

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**First Session — Eighteenth Legislature**  
**30th Day**

**Tuesday, January 6, 1976**

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

**QUESTIONS**

**PURCHASE OF CONSUMERS OIL LIMITED**

**MR. E.C. MALONE** (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I have a series of questions I should like to direct to the Minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation in connection with the announcement yesterday of the purchase by the corporation of Consumers Oil Limited.

The Press release that the Minister issued is significant mainly in what it doesn't say rather than what it does say and I think there are a number of questions that should be answered. The Minister has not made an announcement in the House so I would like to ask him firstly these two questions, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister tell us how much property Consumers Oil Limited owns in Saskatchewan? Secondly, whether the SPC has bought the entire amount of shares of this company, or whether it is less than the entire amount and secondly, would the Minister be prepared to table in this Legislature or give to the Opposition a copy of the last financial statement of Consumers Oil Limited?

**HON. J.R. MESSER** (Minister of Industry and Commerce): — Mr. Speaker, I can't be specific in regard to the acreage of land that Consumers retained in the Province of Saskatchewan. In the purchase of the shares of the company we acquired something in the neighborhood of 100 quarter sections of land. Of that it is estimated that 10 billion cubic feet of the total estimated 55 billion cubic feet of gas of proven reserves is in the Province of Saskatchewan. I don't know if that sufficiently answers the first question of the Member or not. The purchase does acquire total ownership and all shares of Consumers Oil Company. There were ten partners in the company, seven of them were either companies or institutions. The purchase acquires the total company.

I should like to give consideration to the third question of the Member in regard to tabling the last financial statement of that company and I will inform the House in due course as to whether the Government's intention is to table that report.

**MR. MALONE:** — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister tell the House where the money came from that is the \$10 million referred to in the Press release to purchase the Company, that is whether it is from the SPC or from the Energy Fund or from Government revenues? Secondly, did the Government give consideration to spending this amount, that is \$10 million, either through Saskoil or some other outlet to explore for gas reserves, new gas reserves in this province?

**MR. MESSER:** — May I first say that the money will be paid out of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Consumers Oil Company will continue to be operated as a private company for six months to a year when we will undertake consideration as to whether or not it should be amalgamated with Many Islands Pipe Line and will continue to operate as an independent company in any case.

We did give consideration to Saskoil involving itself in the acquisition of this company. We felt that due to the negotiations that had been going on between Consumers Oil Company Limited and Saskatchewan Power Corporation for some considerable time, that at this point in time it seemed reasonable for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation to acquire the company and plug it into the system that Saskatchewan Power have near or around the activities that Consumers Oil had both in Saskatchewan and in the Province of Alberta.

**MR. MALONE:** — I am not sure you answered the first part of my question about where the money came from, perhaps you could answer that when you respond to my next question, Mr. Minister.

Finally, would you inform the House, Mr. Minister, as to how many wells this company has in actual production at this time, if any, and how many it is proposed to drill over the next say 12 month period? I should like also to know where the money is coming from, Energy Fund or whatever?

**MR. MESSER:** — Well, as I said the money will be paid out of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. The moneys that will be advanced to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation will, I assume, be provided by the Minister of Finance and I am not at this time informed as to where the money will be coming. It may well come from the Energy Fund but I am not in a position to say at this time.

The second question in regard to the production and the amount of wells that are now in place, I cannot answer that; and I know that we have had independent advice in regard to the proven reserves that the company said they have in their holdings, we are satisfied that it is in the 55 billion cubic foot range, perhaps higher than that. We are hoping to have gas in place from that field via the development of new wells prior to the end of this year. Now the game plan that we use in regard to producing in these leases will relate to the demand on gas and I guess the amount that we want to put into the Saskatchewan system. I would think that at this time it would be reasonable to assume that we would like to hold some of this in reserve rather than to put it into immediate use. We are making application to the Alberta Government, to the Energy Board in regard to removal permits, those have not yet been obtained and could not be obtained until in fact the transaction took place, so that it is hypothetical to assume that we will be able to remove the gas early. We are not concerned about not getting a permit but we are contemplating a six month period of time or so before we could in fact bring gas into the Saskatchewan system.

## CENTRE OF THE ARTS DEFICIT

**MR. G.H. PENNER (SASKATOON EASTVIEW):** — I was going to direct a question to the Minister of Education and I noticed that he is not here. Maybe I could direct it to the Attorney General, in his absence.

I saw on a television interview last night the Minister of Education (Mr. Tchorzewski) commenting with regard to an increased deficit experienced by the Centre of the Arts here in Regina. I wonder if the Attorney General could tell me what that increased deficit is?

**HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General):** — Mr. Speaker, I did not see the interview, or the question, or the answer. Something in my mind, and this is just a pure guess, a figure of \$125,000, which is the approximate amount of the deficit now. I could be totally wrong on that. I would really have to inform myself to advise the Member.

**MR. PENNER:** — I think maybe the figure you quoted is a little high. I am not sure either that is why I wanted a specific amount. Can you tell what it is the Government plans to do in face of that increased deficit at the Centre?

**MR. ROMANOW:** — I should say that my colleague here, the former Minister of Finance (Mr. Robbins) says that the deficit is \$105,000. It seems to be a more precise sounding figure. He is probably more accurate than I am on this.

As to the question of what we are going to do, I don't want to sound purposefully vague, but really the Government has not had an opportunity yet to consider all aspects of this matter and accordingly any answer I would give you would be one man's speculation only. As far as Government policy is concerned in this area, it will be announced in due course.

**MR. PENNER:** — I appreciate the fact that the Attorney General is not responsible for this Department and therefore may not know specifically. I have been a little vague up until now myself. I expect that what the Government will do is pick up the increased deficits, since I think that the Government accepts major responsibility for the funding of the Centre of the Arts.

I wonder if the Attorney General would be prepared to comment, since we really have two facilities of this type in Saskatchewan, one for the South and one for the North. And since the kind of operating deficit that has been experienced there has also been experienced in Saskatoon, whether or not if the Government is prepared to give the same consideration in terms of increased funding for 1975 to the city of Saskatoon in terms of the Centennial Auditorium there as is the case here at the Centre of the Arts?

**MR. ROMANOW:** — I think on this one, this is a very easy question to answer. Whatever the policy is with respect to the picking up of deficits or the funding of the deficits of the Centre of the

Arts whether it is in Regina or Saskatoon, will be a policy which is applied equally and consistently to both Saskatoon and Regina. There might be some individual small variations based on operating costs by each Centre and so forth. But whatever it is, the policy will be applied uniformly. I can tell you that as the Member of Saskatoon that it will be applied uniformly. If I have any influence over it anyway.

### **GUARANTEE OF OIL AND GAS SUPPLY**

**MR. R.A. LARTER** (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Industry. I wonder in view of the fact that this NDP Government themselves have broken many written agreements with potash, oil and timber interests, and they broke these agreements, I wonder what makes the Minister of Industry think that the assurances given by the Alberta Government, even in writing, will guarantee future gas supplies?

**HON. R. MESSER** (Minister of Industry and Commerce): — Perhaps you should ask your seatmate, he may well be better informed than I. I have no reason to question the assurance that the Alberta Government has given us that we are not welcome in the Province of Alberta, both for exploration and development of gas and oil and that we will be confronted with no other regulations than what apply to anyone else who is seeking the development of gas and oil in that province.

**MR. LARTER:** — First supplementary, Mr. Speaker. We wonder if this isn't a very bad purchase in the fact that there are \$10 million going to Joe Fatcat in Alberta and we are guaranteed nothing to show for it other than the possible 10 billion cubic feet?

**MR. MESSER:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that it is anything but a bad purchase. We are purchasing a proven 55 billion cubic foot reserve of gas for \$10 million, which in itself is a considerable saving to the consumer, once it is put into the system. I might also say that it is hypothetical to assume that the \$10 million will all go to Joe Fatcat in the Province of Alberta. I pointed out that 7 of the 10 shareholders in Consumer Oil were either companies or institutions. They were located not only in other parts of Canada, but outside of Canada. It is unfortunate that the money had to be paid out of Canada, but I think it does acquire for the people of Saskatchewan, not only reserves, but confidence that the Government and the Crown corporation of that Government is actively seeking to acquire reserves so that they can have future security for gas and oil in this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. C.P. MacDONALD** (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to put an additional supplementary question to my friend from Estevan.

**MR. COLLVER:** — On a Point of Order,

Mr. Speaker, I rose on the supplementary question and you recognized the Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland.

**MR. MacDONALD:** — Mr. Speaker, whom did you recognize?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I recognized the Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland. I would ask Members if they are rising on further supplementaries, to maintain the point that they are rising on a supplementary. If the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) had said he was rising on a further supplementary, he would have had the floor. However, he didn't say that.

### **HAS THE GOVERNMENT ENGAGED AN EASTERN CONSULTING FIRM**

**MRS. E.G. EDWARDS:** — Question to the Attorney General. Has the Government engaged a consulting firm from eastern Canada for the purpose of recruiting and hiring people for the Saskatchewan Potash Corporation and if so, what is the name of the firm and how much are they being paid?

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, I will take notice of that question.

**MRS. EDWARDS:** — I have a supplementary that you can take as notice. How long has the consulting firm been recruiting and whom have they hired to date?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — If I may interrupt the Member on the question of supplementaries. It is impossible to ask a supplementary unless you get an answer. The Minister has not given you an answer, therefore, you cannot ask a supplementary.

**MR. E.C. MALONE** (Regina Lakeview): — On a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. Surely the Member when she gets a response of the nature given by the Attorney General that he is going to take her question as notice, that she can finish off the first part of her question by saying please take as notice these other things when you are looking up the answer to the first question, just to save the Attorney General and this House time, that is all she is doing.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I think it is a recognized fact that the Member is allowed one question at a time. The Member has asked the one question, and the Minister has said I will take it as notice. That ends the issue, I would say, at this time.

### **GUARANTEE OF OIL AND GAS SUPPLY**

**MR. R.L. COLLVER** (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, a second

supplementary to the Minister of Industry. I would ask him if he really seriously believes that in any way the reserves in the Province of Saskatchewan have been increased by the expenditure of the \$10 million since the Government of the Province of Alberta controls the resources of the Province of Alberta, as does the Government of Saskatchewan control the resources of the Province of Saskatchewan. And accordingly, the Government, through this purchase, has not acquired any voting participation in the Government of Alberta. In what way does the Minister possibly believe that the reserves of the Province of Saskatchewan have been increased other than the 10 billion cubic feet that he talked about and are located and situated in the Province of Saskatchewan?

**MR. MESSER:** — Well, the answer has to be shortly put, Yes, there are 10 billion feet of proven reserves in Saskatchewan. There is land that has potential for yet further reserves to be proven that will add to the reserves that are located in the Province of Saskatchewan. I think it is obvious to most people in Saskatchewan, and I direct that particularly to the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) that there are not adequate reserves of natural gas in Saskatchewan to meet future consumption. So we have to acquire those reserves outside of the province. We are undertaking to find those in the next best area located near, at least geographically to the Province of Saskatchewan, in Alberta.

I had discussions with Mr. Getty, the Minister who is responsible for the extraction of gas and the movement of gas out of that province. He has both confirmed to me verbally and by letter that we should not expect any obstacles from the Government of Alberta in regard to removing gas from the Province of Alberta into the Saskatchewan system. So that I say, in effect, means that we are acquiring additional reserves for the consumers in the Province of Saskatchewan.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **RESOLUTION NO. 29 - SEVEN CENTS FUEL REBATE**

MR. J. WIEBE (Morse) moved, seconded by Mr. McMillan (Kindersley):

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to reconsider its policy of discrimination and allow the Saskatchewan farmer to receive the full benefits of the seven cents fuel rebate that is now being given to the non-farm sector; and further

That this Assembly urges the Government to apply the rebate at the dealer level, thereby allowing farmers to obtain an immediate rebate and relieve them from having to make individual applications for the reduction.

He said: — Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my remarks I intend to move a resolution calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to reconsider its present policy or revised policy on the rebate of seven cents per gallon that is now being given to the farming sector of our province.

As well, the second part of the resolution which I intend

to move, will request that the Government of Saskatchewan as well apply that rebate at the dealer level instead of forcing the rural people of Saskatchewan to go through all the necessary red tape and bookwork that is now required to recover that rebate.

First of all let me say that the policy that was implemented in 1973-74 by the former Minister of Agriculture, received the full endorsement of the Members on this side of the House. We were extremely pleased that the Government followed the lead that was established in the Province of Alberta in refunding part of the increased cost of farm fuels to the farmer.

We approved of that action at that time because the Government at that time recognized the great contribution which the farmers make to the total economy and industry of Saskatchewan and that they were prepared to provide that benefit to all farmers in Saskatchewan. We regret the present position that is now being taken by the Provincial Government which in effect is discriminating against the farm sector of Saskatchewan.

They are discriminating, Mr. Speaker, because they have put a limit on the amount of farm fuel that a farmer may purchase and still qualify for the rebate. They are saying that any farmer who purchases more than 2,900 gallons of purple diesel fuel or heating fuel for his farm will not qualify above that maximum. They are saying that the average farmer in Saskatchewan will not be able to receive the full benefits of this legislation. One doesn't have to go very far in Saskatchewan to realize that 2,900 gallons of fuel does not last the average farmer that long, especially in light of the fact that they are now including heating costs for the farm home, heating costs for any diversified operation that the farmer may have, such as intensified hog operation, a dairy, feedlot and so on.

When you add up these costs it amounts to considerably more than \$200. The Government, when it introduced this program back in 1973-74, immediately applied the 7-cent rebate to the public of Saskatchewan when they reduced the sales tax on car gasoline by 7 cents at the pumps.

The private sector of Saskatchewan does not have to go through the procedure of saving its bills, saving their receipts in order for them, at the end of the year, to mail in all of these receipts asking that the seven cents be returned to them. I believe that that program, at that time, cost the Government in the neighborhood of something like \$17 million.

There is no discrimination against the public sector of Saskatchewan in regard to this program, whether the individual purchases 100 gallons a year or whether he purchases 100,000 gallons of car gasoline a year, he still receives the full benefits of that seven cents. That seven-cent rebate, as I said earlier, was applied at the gas pumps at the service stations. So whether it be a giant corporation, a large business firm, or an individual who does a considerable amount of driving, the Government does not discriminate between them and the average citizen in Saskatchewan.

The Government, for some reason this year, has decided to discriminate against the successful farmer, the farmer who because he does have a family farm combined with maybe one or

two sons working with him, will now only qualify for \$200.

Let me just go back a bit to May 15, 1974 when the actual program was announced and initiated by the then Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. Jack Messer. I am very sorry to see that both the present Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) and the former Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) are not in the Legislature at this time.

Let me first quote from a letter which the former Minister of Agriculture sent to all farmers in Saskatchewan. I quote:

The Government of Saskatchewan has responded to the anticipated cost increase for petroleum and for fuel products by providing a refund of seven cents a gallon on purchases of farm fuels. The refund will apply to marked purple gasoline, diesel fuel and bulk propane used in farming operations. These payments will offset, for farmers, the impact of retail price increases expected as a result of the federal-provincial agreement affecting the wellhead cost of crude oil to refiners of petroleum products.

Let me just pause here, for one moment, Mr. Speaker, and point out that the seven-cent rebate that is being applied to the private sector, and to the farm sector of Saskatchewan, is not money that in effect comes out of the taxpayer of this province. It is paid, I grant you, out of general revenue but it is money that has been received by the Saskatchewan Government through the federal-provincial agreement affecting the wellhead cost of crude oil to refineries in Saskatchewan and in effect in Canada.

To put it in simple terms, the Provincial Government because of their agreement with the Federal Government, has directly caused the increase of the price of gasoline by some 14 cents per gallon to all consumers in the Province of Saskatchewan. This money, in turn, went into what they call a special oil reserve fund. Now the reason why it went into that particular fund instead of into general revenues was to allow the Provincial Government to still qualify for the equalization payments from the Federal Government. So in effect what is happening is that the people of Saskatchewan, both the farmers and those who drive an automobile, are paying 14 cents a gallon more for their car gasoline, for their diesel fuel and their farm fuel and this is going directly to the coffers of the provincial government. The Provincial Government in turn has said, okay we will help relieve that burden. We will first of all knock off the sales tax on gasoline by seven cents a gallon and we will then in turn, rebate to the farmers of the province because there is no provincial tax paid on farm fuel, we will rebate to the farmers of Saskatchewan seven cents per gallon.

So in effect, we are getting back half of what we are paying in to the Provincial Government. That is everybody in Saskatchewan is getting half of it back, with the exception of about half of the farmers of the Province of Saskatchewan, because the Government has now decided to put a maximum return of \$200.

Let me go on to read the letter sent out by the former Minister of Agriculture.

This payment of seven cents a gallon will apply to fuel



supplies you receive on your farm after May 15, 1974. You will be required to submit invoices from your dealer showing date of delivery, description of fuel, quantity and price. The refunds will be made through the Department of Agriculture upon application by you. However, no applications will be processed until after December 31, 1974.

You are not only to apply for any part of your refund until all your farm fuel purchases of the period May 15 to December 31st, 1974 have been made.

This program still applies today. A farmer applies for his rebate on December 31st of each and every year, but now the period is for the full 12 months of 1975 and hopefully for the next year will apply again for the full 12 months of 1976.

Let me go on, again, to quote from the letter:

My Government is vitally concerned about the rapid increase in production costs being experienced by all farmers. The seven cent per gallon refund on fuels used in your farming operation will, we trust, help relieve some of the impact of higher costs.

This is why, Mr. Speaker, that at the time the legislation was introduced we on this side of the House supported it and felt that it was good legislation.

Let me briefly remind the Members of the House what the Minister of Agriculture said at the time that he introduced this particular legislation. I think to best explain the procedures or the events that happened, I should like to read from Hansard some of the comments made which applies to the history of why this particular Act was established and I am referring, in effect, to Bill No. 24 — An Act respecting Payments to Farmers who use Fuel Petroleum Products in their Farming Operations. I quote from Hansard, page 799, the Hon. Jack Messer:

I would like to review the recent chain of events occurring in the crude oil market. Last year the Middle East oil producing countries raised their royalty on crude oil and as a result the world price of oil rose from \$3.80 per barrel to about \$11.70 per barrel.

The effect of this was to raise to this level the value of all oils produced in the world, regardless of the actual production cost involved. It is the position of this Government that the windfall profits accruing from the increase from the price of Saskatchewan crude oil should benefit the people of this Province, not the international oil companies.

Mr. Speaker, we agree with that statement. Let me go on to read:

Last spring an agreement was reached by the provinces and the Federal Government to establish a Canadian price for crude oil significantly below the world price. At that time the price level was established at \$6.50 per barrel. As major crude oil producers, Saskatchewan and Alberta are now subsidizing petroleum consumers in Canada to the amount of \$5.20 per barrel. That is a

difference between the world price and the price our oil receives from Canada. Annual crude oil production in Saskatchewan is in the order of 80 million barrels. This compares with a level of consumption of some 20 million barrels.

So in effect, what is happening is that we consume approximately 20 million barrels of oil in the province — the Government is not only receiving 14 cents a gallon extra on that particular oil, but they are also receiving 14 cents a gallon on the balance of 60 million barrels which is exported outside of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Let me, Mr. Speaker, again quote:

This Government felt that a more significant effort should be made. Effectively May 15, 1975, the tax on gasolines sold in Saskatchewan was reduced from 19 cents per gallon to 12 cents per gallon, a reduction of 7 cents per gallon at the pumps. Each year in this province some 271 million gallons of gasoline are consumed. The cut-back of this tax was estimated to reduce the cost of gasoline to Saskatchewan consumers by approximately \$19 million.

Let me explain here, Mr. Speaker, that this \$19 million rebate is applying to all people of Saskatchewan when they consume gasoline or diesel fuel in their automobiles. So here again, it is a direct payment to each and every resident of the province, regardless of how many gallons of fuel that they consume. Let me repeat, under this program as stated by the Minister of Agriculture, that an individual who purchases 100 gallons of gasoline at the pumps receives the full benefit of the seven cents, the same as an individual who may purchase 100,000 gallons of gasoline at the pumps, receives the full seven-cent rebate.

One must ask, why then is this Government now discriminating against the farm sector of this province? They are applying this benefit to all people of Saskatchewan who consume car gasoline, but they are saying to the Saskatchewan farmer, that if you happen to be an average-size farmer, or above average, we are going to discriminate against you. We are going to say that we are only going to give you \$200 back of your own money which in effect you have already paid to this Provincial Government. They are saying that because you are being successful and contributing to the growth and economy of this province, we are going to discriminate against you. We don't want you to receive these benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I disagree with this policy. I think it is wrong, I think the amount of money that is involved in that rebate, to the farm sector of this province, is small compared to the total revenue which this Government receives from the farm sector alone in the increase of 14 cents per gallon on their farm fuel.

So in effect, the Government is saying, we are going to take 14 cents a gallon from you for the fuel which you need to operate your farm. We are going to give you seven cents back but only if you use up to 2,900 gallons. If you use more than 2,900 gallons you are not going to get it back.

I have more words of wisdom which I should like to quote to you from the Minister of Agriculture. Let me, Mr. Speaker, go on again to quote to the Members of the House the remarks which the Minister of Agriculture made when introducing this legislation which endorses the need or the recognition that the Government of that day had for the contribution which the farming sector made to the Province of Saskatchewan and the contribution or the need that farm fuels play to the economy of agriculture in this province. I quote:

The price of fuel is even more important to farm families than it is to other citizens.

The Government of the day at that time recognized that farm fuel played a much larger part in the economy of this province to the farmer than it does to other citizens in Saskatchewan. And again I must ask: why now the change of heart? I quote:

Not only are they required to travel greater distances to obtain goods and services, but the fuel consumed in their farming operations is in effect necessary to retain their livelihood. While other individuals may reduce their consumption by cutting down on pleasure trips, if you like, and by making greater use of public transportation, a rural resident, a farmer, cannot use his tractor less without directly relating to a reduced income. It is essential, therefore, that any assistance made available to consumers of tax fuels also be extended to the farming community.

Mr. Speaker, at that time we agreed with the statement that was made by the Minister of Agriculture and again we must ask: why this change of heart, why the change of policy now?

Let me go on to quote:

For those reasons, effective last May 15, 1974, this Government introduced a farm cost reduction program under the Department of Agriculture. Cheques are being mailed to farmers to compensate them for this increase in their production cost, resulting from the increase in the price of purple gasoline, diesel fuel and liquid petroleum gasoline used in their farming operations for farming purposes.

At that time of the announcement farmers were requested to retain their fuel delivery slips paying particular attention to assure that receipts were correctly completed. Under the Farm Cost Reduction Program application forms for rebates on farm fuel, purchased prior to December 31, were made available.

The program, in our minds, is a benefit essentially to every bonafide farmer operating in Saskatchewan. Our statistics, Mr. Speaker, show that in 1973, 183 million gallons of farm fuel were consumed in Saskatchewan. It is estimated that this will increase to somewhere in the neighborhood of 186 million gallons for the last calendar year, 1974. The total amount of rebates under this program each year should be in excess of \$13 million. Because this year the program began in March 15, the payments are expected to total somewhat less than that.

We are estimating somewhere in the neighborhood of \$11 million.

Let me interject again, Mr. Speaker, and say that the Government at that time recognized that the cost would be in the neighborhood of \$13 million on an average year had the program been implemented for the entire year. They felt the cost, in effect, would be about \$11 million. Under the regulations which now apply, under the fuel reduction program, the Government has set a maximum of only \$10 million, which will be returned to Saskatchewan farmers for the year 1975.

Let me go back briefly again to the statement that the Minister of Agriculture made regarding the amount of money that it was going to cost the Provincial Government for its seven cent rebate at the pumps. This is back in 1973. The Government was going to be returning to the private sector of Saskatchewan \$19 million. Consumption of gasoline has increased drastically since 1973-74 and in 1975 I think I can safely estimate that the provincial government is returning to the private sector of Saskatchewan closer to \$28 million in direct relief for their operating costs of their automobiles, and yet in turn are saying to the Saskatchewan farmer, we are only going to return to you \$10 million. And I say again, that this is discrimination against the farming sector of this province. Discrimination against the individuals and farm families who contribute more to the livelihood of this province than any other industry in Saskatchewan.

I should just like to quote to you the remarks the Minister made in conclusion of his address:

Mr. Speaker, I should like to conclude my remarks by saying that as the people of this province own the crude oil resources of Saskatchewan they should then benefit from any increases in the value of that resource. They should not suffer from an increase in the price of gas and oil.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I agree with that statement and it is for that reason we supported this particular legislation when it was introduced back in 1973-74. Again, let me remind Members opposite that the result of that increase in farm fuel was the direct result of actions taken by the federal and provincial governments. The 14 cents a gallon extra which the farmer and the private sector is paying for gasoline went directly back into the coffers of the provincial government. So in effect, it was an indirect tax that the farmer was paying directly to the Province of Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan has said, and we agreed with it, that we will return seven cents back to you. But again, they are not now doing so in the case of the farmer throughout Saskatchewan.

Let me go on, Mr. Speaker, to point out in fact what the NDP are saying throughout the Province of Saskatchewan. They are saying that the seven cents which you are getting is a direct result of actions which we are taking. It's money which we are giving you. It's not money which you have paid us and we are returning part of it. What the provincial government is saying — we are helping you out in your farm costs by giving you seven cents a gallon. They tried at that time, and they are still trying, to shift the blame of that increased cost of 14 cents a gallon onto the shoulders of the multinational oil

corporations. They are saying that the reason why your farm fuel increased by 14 cents a gallon was not because of actions which we as a provincial and federal government took, but that increase in gasoline is a direct result of what the multinational corporations have done.

Let me go on as well to just prove this point to you by reading a letter which the Minister of Agriculture sent out to all farmers in the province on December 27, 1974. I quote:

The position our Government is taking is that any windfall profits occurring from the increase in the price of Saskatchewan crude oil should benefit the people in this province and not the international oil companies.

The natural advantage we have as an oil producing province should be reflected in the prices which consumers in Saskatchewan pay for their petroleum products.

Let me emphasize this next paragraph, Mr. Speaker:

On May 15, 1974 major oil companies increased retail gasoline prices by nearly nine cents a gallon. Your Provincial Government, at the same time, reduced the tax on gasoline by seven cents a gallon to cushion consumers from the sudden increase. However, your Government had no way to directly intervene in the costs of non-taxed marked purple gasoline, diesel fuel and bulk propane which farmers use in their farming operations.

So here let me quote that first sentence again:

On May 15, 1974 major oil companies increased retail gasoline prices by nearly nine cents a gallon.

So the Government in effect was saying to the farmers of Saskatchewan, it is not the federal-provincial agreement that increased the price of your gasoline, it's those major oil companies that increased the price of your gasoline. To emphasize this, let me quote as well from a letter which the Minister of Agriculture received on January 5, 1975, just shortly after this letter went out to all farmers in the province. I quote from that letter. It's addressed to the Hon. John R. Messer, Minister of Agriculture:

Dear Sir: Your December 27, 1974 letter addressed to the farmers in Saskatchewan concerning the seven cents per gallon provincial government rebate on farm petroleum fuels has come to my attention.

I am disappointed to note your statement without elaboration that on May 16, 1974 the major oil companies increased retail gasoline prices by nearly nine cents per gallon.

The inference in your letter is that this additional revenue went to the oil companies. And this is not the case.

It's true that on May 16, 1974 Imperial Oil increased the wholesale price of its principal products by 9.2 cents

per gallon west of the Ottawa Valley. This increase resulted from the provincial-federal government accord earlier in the year and raised the price to Canadians who purchase crude oil. Of the 9.2 cents per gallon increase Imperial Oil received .4 cents per gallon, the balance, this is 8.8 cents went entirely to the government, either provincially or federally in the form of royalty or tax.

It was signed by one of the officials of Imperial Oil of Canada.

