended that they stood for in the last three and one-half years and the seven years prior to that. Surely they want to tell working people in this province that, no, we do not want to put any compulsory, binding arbitration which will establish a precedent that every time someone suggests there is a crisis that this will be the only overall solution.

Mr. Speaker, I am, in a minute, going to ask the Government to go back tonight and call the Cabinet in caucus that made that very important decision on Friday evening to once again reconvene and consider withdrawing the legislation or adjourning the House and leaving it on the books, if they feel necessary, and giving again the opportunity to the union and management to once again sit down at the bargaining table without Cabinet and without caucus interference to try and come to a solution, so that they can restore the faith of the SGEA, the teachers and all the Crown corporations that there will be negotiations which are legitimate and free between management and labour and not between labour and the Cabinet or the caucus.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask them to go back and consider either withdrawing this legislation or adjourning this House and giving again the opportunity to management and labour to sit down. I have confidence in the way in which the Union has handled themselves in this dispute that they can come and sit down at the bargaining table and despite the ridiculous arguments of the Premier about as soon as the mediator finished his work we are all back to point one. The Union has offered to put forth as their position once again and I suggest the Government has the responsibility to examine that position again, and they have the responsibility to at least come forth in the same position that they left off at. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, because now the emergency has somewhat dissolved itself, because now there is a danger of a precedent being established by that Government in labour-management relations, I should like to have that Government go back and reconsider their position, give labour and management the opportunity to go back to the bargaining table, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Adjournment negatived on the following recorded division:

Yeas - 13

Steuart	Gardner	MacDonald (M.J.N.)
Coupland	Weatherald	Malone
Guy	MacLeod	Richards
MacDonald (Milestone)	Wiebe	

Nays - 35

Blakeney	Michayluk	Faris
Dyck	Byers	Owens
Meakes	Thorson	Mostoway
Wood	Whelan	Gross
Romanow	Carlson	Feduniak
Messer	Engel	Comer
Synder	Cody	Rolfes
Bowerman	Robbins	Lange
Thibault	Tchorzewski	Oliver
Brockelbank	Cowley	Kaeding
MacMurchy	Taylor	Flasch
Pepper	Matsalla	

The debate continued.

Mr. MacDonald (Milestone): — I should like to tell you I am sincerely disappointed in the attitude of the Government Members. I am not going to carry on, I think I have expressed the thoughts that I have before me, but I should like once again to reiterate to the House.

The Liberal Opposition came into this Legislature more than willing to co-operate. I want to suggest to the Attorney General that we have in no way given unanimous consent to proceed on third reading. We are more than willing to co-operate to see that this legislation was passed today in order to avert any

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crisis that might occur in any part of Saskatchewan. I want to repeat again for any of those Members who did not have the opportunity to see the news at 6:30, that the president of the Union has been on television, he has withdrawn the picket lines, he has sent out instructions to all the employees of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation that were on strike to return to work as soon as possible. The other union, the OCAW, the oil and chemical atomic workers, have also withdrawn their pickets with the result that they, too, will be back on the job, if they were picketing. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that the emergency is over. I suggest to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) that it is about time that he stood on his feet and expressed himself instead of sitting there and yakking in his seat.

Mr. Speaker, the emergency has now concluded in the Province of Saskatchewan. I want to say once again that the president of the Union also indicated in his news release that the Union was willing to return to the negotiation of the bargaining table and to attempt to solve this dispute without compulsory arbitration. I would like to suggest that all the Government is doing by insisting on carrying on with this show of force is demonstrating to the working people of Saskatchewan a big fist. A big fist, this is revenge. This is not legislation to solve any longer a crisis in the Province of Saskatchewan. I am extremely disappointed, Mr. Speaker, and once again I ask the Government to go back to caucus and to Cabinet and reconsider their position. They will not be looked on askance by union or the general public of Saskatchewan. This will be considered a reasonable position.

Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat again, I am disappointed, I know that working people are disappointed, I know that the general public is disappointed because the emergency . . .

Mr. Romanow: — . . . farmers.

Mr. MacDonald: — The Attorney General says farmers. That's exactly why we are here and that is exactly why you want to ram this legislation through, not for the working people. It is for straight political benefits, Mr. Attorney General, that is why you want to put out the big fist. You finally expressed what is really there.

Mr. Speaker, once again I suggest to you that I am disappointed and I hope that the Government will reconsider its position.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. Cowley (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few very brief comments in this debate to explain to the Members opposite and to this House some of the reasons why I, as a member of this Government, feel and voted that we should continue with this debate and pass this particular piece of legislation.

I might say I don't intend as some of the Members opposite, the speaker who came before me, to enter into any particular partisan debate. I think, Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Guy: — You have problems . . .

Mr. Cowley: — Well, Mr. Guy, the Member for Athabasca, and the Member for Rosthern, I am quite willing next time you change constituencies to invite you to Biggar and we will entertain some political debate there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, the question of the adjournment of the debate, I want to point out that at the time the Premier announced this session, he asked at that time the members of the IBEW to return to work as negotiations had broken down. He indicated at that time, the Government indicated that we would be moving forward with legislation and that in order to avoid any difficulties which might result he asked the union leadership to ask their members to return to work. I understand that they have returned to work and I understand that they have returned to work in the expectations that this particular legislation will be passed by this House and the dispute will be resolved by this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I think it would be unfortunate if the Government or if the Opposition opposite should suggest that we use the Legislature as an instrument in bargaining and that we called the Legislature as part of a return to the bargaining table. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I have attempted as best I can to explain to you and to the Members opposite why I felt obliged not to support the motion of the Member for Milestone that the debate be adjourned.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. T.M. Weatherald (Cannington): — I want to say a few brief words on this Bill and the reason I do is that I rather suspect that I was probably one of the few Members of this Assembly who actually experienced the power outage on that particular evening, on Friday evening.

I don't want to dwell, Mr. Speaker, to any great extent on the negotiations between the Union and the Corporation. I think this has been dealt with by many speakers on the Government side and from the Opposition side and I am sure that both sides have given a thorough airing as far as who was right and who was wrong in the negotiations and what should and what should not have been done. I do want to talk for a little while on how the Government handled this whole sorry mess. The reason I say I want to talk about that because this Government is becoming notorious for its total and complete incompetence in management of many of the affairs of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Weatherald: — It is incompetent and has mismanaged our oil industry and our potash industry and it is obvious in this debate and in this present act that it is completely and totally incompetent in handling other matters of the public interest in our province. I say that, Mr. Speaker, because by the Premier's very own words, the timetable of negotiations indicates that the public interest has not been well served by the Government opposite in this

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particular crisis and in this particular storm.

Let's look at the timetable for negotiations. I copied it down as it was given by the Attorney General and the Premier. Negotiations, I understand, began on October 9. They continued on intermittently for some time and then there were intensive and extensive meetings with the mediator from January 6th to January 10th. The final breakdown in these negotiations took place in the evening sometime approximately seven o'clock or later on the Friday evening. As an individual and as an MLA I think I probably follow the newscasts somewhat more regularly than do ordinary average citizens. I think I probably follow newspaper reports because of the nature of my occupation somewhat more closely and I think probably all Members do in this Assembly.

