

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**March 27, 1979**

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

On the Orders of the Day

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington):** — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Mr. Swan, the member for Rosetown-Elrose, who is unable to be with us today because of a school trustees meeting, I would like to introduce to you and through you to this legislature, 25 Grade 8 students from the Rosetown school. They are accompanied today by Mr. Jake Wiebe and my very charming and lovely aunt, Mrs. Isabel Berntson and Mr. Norman Berntson. I might add that one of the reasons we have such a terrific and effective opposition is that Mr. and Mrs. Berntson both had something to do with the structuring of the education of our member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew). I am very, very pleased that they are here to view the activities in the House today. I am sure that the House will join me in wishing them a warm welcome.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. J.L. SKOBERG (Moose Jaw North):** — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a good deal of pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and to members of this House a group of 47 students in the Speaker's gallery from Division III from Ross Elementary School in Moose Jaw North.

With these students we have Mr. Garry Olafson, the principal, Mr. Ed. Segall, the vice-principal and Mr. Richard Forberg, the teacher. I might just say in welcoming these students and the teachers here from Ross school this afternoon, that Mr. Segall has made a practice over the years of bringing students down to this Legislative Assembly to see true democracy at work. I believe that Mr. Segall is to be sincerely congratulated for his continuing dedication in this particular area. I would ask for all members, Mr. Speaker, and yourself to join with me in welcoming the students from Ross school.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and the Assembly some 35 Grades 7 and 8 students from Bert Fox High School in Fort Qu'Appelle. They are accompanied by Mr. Klisowski and Mr. Dick Rathgerber, the principal. Mr. Rathgerber has attained some degree of prominence in Fort Qu'Appelle as a curler I have noticed this winter. We wish them, hopefully, an interesting and enjoyable afternoon. I will have the pleasure of meeting with them later. We wish them a safe journey home.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**QUESTIONS**

**Neglected Indian Children**

**MRS. J. DUNCAN (Maple Creek):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Rolfes). With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I will have to present certain

facts in order to ask my question.

Last August it was reported to social services that eight Indian children on the Nikaneek Reserve, aging from nine months to 10 years, had been regularly abandoned by their mothers and had been abused and neglected. It was reported in August that they were scavenging in garbage cans on the reserve. Social services replied to Mrs. Crawshaw of our community centre that it was not their jurisdiction and they had in turn turned it over to Indian Affairs. She subsequently got a letter from Indian Affairs saying it was not their responsibility; it was in fact the provincial social services responsibility.

Nothing was done and in February the children were left alone, the house was burnt and it was a miracle that the children did not die. My question to the minister is simply, who is going to take responsibility for this deplorable, tragic situation?

**MR. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Social Services):** — Mr. Speaker, I can agree with the member if her facts are accurate. I have no evidence to say that they are not but I think that the situation, as it pertains to treaty Indians on reservations, is one which has not been resolved across Canada. I think it is a fact that the first ministers, for a number of years under various governments, whether they were Conservative governments under John Diefenbaker, Liberal governments under Pierre Elliot Trudeau, or provincial governments (NDP, Liberal or Conservative) have discussed this situation and have not been able to come to any mutual agreement. Let me also say, Mr. Speaker, that there is no agreement between treaty Indians across Canada, as to who has jurisdiction in this particular area.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, it has always been the position of the NDP government (and I believe it was true under the T.C. Douglas government as it was true under the Lloyd government as it is true under our government) that we will intervene in a crisis. That is the agreement that I think has existed between this province under our government and I also believe under the Thatcher government; the province would come into play only in so far as a crisis situation would occur, or if we were invited by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians to intervene.

Other than that, I think section 93 of the BNA Act — I may be wrong on the section but I think it is 93 — in our opinion at least, says that the primary responsibility for treaty Indians, when they are on the reserve, must rest with the federal government. In my discussions with the former chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, that is what he led me to believe was also their position, that they did not want the provincial government to intervene and thereby take away their bargaining rights with the federal government, rights that they had been promised when the British North America Act was put into effect and rights that they wanted to preserve. But, Mr. Speaker, as I've said, the province will pick up its responsibility in crises situations.