So here in effect, it took a letter by Imperial Oil to the Minister of Agriculture (I'm sorry that this letter, at that time, could not have been made public — or the Imperial Oil would not have made that letter public) explaining to the people of Saskatchewan that in effect it was not the oil companies that increased the price of gasoline to farmers in this province, but in effect it was the direct result of the provincial-federal agreement, and it was the governments that were increasing that price, and the governments that were maintaining that revenue.

So I hope, Mr. Speaker, that I have outlined to the Members of this Assembly, the history that was involved in the implementation and the events that took place since the implementation of this particular farm fuel rebate.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — That's six letters in . . .

**MR. WIEBE:** — Are you referring to the letter which I just quoted, Mr. Attorney General?

Now, let me go on to the second part of the Resolution which I will be moving at the conclusion of my remarks, and that will read:

That this Assembly urges the Government to apply the rebate at the dealer level, thereby allowing farmers to obtain an immediate rebate and relieve them from having to make individual applications for the reduction.

Now the reduction that the private sector receives throughout Saskatchewan is immediate. When they buy their gas, a gallon of gasoline at the pumps, they receive that seven cent reduction because the Government in effect reduced the sales tax on gasoline by seven cents a gallon.

The Minister of Agriculture at that time said that because there was no tax on farm fuels that they could not effect the same reduction to the farmer when he purchases his gasoline. And this is quite right. There is no tax on farm fuels. But, it would be quite simple, for example, for the Government to apply that seven cent rebate at the dealer level, than it would be to have to ask the farmers in Saskatchewan to again make individual applications for the reduction. This in turn costs the farmer extra book work, extra time. But that is minor. It also costs the taxpayers of this province a considerable amount of money because of the staff which is required by the Government to sift through each and every application and to check each and every gas voucher that comes in from the individual farmers. It would be much easier at the time that the farmer purchased his farm fuel, from a bulk dealer, to have that

seven cent rebate applied at that time. This suggestion was made to the then Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) back in 1974, and was the reasoning that he gave to this Assembly at that time was that this type of an arrangement could not guarantee to the Government that contractors and constructing firms throughout this province would not take advantage of this program.

Now I felt that was a weak argument. Certainly your bulk dealer can tell the difference between a farmer and a construction engineer, or a contractor. If he couldn't it would be quite simple for the bulk dealer to ask the individual who purchased the farm fuel from that particular bulk dealer to list at the bottom of his invoice the individual's land number, which is done in each and every other purchase that is made in Saskatchewan today to obtain products that don't have provincial taxation. Each and every farmer is required at the bottom of the sales slip to state the land number of his home quarter.

This we feel, Mr. Speaker, would not only relieve the extra burden on the farmers in the province, but it would as well cut the cost of the operation of this program because the extra staff required to sift through all these applications would not be required.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that I don't think that the Government is going to take our advice or act upon our request. I say this because it would not be as politically astute to provide the reduction at the dealer level than it would be to provide the reduction at the farmer level. Because the Government can again, when they send out their cheques to the farmers, starting in February, March and April, say that this is a provincial government program which is returning to you seven cents a gallon to help relieve your increased costs in farming operations. The Provincial Government will have an opportunity, each and every year, to pat themselves on the back and to say to the farmers of Saskatchewan, we are concerned about you, we are sending you back seven cents a gallon and here is our cheque. If the rebate was applied at the dealer level, of course, this would not provide the Government with a political opportunity to make some (as the Member for Meadow Lake, Mr. McNeill said a number of weeks back) political hay on the program which the Government has implemented.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that in my brief remarks I have outlined the reason for my Resolution, and I think, Mr. Speaker, that it's a Resolution that I hope Government Members will act on. I cannot, for the life of me, see why a government who says that it realizes the contribution which agriculture makes to the total economy of this province, why a government that realizes that the cost of farming, farm operations through this province has increased just as drastically, if not more so, than any other industry in Saskatchewan, why the Government should, in effect, say to that particular industry, we are going to treat you differently than we treat the rest of the people of Saskatchewan. We are going to give \$28 million back to the people who drive their cars, but we are only going to give \$10 million back to the people that produce the revenue, the income and the dollars that are needed to run this province, more so than any other industry.

I urge the Members opposite to talk to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek), and I am very pleased that he is here today, because it is his Department that operates this program,

and ask that Minister to reconsider his decision of placing the \$10 million maximum on the refund and to reconsider the discrimination which they now place against the farming sector of Saskatchewan by putting a \$200 maximum on the rebate that the average farmer will now be receiving.

It is for this reason, Mr. Speaker, that I move this Resolution.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. A.N. McMILLAN** (Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a good deal of pleasure to speak to the Resolution concerning the farm fuel rebate. I am only sorry that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) isn't here today to hear this. I am certain that a man of his integrity can't be aware of the situation as it now exists, or he would have done something about it. Perhaps he got lost on his way to the Buildings. I note with interest, that the only visit that he did make to Kindersley to open the new provincial government building out there, I think he apparently got lost on the way there, because he prefaced his comments and referred to it again on several occasions, how nice it was to be here in Tisdale to open this new provincial government building. However, I am sure when he becomes aware of exactly what the situation is with respect to farm fuel rebates, that he will attempt to do something about it, and certainly take this resolution with all the sincerity that it is intended.

It's interesting to note that the Members opposite, the great champions of the small businessman, supposedly the small individual, the people who operate at the whims of the multinational corporations, International Harvester and Imperial Oil, should implement a program that is directly discriminatory against young farmers and small farmers, and farmers in general. These people, as the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) has indicated, who have, and especially in the past three years, supported the economy of Saskatchewan to the utmost.

I have just done some rough computing here about the amount of fuel you have to burn in order to exceed the \$200 limit. One farmer, operating one single tractor unit that burns seven gallons an hour, which is not unusual, operating for 100 hours per month, which is minimal, for five months, which would be June, July, August, September and October, would receive if the lid was lifted, a rebate of \$245. On one tractor, one farmer.

I would suggest that more than 50 per cent of the farmers in this province would, in fact, qualify for more than \$200 if the lid was lifted. The \$200 level in itself is ridiculous if you are going to put a lid on it, because it applies to only a very narrow margin of farmers. It makes it look almost as though this Government is not interested in helping farmers at all.

Small farmers in this province, under this present system, aren't getting the same breaks as executives of the one or two multinational corporations that are left in this province. Those people that this Government seems so determined to bring to justice. They don't, I suspect, get the same break as many small corporate businessmen in Saskatchewan, perhaps even many government executives in Saskatchewan.



I can't understand why the Minister of Agriculture hasn't, in the light of these facts, moved already to do something about this situation. I can't understand why, at least now the election is over, the Minister of Agriculture hasn't made some move to see that rebates are done at the dealer level. I've talked to many dealers in the western part of Saskatchewan, and all of them have indicated to me that it would be no great problem for them to issue the rebate at the bulk level.

The fact that this Provincial Government takes all the credit for the assistance that is given, and as pointed out by the Member for Morse, that this rebate is great work on behalf of your Provincial Government, smacks somewhat of a situation that could be drawn on the federal level, and it would, in many instances, not be unlike the Federal Government taking full credit for the final payment of wheat. I can well imagine the reaction of the Members opposite if that situation should arise. I suggest it isn't really much different here.

It is for that reason that I have a good deal of pleasure in seconding the motion, and I'm confident that the Minister of Agriculture, when he returns, will see fit to make some changes, remove the restrictions on the amount you can file for rebate, and see that changes are made in the rebating system so that rebates are issued at the bulk or dealer level. With that, I have a good deal of pleasure in seconding the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. R. KATZMAN** (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, once again, the against. The Government is saying that if you burn over 2,858 gallons of fuel at seven cents, which comes to \$200.06, that we're not going to give back the seven cents. But every time I drive my car or my truck to Regina, I get seven cents off on every gallon of gas I buy at the pumps. Amber.

Now, I think the farmer should get the same arrangement. But, as usual, this Government believes in big bureaucracies, lots of government employees. So we have a department that checks over all these slips and that causes more work. Why not take Mr. Wiebe's motion and say there is no problem for the dealer to give the seven cents discount. I've talked to the people in my area. They say, no problem to take it off when they deliver, and no problem to bill directly to the Government of Saskatchewan with the statistics. We, in this caucus believe this is a very fair, good suggestion. We intend to support this motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. D.G. BANDA** (Redberry): — It's a pleasure for me to say a few words on this Resolution. I want to remind the Members opposite that this Government realized that many of our farmers were caught in a cost-price squeeze, as a result of sharp price increases for many farm inputs, including fuels. The cost-price squeeze was an important factor in the declining number of farmer operators in this province. This Government has made real strides to tackle this problem and encourage younger people to return to the farms, thus reversing the trend that was established during the seven years of Liberal Government in this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BANDA:** — Mr. Speaker, our farm fuel rebate is designed to help small operators, and I don't consider that discrimination, as suggested in this Resolution. In fact, it's a sure indication of our party's desire to help young farmers and keep them in business on the farms.

I'd like to inform those Members opposite that this program does not cover home heating fuels, as they are suggesting in this House, therefore, trying to cloud the issue and discredit a good program.

I think that this Government should be commended for introducing the Farm Cost Reduction Program.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BANDA:** — Which has provided a grant of seven cents a gallon to farmers, on fuels used in their farming operations in '74 and continuing again in '75.

The average payment in 1974 for the period May 15, 1974 to December 31, 1974 was \$154. If the grants were paid on all farm fuel purchases in 1975, the average payment would be approximately \$175. This program is intended to help the family farm and the average size farm in Saskatchewan and, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that that is what the program is doing.

Mr. Speaker, the program in 1975 does provide for payment to family farms beyond the \$200 maximum, where sons and daughters over 18 years of age are farming with the parents. This is in keeping with government programs and of helping the family farm and I certainly support that kind of a concept.

Now, I have much more to say on this Resolution, at some other time, and I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 32 — GOVERNMENT LOANS ON BEEF PRODUCTION**

**MR. E. ANDERSON** (Shaunavon) moved, seconded by Mr. Wiebe (Morse):

That this Assembly urges the Government of Saskatchewan to impose a two-year moratorium on the principal and interest payments of government loans that were given to encourage young farmers into beef production.

He said: — Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I rise to speak to this Resolution. The need is certainly there. The cattle prices have dropped substantially. The young farmer who is in debt, certainly finds himself in a very difficult position trying to make his payments. There has been strong support for the suggestion that a subsidy should be paid to the producer to cover the cost of production. A subsidy has been suggested of \$100 a head, to cover the cost of production. The problem with a subsidy is that it is extremely costly for any government to carry and it is also extremely slow to put in action. A subsidy program takes much legislation if it's going to be done, and it must be done with federal help. You would be in consultation with federal governments and other provincial governments. I feel that in waiting for subsidy legislation, we are allowing a

lot of young farmers to go into bankruptcy.

Another problem with the subsidy payment is that there is the example of the B.C. plan, where they subsidize 30 to 300 head. If you take this through at a \$100 subsidy as suggested, a large, well-established operator with 300 calves is going to get a \$30,000 subsidy payment, which is quite substantial. He probably doesn't have the debt load, and has probably been established a long time, and hasn't got the debt load that a small farmer has. But, most of our cattle farmers are in the 30 to 50 head category. They would only get \$3,000 to \$5,000 on this basis. It isn't going to help them a great deal.

This, I feel, is one drawback with the subsidy system, and I feel besides this, and to put a subsidy system into operation, it's going to be much too late. Certainly the small producer and the young farmer is the fellow who has expanded or just started into business, and he has the debt load. He is the person who needs the help now. The man who has been in business usually has an equity and possibly more cash reserve that will allow him to ride out a drop in the markets, and so his need isn't as great, nor as urgent.

I feel that in asking for a moratorium on government loans that we have, or the Government has, a moral obligation to the producers, these young producers and the small producer who has expanded or diversified, because that was done by government measures. They were encouraged to start into beef production at a time when it looked as if beef consumption would rise, beef prices would stay extremely high.

For example, there is Farmstart, which is an act to increase breeding stock and to allow for expansion and feedlots. In the act itself, the design of the act was to encourage young producers, small producers. The act, under Section 10 says:

The corporation may make loans to farmers to assist or enable them, (a) to purchase livestock for breeding purposes where in the opinion of the corporation, such breeding stock may reasonably expect to result in a net increase in the breeding herd of the farmer; (b) to avoid disposal of the female livestock, when in the opinion of the corporation, the livestock retained may reasonably be expected to result in a net increase in the breeding herd of the farmer; (c) to clear, break, sow or re-sow to grass, any grazing land of the farmer so as to increase the amount of land of the farmer for grazing purposes; (d) sow perennial forage crops to increase feed supplies for livestock production; (e) to construct or renovate buildings, improvements or facilities, to purchase equipment to be used in the establishment or expansion of livestock production; and (f) to avoid disposal of calves until they can be sold as feeder animals.

Now, this certainly was the intention of Farmstart. The intent was there and it worked well. It put a lot of small producers into diversification programs in livestock. It put young farmers into the livestock industry. So, I believe that in encouraging them into the industry at the time when the price dropped, that the Government does have a responsibility to see that these loans that they were encouraged to take out, don't bankrupt the farmers now. Put some under moratorium so you don't put them out of business.

Certainly, it was the intention of the Government at the time, to increase production, to encourage the young farmer into the livestock business. I should like to quote from the Member for Kelsey-Tisdale (Mr. Messer) when he was speaking to the Farmstart Act, where he says:

that another important objective of the Government is to expand the cow herd by 7,500 head per year over the next ten years.

Certainly, this has been achieved; this has been proven by the increase in our cattle numbers to the point that our market is flooded at this time and our prices are down. I do believe that this is another indication of the moral obligation the Government has to provide a moratorium for young farmers.

We have a story from another Member who was a farmer, the previous Member for Shaunavon, when he stated in his speech in the House on August 10, 1971:

I was one of those who bit on the diversification pitch and I went into hogs on a fair scale, from farrow to finishing operations. I had borrowed additional money, over and above my capital loan. Within the next few months, the price dropped . . .

No sense going through the whole thing here.

. . . Therefore, I was forced to sell off my sows and terminate the enterprise.

Now we are facing the same thing in the cattle industry. The conditions that this previous Member was facing at that time are being faced by young farmers. He says that if he could have kept in business over a year period, and the price had turned around, he would have been all right. But he said he was fortunate enough to get back into the teaching business, because he went bust on his farm. Now he's out of politics too.

This is an example where we did, as a government, go into an expansion program, to put the young farmers into a debt position. We had another herd expansion program where \$6,000, I believe up to \$12,000, was given out to purchase beef breeding animals. This resulted in a high cow herd increase and an increase in price. Some of those cattle went up to \$400, \$450 and \$500 a head for breeding cows, that you can't sell now for \$120, \$130 or \$140 and the debt for repayment is there now, to be paid. Even in selling a cow, they can't even make a quarter of it back, and this is going to break the young farmers unless a moratorium is put on this so they can hold these cattle until the price does come around.

The concept of a moratorium has a precedent; it is not a new concept, the precedent was set in 1971 in The Protection of Farm Property Act. In this Act, a moratorium was declared on the farm loans that farmers owed to implement dealers, that for one year there would be no principal or interest payments on these loans. Now, I think that certainly, the Saskatchewan Government should be willing to do now, in the time of need, for the cattle producer, what they were quite willing to have the small implement dealer do in '71, when the grain farmers were in dire straits. They had no compunction at that time in telling the small businessman in the small town, that he would have to

because of the dire straits in the grain industry at that time, carry those debts on without interest and without payments on a one-year moratorium. Certainly, if they were quite willing to let one segment of the economy, at that time, take the load, we can certainly, at this time, ask the whole province to carry a moratorium.

As I say, the concept of moratorium is certainly not repugnant to this Government. They certainly believe in it. I feel that because of this, there should be no problem in getting passage of a moratorium bill or act. I should like to quote some of the things that have been said at that time, when they were asking the implement dealer to carry the load because of the need for it. The Member for Saskatoon-Riversdale (Mr. Romanow), who was asking for the moratorium at that time said:

I say the farmers who were able to make their payments, even during this crisis, have shown that they have done it and that the Government urges them to do so because the delay will only catch up with them. They still owe their debt, they still owe the principal and interest. They would all only ultimately be responsible to the creditor when they have the money to pay.

This shows the concept is that we are not declaring a gift or a subsidy, but just a moratorium. At that time I think, we still have the same faith in the farmer that the Member for Saskatoon-Riversdale did at that time. The farmers won't take advantage of this, unless they have to, and if they have to certainly the means should be there to allow those who have the dire need to accomplish this.

We also find, in speaking on the benefits and the need for a moratorium at this dire time, the Member for Kelsey-Tisdale (Mr. Messer), speaking in the House on August 4, 1971, said:

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

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

Now, certainly, the same thing is happening to the cattle producer. I quite agree with the Member for Kelsey-Tisdale in his remarks, with him putting a moratorium into effect. We will allow expenditures, or money to meet family needs, to pay store bills for food, to pay in-community costs being borne by small, local businessmen as debts.

He goes on to say:

We say, that if this Bill helps in one major area, it will be here. Due to the relief provided to farmers not having to pay major debts, he will be able to meet these commitments . . .

Talking of the commitments I just mentioned:

. . . that are of a more local nature, thereby stabilizing not only his own operation, but the community which serves him as well.

I know we all do not want to see the demise of the small town or the family farm, and in asking for a moratorium, I am sure that I will find you in agreement with me that this is a policy which I think all governments and all politicians strive for, some achieve it better than others, but I think it is something we do strive for, and that is a family farm and keeping the small communities going.

He goes on to say that:

As the Act (which is the Moratorium Act which I am suggesting in this one) applies only to past debts and further that the Act will be enforced for only one year . . .

I am asking for a two-year one, because I think it will take that long for our cattle prices to come around.

. . . there should be no deterrent in regard to future or current loans. In fact, the legislation will provide for a more desirable climate for future debt repayment.

Now, I believe that the Member for Kelsey-Tisdale would certainly agree now, as he did in 1971, that a moratorium served an urgent need, a very necessary need to preserve the small farms in the rural community of Saskatchewan.

I find that later in the debate, the member for Humboldt (Mr. Tchorzewski), speaking for a moratorium on debt to farmers, to machine dealers, which I would certainly say fits in with my Resolution, that a moratorium through Government payment:

says that it should be clearly understood that it would be no advantage to any farmer who is able to make his payments to withhold it. The payments and interest are stayed for one year, they are not forgiven forever. The fears expressed by Members opposite about the damage to farmers' credit ratings are somewhat exaggerated. Actually it does not apply in this case because it is a government loan, and I am quite sure that the Government has faith in the farmers' credit. This Bill will protect farm property from seizure which has been mortgaged prior to the implementation of this Bill. Any purchases made after this are not subject to this Act. Credit will still be available.

So, Mr. Speaker, in summary, this Bill will give farmers short of cash, a one-year period in which to find himself financially. It may prevent men from moving from the farm and further depopulating our rural areas. This, in turn, will be important in preserving our rural towns and villages. Farmers who find themselves in this crisis need some protection. This Bill will provide a short-period protection, and therefore, I will support it.

I am quite sure that the Member for Humboldt's mode of thinking has not changed since 1971. I believe the Bill presented here now, is presented for the same need. It will do

now, what the government in 1971 felt that The Farm Protection Act at that time would do for the small farmer and not . . . I say that this Bill will do the same for the small cattlemen in not meeting his loans that have been given to him in good faith by a government to increase calf production, Farmstart loans and other incentive loans. Certainly, I have no desire nor do I want to criticize the Government for giving out Farmstart loans and other loans. It is time, in retrospect, to say we shouldn't have done it, but many things are fine to say in retrospect.

Further in the debate, the Member for Biggar (Mr. Cowley) says:

Mr. Speaker, we all realize there are problems facing agriculture in Saskatchewan. The major problem is one of rising cost production and declining prices for the products farmers have to sell. We have not put this legislation forward as a solution, we have put it forward as a stop-gap measure to attempt to stabilize the agricultural situation, while further legislation is prepared to meet the crisis that we find in Saskatchewan agriculture. Mr. Speaker, the Opposition has spent most of their time picking holes in this Bill. They have never once spoken to the principle, the idea of a debt moratorium. They simply picked a hole here and a hole there.

And I certainly hope that we won't be picking holes in the thing. I think I should like to see us debate this as the Member requested at that time, on the principle of the Bill.

Further in the debate, the Member for Biggar, I believe, made a speech which says what I think is my intention in presenting this Resolution, and he says:

I should be interested in the comments as to whether or not, if they could design what they would consider a perfect Bill for debt moratorium, whether or not they would be in favor of the principle or whether they are just picking holes in it so they don't have to take a stand one way or the other.

I believe that this is true right now. I would hope for the support of the Government in this Resolution. I hope they would support this Resolution in the same way that they supported The Farm Protection Act in 1971. It's an Act that asks, essentially the same thing as I said before, instead of asking the small businessman, the small machinery people, to carry the load, this Resolution asks that we all, as citizens, carry the load.

There probably are some who will say that it is a Resolution that gives unfair advantage, or in a sense a subsidy, to the farm economy or the small cattle operator. I suppose in a sense that in the carrying of the interest over the year period it does, but for the benefits it gives, it is a very small load on the budget of the province. It does do what the Member for Yorkton (Mr. Carlson) at that time said was needed on that moratorium Bill. He said in speaking to the House on August 9th:

The kind of protection that this legislation gives the farmer will allow him time to finish off his crop this fall and again put in crops next spring.

I believe that this kind of protection for the cattleman will allow him to keep his breeding herd another year, or the following year, and take advantage of higher prices by not having to dispose of his breeding herd now to meet future commitments. The same argument or debate which the Member for Yorkton gave at that time certainly is applicable to this Resolution.

It will also give the Government some time to draft more permanent legislation that will help the farmers in the long term.

We all know that there has been much consideration given on both the provincial and federal level on different types of help to be given the farm economy in the dominion, and in the province, but as the Member for Yorkton at that time stated, this takes time, and we don't have it at this moment. A moratorium will allow the time to be given for these considerations which, no doubt, will be coming on both levels, federally and provincially. In speaking for a moratorium rather than a cancellation of debt, the Member for Yorkton says:

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, let me say that knowing the farmers of this Province as well as I do, they do not need to have their debts waived. The farmers of Saskatchewan are responsible people, but they do deserve economic justice. This Bill is the first step towards economic justice, that the people of Saskatchewan deserve . . .

He is saying, as I say, that I don't believe that we should ask for a cancellation of these loans, but a moratorium, because if we do a cancellation it is a precedent that is a very serious precedent. We have a certain amount of that in The Farmstart Act, with the forgivable loans. The problem with starting to give forgivable loans or cancelling debts, is that it does set a precedent, and makes it very difficult that in any time, a certain segment of our society have any mortgage to governments or other mortgage companies, it would set a precedent that I believe is a dangerous step. But a moratorium does not cancel, it only postpones. Speaking on the debate on August 10th, the Member for Saskatoon-Nutana (Mr. Robbins) said:

I do not argue this Bill is any more than a breather or a stop-gap, because it is an extremely difficult situation at the present time in the farming community. I would contend that it is being introduced only as a temporary measure to provide some immediate relief and a breathing space to assist in achieving the reversal of the most recent and deteriorating agricultural scene which began in the year 1967, and has been accelerating ever since.

It is the same in the cattle industry right now. This is a fairly recent, I believe a fairly short-term phenomenon, brought on by various things over which we had no control, certainly not the province or even the country. The rising price of oil in the Far East certainly cut out a lot of foreign markets for the export of beef, and this brings the price down. This is beginning to correct itself. The American price-freeze did nothing to help the situation. And this is why I say, a moratorium on the short-term basis will keep people in business for this short-term problem, keep the small farmer in business so he can take advantage when the turnaround does come. If we don't give him this help now, he is going to dispose, as I said



before, of his breeding herd, and then he is out of business. He will have no calves to sell when the price turns around. A lot of them on the smaller farms who need diversification, the reason that they were put into it, will go out of business or sell out.

A lot of the farms throughout this province, in the south as well as in the north, are in an area which has a climate that both cattle and grain production gives them the best economy of production, and certainly in putting them out of the one segment of their production, we will probably destroy the whole enterprise.

The fact that the Member for Pelly, in speaking to the Resolution at that time, on the moratorium said:

I have a young friend at home, struggling in cattle, struggling to try to do what he is told by Ottawa to establish himself in . . .

Which, actually, we have done in demanding a loan for the repayment of our Farmstart loans, we are putting a third-party claim against the man's income. And, I believe, at this time that this third-party claim should be put into moratorium. As I stated, this is not an inconsistent idea to the NDP party. They certainly argued the Bill of '71 through with vigor, and with very good arguments.

I think you will find, Mr. Attorney General, that at that time you were asking the small town dealer to carry the load, which is a far different cry than asking the Government of Saskatchewan to carry the load.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — . . . the Government to carry the burden now.

**MR. ANDERSON:** — . . . implement dealers, until we break the small town implement dealer and put the small towns out of business. We want to preserve rural Saskatchewan so don't do it that way.

As I said before, the concept of a subsidy is very time-consuming, and we are going to have to go into agreement with the Federal Government, because the provincial treasury cannot carry a subsidy of this size. In going into government subsidy we have to deal with yet many other, well at least six other, beef-producing provinces which will have to have their legislation, and this will be very time-consuming. A moratorium can be put through quite quickly if, in fact, it takes not even a change in the Act itself. The Act, as it was written, The Farmstart Act of that time, did provide for just such a happening.

On page seven (Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1973) on The Farmstart Act, Section 12(b), it says that the Farmstart Corporation can make,

compensation or schemes of arrangement, grant extensions of time, accept other security in substitution, for any security held by the corporation and revise, amend or renegotiate any mortgage or any other agreement.

It says further, on page 18 of The Farmstart Act, so this regards no further legislation on the Farmstart loan, it is in the Act. It says that the corporation, under Section 34(f),

may prescribe the interest rates or rates payable in respect of loans made by the corporation, for farmers, and in respect of arrears of principal and interest of such loans. (Under (g)) providing for varying, waiving, postponing, or rescheduling the payment of the interest and the principal of any loans made by the corporation to farmers.

So it certainly doesn't require any new legislation, it just requires the proclaiming of legislation which is right now in The Farmstart Act. It also says in Section (s) of Section 34,

providing that, in the event of an actual or impending default, the repayment of the loan referred to in Clause (1) the lender may, notwithstanding anything in this Act, with the approval of the borrower, alter or revise the terms of the loan, respecting the amount of any payments made to the borrower under the loan or the time when any payments under the loan become due, but no alteration or revision shall be made to the terms of such a loan to provide for less than one payment under the loan by the borrower in a 12-month period.

It doesn't say the amount. It could be down to \$1 to cover it. It requires no further action and it could be done very quickly. I do believe that if it isn't done very quickly we are going to find many of our young farmers off the farm and out of business.

Also, it is not a new concept. The Member for Regina North East (Mr. Smishek) speaking on the debate of the moratorium, says,

Well, Mr. Speaker, for years the Mediation Board had The Moratorium Act more restrictive than this — 13 years in all, and it covered everything. Did it ruin farmers' credit? No. Did it ruin the confidence of the people when dealing with these people? No.

So a moratorium is not a new concept. It wasn't new in 1971, and it isn't new now. It has been used when you have other, or dire circumstances such as this, on a short-term basis.

If this isn't enacted, the subsection to allow for a moratorium, there is also under the Act, already, that the money covering this can be appropriated from general government funds. In Section 37(1)(a), it says:

Out of the moneys appropriated by the Legislature for the purpose, the Minister may make grants to the corporation to defray losses incurred by the corporation, as the result of loans made by it, and have not been repaid.

So, Mr. Speaker, I should like to say, that I put this Resolution forward in good faith. I believe that it is one way that the Government of Saskatchewan can help the young beef producer, the small beef producer, right now, rather than delaying for a long time the legislation that is required for a subsidy payment. I believe that if the Government of this day

really wants to help the young farmer, the small farmer, they have the power under this Act to do so. Any powers needed can certainly be passed by an Act. We can help the young farmers keep in business and keep in agriculture.