On Friday morning the storm was getting well underway in eastern Saskatchewan at least and by Friday at suppertime it was well underway. The temperature had reached something like 30 below and according to the weather approximations of temperature it was something like 100 below. There had been no word whatsoever about the possibility of a strike to my knowledge from the Government or from anyone. I wouldn't expect that knowledge to be forthcoming from the Union. I don't think it was their duty to inform the public of Saskatchewan of the possibility of a strike. I think it was the duty and the public responsibility of the Government in looking after the public's interest to inform us there was a possibility of a strike. So we retired to bed. At 3 o'clock in the morning, since I have an eight-month-old baby, we woke up and we had no electricity and the blizzard was well underway. I might say I live eight miles out in the country. I found very quickly that the telephone didn't work and I found out also that the power had been off approximately an hour so that the car didn't start. I turned on the radio and I was informed that the electrical workers were now on strike.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was the first indication that I had that a strike was imminent to my knowledge, at 3 o'clock in the morning on Saturday. The Government had through those negotiations, through all of their difficulties and all their tribulations and despite the fact they knew a storm was coming, had totally failed to notify the people of Saskatchewan of the dangerous position that many of them might find themselves in. Now, Mr. Speaker, surely any reasonable citizen in Saskatchewan, and there are many reasonable citizens who say, where was the Government that they couldn't even possibly tell us a day or so ahead of the imminent danger of a strike taking place and a serious problem occurring as far as some of the rural citizens were concerned. The Premier and the Government totally and miserably failed to consider the public interest in giving us any warning.

Mr. Speaker, you know that we can pick up any daily paper in this province, we can pick up any weekly and we can find Government ads everywhere covering half of the pages in those magazines. We can find thousands of dollars spent on television and we can find thousands of dollars in Government ads spent on the radio, but do you think we could find out one word from the Government when the temperature is the equivalent of 100 below in Saskatchewan that there could be a strike that might take place and let the public have some warning to be able to take some precautions as to what they might do. Not from this Government, they couldn't think that far ahead with all the high-priced help they have in the Premier's office.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Weatherald: — And this to me, Mr. Speaker, shows the total and abject failure of this Government to be able to represent the public and manage their affairs in a proper and fair manner. I think that they are to be condemned roundly regardless of who is at fault as far as negotiations were concerned. I think there are many people who feel strongly about this matter. They feel that the Government totally and ineffectually represented them and gave them no warning as to the possibilities of the problems they were to experience.

I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, how real this really is. A slight bit of warning of one or two days in advance could have easily saved many farmers hundreds of dollars by preventing the freezing up of waterworks on farms, the freezing up of houses. Many precautions could have been taken if the Government had seen to it a day or so ahead to warn them then that the possibility of a strike existed. But the Government says we got an emergency today. Well the blizzard was four days ago, Mr. Speaker, and you mean to tell me that a Government like this can't think that far ahead. I think they could, Mr. Speaker, but I don't think they wanted to. I don't think they wanted to and I don't think they intended to.

Now I want to talk about the situation that many of the men who worked for SPC found themselves in. I think it is very much to their credit that many of them did go out and work extensively to do everything possible, to be able to put the system back into order. I give them my full thanks and the appreciation of many other people I am sure, as many other Members already have in this Assembly for the work and the effort they went to with no pay and on their own time to be able to put the electrical system back to work.

I want to say something about the situation that many of them found themselves in. Under those given circumstances that night it was very easily determined and immediately determined that the men who are on strike found themselves in a very, very difficult position. First of all, they had their loyalty to their union because they had been called out on strike at 12 o'clock that night. This was quite understandable. Being union people they felt the loyalty to support their union by going on strike and I think this was totally to be understood. They also felt under tremendous and heavy obligation to the local citizens, particularly in the smaller communities where they found themselves under fantastic pressure immediately when they informed citizens in their local community where they had lived for many years, to inform citizens that they were on strike and were unable to do anything about the situation. They found themselves under fantastic pressure in a community where many of them had often lived for many years.

In our particular situation although management was presumably available to help, the closest management personnel would be something over 90 miles away from where I actually lived. I just refer to my own particular case because I think it is typical of many other people in Saskatchewan that found themselves in very similar situations. So I say that while I give very substantial credit to the electrical workers for doing everything possible, that these workers found themselves in a very difficult position and one that they did not find to be entirely compatible

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with their own feelings. Their loyalty to the Union was on one hand and on the other hand was their loyalty to the local community and the fantastic pressure they were under. This was something they, themselves, had to resolve and I think that many of them will say that it was a difficult thing to resolve in their own minds.

So, Mr. Speaker, basically I don't want to prolong the discussion that is taking place because, as I said, many Members have talked at length about the negotiations themselves and they have been enunciated to the Assembly many times over, both respecting the Union's position and the management's position, but I think, Mr. Speaker, that this Government has once again demonstrated to the public of Saskatchewan that they seem to be incapable of thinking far enough ahead and in giving the public the consideration and the representation that the public deserves. I think that there is no better example than the one that we have had over the recent weekend.

Mr. Speaker, I personally believe that the Government has completely and totally failed us in this regard and it is only after a sheer miracle in many particular instances in rural Saskatchewan that we are very, very fortunate that Saskatchewan people did survive without any catastrophes occurring.

Mr. Speaker, in summary, I just want to say that I think it was disappointing and certainly I think it was a disappointment to many of the people of Saskatchewan that the Minister in charge of SPC was apparently incapable of showing any foresight, or the Premier or the Attorney General in showing any foresight in warning of the situation and risks involved. I want to say that I personally feel that Bill 2 before covered a wide field and I think particularly in retrospect it covered far too wide a field. I do think that the people of Saskatchewan under circumstances that existed last Friday and Saturday are not unreasonable and would not have been unreasonable to expect the Government to ask that despite negotiations breaking down that the Government says to the Union, under the extreme conditions which existed here on Friday and Saturday nights would you continue to work for at least two or three days more until the weather situation improves.

Mr. Romanow: — The Premier did.

Mr. Weatherald: — Well, the Premier did on the radio and I heard this on the radio after the Legislature was asked to convene. My first indication was that the Union had been asked to stay on was when the Legislature was called to meet today and the Premier said, "I am hopeful that we can settle this negotiation before the Legislature meets." That is precisely what information came across the radio. There was no indication that at any time that I know of that the Premier said to the Union on Friday night or Saturday during blizzard conditions, would you continue to work for the next two or three days with the weather conditions the way they are. I don't think that there were any indications publicly that the Premier offered this to the Union, no speaker on that side of the House has said that prior to the Legislature being called that the Premier asked the Union to continue working. Certainly he did after he said the Legislature would be called Tuesday, he asked that the Union continue negotiations and hopefully the Legislature would not have to meet today. I have not heard one speaker on that side of the Assembly say yet today

that the Premier, when the storm conditions existed on Friday and Saturday, that the Premier went to the Union and asked, would you continue to work through this difficult period until the weather conditions in Saskatchewan somewhat improve and then you could continue with your strike. I have not had any indication whatsoever that that actually took place and I would be pleased to hear if it actually did.