**MRS. DUNCAN:** — Supplementary. On March 15, a meeting was held in Maple Creek with representatives of your department, Indian Affairs, the local police, the ministerial association and other interested parties. The Indian Chief, Gordon Oakes, had asked that those children be removed. A week after the fire, Mrs. Crawshaw went out to the reserve and the children were found abandoned again. (It might be pointed out there are three single mothers involved and they are all pregnant again). She found them padlocked in the bedroom and burners on the stove set on high and that was what was heating the house. I just feel, how much more of a crisis do you need before you step in there? Do you have to wait until one of the mothers who has threatened to kill those children, kills them and then you are going to step in?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROLFES:** — Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate again the seriousness of the problem and the concern that the member's expressing. I will give the member the assurance I will personally look into the matter. I am not familiar with the details of the particular incident she is relating to. I do want to again say to the member that the chief may well have asked that the children be removed but I would assume that the chief would have asked that of the Indian Affairs people and not have asked the Department of Social Services to do so. If he agrees with the chief of the Saskatchewan Federation of Indians, then I think he would have asked the Indian Affairs Department to intervene and remove those children. As I've said, Mr. Speaker, I will personally look into it and will bring an answer back to the member as to what our responsibilities are at this moment in that particular incident.

### **Competition Policy — CP Air to Extend Services**

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the minister responsible for tourism. In a recent announcement the federal government has changed its competition policy as it pertains to Air Canada thus allowing CP (Canadian Pacific) Air to extend its competition beyond the previously limited 25 per cent. The indication is that this would now mean that CP Air is intending to extend its service to the city of Regina. Is it your government's policy to support that position and support the fact that now CP Air will be able to come to Regina or is it your intention to oppose that policy?

**HON. A.S. MATSALLA (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources):** — Mr. Speaker, on the information that I have, I, personally, feel that we should be supporting that policy.

**MR. LANE:** — I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. minister has communicated his support of that policy to the Hon. Les Benjamin, Member of Parliament for Regina West, who is quoted as saying that it will be like a gas war and that he felt that this competition should not be allowed and that they, in fact, oppose that particular policy. Have you communicated your government's policy to the federal New Democratic member for Regina who opposed CP Air coming to Regina?

**MR. MATSALLA:** — Mr. Speaker, no, I have had no discussions with the hon. member.

**MR. LANE:** — Final supplementary. Do you not think it incumbent upon yourself on behalf of the citizens of Regina to communicate in the strongest possible terms your dissatisfaction with — and Saskatoon — your federal government's and your federal colleagues' policy which is harmful to Saskatchewan and detrimental to the travelling public and the tourist industry in Saskatchewan?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MATSALLA:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to have my discussions with the member that the hon. member is referring to and with any other people that are concerned and interested.

### **Land Bank Price Offer Policy**

**MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding). Is it the policy of the land bank to make offers on all lands offered to them or just what is the criteria for making an offer on a parcel of land?

**MR. E.E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture):** — Generally speaking, Mr. Speaker, the policy is that we do not make offers on land unless someone indicates to us that they want to sell to the land bank. Generally speaking, then, the commission will go out and do an evaluation. Now, there may or may not be reasons why they may not wish to buy a particular piece of land. If it's in an area where it's above what we call our productive value rate, then we may say to that person, sorry, your land values in this area are too high. We're not prepared to buy in this area. So, in those sorts of circumstances, we would not buy.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. What would you say if farmer A offered his land to land bank, and land bank did not make an offer to purchase, but farmer A then sold his land to farmer B who within 3 months sold his land to land bank at a \$12,000 profit — would you indicate to this House whether or not that falls within the criteria of making an offer on land bank land?

**MR. KAEDING:** — Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't want to comment particularly on that, unless I had a specific case to relate to. But I would be fairly certain that if the request to purchase was not undertaken in the first case, there must have been a reason and I don't know what that reason would be. If it was undertaken in another case, I wouldn't know. But the price on that farm would be based on the average market value of land in that area.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I will be laying a case out in Resolution No. 7, I think, later this afternoon. But, Mr. Speaker, how many of these sorts of things do we have to lay before you before you will admit that your land bank is an administrative mess and you'll take a look at it and clean it up?

**MR. KAEDING:** — Before you make charges, as you fellows have done all during the session, you had better get your facts straight.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

### **Air Service in Smaller Cities**

**MR. J. GARNER (Wilkie):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources. Is the minister aware that there are smaller cities in Saskatchewan struggling to try to obtain air service for their communities, and what is his department, or the government, planning on doing about this?

