

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fifth Session — Eighteenth Legislature

April 11, 1987

The Assembly met at 2:00 o'clock p.m.

On the Orders of the Day

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. W.H. STODALKA (Maple Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I believe we would like to welcome all of the interested parents and ratepayers who are visiting the Legislature today and particularly those people who are interested in education. We hope you enjoy your stay here this afternoon and the proceedings of the Legislature.

HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways): — I would also like to welcome all of the visitors to the gallery. We have a very special one here today, Mr. Speaker. Many of us have often said about the history of Saskatchewan and all of the stories that are rampant among old timers, 'somebody ought to put that together before it is too late'. I would like the gentleman, Mr. Larsen to please stand, from Swift Current, formerly of Abbey, the Cabri country — he has compiled the story of that area in his book, 'Yesterday is Gone Forever'.

I am proud to introduce an old-timer who is 83 years young and has used his time and his talents from his early years, coming from Norway as a boy of nine years old, coming to the United States and then coming up to the Cabri country in 1912. He has been a cowboy; rode on the Miner ranch, his family supplied the meat for the town of Cabri as butchers for 50 years. He has also been a cattle dealer and a number of other things.

Once again I would like to say how proud I am to introduce Mr. Larsen to you and to this Assembly, as one of Saskatchewan's bona fide old-timers, a pioneer who has actually done a favor to all of us by recording the history. Thank you, Mr. Larsen.

HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. G.N. WIPF (Prince Albert-Duck Lake): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly, I believe the largest group of students who have ever visited the Assembly, of 125 from the Wesmore Junior High School. They are seated in the east gallery, the west gallery and the Speaker's Gallery. They are accompanied here today by their teachers and chaperones, Mr. Twyver, Mr. Drobot, Mr. Pennefather, Miss Kostynuk, Mr. Balan and Mr. Waldner.

Some of them have visited the RCMP Barracks this morning. Many of them had to get up at 5:00 o'clock this morning to arrive here from Prince Albert and district. I do hope that their stay here today will be educational and that they enjoy their trip to Regina and what they learn in Regina. I wish you a very safe trip home and I will be meeting with you right after question period for pictures out in the gallery.

HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Shellbrook): — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to welcome to the Assembly this afternoon, the students from Wesmore Junior High. The students who come to Wesmore Junior High come from the communities surrounding the city of Prince Albert and from the rural districts. Many of the students who are here this afternoon come from the constituency of Shellbrook and I want to welcome you to the Assembly this afternoon, and I along with the hon. member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake will meet with you later this afternoon and be entreated to some questions perhaps. I do hope you have an enjoyable stay and that your visit here will be informative.

WELCOME TO TRUSTEES

MR. R.H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Conservative caucus, I would like to welcome the trustees and visitors that are here today. In particular, I want to welcome and introduce to you a group of people with whom I had a great deal of association, which began in 1951. It ended, I suppose, in some way in 1971. That is a group of trustees from the Borderland School Unit. It is good to meet with them all today and after 20 years of being with them I believe it is the first time that I have seen them together. I welcome them to the Assembly.

HON. D.L. FARIS (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might add my greetings to the trustees of the South East section of the province who have come here today. I hope that, following question period, we might have some opportunity for members to possibly meet in smaller groups and have smaller sorts of discussions. I want to thank them for coming and hope they have a safe journey home.

QUESTIONS

Dairy Strike

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, through you, I would like to direct a question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, in light of the current strike which is still continuing and the hardships which it is imposing on the dairy farmers of Saskatchewan and on the consumers of Saskatchewan, the strike of employees of Dairy Producers Co-operative and of Palm Dairies which is causing great numbers of pounds of milk to be dumped daily, which cannot be recovered, Mr. Premier, will you now offer your personal services to mediate a settlement of this strike and, failing that, would you introduce immediately a 90 day cooling off period?

HON. MR. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I think hon. members will have noted that the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Labour are not in their seats. They are not in their seats because they are, at this moment, having a meeting which we have convened between the representatives of the dairy companies, namely the manager of Palm Dairies, the president of the Co-op Dairy Producers, the general manager of the Co-op Dairy Producers and one of their additional staff, and at the same meeting, representatives of the Canadian Food and Allied Workers, the Teamsters Union, the Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union, and also three representatives of the Saskatchewan Milk Producers Association and representatives of the government.

Yesterday some of our staff met with the union representatives, and with the company representatives this morning. The Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Consumer Affairs met with representatives of the Saskatchewan Milk Producers Association, and we convened this morning for 2 o'clock this afternoon, a meeting of all the interested groups namely, the two dairies, the unions, the milk producers under the auspices of

the government, with the two ministers. I am very hopeful we will be able to impress upon the parties the concern felt not only by the government of Saskatchewan but by the Saskatchewan Milk Producers Association who very forcibly expressed their concern to us this morning. We hope this concern will be so forcibly imprinted upon the management and union in this dispute, that a speedy resolution of the dispute will be arrived at.

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, is the Mr. Premier aware the commodity that we are dealing with, namely milk, is a highly perishable commodity? Is the Premier aware that as the dairy producers are forced to dispose of this milk down a sewer, they are, in effect, losing income or a product that can never be recaptured? It is not like anything else that you can hold back and it is there when the strike is over — you are losing something that can never be recaptured. My question, Mr. Premier is, are you prepared to assure the dairy producers of this province, who have very high ongoing day to day costs, that the financial losses they are now receiving will, in some way or form, be lessened by your government?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I think all of us are aware of the particularly difficult conditions that work stoppage of this kind imposes upon milk producers. It is, as the hon. member says, not quite the same as holding cattle off the market because while cattle lose some value when being held off the market, it is not a complete loss. It is not like workers withdrawing their labor because while it is a total loss for one day, it is not a compounded loss as it is for milk producers. So we are very conscious of the fact that milk producers lose more than one day's pay if they have to withhold from the market one day's milk supply — much more than one day's pay — we are very well aware of that. So we are bending our best efforts to getting a speedy conclusion to this work stoppage. We think all parties will be best served by a speedy conclusion to the work stoppage so that there will be no further loss. Our efforts should be directed primarily to eliminating the loss rather than, at this point at least, trying to compensate for losses which with perhaps our most strenuous efforts can be avoided.

MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Final Supplementary. Question to the Premier, would the Premier not agree that this is more than anything a consumer matter. The 14 per cent off for already made will cause a two cent increase per quart in the cost of milk and I ask the Premier why the Minister of Consumer Affairs is not involved in the meetings and whether the Premier would not agree that to have a passage of such a large increase in these times on to the consumers and particularly people with young families is a dangerous direction to go just as we come out of the AIB (Anti-inflation Board) controls?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, while I have concern for consumers I don't want this to be misunderstood. I think our first concern at this time must be for the milk producers because while the consumers are undoubtedly suffering some loss and while, if there is an increase in cost, it will be passed through and there will be inevitably some increase in the price of milk as there has been in many other commodities, we must, I think, focus right now on the real problems of the milk producers who are losing very much more than the consumers will lose in the foreseeable future.

May I take the opportunity to correct a number of news comments which were made with respect to what I said yesterday about consumers. Mr. Speaker, I want to respond with respect to consumers to what the member for Wascana has said. It is clear that consumers will not suffer immediately because, as I said yesterday, there will be powdered milk, canned milk and formula milk in all likelihood available. Notwithstanding

the fact that the government of Saskatchewan has no intention and has given no indication that it will bring any milk into this province from any other province. Fortunately the Hansard is here and is available for anyone to see what I said. I am glad to know that; it is a great comfort when dealing with members of the opposition and members of the press. What I do want to say is that we are concerned about the plight of consumers but we are now more concerned about the plight of milk producers in this immediate period ahead.

Education Bill 22

MR. STODALKA: — A question to the Minister of Education. In light of the fact that your changing of certain sections of the bill has proved highly controversial and probably added a lot of provocation and also the fact that you have written a letter to trustees in which you circumvented, as you might say, the provincial executive of the trustees' organization and has caused a lot of complication and certainly a lot of problems that you are going to have some affect on education. Would the Minister of Education give us assurance that he will sit down with these people and try to resolve the situation and will not continue to expand any problems that we may have, like running advertisements in the newspapers?

HON. D.L. FARIS (Minister of Education): — Mr. Speaker, I can certainly give you the assurance we will work things out. Of course, the member has asked the question in a sort of way that implies where you stop beating your wife, and we don't imply that at all. But we certainly do intend to give the public continuing information on this bill.

MR. STODALKA: — Can the minister indicate whether or not he will actually sit down with the members of the Trustees Association, not just the public school as a whole? And also another question while the minister is on his feet. I was really interested in why he chose the method of writing a letter to all trustees when he was dealing with the Trustees' Association and when you dealt with the Teacher's Federation, at an earlier period, the negotiations then took place between two different levels. It seems to me that certainly the step that you took proved to sort of a defiant method.

MR. FARIS: — Mr. Speaker, I tell you that it is simply not true that I worked simply through the STF. I wrote letters to many teachers. I met with many groups of teachers and trustees, in small groups. I must have met with close to 40 boards throughout the province in having these discussions. I certainly intend to continue to meet with both individual teachers and trustees, as well as with the executives of the organizations.

MR. STODALKA: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister give us some assurance that when he has amendments to the proposed legislation on Bill 22, if that is the step that he is going to follow, that we will receive these amendments in ample time, at least a week or two weeks possibly before the final passing of the legislation, so that we can properly study them and interested people can also properly study them?

MR. FARIS: — Well, if the hon. member will show me his amendments - he says he has amendments that he intends to make to the act. I am sure that we can sit down and discuss these matters. I have, in the past, met with members of the Opposition and discussed The Education Act and I would be pleased to do that in the future.

MR. R.H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Minister, as a result of the questions which I asked you very late, yesterday, during question period and listening to the comments made by the different speakers in front of this Legislature today, would the minister not agree that this is the right time in the history of the province, as far as education is concerned, that we should call the Education Committee together of this Legislature, and by doing so, Mr. Minister, would you not agree that much of the difficulties that exist between the various bodies, this will be the best way to bring the least interference to the classrooms of Saskatchewan?

MR. FARIS: — No, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't agree with that at all. The member would know, as all members of this House would know by this time, that that committee has not been called for 54 years. Many changes, many important changes have been made in legislation during that time. I take, for example during the former government when the area bargaining was brought in the Education Committee was not called. My suggestion is that if that Education Committee was called that we would find various members of the opposition taking chances to inflame political activity in that committee and I suggest that some of the speeches which were made by members of the opposition in front of the Legislature today would bear that out.

MR. BAILEY: — I would like to inform in my supplementary question that the minister can rest assured that members of the opposition will in fact not inflame and having said that, Mr. Minister and having made a commitment at this time, that we will be very glad to serve on this committee, will that change your mind even though the committee has not been called to get the politics out of the classrooms of Saskatchewan?

MR. FARIS: — Mr. Speaker, there is no politics in the classrooms of Saskatchewan and I think that if there is anything being inflamed in this province it is by the members of the opposition. We are quite willing and have asked to meet with representatives and individual members of trustees and the Trustees' Association, teachers and the Teachers' Association and we shall continue to do so.

Telegram from CRTC

MR. MacDONALD: — I would like to ask the Attorney General if he is aware of a telegram received from the Canadian Radio and Television Telecommunication Commission to Mr. Fred Wagner of Cable Regina this morning, in which the commission drew to the attention of Cable Regina that they were contravening section 5 of the Cable Television Regulations which forbids the use of any channel of your undertaking for any purpose other than is authorized by licence and also the fact that section 29 of The Broadcast Act provides that the breach of the provisions of any regulations is an offence punishable by summary conviction. Would the Attorney General indicate how he is going to eliminate this situation, what he is going to do when an innocent corporation in the province of Saskatchewan is liable for a summary conviction contravening a federal act because of the acts of Sask Tel and the government of Saskatchewan?

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of such a telegram until the hon. member just brought it to my attention. As to the second part of the question I can only say that the situation at law as it is at least represented by the hon. member and by that communication was the situation as it existed in middle February, late January of this year straight through to April 7th of this year, 1978, where there was the use of a channel by CPN on the conventional cable spectrum. The

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CRTC surely must have known of that and surely Cable Regina and the conventional licencees must have known of that. I can see hardly any reason for change in the factual or legal circumstances after April 7.

MR. MacDONALD: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I would like to also inform the minister and is he aware, that the CRTC, in this telegram advised Cable Regina and the other conventional cable operators in the province of Saskatchewan, 'Kindly advise by return as to the steps being taken to correct the unauthorized use of channels', and let me quote the pertinent section:

You should of course be aware in formulating any reply that when the executive committee considers this matter, one of the opinions before it will be to prosecute.

I say that the government of Saskatchewan is placing in jeopardy . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. The member is making a debatable statement.