So, Mr. Speaker, I conclude my remarks on this particular subject. I think that it has been badly handled and I will support the legislation that requires the arbitration. It is somewhat reluctantly that I will support it but I will support it because I do feel that under the current winter conditions that prevail that while the Union is to be congratulated for going back to work, on their decision to go back to work, I will reluctantly support the Government's Bill because I do think that the risks last weekend if they actually took place again that we may very well not be as fortunate as we were at that particular time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. J.G. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, the debate started to deteriorate on the Government side when they realised the impossible position that they had been put in. Their own words indicate that this is back-to-work legislation. You can't dispute that fact. This is a precedent that applies to all Crown corporations and all Government employees and you can't dispute that fact. You say that Bill 2 applied to all organizations, all unions and it was greatly overextended and there is no question and we were proved wrong, but Bill 2 only applied to one union at a time, one essential service at a time and one emergency at a time. This is exactly what you are doing and it is the same principle and you can't dispute that fact.

The Attorney General says that he did not accuse the IBEW of irresponsibility. Members opposite have in speech after speech today done exactly that and I am going to list some of the accusations made by Members opposite about the IBEW. First of all the Attorney General got up this morning and went through the series, his interpretation I might add of the series, of negotiations and how they went. He prefaced his remarks by saying that Saskatchewan Power was prepared to negotiate in good faith and he stated that the first offer, the first proposal came in from the IBEW on salaries and he gave the figures and he made it quite clear that it was rejected out of hand and sent back by the SPC to tell the Union to come up with another figure. What do you call that other than accusing the Union of irresponsibility when you won't even listen to their figures and you just throw them out. The Premier said in his remarks, oh, I don't get uptight, I don't worry about somebody in their high demands initially because it is part of the collective bargaining process and it is part of negotiations and it is part of posturing. When the Union did that, you threw it out, you threw it out, out of hand. That, by implication, is saying that the Union demands were irresponsible and unjustified and you can't say anything else. The Premier made the allegation that the negotiations and he referred to the series of negotiations as given by the Attorney General and then he made the comment that Sask Power and the Government was faced with the impossible position that there had been no change or no substantial change in the Union position until the end of 1974. In other words that the Union was holding

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tight, refusing to negotiate, giving up some minor points in discussions but nothing substantial. You accused the Union of that, that is irresponsibility by implication. You said that, we didn't.

We had the statement by the Member for Saskatoon University (Mr. Richards), who referred to his many conversations with the union people over the last couple of days, where he stated that just prior to the strike that there was a substantial change in the Government position in that they had drastically increased their offer from whatever it was, six percent to 30 percent and proposed a substantial change in the hours of work and that the Government made a substantial change in position. And then the Members opposite said that was rejected by the Union without further negotiations and that they weren't prepared to talk and that is what you are saying by implication that at that point the Union acted irresponsibly. And then the Premier said that he requested the Union not to withdraw its services, he was resting on the assurances given to this house and to the people of Saskatchewan by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) in 1971, when he assured Members of this House and, as I say, the general public, that unions would act responsibly in an emergency situation and that the Premier says that he requested the IBEW not to withdraw their services and that was refused. If we take each of these positions and if every one of the allegations you have made is true there can be no question but that the Union did act irresponsibly, if true. They are your statements. I don't think your statements are all that true. I think you forced the Union into the position that you did. The Union, by the way, that announced tonight that it is going back to work, the Union that is having to face its employees and its members as being the first union to not get what it asked for from the NDP Government and it is going to have to take that to its membership and it is not going to be easy and the Members know it. I don't think it is going to help their jurisdictional problems, if there are any, with the IBEW, because they are the first ones not to get what they asked for from the Government opposite. Why were they forced into the position of thinking that they were entitled to a certain wage and fringe benefits? Because your record over the last three years is the case that you knuckled under to anybody and any group that took a day off and called public attention to what you are doing.

Starting last year the Leader of the Opposition referred to some of them, some of the situations. A year ago January 14, 1,100 electrical workers held study sessions throughout the day and eventually that was settled to the workers' satisfaction. In February, highway departmental technicians held a study session, they got that settled to their satisfaction. In March 2,500 SGEA members took a day off on their union demand for a 40-hour week and they got it settled to their satisfaction. The nurses staged walkouts and eventually got money that they were basically satisfied with. The university did the same a couple of times last year. They got what they were satisfied with. SGEA walked off again in November for a cost of living bonus. They got what they were satisfied with. Regina teachers left their classrooms. Group after group, union after union, government employee after government employee has stood up to this Government and taken a day off and has called public attention to their situation and the Government opposite knuckled under.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — But not the IBEW and I think we have to ask why. The Attorney General just gave us the answer when he said he is going to take this to the farmers of Saskatchewan. They are using the IBEW as a political football. We know it. With your past record with the people of Saskatchewan, they know it, and they are not going to be fooled by the sham and the farce that we are going through here tonight and all day today.

There have been some serious allegations that were not answered by the Government opposite. Allegations by Mr. Hill, the president of the local union who says that he had a verbal agreement. He had a verbal agreement on Friday at seven o'clock but that that verbal agreement was rejected by Cabinet. That was not answered by the Government opposite. The reason for rejection of that agreement were never touched on today. You have been accused of, in effect, deliberately creating this strike at the time of the worst weather conditions in the history of this province, 110 below wind chill factor, you have been accused, not by the Liberals but by the words of Mr. Hill that there was a verbal agreement, that you vetoed it. You have been accused of putting the lives of the people of this province in serious danger and to use the words of the Attorney General, the situation was deadly. You put the lives of the people of Saskatchewan in jeopardy if that allegation is true. And you didn't answer that today and you stand condemned by your own words and by implications that there was an agreement on Friday night and that you deliberately caused this strike. If those allegations are true that there was an agreement and that you vetoed it, you have cost the people in Saskatchewan thousands of dollars of property damage by reason of deliberately causing a strike at the worst possible time. If you intend to maintain any semblance of sincerity on this after the remarks of the Attorney General that he was going to take this to the farmers and see what they think about us wanting the Bill adjourned, you have a duty to the people of this province to answer the allegations against you and you have failed today, you have refused today and you stand damned before the people of Saskatchewan for your attitude and your position on this strike.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — You said that there was an emergency and that is why you are acting. There is no emergency tonight. The Union has gone back to work, you don't want to adjourn the debate and give a chance - we are prepared to come back anytime. As a matter of fact we will get into that particular aspect about your position on this.

Agreed, an emergency developed last Friday. There has been some question as to whether there was an emergency and whether services were being supplied. I think it is a legitimate question. The Member for Cannington (Mr. Weatherald) has indicated that you knew of the situation on Friday and that you gave no warning to the public of Saskatchewan. Oh, you went around and you got a lot of ads, you kept the lights of the Power Building on through all of this, but you got a lot of ads, saying, "Don't use the power, don't leave your lights on, keep your car heaters off." Some of the Members opposite didn't heed that. But nowhere did you warn the people of Saskatchewan when there was this dire emergency that you stated. The interesting thing about this is that you did have the opportunity

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because caucus met all day Friday, the Cabinet was meeting all day Friday. The runner from Estevan was carrying messages back and forth and doing what he was told, the spreader. I don't think he was moving too fast, he hasn't moved fast on anything else.