I should, therefore, like to move this Resolution.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. J. WIEBE** (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, rising to speak briefly on this particular motion, let me say initially that I support it. I support the concerns which have been expressed by a private Member, on one of the days which Parliamentary procedure has allowed private Members to voice their concerns and the concerns of their constituents, their ideas and their suggestions for better government, and also for better opportunities for all people of Saskatchewan.

The Government, in its acknowledgment of the need for private Members to be able to express their opinions, has asked this Legislature to sit an extra two and one-half hours a day. They have asked us to sit in the mornings so that we, as private Members, will have ample opportunity to voice the concerns of our constituents. And yet, Mr. Speaker, as far as the Government Opposite is concerned, private Members' day is a farce.

Private Members' day is a farce. Look at that side of the House — two Cabinet Ministers, two Cabinet Ministers out of 18 are in this House today, listening to the concerns of the private Members. Other individual Members at one time were down to as low as 12 — 12 Members on that side of the House. If it wasn't for the Opposition, this Government would not even have a quorum, this Legislature would not have a quorum, and we would not be able to conduct our business today.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — It is for that reason, Mr. Speaker, that I ask leave under Rule No. 4 to move that this House now adjourn.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

Motion to adjourn debate negated on the following recorded division:

# **YEAS — 16**

Stodalka	Edwards	Collver
Wiebe	Clifford	Larter
Malone	Anderson	Bailey
MaDonald	Merchant	Ham
Penner	McMillan	Katzman
Cameron		

**NAYS — 27**

Blakeney  
Pepper  
Thibault  
Bowerman  
Smishek  
Romanow  
Snyder  
Byers  
Kramer

Robbins  
MacMurchy  
Mostoway  
Larson  
Whelan  
Kaeding  
MacAuley  
Feschuk  
Shillington

Rolfes  
Cowley  
Tchorzewski  
Skoberg  
Vickar  
Koskie  
Johnson  
Thompson  
Banda

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, speaking to the Motion that is before us, Motion No. 4,

**MR. WIEBE:** — Mr. Speaker . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Give me a moment or two to consider what happens now. I recognize the Attorney General.

**MR. MacDONALD:** — On a Point of Order. Could the Speaker indicate what he bases his ruling on. I understand the Motion to adjourn the House is a non-debatable Motion. When you lose an adjournment Motion, is it not the same thing as adjourning debate? What is the distinction and could the Speaker indicate on our behalf where the ruling comes from that the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) loses his position in the debate.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — The basis on which I recognize the Attorney General is the practices of the House, which have been accepted, this is from the report in 1969 and it says that a Member who has lost a motion for adjournment of a debate shall not thereby be precluded from continuing in the debate, provided he does so forthwith.

Now the Motion that the Member for Morse made was not with regard to discontinuing the debate, but discontinuing the House, which is absolutely different. Now the Member for Morse has lost that Motion. He had to sit down when he made the Motion. Therefore, he cannot continue to speak at this time and I recognize the Attorney General. That is the basis on which I made this decision.

**MR. MALONE:** — On a Point of Order, then Mr. Speaker. Could you then distinguish for us please the difference between a Motion to adjourn debate, which terminates the debate on a particular motion and a Motion to adjourn the House, which does the same thing, terminates debate on the particular motion. What is the distinction?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — The distinction is that the Motion to curtail the sitting of the House is far broader than the Motion to curtail the debate, consequently if you curtail the debate, the Member had moved, and you curtailed the debate then you could continue

on with other business of the House. But the fact of the matter is that he had moved that the House adjourn and that means that if it had been passed we could continue on with no business of the House and would have to adjourn.

**MR. MacDONALD:** — Mr. Speaker, on the Point of Order. Supposing now that it was 20 minutes past 12 and the Member or someone moved to adjourn the House, does that mean that the man who is speaking in the debate loses his position in the debate? Of course not! When the House assembles the man who has the position in the debate — who speaks, for example, say 9:30 p.m. and the Member for Morse was speaking and he looked at the clock and said it is 9:30, I beg leave to adjourn the House. Why does he lose, because of the adjournment of the House, which occurs at 5:30 on Wednesday and Friday; at 9:30 on other days of the House and the House is adjourned, the position in the debate and, therefore, I cannot see why an adjournment Motion for the House, whether it's at this particular time of the day, or 12:25 o'clock, why the Member for Morse should lose his position in the debate. He certainly has lost the Motion to adjourn the House. That Motion to adjourn the House comes every day the House is sitting, Mr. Speaker, and the man who is speaking at that time when the Motion to adjourn the House, in no way ever loses his position in the debate. And I can't see the distinction at this time.

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY** (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, may I rise on a Point of Order?

The rules say all the time that when a Member, in speaking, moves a Motion and has it voted on, he has lost his place in the debate. That is the general rule. That is everywhere in the rules. We have made one exception to that, i.e. that a Member can move that the debate be adjourned, the debate that he is now speaking in, and if carried he maintains his position and if lost he can continue to speak. But this was made by special rule of this House in 1968 or 1969, or whenever it was made. I well remember when the rules did not provide for this. In 1960 and some period thereafter, if a Member moved to have the debate adjourned and he or she lost the Motion, he or she lost his place and his right to speak. Because that is the general rule. If I stand up in my place and on my feet and move a Motion and have it voted on, then I sit down for the vote, then I have lost my place. The House has made an exception where the Member is moving that the current debate be adjourned. And that is the only exception and it is set out in the rules. The Member for Morse did not decide to use that exception. He decided that he wanted the House adjourned, which is another subject altogether. And he can cause that to be voted upon. Yes, indeed he can. But it can't be voted upon until he sits in his chair and when he sits in his chair he has lost his place. And there is no way that he can move the adjournment of the House otherwise. Because that's the way the rule is.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — If I could just refer the Members to Beauchesne for guidance. Page 138 of Beauchesne, sub-item 8,

(viii) A Member who has moved or seconded the adjournment of a debate which has been negatived, cannot speak

to the original motion.

The remarks that the Premier has been making to clarify the situation, as he saw it, illustrated the situation that existed in this House in previous times. Therefore, if the Member for Morse had moved the adjournment of the debate or the adjournment of the House, had lost it, he would have precluded himself from re-entering the debate. However, as the Premier stated in his understanding of the rules, in 1969, and I refer to the booklet here (you all have a copy of this one — which is the practice of the House) the exclusion was made which allows a Member to attempt to adjourn the debate. If he is unsuccessful then that Member can continue to debate the Resolution of the item, providing he does so forthwith.

**HON. R. ROMANOW** (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I assume that that's the end of the challenge.

I realize as the Hon. Member for Regina Lakeview (Mr. Malone) said, it's going to be a long day, and quite frankly I think that a lot of Members on this side of the House — I would have thought a lot of Members on the Conservative side as well were surprised to see the Motion which has just been defeated, the question of the adjourning of the business of the House.

**MR. MALONE:** — Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General, I believe, rose to speak to item 4 under the Motions, which deals with a two year moratorium. True, we did have a Motion about adjourning the House by the Member for Morse. That Motion was voted on and lost. It ill behoves the Attorney General to return to speaking to that Motion which we have already voted upon. I suggest that if he is going to rise and speak in this House, according to your rulings over the past few weeks, he is obliged to restrict himself to the subject matter of the Motion which talks about a moratorium on principal and interest of government loans that were given to encourage young farmers into beef production, and that's all he is allowed to talk about.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — It's nice to see that Members are so eager to adhere to the rules of the House. I have been fairly generous on both sides of the House allowing Members to connect the remarks they are making to the subject under discussion. The Attorney General had been on his feet for approximately, on the outside a minute or two minutes, and I expect he is going to relate it to the subject. If he isn't going to I would hope that he cease and desist at this time and discuss the Resolution.

**MR. R.L. COLLVER** (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, if I might speak to the Point of Order.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — What's the point?

**MR. COLLVER:** — Since the Attorney General is not speaking on the particular topic at hand, but has been making comments about whether or not the Progressive Conservative Members can vote in favor of a Resolution to condemn Treasury Benches having only two Members in them . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I don't believe that's necessarily a Point of Order. I think if the Attorney General intends to relate what he is saying to the topic under discussion, then it is in order.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, I shall relate my remarks because I want to speak on this Motion, as I'm doing, and if the earlier Motion moved by the Member for Morse had passed I would have been denied the right to speak.

If the Hon. Leader of the Conservative Party had been in his seat at the time of this debate (and he wasn't in his seat). I want to tell the Hon. Leader of the Conservative Party not only was he not in his seat, five of his Members were not in their seats. I want to tell the Hon. Member of the Conservative Party, this Motion is important enough for everybody to speak, to do some thinking about and research. He shouldn't come into the House and lecture the Treasury Benches about not sitting when he himself is not there. And I want to tell those Conservatives and the Liberals opposite . . .

**MR. R. KATZMAN** (Rosthern): — Point of Privilege. I believe the Hon. Member for Saskatoon Riversdale can count and I think he should correct his statement. He was incorrect in his numbers.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I think that is a debating point and if the Member for Rosthern wishes to get into debate at a later time he can avail himself of that opportunity.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — All that I can say is that I'm glad that the Hon. Leader of the Conservative Party voted as he did because if it is a condemnation of Treasury Benches it is equally a condemnation of all the front benches opposite and the Opposition side as well. Not all, there were some Members here, but just as many empty as here.

I want to tell, Mr. Speaker, the Members of this House, that this Motion that the Member for Shaunavon has introduced is an important one. It's an important one because it represents the total reversal of the position of the Liberal Party from what it was three or four years ago. Mr. Speaker, when the government, three or four years ago, introduced The Family Farm Protection Act there were howls of protest and opposition by the Liberals opposite. Now in this debate we see the spectacle of the Member for Shaunavon getting up and reciting to us at length items from speeches that the Members on this side gave at that the time of the introduction of the Bill. The same Bill that he and his Liberal Party cohorts opposed tooth and nail.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time that the Liberals have adopted this type of a position. Everything that the Liberals and the Conservatives do in this province is totally dictated by political expediency. Mr. Speaker, if it's in their political expedient interests to try and support a

moratorium today they will do it. If they judge, in their political wisdom, that it's not to their benefit to support a moratorium, they won't do it. They are never consistent in philosophy of program from one day, to one month, one year, to one session, or to one Liberal Party.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Shaunavon says that he is a newer than brand-new look Liberal. The Member for Regina South (Mr. Cameron) and the Member for Wascana (Mr. Merchant) all these new-look Liberals. Mr. Speaker, I tell the Members of this House, don't anybody be fooled by that. It's the same old Liberal Party.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — It's the same old Liberal Party that almost thinks it has got a divine right to rule by family compact in this Province of Saskatchewan and I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, and the Liberals opposite and the Conservatives opposite, that when the election comes 1979 or 1976, they have got a surprise in store for them by the people of this province. They've got a surprise in store, Mr. Speaker, because of Motions by the Member for Shaunavon, the types of Motions that get up and tell us — tell the people of Saskatchewan now to ignore everything that was said by their leader in 1971, to ignore everything that was said by the deputy leader, to ignore everything that was said by all the Liberals and some of the Conservatives. He wants us now to ignore it and now he wants a moratorium and he quotes back some of the speeches of that time. Mr. Speaker, that position symbolizes the entire Liberal-Conservative position since this House has opened — hypocrisy, political hypocrisy.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Let's not make any mistake, Mr. Speaker, what's up here. When a member talks by reading back speeches, speeches that we made, speeches from the Government. Not one speech that he gave was made by a Member of the Liberal Party, not one.

But leaving that aside, Mr. Speaker, let's make no mistake what's up here by the Liberals as they continue to read at length from old speeches. The Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) did it in the earlier Resolution. I've heard of filibusters, Mr. Leader of the Conservative Party, of Government Motions, but this is the first time that I have heard of filibuster of Liberal Opposition Motions. And that's exactly what is happening here. And then of course, because everybody wasn't sitting in rapt attention to the wise words of wisdom that the Member for Shaunavon said, there was a Motion to adjourn the House. Why even the Leader of the Conservative Party didn't have enough attention to sit in the House. Why even the Leader of the Opposition couldn't have enough attention to sit in the House.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — He isn't here.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — I don't know where he is.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — That's a cheap shot!



**MR. ROMANOW:** — No cheaper a shot than when you say the Premier can't sit in his seat today. Don't tell me about cheap shots. No cheaper than you, or you, saying that the Treasury Benches have to sit here all the time. They have business as well when they are out.

Now look, we as Members of the Legislative Assembly, we have been guilty, as Members on this side, yes. But I ask the Opposition, you too have been guilty. The Conservatives and Liberals. What must the taxpayers think of us when they see these types of Motions, to adjourn. When they see these types of debates going on long after the point has been made. When they see all sorts of . . .

**MR. CAMERON:** — Stand, stand!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Yes, 'stands', yes Mr. Cameron, stands. And this morning there have been two stands and both of them have been Liberal stands. Not one NDP stand.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Two Liberal stands this morning and not one NDP stand and I want to tell the Member for Regina South (Mr. Cameron) there will be a stand whenever we are not ready to go, as is your prerogative to stand your Motions when you are not ready to go, and it's their prerogative to adjourn Motions when they are not ready to go or when they want to adjourn it, or when they want to consider the remarks made by any Member. That is going to be a right that I hope to retain as a Member of this House whether I'm sitting here or there. And I simply say, Mr. Speaker, to the Members of this House and the taxpayers of the province, watch what is going on from all of us. I'm not saying this now in the sense of accusation, but the types of gamesmanship that we're playing here when we have Motions and Government business and orders and private bills that we can't get to. We can't get to some today. A Member doesn't have to be here. I don't know why he is not here, but he can't be here. Or some other Members can't be here because of this particular Motion. That's not relevant. But the point is, we continue to do work as we can do work, as we are permitted to do work, whether it's private Member's work or whether it's Government Member's work. And I plead with the Members of this House to try and get off of this continual gamesmanship about rule 4 and rule 15. I move this and I move that, and I'm as guilty as any of the people about that, guilty as anybody. I want to tell you, if you think that in the Legislature what we are doing is right or wrong has any relevancy and the issue is going to be whether or not we are acting in accordance with the expected standards of the people of Saskatchewan or the Members of this House. I say, we are not so doing, not so doing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Members of this House that the Member for Shaunavon, I think, made a good speech. I think he went long on some of the areas. I think he made a good speech though about the question of a moratorium. I was disappointed in one aspect of the Member's speech. One aspect which he should have brought to the attention of this House, and that is what the Liberals said about the moratorium and the principles when we introduced the Family Farm Protection Bill. I wanted him

to tell the Members of this House how it is that the Liberals now are able to rationalize a total change around from no moratorium, to moratorium. What was it? What was it in the thinking of the Liberal Party that resulted in this? He didn't give us such an explanation.

The Member for Morse, I would have hoped, would have given us such an explanation. He didn't give us an explanation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to know exactly what it was to refresh my own memory as to what the Liberals have said.

**MR. MALONE:** — Here we go!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Okay, the boys are saying "here we go".

When they said the moratorium and the recitation of our speeches, I would have expected some recitation of one of the Liberal positions at that time. How do you justify it today? Nothing! Now is that unreasonable for me to expect? Is it unreasonable for the public to expect? Of course it's not unreasonable. We didn't get it. I'm sure there is a reason. In any event, I want to say quite a few more words on this, in particular as to your position in 1971, and the inconsistency of your position in 1971.

I want to say one other thing. The Hon. Members opposite have a big habit of saying — Liberals saying — I say 'your' position and the Liberal Member turns around and he says "oh no, not my position, I wasn't here". The Member for Regina South (Mr. Cameron) periodically says, "Oh no, how long are you going to keep going". "It's nothing to do with us". "No, no, what we did between 1964 and 1971, that's none of my business". Well I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan don't take kindly to politicians who reject the policies of the past, let alone political parties. You can't have it that way. And I want to say . . .

**MR. PENNER:** — How far back do you want to go, Roy?

**MR. ROMANOW:** — You can go back to 1944 if you want and criticize us on anything. You do — you always go back and you criticize us on the shoe factory, on the box factory and go all the way back to 1944 if you want, and we stand to be accepted by that policy. But not the Liberals, try and slough off this as something different, because it isn't. I simply want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I want to exploit at some detail to the people of Saskatchewan and I emphasize that 'at some detail', exploit the contradictions, the total contradictions of the Liberal policy as is exemplified by this Motion, as is exemplified by their conduct in this entire Legislature, and I want to get a chance to read back some of the speeches of the Members opposite. I don't have those speeches here and I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

**RESOLUTION NO. 34 — SPECIAL COMMISSION TO STUDY NURSING HOMES IN THE PROVINCE**

MISS L.B. CLIFFORD (Wilkie) moved, seconded by Mr. Stodalka (Maple Creek):

That this Assembly urges the Government of Saskatchewan to set up a special commission to study nursing homes in the province and their rental fee structures in order to determine whether the problem of unreasonable rent hikes which take place in some nursing homes can be alleviated.

She said: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a tough act to follow after that dissertation.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — There's nobody I would rather be followed by than you.

**MISS CLIFFORD:** — Thank you very much. I was pleased to see that we have a few people here to listen to my Motion today because this is my third attempt, I think.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MISS CLIFFORD:** — Not that I don't like the new Members over there, because these are the Members that I am mainly talking to because they may have an open mind and I'm not saying that all those Ministers don't, so I am sure that they will listen to my Motion that I am putting forth.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Maybe they will stick around for a while.

**MISS CLIFFORD:** — Yes, but it's nice to see them here. I know that at times you may feel that we are long-winded as you have mentioned the curbing of speeches that have been made.

I should like you to understand why I am going to quote from a speech that was made in 1970. Some of our speeches have become lengthy at times, and I have been accused of that, which I think was not really a just statement. The reason why we are going back to this is to show you that sometimes there is some common ground between the Opposition and the Government. I don't think that to date you can accuse myself or many of us in some of the motions which we have been discussing, of totally condemning or opposing any government, except perhaps the Potash Bill, but we have had positive suggestions for these motions; positive suggestions for instance, the Positive Action Committee that is being proposed for women. Positive suggestions in this Motion for senior citizens; positive suggestions for teachers, rent control; we passed the Bill but we said, "look there are different things that maybe can be done. No one is perfect, you are doing some good things".

You know a funny thing happened to me the other day. You announced the Saskatchewan Assistance Benefit programs, some of the improvements and Mr. Speaker, I am only relating this to tell

you why I am presenting this Motion and why I think that perhaps it is time that you listened to the Motion. You say, look maybe we are not doing everything we can; we are doing some good things. I am ready to concede that you are doing some good things, but no one is perfect and you can always improve your legislation.

I was phoned by a CFQC reporter the other evening and as I was driving back to Regina, in the afternoon, and I hadn't heard the news report on your special Saskatchewan Assistance program, but he outlined briefly some of the improvements. So I said, well I think that they are good and I said that some of them were long needed and I suggested some other ones that maybe could be improved. He said, "You mean, they are good?" "You are going to say that they are good?" I said, "Sure". "They are going to help the people of Saskatchewan". I think that it is time in the House that if you have a motion such as the one that was the previous one, you don't condemn us for possibly seeing that there is a change in this province.

One of the things that I was really surprised at when I was campaigning — and I haven't been in politics that long — but during the election the NDP Candidate said, "You know the NDP program is just super. And the NDP in British Columbia, the NDP in Saskatchewan, the NDP in Manitoba, you know they have a solid program. You know it is the same, it is for the people". But all people don't have the same needs. We are individual people and I don't think can say, look today is 1974, 1975, 1976 or before it was 1964 and so you can change your mind. Times change, things change. So I don't think that is good enough to stand up and say, why are you changing your mind? It was right that the Member previously had some good points and I think it is time, like in this Motion that you consider what I have to say for the sincerity and for the reasons why we are saying it. I would ask that you do this in the subsequent motions, so that perhaps you are talking about why this Legislature is here, why we are here. I think we are here for the betterment of the people of Saskatchewan and that we should be considering these as individuals and we should be voting on them in that way, not in groups or blocks. Work for the future, don't dwell on the past.

Mr. Speaker, my Motion involves nursing homes. I have mentioned some nursing homes. I agree that some of the other nursing homes have lesser rents but that doesn't mean that there isn't an opportunity or there isn't a need to look into the problems of the nursing homes and these rent hikes.

I think everyone here would agree that the senior citizens are among the most deserving people that we have in Saskatchewan. And after all they have done, we owe much to the senior citizens of Saskatchewan. We should indeed be looking at their programs.

I should like for this moment to quote from a speech that was made in 1969 and 1970 and as I said, the reason why I am doing this, Mr. Speaker, is to show that we are not all that far apart. I don't think that we have really changed our minds, but that we have common ideas. You are concerned about this problem and we are concerned about this problem. Granted, it may take us a while to get together, but I hope that 1976 is the year in which we can get together and the year that we can start passing some good legislation.

In March 11th, 1969, a question was asked about increases

in special care homes. The question was asked by Mr. Matsalla and it said:

Does the Government anticipate increases in rental charges in housing in special care homes?

So it is not any different than now. There are increases now, there were increases then. The answer was 'yes'.

If so, on what will these increases become effective and what will be the new charges for self-contained units and for special care units?

And the answer was:

It is anticipated that the Board of Directors for most self-contained units in special care homes will likely increase their rates on April 1st, 1969. For all non-profit operated special care homes and self-contained units the rates they are allowed to charge are directly related to operating costs; thus any increase in the rental rates must be related to a break-even budget. In most instances the increase will likely be \$3.50 per month and the increases will range from \$4 to \$44 per month.

Now that is the type of increase that was taking effect in 1969, which unfortunately is not the sort of increase that is taking effect at the moment

The second quote that I should like to make is from a speech that was made March 24, 1970, by Mr. Snyder. You know, when I started researching this Motion I happened to look into the past speeches and I just wish now that I had seen this one before I put in my Motion because I think it is a very good Motion. In fact, the speech is very good and had I known it I would have just looked for some additional material. The Motion that was put in effect started with: That this Assembly views with alarm. Now I could have put that in my Motion, but I didn't really get uptight about the whole thing as I thought I would be better to be rational so that you would accept it as a logical Motion.

That this Assembly views with alarm the rapid escalation in the rates charged to guests in some Saskatchewan nursing homes and recommends to the Government that all those that provide institutions licensed under The Housing and Nursing Home Act and accommodating ten or more guests be required to provide to the Government an annual statement of income operating expenses and net profits.

Now that was a very good Motion just as my Motion is a very good Motion and I think that they have a lot in common and if you will just bear with me on that side of the House I think maybe we can learn something from this because at that time the problems were the same as they are now. And granted, maybe, we didn't do enough, but I don't think you are doing enough either. I think it is time in this 1976 year that we do something.

He went ahead, quote:.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this Resolution is one which I hope and expect to raise a number of questions which relate to the care of the aged.

Again, I believe the same thing. To continue:

It will, I hope, inspire some dialogue which will make somewhat clearer the direction in which we are travelling in the care of the aged and infirm.

I believe it is well known, Mr. Speaker, that in 1945 the home for the infirm in Wolseley was placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of Welfare. This, Mr. Speaker, in effect was the first form of recognition of the responsibility of the government in the care of the aged, the needy and the disabled.

That was a start and we are still needing some responsibility in this area and that is why this Motion that I am presenting will indeed do this to increase support for the aged. Again I quote:

It's a matter of record, Mr. Speaker, in 1961 9.4 per cent of Saskatchewan's population was over 65 years of age. By 1969 this had increased slightly to 9.53 per cent. I believe what is more significant, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that those over 75 years of age as a percentage of Saskatchewan's population increased from 3.4 per cent to 4.15 per cent during that eight year period.

This is an indicating increase and increases that are still taking effect, if you can recall and I don't know how many were listening to my last speech on senior citizens, but they are increasing year by year and there should be an increase to about 10 per cent by the year 1980.

He continues:

These figures, at least on the surface, would seem to indicate that medical science has become increasingly successful in prolonging the life of our senior citizens. In addition, I believe, these figures may serve to indicate that our senior citizens tend to live out their lives here in the province, while the movement of young people out of the province has increased rather sharply in recent years.

I think you can tell the analogy here and we have heard it many times in the last few years, rather than 1970. To continue:

A number of factors have contributed to the increasing need for special care accommodations in our province. Not the least of these was the discharge of approximately 1,000 patients in Saskatchewan mental institutions around 1965, in the earlier months.

It will be remembered, Mr. Speaker, that in 1961, the survey committee which dealt with the problems of the aging and long-term ill, established general classifications for the care of senior citizens groups in the special care homes in the terms of Level I, II, III and IV care. The informed estimates of Saskatchewan's need for the first three levels of care seem to be based on a formula of five beds per 1,000 total population, or a total of about 5,000 beds.

The rest is facts on beds and I think what we are doing about that has relevance in this matter because the cost does deal with the number of beds and it is directly proportional. I think that this Motion, as far as it stands, is dealing basically on costs and rents but that issue I will not debate at this time. He goes on, Mr. Speaker, as follows:

In recent years we have seen a new phenomenon emerge in Saskatchewan in the care of the elderly with private commercial nursing homes springing up across the country. One of these commercial enterprises involved in providing care for the aged gave notice of their success of their operation in the February 10th issue of the Regina Leader Post, in which this organization lays claim to investment of some \$40 million in a chain of 20 nursing homes across Canada.

This is the start of where we have private and we have now government owned nursing homes and that, again, is debatable whether or not they balance out; whether or not perhaps the difference between private and government owned nursing homes does initiate the problem in the rent increases and this, again, is at another time, another debate. And perhaps through an investigation or an inquiry you can see why some of these rental increases that there is such a discrepancy between this province and other provinces in different areas. I don't think in this discussion you could say, great, government owned nursing homes, they are the answer. There are some differences between them and I think they both, perhaps, have good and bad points. There is no generalization in this. All I am asking for in this Motion is that an investigation to see what the problems are and I think this is a reasonable observation and a reasonable suggestion. So there is no reason why all Members in this House can't support this. Continuing:

The article claims that the success of this scheme has been so rapid that a year ago the principals who backed the plan originally had to decide whether to mark time while collecting more expansion capital or to combine with a larger organization, seeking investment opportunities.

I will skip the next paragraph, Mr. Speaker, because I don't think it has that much to relate to what I am talking about. He does say that the care of the aged has become increasingly fragmented in recent years. Again, this perhaps would have to do with why there are problems in rents. Again I quote:

Some time ago this care was a principal responsibility of the government, with municipal and charitable organizations filling an important role also in this vital work.

I have had the opportunity in the past number of months and years to visit a large number of these institutions which fall generally into one of the three categories and I think that this is important because it goes on to say, the different fees for the different levels.

The House recessed from 12:30 o'clock p.m. to 2:30 o'clock p.m.

**MISS CLIFFORD:** — I am so interested and captivated in what I was saying since you all have come back to listen again this afternoon.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MISS CLIFFORD:** — I should like to continue for a few minutes along the line which I was speaking before we adjourned and that was outlining a speech that was made in 1970. I should like to go over some of the rates and the increases that were being discussed at that time and were abhorred or alarmed at the escalation in rates. I am quoting from Mr. Snyder's speech when he said:

One of the private institutions provided figures to indicate that their rates for Level III care had increased from \$9 per day in 1966 to \$11 per day in 1969, to \$13 a day only a few weeks ago.

And since I had my script typed, Mr. Speaker, I discovered that he stated that:

The rate has now gone up from \$13 per day to \$15 per day, amounting to a monthly cost to a guest in this private nursing home of some \$450 per month.

Charitable and religious non-profitable organizations, Mr. Speaker, have been plagued, as have others I suppose, with increased costs as the inflationary trend has influenced the cost of operation with rising interest rates adding to the burden in a very significant way.

The same today.