Legal Interpretation — Proposed Education Act

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of the Conservative Opposition): — My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General. In the light of the apparent discrepancy in the remarks of the Premier and the Minister of Education this afternoon on the steps of the Legislature, and those on the other hand of the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, of myself and of the president of the SSTA, would the Attorney General's Department provide both to the Minister of Education and to the Premier, and in addition to that, to this Legislature, any legal interpretations of the proposed education act that he may have provided? Will he provide such . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order.

Availability of Industrial Milk Supplies

MR. J. WIEBE (Morse):— A question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture. As you are aware, I am sure, many of the quotas which presently exist in the province or Saskatchewan could be in jeopardy in regard to the federal market sharing quotas now in effect, and the possibility that a prolonged strike could put those quotas in jeopardy. Has your office and the office of the Minister of Agriculture been in contact at all with the federal Dairy Commission to ensure that these quotas, if the strike should be prolonged, will not be put in jeopardy for future years?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, we are aware, of course, that the industrial milk quota could be affected if we weren't able to fulfil the quota which has been allocated to Saskatchewan. We don't anticipate that this is likely to occur because of one or two or three days stoppage. We do, however, take very seriously the point raised by the hon. member that if there should be any prolonged stoppage so that industrial milk products were not available to fill our quota, then our quota might be in jeopardy.

I don't know whether the Minister of Agriculture has contacted the Canadian Dairy Commission. I am not clear on whether he has. I know that he is considering the issue and will be taking such steps as are necessary if in the unlikely event that this work stoppage is prolonged to do what we can to protect our quota.

MR. WIEBE: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The average producer, as a result of having to dump milk on the ground as of this morning, could be put in the position of losing anywhere from \$1,500 to \$2,200 per day. Dairy units are very highly costly intensified units and the provincial governments, as well as other governments, have encouraged young people to get into the dairy industry, mainly because we have not met our maximum of production in the province of Saskatchewan. Many of these, of course, are involved in Farm Start loans. In the event that the strike should not be settled shortly, has your office, through the Minister of Agriculture, set up machinery to ensure that default of payment of Farm Start loans will not be put in jeopardy as well, as a result of the dumping action which is taking place today?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I think that has not been done as yet. We are conscious of the point you raised. Members will be aware of the steps taken by the government to increase dairy production over the last four or five years with substantial grants for modernization and a good number of Farm Start loans with a grant component to young people, particularly getting into the dairy industry, a very high capital industry. Accordingly the losses when they are not able to deliver are significant and accumulate rapidly. We are therefore very aware of the adverse effect this will have on their ability to repay their Farm Start loans. We are giving consideration to that, but we think it is premature to announce any particular policy initiative in this regard at this time. We are very hopeful that the work stoppage will be short and that the impact accordingly, while severe, will be over in a very short length of time and, in the long run therefore, will not be significant.

MISS L.B. CLIFFORD (Wilkie): — I have question to the Premier. Upon questioning yesterday, the Premier suggested that there would be a number of alternatives to fluid milk. I made a couple of trips today, in the mid-morning, to a number of the larger supermarkets. Three quarters per cent of the supermarkets I called on did not have fluid milk, fifty per cent of them did not have any powdered milk.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. I will take the next question.

Discrepancy in Gas Prices Along Border

MR. BAILEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Revenue. Mr. Minister, last week in this House, I asked you a question concerning the government's intention as to what it was going to do to alleviate the difficult problems which the Saskatchewan business people (garages mainly) were having along the border in view of the discrepancy in gas prices. You indicated to the House at that time that a policy would be forthcoming in a very few days. Have you reached the decision as to what your policy will be and have you been in communication with some of the businesses along the border?

HON. W.A. ROBBINS (Minister of Revenue): — The policy will be announced in due course. Mr. Speaker, correctly, milk has taken precedence over gasoline.

MR. R.H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — Did the minister clear up any new business since I last asked this question in the House that have closed their doors and have you been in communication with additional businesses since my last question in this House last week?

HON. W.A. ROBBINS (Minister of Revenue): — I have had one phone call from

Lloydminster.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Revenue. Are you indicating by your statement in reply to the first question asked by the member for Rosetown-Elrose, that your government is only competent to deal with one issue at a time, and are in fact, forgoing the serious problems raised because of the 20 cent a gallon tax discrepancy between Alberta and Saskatchewan?

MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Speaker, we are looking at all the options and they will be announced in due course.

Bill 22 Amendments

MR. G.H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Education. In light of the concern with regards to Bill 22, and your comments of a few moments ago respecting amendments, would the minister not agree that there would be no need for us to bring in our amendments if the government would bring in their amendments in order to clean up the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — Mr. Speaker, I have no idea what the hon. member intends to bring in as amendments. Therefore, I cannot answer that question.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order!

Out of Province Milk Supply

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — A question to the Premier. Yesterday in this House, you indicated that you were in favor, by your comments on page 1226, of the bringing in of milk from another province. Are you intending to co-operate with Dominion Stores who, this morning, said they would bring milk in from another province?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, my comments speak for themselves. I did not indicate: (a) that I was in favor if it, or, (b) that the government would do anything. You asked what would happen if there was an absolute shortage of milk. I gave my prediction, and only my prediction, that if there is an absolute shortage of milk, if it is difficult to meet emergency situations in hospitals, it is difficult to think that there would be no supplies of powdered milk, no supplies of canned milk, no supplies of formula, coming into Saskatchewan if in fact there was an absolute shortage. That was my belief, and I still think it is difficult to believe there would be none. I expressed no approval or disapproval and I expressed no policy of the government of Saskatchewan!

MR. KATZMAN: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The prior statement you made was there are no Saskatchewan herds available. There are cattle elsewhere and therefore you were indicating that you were approving milk to come in from other provinces during this strike.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member needs somebody to assist him in interpreting what the clear words state. 'I'm simply stating as a proposition,' and now I am reading the words, not expressing approval, disapproval, my idea, government policy, 'I am stating as a proposition that if there is a shortage of milk in Saskatchewan because there are no deliveries from Saskatchewan herds, we can be reasonably confident that milk would come from cattle elsewhere to meet the emergency

situations in hospitals. It is difficult to think that there would be no supplies of powdered milk, no supplies of canned milk, no supplies of formula coming into Saskatchewan, if in fact there was an absolute shortage. I simply do not believe that there would be . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Next question. Member for Wascana.

CABLE REGINA — ISSUANCE OF CLAIM

MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Attorney General.

I just spoke, regarding Cable Regina, to Fred Wagman. He tells me that the issuance of a statement of claim against Sask Tel is imminent, that it will definitely be out within the next one or two or three days at the latest. What will be the reaction of the government to solving this mess which Sask Tel has created for Cable and CPN in Regina?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, the reaction of the government really is one of watching this matter with interest, but the statement of claim will be issued against Sask Tel, as you have indicated, and I presume that Sask Tel will have legal counsel to advise them of their rights and will be governed by the legal and other obligations that Sask Tel thinks it has or doesn't have.

MR. MERCHANT: — Does the minister not feel that having brought Sask Tel into the mess and having put CPN and Cable Regina into the mess, and taking into account that Sask Tel's reaction when policy questions are advanced in Crown Corporations is to say, these were all government decisions, does the minister in charge not take the view that having put the cable community into this box, in Regina, it is now the responsibility of the government to extricate Sask Tel and the cable companies?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I think the dean of the House has described it accurately. I think the box exists entirely in the mind of the member for Wascana. I just hope that isn't too big a box, otherwise there will be some problems there.

Mr. Speaker, the situation simply is as follows: I repeat, again, Channel three has been used by CPN for months, with the knowledge of the licensees. Presumably if it is contrary to the licensees obligations of the CRTC, today, it was two weeks ago, or two months ago, or three months ago. No action was taken by the CRTC then. Why should there be an assumption that action will be taken by the CRTC today? If there is a legal action as to the obligations that exist between Sask Tel and the licensee, the courts are the proper body to resolve that legal interpretation.

I close, by saying, that Sask Tel is a common carrier. There are more than just one customer involved. The Conventional Cable licensee is a customer. CPN is a customer also and Sask Tel is trying to balance the competing customer needs in this area. That's the best that they are going to do, they are doing it according to the corporate responsibility that they have.

Dairy Strike

MR. BIRKBECK: — A question to the premier regarding the dairy producers' strike in the province. The issue, Mr. Speaker, very simply is how are these losses going to be made up? Therefore, Mr. Premier, I ask you, will you be making a request to the Milk Control Board that the price increases to the dairy farmers in this province will be increased to

an amount which will offset these losses in the next six months or a year at the outside?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I think that it would be inappropriate for the government of Saskatchewan to make representation to the Milk Control Board to say that they should grant increases. No doubt the appropriate parties who have status to apply to the Milk Control Board for increases, that is the milk producers or the dairy producers will in due course, no doubt, as they have in the past, make applications and they will be dealt with in all the circumstances and doubtless one of the circumstances will be these losses which may have been suffered by milk producers.

Leave Requested to Introduce Bill

MR. MacDONALD: — By leave, Mr. Speaker, I would beg the indulgence of the House to be very brief, I would beg leave to introduce a bill, An Act respecting a Certain dispute between Dairy Producers Co-op Ltd., . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! The member has asked leave to introduce a bill. The member has no opportunity to explain the bill, the member may just introduce the bill.

MR. MacDONALD: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave with the indulgence of the House to move a bill, first, second and third reading today. An Act respecting a Certain dispute between Dairy Producers Co-op Ltd., Palm Dairies Ltd., and certain of their Employees. The short title of this act may be cited as The Dairy Workers Return to Work Act, 1978. I so introduce, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — Does the hon. member have leave to introduce the said bill?

Motion negatived.

PRIORITY OF DEBATE — Dairy Workers' Strike

MR. J. WIEBE (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, prior to orders of the day, I would like to move, seconded by Mr. McMillan, the hon. member for Kindersley, that priority of debate be given to the urgent and compelling need for this Assembly to discuss:

- (a) the need for this Assembly to help end the senseless dumping of about 2 million pounds of milk per day and its implications for the consumer, the producers and the economy of Saskatchewan;
- (b) the imminent loss by Saskatchewan milk producers of their present quota to other provinces, and
- (c) the need for this Assembly to pass legislation calling for a cooling-off period to end the anxiety being experienced by every man, woman and child of the province; to end the current atmosphere of confrontation and to allow the contract dispute to be settled in an atmosphere of reconciliation.

MR. SPEAKER: — The hon. member has asked leave to introduce the motion which he has just read.

Two notices were received in the Clerk's office this morning regarding a priority of debate under rule 17. The first notice was received at 8:30 a.m. from the hon. member

for Morse, and the second, at 8:31 a.m. from the hon. member for Moosomin, for which I thank the hon. members.

I refer all hon. members to rule 17 (3) which states

Notices of motion for priority of debate to discuss a matter of urgent public importance shall be recognized in the order in which such notices were received by the Clerk.

The notice received from the hon. member for Morse must be considered first. I therefore ask, does the member for Morse have leave to proceed?

Motion agreed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. WIEBE: — As has been evident in the question period today and the concern being expressed on the news media throughout the province, the situation in regard to the milk producers of the province is a very serious one and I wish at this time to thank the Speaker and members of this Assembly for their consideration in agreeing to allow the priority of debate for today.

As I am sure all of us are aware Saskatchewan has been, always will be and is at present a province whose chief source of livelihood comes from the land. Mr. Speaker, and fellow MLAs, we are an agricultural society and we are very proud of it. A very important part of that livelihood today, in my view, is being threatened. Midnight last Sunday negotiations between the employees' union and the Dairy Producers Co-operative and Palm Dairies in the province of Saskatchewan broke down with a result that a strike was called for midnight Sunday night.

Farmers throughout the province of Saskatchewan, dairy producers throughout the province of Saskatchewan as a whole have approximately two days of storage facilities on their particular farming enterprises. I go back to the fact that the strike was called at midnight Sunday night. Starting today up to 2 million pounds of milk per day will be dumped down the sewers in the province of Saskatchewan. Let me point out that this is a product that is needed in a hungry world and in a hungry province, as well it is a product that is perishable and cannot be kept for long periods of time.

Another interesting side point Mr. Speaker, is that the only other way that the dairy producers can deal with the milk that they are producing is by separating that milk into cream; cream will store for up to two weeks in proper cool facilities. The interesting part is that in an agricultural province like Saskatchewan there are very, very few cream separators left with a result that very few dairies, if they wished to follow this route, would not even have the opportunity to separate their milk into cream and therefore save some of the production which they are presently losing.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, it is very urgent that this Assembly help to end this senseless dumping of 2 million pounds of milk products throughout the province of Saskatchewan. What do we as a province have at stake? First of all let me mention that Saskatchewan has yet to reach its potential in terms of dairy production in this province. The dairy industry, I believe, is proof of what all segments of our provincial agricultural industry have been striving for over the past number of years. Dairy is one example of what we would like to see happen to all farm commodities in the province

of Saskatchewan. Let me explain, Mr. Speaker. We produce the raw material; we produce the milk. In dairy we also process that material and also in dairy we market the finished product right within the province of Saskatchewan. This is an example, I think, that all of us in this Legislature and throughout this province should be striving for, not only in terms of dairy, but in terms of cattle production. Why should we be shipping our cattle down East, have the eastern Canadians take advantage of the fattening, production and marketing of that particular product? The same thing applies to our rapeseed, to our oil and even, for that part, to the grain which we produce in Saskatchewan.