An Hon. Member: — He should have been. He has had his coffee.

Mr. Lane: — I'll tell you if he doesn't show the public of Saskatchewan that if he is streaking more than what he is showing us in the Legislature, he shouldn't go out as he hasn't accomplished anything.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — That Cabinet met all day Friday. I'll venture to guess that it was in last Thursday night because the Premier cancelled his trip to Hawaii. He knew that there was a chance of strike. He did not warn the public of Saskatchewan. That was your duty and you failed. You met caucus on Friday and the caucus didn't warn the public of Saskatchewan. Every backbencher is at fault and bears some of the blame for any damage and any threat to the safety of the people of Saskatchewan. You had Thursday and Friday to warn the people and you failed or you refused and all the evidence that has been given today by your position and by your refusal to refute the allegations made by Mr. Hill that there was an agreement, indicates that this whole sham was a contrived scheme to get the political benefit that the Attorney General has just said that he is going to take from this.

The real reason for this emergency session came out in the offhand comment of the Attorney General tonight when he said, "We are going to take it to the farmer and say that you were in favour of adjourning this Bill." That's the real reason for this debate. Serious allegations have been made against you, supposedly the Government of the people of Saskatchewan, and you have failed and every one of your Cabinet Ministers today refused to answer the allegations of Mr. Hill. And if those allegations are in fact correct and you haven't answered, there is no other answer that can be drawn from this but that you vetoed an agreement made by the Minister supposedly responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and in effect, deliberately caused a strike. What's the position, if those allegations are true, of the Minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation? If he had an agreement and it was rejected, obviously he is not the Minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, and it is in reality under the Cabinet. If he had an agreement and if he did give a verbal commitment to the Union that it was acceptable and he took that to Cabinet and his Cabinet colleagues rejected him, he has no alternative but to resign because he does not have the support and confidence of his Cabinet colleagues. We can't afford to keep him around for another six months, that is why he should go now.

Again, very, very serious allegations have been made against the Government opposite. The Attorney General spoke by implication. He gave us facts and he stated facts and those facts by implications led to only one conclusion and that is that he accused the Union of irresponsibility. The Minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation did not refute the

allegations that there was an agreement. The Premier did not refute the allegations that there was an agreement because if Mr. Hill is not telling the truth, he stands to be publicly condemned. He has made the allegation Cabinet Minister after Cabinet Minister has refused to comment on them and that is wrong. Each and every one of you know that that is wrong. You have a duty to start to justify to the people of Saskatchewan whether or not this exercise is an exercise in futility or is an expression of your principles on the matter of labour management and essential services. The words of the Attorney General also makes it quite clear that this exercise is an exercise in cheap, partisan politics.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — And you are going to stand condemned by the people of Saskatchewan and the trade union movement for the stand that you have taken and the sorry display that you put on today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. G.T. Snyder (Minister of Labour): — Mr. Speaker, I find myself inclined to make a few remarks with respect to the debate on the Bill which is before us. I must say, first of all, Mr. Speaker, that I do find the attitude and the antics of the Members opposite something of a sight to behold. When I see Members opposite, Mr. Speaker, assuming the role as a defender of the Saskatchewan working man and woman, I think it is a cape that fits rather uneasily on their shoulders; keeping in mind performances of days gone by, keeping in mind Bill 2; keeping in mind the hot cargo clause of the Trade Union Act which is long since gone. I think of the 30-day strike votes and all of the punitive measures that Liberals have imposed upon working class people; the attempts that Liberals have made over years in order to restrict the right of working men and women in the Province of Saskatchewan to the right to bargain collectively, to organize and to bargain collectively with their employer. I think that the attitude that I see manifesting itself across the way by Members opposite is a subterfuge and is one I think that fits rather untidily on their shoulders. I think without question, Mr. Speaker, Liberals opposite are attempting to take advantage of a situation and I suppose keeping in mind the fact of the adversary type of politics which we see in the Province of Saskatchewan, that can be expected. But I don't believe the trade unionists in Saskatchewan are so short-sighted, nor have they forgotten so easily that they will regard Members opposite as the salvation of Saskatchewan men and women.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't a particularly happy occasion either for me as the Minister of Labour, or for the Government and I don't intend to become embroiled in a lengthy debate with respect to the philosophical implications of the step which the Government has been obliged to ask the Legislature to take today. I am satisfied that the course of action that has been proposed was unavoidable and I feel the citizens of the province will understand that the extreme severity of the situation warrants a quick and a decisive measure of the nature that is being contemplated, Mr. Speaker.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that there is something to be said for

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reading into the records some of the remarks that people have made in this House on previous occasions. The Leader of the Opposition, among other things, has suggested that we on this side of the House weren't showing very much enthusiasm for the task that was before us. I want to tell you right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this is true. I don't believe that there is a single Member on this side of the House who approaches the job that is before us with any degree of eagerness or with any degree of satisfaction because to those of us who sit on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, the idea of compulsory arbitration is repugnant to us.

Now the Leader of the Opposition chooses to quote from *Hansard* and he quotes rather carefully when it serves his own purpose. Just let me quote to you, Mr. Speaker, what I had to say in this House on September 7th, 1966, when Bill 2 was being introduced by a gleeful and a verbose Government. At that time, Mr. Speaker, I said and I want you to take note of the quotation:

I want to point out a fundamental principle. I oppose compulsory arbitration except where all other methods of settlement have been exhausted and an emergency situation exists.

This is on September the 7th, Mr. Speaker, 1966. I said at that time that I opposed compulsory arbitration except where all other methods of settlement have been exhausted. I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that negotiations have been conducted for a continuing period of time, that conciliation and mediation was used and as late as the eleventh hour, voluntary arbitration was even offered.

Let me quote from *Hansard*, too, during the 1971 debate, Mr. Speaker, when Bill 2 was being repealed. For the sake of consistency and to read it into the records once again, Mr. Speaker, I said on that particular occasion and I am quoting:

I might say, Mr. Speaker, that in the unlikely event that a genuine emergency could arise, the situation can be handled by legislative action as a very extreme and a very last resort, but applicable only to that one situation. Why should a threat to all of the collective bargaining processes be created simply because of the possibility existing at some future time that there may be an emergency?

I went on to say:

It is within the realm of possibility, Mr. Speaker, that some real emergency could arise in the future and if this were to happen it would not result, I suggest, from a conscious destructive streak within Saskatchewan people as the Opposition would tend to suggest, but from some irreversible force which I couldn't even attempt to predict since the precedent does not presently exist.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to you that the Government is taking the steps which they are taking at this time, reluctantly. I want to just take a few minutes to make a point or two quite briefly in light of some of the questions that are being raised about my position in this particular matter. May I begin, Mr. Speaker, by reviewing my stand and that of the Government, generally, with respect to labour unions in total.