As of April, 1965, Level III care in St. Anthony's Home in the city of Moose Jaw, which I am pleased to represent, cost \$170. By 1966 it had risen to \$180 per month and in 1967 it had increased to \$190. By April of 1968 it had increased to \$260 and \$270 by April of 1969 and as of December 31, 1969 it had risen to \$287.

I understand that the figure is now \$310 for level III care. I am only going over these figures to show you that the inflationary rate had indeed increased the cost and then I am going to give you some comparable figures as of now. He goes on:

The Minister of Welfare is aware, I am sure, that one of the factors which have compounded the financial problems in these institutions is a fact that his Department provides for payment only up to and including Level III care at a maximum rate which I understand is now \$310 per month.

Therefore, you see that with a means test that would have covered the figure which he was quoting previously. Again:

I understand that these possibilities, and you were speaking previously of transferring people, that in transferring people there is extremely remote and limited space so that a large number of Level IV cases continue to be classified as Level III. I think that this indicates, Mr. Speaker, what genuine need there is for



Level IV accommodation, with an estimate that between 400 and 500 special care guests are requiring Level IV care.

I won't go on in that light because again it indicates a number of problems in the nursing home situation. But I think that some of these problems are due in fact — the rent increases are due in fact to these problems.

It goes on to say:

I believe that it is generally accepted, Mr. Speaker, that with an exception of a few independently wealthy cases that it is only a matter of a few weeks or months before the majority of elderly who are institutionalized at existing rates charged by private nursing homes become financially dependent upon public programs. The question which I directed to the Minister of Welfare (Mr. MacDonald) earlier this Session was answered on February 24, which indicates that a total of 2,101 guests in nursing homes registered by the Department are receiving financial assistance through Saskatchewan Assistance Plan. It strikes me, Mr. Speaker, that with the expanded role that is being played by the private nursing homes in our province over the past number of years that the Government owes it to the taxpaying public to have an accounting of the manner in which those taxpayer dollars are being spent.

I think this is equally applicable to our taxpayers today. We do owe them some explanation of where the tax money is being spent. And why these rent increases in some of the homes are occurring.

The charitable and religious organizations with whom I have been in touch would welcome the opportunity to make their operations public knowledge and they feel that a very useful purpose would be served if this was done. With approximately half of the income of private homes being derived from the public purse, it would appear to be only good business to provide an annual financial statement to the Government. I think with this initial step, Mr. Speaker, the Government might then be in a better position to make necessary adjustments in order to iron out some of the inequities which presently exist. It seems almost incredible to me, Mr. Speaker, that if two patients of identical disabilities were discharged from a hospital, one to the Parkside Nursing Home in Regina and one to the Swift Current Geriatric Centre,

I will just give this example, he has got many more but I will give only one, to show you the difference in costs.

The patient at the Parkside Nursing Home would have paid \$5,400 for Level III care, at \$15 per day in the first twelve months that he was a guest at the institution. While the patient who is fortunate enough to get into the Government Geriatric Centre in Swift Current would have paid his \$180 deterrent charge and would have then been cared for without charge except for the extended services that are provided for a few dollars a month.

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There is a very fundamental difference that arises and he comments at some length on the comparative costs, terms of resident treatment, between government and private institutions. He concludes, Mr. Speaker, by saying as I have stated:

I am hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that this Resolution need not be one which is voted on with a demarkation line drawn down the floor of this Assembly. There are a large number of people of all political faiths who are deeply concerned with the problem that I related today. I hope that the Members opposite can see their way clear to offer their support to this Resolution.

Following Mr. Snyder's speech on this issue, Mr. Whelan also had some remarks. I have hopefully made my point when I said why I am quoting from these speeches, but he too, said that he did wholeheartedly approve of the reference to rapid escalation in the price, particularly of nursing care in private nursing homes. He concluded by saying much along the same line, that he thought that all Members of the House could vote on this in a rational way. He said:

Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Moose Jaw North, Mr. Snyder, by placing this Resolution on the Order Paper has done the senior citizens and the patients of the nursing homes a real service for he has provided the opportunity for each Member of the Legislature to raise points, which we are doing now, to make suggestions and to criticize some of the techniques we are using at the present time.

This is why this Motion is put forward today, so that we can question, we can look into and we can improve some of the techniques in the nursing homes. Mr. Whelan continues:

Mr. Speaker, no more dedicated group of people operate in our civil service or would I say no more dedicated group of people in our medical care area, than those who care for nursing home patients. But, Mr. Speaker, unless we attempt to improve from day to day the whole area of care for senior citizens and nursing homes we will find that problems will develop. It is my observation that the Ministers of both Public Health and Welfare will merit by the discussions of this Resolution and will provide and develop senior citizens of this province. Senior citizens of this province are entitled to and deserve the best possible care. Mr. Speaker, it is our responsibility to see that they get it.

I am sure that no matter what the comments were previously this morning, although you don't agree perhaps with some of the Opposition Members reading speeches from the past, I think you cannot deny that we have a common goal. And that what I am proposing is a common goal that we can all support.

I should like to quote from a number of news articles showing that the NDP Government has been concerned about increased deficits and financing. I would also like to look at what the Social Services Department has been doing.

In February 1971, this is a Social Services report for 1971-72, they observed that:

The rates of the homes were frozen, this was right after, as you well know, you became the Government. The homes were advised that the assistance in the form of block grants were available to enable the homes to operate on a break-even basis. An appeal committee was set up to review the operating budgets of homes which indicated that they were operating at a deficit.

This is one interesting thing that I find about this report in that in August, 1971, and perhaps some of you who haven't been here before, like myself, did not know this:

A special committee was set up to review the financing of special care homes. After months of research and interviews with homes, community and government personnel as well as homes and agencies in other provinces, the committee submitted its report to the Cabinet. Their report is currently under study by the Government and a decision on new methods of financing the program is expected in the near future.

Now for a number of reasons try as I may, I couldn't find the report that was currently under study. I admit perhaps it is there but I just didn't have the time to do the research myself, so maybe they are there and I am sure I will be informed if they are. I should like to continue by saying there are a number of news articles which I will briefly outline to show you there has been a concern in your party which I am sure you know about, but I should like to have this read in the House. It was another comment by Welfare Minister, Gordon Snyder, where he announced establishment of a committee to look into all aspects of the provincial special care program and to suggest new ways of financing it. He told the Legislature:

Government would not alter maintenance rates during the study. However, the Government would not let special care homes operate on a deficit basis. An appeal committee will be set up to review cases where homes are in financial difficulty. It will be able to recommend block payments from the Welfare Department to those homes which find financial assistance to maintain adequate level of care and to operate on a non-profit basis. The NDP is deeply concerned with the entire financial status of the special care program. We are concerned that the maintenance rates charged by special care homes to their guests have increased sharply in recent years and have placed an unrealistic financial burden on many of the special care home guests and their families.

I think that that last paragraph is the most important one of all, because often we suggest that we are having problems financing some of the nursing homes. To date most of the burden has been on guests as was stated in this last paragraph, rather than on the homes. This is where we have to have an investigation to see if this is truly so, and what can be done about it.

Another article from September 29, 1971 was entitled, "Nursing Homes Helped".

A total of \$208,000 was made available to 35 special care homes in Saskatchewan to allow them to operate on a break-even basis until October 1st, Welfare Minister

Gordon Snyder told some members of the Saskatchewan Association of Housing and Nursing Homes. The requests for financial assistance by 13 of the homes are still under review. Because adjustments to rates were not authorized by April 1st, many homes have found themselves in financial difficulty.

Again, this is an interesting paragraph. He said:

The problems to be overcome include a solution to the existing rates which place a financial burden on many special care home guests and their families.

I have a couple more and I should like to pick out — and I am not intentionally picking out paragraphs because the parts that I am eliminating are the ones that I feel are perhaps lengthy and not relevant. There is one here, dated October 21, 1971, being concerned about the same problem as in the Motion. It says:

The Saskatchewan Government in its future policy would generally try to discourage development of profit-making in nursing homes. I do not necessarily say that we will take them over or try to phase out those now in existence, but our direction in the future will be to encourage development of nursing homes by non-profit organizations. The Government believes persons should live in communities unless the kind of care they need requires institutional living.

The final one that I am going to read from Saskatchewan, was a Resolution that was passed regarding nursing homes. This was April 5, 1972:

A Resolution asking the Government to consider increasing its financial support of the actual nursing care component provided in nursing homes was passed in the Legislature on Tuesday.

This is an example that I will give the Government credit for. It is an example of the type of motion that is being debated today.

The Resolution was an amended version of the one introduced by Gordon Grant, former Liberal Minister of Health. His Resolution urged the Government to consider immediate inclusion of all Level III care nursing home care under the Saskatchewan Hospital Insurance Plan.

Now, besides this consideration here, I have mentioned that the main thing we are looking at today in this Motion is the cost or rental charges to the individual senior citizen. There are many other factors that affect this rental cost and one of them I would consider to be the fact that the nursing home care is not under the Saskatchewan Hospitalization Insurance Plan. This was a resolution that was passed.

Mr. Grant said, inclusion of Level III care was part of the NDP election platform even though the wording of that particular promise was very garbled. The amendment to Mr. Grant's Resolution was moved by Rev. Alex Taylor. Mr. Taylor said that the NDP promise was to provide more Government aid towards nursing care, a component of care

in public and non-profit homes. If the Government assumed all the costs of nursing care homes it would also have to pay for guests in the senior citizens' homes he said. Before making any change the Government must make sure that the children are not encouraged to put their parents in nursing homes, just to get rid of them.

Again, this article mentions many instances why there is a problem in nursing home care and I should just like to mention one more comment made by Cy MacDonald who said — I had better not skip the part I was going to skip because it is out of context then and I wouldn't want you to think I was just giving the Liberal version, that wouldn't be fair. We must be fair.

However, when the nursing care is needed it should be made available without financial hardship. Financial responsibility should be a consideration. He described Mr. Grant's Resolution as to providing different funds for nursing care as evidence of conversion, because Mr. Grant was a Minister of Health in the Government, failing to increase aid in nursing homes. He said he had visited some homes where there was very little care for the guests. All nursing homes should be run by government or non-profit organizations because there should be no profiteering on the senior citizens. Mr. Taylor's amendment also expressed regret concerning indifference and inactivity of the former Liberal Government providing financial assistance to special care home guests.

I am going to continue reading this, and I see you are very wide awake over there. You are looking like, Ah ha, I've got the Liberals now, I have got something on them. I am reading all this article because I want to prove the fact that I am trying to make this as much as possible a non-political Resolution. This is why I am reading the whole article. As has been stated, this should be a non-political Motion. So I will read the whole thing:

Cy MacDonald said that the Liberals took over a deplorable nursing care situation in 1964 and that during their term of office they had increased the number of homes from 2,500 to 6,500. It added a multitude of services to the homes but had to close down hundreds because of the poor level of care.

It concludes:

It is the intention of the Government to give assistance to the cost of basic nursing care which might be calculated as a portion of the difference between Level II and Level III care.

It is our contention that by definition Level III care cannot be an insured benefit under The Saskatchewan Hospital Insurance Act. Primary function of the special care and nursing home care is to provide personal care and the actual nursing care element constitutes only a minor portion of the total service provided to the guests.

Now, although those articles have been somewhat lengthy I think they have pointed out that we both, on each side of the House have got the concern for the nursing homes and

especially concern for the people who live in the nursing homes.

This concern I would just like to relate for a minute or two has not only been in Saskatchewan, it has been a concern in other provinces. I shall just mention one of them and that is Ontario. The reason why I mention this is that we can perhaps relate some of the ideas that they had to Saskatchewan so that we can look into this problem adequately as the Motion indicates.

They found in Ontario in 1972 that the provincial health department estimates about 60 of Ontario's 400 nursing homes may go out of business. The reason for this was that they decided to put their nursing homes under a health program like the Saskatchewan health program, and they felt that a number of the nursing homes which were privately owned and were unfortunately making a large profit would go out of business because the government was subsidizing the other public homes.

Now that I have illustrated the problems and that we both have the concern about the Motion, I should like to point out some of the problems as I see them today in Saskatchewan.

Previously, in one of my speeches, I illustrated or gave examples of a number of the rental fees that were found in my constituency and in other constituencies in Saskatchewan.

I think what we have to look at first is what do the senior citizens have or how much do they have to comply with these rental structures. As you well know, they have the assistance program that Saskatchewan has offered them, newly implemented. I am sorry I can't quote the new figures, but some of them have increased. As well, they have their old age pensions, where 9,800 or so of them are receiving old age pensions. And a total of 100,000 in Saskatchewan are receiving old age pensions and Canada pension. So this is mainly, unless you have some other income of your own, this is where they are getting their money from.

Besides that, I think what we should look at are the figures we have in Saskatchewan itself. The best examples I can give are ones that come from my own constituency. As I pointed out before, my constituency runs along the Alberta border. And although I don't like always to use Alberta or another province for comparison, I think it is sometimes good to see what some of their programs are doing and maybe we can improve our own.

The rates in Provost, Alberta, which is just on the border of my constituency, for a double room \$115; while singles are \$130 and each guest receives a subsidy of \$45 to \$50. But however, when you leave Alberta and come in within 12 miles of Saskatchewan we hit one of the towns in my constituency which is Macklin, and there Level I room or Level I service is \$378 a month and a Level II is \$493. The Government does give a subsidy of \$105, which means the guest pays \$388. You come another 50 miles away to Unity, from this same nursing home in Alberta, where Level II care is \$430 with \$105 Government subsidy, which means the guest pays \$325. Level I care is \$315 per guest, there is no Government subsidy. Level III care is \$650, but a Government subsidy of \$335 means the guest pays \$315. Now I would suggest that there is quite a difference between Alberta and Saskatchewan, perhaps there are many reasons

for this but I should like to find out what the reasons are and perhaps we can improve them.

In Saskatoon, the rents of a nursing home in May was \$300, in October it increased to \$795 a month, which meant the rates were allowed to increase \$120 a month in October after having been raised \$85 a month last spring. No matter which way you look at it the cost of rents in Saskatchewan is a great deal more expensive than the ones in Alberta. There must be reasons for them and all I am asking you for is to get a committee of inquiry to look into the reasons why perhaps we can have a different system of subsidizing or a different system of taxation so that the senior citizens who do not have the funds or the abilities to earn or pay for their living perhaps can have a better deal from the Government of Saskatchewan.

Now there are a number of problems and a number of solutions. I suggested that perhaps some of the solutions might be to look into the quality and the cost of care and what departments are funding the care. At the same time I think that we can look into the quality; we should ask, does it meet the present and future needs; have the nursing homes had a realistic survey to find out what the problems are; is the quality of care that is in the nursing homes evaluated? I think also we have to look — and I mentioned it one other time in one of my speeches — what are the problems if there are any, with the unions in the nursing homes? This has been another new addition to care in the nursing homes. I have found in my area I think they are a problem. Perhaps maybe this causes increased cost, I don't know. But I think it is something that we cannot put blinders on and say, you know, definitely not, the unions never cause any problems. That's ridiculous because everything can cause a problem whether it is good or bad, maybe it is just not managed right and I feel that we cannot close our eyes to the tentative problems here. We have to look realistically and open-mindedly at the problem and then come up with a solution. I think that everyone here would want to do the best for the senior citizens of Saskatchewan.

Now as I close, I should just like to quote from the Saskatchewan Care, February, 1973 Journal, and it says:

Can you remember 1959, just 14 years ago? We learn from old records of one Level III home all but two of the staff are paid \$130 a month. The work week was 44 hours. The residents paid from \$55 a month to \$125 for care. The old age pensioners \$55 a month. Welfare assistance came through the municipalities who used also to give \$10 Christmas gifts to those they helped. There were no unions in Saskatchewan Homes, there were no levels of care. So what will it be like in 14 more years, in 1987?

Now many strides have been made since 1959, as you well know, and I should like to know what it would be like in 1987, but I think we have to look at what it is like now so that we can improve these, just as the improvements have been made, as compared to those years. We must be sure that Saskatchewan is a province where senior citizens will be proud to live, where they can have a good life. We have had many commissions, one of them is in action now, which have met with all our caucuses and they have given their suggestions as to what the senior citizens should have. I am sure that we could find many

solutions and better solutions for our nursing home care. The Minister of Social Services (Mr. Rolfes) has said that he hopes that this will be a non-political discussion, that there will be no mud slinging, which I have tried very much to stay away from, that he would basically support the Motion and I found that lately when motions have been presented that what has happened is that, unfortunately, the Government gets up and commends itself, which is fine, but I think I have commended you enough today — Not enough? — oh, you want to commend yourself some more, okay — and then what happens is they adjourn and the Resolution is forgotten. And I would ask this House and the Members in it not to take this route on this Motion because I think it will be the best for the senior citizens.

It has also been mentioned that perhaps some times there has been a mockery in the House and I suggest that this type of situation would be a mockery, to let this Motion die on the Order Paper.

So, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I should like to move this Resolution.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. W.H. STODALKA** (Maple Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I should first of all like to congratulate the Member for Wilkie (Miss Clifford) on the well researched and well prepared presentation. I might add that I agree also very heartily with many of the things that she said and will try not to duplicate too many of the things that were presented by her. But because some of them are really important I will be referring to them during the course of this presentation.

Before I begin, I should like to make a comment or two about Private Members' Day. To me, as a new Member, one of the things that bothers me is the fact that we have been here four weeks and I don't recall any time during the four weeks when we have been able to get any of the resolutions to a vote. It is about one of the longest meetings I have ever attended in my life, in which we never have had a motion come to a vote. I hope that certainly, as the Member for Wilkie indicated, that we shall be able to vote on this Resolution as well as some of the other ones.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — How About Bill 1 and 2?

**MR. STODALKA:** — I said Private Members' Day when I started. I think there is a separate purpose for Bills 1 and 2 on Government Day. Before the Attorney General leaves I would also like to mention, I think he referred this morning to the idea of a family compact. I should just like to advise the Attorney General that during the course of his reference to a family compact being on this particular side of the House, the Member for Wilkie whispered to me "you know", she said "the Minister of Highways (Mr. Kramer) is a relative of mine". So I guess that possibly the family compact must extend to the other side of the House as well. I am sure happy that the younger people are thinking their way into the Liberal Party rather than being born into the NDP. I have heard that line before.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!



**MR. STODALKA:** — The other reference was made to political expediency. Well, personally, I hope that if I ever have to make a decision based on political expediency that I won't stay around too long or that the people of Maple Creek won't send me to this Legislature again. I think, Mr. Speaker, that most of us on this side of the House, and I hope the Members opposite are here representing the people and are more concerned with them rather than what is politically expedient.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STODALKA:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, since my election and during the election period, I became more acquainted with the senior citizens' homes than I ever have before. During the course of the election I had contact with the people within the homes and since then I have not only talked to people within the homes but I have talked to people who are on the boards. What I am going to say today, I hope that it is going to be constructive. I hope I can be positive and any criticisms that I make are certainly not meant to be critical only of this Government because certainly some of the conditions existed before. But I think I would be remiss in my duty if I didn't mention some of the things that I observed.

First of all, coming into these homes one finds most of them are really very attractive. The architectural design is excellent. The physical features within the homes are remarkable and immaculately clean. The employed people within the home appear to be very, very dedicated individuals, all concerned with the patients. The homes have recreational programs designed to please the people within the homes and to try and make life more pleasant for them in an institution that is removed from their home. And they are a tribute to anybody and to all people who have been involved either with establishing the homes or in running the homes since their establishment. There are a few things I observed during the course of my visitations that I should like to make a few comments about.

The Member for Wilkie indicated what the rates were for the home in Macklin. I might mention for the one in Maple Creek the Level I rates are \$320; the Level II rates are \$417 and the Level III rates are \$637. Very costly, indeed. And what bothers a good many people, not only those within the homes, is the fact that some services are received gratis from the Government, while those who have dollars in their pockets have it removed from them during the course of their stay within the home. I know this situation has been existing for a long time but, personally, I just can't see the fairness to the individuals themselves and to the individual's families. It would seem that a father who was wanting to plan his estate probably would be wise in the five or six years before he might be entering one of these homes to distribute his wealth among his children. Now if this wealth was distributed among the children then upon his entry into the home the Province of Saskatchewan would pay his rental fee. But, on the other hand, if the father kept his assets, did not distribute them, and then went into the home, he would of course have to pay his own way to the home and this has a very sad effect. It not only reduces the person's savings very, very quickly, particularly if he is in Level III, but it has an impact upon the family. It is particularly at the Level III (\$637 in this case) that I

think that the Government should act. To me, Level III and Level IV, levels, that are determined by the amount of care the patients have, there is so little difference. It would seem to me that the Government should look at the possibility of implementing Level III into the program sponsored by the Provincial Government. I know that this has been suggested by the Member for Wilkie, as indicated in her presentation. Again, I should just like to reinforce the idea that the Government consider this particular program.

Another area which I referred to in the Throne Speech, and which was not mentioned today, is the designation of levels. There is a problem in designating people particularly from Level III to Level IV. When the person needs an extreme amount of care, then of course the committee or someone must make a decision as to whether or not they should be advanced to Level IV and this is where the problem is. First of all, the guests themselves, may have to be removed from their home area. The board receives pressures from the children of the parents hoping that they will keep them in Level III so that they can stay close to their homes. The doctor has pressure on him from the family hoping that he will not label them as a Level IV patient or guest. The staff, themselves, because the patients remain within the institution are forced to extend care above and beyond the hours assigned for that particular level. This has the ultimate effect that a good deal of the staff have to spend a large portion of their day taking care of the physical needs of the patient. When you talk to some of these people they say they would like to have someone they could talk to. Somebody to help them write a letter; somebody just to be a friend to them. The staff tells me that they are overburdened to the extent that I wonder if the Minister could not possibly look at the matter again. I think by moving Level III guests into Level IV institutions we could reduce the workload in some of these homes.

I also was affected during a visit to one of the guests in the home when he indicated that some of these transfers probably should have been made. He said there was a real psychological effect on him as a person. He said he was being surrounded by some patients who just kept deteriorating and moving closer to death. It was not the type of situation which he particularly relished. And again, by having these people within the homes I think that we should try and create a situation which is as close as possible to the outside. This cannot be accomplished if we are going to have the extremely ill people within the building and observable to the patients. They look ahead and visualize the deterioration that is probably going to take place in their own case. This again is another reason as to why the Level III patients should be moved into other institutions. The argument is that many of the Level III people should be redesignated. At least this is what I have been told by people who have been working within the homes.

Another area in which I think action should be taken, and there are a few programs now, is in the Assisted Rentalship programs where people can secure rental accommodation. These programs are excellent as they supply rent at a reduced price for those who cannot afford it and a home environment, but in which they can live themselves as they have most of their lives.

One other area I think should be considered is some of the programs that take place in some of the communities. I know

there is a certain amount of aid now. The best situation I feel is if people can live within their own home and within their own community. This is based on my observations and what I know about it. I don't say that I know everything about it, but it does seem to me that we should find some programs where we could give people aid in their own homes. Some communities have started Meals-on-wheels programs, where they deliver meals to the residents at least one day of the week. This I think is a very excellent program. It seems to me that an enquiry, such as the Resolution calls for, could look into some of the possibilities and some of the programs that might be implemented, some of the things that the Government might do to help these people remain in their own homes. I am sure a good number of these people who rebel at the idea of being placed in an institution would much rather stay in their own homes. I think this is one of the areas the enquiry might look into. In this area we should devise and find programs suitable to help people stay within their own homes and within their own communities.

In summary, I should like to say I think many good things have been done by many levels of government, be they provincial, national or local. There are many things that still can be done. I should like to support the Member for Wilkie (Miss Clifford) and I will be voting in favor of her Resolution calling for an enquiry, with the hope that we can improve some of the things that our senior citizens wish to have and need.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. H.H. ROLFES** (Minister of Social Services): — Mr. Speaker, in addressing myself to the Resolution that is before us, I want to say at the outset that I do not intend to oppose the Resolution in principle, although there are a few things in the Resolution that I cannot approve of.

I also like the manner in which the mover and the seconder addressed themselves to the Resolution and I hope that basically I shall do the same.

I must object, however, and I think if the mover examined the Resolution she would agree with me, that the word "unreasonable" rates leave a connotation in one's mind — recognizing that rates are set by the local people themselves who are in control of the institution — leaves in my mind the impression that somehow these people are irresponsible in setting the rates, 'unreasonable' rates. Now it might be necessary to have these rates, I don't think she intended to mean that. I should like to say at the outset that I think that most of the boards who are running our nursing homes in Levels I, II and III are very responsible people. They have been faced with escalating costs due to inflation and many, many other reasons as I hope to outline very briefly. I don't think I would like to leave the impression that these people are committing their guests to unreasonable rates.

Mr. Speaker, if we go back four years ago, to 1971, we find actions have been taken by this Government to help alleviate the problems of senior citizens. I have made this speech before in this House and I should like to say it again, just for the record. Insofar as assistance given, in 1971 when we took over the office of government the net, the net assistance to senior citizens was about \$500,000. Approximately \$5,500,000 minus the deterrent

fees of \$4,500,000, the net assistance to senior citizens was about \$500,000. This year alone it will reach well over \$50 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROLFES:** — We made a commitment in 1971 to our senior citizens. We recognized that they should not have to suffer in their old age. We wanted to make amenities available to them which they rightly deserved for building this country that we have the privilege to live in.

Let me very quickly, Mr. Speaker, outline what I feel are some of the problems that we face today in Saskatchewan because of the escalating costs of nursing homes. One of the main reasons I believe is the high economic activity that we have in the province. There is absolutely no doubt about it. Very often we have one tender for nursing homes as you have for schools, and public buildings. I have talked to some of the construction people and some of the people from Saskatoon, they tell me that that is probably one of the problems that we have to face here in Saskatchewan. As the economic activity decreases I think we can expect that the costs per square foot for the construction of nursing homes will also go down, because you are going to have more tenders and they will be more competitive. I think these costs will go down.

Construction costs no doubt have a great bearing. But I don't want to leave the impression that the construction industry has been ripping off, because their costs have certainly increased. Materials have increased in price, wages have increased and I think this has to be recognized. But these people also recognize that because of the economic activity there are not enough people available to tender for these homes.

The other factor that we must keep in mind is interest rates, because some of the nursing homes have to pay 10, 11 and sometimes 12 per cent on the debt that is owing on the nursing home, naturally their costs to the guests will have to increase. Somehow, either the Provincial Government but more apt the Federal Government should subsidize the interest rate for nursing homes. Nursing home people should be able to go to CMHC and get a loan from them, say at 8 per cent. This would drastically cut the fee that the guests would have to pay.

Since 1971, there have been extensive increases and expansions of care that the people in nursing homes receive. I think the Member for Maple Creek alluded to this. We have today, physiotherapists in many of our Level III homes, we have speech therapists coming in, we have recreational facilities, we have personnel, professional personnel in the area of recreation, spending time in the nursing homes.

I was talking to a nursing home operator yesterday, who was telling me that they have found some of their senior citizens are back in the community, their rehabilitation program is taking effect and these people in Level III have moved back into the community. That's the kind of thing that you're suggesting and I certainly go along with that. I think we need more of that. I should like to see before the people go into the institution that we provide many more activities in the community. I have said this when I took over as Minister of Social Services,

I said it in the Throne Speech and I will say it again. I think what we need is increased homemaker services, increased and improved meals-on-wheels, improved local public transportation, assistance so that young people can go out into the community and help senior citizens, maybe just to shovel the snow off the sidewalk, which is a tremendous help to them.

I should like to see, for example, expanded senior citizen activity centres of which we have a vast number today. I should also like to see an expansion of the Aid to Independent Living, which has helped many senior citizens. I think these are the kinds of programs that we need. Let me say this, with the homes that have been approved and those that are under construction, we will approximately have 7,700 homes of Level I, II and III care. In my opinion there is a very dangerous trend to institutionalization of senior citizens. I should like to see that this trend be reversed.