What is happening is that one of the two agricultural industries in the province, in which we do carry through the whole cycle right within this province, is being threatened today by the actions of the breakdown between negotiations between management and labor.

This segment of our economy, let me point out as well, creates jobs, the highest rate of income for producers involved in dairy, and also it provides a good product to sell and adds greatly to the total provincial picture of our provincial economy, not only in this year, but in years ahead.

If the strike, Mr. Speaker, is allowed to go on, if it is prolonged longer than today's date, we stand a very real chance of losing all of this. Let me explain further that the dairy industry is a high gross income business as compared to other operations. As well, its net operating costs are extremely high and its capital costs are extremely high. Dairy men, because of this high capital cost and high operating cost, are financed to the hilt and there is no getting around it.

Any dairy farmer who has been in business for 10, 15 or 20 years may not be in that position. Much of this huge capital cost was acquired when prices were lower; he has now had an opportunity over the past year to retire a lot of that capital cost but he is not in the same position today as many of our younger producers — many of the young men throughout the province which we, as a government, not only this government but previous governments prior to this, encouraged to get into agriculture and encouraged to get into the dairy industry.

I was very pleased in my request today to the Premier, that he said that some consideration would be given to Farm Start applicants. Young men who have started up a dairy through Farm Start will be given consideration in the event that this strike should continue past today.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that this will not happen. I hope that it will not be necessary for the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture to make representation to the Federal Dairy Commission to try to preserve the quotas which we presently have and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that it will not be necessary for the Department of Agriculture to make changes to facilitate Farm Start loanees who may find themselves in financial difficulties because of this strike.

Saskatchewan itself only has approximately 1,040 dairy producers within its boundaries, 540 are involved in fluid milk and about 500 in industrial milk. When you look at Saskatchewan as a total agricultural picture and the amount of farmers involved in Saskatchewan, 1,040 is not a great figure. I think all governments over the past have been striving to increase that figure — striving to ensure that we can become self-sufficient and that we can reach our total potential in terms of dairy production in Saskatchewan. If the strike is prolonged, we could lose the gains that we have made

today. If the strike is prolonged, we may find out a month from now that we no longer have 1,040 dairy producers in the province. We may find, because of the fact that each and every dairy producer could, on the average, be losing up to \$2,200 a day, that in a month from now we could only have 940 dairy producers. Instead of increasing that figure, the actions of a prolonged strike could very drastically have a reverse effect.

Again, Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate as well that, in regard to dairy, dairy as a segment of our agricultural society that is different from other segments of the society, as I said earlier, dairy is a very high capital and operating cost procedure. As well, individuals who are attracted to dairy, I think, are probably some of the most staunch agricultural people in the province of Saskatchewan because dairy today is a 365-day-a-year job, twice a day, each and every day and there is no way that they can have any form of break in regard to the particular operation that they operate. Therefore, I believe it is very important that proper incentive be given to encourage young farmers in the province to go into the dairy industry and, by this Assembly allowing this strike to go past today's date, is not adding the proper incentive that is required to encourage young men throughout the province of Saskatchewan to go into the agricultural industry.

What does it mean in terms of dollars to the producer and to the province of Saskatchewan? As I said earlier, 1040 producers produce approximately two million pounds of milk per day. About half of that, one million pounds, is industrial milk which sell at \$8 per hundredweight, or approximately \$80,000. The other half is consumed in fluid milk at \$12 per hundredweight which accounts for approximately \$120,000, making a total cost to the actual producer in the province of Saskatchewan of over \$200,000 per day for every day that the strike is allowed to go on past today's date.

When you take the average, 1,040 producers and divide that into \$220,000 per day, you are looking at an average loss of \$2,000 per producer per day. You stretch that over a two week period and you are looking at a loss of revenue of \$28,000.

Mr. Speaker, we are not dealing in small sums of money. We are dealing in fairly large sums of money. The margin of profit in dairy is not that great so that the chances of recovering that loss, by the producer, over the years ahead, is very, very slim. This is why, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is very, very imperative that all members of this Assembly accept their responsibility, accept the responsibility that is due to the milk producers in this province and enact legislation, legislation, Mr. Speaker, that we get milk moving again in the province of Saskatchewan.

Before I go on to the final point of my motion, let me deal with what else we can lose, or what else the producers of the province can lose in the event that the strike is allowed to continue.

What we can lose is Saskatchewan's share of our quota, through the market share quota, through the Federal Dairy Commission. Again, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Premier of the province has realized the problem that can be involved in regard to this and I am sure that every effort will be made, by him and by the Department of Agriculture, to make representation to the federal Dairy Commission to ensure that our quota — not for '78-'79, which is the present year which we are going into — but our quota for 1979-80 will not be affected by the actions of this strike that has taken place during the last couple of days. Not only will the loss of that share affect the province's total milk production picture, but it will affect each producer as well, because it will mean a cutback in quota for each and every present producer in the province. So that even after the strike is settled, a year down the road 1979-80, the producers that are

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now enjoying a certain level of quota may be cut back because their total provincial quota has been cut by the Federal Dairy Commission and allocated to other provinces in Canada. The result, as well, could be that our efforts in the past to encourage more young people into the production of dairy products in Saskatchewan will be curtailed very drastically.

The third part of my motion, Mr. Speaker, I believe deals with the crux of the entire matter in what we, as legislators, can do to help solve the impasse of the dairy producers. This is to pass enabling legislation calling for a 60 day or a 90 day cooling off period.

Just as a matter of side comment, Mr. Speaker, I was very interested yesterday, in the question posed to the Minister of Agriculture by the Leader of the third party, in which he, too, called for a 90 day cooling off period. It was rather interesting as to how he came about that particular idea.

As I am sure many of you are aware dairy producers from Saskatchewan met with Mr. Cy MacDonald, their MLA about 1:45 p.m., to discuss the problem which now confronts dairy producers in the province. Mr. MacDonald suggested to them that it was his intention to request that the government of Saskatchewan enact legislation to allow for a 90 day cooling off period.

His constituents then met shortly after that with the Leader of the third party in the Legislature and suggested this alternative to them, as well, and of course, that alternative was accepted by the member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) and the question was raised in the House prior to Mr. MacDonald having an opportunity to move that question. When Mr. Collver was confronted with the idea of stealing a Liberal idea, as he has done in the past, he stated he didn't care where good ideas come from. If they are good he will use them. It is quite apparent that the only place good ideas come from, are from the members on this particular corner of the house, Mr. Speaker. (Inaudible interjection) ..and we are pleased again to hear from the expert from Saskatoon on dairy business, and I am sure he is going to have something to contribute to this particular debate as the afternoon wears on.

Mr. Speaker, let me read once again, Section C of the particular motion which I have placed before the Assembly today. That is, 'the need for this Assembly to pass legislation calling for a cooling off period to end the anxiety being experienced by every man, woman and child, in the province, to end the current atmosphere of confrontation and to allow the contract dispute to be settled in an atmosphere of reconciliation'.

I believe this particular section would certainly solve the problem that dairy producers now find themselves in within the province of Saskatchewan — the problem of having to lose fantastic amounts of money which they very dearly need. What this suggestion does, by this Assembly adopting it, is we are not asking the government of Saskatchewan to legislate the contract; we are not asking the government of Saskatchewan to get involved in the normal bargaining process between labour and between union. What we are saying is, let's get the milk moving again in the province of Saskatchewan. Let us get our truck drivers out on the road. Let us stop the dumping of milk by all farmers throughout the province. Let us pass legislation that allows for this 60 days to 90 days cooling off period, and then let the normal bargaining process between management and employee take place to, hopefully within that 90 day period, come up with a solution that is acceptable, not only to employees, but to employers throughout the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of this Assembly to give very, very serious consideration to this motion. I believe it is one that all of us can support, regardless what our political leanings may be. What we must do at this particular time is look at where the most need is, in regard to the province of Saskatchewan. That need today is the need of the dairy producers of this province who, I said earlier, are losing up to \$200,000 a day in a product that is impossible to replace. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to set aside the particular seat they might be sitting in, and unite with me behind the dairy producers of this province, and let us get milk flowing again in the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. A.N. McMILLAN (Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker, the member for Morse has quite properly pointed out that this situation is an emergency for milk producers in Saskatchewan. It is however, not a particularly emergency to the milk producers but also an emergency for the consumers of Saskatchewan.

Many people in this province, depend entirely upon an adequate and consistent supply of milk, in order to maintain their level of health. Whether they be infants in institutions in Saskatchewan (primarily hospitals), whether they be infants living at home with their parents, or young children who require milk on a consistent and regular basis as their many source of nutrition, many people in Saskatchewan need this mandatory supply of milk in order to maintain their level of health. This is just as big an emergency for people in the consuming public as it is for the producers. The government opposite has, to date, in this limited time that we have had since Sunday night to discuss this problem, sat on their hands. The Premier says, 'wait'. I will quote him, when pressed about this emergency situation in the Legislature, he admitted that it was an emergency and he says: 'No doubt that there is an emergency', and then he goes on to say: 'Accordingly, I think prudence dictates that we leave it to the people who will be dealing with this until it is clear that their efforts are not going to be successful.' That will be, as I said yesterday, cold comfort for those people in Saskatchewan who are faced with a milk shortage today. As the Premier well knows the members on that side of the House, leaving it to those people who are currently involved in the negotiations could, at this point in time, probably be the very worst thing we might do — if we are to insure producers in Saskatchewan in a market, and consumers in Saskatchewan a product.

The Premier also says, 'We do not anticipate any absolute shortages of milk because of the difficulties.' That is what he said yesterday. Today, 36 hours after the strike went into effect, three-quarters of the major shopping centres and stores in Saskatchewan, Co-op, Safeways and Dominion stores are out of milk. The other quarter, probably, some of them certainly do have up signs which state that milk is available on a limited supply, 50 per cent of the stores in Regina as of this date, as of noon today, could not even offer the consuming public the Premier's adequate substitute of powdered milk or canned milk, because they were sold out of that. Sunday night, many of the convenience stores in Saskatchewan and in particular here in Regina, Happy Shopper, etc. were faced either with a severe shortage of milk as of Sunday evening, or they were out of milk.

This isn't a matter than we can afford to leave for the next two days or three days. As of this evening many parents in the city of Regina and in the province of Saskatchewan

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will very likely be without a supply of milk, many of those parents who need it for the nutritional requirements of children.

I don't know exactly what the situation is in the hospitals. I would suspect they would be in a slightly better position to proceed with other supplies or other sources of nutrition than parents in the home, with infant children, would be. But, the situation is such that we cannot afford to let this strike continue in its present form for any length of time whatsoever.

The member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. MacDonald) stood in this Legislature to bring in a short-term, but worthwhile, relief to this situation. He asked leave of the Assembly to introduce and pass speedily a bill which would put a 60 day cooling off period on this dispute, this labor dispute, to give the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Consumer Affairs, adequate time to sit down with the parties involved in this and explain to them the seriousness of a strike in Saskatchewan, of dairy producers and workers. This 60 days would have given them adequate time to sit down with these people and try and bring about some reconciliation of the labor dispute. What was the reaction of members opposite?

They turned down the unanimous consent necessary to bring that legislation in. Legislation that wouldn't interfere with the collective bargaining process, delay it for 60 days, which is no particular skin off anybody's teeth in view of the fact that most settlements are retroactive anyway. Those members opposite have said to those people in Saskatchewan who are suffering a milk shortage, to heck with you, you can wait. We have an opportunity here to relieve your current situation at least for 60 days in the hopes that a settlement can be brought in and you rejected that. That says a lot about your attitude.

I don't know what the outcome of today's negotiations between the Minister of Labour and Agriculture and other interested parties are. I hope that he comes up with an amicable settlement. Maybe he can convince them, using his good office, to go back to work on their honor until some such reconciliation can be brought about in the dispute. Maybe he will bludgeon them with political threats into going back to work. I am not particularly fussy, at this moment, about which methods you people use in dealing with this labor dispute to see that there is pressure taken off the consuming public in Saskatchewan, but I suggest you better be prepared to do something and to do it quickly.