Let me say initially, Mr. Speaker, that I am a trade unionist, that I believe in unions, that I believe in collective bargaining, I believe in free collective bargaining.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Snyder: — It seems reasonable to state that the actions of the Government have consistently reflected that philosophy. It will be remembered, Mr. Speaker, I believe, that unions were originally born out of the product of dire need caused by desperate and deplorable conditions characterized by the Industrial Revolution. It was out of the unequal division of that kind of economic power that unions were born. In relatively recent times the fact of union existence has been acknowledged and has been preserved in law because freedom of association came to be recognized as a legitimate democratic right in Canada.

Unfortunately there are some people around still who ask why unions should be protected in law. Some of those questions have been asked by Members opposite on numerous occasions from the floor of this House. As far as the Saskatchewan Government is concerned, Mr. Speaker, there are three persuasive reasons.

The first involves the nature and the function of the collective bargaining process. It's not possible to say that collective bargaining is perfect by any stretch of the imagination, but it's widely recognized as a most efficient means of regulating conditions of employment. It's a system which ensures equality of treatment and standardization of conditions and as such, I think, it has to be said it's to the advantage of the employers, employees and to the general economy as a whole.

Management and labour and government generally acknowledge the collective bargaining system is an essential ingredient of our Canadian way of life.

This being the case I believe that the Government of Saskatchewan has a duty and governments everywhere have a duty to support measures designed to preserve the right of union members to organize and to have an independent existence in order to make collective bargaining a viable mechanism. This I believe the present Government has done, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that our record is inclined to speak for itself.

The second reason for government action to enhance the security of labour organizations centres on the role of the unions themselves. Unions I think it has to be said are making a vital contribution to social and economic processes generally. They are successful in achieving the objectives of improving wages and improving the working conditions of their members.

Mr. Speaker, the third justification for the enactment of legislation over the past three years, protective labour relations law, relates to the general impact of the collective bargaining agreement. I think it's fair to say that the labour management contract is much more important to society than it's given credit for.

The significance of collective bargaining extends far beyond the boundaries of organized business establishments. It's a product of the hopes and the aims and the values of the community at large and it's profoundly influenced by prevailing conditions

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and it in turn shapes the way of life and new approaches to problem settlements.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, the gains which have been won by unions have led to the raising of standards applicable to non-union employees as well, which eventually become incorporated into law. So in this sense, Mr. Speaker, legislative measures to safeguard the status of collective bargaining are, I believe, of mutual benefit to all Canadians.

I want to repeat a quotation that the Leader of the Opposition read into the record today, a quotation which I spoke in this House some time ago. I've said it before and I still stand by it. I say to be effective and to permit the orderly and the progressive development of the Canadian economy the collective bargaining process must be allowed to operate in a free and an unrestricted way. There must be an independent union movement. If bargaining is to be fair and meaningful each side must have some bargaining power and each side must be unimpeded by domination by each other and by outside influence.

There are, of course, Members opposite who are suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that the Government has, in effect, reversed its position with the introduction of the present legislation before us and that our actions belie those high-sounding phrases about union security and free collective bargaining. I deny those charges, Mr. Speaker. Surely every reasonable person in this province can see that we are dealing today with a very special and a very significant situation, one which represents a genuine emergency involving human lives. The fact that legislation is needed here in no way detracts from the principles that I have outlined.

You will notice, Mr. Speaker, that the legislation before this Assembly embodies a fundamental difference between the repealed Essential Services Emergency Act and the Bill which we are discussing.

The present Bill is intended to apply to one particular labour dispute at one specific point in time, after which it becomes inoperative. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, the former Bill 2 was a permanent, continuing mechanism which cast its shadow over the collective bargaining functions and was a serious threat to the freedoms and the security and the welfare of all Saskatchewan workers.

You will recall for example, Mr. Speaker, that the Bill was applied to a dispute in the construction industry in 1970. Not only was that dispute not a legitimate emergency but the invoking of Bill 2 at that time interfered so badly with the normal bargaining procedures that I am convinced that it had a profound influence on subsequent work stoppages in 1972 and 1974.

When the legislature repealed Bill 2 in 1971 it will be remembered that it was termed by Members opposite to be an irresponsible act and the Government was asked what it would do if a work stoppage in an essential service occurred. At that time, Mr. Speaker, I indicated that if an emergency should arise it could be dealt with by a special piece of legislation. I also indicated that such an event would not occur very frequently.

It is apparent, Mr. Speaker, that this assumption has proven to be correct. The current dispute between the IBEW and the

Saskatchewan Power Corporation constitutes the first occasion since that time that legislation has become necessary and for this we are particularly grateful.

During this time, Mr. Speaker, over this period over 1,500 collective bargaining agreements have been successfully negotiated without Bill 2 dangling menacingly in front of the bargaining parties.

Now, I'm not attempting to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that collective bargaining as it exists today can't be improved. The complex nature of society itself, with its rapid technological change, its interdependence on the factors of production and the threat of continuing inflation are all imposing additional stresses on the collective bargaining system. New mechanisms are going to have to be developed if the collective bargaining system is going to continue to be an effective and equitable means of regulating and standardizing conditions of employment.

There is no doubt that a great deal more attention is going to have to be paid to the bargaining table, to the principles of objectivity, to compromise and co-operation. I am confident that these improvements will come within the context of government-supported free collective bargaining.

In the present situation, Mr. Speaker, however the duty of the Government is clear. We have a responsibility I suggest which transcends politics. Governments at any level of any political stripe, Mr. Speaker, would have no alternative but to introduce the kind of measure which is before this Assembly when the public safety is involved, no matter how unpalatable the measure may be.

May I say, Mr. Speaker, that the Government's decision to act should not be interpreted as a reflection on the integrity of the members of the IBEW, because I noted with deep appreciation that they promised to send union members into trouble spots in the event of outages and I understand that this has taken place in a number of instances.

As a matter of fact, I understand that there were some 200 union members who have provided emergency service since Saturday. Nevertheless I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that as Government we do have a responsibility to ensure that the power utilities work force is at full strength. I'm pleased also to see that the members have returned to work and I would hope that prior to an arbitrator bringing down a ruling with respect to the dispute in question that the parties to a collective agreement may be able to resolve their differences without an arbitrator having to draw the distinctions and make the judgment on his own.

It is not our intention, Mr. Speaker, to undermine or betray Saskatchewan's working men and women and I believe our record over the past number of years indicates just that. We will continue to uphold the right to the freedom of association and the right to free collective bargaining for all Saskatchewan's working men and women.