**MISS CLIFFORD:** — Do something . . .

**MR. ROLFES:** — If the Hon. Member just lets me proceed, I think she will get her answer very shortly.

I think we have found some common ground as the Member for Wilkie has said. I don't think we disagree. However, I think we have to be judged in what we are doing. I think in that particular regard, this Government, and I commend ourselves for it, cannot be criticized too severely for the things that we have done for senior citizens. I appreciate that the two Members today did not criticize us for the things that we have done.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are many other things I should like to discuss that the Members have spoken about today. But before I ask for adjournment of this Resolution, let me say that like the former Ministers, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Snyder, I am very concerned about the escalating costs. They were examining how they could look into not only the construction costs but the operating costs. I am not sure whether they were also considering, but certainly I am considering alternatives to institutionalization. When I talk to senior citizens, and I spent at least three or four hours during the Christmas break at Sherbrooke Nursing Home, talking to some of the senior citizens, I get the distinct impression that if many of those people had their choice they would like to be back in the community.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to say that since we have had a look at this, I hope that in the near future possibly within a week's time, I can make a public statement either in this House or through a Press release, that a study will be undertaken. Basically, to look at the escalating costs of nursing homes, but also the operating costs as well, and other alternatives to institutionalized care. With that, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — I wonder if the Minister would be good enough to answer a question before he takes his seat. The Member left the impression, and I am sure the Minister can correct that impression, or if indeed after only having been appointed on November 5, he doesn't know, he might check and find out. Is the Minister suggesting that you are not aware of the Central

Mortgage and Housing Federal Program which subsidizes, heavily subsidizes nursing homes and special care programs? I heard you say exactly, there should be a program for limited or lower interest rates and there is such a program. The Balcarres Parkland Lodge, for instance, that just went up was by some millions of dollars at a very much lower interest rates. I hope that the Minister hadn't by inadvertence left that impression.

**MR. ROLFES:** — Mr. Speaker, if I left that impression, it was certainly not my intention. What I am suggesting is that the interest rates are still too high, even the subsidized interest rates that we receive from CMHC. I still think they are too high. Maybe there should be a further subsidy in the area of interest rates for nursing homes. There are other areas that I should also like to see. I hope I did not leave the impression that I was not aware that there is a subsidy at the present time. Certainly I am aware of that.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A supplementary question.

**MR. ROLFES:** — Strictly a question?

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Yes. The subsidies tend to be at a rate of 4 or 5 per cent beneath the going rate, Parkland for instance is 8 per cent, at a time when we are dealing with 12 and 12.5 per cent rates. I am wondering if the Minister thinks that 4 per cent and 4.5 per cent isn't a big enough subsidy, whether you are indeed suggesting that CMHC should just lend the money at virtually no interest rate? Parkland is going up now at 8 per cent.

**MR. ROLFES:** — Mr. Speaker, I think the Member is exaggerating that, it's 4 or 5 per cent. It is 4 or 5 per cent to individuals. Certainly institutions generally do not pay 12 or 13 per cent. What I am simply suggesting is that if they are paying 8 per cent, then 8 per cent is not low enough in my opinion. Possibly a 6 per cent interest rate would be very reasonable. I am not saying that it should be at 1 or 2 per cent or virtually for nothing. I say 6 per cent would be very reasonable.

Debate adjourned.

## **ADJOURNED DEBATES**

### **MOTIONS FOR RETURNS**

#### **RETURN NO. 21**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. R.H. Bailey (Rosetown-Elrose) for Return No. 21 showing:

- (1) The number of principals appointed to the Community Colleges that were previously
  - (a) former NDP MLAs or MPs;
  - (b) defeated NDP candidates, federal or provincial;
  - (c) candidates who contested a nomination for the NDP provincial or federal;
  - (d) known campaign workers for the NDP provincial or federal, or both.
- (2) The annual salary for each.

**MR. R.L. COLLVER** (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I believe this is the fifth, sixth or seventh time that that particular item is been stood by the Attorney General and I am wondering in the light of his previous comments in this House, as to the number of times that he was going to stand adjourned debates, that on items number 2, and the next one following, item number 3, how much longer are these going to stand on the Order Paper and not allow anyone else to speak on them?

**MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT** (Regina Wascana): — Is that a non-debatable motion, Mr. Speaker. It would seem to me that it is not in the class of an adjournment matter.

Motion that the Return 'stand' agreed to on the following recorded division:

#### YEAS — 27

Blakeney	Faris	Rolfes
Pepper	Robbins	Cowley
Thibault	MacMurchy	Tchorzewski
Bowerman	Mostoway	Skoberg
Smishek	Larson	Vickar
Romanow	Whelan	Koskie
Snyder	MacAuley	Johnson
Byers	Feschuk	Thompson
Kramer	Shillington	Banda

#### NAYS — 17

Stodalka	Edwards	Collver
Wiebe	Clifford	Larter
Malone	Anderson	Bailey
MacDonald	Merchant	Ham
Penner	McMillan	Katzman
Cameron	Thatcher	

#### RETURN NO. 22

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. R.A. Larter (Estevan) for Return No. 22 showing:

The number of NDP candidates from June 11, 1975 Saskatchewan Provincial Election who now work for the Saskatchewan Government or a Saskatchewan Crown Corporation; (a) their names and position held; (b) the positions advertised; (c) the salary that accompanies each position.

**HON. R. ROMANOW** (Attorney General): — Stand.

**MR. COLLVER**: — Mr. Speaker, this item has been stood five times, the same thing that has applied to the previous Motion should apply

to this one and I call for question on whether or not it should stand. Unless the Attorney General is prepared to allow someone else to take this in his name so that we could get an opportunity to reply to his diatribe of the initial reaction of this Bill.

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY** (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) would elucidate that Point of Order again.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Is Mr. Speaker asking me to clarify that Point of Order?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — No, as first of all I don't think you had a Point of Order, so therefore I will not ask you to clarify it. I may suggest to the Chamber that the count on the last vote was 27 to 17.

Motion that the Return stand agreed to on the following recorded division:

**YEAS — 29**

Blakeney	Baker	Rolfes
Pepper	Faris	Cowley
Thibault	Robbins	Tchorzewski
Bowerman	MacMurchy	Skoberg
Smishek	Mostoway	Vickar
Romanow	Larson	Koskie
Messer	Whelan	Johnson
Snyder	MacAuley	Thompson
Byers	Feschuk	Banda
Kramer	Shillington	

**NAYS — 17**

Stodalka	Edwards	Collver
Wiebe	Clifford	Larter
Malone	Anderson	Bailey
MacDonald	Merchant	Ham
Penner	McMillan	Katzman
Cameron	Thatcher	

**RETURN NO. 20**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. C.P. MacDonald (Indian Head-Wolseley) for Return No. 20 showing:

- (a) A copy of any feasibility study relating to the cost of construction of any new potash mine by the Saskatchewan Potash Corporation. (b) The name of the organization that carried out those studies. (c) The cost of carrying out those studies.

He said: — I am delighted to see that the Attorney General has not stood this one. I am not going to pursue the matter any more, but I should like to say very sincerely that I hope all



Members will support this Resolution because it has some very real importance.

**HON. E.L. COWLEY** (Provincial Secretary): — Mr. Speaker, I don't propose to spend a great deal of time on this particular Motion.

I want to say, first of all, Mr. Speaker, that there are three parts to the Motion. The first part deals with the tabling of a study related to the cost of construction of any new potash mines by the Saskatchewan Potash Corporation. I think, first of all it is incorrect as it is the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, but I won't deal at any length with the details, Mr. Speaker.

"The name of the organization that carried out those studies and the cost of carrying out those studies". Mr. Speaker, with respect to the last item, the cost of carrying out those studies, I am prepared to provide in the Crown Corporations Committee, the cost to date of carrying out the studies with respect to a feasibility report on any new potash mine that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan may be considering.

With respect to the name of the organization that carried out these studies, and the organizations that were associated with it, I am at that time prepared to provide that information as well.

With respect to the copy of the feasibility study, Mr. Speaker, I think one needs to recognize, first of all, that the feasibility study contains several separate studies which were incorporated into one study. Part of the information deals with marketing; part of it is engineering; part of it deals also with the financial aspects of any proposed potash mine that might be constructed by the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

I think that Members would recognize that the detailed marketing strategy in the hands of one's competitors or people who might be dealing one way or another with you over the next short while, would not be in the public interest.

With respect to the report which contains the marketing studies, plus the projected markets and the project costs, plus projected costs of production from a particular mine. This mine would have been and may be, when constructed, the largest potash mine in the world, the unit costs of production would be relatively low compared to other potash mines of a smaller size and of an older design.

Mr. Speaker, the policy of this Government is not to table a feasibility study on a project which has not become government policy or the policy of the particular Crown Corporation. When and if the Government decides to proceed with a new potash mine, under the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, then I think more properly the question of whether or not such a study should be tabled can be dealt with in much more precise manner. I think to table a study which has not been acted upon by the Government, which contains information which goes beyond just the question of that particular potash mine, which would have relevance in terms of any valuation with respect to any potash mine or mines that might be acquired by the Government of Saskatchewan or the

Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, would not be in the public interest and, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Members to defeat this Motion.

**MR. MacDONALD:** — Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised that the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan would deny information to this House and deny information to the people of Saskatchewan about the projected costs of a new potash mine in the Province of Saskatchewan carried out by the Crown Corporation and the Government of Saskatchewan, and I am not surprised, Mr. Speaker. Then, and he uses this as his argument that it is not related and it would be of no value until the Government policy decision is made to go forward with that new mine.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that that feasibility study has never been more relative because I suggest to the people of Saskatchewan that it was a feasibility study that caused the NDP Government of the Province of Saskatchewan to reverse its decision and reverse its policy . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MacDONALD:** — . . . and is the reason that now we have Bill 1 and Bill 2 before this Legislature. They turned around and looked at what it would cost to build a mine themselves and they found that the costs were so astronomical, they found that the technical difficulties were so extreme, that the expertise required was not available, but most important, that the costs were so high that it became impractical and it brought about a complete reversal of decision in policy in the Government of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MacDONALD:** — I suggest now, Mr. Speaker, that by denying that information to the people of Saskatchewan he is denying a very fundamental right of this House and of these Members and of the people of Saskatchewan to evaluate Bill 1 and Bill 2, the effects of those Bills on individual corporations and companies that have come into Saskatchewan and invested their money to develop our resources.

I suggest also that if that feasibility study carries on what I think it implies, and from what I understand from people who were involved from the private sector of the potash industry, that that cost of that proposed new mine would frighten the taxpayers of the Province of Saskatchewan and the NDP didn't dare go ahead with it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MacDONALD:** — That is the reason, Mr. Speaker, that this information is being denied to this House. That is why this information is being denied to the taxpayers or the people of Saskatchewan and that is why he is refusing to present that feasibility study. I suggest also that when we evaluate Bill 1 and Bill 2 and the people of Saskatchewan come to evaluate the wisdom of the decision of the NDP and the justice with which they treat the private individual, a company or a corporation that has come to our province, that that particular feasibility

study would embarrass the Government and embarrass their political associations. I suggest there is no way humanly possible that the Minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Potash Corporation would dare present that feasibility study to this House.

If there is any information that is right now relative to the biggest debate that has ever gone on in the Province of Saskatchewan, it is that particular feasibility study.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MacDONALD:** — Mr. Speaker, I suggest also that that denial of information is an insult to the people of Saskatchewan and an insult to the private sector who have come in here and invested in this province so many of their dollars. I suggest it will have an impact on future private investment coming into this province.

I am going to ask every Member of this House, including the Government Members, to vote against the recommendation of the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. I don't know one single Resolution that has been put on this paper since this House was called November 12th that has more relevance, more significance or more implications. If the Government of Saskatchewan is not ashamed, if they are not embarrassed, if they have nothing to hide, then there is absolutely no reason why that particular feasibility study should not be presented in this House.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MacDONALD:** — I remember going back to the debate on the Athabasca Pulp Mill and the Prince Albert Pulp Mill and the reams of information that were demanded by that political party when they were in Opposition and the amount that was presented that was made available to all the people of Saskatchewan to evaluate the investment of \$1.5 million, \$1.5 million for 30 per cent of that pulp mill, which has turned out to be one of the greatest investments that this province ever had. Now we are being asked to invest perhaps one billion and upwards. I suggest to you if that feasibility study were made available it would demonstrate that the real cost of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and the taking over of the 10 potash mines in this province could be as high as two billion, if fair market value was paid for those particular mines.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a very, very serious denial of information, it shows a secretiveness, trying to hide something the refusal to disclose legitimate information. I think it is a tragedy. I ask every Member to vote for this Resolution and against the recommendation of the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation.

# **YEAS — 17**

Stodalka  
Wiebe  
Malone  
MacDonald  
Penner  
Cameron

Edwards  
Clifford  
Anderson  
Merchant  
McMillan  
Thatcher

Collver  
Larter  
Bailey  
Ham  
Katzman

**NAYS — 28**

Pepper  
Thibault  
Bowerman  
Smishek  
Romanow  
Messer  
Snyder  
Byers  
Kramer  
Baker

Faris  
Robbins  
MacMurchy  
Mostoway  
Larson  
Whelan  
MacAuley  
Feschuk  
Shillington

Rolfes  
Cowley  
Tchorzewski  
Skoberg  
Vickar  
Koskie  
Johnson  
Thompson  
Banda

**ADJOURNED DEBATES**

**RESOLUTION NO. 1 — NATIONAL STABILIZATION PROGRAMS TO GUARANTEE  
REALISTIC PRICES FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. Banda:

That this Assembly requests the Federal Government to recognize the inadequacy of its present stabilization program and move to amend Bill C-50 in order to develop long-term national stabilization programs, based on Federal-Provincial producer-co-operation, that guarantee realistic prices based on full costs of production for all agricultural products, with first priority being given to programs for key commodities such as hogs and calves, and that the amendments also prevent proliferation of provincial programs that distort natural production advantages.

**MR. A.N. McMILLAN** (Kindersley): — The Resolution before the House, is an indication of the kind of attitude that this Provincial Government has displayed in the past few years, over the development of agricultural production in Saskatchewan. I think it shows to some degree a significant change at least in the posture that this Provincial Government now takes or has taken since the introduction of its Hog Marketing Commission, I believe in 1973.

This Resolution calls in effect for a program of state control of agricultural production. I think that is the intent of the Government. The Government opposite is well aware that such a program would be politically unpopular in Saskatchewan and for that reason as is so often the case when they would like to see some unpopular medicine forced down the throats of Saskatchewan voters in particular, they call on the Federal Government to do it. Here they call on the Federal Government to increase its stabilization program in fact to guarantee cost of production. It refers specifically here in the clause that I am interested in, hog and cattle production.

Now I am not sure many of the Members opposite really understand what that request means. In effect, what you are saying is that you would like to guarantee producers in Saskatchewan at least a profit on their production of hogs and cattle and certainly you may, I suspect, feel the same thing about grain production. You want to guarantee these producers a profit and in so doing you have to be aware that there are certain circumstances that come about as a result of that.

For example, if you guarantee me a profit as a cattle producer, which on some days I wish you would, as well you are going to have to curtail production. Because if I am guaranteed a profit, I am going to go out and buy all the 'bloody' cattle I can, I am going to turn all of my grain land into cattle production because I am guaranteed a profit. I am guaranteed of meeting my costs of production, regardless of how high they are. I am going to have the incentive to perhaps quadruple my cow-calf operation. It stands to reason that that would be an unreasonable thing for anyone to do in light of national cattle markets.

So on the other hand, the Government has to turn around and curtail production or put production quotas on. The only method I know of doing that is through production quotas, telling people (1) if they can be involved in the cattle or hog production business, (2) how many cattle or hogs they can raise. That program and a program like that has been introduced in Saskatchewan by this very same Government in the field of hog production. Fortunately to date because of the national demand for pork there has been no need for this Government to have any reason to curtail hog production. They did however give themselves the power to do so. They did it without producer consent. These people I am sure are aware of the lack of good feeling in the hog industry when that program was introduced. Here in one hand they suggest that this time the Federal Government should implement the program which would have the same results. A program which would require that the Government take unto itself the power to tell people if they could be involved in production and how many cattle or hogs they could produce, etc., the same powers that this Provincial Government took unto itself through Natural Products Marketing Act, under which Act they instituted the Hog Marketing Commission.

I think you must be well aware of the unpopular feeling at least in the rural areas about such a program. You know how the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association feels about it, that Association that represents the vast majority of people who earn their primary source of income through the production of cattle. You know how that segment of the voting populace feels about it and I think probably it is politically wise for you to suggest that the Federal Government should step in and implement that program.

I think you learned your lesson in the last election as far as the Hog Marketing Commission went. That, in conjunction with your Land Bank program, proved to have some pretty disastrous results to your popular vote in the rural areas. I am not surprised, as I say, to see you suggest in this Resolution that it be the Federal Government that make the move to guarantee the cost of production to farmers and, therefore, the onus would certainly be on their shoulders to curtail production in order to make it a workable system.

I wish however, that you did have the courage to call it what it really is. Have the courage to stand up in this House and tell the people in this province the kind of method you think should be used to control agricultural production in Saskatchewan; stand up and say to the Press that you believe the people in Saskatchewan should fall under a state controlled production of agriculture system. That is in fact what you believe. I would think this Resolution is sort of an indirect

method of approaching or at least achieving some of those goals.

I would be interested in hearing some of the other Members on the other side of the House at some later time standing up and stating their position as far as meeting the cost of production goals and what sort of repercussions that has on agriculture production in Saskatchewan and what your Provincial Government is prepared to do to alleviate some of the hardships that a program like that would bring about on this population.

For those reasons I am opposed to the Resolution as it stands in this form. I have referred specifically to hog and cattle production and I am sure some of my seatmates are interested in referring to the effect such a program will have and in some respects is having in the development of grain production. I am opposed to the Resolution, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. W.C. THATCHER** (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I think that I can speak with the entire backing of the western Canadian cattle industry and I think the National cattle industry when I say that cattlemen, legitimate cattlemen, have had quite enough of government intervention.

I think that we have spoken out against the dangers of government intervention long before it was popular to do so, long before the situation reached the danger point. I am sure many Members will recall in the late 1960s the very bitter national debate that took place over the Federal Government's Bill C-176. Cattlemen at that time, regardless of their political party, rallied very strongly behind their national organization, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association and they fought the Federal Government, regardless of what their partisan politics may have been.

It was a very bitter battle. I think when the smoke cleared I would be very optimistic if I said we won it, I like to think we got a draw out of it. We didn't do as well as we wanted to. We were very fearful then of the ramifications of Bill C-176. When it was all over, there was one thing which we could say about the Federal Government at that time. Unlike certain provincial governments in existence today, at least when an opposition was expressed to that government, we at least got a sufficient hearing. We didn't get all that we wanted, we got some of what we wanted, at least we were listened to. This is a lesson that this Government across the way would be very wise perhaps to adopt.

Mr. Speaker, one reason that we are most suspicious of government intervention is because it is so difficult to predict what is going to happen in the cattle market, or for that matter any livestock market. In many ways the livestock marketing system is much more complex than even the grain marketing system. In fact, it is so complex that at many times I really fear that very few people truly understand it. I don't pretend to. It's a very intricate complex mechanism which can be tipped one way or the other by just the slightest whisker. I'm sure that, well, I was going to say I'm sure friends opposite would remember, but seeing not many of them know anything about agriculture, I'm sure they wouldn't. But in the early 1970s we had experts, university types, civil service types, and they were telling the cattle

producers, the cattle market is good until 1980. Produce all that you can. There is a shortage of beef, and no matter what you produce there are too many people so that the demand will always exceed the supply well past the year 1980.

Now there's a brilliant statement right there. We are talking about cattle, and he talks about the LIFT program. Now I suggest to you, that is typical of the knowledge of agriculture that we have on that side. Probably the same kind of knowledge that the Minister displays in his own Department, which is maybe why he has such a mess up there.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, what happened when we had all these experts, all over the world, telling us about this shortage of beef where demand would exceed supply well past the 1980s. I think even our friends across the way may be aware of what has happened in the livestock industry in the past couple of years. The cattle business has collapsed. Granted, at this time there is some light at the end of the tunnel, but it is still a very difficult situation.

For those of you who do not know very much about agriculture, I should like to suggest you consider the problem. You've got 1976 overhead with about 1968 prices. I just wonder how many businesses in other sectors would stay in business with such a situation.

Basically what happened, Mr. Speaker, was these predictions about this great demand for beef cattle was that all over the world breeders of cattle, instead of putting the normal supply of females onto the market, put them back into the breeding herds. They increased the number of their breeding herds and these females simply did not go on to market to be used as disposable beef. Our experts of the day misinterpreted this move to be one of a beef shortage. But, instead, all over the world females, young females which normally would have gone in for the normal finishing process and eventually found their way to a packing plant, they found their way back into the breeding herd. This happened all over the world. Now it was very easy for these people to make a mistake because actually nobody in the world really knew what was going on. Then came 1974 and this flood of females that had been put back into the breeding herds when they should have already gone to the packing plants, they all had calves and this gush of calves suddenly just flooded onto the market and we have had an oversupply ever since, one that we just don't know what to do about. This oversupply was not just in Canada, or the United States, it was in Uruguay, Argentina, it was in the Common Market countries, it was even in Great Britain.

The point of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, the learned experts whom we had, couldn't predict this. They were predicting up into 1980 about this great demand for beef, but they couldn't see what was actually happening. I don't really fault them for that because no one else did. But the point of the matter is, if they couldn't predict that one, how can we have faith in them to make any long-lasting predictions in terms of any stabilization programs?

I think the history of the cattle business in the past three to four years has really been rather interesting and it has been a real example of what can happen when government does intervene in a business that can only operate through some

semblance of a free market system.

Most cattlemen will recall the years of 1972 and 1973 when we had record prices for our calves, record prices on fat cattle, and as the price began to rise a phenomenon happened down in the United States that we all scoffed at, those of us in the business. A group of housewives got together and they had a beef boycott. And those of us in the business we laughed at it. It was kind of funny. These few housewives (I think it started in Los Angeles) and it spread into the midwest and finally into New York City. They had a beef boycott down there for about a week. Mind you we kept on laughing as the price continued to rise on fat cattle and the boycott got a little more publicity and the price continued to rise. It was really quite humorous to us watching these poor housewives who don't know anything about the cattle business, don't know anything about the economic system operating down there, and they finally gave up. Except, about six months later, we weren't laughing. It was incredible the effect that these housewives really did have on the cattle market, because in a country of 250 million people such as the United States, it did show a lot of people exactly how well they can get along without eating beef. The significant effect that this change in eating habits had on the United States dropped the per capita consumption of beef down there 20 pounds. Granted, while the boycott was going on we had a laugh, but it was a very short-lived one. Anyway, as the price continued to rise in the United States that great right wing free-enterpriser of Watergate fame, President Nixon, decided to freeze the price of beef. This hit like a thunderbolt through the industry. Granted he had frozen it at a very high price, but as he was freezing it he did not freeze the price of imported beef, which in our case on the Canadian side, was our export beef into the United States. American cattlemen reacted in such a manner to hold fat cattle off the market. But because the price of Canadian cattle coming in was not under this freeze the price for Canadian beef going to the United States just continued to rise.

Those days were absolutely unreal in Canada. You could put together a liner load of cattle, any kind of cattle, any kind of junk, anything, and turn a profit of \$4,000 or \$5,000 and you didn't have to be very smart. All you had to do was to have enough credit, put together a liner load, hire a truck, send it to Sioux City or Bismarck and there was anywhere from \$4,000 to \$5,000, the easiest you could ever make. Those were quite the days — I believe in 1973. But then, the price freeze came off later on that fall. That flood of cattle that had been held off the market for months in the United States suddenly gushed in with the resulting collapse of the cattle business here in Canada.

About the same time another controversy came up, that again our Government people got into, or so-called experts, and this was the federal government over the DES farce as we like to term it in the cattle business, diethylstilbestrol. And it doesn't sound all that serious. What had happened in the DES was that it's a hormone which is fed to facilitate the rate of gain in the amount of time to finish an animal. Some researcher in the United States fed a dosage to some white laboratory rats of one thousand times what could possibly be obtained by eating beef. That is, he fed this same amount one thousand times that amount to the rats that any human could possibly get by eating beef. Out of that there was a slight positive reaction in terms



of a cancer reaction. It wasn't a significant one, but it was close enough to being positive that immediately the cries went up to ban DES. A debate went on in the United States as to whether or not it should be banned.

Canada, in the meantime, because of this great flood of American beef that was then proceeding to come into Canada, was looking for an excuse to close the border to American cattle coming in. The Minister of the day seized on the opportunity to tell Americans that unless you can guarantee us that the cattle coming in are free of DES we are simply not going to allow them in. Rather than saying outright, we don't want your cattle, or you're sending them in in abnormal amounts, we have to negotiate this thing. It's one thing to send in the normal amount, but to send in the amount that you're sending in now is ridiculous. Rather than facing them eyeball to eyeball, he had to go about it through the DES business. Well, this jockeying went back and forth between the Americans and Canadians for about six months and the Americans finally had enough and the Americans closed the border to Canadian cattle.

Now the significance of this I think should be obvious. When you are in a surplus position I think it makes sense to be locked into a market of 250 million any day than to be locked into a market of 22 million. Basically, what happened the business collapsed up here in Canada. The Americans, after closing the border (as Americans so often have a tendency to do) the Americans went to work and proceeded to get down to the business of solving the problem. And, as a Canadian cattleman, I must take my hat off to the Americans who have faced their problem, their situation of surplus beef, far more effectively, far more efficiently than we in Canada. The Americans have not put in any subsidies, they have not put in any cash advances, they have done none of this. And yet there is no question that the Americans are working their way out of the beef cattle surplus at a far quicker rate than what we are in Canada.

I suppose, Mr. Speaker, it brings up a question pertaining to the cattle business, or for that matter any other commodity, the law of supply and demand. I have heard it said that it's dead. I heard the Premier call it the "so-called" law of supply and demand. I have heard Roy Atkinson, the president of the NFU say many times that the law of supply and demand is dead. Well they may be partially right. Although being in a business that does depend very significantly on what the demand is for the product, I have always found that I have always received more dollars for my product when I've had many feeders than when I have had one or two. I think it is safe to say that when you talk about the law of supply and demand it doesn't matter what product you are talking about, how many government controls are on it, how much artificial pricing goes on, somewhere along the line (and it may be well down the line) somebody has to want to buy that thing before you are going to sell it. We have been through this in the grain business. When there is a shortage of grain we don't have too much trouble shipping it out from this country. And when everybody has got all the grain that they need, I don't care how good a seller you've got or how efficient your selling mediums may be, you're going to have trouble selling it. The law of supply and demand may be dead. I sincerely hope it isn't but there is no question about it, if somebody doesn't want to buy your product you've got trouble.

Now if that means that the law of supply and demand is dead, well so be it.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, getting back into the current state of the cattle business, we have farm organizations such as the National Farmers' Union, which are calling for such bureaucratic agencies, what I believe they term a national meat authority. Frankly, I'm not even sure that Mr. Atkinson or his group really even know what they are calling for. They have a name for it, they call it the National Meat Authority. I really wonder if they know what it is supposed to do or how it is going to be run. Naturally I would assume that they would expect the National Farmers' Union to have quite a bit to say about this national meat authority of theirs. Of course they have so many cattlemen in their organization. I was amused in my own constituency of Thunder Creek to have the privilege of driving by when one of their tractor demonstrations was on down the line on Number One highway. I sold a lot of cattle out in that country and I think at one time or another I have met pretty well every cattleman who operates in that area at one time or another. I didn't see one single person that I could put a name to. Most of them weren't the type that would come to a Liberal political meeting but they sure weren't the type that would come to any cattle sales. You don't see them at feeder sales, you don't see them at bull sales. As cattlemen they were as phoney as three dollar bills. Here they were. They were driving the tractor, they want government controls, they want a National Meat Authority. I suggest that the protest on National Meat Authority is probably as phoney as their president whose only claim to fame is his activities or in his lifetime has been to con a group of farmers into a big paying job. He never could run a farm.