We are not talking about a problem that is going to appear in Saskatchewan in three weeks. This isn't going to be a shortage of coca cola for people who like to mix drinks; it isn't going to be a shortage of cigarettes or of a frozen convenience food that people can do without. This is a product that parents of infant children and people who are on special diets cannot afford to go without for longer than a 24 hour period.

Some of these parents were faced with that shortage as of midnight Sunday. We know, today, as a result of some of the investigation that the member for Wilkie (Miss Clifford) has done, that probably three quarters of the stores in Regina are either sold out now, will be at 6:00 p.m. or on such a limited quantity supply, that they might as well effectively be sold out.

The Premier's response to this, in view of the fact that people should be able to depend on an alternate supply, doesn't even hold water because there is no powdered milk or canned milk in any of these stores.

I suggest that you can't afford to wait another 24 hours to bring relief to the parents of infant children in the consuming public at large. You had the opportunity here, 20 minutes ago, to do something worthwhile about this situation, something that would not interfere with your coveted protection of the collective bargaining process in Saskatchewan; something that no doubt would have stood you in good stead with the voting public and certainly the milk consuming public and you brushed it aside. I can only wonder for what reason? Politics, no doubt. Anything suggested by members of this side of the House, done sincerely to try and alleviate the pressures on the public; you reject it out of hand. You should be condemned for that.

I will be interested to hear members on that side of the House get up in this debate, this emergency debate, and explain to members of the public where they are supposed to get their milk supply for infants and children who demand that in their diets. I will be interested to know should they, as the Premier suggests, count on it coming in from other provinces. The Premier says it is difficult to think. Maybe he should have stopped right there. It is difficult to think that there would be no supplies of powdered milk, no supplies of canned milk and no supplies of formula coming into Saskatchewan if in fact there was an absolute shortage. Well, there is an absolute shortage. Now your answer, according to your first minister, is to depend upon the outside supplies of powdered milk and canned milk coming in and formulas. I say again to you people as I said to your Premier, that's cold comfort for those families who have to depend upon a milk supply. Who is being held at ransom here? You people? You will pay for this politically down the road. The unions? The unions aren't that concerned at this point apparently with what the effect on the public is. I haven't heard any call for binding arbitration or a mediator. Hopefully something like that might come out of the meeting today. It's not the union that is going to suffer drastically here. You are going to suffer but the consuming public is going to suffer directly and severely if immediate action is not taken. The producers, as well, as pointed out by the member for Morse, are going to suffer seriously. Their plight in the long run may be just as serious as those people in Saskatchewan who depend on their supply of milk. You people had the opportunity earlier today to take steps, reasonable and rational steps, not in conflict even with your narrow political philosophy. You could have taken steps to alleviate this pressure for 60 days until some reconciliation could have been worked out. What did you do? You sat on your hands and muttered, No, to the mothers in Saskatchewan who have to feed milk to their children. You go and stand in the line ups in the Safeway stores and your Co-op stores and the Minute Marts and everything else and explain to people who come in for a supply of milk why there isn't any, when in fact we had a method by which we could have put a supply of milk on the shelves for those people. You answer for that. The Minister of Social Services should be more concerned than most because it is children under your care in Saskatchewan, your concern, you are looking after the family unit here. What's to be your response when people start calling your department and the Minister of Health to say that my children are suffering a shortage of milk, I have no adequate substitute, what should I do? Are you going to drive the truck to Manitoba to pick up an emergency supply? Go and ask the Premier where the emergency supply of powdered milk is for two and three week old infants. Are you prepared to do that? I would like to know what the member for Saskatoon Buena Vista (Mr. Rolfes) has to say about legislation to relieve people of this situation? You were one of the members who said, No. I'd like to hear you get on your feet in this debate and explain to the people of Saskatchewan why that is.

I support very sincerely the motion moved by the member for Morse. I suggest that all

members of this Legislature should support it and I would be interested in hearing one member from that side get up and tell the people of Saskatchewan why you shouldn't support it.

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. members on the government side of the House and the Liberal Opposition could for just a few moments restrain themselves from remarks in the House, I would like to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that surely the dairy industry is closer to my heart than it is to the member for Morse since he is a pig farmer and I'm a dairy farmer.

Mr. Speaker, it seems rather ironic that we should bring up such an important matter in the Legislature and look at those empty seats across the floor.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Speaker, as always we are getting the usual tirade from the government side of the House every time I get up on my feet. Clearly the distinction is that you are the government and it is your responsibility in this matter, our responsibility as an opposition is to bring pressure upon you to make some changes. Now, Mr. Speaker, you can be sure that I am not going to take the approach that the hon. member for Morse has taken when again he turns to the Conservative Opposition in the House and attempts to make political gain and political hay on such a very serious matter to the dairy farmers and to the consumers of this province. Surely the hon. member for Morse should be aware that it is not the Conservative Party at this point in time that is a position to do anything about this other than to, as I said before, bring pressure on the government. Surely his remarks, Mr. Speaker, should have been directed at the government but as I have said many times before the member for Morse is in a very serious situation in his constituency and has to take every opportunity available to gain whatever political mileage he can.

Very simply, Mr. Speaker, this matter of a breakdown on negotiations between the Dairy Producers Co-operative employees and Palm Dairy employees resulting in serious losses to the dairy farmers and serious hardships which, if it is continued, will be imposed on the consumers of this province is a matter which needs to be dealt with immediately.

One can take the position that we are going to have a loss of share of our market quota but we are not going to have that loss unless this strike continues on for a reasonable length of time. Surely we can't be taking an immediate position and a long range position simultaneously. There is only one position that should be taken and that is that this strike has to come to an end now, that further losses cannot be incurred. But as the member for Morse has stated, in some cases in excess of \$2,000 a day is lost to dairy farmers.

We are placed in a position where we are about to lose the status which the dairy farmers have worked hard to attain in the province of Saskatchewan against very difficult odds.

I have questioned the Minister of Agriculture, talked with him, talked with our dairy commissioner in an attempt to increase the dairy interest in this province. The direction that we were going at one point in time was a direction which would have lost all of the shares that this province would have had to the larger provinces of Ontario and Quebec and to a large extent to British Columbia. That position has been reversed.

The dairy farmers have taken up the slack. They work 365 days of the year. And as has always been the case, not just today, it is a seven day a week job. That is a position that is hard for anybody to place themselves in, which makes it a very difficult industry to work in. Nonetheless, in spite of all the odds, we are in a position now where we are on our way to becoming at least competitive with the other provinces in terms of the share of our market, which we have.

Mr. Speaker, one of those other odds that we have had to face is the Canadian Dairy Commission, when it put a levy on our fluid milk trade in this province, which it had no jurisdiction over. It told the Minister of Agriculture that he was going to agree to this levy to offset the losses the federal government had regarding exports of skim milk powder, which was supposedly the surplus that this country had, a surplus which Saskatchewan producers did not submit to in any way. They did not create the surplus and yet they were forced to pay the price.

They are again in a position, Mr. Speaker, where they have not asked for more for their milk. They are in a helpless position. They are not able to do anything about the strike. They must only sit there and take their losses.

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, and the government of Saskatchewan, that the dairy farmers are not going to take it for too long. Unless negotiations are brought about very quickly and a settlement is reached very quickly, I would agree with what the dairy producers have been saying, that serious action will be taken. I as a dairy producer myself would be impelled to take some very serious action if I had to dump hundreds of pounds of milk daily.

The government, as well, has a very serious stake in this in terms of losses and has, in fact, financed a lot of these dairy operations in the province.

MR. BOWERMAN: — What are you . . .

MR. BIRKBECK: — Well, the hon. member responsible for the North has always got to interject with a few insane remarks. I tell the hon. member that you will be able to get up and speak whenever you feel like it. O.K.? Just as soon as I sit down you can get up and say all you like.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, there is not a week goes by that there isn't another blow struck at agriculture in this country. And in particular in this province.

Now, if the minister is listening, he can hear what I would suggest — what I suggested in question period — that your government has always and still is in strong support of a marketing board concept. We have a marketing board with regard to the dairy industry in this province. The Saskatchewan Milk Control Board is supposedly set up to set prices in accordance with a producer's cost of production — his input cost. Now surely, if he has no income, because he cannot sell the milk to restricted outlets, he is going to have to go to the bank to get money to tide him over unless the government is prepared to waive the payments that they will have to make to Farm Start or the banks or whoever they have loans with. Very simply, either you are prepared to do that or the Milk Control Board is going to have to allow price increases to be paid to the dairy farmers to that extent which will offset the losses they have had during this strike and that is as long as they would have to have them there. Obviously the prices set now have been arranged

and agreed upon by the Saskatchewan milk producers. If that increase was only effective long enough for these losses to be offset, then that is one solution to this problem. I do not think that any of the dairy farmers would object to that. If they knew that in the course of six months or a year that they were going to be able to recover these losses, I think they would be all the more content than they are now.

The Premier did not respond favorably to that question that I raised today in the House. He took the same position on that matter as he has taken regarding questions on the strike right throughout its whole course, since its beginning, a hands-off position, which the Minister of Labour has taken as well. I can agree what while the negotiations are taking place an interference at that time would be an interference in the collective bargaining process we know today, which is reasonable, but surely, when the negotiation process breaks down and a strike of this nature takes place, with the ramifications it is causing in the province, which members of this House have already eluded to and I do not need to repeat, these are very serious hardships. It is simple, cold, hard fact this government has to face. It is a responsibility it has to the people; it is a responsibility it has to the number one industry in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that we, in the progressive Conservative Party, support the motion and we urge all members of this House to support this motion. We challenge any member in this House to speak in opposition to the good intent which this motion has in this Assembly today.

HON. E.L. COWLEY (Provincial Secretary): — Mr. Speaker, I have been listening for the last few minutes to some of the comments of the various members opposite. I think that, while I listened to the member for Shaunavon there, talking about the cow ranch, and I will tell the member for Shaunavon — the member for Assiniboia Gravelbourg, or wherever he is from, that I have got more dairy farmers in my constituency than he has in his. I also have more dairy farmers in my constituency than the member for Wascana, and I will tell you, in a few days he is not going to have a constituency at all, so he will not have that problem.

Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the comments of the member for Moosomin. It is just too bad that the people of the province could not have watched that rather disgusting episode that went on over there. He obviously does not have any solutions at all because he certainly did not propose any. His best effort at a positive comment was that he thought he would support the motion that the Liberals had put forward. I want to say that that is the closest we have come in this Assembly to seeing a Conservative position on anything.

Now, Mr. Speaker, he chided the government for not having very many members in the House. I reached around and counted; we had half of our members here and they had 36.4 per cent of theirs. That is when he started speaking. Just at the very end of the speech they were down to 18.2 per cent and that says something about the member for Moosomin. Mr. Speaker, I think that we can safely leave the member for Moosomin for now and turn to the position put forward by the two members of the Liberal party.

I must say that the member for Kindersley put forward a very rousing and very political speech. I was terribly disappointed in his speech because I thought he was sort of making a mountain out of a molehill. About halfway through I thought maybe we should go out and see if everybody in Saskatchewan was starving to death already. It was obviously done with some skill and dexterity. I must say to give the member for

Kindersley credit, but if he was trying to make the point, he was certainly assisting that there is concern out there and attempting to build it up.

I think the member for Morse put the case reasonably well from the point of view of the problems facing dairy producers in this province. The potential (and it is unfortunate that the member for Kindersley wasn't listening to the member for Morse) problems that consumers face — because I don't think, I don't believe and I doubt if any member of this Assembly seriously believes that there is a major problem with respect to consumers at this point in time or indeed tomorrow or the next day with respect to the supply of milk in this province.

The members talked about hospitals and so on. Provision has already been made by agreement with the union and the processors to make milk supplies available to hospitals and other institutions where milk will be needed. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I think all members of the Assembly could, in issues such as this, attempt to deal with them in a rational and reasonable way rather than in a straight political way that the member for Kindersley has obviously learned from the member for Wascana.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that we need to take a look at this motion. We need to take a look at the motion put forward by the member for Morse and we need to consider it seriously. Where are we at in this particular strike? First of all it started at midnight yesterday, so the strike is approximately 39.5 hours old.

The motion calls for the Assembly to help end the dumping of 2 million pounds of milk per day. Well first of all, as the member for Morse himself admitted, some of the producers may even have two or three days of storage and I doubt very much whether 2 million pounds of milk will be dumped today, and there certainly wasn't 2 million pounds of milk dumped yesterday and it may not be tomorrow. I agree with the member for Morse that the third, fourth, fifth, sixth day of the difficulty — that is what we are coming to.

We are taking action. The Minister of Labour and the Minister of Agriculture are at this very moment sitting down with representatives from both sides in this dispute attempting to reach a conclusion. So that is what we are doing. Action is being taken so we are dealing with part (a) of the motion. Part (b), the imminent loss by Saskatchewan milk producers of their present quota to other provinces — the member for Morse himself said that this wasn't an immediate problem of a day or two or three, but rather a long time problem, and that is, I suggest to the member for Morse and to other members of this Assembly, being dealt with by the Minister of Agriculture and by his staff in consultations with Ottawa.