When it comes to the provision of heat and power in the middle of a Saskatchewan winter, I'm afraid, however, Mr. Speaker, we can't afford to take chances. There is no margin for error when the lives of Saskatchewan citizens are at stake. Accordingly I am confident that the people of Saskatchewan will understand and

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will endorse the passage of the legislation which is proposed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, we waited for some time in the debate, of course, to hear from the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) and we finally did hear from him, even though he didn't talk about the Bill. The one thing I notice about the Minister of Labour over the years is that he doesn't really seem to have any feeling for the person who is actually working, the lineman, the store clerk in the province, the waitresses, the truck drivers and so on. The Minister of Labour seems to feel that if he stays in good with some of the major labour leaders of the province, this is what his job consists of, not referring to this particular situation, but this has been his attitude over the years and it's just not good enough for the Minister of Labour. We got the same old speech from him today that we've all heard before, going back to the Industrial Revolution and the need for the right to strike and so on. This old speech again is not enough. The Minister should be consulting with all people in the province. He is the Minister of Labour, he should consult with individual members of the unions, they should be considered and they should be consulted. They would be consulted, Mr. Speaker, by a competent Minister of Labour in this province.

I agree with the Minister on one point. In this particular strike the individual members of the union have acted in a very responsible manner and should be commended for their attitude.

I think we have understood fairly well the attitude of the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) as far as strikes are concerned. Strangely enough his attitude seems to be somewhat different when he's in opposition or when he's in government and I should like to refer you to an article in the Star-Phoenix, Saturday, May 24, 1969, when Mr. Romanow was talking to trade unionists in Saskatoon and he made some statement such as this. He said:

We will end strikes only when we abandon our preoccupation with superficial characteristics and focus on the root cause of strikes.

Now I'm not just sure what that means and I don't know whether Roy knew at that time, but it sounds pretty good, but at any rate they have been the Government for three and a half years and whatever he meant there, apparently hasn't been done because we certainly haven't done away with the strikes. He goes on to say and I quote again from the Star-Phoenix of that date:

The use of power by both sides can only be eliminated when the economic climate of the country is such that both parties are prepared to make decisions in the interest of society as a whole.

Well apparently after three and a half years they haven't been able to get that climate in this province again which is going to prevent the strikes. He goes on to say and this is typical of some of the things he said when they were not the Government:

The average worker is powerless in the present economic set up in Saskatchewan and Canada without the right to strike (Mr. Romanow said). Without strikes the union would be a paper tiger and history has shown in labour

matters that employers will not take employees seriously where there is no threat to strike.

So we have the situation here where he is stopping a strike by a group in this province and he has indicated in his thinking at that time was that the union would simply be a paper tiger if they weren't able to strike as they have done in this particular case.

I'd like to refer you also to Mr. Romanow's, some of Mr. Romanow's thinking even prior to this and this is back in the days when Roy Romanow was the CCF-NDP candidate in Riversdale and this is from the Star-Phoenix, January 23, 1967:

Roy Romanow, CCF-NDP candidate in Riversdale said at the windup banquet of the Saskatoon Labour Council's annual meeting (apparently he was the guest speaker at their annual meeting, I don't know if they will ever ask him again, but at any rate he said it) that compulsory arbitration and regressive labour policies were price controls on the only saleable product of union members, their labour.

Now this is a pretty profound statement by the Attorney General at that time, the only product they had to sell was the labour and arbitration was putting price controls on it. I just wondered if the Minister, when he closes the debate, if he gets around to closing the debate, would like to comment on his thinking at that time and his thinking now when he is removing this one weapon that the unions have in this particular case.

You know, Mr. Speaker, quite a number of us were not going to speak in this debate, when it appeared that this Bill must be passed quickly, and certainly passed today, and I think this was the attitude of many on our side of the house. In my own case, I left the house this morning and packed my suitcase with the intention that I would be leaving for home tonight and this probably is not going to be the case. But we were perfectly prepared when it appeared there was some emergency in the province to co-operate in every possible way and to pass this legislation certainly as quickly as possible. But now that this is not the case, now that the emergency is over, certainly temporarily at least, I believe that the people, the Members on the opposite side, some of the backbenchers and particularly the rural Members should express their views on this very important subject. Everyone agrees it is an important subject that we were called in for and there is no doubt about that. Now that we do have a bit more time in this regard it would be interesting to hear the views of more of the Members opposite, some of the other Cabinet Ministers and some of the backbenchers and the people who represent rural areas in this Legislature. I believe, certainly they have an obligation and a duty to get up and tell us their position in this regard.

Now we have listened today to some of the comments on the actual negotiations. I am still not sure why negotiations broke down. I got the impression, whether the Attorney General said it in those specific words or not, that he felt and the Cabinet felt that the demands of the Union were unreasonable. We don't know, we haven't had an opportunity or we haven't been given enough information really to decide whether this was true or not.

I think it would be a good idea, Mr. Speaker, just for the record to indicate the position of the Power Corporation, some of the income position and to have this so that we can understand

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their position as far as negotiations were concerned.

In 1972, for example, according to their annual report the net income of the Power Corporation was \$20.9 million. In 1973 it was \$17.3 million, this is the net income or profit of the Corporation. It is also interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that in the ten years from 1964 to 1973, the total number of employees of the Power Corporation declined from about 2,787 according to the report, to 2,524. It did decline more than that in the early 1970s and is rising slightly again. In that ten-year period the number of people working for the Power Corporation has declined by some 250. In this particular ten-year period it is interesting to note that the electricity sold by the Power Corporation in 1964 was 1,860 million kilowatt hours; in 1973 it was 5,989 million kilowatt hours, well over 300 per cent increase. I mention this to put on the record, Mr. Speaker, that while the number of employees was reduced, the actual electricity sold increased by about 300 per cent. During this same period the gas sales by the Power Corporation in 1964 were 51,600 million cubic feet, in 1973 were roughly 114,000 million cubic feet, an increase of over 200 per cent. It is quite obvious, I think, that the productivity of the employees has gone up during that time. No doubt much of the reason for this is due to the automation and the various equipment and devices that are used by the Power Corporation, but we do have to note that certainly with less employees there has been a very substantial increase in the output of the Power Corporation in that period.

We don't really know the details of the negotiations as I have said, certainly by looking at the financial position of the Power Corporation and the number of employees, I don't think there is any doubt that the Power Corporation can afford a substantial rise in wages if it is necessary for the people who are working for the Power Corporation at this time when we all know the cost of living is rising very rapidly.

We should also note when we are examining the Power Corporation that gas prices have been raised to the consumer as of November 1, 1974, by something between 12 and 30 per cent. Strangely enough, Mr. Speaker, in this time of inflation in the province when everyone is watching closely increases in the cost of living, it is rather strange that this rather substantial increase in the price of this very basic commodity went almost unnoticed by the Press and by the people of this province. This is a commodity that is used by almost everyone in the province and 12 to 30 per cent is a pretty substantial increase. You wonder at the necessity of the increase when the Power Corporation made \$40 million profit in the past two years, if an increase at this particular time and at this time of inflation was really necessary. The gas prices have gone up considerably, the profit picture is very good and yet the increased wages for the employees has apparently been turned down without adequate discussion, we believe. The gas rates, incidentally, for those of you who happened to miss the increase in November 1st was for residential consumers at a rate of about 12 per cent, commercial and small industrial users will pay about 15 per cent more while the large industrial customers' increase will average about 30 per cent. This was announced last August by the Power Corporation, reported in the Star-Phoenix and is an indication of the increases that they are charging to the people of the province even though the profit picture is very favourable at this time. Without commenting in detail on these, I felt that it might be useful to have these figures on record so that the people will know the position of the Power Corporation

during the bargaining and during negotiations with their unions and the people that are working for them.