So what are the solutions to the current problem in the cattle industry? Mr. Speaker, I wish I could stand up here and list them off to you. I frankly don't know. Unquestionably, on a short-term basis for the cattlemen, the idea of being subsidized in one form or another for the produce, has to look good. Because cattlemen are in trouble, there is no question about that. In fact, the only thing that has kept most of them going has been the appreciation of their land values because they have been able to maintain their bank credit mainly because the evaluation of their land has increased and consequently their net worth has really not changed all that significantly. Also, the evaluation of the machinery that they may own has increased and it solely, strange as it may sound, it has solely been the inflation of these two commodities that has kept them going. But as far as the basic solution to the problems that we may have in the cattle industry I am afraid there is only one. We have to eat our way out of the problem.

Now if we examine what the approach of this Government has taken, it's most significant one has been on cash advances. I respect the Government's intention on these cash advances. I would also respectfully say to them, I think the net effect of them has been zero. I don't think you have really helped anyone, I don't think you have really hurt anyone. Basically, I think in many cases the cash advances have been taken to the maximum and I think probably they have been placed on term deposit and ten per cent I suppose is worth \$600.

I'd suggest to you that any operator who is in the business now and \$600 is going to determine whether he's going to hold his calves over for that winter or sell them, if \$600 is going to make that decision for him, he is beyond help at this point long before he took out that loan.

Unfortunately there is no other way around it. These cattle simply have to be consumed. As we move into the stabilization programs, what exactly are you going to stabilize? Are you going to stabilize overproduction, because as my seatmate the Member for Kindersley (Mr. McMillan) indicated, unless there is a control put on this you will see these cattle double, triple, knowing full well that they are locked into a profit. We are not talking about a commodity like wheat that you put into a granary and that you can store it there as long as you have to, or put it in a terminal or whatever the case may be. We're talking about something that must be slaughtered, put into a cooler, and must be consumed very shortly afterwards. Granted you can freeze it for a time, but I'm sure any of you could ask your wives about how long you can freeze beef. I think they would tell you that you are very limited on how long you can do this.

So what in effect are we doing? If you stabilize it now, if you stabilize the price so that he has a profit, the producer of that commodity, whether it's cattle or hogs, he has no incentive to respond to market conditions. In essence, what I am saying then, that if the producer feels that the price is going to drop down the road, he has no incentive to market his cattle, he has no incentive to cut down the size of his cow herd, because he knows he has a locked in profit.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would have to suggest to you that stabilization is not the answer to a perishable product such as beef or hogs.

As far as the future outlook for the businesses is concerned, left as it is on some semblance of a free market system, there does appear to be some light at the end of the tunnel. Packing plants are operating at full capacity right now. But the interesting part of it is that 70 per cent of that kill is cows. These are what have to be killed, the cows, the two for one basis.

It is for this reason that the hog business came back. If you recall two or three years ago when we had real problems in the hog business, the number of sows that went through the packing plants. As the sows were slaughtered, 12, 13, 14 went along with them. Well in the cattle business it takes a little bit longer, it's a two for one basis. Nonetheless they are very slowly going.

Mr. Speaker, I see it is now 5:30. I'd like to call it 5:30.

The Assembly recessed from 5:30 o'clock p.m. until 7:00 o'clock p.m.

**MR. W.C. THATCHER** (Thunder Creek): — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's an honor to stand up in the House this time of evening with . . . well, I'm glad to see the Attorney General came in. You know all the heavy weights whom I was facing up until a moment ago, it's certainly very frightening to a rookie. I note the Minister of Agriculture isn't in his chair. I suppose he's down mingling with the delegates to the Palliser Wheat Growers' convention.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THATCHER:** — My, my, my. You fellows are

rough on a rookie, goodness sakes. You know the pressure that it takes for one to stand up here and face that barrage from the heavy weights across there, you just have no idea of the pressures you can bring on someone.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, getting back to the cattle industry and as it pertains to the resolution before us. The NDP Government traditionally has always had a reputation of being very antagonistic towards the livestock industry and the people who are involved in it. This goes right back to the days of the government of T.C. Douglas. But I suppose much of the bitterness emanates from the days in the late '50s when the T.C. Douglas Government took it into their heads that they were going to bring about a cattle marketing board. Quite a battle ensued over that. Some of the names of the stock growers who battled that thing tooth and nail finally forced the government of T.C. Douglas to abandon that program. Some of those names have become quite legendary. But out of that battle I think the CCF government at the time and its successor the NDP have always had a very strong antagonism towards the livestock industry.

I think it is safe to say that in the back of your minds over there you would really love to have a cattle marketing board. I suppose fortunately for you, and maybe fortunately for the cattle industry, the former Minister of Agriculture was demoted before he took it into his head to create a cattle marketing board.

Marketing boards, government control, production controls, they are all part and parcel of the same package. I think we have all seen in recent months the fiascos that can be created by government regulation of an industry which produces a perishable product. I don't think we have to go through the procedures of what we saw in CEMA, the egg marketing agency. The fiasco that was handled there. The mess that's there, the outright scandal that took place there.

I suppose the biggest example, or the most recent example of a marketing board fiasco in regard to cattle took place in the Common Market countries starting somewhere around 1969. At that time in the Common Market they had an overproduction of dairy products and they were very desperate to solve that problem. The subsidies they were paying out on these dairy products were practically draining the treasury of all countries involved.

At the same time they had the notion that there was a shortage of beef. After all government experts all over the world and university experts were telling us, as I mentioned earlier, that we were in a beef shortage right up through the 1980s.

So what the Common Market countries did at that time, they pegged the price at a very artificially high level, they subsidized it. The purpose of this was to encourage dairy producers to use beef type bulls on their dairy cows, theoretically so that the pure dairy heifers would not go back into the herds, they would go into beef production. So they pegged this price, but at the same time they continued to import beef from Australia and New Zealand.

Well, the dairymen were in such financial straits that they gladly accepted this inducement to convert over to beef production. Things appeared to be going not all that badly until

the beef crisis hit in late 1973. Then the bottom fell out. The common market countries were caught with this artificially pegged price. The price of Australian and New Zealand beef had crashed. They considered cutting these imports off, but they couldn't. They were bound by the GATT agreements, that they were sending processed goods to these countries and they were bound by the GATT agreements to continue to import their beef.

So they came up with a brilliant idea that we'll put some of this beef in cold storage. So they continued to buy it. As the beef was produced, nobody was buying it, somebody had to buy it, so governments bought it. They put it into cold storage thinking that they would sell it as the price returned to what they considered normal. Well, the price didn't pop right back up as they expected and they kept buying and buying and storing it and building plants to store it, until they reached the point where they had stored 50 million metric tons of the stuff. All this time while they were buying it they were having to take Australian and New Zealand beef because they couldn't get out of the GATT agreement. What happens? The producers took a shafting, the consumers took a shafting, the treasury took a shafting, everybody took a shafting.

Now what's the relevance to the Common Market countries to Canada. Well, hopefully Canada can learn some semblance of a lesson from what is a bitter experience, that you are dealing with a perishable product, a product that must be consumed and when you have a surplus you have to take your beating and you have to eat your way out of it. Regrettably there is simply no other solution. If I had one I would be happy to put it forward. Unfortunately that's the only one I know, that's the only one that works.

We all know very well that if you people had the political courage you would love to put the cattle industry under a marketing board. Of course, you are pretty good at dictating people under a marketing board. I think that most livestock men probably remember very vividly some years ago when the hog producers woke up. The announcement that they were now under a central marketing agency. Not a producer controlled marketing agency, but a straight state controlled marketing agency.

I can recall very well being at a livestock convention, sitting in on a meeting of the hog producers. There were about 500 packed into this room. The former Minister of Agriculture stood up there and he fielded the questions, took a little bit of abuse and he strode to the microphone and he said, that's the way it is, if you don't like it then get rid of us the next election.

Well, you got re-elected. You got a little unexpected help from my friends on the left or else I'm sure you would have been obliterated. But your day is coming. You know, it is easy to make statements like that and sometimes it takes a little time for them to happen. But attitudes like that will certainly lead to your downfall.

Of course very definitely, unquestionably, before the next election comes we'll have the goodies, you have tried to ease that situation off by replacing the Minister of Agriculture with someone who is not so controversial, someone who is not as aggressive, probably one who is not nearly as able. But nonetheless your time will come.

But what did we do with this hog marketing agency? I think the hog producers at that time were told that after you have had a reasonable time to assess this, after you have had time to see it work, after you have had time to see the marvellous miracles that it can work for you, we will then give you a vote on it. Well I think it must be getting pretty close to three and a half years now. The hog producers are stilling waiting for that vote. I really wonder if this Government has any intention of providing a vote. I really doubt it because you know very well what would happen on such a vote. Given a vote of legitimate hog producers, that agency of yours would cease to exist immediately afterwards.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THATCHER:** — But then of course, I suppose we can do a little manipulating if we do decide to have a vote. We can do a little manipulating on who is a hog producer. You know, I suppose it's not too tough to win a vote if somebody who owns one sow or owns one hog, make him a voter, your odds would improve. But take a vote among legitimate hog producers and that marketing agency of yours, that government controlled agency of yours in which producers have no say, no representation, it would be gone. I challenge you to have a vote, but I really don't think you will.

You know, the class of people who you have running that agency, what's his name? Harry J. Or Billy-Jo Elder or something. He's got to be a prime example.

While the hog prices were high here in the past nine months, record prices in this industry and the Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Board is still buying hogs to ship to Japan for probably 20 cents less than the going rate, in combination with Manitoba. When you entered the contract agreement with the Manitoba Hog Marketing Agency you also had to pick up their contracts. It's going to be very interesting in Estimates to find out just how much of the tab that the taxpayer has to pick up from that agreement. Of course, that may be very difficult to ascertain. If memory serves me correctly, about eight to ten months ago, the Provincial Auditor tried to audit the books of the Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Agency. I don't remember his exact words but roughly paraphrased he said that next to the Department of the DNS they were probably the worst set of books that anybody anywhere ever kept. I believe his words were something to the effect that they were unauditable.

If this is an example of the government efficiency, I think that we in the livestock business can very definitely do without it.

The days in the livestock industry have been very difficult in the past couple of years. Even in the hog business where you have had record prices, in terms of their feed costs and their overhead I really don't think any of them have really made any significant profit.

But why has the price not declined over the counter at the supermarket level? That is the question that you hear consumers everywhere asking. I think it is a question that probably this Government is in a position to answer as well as any government anywhere. Because you own 45 per cent of a packing plant. Theoretically this packing plant was bought to do something about these situations. To keep the price equitable to producers.

That is your packing plant should theoretically force the price that other packing plants would have to pay, consequently you could in essence boost the price at the producer level. Yet at the same time through your efficiency, you could process it at such a degree that it would not be gouging any consumers.

Some of the retailers — the figures which they quote — I am not going to give them to you tonight, but when they get quotes from the different packing companies, it is very interesting that invariably in many, many cases the highest quotes come from Intercontinental Packers. Not that cursed Canada Packers who are that eastern owned free enterprise outfit, or from Burns whom you did what you could to help run them out of this province, but from good old Intercontinental Packers.

So you tell us why are the prices of our livestock products so high over the counter? Because you people with your great government efficiency, you own a packing plant. Why are you turning the product out at such a cost? Your answer is pretty simple because even this Government can't do anything about the high wage settlements, the high costs of operation. You can't hand out increases at the packing plant, 25 and 30 per cent without the price of your product going up. It is going to be very interesting what is going to happen when it eventually does start to go up at the consumer level.

Here are two examples of total inefficiency, right here in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Board and Intercontinental Packers. And Intercontinental Packers the sickening sort of thing about that is that no matter what government defeats you or which party defeats you in 1979, Intercontinental Packers is a white elephant that the government is going to be saddled with until they eventually close it down. They are going to be saddled with it because you paid such a horrendous price for it that much as either we or the Conservatives, I am sure, would love to sell it, we are going to be stuck with it. We are going to have to run that white elephant. If that is your Government efficiency then heaven help the livestock industry.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that an appropriate resolution at some point in time instead of one such as we have on the Order Paper now that could seriously help the livestock industry would be pertaining to Australian beef. This is one of the real thorns in the side that we as cattle producers have. Never mind stabilization plans, never mind subsidies, never mind the cash advances. This Australian beef that comes in at a very low cost is consumed upwards roughly 30 per cent in this province alone and in this country.

Chains such as MacDonald's hamburgers, Ponderosa, Bonanza, they are notorious users of imported Australian and New Zealand beef.

We in the cattle business can compete against anyone in the world provided we can buy the same way that we have to sell. I think it is a most unfair situation when everything that we purchase or that the cattle industry purchases must be bought on a tariff protected market. Yet everything that it sells has to be in an unprotected market. In essence what I am saying is put a tariff on Australian beef the same way that you put tariffs on manufactured goods which come into this country. I think many of the problems of the cattle industry would

disappear. This Australian beef, take that off the market, automatically the consumption of Canadian beef has to come up.

The argument that Canada is a net importer of beef is solely because it is used by the government in eastern Canada to keep the price low to the consumer, for no other reason. The suggestion that Canada cannot feed its population out of its cattle industry is nonsense, it is there because this Australian beef comes in which makes us a net importer, and it is used merely to depress the price to the consumer.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is rather obvious that because of the nature of this thing, the stabilization aspect, it will not work. What we are doing is stabilizing overproduction. That in essence a stabilization program does not give a producer an incentive to react to market demands, and therefore will not work.

Mr. Speaker, I will vote against this Resolution.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. S. CAMERON** (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, I want to address myself to one aspect of this Resolution.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Member for Quill Lakes.

**MR. CAMERON:** — I wonder if I might ask the Member opposite if he intends at the conclusion of his remarks to adjourn the debate. If he does, perhaps he would give me leave to make my remarks in advance, because I don't intend to adjourn.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I recognized the Member for Quill Lakes. You may ask him if you wish.

**MR. CAMERON:** — I won't adjourn. I will give you the opportunity to respond to me.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Fine, I will concede to the Member for Regina South.

**MR. CAMERON:** — I want to thank the Member for Quill Lakes for his generosity in doing that. I do indeed appreciate it.

I wanted . . . if the Minister of Finance had spent some time in the House this afternoon he would have recognized 13 gentlemen and two ladies on this side of the House.

This Resolution, Mr. Speaker, while it has been dominated by debate with respect to livestock is wide enough in its wording to include stabilization grain programs as well because it refers in the second paragraph to the inadequacy of present stabilization programs. It refers as well to developing long-term national stabilization programs so that as I read the Resolution it is not restricted to livestock but is wide enough to encompass grain as well. It is with respect to grain stabilization that I want to direct some comments about this



Resolution.

The Resolution, if passed, would again in effect, request the national government to delay the implementation of the western grain stabilization program. It asks in effect for a pause with respect to the stabilization programs being advanced by the Federal Government, a pause in order to develop long-term national stabilization programs. I think, as I say, if we were to pass this Resolution we would in effect be saying to the Federal Government we want you to take another look at Bill C-50, and we want in addition for you to have another look at grain stabilization and work together in respect of livestock and grain and other agricultural commodities and develop some overall stabilization strategy and programs.

I think it would be sad indeed if we were to pass the Resolution now in this House asking in effect the Federal Government to suspend for the time being or further delay passage of The Western Grain Stabilization Act which is now before Parliament.

The member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) referred to the present Minister of Agriculture and the switch between Ministers of Agriculture recently. We on this side of the House, following that switch, were keeping some track of the record of the new Minister of Agriculture, his track record. In his first several weeks in office he had something to say about four subjects.

The first was about the Western Grain Stabilization Program which he blasted. The second was about the livestock Stabilization Program which he blasted, a federal program. The third was about yet another Federal agriculture program, which he blasted. His first three public pronouncements as Minister of Agriculture were three blasts. Then he came along with a little program of his own. A program in respect of lambs. So we say his first four public pronouncements were three blasts and a bleat. That was his record in his first several weeks in office.

The Western Grains Stabilization program which is now before Parliament, as Members opposite will remember, began in 1970 and in 1971, and was first brought to the attention of Saskatchewan farmers in a great debate about stabilization in 1971. Members will remember that that program was designed to stabilize gross returns from grain sales in the three prairie provinces at a level consistent with the previous five years.

Members opposite will recall I am sure in detail the tremendous battle which their Party fought over that program both federally and provincially, but particularly federally, when in the House of Commons they used every device at their disposal to hold up and delay that Bill. When they used amendment after amendment, and speech after speech, repetition after repetition to delay passage of that Bill and ultimately killed it. Members opposite will recall the rallying cry in respect of their opposition to that Bill that it would stabilize poverty. Eventually their opposition led to the withdrawal of The Grain Stabilization Plan that was then proposed.

Members will recall that it was a program to stabilize gross receipts from the sale of grain in the three prairie provinces. It would have been a compulsory program. They took

issue with it in respect of two or three things apart from their rallying cry which was that it was to stabilize poverty, which incidentally, as is usual with slogans, was highly misleading. But they said it would stabilize gross receipts and not net returns and we should be looking at net returns and not gross returns. At least in that one respect they had a valid point. They said as well that the program was compulsory and some of them, but not all of them had difficulty with the compulsory aspect of that program.

Eventually as I said the program was withdrawn despite the fact that the Government of Canada and the people of Canada were prepared to commit \$40 million or \$50 million a year to the establishment of a grain fund to assist farmers in the three prairie provinces.

I want to pause there to remind Members that it was a government measure which would apply to and would benefit only grain producers in the three western provinces. It did not apply to grain producers elsewhere in Canada. It was a measure that was undertaken by the Government of Canada with a commitment by all the people of Canada to producers only in the prairie region. And a commitment of \$40 million to \$50 million per year. That measure was eventually withdrawn as a clear result of the Opposition, and the very strenuous opposition of the NDP, nationally and provincially.

That was four or five years ago. In the four or five years since, that program would now have a fund, if fairly estimated, of about \$300 million, with producer contributions and Government of Canada contributions. \$300 million which would be today available to grain producers in the three prairie provinces in the event of a decline either in markets or prices of grain the years ahead.

We come to the next significant stage in respect of stabilization of grain and the development of it, to the Western Economic Opportunities Conference in Calgary in July, 1973. The Premier will remember participating in that Conference when each of the four provincial governments was given a period of eight or nine months to intensively study what they considered to be the root problems facing the four western provinces as distinct from the rest of the country. While the provinces were engaged in that exercise so was the national government. Over the course of that eight or nine month period, in that intensive study, done by both levels of governments, the four prairie governments as well as the national government, there were in the end four principal areas of concern to the western provinces, both from the national point of view and from the federal point of view. One of course was agriculture.

The cry at that stage and that Conference in Calgary in July 1973 was for some stabilization measure in agriculture. The Premiers referred rightly so to the boom and bust cycles which the prairies had experienced from the beginning of time. How we would see for three or four years of grain sales brisk and prices high and incomes relatively good only to be followed by a period of disastrous markets or disastrous prices and the resulting difficulty, not only among grain producers but for the province as a whole. They pointed out at that stage, quite rightly again, the difficulties that boom and bust cycles in prairie agriculture pose not only for farmers who were the most directly hit but also for provincial governments themselves in terms of devising their programs and budgeting the revenue that

was required.

They pointed out rightly too the tremendous difficulty that it was causing other groups in society particularly in Saskatchewan where we were so dependent directly on grain. I remember one of the Premiers using an example about an implement dealer and how we went through the phase of three or four good years and incomes were high, dealerships were sound, they were hiring people and communities were thriving. That would be followed by a period of bust for four or five years, dealers had to lay men off and cut back. Some dealers went under. It was those peaks and valleys and booms and busts which the Premiers pointed to as the main problem in agriculture in western Canada. They said, and they all agreed, the answer to this was a system of stabilization programs. A stabilization program for grain, a stabilization program for livestock, and other kinds of stabilization programs for agriculture commodities.

They said that they were agreed as a matter of general principle with what the federal government was attempting to do with its grain stabilization proposals of early 1970 and 1971, although they found fault, and said it wasn't sufficient. They thought the program should be stabilizing net returns and not gross returns. Some felt it should not be a compulsory program. They had one or two other suggestions to strengthen the program including a bigger commitment by the national government to stabilization.

Following that conference in which our present day Premier participated significantly, calling for stabilization, the national government then went back and began to devise a series of stabilization programs including a revised Western Grains Stabilization Program. The new program was based upon net return as was requested by the Premiers and some farm organizations. The new program was proposed as a voluntary one, not compulsory. Once the new program was drafted and that was about mid 1974 it was quickly submitted to the four western governments. In addition to that it went to farm organizations like Unifarm, Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, Sask Pool and Manitoba Pool, Alberta Pool, Palliser, Canadian Federation of Agriculture, indeed even the NFU had a crack at it. As the Bill or proposals went to all those organizations they presented what they thought were legitimate and desirable amendments to it. Many of those amendment were accepted. Some were not. Then the Bill in its revised form, having gone through the provincial governments and the farm organizations, was brought back into the House of Commons. Shortly after that it was referred to the agriculture committee of the House of Commons who held public hearings around the country.

I can't resist drawing a parallel between that proposal and the way in which that government acted with respect to that measure and the way in which this Government acts in respect to some of its measures.

We have been asking them, in respect of several things, to use the Members of the House more fully to turn proposals over to committees of the House, to have them hold public hearings, to have them go about the province and gather views and hear the points of view of people and develop sides to the programs which otherwise we would miss. While this Government consistently refuses to do those kinds of things, we see the national government doing it readily.

They came out from Ottawa, with their agriculture committee, made up of Members of Parliament of all parties. They held a series of public hearings across the prairies, taking representations again from farm organizations and interested individuals. The result of that was some additional amendments to the proposal, some of which were accepted, some of which were deferred and some of which in the end were rejected.

But again the interesting thing here is the process which the national government is prepared to engage in with respect to a thing like grain stabilization which this Government, operating on a much smaller scale, is not prepared to emulate even in respect to a proposal the magnitude of potash and the effect it's going to have on the province.

We have been dealing with the Western Grain Stabilization Bill, now back before Parliament, for more than four years. I wonder whether there has been a bill in the history of Canada that's had a longer gestation period than that one; some four years. Indeed, I think it's an elephant that's two years in gestation; the grain stabilization four years in gestation, yet the Members opposite are asking that we keep it under wraps for a while longer and continue to fiddle with it.

I remember saying to the Members opposite in 1971 when the stabilization concept was first proposed, it isn't a perfect piece of legislation, it's an imperfect beginning but at least it's a beginning, backed by a commitment of \$60 million a year. We reminded Members opposite that if Henry Ford had waited until he had produced a perfect car before he built his first one, we would probably still be driving in horse and buggy. We would have taken that Bill in the four years since it was first introduced and no doubt have not only improved it to the extent it's now been improved, but likely we would be looking at more improvements because we would have had some experience in working with it in the past four years. We still don't have it.

We don't have it as a direct result of the determined opposition of the NDP. We don't have it today because federally again the NDP has dug in its heels. Again, in the House of Commons, day after day, when this Bill comes up for debate, they use every device to delay it and every device to prevent it from passing.

The Attorney General talked earlier in the day about inconsistency and political expediency. I can't think of anything more inconsistent than to put a Resolution like this on the Order Paper, to talk about the benefit of stabilization, to suggest that we ought to propose it in 1970, then when the Government comes forward with the program, all the while to oppose it. For what purpose and to whose advantage? For the purpose of their friends opposite and for their political advantage. It's the only conclusion one can come to, when you see the way in which they behave as distinct from what they say.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, that Bill, if it had passed in 1971 and we would have had the four years to improve it based upon experience, would now see a piggy bank or a kitty of some \$300 million which would be held for the prairie grain producers, which would be theirs in the event we had crop failure, market failure or price failure again. That is the principal concern of western grain producers. Two or three years down the road how do we know that grain prices aren't going to revert to what

they were before, or markets to be eroded. What if we get into a tight situation and can't sell? If that happened again we would face a disaster on the prairies, a very real one.

The purpose of the stabilization fund is to buffer us from the effects of declines in those difficult periods. Under the present proposal a producer would put \$1 in the fund and for every dollar he put in the fund the Federal Government would match it with \$2. The Federal Government is prepared to make a commitment to prairie grain producers under this stabilization program of between \$50 and \$100 million a year.

Consider the tremendous consequence that the stabilization program could have in the event grain prices or grain markets again take a downturn which farmers so fear. We think that rather than be delaying that Bill as the NDP are doing federally and rather than be calling for its delay in this House we should be urging the Federal Government to pass it. Get on with it. Get it into operation and get the fund established for if two or three years down the road things turn around then we shall have the fund to rely upon and to cushion the impact of the downturn.

But we hear and see this record again and again. The Members opposite on the one hand calling for programs, then on the other hand, when the programs are introduced, obstructing them. Asking for programs and then when they are introduced, opposing them. Never being satisfied with efforts, no matter how genuine or how good they are. This Resolution is one of so many we see on the Order Paper by Members opposite. Never asking their own Provincial Government to do something, never asking for some amendment to a provincial program, never asking one of their Ministers to consider something. No. All the while proposing resolutions directed in a negative way against the Federal Government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — I want to remind the Members opposite and the Attorney General in particular. I think it's a very good time to bring forward the reminder too, given the remarks we heard this afternoon. We heard the nonsense about where we stand vis-a-vis Saskatchewan Pool, and where we stand vis-a-vis co-ops. I want to read for Members opposite a release issued by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool a short time ago with respect to the grain stabilization proposal. You people are asking that that proposal be delayed. We are saying don't pass this Resolution asking for its delay. We say let's get on and get it passed. Let's see whether you are with the Pool on this one or we are with the Pool. I want to read from their release. It said:

The Board of Directors of Saskatchewan Wheat Pool has called on all Members of Parliament to facilitate passage of the Federal Government's Grain Stabilization Bill. The Directors stated that ample time and opportunity has been provided for all interested parties wishing to suggest amendments to the Stabilization Bill. Saskatchewan Wheat Pool notes that the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture held a series of hearings throughout the prairie region this past summer in which opinions of farm people were heard and proposed amendments were discussed. The Board of Directors of Saskatchewan Wheat Pool notes that the program is

voluntary. Producers who wish to participate in the stabilization plan would be allowed to do so and should be allowed to do so as quickly as possible, the Directors concluded.

The Pool Directors are concerned that provisions of the plan be passed into law as soon as possible.

We say let's get on and get the Act passed. The Members opposite say let's delay it. I remind them we stand where the Pool stands and they stand where the Pool does not stand on this issue, which is some evidence, at least, of what we were saying this afternoon to that nonsense you were peddling to us about ours being against the Pool and your being with it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — Mr. Speaker, we don't intend for those reasons, and for the reasons my colleague for Thunder Creek has indicated, to support this Resolution.

**MR. M.J. KOSKIE** (Quill Lakes): — Mr. Speaker, it is with some interest that I listened this afternoon to the Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) speaking on this motion as he squirmed and vacillated. It's rather interesting also to listen to the same old speech, with the same old content, delivered in the same old way.

It's rather remarkable that one thing that came clearly through on this speech as it did on other resolutions from the Member for Thunder Creek is that he totally rejects categorically any government assistance or programs which will be of assistance to the agricultural economy. That's the purport, that's the message that he has said on the two occasions that he spoke on resolutions.

I am very surprised that he would take this position because not long ago in the new year, the Prime Minister, his federal leader, spoke and he talked about the new society and he talked about the need for government intervention in the market place and government direction and government stabilization programs to regulate and to build a better society. So I find it very difficult that he didn't take that message of the Prime Minister to heart and incorporate it in his doctrine or his philosophy. I suppose there are Liberals and then there are Liberals.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. Eugene Whelan, you know the brother of Ed Whelan, Minister of Mineral Resources, has sort of been trying to develop some agricultural programs, has been trying to speak to the agricultural people across Canada. It seems to me that every attempt that he has made he has been stifled by the Bay Street boys that control the federal Liberal Party and also by the distorted views held by some of the Members opposite, I don't say all.