I would be very surprised, as I am sure all members of the House would be, as to whether or not other provinces have not faced, at particular times in their history, similar problems with respect to the production of milk and similar problems or potential problems with respect to their quotas vis-a-vis the federal government and other provinces.

Third — the need for this Assembly to pass legislation calling for a cooling off period to end the anxiety being experienced by every man, woman and child in the province — and here is where I think the member for Morse must have got this line, either from his seatmate for Wascana or from the member for Kindersley. Now I don't disagree that people are talking about it. I don't disagree that there is concern, particularly among milk producers, and well there should be and I can understand that. But I think 'the

anxiety being experienced by every man, woman and child in the province' is maybe stretching a little bit the motion by the member for Morse.

'To end the current atmosphere of confrontation and to allow the contract dispute to be settled in an atmosphere of reconciliation' — well, Mr. Speaker, a 60 or a 90 day cooling off period obviously doesn't bring about a settlement. It brings about 60 to 90 days more in which there is an opportunity for a settlement to be arrived at. It seems to me that when we have those representing the processing part of this industry and the people representing the trade unions sitting down at this point in time with the Ministers of Agriculture and Labour, that this is the wrong time, the absolute wrong time for the members of this Assembly to be taking the heat off the two sides of the dispute. That's what we do. If we order a 60 day cooling off period, then obviously the people who represent the trade unionists aren't going to feel any great pressure to settle today. The people who represent the processors aren't going to feel any great heat to settle today and it is going to go on for the next 30, 40, 50 or 60 days.

Now it may be if these last minute attempts to arrive at a solution are unsuccessful, if we cannot get them to reach an agreement, if we cannot get them voluntarily to go before a third party, if we cannot get them to do that in the next day or two then we need to look at, perhaps, something like this . . . perhaps some other action by the members of this Legislature. But I want to suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that at this point in time I think . . . well, Mr. Speaker, this says the Conservatives have finally hewn their first fledgling plank for their platform. But Colin won't stand on it. Thank you, Tony, whatever that is. I'll send it over to the member for Thunder Creek, he can see if he can stand on it or not.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that this motion, in light of the discussions which are going on at this particular time, between the trade unionists, between the processors, with the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Agriculture sitting in, this motion is particularly untimely.

Now I was in my constituency last night and I have got several dairy farmers in my riding. Indeed, I spoke with two or three of them last night and I spoke on the telephone this morning with a couple more. Now, they are concerned. I want to say they are a lot happier with me than they are with your dear friend and colleague, Otto Lang. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased with their reaction. They are for the most part young farmers. Some of them are involved in FarmStart and just starting out. They are not having an easy time of it financially, they are just getting on their feet. They are concerned about the strike but I must say they were taking a pretty reasonable approach to me about it. They said we will hope that the government will do everything in its power to bring a quick end to this. They said it is going to cost us some money, obviously, in the short run. If it is two, or three, or four days it is a problem for us and we are not terribly happy about that. But they were taking a pretty rational approach to it. They were expressing to me their concern. They were expressing to me their concern about the strike lasting any length of time. They are asking the government to take what action is good and use its good offices in the very short run to see whether or not it could bring about a reconciliation between the two parties to the dispute.

Mr. Speaker, I think that is what the government is trying to do. I think it is acting in a rational and reasonable way. I think it would be contrary to the interests of the people of this province to pass this particular motion at this time. What we do not need is to take the heat off this afternoon of the two parties to the dispute, by passing this legislation and giving them a 60-90 day cooling off period which may, indeed, accomplish

nothing because no agreement may be made in that 60-90 day period. But rather, Mr. Speaker, I think we should not pass this motion, we should wait to see what the outcome of those discussions are today. And while it is causing some, I suggest, minor difficulties for the consumers, some significant, I suggest, difficulties for producers in this two or three day period that it may be, if we can reach an agreement and get this problem out of the way it seems to me that consumers and producers will be satisfied with what this government has done, and what this Assembly has done. If we can't, obviously, bring about a settlement in a very short order then we need to look at whether other options are open to this Assembly and to this government. That at this time, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be contrary to the public interest to pass this motion. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, in dealing with this motion I think I would ask all members to vote against it. While I realize that it is a very serious matter that the people of Saskatchewan are facing, I do not think that the solution offered by the member for Morse and seconded by the member for Kindersley, is the solution that should be accepted at this time. And I say, at this time, very, very clearly. There is no question that I share the member for Kindersley's concern with respect to the consumer I don't share it in the loud voiced manner that he put it forward. But I share the concern. More important is the concern that I have for the producer in this particular situation, for certainly the producer is faced with destroying food, the producer is faced with a significant loss and many of these producers as the honorable members, both for Morse and my honorable colleague for Biggar, have pointed out are beginning producers and are very very highly capitalized and involved with some significant financial commitments. So it's a real concern that I have for the producer. I don't think the time is for the Assembly to deal with it, but the time is for some calm and serious action; that is exactly what government has been doing. It has been taking calm and serious action.

Mr. Speaker, what has been the action? Earlier in the problem of the dispute, the good offices of the Minister of Labour provided a mediator in the person of Mr. Sig Walter. Mr. Walter worked with the two sides and worked with them for many, many long hours as so often happens unfortunately in the process of bargaining — an agreement was not signed. What further action has the government taken? The further action and the important action which is going right on, on right now, which makes the particular motion I think something that we should not support, is the action being taken by the Minister of Labour, the member for Moose Jaw and the action being taken by the Minister of Agriculture, the member for Saltcoats. For they are meeting now with the officials of the processors and the officials of the union and there are I understand three unions involved and I understand that there are two processors involved, but not only that, the meeting that is taking place now involves the producers as well. And our hope is that the presence of the two ministers and the presence of the producers at a meeting with the two people that are involved or the two groups that are involved in the negotiations can bring about a settlement that will be satisfactory to both sides and satisfactory to all that are concerned, and particularly satisfactory to the people of Saskatchewan.

I had an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to talk with producers in the constituency that I represent, the constituency of Last Mountain-Touchwood, and as you know and the members know, the constituency starts just north of the Qu'Appelle Valley and we do have some producers in that constituency. Not a lot, but some and I took the liberty to

get in touch with them just before we came into the House at 2:00 o'clock and they indicated their concern; but they indicated they were pleased with the action that the government was taking with respect to the meeting that was being called today. They indicated that their representatives, their representatives in terms of the executive producers had been working and they are very very pleased, Mr. Speaker, with the efforts of the member and the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Agriculture in attempting to bring about a speedy and worthwhile settlement.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to consider very seriously, the motion that has been put forward. While I share the concerns expressed by the members in putting forward the motion, I just say to the Assembly, with what is going on now, this is not the time to pass such a motion, and I therefore ask all members to vote against the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, in my initial remarks, there was a plank of wood sent to me during this debate, so I trust this plank of wood must be valid participation, and I am standing on it right now. The note on it says, "The Conservatives have finally hewn the first fledgling plank for their platform, but Colin won't stand on it." Well, Mr. Speaker, I am standing on it and I ask you to take note of what I can do.

Mr. Speaker, this came from the MLA for Regina Wascana, hopefully presently the Regina candidate in Regina East for the Liberal Party, and I would like to comment. I would suggest that this plank of wood that you could walk so smoothly on, is pretty indicative of the advertising that that member has been flooding the Regina media with, in the past one, two, three or four months, particularly the last month. Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that as a foundation for anything, this thing that rocks, that nobody could stand on, is not worth much of anything, and he is quite right — I certainly would not care to stand on this thing — because eventually you would break your neck. I suggest that a similar fate would happen to the people of Regina East, were they to elect this member as their MP in the next election.

MR. SPEAKER: — I hope the member intends to discuss ..

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, your comments are well taken and I think my comments will become clear very shortly.

Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of a very difficult situation for some people in Saskatchewan at this point in time. We have a situation where we have an innocent party, namely the milk producers of Saskatchewan, caught in the middle of a fight between two giants — the union, and of course the processors. Mr. Speaker, the milk producers play no part .. Oh, I am sorry to see that the Provincial Secretary is leaving. I had a comment or two for him. I hope he won't be too long .. Mr. Speaker, the milk producers are totally and completely the innocent party in this dispute. Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the question period today. In taking note of a comment that the member for Regina Wascana made in his supplementary to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, I was shocked and stunned when the member for Regina Wascana asked the question as though the consumers were the only people that could possibly get hurt in this strike.

Mr. Speaker, speaking on behalf of his party, the member for Regina Wascana in effect, said: 'to blazes with the producers out there . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! This is supposed to be a very serious matter and I want to keep all members in order so that we can discuss it and conclude the matter. Now the member for Wascana has not spoken in this debate, and therefore, the member for Thunder Creek is not permitted to make references to the member for Wascana speaking. Now, if he wants to make oblique references to something said at some other time, that is fine. But the member for Wascana has not spoken in this debate.

MR. THATCHER: — I accept your point, Mr. Speaker. I had a few more words in this particular area I thought because it was done in this Assembly today. But even though I accept your ruling that because it was not done in debate, I may not refer to them, nonetheless, I think the indications of his party are pretty obvious, and that is, they stand for the consumers and not for the producers of milk in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard from the Provincial Secretary this afternoon, and I was a little bit surprised at the very off handed way in which the member for Biggar, the Provincial Secretary, made reference that if we were to have a cooling off period, that this thing could drag on for 30 days, 40 days, or 50 days — that this could not be a good situation.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that the Provincial Secretary in his remarks, when at times he referred very disdainfully to the member for Moosomin, I would suggest that the member for Moosomin has experienced something in regard to the dairy business that the Provincial Secretary has never experienced and probably nobody else in this House. And that is just exactly how difficult that dairy business is. Mr. Speaker, I don't think that very many of you in this House really realize what it is like to be in the dairy business. Do you realize that 365 days a year, twice a day, 730 times, somebody must go and remove the milk, must milk those cows, 730 times a year. Mr. Speaker, that dairy business is one of the toughest lives that I know. I'm not man enough to take it. I have nothing but respect for those who choose to have a life like that. The member for Moosomin did it for a long time and I can only say I hope he got some sort of a reward out of it. It is one of the most difficult businesses that I know. There are no holidays. There is no booking off. There is no taking a weekend off. Twice a day somebody has to be looking after these cows.

Mr. Speaker, it is fine for the members opposite very callously, very callously to suggest, well, something is going to be done, we've got a couple of Cabinet Ministers out there, we've got a representative of the producers there, we've got a representative of the manufacturers or the processors there, something is going to get done. Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that there are not very many members in this Assembly who have ever had the experience of having their income just totally shut off, just ping that's it, no more! That's exactly what these producers are going through because every pound, every gallon of milk that they lose, that gets poured out is money that has gone that can never be recaptured, never recaptured. And that is one of the very difficult things about the dairy business. If you don't look after your cows in a proper manner, you don't get the maximum production out of your cows. That production is gone forever. You never, ever get it back.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think there are too many members of this Assembly who really know what it is like to have your cheque cut off. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully suggest to this Assembly today that something is grossly wrong in our system when 680 people in this province can decide that another group is going to have no income, that they are going to lose X number of dollars. We don't know what that is but unquestionably there are going to be tremendous losses and 680 people have decided that the group of dairy

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producers whatever number they may be and whatever their dollar value may be, that just like a light switch, it's turned off. Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that that group of preachers and teachers across there doesn't know what that feeling is like. It's a feeling that I have never experienced, not very many members in this Assembly ever have experienced it and I hope they never do but, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what these dairy producers are experiencing today.

I suggest to this Assembly today that if it is going to be allowed that one group of society, and to be precise 680 of them, are going to be allowed to turn off the income for another group and if this government across the way is going to allow that then that's fine, that's your decision. You can argue all you want the merits of collective bargaining, etc., and there is no question of the validity of it but at the same time the government across the way are being irresponsible when they refuse to guarantee to these producers who have some of the highest per day costs to meet of any agricultural group in Saskatchewan and I say unequivocally to this Assembly that if you are going to allow this 680 people to put the squeeze or literally turn off the income lights for the dairy producers, you have a moral obligation today at least to assure them that the income that they are losing, whether it be today, tomorrow or the next day, will in some way be reimbursed by the government.

If you are going to allow a system like that if you believe in that sort of a system of what has to be considered some form of blackmail, then at least have the courage to assure those people that they are not going to have financial ruin. Because here in agriculture we have a situation which I really don't think you people across the way know what it is like. Not very many of you have to sell something on the world market spread out over well they are minimized over a few times a year. You don't really know what it's like not to have a weekly cheque coming in or a monthly cheque coming in. Believe me it's a vastly different experience than what you are accustomed to.