To comment on the problem that we face at the moment throughout Canada as far as the people of Canada are concerned most places you go indicate that their number one concern is about strikes, that affect innocent third parties and this is usually members of the general public.

I should like to refer for a moment to the problem facing grain farmers today. We have discussed these at great length in this Legislature over the years. The problem now strangely enough is not prices that we can get for the grain we have to sell, it is not the demand or the market that we might want some place in the world, it is not even shortages of equipment - although this is certainly serious - it is not even the increase in price of the inputs in the grain industry, although this again is very serious. The great problem facing grain farmers is the loss of reputation of this country as a reliable supplier of grain to its customers around the world. This reputation is threatened chiefly by work stoppages in the grain industry, this is the greatest single factor affecting the grain farmer today. There are a fantastic number of separate small groups that can, if they so desire, tie up our grain exports. I am thinking of grain handlers, dock workers and inspectors. This simply points out as it does with a service such as that rendered by the Power Corporation that there has got to be some better way of settling these strikes. I don't believe that compulsory arbitration as suggested by the Bill that we are discussing today is the best method. There is bound to be some other method.

We saw, for example, a six-week tie-up in the grain industry early last fall. We had at that time various parties involved in the dispute, the Federal Government, the unions and the terminal owners. At that particular time in that situation, Mr. Speaker, I believe that all three of these parties involved in this dispute were certainly at fault, I don't know what percentage you would assess to each one, but certainly all parties involved in that dispute must share some of the blame for six weeks going by and many of us harvesting our crop having to haul the grain to the bin, often in unfit conditions at a time when grain should have been moving if this strike had been settled. The farmers we all know are concerned that a handful of men in some phase of the grain movement can force a complete halt in this very vital trade. It is becoming more vital, not just because the farmer wants the sale of his product but because people around the world are actually starving and need the product that the farmer is able to supply.

In the Vancouver grain-handlers strike there was a lack of sincerity in statements by all parties concerned. The Federal Government as you know or recall had indicated that a settlement would be enforced and with certain conditions at a specific time. They may have been wrong in making that statement and they may have been wrong in the actual conditions, but they did indicate that a settlement would take place. In view of this, farmers naturally asked why the strike would have to continue. The union workers knew what they were going to get when the Parliament met, the terminal owners in this case the Pools, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool chiefly, knew what they were going to have to pay when the Parliament in Ottawa met. There was absolutely no reason to continue that strike by any of the parties involved except stubbornness on the part of the parties that were

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in dispute. They gained nothing by continuing the strike, the farmers of course were harmed as we all know and the country lost a great number of sales.

I have clippings from the Federation of Agriculture and other people who indicated the problem at the West Coast, I am not going to go into those at this time. I believe we understand the farmers' feeling in this regard.

I want to emphasize a point that was made by my colleague for Cannington (Mr. Weatherald). That was the fact, and I think this is a very important point, that the general public in this province received little or no warning of the strike that occurred last weekend. This has got to be a very irresponsible act on the part of the Cabinet. This occurred late at night and other speakers have gone into this, on the eve of a blizzard the Cabinet simply made their decision which meant that the strike would be forced, went home to bed, and the people of the province knew nothing about this, given no warning, they were unable to take any precautions. It is amazing that there wasn't a greater catastrophe or greater suffering incurred as a result of this strike.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the method that is being used by the Bill, that is now redundant of course, that is being used to solve, a labour dispute we have to certainly believe that there must be a much better way. This Bill will be passed due to the co-operation of the Opposition Members, all Members of the House. This Bill could probably have been passed quite quickly which meant that it would have been successful in this case. I am sure the Cabinet is aware that in a situation like this we have 59 or 60 Members in the House, it only takes one Member for some reason of his own to decide that he doesn't believe that legislation should be passed that quickly. Whatever his reasons are he may have decided that, and this would simply mean that the Bill couldn't be proceeded with because it has to be proceeded with by leave of the House. If any single Member decided that he was opposed to this, then you could run into great delay in settling a dispute of great severity, which it appeared this one might have been. This points out the fact that this method just isn't good enough. The Premier may get up and say this is a one-shot proposition, the people will have a chance to see what is going on. I am sure the Cabinet is well aware that this can only work with the co-operation of all Members which you don't have guaranteed in a situation such as this. We could run into a very desperate situation in the province if there is no better method than the one being employed by the Cabinet at this particular time.

We know that over the years the Government has said some very strange things regarding the labour situation in this province. I have here a list of election promises, election promises made by the NDP in 1971. You see that it is a rather thick list. They talk about the ones they kept. Some day if I have the time I'd like to go through this complete list and indicate all of these that were not kept. There are a few that are pertinent and I should like to refer to one or two of these now. This is related to some extent to what we are discussing here today. We are talking about a settlement. At the Melville meeting in June 1971 Mr. Blakeney said the only way to fight inflation was to introduce price control and if elected he would set up a prices review board to protect all consumers from unwarranted price hikes. I think that we all know that in the last three years and

certainly in the last six months we have had some pretty unwarranted price hikes in this province.

At Swift Current in the Leader-Post it was reported June 16, 1971, this was by Mr. Blakeney again, the Saskatchewan NDP Government would impose selective price and wage controls if inflation continued and Ottawa failed to act. If inflation continues the time has come to impose selective controls on prices, wages, fees, rents and mortgage rates. Mr. Blakeney said this in June 1971. No one in the province will doubt that inflation has continued and of course he hasn't done any of these things he indicated at that time.

There is one here which is not that relevant, but I would like to throw it in to bring a little levity to the situation tonight. This is from Art Thibault's campaign book, which he passed out to everybody. You will recall Art voted against allowing farmers purple gas in this province, the only Member in the House. We have to respect him for this. But in his campaign booklet this is what Mr. Thibault said, he's going to supply tax-free gas to small independent businessmen using vehicles for making a living such as electricians, plumbers, bakers, etc., as well as farmers. Well that was a pretty good promise by Mr. Thibault, but of course it hasn't been kept either.

We noted that it was reported in the North Battleford News Optimist of June 22, 1971, a statement by Eiling Kramer. I realize there are many of you who may not know who this person is because we seldom see him in the house, but he is, I believe the Minister of Highways and occasionally he is here. Anyway this is the statement he made, he said, "The Government would provide a favourable climate for labour-management relations to provide a fair return for all." This was a very profound statement made by Mr. Kramer, there are quite a number of people today who will be doubting that statement in this province.

We might notice also a statement by Mr. Blakeney at the Prince Albert rally, June 16, 1971 as reported in the Star-Phoenix. Mr. Blakeney said we don't want to conquer the North, we want to be friends with it. I think that is pertinent to the debate we are having here tonight. I know that he hasn't made friends with the North, he also hasn't provided any jobs for the people in northern Saskatchewan. The best he can do while hundreds and hundreds of people are sitting out there with no jobs is bring in some Spanish immigrants to work at the pulp mill at Prince Albert. This is his answer to the unemployment in the North and presumably this is how he is going to be friends with the North.