The thing is, Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that the provincial Liberal Party and their spokesmen have categorically indicated that they are against stabilization programs which would be of assistance to the agricultural economy.

Now the Hon. Member for Thunder Creek might speak on behalf of his constituents, but I don't think he can speak on behalf of mine because certainly the individual members of the farming community are having tremendous problems, particularly in the cattle industry, are crying out and asking for federal assistance. A stabilization program which would give them some security for their work and hard toil.

I want to say that the members of the Wheat Pool delegates, farmer union members, in my constituency and other farm organizations are asking for a strong stabilization program from the Federal Government. It is absolutely essential that it be a federal program, because what would happen if the rich provinces were to introduce a program they could build up a very good program. Poor provinces wouldn't be able to finance an equivalent stabilization program.

Therefore, to give some order to what we need is some federal action and certainly I would think that in the dire need of the cattle industry and the people in the cattle industry, that all Members on both sides of the House would support this motion.

This is an important Resolution to my constituency and I want to develop the topic considerably further and at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would beg leave to adjourn the debate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

### **RESOLUTION NO. 3 — INCREASE OF GOVERNMENT CORPORATION RATES**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Steuart (Leader of the Opposition):

That this Assembly strongly disapproves of the enormous increases in the Saskatchewan Telephone rates of 25 per cent, the Saskatchewan Power Corporation electrical and gas rates on the average of 26 per cent and 47 per cent respectively and the Saskatchewan Government insurance rates on automobiles and private dwellings averaging 25 per cent.

**HON. E.L. COWLEY** (Provincial Secretary): — Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a few moments this evening on this particular Resolution which was moved some time ago by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am amazed that the Members opposite should choose to attack so vehemently the increases which we have seen in SGIO, Sask Tel, and Saskatchewan Power rates and premiums.

The Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake has accused the corporations of enormous increases and he, and I believe this is a quote, "strongly disapproves of such". Well, we must certainly agree that they are unfortunate I think, Mr. Speaker, we must face reality. Pressures of inflation, increasing costs of repair and maintenance, expansion and improvement of services have increased the costs of all these corporations. It is naive to assume that these increases can be met without a corresponding

increase in the price of services. Without adjustment the needs of subsidization or for cutbacks in service suggest to me that such action would merely be robbing Peter to pay Paul. If we wish to continue to expand and improve our public utilities we must price them realistically.

I am surprised that the Members opposite should have forgotten so quickly the announcements made in the spring, contrary to some of the things they have been saying, by the Premier and the then Minister of Industry and Commerce, who was the Minister in charge of the Power Corporation, who announced, and I must emphasize this, prior to the election, that there would be increases in Sask Power rates. The main cause of those increases was the rising cost of Alberta natural gas, over 60 per cent of SPC's natural gas comes from Alberta. Surely the Members opposite realize that such a direct increase in cost must result in a corresponding increase in price. They might also be aware that in spite of our dependence on outside sources, Saskatchewan's natural gas rates are lower than anywhere else in Canada, except Alberta. And I believe if you check the rates there, our rates are lower. There is a subsidy in Alberta which lowers their rates below ours.

Our electrical rates remain below the average cost in other provinces and taking into account our dependency on electricity and natural gas for heating in this rather cold climate, I think SPC is providing a good service at a reasonable rate.

Another one of the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake's (Mr. Steuart) targets is SGIO. It is a target that he shot at for seven years when he was a Member of the Treasury Benches, but was unable to destroy. I should like to point out for the benefit of Members opposite a few comparisons of insurance rates in Canada. I don't have by the way, Mr. Speaker, the rates from the used-to-be sunny province of B.C., but I am sure that the Liberals and Conservatives over there, given time to get together, could do the same thing in Saskatchewan given the chance. Mr. Speaker, may I again remind Members that the cost of repairing motor vehicles has increased sharply in the past months. The number of accidents has increased and it has been happening right across the country. The media even brings us news of private insurance companies which are putting forward to the Anti-inflation Board in Ottawa very substantial increases and some news that some are considering no-fault insurance plans as a method to reduce their costs. I might say, Mr. Speaker, "how revolutionary". To insure a 1974 Pontiac Laurentian for business and pleasure SGIO provides a basic \$235,000 coverage for a premium of \$203. In Calgary for only \$200,000 of coverage the rate is \$352.

In Toronto, the average is 73 per cent greater. That's a Tory Government in Alberta, by gosh it is part of a Tory Government in Toronto too. Just part.

**MR. PENNER:** — Which part, the top half or the bottom?

**MR. COWLEY:** — Well you know which part the Liberal Party is, so the Tories will be in the middle and the NDP at the front.

Saskatchewan's premium for that same car used for pleasure by a 22-year-old would be \$214. Manitoba's rate which is lower



\$173, provides less coverage than SGIO. An average premium in Toronto for the 22-year-old is \$635, in Calgary, \$657. That sounds about like what the increase would be in British Columbia under the "Liberal'servatives".

SGIO continues to provide superior service at minimal cost and refuses to discriminate against younger drivers and justly so.

The Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Steuart) includes in his list of enormous increases the rise in premiums on private dwellings. In view of the recent increase, Mr. Speaker, we should look at the packages in other provinces. SGIO's home pack A provides basically \$100,000 comprehensive personal liability insurance, at \$20,000 for the dwelling itself. It is a new premium at \$70. Comparable packages in Calgary from the Insurance Advisory organization \$72; in Vancouver from the old V ICBC \$63. I suppose that is about \$163 now. In Winnipeg from Manitoba public insurance \$82; in Toronto from Sun Alliance \$112. These packages are not as comprehensive as SGIO nor do they have as low a deductible, \$50 compared to SGIO's \$25.

I am amazed that the Opposition should label as enormous, increases that still enable Saskatchewan to maintain its low rates challenged seriously only by a sister Crown corporation in Manitoba.

Let's turn to Sask Tel, the third corporation which increased its rates. The last general increase for toll calls in Sask Tel was some eight years ago, then only 7.5 per cent. Sask Tel reduced its direct dial rate in 1971, included Uranium City as a regular part of the Saskatchewan system and reduced the top of the rate schedule by over 100 miles. To be correct the small fixed costs of residents or business lines have increased. Both compare nicely, increased as they have been, with rates in other provinces. However, the top individual residence rate of \$5 per month is well below the national average. The business rate is about the lowest in the country with the exception of the Crown corporation in Manitoba.

Long distance calls within the province increased about 13 per cent, calls outside the province between 18 and 23 per cent. Mr. Speaker, none of these increases are too surprising especially in view of the length of time since the last general increase and the present rate of inflation in Canada. Saskatchewan residents are fortunate that their Government saw fit to develop these utilities and services with savings to the people of Saskatchewan. This has been shown countless times. Still the slow learners over there have trouble understanding.

The planned development of the corporations has resulted in lower prices for Saskatchewan people and superior service. That development plan has been designed for the benefit of Saskatchewan by the people's own Crown corporations. SGIO, Sask Tel and Sask Power are to be congratulated for their continued efforts on our behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I should therefore like to move, seconded by the Member for Pelly (Mr. Larson) that the Resolution be amended:

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

Commends the Government of Saskatchewan for keeping increases in telephone rates, electrical and gas rates and insurance rates in this province at a minimum in face of escalating costs while maintaining a high level of service to the public unequalled in the continent.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

The debate continues concurrently on the motion and the amendment.

**MR. R.L. COLLVER** (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, I accept the fact that there has been escalation in costs. I accept the fact that there has been escalation in prices to the Crown corporations in Saskatchewan and that some increase in price has been necessitated as a result of inflation. I think we are all aware that there have been increases in prices. If these Crown corporations are to be reasonably self supporting and reasonably un-subsidized through taxation, then a reasonable increase in price is, in fact, necessary.

However, in the Minister's comparisons that he used this evening, he neglected to mention some very specific details. First of all, he neglected to compare centres of comparable size, when he fully realizes that cities that are larger have more accidents than cities that are smaller. And rural areas are even better from an accident rate point of view. Why not compare for example, Medicine Hat and Moose Jaw. Did you get rates and compare them insurance-wise between Medicine Hat and Moose Jaw? No, you used an average Saskatchewan rate which is exactly the problem in the automobile insurance industry in the Province of Saskatchewan. The rates are averaged throughout the province and the people in the low accident area are bearing more than they should and the people in the high accident area are paying less than they should.

Furthermore, he neglects to mention that the citizens of the city of Calgary are not required to pay a substantial gasoline tax differential to make up the difference in the insurance rates that he quoted between Calgary and the average rate for the Province of Saskatchewan. If you compute for a minute that the average driver in a centre the size of Calgary drives between 15,000 and 20,000 per annum and if you imagine for a moment that the modern automobile gets somewhere between 12 and 15 miles to the gallon, that means that the average driver in the city of Calgary is going to use approximately somewhere around 1,500 to 2,000 gallons of gas per annum. That amounts to something between \$85 per annum and \$140 per annum that that driver would be subsidizing the insurance in the city of Calgary if he were to be paying the seven cents a gallon subsidy that the driver has to pay in the Province of Saskatchewan.

**MR. COWLEY:** — It's only 3 cents, not seven!

**MR. COLLVER:** — Even at three cents in a city the size of Calgary you are still talking between \$40 and \$80. That brings me to a problem in that the Minister has amended this motion. I should like an opportunity to work out some meaningful statistics to present to the Minister. I should also like an opportunity to check into the enormous increases being charged by Sask Tel as

an example to the user of the pay telephone, a 400 per cent increase as opposed to the 26 or 28 per cent increase mentioned in the original resolution.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — . . . why don't you review?

**MR. COLLVER:** — As soon as I get an opportunity to review the statistics and present statistics that are perhaps more meaningful than those presented by the Minister, I, therefore beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 15 — PHASE OUT ENGAGING LAWYERS AS ACTING JUDGES OR MAGISTRATES**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. S.J. Cameron (Regina South):

That this Assembly urges the Government of Saskatchewan to begin immediately to phase out the practice of engaging lawyers in private practice from time to time as acting judges or magistrates and that within twelve months such practice be discontinued in full.

**HON. R. ROMANOW** (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I just have a few words to say with respect to this motion. I believe that I have already made comments on this earlier. I would simply say to the Members of the House that some good reforms have taken place. I am optimistic that in the next few months and years we will improve the Magistrate Court system even further to a better system for the Province of Saskatchewan.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, because I don't believe the motion fully takes this into account, while I do agree with some of the comments made by the Members opposite in speaking to the motion, I should like to propose an amendment which I think more accurately reflects the state of affairs of the current time. I move, seconded by the Member for Shellbrook (Mr. Bowerman):

That all the words after the words "That this Assembly urges the Government of Saskatchewan" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

to continue in its efforts to implement reforms in the Magistrates' Courts system to cut down on the practice of engaging lawyers in private practice as acting judges with more time for their judicial duties.

Debate continues on the motion and the amendment.

**MR. S.J. CAMERON** (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, I intend to be very brief. In moving the Resolution I wanted to draw attention, particularly to this practice. As I indicated in my remarks earlier, it began in rather extraordinary circumstances, but became in time a rather routine kind of practice. I wasn't assessing any particular blame. I wasn't indicating to the Attorney General that he was in some way at fault in this respect. I think that his Government wasn't doing anything in this respect very much different than what the previous government was doing. I tried, in

presenting the Resolution, to do it essentially in a non-partisan kind of way, directing attention at the problem itself, rather than attempting to lay any blame and talk about fault in respect of the problem.

The remarks of the Attorney General in response to my earlier remarks on the Resolution indicate to me, at least, and to Members on this side that he appreciated the problem itself. He too was concerned about the way in which it was becoming routine and indicated his own desire in due course to phase out the . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I just want to clarify with the Hon. Member for Regina South, I gather you are speaking solely on the amendment.

**MR. CAMERON:** — Yes. I am coming in a brief time to make mention of the amendment. I was saying that in the remarks which the Attorney General made in response to my own remarks in support of the Resolution, we gathered on this side of the House that he was cognizant of the problem and that he was genuinely willing to come to grips with the problem. I think he found some difficulty with the one-year limitation which we had placed on it.

I think his amendment to the Resolution is a reasonably fair one, in the sense that he too would like to see the practice, which we consider to be unsatisfactory, ended. We would like to see it ended as soon as possible. We put a one-year time limitation on it. His amendment to it in effect is simply saying give us more time; we are cognizant of the problem; we too want to phase out the practice; we too want to get to the point in time with our courts where we don't have to rely on legal people acting as judges. I gather from his comments he is merely saying in his amendment, don't put the time limitation on us, we understand the problem, we recognize it, we'll do what we can about it, except let's not tie our hands to a year. We think that the amendment is in keeping with the spirit of the Resolution which we moved and we will be pleased indeed, Mr. Speaker, to support the amendment as well as support the Resolution itself. We would prefer to see the time limit, one year, but we are quite prepared as a reasonable compromise to support the Attorney General's amendment which would have it phased out but over a longer period of time.

Motion as amended agreed to.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 18 — TO AMEND THE TRADE UNION ACT, 1972**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Collver (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives):

That this Assembly urges the Government of Saskatchewan to amend The Trade Union Act, 1972, to ensure that upon certification or decertification and upon strike votes or back to work votes that if a significant minority of union members are dissatisfied with the accuracy of the vote taken in the usual way that they may apply for a vote supervised by the Labour Relations Board.

**MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT** (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, I wanted, in

starting, before I go into my fairly lengthy prepared remarks to make some comment about the "newer than new Liberals" that my friend, the Hon. Attorney General, seems to cast at us from time to time and I am starting to believe that what he means by that is stronger, tougher, more capable, harder working Liberals . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — . . . Liberals who are more open to new ideas and new proposals. Frankly, I am learning to like the phrase 'newer than new Liberals' although I know that he means it for us in castigating terms. We have changed a great deal and I suggest and I think that what the Attorney General sees on this side in Liberals is the same kind of spirit and enthusiasm that he probably nostalgically remembers on his side from '60 to '64. Now if that is what 'newer then new Liberals' means, I am delighted to accept that kind of a phrase and I am starting to believe in some ways that what he hopes to do is discredit what he perceives to be a winning, unified team working together.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — The Member for Wilkie (Miss Clifford) speaking this afternoon, and it was some references along these lines that brought me to bring these remarks to Mr. Speaker's attention, talked about a new fairness on our side. And I think that is genuine. When I see a good policy I say so. CJVR, for instance, in Melfort phoned me shortly after the new unemployment rates had come in. They said, what about that, and I said, quite candidly, we believe that the unemployment rate at a low level was not really due to the Government and I think that that change is really not due to the Provincial Government either. The credit should have gone federally and I suspect that the discredit doesn't go provincially. His reaction was sort of, Ah, gosh! And I know that didn't get on the air. Now if that is a clip that didn't get published and that is one of the losses of being a 'newer than new Liberal' then again I am delighted.

You know we have been moving various proposals and propositions that are extremely positive in nature and I say that because some of the remarks that I have to make tonight aren't all that positive in nature. I suggest to the Hon. Attorney General that in his contrived tantrums, and that is really what they are, and we were treated to another contrived, planned tantrum this afternoon, that if those kinds of calculated acts and I heard Miss Clifford say, it's a hard act to follow. I don't know how hard it was to follow, but I do know that it was an act.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I am unable to discover what Resolution the Member is talking on.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, I was, of course concerning The Trade Union Act and the reason I made those

preliminary remarks because where the proposals and the comments that you have heard from this side of the House have been very positive in nature, some of the remarks that I am going to make in the next 40 or 50 minutes are not quite as positive in nature. Now, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that the Resolution that you have before you isn't really an improvement of The Trade Union Act, it is more of a tinkering with The Trade Union Act. The question has to be whether it is a useful tinkering or not.

We Liberals believe that the process embodied in the present Trade Union Act is not a good enough process but that's a different question from whether a tinkering at this time is a good thing to do or not.

The very fact that the Hon. Attorney General was a labor lawyer acting for trade unions, and the Hon. Minister of Labour and the Minister of Finance were both senior trade union representatives, the very fact that so many of their Members come directly from union involvement blinds their eyes, I think, to seeking better means by which to solve labor relations problems. They don't look for any better means beyond the traditional means that they understand. We believe that the way the process is working in the labor relations field isn't working as well as it should be. We believe that this Resolution or any resolution of the House in this field should be asking the Government to look for better and more meaningful solutions to labor relations problems. We believe that the Government and the people of this province, should be challenged to find means to decide appropriate remuneration without direct government intervention but that we should be challenging ourselves to find better means, means which fit the 20th century. The strike weapon fits the 19th century. The strike weapon fits a time of hopelessly irresponsible and extremely wealthy industrialists who almost warred with their workers, and the trade union perfection of the NDP side of the House takes that other side and extends that too far. We are in the 20th century, yet our labor relations approach has not changed.

Now I found in viewing the amendments that the Conservatives proposed that they must be by and large happy with the process that we now have because obviously they feel that all that is necessary is some tinkering with the current process. They must feel that the traditional machinery should simply be fine tuned to make it work a little better. We feel that something more basic should be done than a mere fine tuning, but the question on this Resolution is whether this fine tuning is a good fine tuning or not.

Mr. Speaker, you will not have before you, as do other Members of the House, the examples of the changes which the Conservatives proposed. I say that, Mr. Speaker, because I suggest that the Resolution has to be viewed with the draft Bill that the Conservatives then sought to place on all of our desks. The Bill isn't before the House but it has to be discussed to some extent in relation to the Resolution.

I don't frankly, want to be too hard on the Resolution because the principle appeals to me. The operation of trade unions is not as democratic as the operation of other institutions but that is the way that trade unions have grown up, that is the way that trade union movements were formed and that is the way it's intended to operate. Before Members are too critical of the trade union movement in its operation, I suggest

it would be wise to look back at the reason and the timing of the formation of the trade union movement in order to understand this tampering as proposed by the Conservatives and I suggest in order to come to the conclusion that it is a bad tampering.

I stress again that you cannot characterize these proposed changes as anything more than a tinkering. We think something more fundamental is required. We think that changes in a fundamental too, will help workers and at the same time keep the strike weapon from creating havoc within our economy. That is the answer and this mere tinkering is not the answer.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Now why do I say that the tinkering is a bad? What is the tradition of our trade union movement in Saskatchewan? What is the history of the Act which our Conservatives would now change? I suggest the Conservatives apparently don't know that history. I was surprised to see an active member of the trade union movement, a president of a CUPE local, come before this House and suggest a resolution and I suspect his understanding of the historical development of the trade union movement in Saskatchewan is very lacking.

The accusation implied in the proposed Bill and in this Resolution is that the operation of the trade unions is not as democratic as it could be. With that I agree. On the other hand, a failure to be democratic is built into the history of the trade union movement and certainly into the history of our trade union movement in Saskatchewan and that is not necessarily bad in itself. Whether the history would be different had I been the Minister of Labour from 1944 to the current day is a separate question. But the question here is whether these changes should be added on to the development of The Trade Union Act as we know it. Our Act comes from The Wagner Act of the United States, and you have to understand the intent of The Wagner Act passed by the Roosevelt Newdealers in 1935 before it is possible to really intelligently deal with this amendment.

One of the major problems with the depression economy in the United States was the growing struggle not only between the trade union movement and their employers but within the trade union movement itself. There was mounting struggle between workers in the various shops. Because there were government roadblocks stopping formation of unions, the argument being presented to workers on behalf of those who had communist leanings, and the Communist Party was very active in the trade union movement at that time, those arguments were going over very well. Indeed until after the second war the influence of the communists within the trade union movement was very large. The Wagner Act was not designed to be fair to workers, The Wagner Act was designed to bring industrial peace. Very commonly the majority of workers wanted a trade union and one would have expected that once a trade union was formed that quite the contrary was true. Fifty-five or 60 per cent of a shop might opt for a union but there was a way to opt out so that the 40 per cent who didn't want a union with the help of management, very frequently, over the 45 per cent continued to fight against that union for years and years after the union went in. So that rather than bringing industrial peace, indeed what was happening with unionization was that greater problems.

were being created. That's the framework behind which The Wagner Act was brought in and a framework which was adopted in Saskatchewan far more fully than it was adopted in any other province in Canada.

It operates here because we adopted the principles of The Wagner Act almost holus-bolus. Part of the reason that we adopted The Wagner Act so completely is because the 1944 Saskatchewan CCF, they may well have been a well intentioned group, but they were an extremely naive group of Members. Charlie Williams was the Minister of Labour. Mr. Williams was probably the most conservative person to sit in this House since 1934 and I suspect that a Ham or a Bailey couldn't hold a candle to him. His Deputy Minister, W.K. Bryden, had no experience in the work place. He was a theoretical socialist. That group of people looked around for what they thought would be an appropriate piece of industrial legislation to bring to Saskatchewan and they followed The Wagner Act almost word for word.

Now that Act was given Royal assent in Saskatchewan on November 10th, 1944. It is interesting that it had 28 sections, our Act only has 44. Indeed, one of the criticisms of the NDP from 1944 to 1964 was that they didn't keep up with the changes in the legislation that they should have been bringing in. They may have brought in a good Act but as technical change came about and indeed I suspect that the Minister of Labour agrees with the suggestions that I am making now, as technical change came about the NDP during that 20 year period sort of sat on their hands. Perhaps part of the reason they sat on their hands is because Charlie Williams was the Minister for a long period of time. I don't say that out of disrespect for Mr. Williams, a man for whom I have had great respect, but he was a very conservative Member of that Cabinet.

There were, of course, some pretty dramatic changes when the Liberals came to power, for better or for worse. The very fact indeed that the CCF called their act The Trade Union Act while other provinces in the federal jurisdiction characterized their Act as a Labour Code or a Labour Relations Act, is indicative that the CCF at that time and you people have followed along with that pattern, were taking sides in industrial relations. You chose and continue to choose to take sides on behalf of trade unions and in many ways that is wrong. But that is not important I suggest to a decision about whether this tampering is important or not. It is important in relation to the fact that the legislation that we now have is more than in any other province designed solely to bring industrial peace.

It is worthwhile though if we are going to deal credibly with what the Conservatives say is their policy. A pretty sweeping change is proposed and now they say this is a Resolution and here is the Bill that we brought in. It is worthwhile I suggest to look at how Conservative governments in other provinces have reacted to the same kind of proposal as contained in The Wagner Act, what they have done in those provinces and whether they have followed the proposals that you now see before you proposed with all due respect I suggest by naive Conservatives. The Conservatives have been in power from time to time almost in every province in this country and they have done nothing along these lines. It can be fairly said that basically the principles of our Act are the same as the principles of the acts across the country. Those principles came from The Wagner Act and they are designed to bring industrial peace and not



necessarily designed to be fair.

All of those principles, when you stack them together, are somewhat hard on the rights of the minority within the labor movement. If there is someone who doesn't want to be part of a trade union they ordinarily find themselves coerced and carried along.

This Government has said that industrial peace comes ahead of the rights of the minority. I am not saying that is wrong. Conservative Governments of Alberta and Ontario, New Brunswick and Newfoundland currently in power, have all kept The Wagner Act concept. It seeks industrial peace and it sacrifices fairness.

When the Conservatives were in power in Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island — all Conservative Parties at one time or another, they haven't sacrificed The Wagner Act principle, they haven't worried particularly about the rights of the minority.

I suggest to this House that either you change the concept, the concept of our Trade Union Act, or you leave the concept alone and you make the concept work as best you can. We may believe in changing the concept, but we believe that it is wrong to try to dismember the concept — and the Conservatives are saying, dismember the concept when they bring this proposal before the House.

What if we took the Conservative proposal at full value and supposing that I were prepared to say their intention really is to bring justice to the minority. I am sure they are well intentioned in bringing this proposal. As I said, and I am sorry, I think the proposal is naive. I think the proposal lacks any particular consideration of the Act, but I am sure they are well intentioned when they bring the proposal.

How would the passage of this Resolution and the amendments which go with it, how would that affect the operation in the work place? I say it would bring industrial havoc. We would be taking a bad situation and making it worse. Of course there is nothing very original, incidentally, about these proposed amendments. We go back now to the "newer than new Liberals." These amendments were part of a more complete package of amendments proposed in this House in April of 1973, when all of these amendments were taken together even that package was more acceptable, far more acceptable, to the proper operation of industrial relation than the amendments which are now before the House. I suggest to the Conservatives they might well go back and read exactly those amendments and the arguments that were presented at that time. Those prior amendments presented by the Liberal Opposition which go beyond these scanty proposals, and which were negated on the 4th of May, 1973.

I don't think that the amendments proposed by the Conservative caucus are anti-labor, I don't think they are anti-trade union; I don't think they were intended that way. I suspect that when the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) gets up, as Government Members ordinarily do, as they try to paint the Opposition into a corner with characterizations which are usually partially true and they blow them up. I suggest that suggestion will be made of the Conservatives, but I don't think that their intention is malevolent. They may be lacking a little but I

don't think they are wrong in the way they have gone about it.

I dealt with the principle of why or why not this should be passed. Now ask this House to consider how workable would be these proposals, because really in the terrible way these proposals would operate in the work place, if for no other reason the proposals are wrong.

First, I am sure, they would encourage union rating which wouldn't help the worker; wouldn't help to avoid labor strikes and indeed would only encourage anarchy in labor relations and more hard feelings in the work place.

The proposed change to Section 6, sub-section (4) would mean that the union would always be looking over its shoulder to see if 10 per cent of its members were about to embarrass the trade union.

The amendments to Section 6 would encourage the formation of cracks within the worker groups and within the union. Whenever you have a division of workers you place stumbling blocks in the path of good industrial relations and good feelings in the work place. And good feelings in the work place, which maintains high productivity and makes high wages possible, good feelings in the work place, that is what it is all about. That is the ultimate aim of all good industrial relations. The time in the work place occupies half of every workers' waking hours. Good feelings in the work place are more important than good feelings at home with your wife and perhaps good feelings in this work place where it occupies more than half are even more important for some of us.

Section 6, sub-section (5), the amendment that is proposed in the Bill, as presented to us, Mr. Speaker, has an almost worse affect because it means that there will be continuing problems and a continued attempt to break away from the trade union by the minority. We go right back to the situation that The Wagner Act tried to cure in the first place in order to bring industrial peace. They will stay as a faction within the union, maintaining animosity in the work place.

Both amendments to Section 6 imply an attack on the card system. I don't like the method of getting card support for unionization. I am suspicious that frequently the card support is obtained as a result of representations which aren't true. I have never been able to perceive why the Minister of Labour or the Minister of Finance, people right out of the trade union movement so greatly fear an open vote system. Why are you so frightened of going out of the card system into an open vote system, an open vote system which would allow the representations if untruthful, to come to the attention of the workers and allow the workers to decide in a fair and easy way? Are you suspicious of the card system as this amendment implies the Conservatives are suspicious? But regardless of my views on the card system that doesn't mean that once the union is in, either through the card system or some better system, I should like to see labor strife continued. That would be the effect of these amendments to Section 6.

Currently under Section 25(b) the Board determines what trade union, if any, represents a majority. The applicant union files its support. Why, one might ask, after a majority has been found, should a minority of 10 per cent — such a small

percentage — be able to force them out?

The amendment to Section 11 as proposed is bad for the same reason as it encourages the formation of splinter groups within the employees who would then go to the board and ask for a vote.

Those are the reasons that I say it is wrong because of what it would do in the work place. An even better question is, whether this amendment could ever be operational? I don't think so. Indeed, I don't think any right thinking person could think so. It isn't hard to imagine, it is impossible to imagine 25 per cent of employees getting together and making application to a board, unless there was company interference. I don't think, I am sure, that the mover of this Resolution can be encouraging company meddling with trade union operations. How, then, would this 25 per cent ever get together to make the application? I suggest to the Member that the CUPW president let him think about the operation, even of a local. How could 25 per cent ever get together? Never mind to think of the classic example of the postal strike through which we have just come. I say that is a classic example because I believe that if this kind of an amendment had been in operation even there, even in the postal strike, it would not have been possible for 25 per cent of the workers to get together and apply to the board.