When you go the agricultural route whether you are talking wheat or cattle and any of you, the few of you over there that are involved in agriculture know what I am talking about. I notice even the minister for the Battlefords knows what I am talking about because usually he would be heckling by now, so I must have some validity.

When you are in agriculture, your cheques come pretty sporadically and you have to be able to stretch them out either with the help of your banker or with the help of your pencil because in agriculture you just don't have that weekly or that monthly cheque coming. The last wheat that's held off the market, at least the wheat is in your bin, you know that eventually if it's not next week or the next month, the next year you will be able to sell that wheat. And if it's cattle and you can't take them in right away, fine. Next week comes and you take them then or next month comes and eventually you take them in. But the cattle are there — the wheat is there. For that matter, any other commodity is there. But with the dairy farmers, that money is gone, directly gone.

Mr. Speaker, I say to this Assembly today, that this is a callous attitude that has been exemplified by members to my right, then they put the consumers first, consumers ahead of the producers. Make no mistake about the consumer, and make no mistake, — well, well, Mr. Speaker, isn't that interesting. Now the candidate for Regina West is getting into the act. We have had to put up with the theatrics in this Assembly, while the member for Regina-Wascana campaigns in Regina East. Now we have to put up with the member for Regina West jumping into the fray. Hopefully, Mr. Speaker, hopefully when the election is called on Wednesday, we can look for these two people to return to the hustings on a couple of by-elections and let's get a couple of MLAs in here, who can

start campaigning or start working for the people in their constituency instead of a federal political business.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard them talk about their consumers and how they are more concerned about whether the consumers are going to have milk than whether or not the producers of this province are going to go broke.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully suggest on a personal opinion that consumers when it pertains to food prices are never going to be satisfied until food becomes free, never, no matter what price food is at, it's always going to be too high. If there is something that must be settled here, Mr. Speaker, it's where do the producers fit into this particular scheme of things?

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to notice that in introducing this motion that we have heard from the member for Morse. Mr. Speaker, this is about the second time in three days that we have heard from the member for Morse in debate which makes me wonder if perhaps that member for Morse isn't considering running federally out of his constituency. Because that's the most I believe the member for Morse has spoken since I have been in the Assembly. That's going back to 1975.

(Interjections and noise)

MR. COWLEY: — On a point of order, there is a lot of noise over there and that whole side is beginning to look like the Conservative caucus.

MR. SPEAKER: — I don't accept that as being all a point of order. I don't think it's valid, but I do hear a lot of noise and I'm having trouble hearing the speaker myself.

MR. THATCHER: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I was having a little bit of trouble. I was having a little trouble hearing the point of order and I thank you very much for your ruling.

Going back to the member for Morse, Mr. Speaker, that's about the second time in about four days that I've heard him and that has got to be his biggest wade in at this point in time since 1975.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I really don't know why the members to my right are getting so upset, because frankly he was the one who took the side of the consumers on this against the producers of this province and by their leader who is sitting in the proper desk right now. Mr. Speaker, I really don't know why they are getting so upset. However, I think we can look forward in a couple of days probably to at least to the end of the commotion in the very obvious blatant federal campaigning that has been going on in this Assembly for goodness knows how long, hopefully coming to an end when, of course, conscience will dictate to these two members, who will make their seats available for a by-election so that their constituents can be represented.

Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the member for Biggar, who was talking about the dairy farmers up in his area, has returned to the Assembly. And again, I would say to that member, that if you can be so callous about the dairy producers in your constituency, if you can say — well let events take their course; if you can say in effect, let 680 people hold up all the dairy producers in this province, the innocent victims, I pass no judgment on the dispute between the processors and their workers. That is between them. Allow them to settle it, but when you have a third party, such as our dairy

producers who are caught in the middle, and you can say let the events of collective bargaining take their course, it will be the best in the long run; if you can allow this sort of a blackmail system to go on without putting your government on the line at least to guarantee and assure the dairy producers of this province that their loss of income will, in some way, be guaranteed by your government, then you are a group of phonies over there. Of course, we knew that a long time ago.

Mr. Speaker, I shall support the motion of the members to my right, despite some of their disparaging comments and in the process, Mr. Speaker, I shall look forward very shortly to moving considerably closer to your left.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Social Services): — Mr. Speaker, since some of the members opposite have asked me to participate in the debate I would welcome the opportunity.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I do want to indicate that I do not have any dairy producers in my constituency, but, Mr. Speaker, I am well acquainted with dairy producers and with the processors and with consumers, coming from the farm, having many of my relatives, immediate relatives, in the farming business and in the mixed farming business and some of them certainly in the dairy business.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few remarks about the member for Thunder Creek and then I will leave his insane and irrational statements, that he usually makes. But, Mr. Speaker, he says members on this side are phonies. Coming from the member for Thunder Creek that is a real phony issue. He sits on that side of the House and he is a phony and then he sits over on that side of the House and he still remains a phony. Mr. Speaker, he talks about the self-made man. He says to us, some of you just haven't experienced, you don't know what it is like not to have a weekly income, or a monthly income. He thinks that he can make us believe that because he is a self-made man, who is experienced, what it means to not have this income.

I have made it, Mr. Speaker, I have made it. And the reason that some of you people haven't made it out there is because you haven't got the intelligence that I have. Mr. Speaker, we all know how he made it and how he got where he is today. Mr. Speaker, I will simply dismiss his remarks as such.

I do want to say a remark or two, although the member for Wascana (Mr. Merchant) hasn't entered the debate by standing on his feet, he has entered the debate. Someone said to him, just a little while ago, that in a short time he would no longer have a constituent to whom he could refer or converse with. But I am going to say to the people of Saskatchewan regardless of whether he has a constituent, I think the member for Regina Wascana will continue to milk the public in his own particular way and his own professional way. I am sure that he will continue to do so.

Mr. Speaker, having dismissed the member for Wascana, let me now go to the subject at hand.

Mr. Speaker, there are, I think, four or five groups involved in this debate this afternoon and in the negotiations, people who are extremely concerned. We have the consumers; we have the producers; we have the employees and, Mr. Speaker, we have the members in this House, the politicians, who in the long run should not be involved but because

this is a problem of great concern to us and to the people of Saskatchewan, we have been drawn into the debate and into the negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, we should be discussing, today, how to resolve the problem rather than trying to score political points with each other here in the House. Mr. Speaker, I don't think anybody out there cares whether we score political points in this House. I want to say that the mover of this motion, I think, was very sincere and, I think, attempted to bring the motion before the House as clearly as he saw it. Although I cannot agree with the timing of the motion, because I do believe that we must let bargaining take its course as it has taken place today. Mr. Speaker, to say as the member for Thunder Creek did, that my seatmate had indicated that collective bargaining should continue, take its long course and the government would be unconcerned, is simply not presenting the fact as the member for Biggar indicated.

The member for Biggar, I thought, explained very clearly how the government was concerned, how we had taken steps and presently are taking steps to try and resolve this situation. The member for Biggar had indicated to the House, the reason the Minister of Labour and the reason the Minister of Agriculture are not in this House is the very fact that presently they are meeting with the groups concerned, the producers, the processors and the employees. They are meeting with these groups and hopefully, Mr. Speaker, an agreement can be reached within the next few hours. And I think the member for Biggar also indicated that if no agreement was reached the government might have to take some immediate steps within the next 24 or 48 hours. Because this is not just an ordinary strike and it is not . . . we cannot permit the strike to continue for very long. Mr. Speaker, there are many groups affected. But I agree with my seatmate again, that the one group that is mainly affected the most is the producers. And we are concerned when we see their livelihood taken away from them. For some of them, if the strike carries on very long it might mean the end of their income, the end of their livelihood. And the government is concerned about that and as I said we are taking steps. But, Mr. Speaker, in collective bargaining if at any one time in the initial stages, if certain groups of people are being hurt or certain people experience hardship, if the government immediately steps in, or a third party immediately steps in, you really do harm not only to the process at that particular time, but you do harm I think, in the long run. Because the groups then who are involved in the bargaining will know that if they simply hold out long enough then the third party will intervene and you heed that I think, destroy the collective bargaining process. And I think that you really do harm to the people today, next week and in the future. But that doesn't mean, Mr. Speaker, that the government should not step in when a particular group is suffering severely. I think we believe that the producers are having a very difficult time and that we are concerned and that we are taking steps. The step that is being taken, Mr. Speaker, right now is that the Minister of Labor and the Minister of Agriculture are sitting down with the three groups concerned. The three groups are, as I said before, the producers, the processors, and the employees or the unions. And, Mr. Speaker, I think if later on today, and I am hopeful that the three groups will come to some agreement, I think later on today if an agreement is made and we do not proceed with this motion that is before us, I think we will all recognize that we have made the right decision. Now if an agreement is not reached today or an agreement may not be reached tomorrow then I think the government will have to take some action. That action will be decided upon when we look at the situation at that time.

Mr. Speaker, what I want to say simply at this particular time is that where the opposition and the member, I think, for Regina South, makes the error is that he thinks

that he must jump up immediately when there are difficulties in negotiations . . . Yes, that's what you seem to be indicating by the very fact that you are supporting this particular motion at this time I think, . . . ah, well, I assume that you are, you didn't say no to it when your colleague brought it in. So I assume that you are supporting it. But, Mr. Speaker, if it's within his political interest not to, he may not. I do not know. But we will have to wait and see. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member for Biggar that at this particular time if we pass this motion it simply means that we are intervening as a third party in negotiations that are going on right at this particular time. We are taking the heat off the two groups involved and I think we could very well stifle the negotiations that are going on at the present time. Mr. Speaker, that is the process of negotiations. The two parties have to give and take and there has to be an out. I think that out is the involvement of the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Labor who will try to work out, I think, a satisfactory solution to the problem. Mr. Speaker, I just do not believe that this is the appropriate time that we should proceed with this motion and, therefore, I ask all members not to support it and let's wait for just a short time longer to see whether or not we can have a solution through the groups that are presently doing the negotiations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MERCHANT: — Mr. Speaker, there are two sides of this discussion that apparently have not been covered and let me address myself first to the matter with which the minister has just been referring, and that is the 90-day hoist. The minister makes it sound as if it is a brand new idea and it has never been done anywhere in the world. I am sure that when the minister goes to the movies on Saturday to see Looney Tunes or wherever he goes to find entertainment suitable to his understanding of the world, he sees those news reels — you remember them Herman, they come on the news reel. For the past few years you have heard about the Taft-Hartley law, and that is all we are proposing here. The Taft-Hartley legislation, Mr. Speaker, gives a 90-day hoist in certain kinds of labor disputes.

Now the minister for Biggar and the minister who just took his place says . . .

MR. ROLFES: — Negotiations are going on right now.

MR. MERCHANT: — Garbage, garbage! You may or may not know something about teaching but you don't know anything about the way the Taft-Hartley legislation works and . . .

MR. ROLFES: — . . . we are not in the States.

MR. MERCHANT: — Garbage. Now we are not suggesting that the government is going holus-bolus, to pass legislation or pass a proposal, or pass the legislation that was brought before you. You have a motion of the House, and I say to the members that this motion of the House deserves to be passed and that if the government can't mediate the matter, we should be looking at some kind of a hoist.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Taft-Hartley legislation is designed to bring in a breathing span to take off the heat in situations where people other than those involved in the negotiations are being hurt. In any labor dispute the whole purpose of the strike is that the union wants to hurt management and perhaps management wants to hurt the union, but in this labor dispute it is the producers and ultimately the consumer who are being hurt more than the parties sitting down at the table.

Mr. Speaker, there is another thing that members seem to be ignoring, perhaps deliberately and that is that any amount of money given in these negotiations will be passed on directly to the consumer. The 14 per cent that has been offered is a big offer. It is not a small offer — it is in keeping with current offers that have been made and settled upon both by the government and by other unions negotiating in the province. That 14 per cent represents a two cent increase in the cost of milk.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister who just took his place said that the parties in this negotiation are now sitting down with the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Agriculture. I wonder whether I wouldn't be more apt to characterize that as sitting down with the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Agriculture, who is also the Minister of the Milk Control Board, because it is the Milk Control Board who will then agree no doubt, to whatever increase pays for this labor demand. I can't help but notice that one of the unions, is the RWDFU which has been involved in innumerable strikes in the past two or three years and is developing a reputation (either an infamous or famous one, depending upon your perspective) of being one of the most aggressive unions in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I said in question period and I say now, that it is the consumers ultimately who will pay the cost of the increase. In the short term the producers are suffering very serious losses and I say to the government that they have to move extremely quickly to resolve that matter.