An Hon. Member: — Where's Art?

Mr. Gardner: — Art, well I don't want to go back to the comments. I'll let you see it in *Hansard*.

From the NDP advertisement in the Star-Phoenix of June 22, 1971 there is a great list of things that are going to be done, almost none of which have been done but one of these indicates that they're going to restore free collective bargaining and improve the Department of Labour services. Again, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that many people in the province today will be doubting whether this Government has restored free collective bargaining or even improved the labour services in the province. There are quite a number of these as I have indicated and hopefully at

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another time we will be able to look at quite a number of these a little more closely.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is unnecessary to say that we (or I particularly at the moment) don't see any need for supporting a Bill that has become redundant because of the announcement on the 6:00 o'clock news. We don't see the need for this Bill at this particular time. It appears that the emergency is over for the time being. We realize, of course, that there is still a dispute between the Power Corporation and the Electrical Workers' Union that must be resolved. Because of the lack of information supplied on the actual dispute, by the Cabinet here today, we are not in a position to decide what an adequate settlement would be. But we do know that the indication is that the Power workers are back on the job. I understand that they have been notified throughout the province that if an emergency occurs that they are officially back to work and that they will provide the services in any location in the province. That they have removed their picket lines and by removing the picket lines this means that the members of the Union representing the gas workers will also be able to go back to work, in areas where the picket lines affect them. This happens in quite a few places because they are working out of the same building. So as far as the emergency is concerned, we believe that the emergency is over. We would like to ask the Government if they still feel that it is necessary to proceed with this Bill at this time, they have indicated themselves that it was with a great deal of distaste that they were proceeding with the Bill. They weren't very happy with it and many of their speakers indicated this that the only reason they were doing this was because of the emergency involved and the fact that they had to protect the people of the province at this time. The Attorney General was one, of course, who indicated this quite clearly that he was very reluctant to have to do this. Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if, in view of the fact that the emergency appears to be over for the time being, if the Government would reconsider their decision to proceed with this Bill . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — . . . because of the great distaste with which all of us view a Bill of this nature and has been indicated by the Cabinet Members who spoke that this is their feeling. We would like to know if they would consider not proceeding at this time?

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is 9:30. Can I call it 9:30?

Mr. Romanow: — Just before the Hon. Member does call it 9:30, I am going to ask the unanimous consent of the House, in view of the fact that we have called the Session in extra special sittings to deal with a very important piece of legislation, on a very important dispute, I am going to ask all Members of the House (I'm not making a speech here), but the Member refers about the return to work, and all that I know about that is a news item at 6:00 o'clock throughout the entire province and I think there are some problems in that regard, but more than that the Bill deals with respect to the settlement of this dispute that is in arbitration, with respect to arbitration, and I am asking the Members of this House to give us unanimous consent to proceed to do the job to which we have summoned the Legislature.

Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, is the Attorney General . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! The Hon. Member is not in his seat.

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, in response to the Minister. I am sorry, ‘no’, but we don’t want to proceed any further. Tomorrow at 2:30 when we meet at the normal time if it is shown to us that in fact the Union, the IBEW, is not back at work, or they are only back at work temporarily then I assure you we will pass the Bill, but if they are back to work and they are ready to go back to the bargaining table, then I think the need for this Bill has disappeared. Then we would hope the Government would take some action to let stay on the books, or, at the very worst, to pass it and give the word they will not proclaim it and I think that we want to see the normal procedures followed which would mean we would meet again at 2:30 o’clock.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, since the Leader of the Opposition has not agreed to stop the clock and has agreed not to sit past 9:30 in view of this urgent matter . . .

Mr. Gardner: — I asked to call it 9:30!

Mr. Speaker: — In face of the debate, it is 9:30.

Mr. Romanow: — I am asking - it is 9:30. You Liberals have denied this 9:30. I am asking whether the Members of the House will give me leave to introduce a resolution that this Assembly sit tomorrow, starting at 10:00 o’clock a.m., recess from 12:30 until 2:30 o’clock in the afternoon, again to deal with the pressing matter which is before us?

Mr. Weatherald: — On a Point of Order, I was going to say that the Attorney General, I think, is very inconsiderate of the Members of the Assembly in asking us at 9:30 to consider such a suggestion. In the first instance, Mr. Attorney General, there are some Members who are not here at 9:30 because they had no advance notice that you might ask this, and the Member for Saskatoon (Mr. Richards) is one of them. There are other Members who are not here. Do you mean to say that you think it is proper procedure to stand up at 9:30 on a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker, proper procedure to stand up at 9:30 and ask for this kind of a leave by some of us? I don’t think it is and I think it is totally inconsiderate that you have not given notice to the rest of the Members of this Assembly that you would be requesting this earlier in the day.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, just on this point. The Hon. Members know that leaves are asked, not when 100 percent of attendance is in the House, in fact I don’t think I have seen 100 percent attendance in the House at any time, and the Hon. Member will also know that leaves are asked, in fact, at the adjournment time to set the procedures of the day for the following day. I have done this many times before. My predecessor, the Attorney General, Hon. Darrel Heald did it many times before. It is a perfectly common procedure.

I don’t want to relate conversations we had on the floor

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with respect to what I thought was co-operation on the part of all parties to introduce leave. That was the basis on which I proceeded, and I don't want to get into that hassle, but I think honourably and honestly I could say that that was the substance of the conversation that basically took place. Now there was the discussion in the situation and so I simply say . . . and I am not trying to force anybody but I am simply asking the Members of this House to give me leave to introduce a resolution to reconvene this House at 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning so that we have more time to debate this very important issue.

Mr. Steuart: — I would just like to, in response to the Attorney General, the House Leader, say this.

As far as I am concerned I would meet at 8:00 o'clock or 7:00 o'clock or 6:00 o'clock tomorrow morning, or keep on tonight, all night if we have to. That doesn't bother me. We are here to settle a serious matter. But we have heard that this strike is over. We have heard that the responsible president of that Union said they are ready to go back to the bargaining table. I have said, and I repeat, I am sorry, I regret this has changed the ball game. We were prepared to pass this today. This has changed so now we are asking the Government to reconsider, to check out, as we will check out, if it is a fact that the Union is back at work, if it is a fact that they are ready to go back to the bargaining table. If it is not, if there is any doubt, then we will meet at 2:30 and I guarantee we will pass this piece of legislation by 5:00 o'clock tomorrow night or 5:30. If it is true they have gone back to work I say that the need for this piece of legislation has disappeared and you don't need to proceed with it, or you don't need to proceed all the way with it.

Mr. Romanow: — If there should be a work stoppage one week from now, the Hon. Leader would suggest we reconvene the House again? And again and again.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! I don't think we need to debate this any further. Order, order! The Attorney General has asked leave that when this House adjourns that it stands adjourned until 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning. Is that leave granted?

The leave not having been granted and it now being 9:30, this House now stands adjourned until 2:30 p.m. tomorrow.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:37 o'clock p.m.