I was satisfied that if union management, who are putting off a vote, who were maintaining the strike and putting off the vote for their own self gain — and I hope Joe Davidson gets his just reward for all of his efforts and gets kicked out of that union. I suggest that even in that circumstance beyond any doubt if a vote had been taken the workers would have voted to go back to work, even there it wouldn't have been possible for 25 per cent to get together and go before the board. So that this kind of an amendment just isn't an operational amendment. And again, and of course, we come back to the basic principle that I have mentioned before — that this kind of an amendment flies in the face of the Wagner principle which is to grease the economic system and to make productivity high.

The Roosevelt New Dealers may have been happy enough that The Wagner Act helped workers, but that is not the reason they passed it. They passed The Wagner Act to bring industrial peace and this kind of an amendment would take away from industrial peace.

What if when we discuss an operational means of running this amendment? What if in that example I presented a 25 per cent had been put together, 25 per cent of CUPW somehow had been organized without company interference and they had gotten before the Labour Relations Board, gotten before the national board, and they had gotten a vote? Surely anyone can see the tremendous strife that that would have caused in the work place. That those 25 per cent had broken from union management; that those 25 per cent had worked against the rights of the rest of the workers as perceived by the rest of those workers. Even if the strike had been overruled, then even after the 25 per cent went to the Labour Relations Board there had been a vote, even then the problems in the work place would have been tremendous and it would have split off from the main body, a clique, a separate group of workers and created further problems in the work place.

We would support, I believe, a provision which automatically forced a vote in the postal dispute after a certain period of

time, I would support that and I think that the Members of the Liberal caucus would support that, but I don't particularly speak for them in that regard, automatically forcing a vote would be far better than asking workers to apply for a vote, because automatically forcing a vote at least wouldn't split off a large group of the workers and create a chasm in the work place.

A vote perhaps should be taken automatically after a certain period of time. Perhaps we should be automatically forcing a vote. That would avoid division within the workers and it would also avoid the kind of travesty of the union movement that I suggest the CUPW strike demonstrated to the Canadian people. A vote which automatically taken after a certain number of days on the picket lines, similar to the proposal in the Bayda Report would, for instance, in the CUPW strike — have allowed an early settlement and wouldn't have hurt union management particularly indeed would have taken them off the hook, a hook upon which they put themselves because of their terrible handling of that strike.

We would have supported an automatic review by the board after a month of strike or we would have supported a review which could be asked for by the Trade Union, asked for by the employer or perhaps asked for by a small percentage of the employees. If that review could only be requested after the passage of perhaps a month on the picket lines. Then, under those circumstances if that had been the amendment, we might well have supported that kind of a resolution and then supported a secret ballot conducted by the board.

Again, of course, that is not a new suggestion. Since the Conservatives obviously don't know that their amendment to Section 11 was once part of The Trade Union Act, I'll tell them it was. It was given assent on April 3, 1969. Then it was Section 10(3) and it is simple to find. At that time Members opposite didn't approve of that but I think that all of us on this side of the House would have approved of it and would have supported it. As I suggest the Conservatives would have. At that time — and if that is your amendment, I think we would be approving it. At that time if the strike had continued for 30 days, the Trade Union, the employer or any employee — that is a key point because allowing any employee to go to the board is far different from asking 25 per cent, for instance, to create that chasm between themselves and the rest of the workers. Anyone really involved in a strike could apply for a vote to determine whether the majority of employees were in favor of accepting the employer's final offer.

Only one vote was allowed under that section. This amendment, as proposed, would allow a vote every day. The Conservative amendment in the way it was presented to me, in the Bill that I received, would allow any number of votes, even a vote a day. It would have resulted, this amendment, would result in a minority by demanding repeated votes, being able to punish union management, perhaps union management which had the majority approval of most of the workers. It could punish them with a vote a day if it chose to. Those votes could be silly and costly and embarrassing.

I said we oppose this proposal because it is unreasonable and, secondly, because it would bring disharmony in the work place. If this proposal had been presented in a little different way we might well be supporting that portion of the Resolution

and that portion of the proposed Bill that I have discussed. It would have met with our approval.

What would the union argument over the amendment as proposed be? This amendment about a majority vote to go to strike and that 25 per cent should not be able to force a back-to-work vote. The union argument would be — and I think it is a valid argument — that a company would only have had to let a strike drag on and then knowing that a vote was coming bear down on the workers, get that 25 per cent to apply and then a vote could be sprung upon them and then the company, just prior to the vote would make a final offer and the bargaining position of the union would be weakened. In effect, if the unions would characterize this Resolution . . . should I run through that again, is it the alligator which said, ruin a man's confidence — no it is the cricket, the cricket to the alligator. In effect the unions would characterize this Resolution as allowing the company to bypass the union, to deal almost directly with the workers, to bring disharmony between the union and the workers, and more important, to destroy the function of the unions and the function of the unions is important within our industrial relations system as we now have it. They are performing a valuable and important function and indeed the strength of the unions within our system is part of the reason that we have had relatively stable industrial relations in North America while the British without a firm trade union movement have had, although they have everyone unionized, have continuing problems and difficulties where every shop steward can take them out almost day by day. As I have said the whole purpose of the Act is to allow employees to choose a trade union to bargain for them.

Why the unions would ask should this purpose be defeated by allowing the company to bypass the union? I suggest that's a very good question that I now pose to the Conservatives. This proposal seeks to legislate how labor management relations will be handled well after the collective bargaining unit is established. That's called downstream meddling, I suppose.

Everyone knowledgeable about the labor management relations field says that legislating downstream is a mistake. There are simply too many variables. Problems vary from company to company and from union rep to union rep. What our Act and what The Wagner Act was designed to do was get the union and get the company launched down the road and then stay out of their way and give them good conciliation and hope that it won't be necessary to meddle downstream.

Meddling downstream is something that shouldn't be done by any jurisdiction and I suggest to the House that it would be a mistake to adopt this Resolution if for no other reason than that it opens that door.

Regardless of all of those things, when you come down to the nub and substance of my argument you come back to the whole purpose of the Act that after they have chosen a union to bargain for them, our Act is designed to bring industrial peace and our Act accomplishes that aim.

We say this is bad tinkering with the system as it now applies, though we are not very happy with the system as it now applies. It's as though the Russian national hockey team which plays a system took a Yakichef or something and he took off and

decided he'd be a Bobby Hull or a star and he'd skate all over the ice. You can't take a man out of his own system and expect him to work effectively in any other. By the same token you couldn't take one of our stars and put them on the Russian national hockey team and expect them to be very successful.

That's what these amendments try to do. They try to tinker with the system. We say change the system. Make some basic changes but don't tinker with the system. The system works as well as can be expected, given that it's not a very good system in the first place.

In closing, let me say again, though I don't propose to support this proposal that we sympathize with the proposal because frankly it has always bothered me that we don't have a particularly fair system for the individual worker. Nonetheless, I'm overpowered, I suggest, by the strength of the argument that to tamper is wrong but these tamperings would be ineffective. For my part with all due respect I suggest that the amendments though well intentioned are ill thought out and I don't particularly propose to take any further part in the debate, nor do I propose to support the Resolution.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. R. KATZMAN** (Rosthern): — On a Point of Privilege. I'd like to correct the Member for Wascana (Mr. Merchant). As usual his facts were wrong. I would be pleased to be the president of CUPE, but I am only the chief shop steward.

**HON. G.T. SNYDER** (Minister of Labour): — Mr. Speaker, I think we were entertained over the past period of time by the Member for Wascana (Mr. Merchant) in which I believed was quite an able attempt to cast himself in the mold of an understanding new Liberal. It becomes rather difficult when one recalls a period of only a matter of four short years ago when he and his colleagues opposite were cast in a somewhat different role. We remember those Liberal years and there are still some Members around who were part of the scene at that particular time when the stage was set, for a good deal of the industrial unrest which was to follow.

It struck me, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Wascana in attending some of his classes in industrial relations at the university had possibly picked up a few of the notes that were left lying on one of his instructors' desks and delivered from them a learned dissertation which I think was fairly enlightening. I do give the Member credit for taking the time and devoting himself to making himself, I believe, acquainted to a better degree than most Members of this House. Certainly better acquainted than the Leader of the Conservative Party (Mr. Collver) by far.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SNYDER:** — And I do give him full marks for diligence and hard work and I think without question the presentation which he made was one which was somewhat meritorious.

He was, I think, well along in his remarks attempting to follow what he had to say and it was a considerable period of time before I actually concluded that the Hon. Member had decided that he was not going to support the Resolution which was before us. I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that his feet were quite a long distance apart, a good deal of the time, when he spoke.

I do feel obliged, Mr. Speaker, to make a few remarks in connection with the Resolution which is before us. I think in relation to this Resolution many of us were somewhat disappointed that the Leader of the Conservative Party didn't take advantage of the opportunity to advance a few of his ideas related to the philosophy of his party with relation to labor matters and the whole question of industrial relations in particular. Instead he stood in his place for a moment or two and sacrificed his right to speak by introducing his labour critic, the Member for Rosthern (Mr. Katzman).

I would have thought, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Nipawin would have taken this opportunity to show some of the qualities of leadership which I believe he has avoided up until this point in time.

After all, Mr. Speaker, to be a devoted spokesman for the free enterprise party hardly sets him apart from the group that sits to his right. Through the 1975 general election, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Conservative Party stood for goodness and light and he confirmed that he was in favor of the practice of the sun coming up in the East and setting in the West. He was opposed to the Land Bank, but he favored a bank for land. Since he took his seat in this House, Mr. Speaker, we have discovered that he is prepared to come down four square on the side of right and he is quite emotional on the question of chewing gum in the House.

Having firmly established himself on so many critical matters of the day, I think we would have been pleased to learn some of his first hand views on such relatively minor matters as those surrounding this Resolution. I expect we can do little more perhaps than to speculate about the reluctance of the Member for Nipawin to stand in his place and speak on this Resolution. Obviously he has had some pressure put upon him to take a position as is stated in the Resolution.

I think without thoroughly understanding the implications of the proposal he has once again come down firmly on the side of freedom and democracy. That's not a bad position to assume, Mr. Speaker, providing you are conversant with your subject and providing the course of action that you proposed doesn't travel in the opposite direction.

I just want to take a moment or two, Mr. Speaker, to quote from a letter of November 1, 1975 over the signature of the Leader of the Conservative Party, which reads as follows:

Dear Friend: I received your note of October 15 regarding your desire to be decertified from the Service Employees International Union. I want you to know that our party is on record and will remain firmly behind your stand. Under a democracy, it is unacceptable for citizens not to be able to select the union of their choice, and we will be presenting amendments to The Labour Standards Act

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to facilitate this end. Although we do not believe that the present Government will see things our way, (because we believe that their intent is to force all citizens into unions of their choice), you may rest assured that after the next provincial election, which we intend to win, this situation will be rectified.

Yours sincerely, Dick Collver.

I am somewhat at a loss, Mr. Speaker, to determine how the Hon. Member reached the conclusion that Members of this Government somehow have a preference of one union over the other in terms of their choice for a trade union organization to represent their members. Clearly, it is of no concern of any Member who sits on this side of the House.

Please note specifically, Mr. Speaker, that in his letter of November 1, 1975, the Leader of the Conservatives proposes to amend The Labour Standards Act to facilitate this end.

It suddenly becomes obvious to all of us, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Nipawin doesn't appreciate the fact that The Labour Standards Act does not deal in any way with matters of this kind. The Labour Standards Act, in case he's not aware, deals with annual vacations, statutory holidays and other minimum requirements, conditions of employment. Clearly, it is The Trade Union Act which comes into play in terms of certification, decertification, strike votes, etc.

It seems that the Leader of the Conservative Party only discovered this since he wrote his letter on November 1, 1975, which I referred to earlier. It is clear that the Member either doesn't understand what he writes, or does not read what he signs.

Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is aimed at a problem between the Service Employees International Union and CUPE on one hand and the Health Sciences Association on the other. It is a complex jurisdictional problem between unions which has plagued the Labour Relations Board for some time. The problem arose, Mr. Speaker, when the Health Sciences Association attempted to gain bargaining rights for groups of hospital employees.

The Labour Relations Board, in their wisdom, determined that for the purpose of bargaining collectively, those employees who had a university degree, or equivalent training background, should be represented by the Health Sciences Association and that all others should be part of the existing unions, SEIU or CUPE, in each particular case.

The problem at St Pauls Hospital, Mr. Speaker, arose between SEIU and the Health Sciences Association. Service Employees International had been certified for some years to represent practically all of the employees at the hospital. However, for some time by mutual agreement, Service Employees had not bargained a contract for most of the technical people. I say by mutual agreement. The Health Sciences Association applied to the Labour Relations Board to be certified for the technical employees.

The Labour Relations Board determined, quite properly that those employees were already covered by an existing certification



order under the Act and that the application was out of line. Subsequently, Mr. Speaker, the technical employees applied to the Board to be deleted from the SEIU certification order. The Board declined to do so, apparently satisfied that the original unit was appropriate for the purposes of bargaining collectively and that SEIU was prepared to bargain for that particular group.

These, Mr. Speaker, are judgments that are historic in every jurisdiction in Canada, all ten provinces, the Federal Government and in the United States of America. To take from the Board that authority to determine the appropriateness of a unit would be tantamount to fragmenting the collective bargaining process and the creation of an archaic state of affairs. I suggest to you that the Board must have the power to determine the appropriateness of a collective bargaining unit. Otherwise, we would find if we were following the example suggested by the Leader of the Conservative Party you would find perhaps in one institution two, three or four unions, representing employees in that hospital, nursing home or similar institution, with each union, Mr. Speaker, capable of throwing up a picket line and paralyzing the operation and this is precisely what is being suggested by the Leader of the Conservatives.

So to follow the logic advanced in the Resolution would in effect allow laundry workers in a hospital to be represented by a different union perhaps than kitchen staff and a third union perhaps certified for the caretaking staff and so on, each union with a different certification order and with a different expiry date of their agreement.

I think one only needs to look at the grain-handling operation at shipping ports to appreciate the chaos which results from the fragmenting of the bargaining process with various unions involved with contracts expiring at different times.

It should be appreciated, Mr. Speaker, that our Labour Relations Board has worked diligently on complex matters related to jurisdictional problems such as this and an additional workload that has occupied them more fully over the past three or four years than at any time in our past history. The annual report of the Department of Labour for 1974-75 indicates an average of more than 11 days per sitting of the Labour Relations Board in 1974-75; an average of 11 days compared to 2.4 days in 1965-66, or a total of 133 days in 1974-75 compared to 35 days in 1965-66.

It should be known that the Labour Relations Board is comprised of nominees from organized labor and from the business community and I expect that the employer representatives will be known to the Member for Nipawin. He should know also that hearings before the Labour Relations Board are open to the public and I expect it might be a useful exercise for Members opposite to devote some time to this operation in order to gain some knowledge and insight into the complex matters which they propose to remedy with simplistic solutions.

While the Member for Nipawin chose not to speak on this Resolution which he moved, we did hear, however, from the Member for Rosthern (Mr. Katzman) and I must admit that I rather like the Hon. Member for Rosthern, misguided though he may be. I think it's obvious that members of the Saskatchewan work force, making up about a third of our population as they do, are vastly

underrepresented in this Legislature. Accordingly, I welcome the presence of another trade union member in the House. I must suggest, however, that it is rather unfortunate that the Hon. Member has such scant knowledge of The Trade Union Act, the statute which this Resolution seeks to amend.

We have before us, Mr. Speaker, a Resolution which I must honestly admit is somewhat difficult to comprehend. The implications of the Resolution are certainly not difficult to understand however. I am in a bit of a quandary in which to deal with, first, the nearly impenetrable wording of the Resolution or the dismaying implications of it.

To deal with the lighter of these two matters first, Mr. Speaker, let's look at the Resolution itself. It appears to ask the Government to amend The Trade Union Act in a very basic way. It says that whenever a vote is held among employees, for example, as part of making an application to the Labour Relations Board for the union of their choice to be certified as their bargaining agent or, as another example, when they wish to take a strike vote within their own organization, the Resolution then suggests that a straight majority should not be the only means of settling an issue.

Instead, Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before us suggests something called a "significant minority" (and you may be sure that each of us will interpret that significant minority somewhat differently), that this significant minority should have the right to overturn the will of the majority ascertained "in the usual way".

Then, Mr. Speaker, having brought the democratic process to a screaming halt, this undefined but certainly significant minority can call for a brand new performance, so to speak. This time for the Labour Relations Board sitting in as the adjudicator, so that these untutored workers can play their part.

For the edification of Members opposite who may not know, let me first explain the present situation with regard to a certification vote. In Saskatchewan the Labour Relations Board already has a statutory responsibility to determine whether a particular trade union does or does not represent the majority of employees in the work place. On the basis of the board's finding, certification or decertification is declared. At the present time in the event of 25 per cent of the employees in a unit requesting for a certification vote to the Labour Relations Board, the Board is then obliged to conduct such a vote. This is clearly a workable democratic procedure with provision for the voice of this so-called significant minority to be heard.

Insofar as strike votes or back-to-work votes are concerned my position, Mr. Speaker, is that these are matters of internal concern, and the government as such has no business interfering with the democratic rights of citizens and their associations, be it the Steel Workers of America or be it CUPE International, be it the College of Physicians and Surgeons or the Saskatchewan Law Society.

The inefficiency and duplication which could result from a Resolution such as is before this House today boggles the mind, Mr. Speaker.

One practical result I suggest would be to guarantee

unjustifiable delay. Obstruction of union rights is perhaps another way to put it.

Whenever a vote is held among any groups of people — be they workers who want to become unionized or company directors who want to complete a merger — I expect that 100 per cent unanimity is a very rare thing. With an amendment such as the one we are dealing with here, any minority group can temporarily flout the will of the majority and introduce an element of instability that could make the whole system break down.

Our only sane objective, Mr. Speaker, must be to streamline our labor relations, not needlessly complicate them. I think we have to admit that democracy is often rather a slow and ponderous process but surely this kind of deliberate retardation could never be justified on any reasonable grounds at all. I for one do not intend to be a party to it.

Furthermore, requiring workers to delay their democratically taken decision until they can re-enact it, like so many school children, before the Labour Relations Board, is an affront to every responsible working citizen in this province.

I regret that I have to point out to some Members of this Assembly that employees, even unionized employees, are first and foremost ordinary Saskatchewan citizens. They have gone to the same schools and they have learned the same lessons and played by the same rules; and in doing so I think it is safe to say that they have absorbed the same knowledge of, and respect for, the democratic process. Their traditions and their education and heritage in this province are likely to be very similar to those who are not classed as workers.

I can tell you positively, Mr. Speaker, that there is no evidence in Saskatchewan in any case (I might quarrel with the situation re the postal workers' problem a short while ago), but there is no evidence in Saskatchewan of any abuse of democratic principles by unions insofar as their internal affairs are concerned.

As it presently stands, our Trade Union Act requires an indication of majority support and the details are left up to those who are concerned — a very common practice in our western society and we have been doing that kind of voting quite successfully for several hundred years now.

Where strike vote or back-to-work votes are concerned, these are the business of the employee group concerned and their number, timing, and their location or other administrative details are the internal constitutional matters for the decision of the union or profession or whatever group it may be.

Perhaps I should point out here for the benefit of some of our newer Members of the House, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan have had a rather unpleasant experience with what could be termed as the "interim strike vote" as is being suggest in the latter half of the Resolution which is before us today.

Back in those days, prior to 1971, that the Member for Wascana would like to forget, in August of 1969, to be exact, there was added to The Trade Union Act what has become known as the "30-day strike vote clause". It provided that the

Labour Relations Board would conduct a strike vote on request by any person involved in a strike which had continued for 30 days. In the three short years, Mr. Speaker, that the Act was in effect, it was used 47 times. What it did, in virtually every one of those instances was to guarantee that no progress would be made in terms of collective bargaining for at least 30 days. It virtually guaranteed that every strike would last at least a minimum of 30 days. Every person involved in work stoppages in those years knew that the situation was a mockery. Genuine bargaining was not likely to proceed and both employers and employees were uncomfortable in such a degrading situation. I do not have to tell you who it was who suffered the most in practical terms. The provision blatantly took advantage of the financial pressures that are exerted on workers after they have been without a pay cheque for a month. After 30 days a settlement could be offered and a vote arranged for. Sometimes a very minimal settlement under pressures of finances.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe any reasonable person could wish to have that kind of injustice visited upon our Saskatchewan working men and women again.

Our experience in Saskatchewan has been that Trade Union leaders stay in very close contact with their membership during a strike and if an offer is made to them that represents a possible settlement, the union can put it to a vote at any time. There has never been any need for a legislated "interim strike vote" in this province as I have explained and there was ample evidence of the damage when we had one back in 1969.

It may be, Mr. Speaker, that this rather strange Resolution is part of an overall reaction to our inflation generated labor unrest. These are obviously unsettled times and some segments of our society have upon occasion been frustrated to the extent that they are coming close to demanding that some members of our society give up their hard-won democratic rights.

Let me assure you that now is the time, as never before, that we must hold to the democratic principles which have stood us in good stead.

All of us in this House, I would hope, are vitally interested in constructive steps which can be taken by government to improve the industrial relations' climate in this province, but I hope I have made it clear to Members here that this Resolution would do exactly the opposite. Insofar as it deals with the certification or decertification of a union, it is unnecessary since the present legislation gives the Labour Relations Board enough leeway to ascertain whether the wishes of the majority are in fact being made evident.

Where it deals with strike votes or back-to-work votes, Mr. Speaker, it implies that our traditional system of collective bargaining, firmly based upon democratic principles as it is, nevertheless is no longer to be trusted. This is the implication of the Resolution.

I think I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that despite its imperfections, our free collective bargaining procedure as it presently stands, is the best that we have to maintain an orderly system of labor relations which is compatible with our democratic values.

The precise suggestion which is embodied in this Resolution has been made in past years by some of the more extreme employer groups in this province. We rarely hear, Mr. Speaker, this kind of thing any more. Because modern, progressive employer associations do not at the present time consider this kind of nineteenth century public pronouncement. Even the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan in recent years, even they have refrained from this public posture of antagonism and I was pleased to see a further manifestation of that from the Member for Wascana. I would hope that the Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) is also in his place when the vote is taken later in the debate when noses are properly counted.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I am driven to wonder whether, in fact, those Hon. Members who share the same party affiliation with the author of this Resolution can actually, in conscience, support a retrograde measure such as is suggested.

Those of us, I believe, Mr. Speaker, who are in government, and I think you in Opposition, have a responsibility to see that everyone understands the basic democratic principles which underlie our labor relations system. Furthermore, we have a responsibility to protect those rights.

Please accept my apologies, Mr. Speaker, if I have strayed somewhat from the wording of this Resolution in trying to deal with its implications. The truth is, Mr. Speaker, I have read it and re-read it in light of my knowledge of the present Trade Union Act in this province and in light of knowledge of similar pieces of legislation across Canada. I have to admit that I am convinced that the Resolution is without merit.

On the other hand the suggested Bill which might arise from acceptance of this Resolution actually compounds the deficiencies rather than clearing them away.

It suggests for example that Section 6 of our present Act should be amended by adding a clause which says the Labour Relations Board would have to order a vote on a certification application if 10 per cent or more of the employees of a unit decided that they wanted one.

As I explained earlier, presently the Board orders a vote if it is necessary to determine the wishes of the majority. What the amendment would do is this in a case where 90 per cent of the employees had indicated support of an application for certification, it would allow a mere 10 per cent to frustrate that overwhelming majority and cause needless delay. It would be clumsy, awkward and would protect no one.

In practical terms it could hold up nearly every application for certification because it certainly wouldn't be too difficult to find 10 per cent of the people in an employee group who would sign a petition to that effect. I think such practices were common a generation ago. I think they are sadly out of date in the 1970s. In fact, no other province in Canada has any provisions remotely resembling this one.

Another amendment which is suggested in the companion Bill, Mr. Speaker, would require the Labour Relations Board to conduct a vote to determine whether an existing bargaining agent should continue to represent employees in a unit where 25 per cent or more of the employees indicate that they want a vote. The

present practice, Mr. Speaker, is that the Board will entertain a decertification application during the 30-60 day hunting period where it is supported by more than 50 per cent of the employees in a unit.

Once again, the Resolution and the Bill contemplates interference with the well-established and time-tested democratic principle of majority rule. All this amendment would do would be to introduce an element of instability because I expect there will always be a group of people in any organized society that will be dissatisfied.

Another feature of this proposed Bill, as I understand it, is an unvarnished attempt to impose another 30-day strike vote clause on the working people of this province. It says where a strike continues for 30 days, the trade union or 25 per cent of the employees in a unit may apply to the Labour Relations Board to have a strike vote conducted.

I have already described the devastating effect of that kind of clause during the previous Liberal administration. Furthermore, it is nonsense to imply, as this amendment does, that when a reasonable offer is made, the union will not take that offer to its membership. Such needless clauses seriously I think, undermine the authority of the bargaining agent and are stridently anti-union and anti-democratic.

A strike vote clause such as this one is also glaringly biased in favor of the management because it seeks to impose conditions on workers which are never applied to employers.

If a vote must be held among the employees concerning an offer made by management, surely it is only fair that workers should have a countervailing right to go to the shareholders or the board of directors for a vote on the union's last position. Bargaining, is bargaining after all, and to keep it honest on both sides perhaps both should have the same right to express their wishes and have them acknowledged by the other party.

Another amendment the Hon. Member would like to set before you is that, prior to a 30-day strike vote taking place, the Labour Relations Board would require that the terms of the offer being made must be posted on bulletin boards at all places of work for all employees to read. If this was done by a private employer this would clearly constitute an unfair labor practice and if done in this way the Labour Relations Board would be a party to that unfair labor practice. A ridiculous situation, in fact. This would be true in any jurisdiction in Canada. Not just in Saskatchewan. It evidently uses another set of principles altogether, principles which come out of the dark ages and fly in the face of hard-won rights. Just think on this for a minute. One of the very basic principles of our system of collective bargaining is that an employer is required to negotiate only with the duly appointed agent of his employees. In most cases, in virtually all cases, this means the certified union.

If this remarkable clause ever saw the light of day, it would have the effect of allowing the employer to bargain individually with each of the employees utterly repudiating the basic principles behind the Trade Union movement, not here in Saskatchewan, not here in Canada, but all over the world.

I can hardly believe that this is being seriously suggested as possible legislation, Mr. Speaker; but then I had trouble believing the Resolution with which it was associated.

Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, I cannot condone either the Resolution or the suggested bill which would follow its acceptance. Such examples of anti-democratic thinking are rare indeed and I think we should be thankful for that.

I find the proposal devious and repugnant, born out of contempt for established democratic practices, or to be more charitable, the product of a lack of knowledge or basic understanding of labor management relations. I would hope that the latter be the fact.

I believe the suggestion embodied in the Resolution is a formula for conflict. I believe the Resolution and the proposed Bill fly in the face of trade union legislation in other parts of Canada. I am convinced that there is not another Labour Minister across Canada, be he Liberal or Tory, that would accept such an approach and would I am sure regard this kind of legislation the kind of thought provoking gestures that are embodied in the Resolution as inflammatory and retrograde.

I would invite Hon. Members to vote against the proposed Resolution.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. E.C. MALONE** (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, I have listened with interest to remarks of both the Member for Regina Wascana and the Minister of Labour. Obviously both gentlemen spent a good deal of time preparing their remarks for today's debate. Although one wonders if the Minister of Labour had perhaps some assistance from members of his Department preparing his remarks. But nevertheless, they are both worthy of consideration, worthy of further study before this matter comes to a vote. There are a number of Members of our caucus who are unable to be here tonight due to illness, or being out of town, I am sure that they would like to consider the remarks that have been made.

Accordingly, I ask leave at this time to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:24 o'clock p.m.