If your negotiations fail today (and I see no reason to assume when union and management are so far apart) — I understand the difference is approximately 13.6 per cent to well over 20 per cent — if union and management are that far apart, a little chit-chat with two ministers of the Crown isn't going to resolve them in one day. If your ministers can't resolve the matter, then I suggest that what the government should be doing is bringing in some kind of cooling-off legislation — legislation that would stop the tremendous waste — a waste which is waste for the whole economy; stop the damage to the consumers who will be cut off from milk, an important part of food that many people consume, but also not allow the consumer to be held to ransom — the consumer to be blackmailed, caught between two processes — caught first between the process by which they know that they have to look after the children and people who demand milk and require milk in their diet. That is part of the way that the consumer will be held to blackmail — secondly, held to blackmail because of the need that we can all see to help the producer out of his bind. We simply can't have the milk producer — milk producers who have suffered pretty badly in the past few years, we can't have the milk producers suffer losses which even in a week could be as large as their profit margin for a whole year. So who will end up suffering? The union now has greater negotiating strength than any union ever gets because not only can the union say to the company, look you're going to lose your profit during this period of time but they can also say to the province, you're going to lose all of this gross national product and it will be bad for the province and bad for the producers who have been under a lot of pressure for some period of time, the past couple of years because of the glut of fluid milk in the national market.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this government has always accepted as have governments in the past, that when the union has too much negotiating power it's not an offence against the general principles in which we believe allowing the collective bargaining process to proceed. It doesn't destroy the collective bargaining process for the government to intervene. They could intervene in two ways. They could intervene as this government

chose to intervene over power, the power strike. And I say, Mr. Speaker, where is the government's priorities if they so categorically reject the plight of the producer and the consumer. Of they could choose to intervene by passing legislation along the lines of the legislation proposed by my seatmate and moved in this priority of debate. If the government doesn't act and knowing the approach of RWDSU, I say, Mr. Speaker, that we will be held to ransom, we will be held to blackmail, that the union will blackmail the consumer through the Milk Control Board and we'll have a whopping big increase at a time when inflation is a problem in this nation.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage members to vote in favor of this motion, not only because of the producers but because of the consumers and because of the inflation question that is involved and lastly, because if some action is not taken by the government what we will be doing is opening the door. We'll be saying next no doubt to people who could strike against the Hog Marketing Commission, STEA, because we know that hog production goes bad and really its loss goes beyond its market. Mr. Speaker, I see the government sort of shrugging and taking the approach that well they will wait and see how the collective bargaining process works. I say that if at the end of this day, if at the end of this day negotiations haven't reach a successful settlement, a settlement that doesn't put the screws to the consumers of this province, then it's time for the government of Saskatchewan to act either in the way proposed by my seatmate or in the way that they acted when they saw a real emergency over power not so long ago.

MR. R.E. NELSON (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg): — Mr. Speaker, this motion is absolutely necessary because of the particular perishable product produced by these dairy producers. Now the member for Biggar (Mr. Cowley) says it's causing some minor problems. I would like to tell that member there is a lot more than minor problems to those dairy farmers that are involved. Each dairy farmer or producer is forced to waste hundreds of dollars of fresh milk every day. This is a cardinal sin by those responsible for this waste. We in this Assembly can do something about the problem now and let's not waste anymore time or waste anymore of this precious milk. What is happening to the farmers is really little different than what happens to a small filling station when a bandit comes in with a revolver and steals that day's receipts from the till. We aren't talking about the profit they are losing, we are talking about all their expenses and all their labor and all their profit as meagre as it is. They can't shut off that factory like many of the companies do when there are strikes against them. They can't go home and live on the strike pay like many of the labor people can. They can't carry placards to convince those cows to shut off that milk so the work shuts off. Those cows must be fed, those cows must be milked and that barn must be cleaned. They have to then dump that precious milk down the drain and this just can't be allowed to continue. If we have any justice at all left for farmers in our province then pass this motion. We have had problems on picket lines with violence just a few weeks ago and I warn the government that when you push people around as far as you are pushing these dairy farmers around, you are asking for much more violence. I believe the government will vote against this motion because they haven't the intestinal fortitude to tell labor unions it is time we find a better way to settle labor disputes than by strike. Our country's economy will not survive if we allow this type of waste and these dairy farmers can't be forced to be caught in the middle as they are being forced. All we will be doing here is giving some time for the collective bargaining system to have the opportunity to work. The Minister of Agriculture has proved his contempt for farmers and the government's contempt in the recent Budget with the lowest portion of provincial revenue ever spent on agriculture in this province. If you vote against this motion you will be taking just another swing at our farming community. Any rural member who will not support this motion is doing nothing more than turning his back on his constituents. I urge all

members to support this motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, on this motion today, the priority of debate, we are concerned with a very difficult problem of a labor dispute which, for the first time, hurts two of the affected parties that are not involved in this dispute, both the producer and the consumer in the end. It is interesting to note that the producer is tied by legislation on how he can sell his milk. Chapter 251 of Legislation, Article 44 indicates where unpasteurized milk may be sold and not sold, therefore, limiting the sales to the public by a primary producer. It states:

That no person shall sell or deliver (a) in a city (b) in a town having a population of 1,000 or more as shown by the last federal census, or (c) in any other urban municipality that may be designated by Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

It is interesting to note that there are many towns under this 1,000 limit but they have all been affected by item (c) where the Lieutenant-Governor in Council has passed regulation saying that they cannot sell unpasteurized milk. So the producer here is totally tied in by legislation to selling his milk to the Dairy Producers Co-op. Therefore, other than selling directly from his home, he is effectively tied by the retail process to the person he may sell to and, therefore, he is totally captive in this situation. He has no way, as many other industries have, on getting out any of his costs and his costs continue and his work continues but he will receive no rewards for this work. It is unfortunate that in this province that a second party or a third party, depending which way you want, will be so drastically affected.

As many members have said that have spoken before me this is a very important decision that this Chamber will take where the affecting on Item (c) of this special motion is to pass legislation. Spending many years within the labor movement, legislating workers back to work is not always the answer. Legislating employers back to accept the employee back at work is not the answer. The answer is, today, a fair and just settlement for those negotiating and honorable men at the table to make that fair and just settlement. It is unfortunate when this Legislative Assembly must, as it seems now, get actively involved in a labor dispute. It is unfortunate that maybe we have not come about in this country, to the concept of labour disputes, where no third party will be heard. When I refer to, no third party will be heard, I refer to some form that has been tested in some other areas of this world, that cause no third party to be heard on a strike. I think that this is one of the examples where we must now start to look at that kind of legislation in this province — that no third party will be heard, and only those affected, the two parties that are in dispute, will have the problem. As much as I do not totally agree with the motion, I must comment that the first nine months of this particular strike, is covered by the AIB, which seems to indicate that 4 per cent is the maximum that can be received by the workers, and it seems to indicate that both management and the union have accepted that particular thinking. With that in mind, I would ask that hopefully the Department of Labour or the Minister of Agriculture could convince them, because of that, that there is no need for the walk-out at this time, because the next nine months are covered, and there is nothing they can do about it.

MR. E. ANDERSON (Shaunavon): — I have a few words in debating this motion. I find the interest of many of the members present very edifying. Many of them seem more interested in fighting their personal political vendettas with each other than debating

the subject matter at hand. One thing I think the 60 day cooling period would do and do well is that it would keep milk flowing to the consumers and keep the producers from very high financial loss because with the dumping of milk, many of these young producers in my area say that they can't afford the loss of the income. We seem to find, on the part of the government opposite, a desire to wait until we reach emergency proportions before we do anything. I would say that it would be well to go into a cooling off period which would allow not a rushed decision. Why this government wants to force a rushed decision I would say is probably for the reason that it is hoping to give quite a large settlement, take the money to The Milk Products Board to put it on to the consumer and it figures in this way it will keep everybody happy.

I also find it interesting, in the Premier's statement, where he says that we can bring in milk from out of the province. I would think that this is probably the first case that I have heard in a long time where the Premier suggests that we use scab tactics against the union and against the producer. It would seem a dereliction of duty to suggest that we will import milk into this province while our own producers are going broke and our own workers are out of work. This is brought up by the Premier as a solution and I think it is a solution that is very short-sighted, a solution that serves no useful purpose in the province and is very poorly thought out as a solution.

As I repeat again, Mr. Speaker, it would appear that this government, in not accepting a cooling off period is hoping to rush a decision through and use the emergency created as an excuse to give a large increase, an increase that probably wouldn't be accepted as being a reasonable increase to the workers, passing that increase on to the consumer through the Milk Board. There is no other reason to suggest the scab tactics that they are doing, no other reason to not put a cooling off period to prevent a very rush decision, an emergency type of situation.

Therefore, I would urge all members of this House to accept this motion and I am sure that all members will.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I want to just say a word or two about what we are voting on. What we are voting on is that there be a priority of debate and presumably, when the vote is taken, one way or the other, the next decision points come into play. If, for example, the vote is 'No' to this motion, as I understand the rules, that is the end of it. If the motion is, Yes, to this priority of debate we are not adopting A, B and C as a House. We are simply adopting the fact that because of those or other reasons there is a priority of debate. It is then, as I understand the rules, incumbent upon the House to present before it, a resolution, which according rule 17 11(b) is without notice, strictly relevant to the subject aforesaid and it shall be in order. In which case there is another debate on that motion.

The reason for my remarks is to indicate to the House that we ought not to confuse the issues. There may be many of us who believe that the matter is, indeed, urgent and compelling and who can support this motion in those terms. But, similarly, there are many of us who could not support the implied solution of the cooling off period, which is in the motion. I believe the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood, outlined his opposition to the 90 day cooling off period. The same thing with the Minister of Social Services, and so forth. In fact, I, too, Mr. Speaker, voice my opposition to the 90 day cooling off period. But I think that one really needs to see what motion is introduced, if any, on the assumption that this motion goes through, before we are able to decide the course of action that is to be taken.

I simply say to the House that if this motion is allowed to go through by the vote of the members, they should be mindful of fact that there are discussions ongoing with the participants and that in any motion so drafted, they keep this uppermost in consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is very much more I can add to it. I simply say this so that the press and others don't adopt the attitude that if we allow this motion through, that we are agreeing as a Legislature, to the need for a cooling off period. That is not the situation. All that we do, if we allow this motion through, is agreeing to a priority of debate, which debate then will ensue once the resolution, if a resolution is introduced.

MISS L.B. CLIFFORD (Wilkie): — I would like to speak, briefly, on the motion and in doing so just mention a couple of points that have been brought forth, but I don't think adequately discussed.

There was an article in the paper last night indicating that by Tuesday or Wednesday milk and dairy products will run out in most parts of Saskatchewan and the province's dairy producers will begin halting milk shipments from Manitoba on Tuesday. It is also indicated that producers will start dumping milk. This has been pointed out a number of times. Some areas have been starting to dump milk sooner than others, particularly in my area, because their last pickup was on Friday, rather than other places that are closer to Regina or Saskatoon.

Each day that they have to dump milk, they are dumping on a herd of about 36 cows, about 1,500 pounds of milk, costing at least \$100 to \$200 per day. I think that the producers are, of course, the prime people that we are considering at the moment, as the resolution does indicate and as some members have not looked at carefully, because as the member for Thunder Creek indicated, he said we are more concerned about the consumer than the producer, which is not the case at all.

The article also said, Mr. Speaker, that a number of the consumers were crossing the picket lines to get milk and, as well perhaps, would have to go to the farm gate to purchase raw milk if the case in point came that the milk supply was running out.

The Premier has indicated on a number of occasions that there would be no problem because when the fluid milk ran out there would be powdered milk and other sources that would be able to supply people that needed milk. I tried to ask the Premier in question period today, but because of wording of my question, did not get the question through - that was he aware that a number of the stores in Regina, at the moment, were out of fluid milk, also out of powdered milk and that the evaporated milk and such were running low?

The case is that I would imagine that there isn't one member across the floor, to my left, who bothered to go and check in the large supermarkets, in particular, what the status of the milk supply was. The case is that at least 75 per cent of them are out of fluid milk, I imagine by now. This was in the morning and I imagine that, by now, there is no fluid milk left. Fifty per cent of the powdered milk was gone in most of the large stores and the canned milk was going quickly. Now this is getting to be a dangerous situation and could be an emergency situation if something is not done. This is why this motion was presented to the House today.

I was pleased to hear that negotiations are going on with the unions and other people

who are affected, but I would like the government, and I was going to ask the Premier, to guarantee that, in an emergency situation where contingency plans are regulated, will we not use Saskatchewan milk first to supply institutions and infants that need the milk? It seems a useless waste to see our producer there, dumping milk daily and hourly. When we do need a contingency plan for emergency situation, why not use our milk first rather than go out of the province for it? It is just another slap in the face to the producer when we are trying or even thinking of doing such a thing as to get milk from outside the province.

The member for Morse indicated that we were concerned about fluid milk quotas not being affected for the year and the Premier indicated that they were concerned and looking into that. They were also concerned about young farmers having their loans and their whole production affected because, with a loss of income daily, this could perhaps determine whether or not they would be able to continue in the business.

This motion, Mr. Speaker, is a positive motion and I begin to wonder why members opposite and to my left have not really entered into the debate. Members to my left — Mr. Wipf, I am sure, has some producers in his area. The Leader of the Conservative Party, I am sure, has some producers in his area. The member for Qu'Appelle once told me when he was on this side that, while travelling around, he had called, instead of a 'herd' of cattle, a 'group' of cattle. Maybe he does not know enough about cattle to even talk about it.

What the member for Weyburn, the member for Kinistino, the member for Cutknife-Lloydminster, the member for Shellbrook, the Agriculture Minister, the Minister of Consumer Affairs, the member for Kelsey-Tisdale, the member for Melville, the member for Melfort, the member for Yorkton, the member for Arm River, the member for Pelly —

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. We are supposedly dealing with a very serious matter and I would ask the members, rather than take the attendance of the House or something of that nature, that they stick to the subject which is under discussion, namely that priority of debate be given to the subject matter which has been mentioned by the member for Morse.

MISS CLIFFORD: — Mr. Speaker, I do not know what your opinion of what I was trying to point out was, but I certainly was not being anything but totally serious in asking why the members opposite, who had producers in the area, were not speaking out. I was not taking a roll call. I am being very serious about this matter. Why are the members for Athabasca, Turtleford and Quill Lakes not speaking on this matter when the producers in their area are one of their main concerns? I would ask the members for the city why they are not speaking on behalf of the consumers in this serious — I would ask the member for Saskatoon why he is not speaking but I do not really think he could speak on it so I will not ask him to speak on it at all. I question you and I point out to you, why are you not up here speaking on this important matter on behalf of your constituents and the consumers of Saskatchewan? I aim to ask each one of you to vote for this motion so that we can, indeed, do something about this serious problem.

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Attorney General got up earlier and gave us a recital on what happens when we vote on this motion and suggested that we are only voting on the urgent portion and not A, B and C.

Could we have a ruling from your chair?

MR. SPEAKER: — I was about to relate what we are voting on to the members before they vote.

The question is, that priority of debate be given to this particular matter which has been related by the member for Morse to the members of the Assembly and the words are contained on a piece of paper which is available to all members. Now what the members are voting on is that priority of debate be given and if they agree with that, then it's up to the members immediately afterwards if they so feel moved, to move a resolution which will give the solution to the problem. If they do not agree with that, that is the end of the subject to that point. Now, the members may be a bit confused about why I say that we are voting on that priority of debate to understand clearly what has happened here. In 1969 the rules of the Assembly were studied and recommended, the recommendations were made thereto. And at that time the committee that undertook the study of the rules said, and this is on page 12 of that report. 'Your committee feels that a more meaningful and less confusing terminology should be devised to describe an emergency debate and recommends that instead of a member moving that this Assembly do now adjourn, to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, the member should move that this Assembly do grant priority of debate to, and then name the subject'.

Now, what the members are voting on is essentially if you go back into history on this particular item, they are voting on the adjournment because all that has happened is that the priority of debate where it has replaced the word 'adjournment', so consequently they are voting on the adjournment and if necessary when you are voting on whether you want adjournment or not, that you know what you are voting on. Therefore, the member for Morse has kindly put forward the wording that he debated on in favor of adjournment. So the question before the House now, are they in favor of the motion to adjourn or the motion that this debate be given priority.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt . . .

MR. MALONE: — On a point of order, I followed you to the extent where we are now voting on the priority of debate. Could you expand perhaps on what happens if priority of debate is granted? The member then presents a motion and we debate the motion is that the — we debate it just as any other motion that comes before this House.

MR. SPEAKER: — By the same token, I might add that we are not in essence dealing with the body of what appears before us here. It cannot be amended, the mover cannot conclude debate because it's a motion to adjourn in effect, so for those reasons you are not voting on it but you are voting on the priority of debate. As I said just a few minutes ago, that if this is carried then the members of the Assembly are free to move if they feel like it, to move a motion according to the rules of the Assembly which are laid out here on Rule 17 sub 11 sub(b). The motion is carried then in the affirmative, a motion may, without notice, strictly relevant to the subject aforesaid, shall be in order and that can be moved or amended and the mover can close debate on it in the normal fashion, if this is carried.

MR. MALONE: — I assume we move immediately into a motion that is put to you rather than going to other business. Is that correct?

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MR. SPEAKER: — If the House wishes to do that, yes. The question before the House is that priority of debate be given to the subject matter put forward by the member for Morse.

Motion agreed to.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Messer):

That this Assembly urge the government of Saskatchewan to continue its efforts to settle the dairy workers strike by all possible means, including voluntary binding arbitration with an immediate return to work.

MR. WIEBE: — Mr. Speaker, whether they will be brief comments only time will tell in regard to the particular motion which has been introduced by the Attorney General. I would appreciate if I could receive a copy of that particular motion.

MR. SPEAKER: — I would say that this motion is amendable and the mover of the motion can close debate and the matter has to conclude today. It cannot be carried over to another day.

MR. WIEBE: — Mr. Speaker, let me say initially we have had, I find, a very interesting and a very successful afternoon in the act of democracy in which a serious problem, which does confront the people of the province of Saskatchewan, has been debated I believe from all sides in the Legislature. The fact that the problem was recognized and that the debate was allowed I think is a plus in favor of all members of this Assembly. While I disagreed with some of the debate that took place this afternoon. I'm very pleased that it did happen and I'm very pleased that we, hopefully, prior to adjourning this evening will come up with some kind of a solution that will solve the dilemma which we now find Saskatchewan in.

I must say initially that until I've had further opportunity to study the motion as presented by the Attorney General, I find it difficult to accept this kind of a solution at this point in time. Much of the debate that took place this afternoon, unfortunately, evolved around the position of labor vis-a-vis the position of the employer. Very few comments were made in regard to the position of the main group of individuals in the province of Saskatchewan and that is the position of the dairy producers themselves. This was the main intent of my particular motion this afternoon to call for a priority of debate and that intent was to do something on behalf of the dairy producers within the province of Saskatchewan.

Labor laws are such that the person involved in labor has enough protection through the Legislative Assembly of this province. Employees who own companies such as the Dairy Producers Co-operative and Palm Dairies are in a financial position where they can afford to go through the normal procedure that takes place when a strike does occur. Financially, labor will not lose because their contract, 9 times out of 10, will be made retroactive back to the time that the strike did take place. From a financial point of view, companies will not lose because in the budgeting of their particular operations and labour negotiations, they budget in for time lost, business lost because of a strike that may arise from the downfall of labor negotiations. But I say, what built-in guarantee does the dairy producer have in the province of Saskatchewan? And this was the meat and the meaning behind my entire motion earlier this afternoon and I ask for members

of this Assembly to show their concern, to show their protection, the protection which only the dairy producer can receive at this point in time. And that protection can only come from their representatives in the province of Saskatchewan. And those representatives happen to be each and every one of us who occupies a seat in these Chambers. If the dairy producers in this province are going to receive any protection whatsoever, if they are going to receive the same protection that a member of a labor union receives, if they are going to receive the same protection that business receives in this province the only place that they can receive that is through their elected representatives.

That is the situation of the agricultural industry in the province of Saskatchewan today. They basically do not have anyone else other than us, other than the elected MLAs to look after their particular concerns and their particular interests. The member for Saskatoon said by suggesting our solution to the problem that we would be taking the heat off negotiations between labor and management. That is true. That heat would be taken off. But I say who is taking the heat off the producer? Who is taking the heat off the dairy producer today? The dairy producer today, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I think it is not fair to attribute remarks to a member who hasn't really said them.

MR. WIEBE: — Mr. Speaker, I shall adhere to your particular ruling. Let me go on, Mr. Speaker, to say who is going to stand up on behalf of that dairy producer? Who is going to say to the average dairy producer, yes, we realize that you are losing \$2,000 a day, \$2,000 a day? How much of that \$2,000 would be net profit if he were able to accrue that profit? I would say possibly 5 per cent. Maybe 5 per cent of that \$2,000 will be profit. If that strike should continue for only one week, until next Sunday, that would then mean that that producer would lose in the neighborhood of \$14,000. Let us look at 5 per cent of \$14,000. How many weeks, how many months is he going to have to operate under present pricing conditions to get back basically what he has lost in that seven day period?

Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with large sums of money; \$2,000 a day for the average producer in the province of Saskatchewan is a considerable amount of money. I must emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that in my figure of \$2,000 a day I am talking about the average producer in the province. Members realize that approximately 2 million pounds of fluid milk is produced in this province each and every day. Everyone realizes that there is 1,040 dairy producers within the province of Saskatchewan. You divide 1,040 into \$220,000 which is what the loss will be on 2 million pounds of fluid milk and believe me you will come awfully close to the average loss of each and every producer in this province of \$2,000. Some producers are going to be losing considerably more than that and some producers will be losing considerably less, depending on the size of their operation. I think that if we are going to be dealing with some generalities this afternoon we must be fair by saying that the average loss throughout the province of Saskatchewan would be in the neighborhood of \$2,000 per producer. Mr. Speaker, the entire intention of my motion this afternoon was not to get involved in that age-old fight between labor and management. That is not the position. My position and my suggestion this afternoon is that we do have a problem today and that whether our producers lose \$2,000 if the strike is settled today, or whether they lose \$14,000 if the strike is settled a week from now, \$2,000 is going to affect them very severely and they have no opportunity whatsoever under our present system, to be able to recapture that \$2,000 loss.

Mr. Speaker, we are wasting time in this Assembly right now. Even as we talk, the producers in this province are losing money. After we conclude our remarks today, producers will have lost \$2,000. If the stalemate in labor negotiations goes on another day you can add another \$2,000, Mr. Speaker, and you are looking at \$4,000. The dairy producers in this province, Mr. Speaker, if they could afford that loss, I'm sure that we wouldn't have seen members of that association sitting up in the galleries this afternoon, taking part in this particular debate and I'm sure that members of this Assembly would not have received telephone calls from their constituents who are dairy producers who say, look we are in a tough bind; we can't afford to have this strike go on any longer; our livelihood is at stake and we ask you to do something on our behalf.

Mr. Speaker, it is for those reasons that I wish at this time to move an amendment, seconded by the member for Maple Creek, Mr. Stodalka, that reads as follows:

that we delete all the words after 'Assembly', and add: recommend to the government of Saskatchewan to pass legislation imposing a 90 day cooling off period to allow for milk to move once again in Saskatchewan, and allow the contract dispute between the Dairy Producers' Co-op and Palm Dairies Limited and their employees to be settled in an atmosphere of normal management-labor relations.

I so move.

MR. McMILLAN: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak to this amendment. As the Speaker will note and other members of the House who have been attentive this afternoon, our position and our solution to this labor problem and the consumer and producer problem in Saskatchewan that results because of the labor problem has been consistent. We have long said that there is a serious problem here for producers in Saskatchewan, that there is a serious problem here for consumers in Saskatchewan and that the best solution would be one which could take effect immediately which would eliminate — if you fellows would like to speak to the amendment, I would be happy to give you the floor in a minute. Thank you. We have said that there is no doubt that the Attorney General needs a great deal of advice, Mr. member for Wascana but we will give it to him some other time.

The fact remains that we have said that there is a solution here that this government could take which would immediately alleviate the problems which the consumers and the producers face and which would not interfere with the free collective bargaining process in Saskatchewan which you cherish so dearly in your narrow dogmatic socialistic philosophy.

Let me give you an example of your inconsistency. Those of you there that are awake should be deeply concerned about what your Premier has said and now what your Attorney General has said. The Premier get up and says, 'wait, wait it is not a serious problem.' And at first he says, 'I think that common prudence would dictate that we leave it to the people, who have been dealing with this, until it is clear that their efforts are not going to be successful.' That was the stance of the First Minister yesterday. After that, the Premier went on to say, 'however, there is no shortage in Saskatchewan. We do not anticipate any absolute shortage of milk because of the difficulties in Saskatchewan.'

Again, in question period before the public of Saskatchewan, he referred to the fact that there is no problem, suggested to members on this side of the House not to create any hysteria. Then the Premier said, 'if things gets really rough, those two and three week old infants, we can feed them powdered milk. If they get really bad, that is what we will do.'

Now what happens, the Attorney General stumbles to his feet and introduces a motion, in this Legislature from his position of embarrassment in this whole episode, suggesting that his government is immediately prepared to introduce legislation forcing these people back into binding arbitration, voluntary binding arbitration, which is an interesting anomaly in itself. I say that is contradictory.

We said, yesterday, that the producers had a problem, the consumers had a problem and that there was a reasonable solution to it. It was piloted by our parenting member for Nipawin, of course, from the dairy producers all.

Mr. Speaker, I see that it is 5:00 o'clock.

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