**HON. A. MATSALLA (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources):** — Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult for me to answer the hon. member's question because he doesn't make any reference to any specific urban areas that he might be referring to. If it is North Battleford, I think that I have already indicated to him what the answer is. Now, if it is Yorkton, all right then, we will have to talk about Yorkton, and certainly, for the city of Yorkton there has been a lot of representation made by the city council, by our government, and by the minister in charge of transportation. For the hon. members to say that the government is not doing anything is absolutely incorrect.

**MR. GARNER:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In July, 1978, the Canadian Transport Commission approved a NorCan Air proposal to link Yorkton with Saskatoon and Regina. Now, 8 months later, city officials have had no word from anyone.

Will the minister please assure this Assembly that some immediate action will be taken and you will correspond with the officials from Yorkton, please?

**MR. MATSALLA:** — Mr. Speaker, the area that the hon. member is referring to is under the jurisdiction of the minister in charge of transportation. Now I will certainly pass that information on to him.

### **Purchase of City Property by Sask Tel**

**MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister in charge of Sask Tel. Mr. Minister, has Sask Tel engaged a Regina real estate firm to purchase properties on the west side of Hamilton Street between 11th Avenue and South Railway?

**HON. D.W. CODY (Minister of Telephones):** — Mr. Speaker, I can't answer that question because of the fact that Sask Tel is not directly the agency involved in making the purchases. We pay for the land, true, but there is a committee of Cabinet which oversees the downtown project, and my colleague, Hon. Walter Smishek, is the minister in charge of that area.

As far as I am aware, there may well not be one. I haven't heard of it if there is.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Well, before I get back to the minister of Sask Tel, I will ask the same question of the Minister of Finance.

**HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance):** — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware that there has been anybody engaged but I am prepared to check with the officials and let the member know.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Mr. Speaker, is it possible that some of your department heads or your departments are acting on this matter without your knowledge?

**MR. SMISHEK:** — No.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — I am advised that there have already been two pieces of property purchased on Hamilton Street by Sask Tel and that a date of July 1 has been given as a deadline for vacating these premises. Are you aware of that fact?

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, if the member was more specific as to what particular properties they are . . . because we are acquiring property through Sask-Tel, and I know there have been acquisitions that have been made as well as notice given during the period of negotiations of when we want to take possession of the property. But I can't be answering the question when not knowing the precise parcel of land, the lot number, because it's just impossible to answer it.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I indicated in my first question the exact property I was referring to. I'm referring to the property north of the new Royal Bank building on the west side of Hamilton Street between 11th Avenue and 12th all the way down.

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member perhaps is aware — maybe he is not — every lot has a number and now there are a number of parcels of land that are between Railway and 11th Avenue, and the land is not owned, or the property isn't owned, by a single person.

### **Purchase of Property to sell to Simpsons**

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — The property that I've been referring to — I'll ask about it to you in this way. Is it perhaps the property that you've been negotiating to purchase to sell to Simpsons for them to build a store on at the expense of the small businesses on that street?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that we've been negotiating for any property to sell to Simpsons at any time.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — . . . or to lease.

### **Local Libraries no say in Selection of Books**

**MR. G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley):** — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Shillington).

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — To lease to Simpsons.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — It has been brought to my attention that there is considerable concern in the Wheatland Regional Library regarding the type of books which are available to juveniles. The content of these books are described: 'As it should never have been printed, or pictures and literature which come straight out of hell and no place else.'

Is it the policy of this government and the regional library system that local libraries have no say in determining what books and magazines will be available in their libraries?

**HON. E.B. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Education):** — We are all aware, Mr. Speaker, that there are books in existence which should never have been printed. I think the member may be aware that what books are used in the regional library is the decision of the board, and not the decision of the provincial library. The provincial library is simply a resource centre for those boards, so I would think the member should direct his question to the board.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Is there no control in the regional library system to prevent such material? Does the government have no responsibility in this regard whatsoever, that's my question, Mr. Minister?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Speaker, the member must be aware that there are sections of the Criminal Code which prohibit obscenity. Apart from those rules we rely on the good judgment of the boards, and I think by and large that reliance has been well justified.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Minister, supplementary question. Will you give me some

assurance that you will look into this situation?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — No, again, Mr. Speaker, it's a matter of local autonomy. This government believes in local autonomy. Hon. members opposite may not. They may believe that the world should be run out of an office building in Regina. That is not the philosophy of this government and we are prepared to leave it to the board.

### **Engaging of Crown Real Estate**

**MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to one of the two ministers whoever wants to answer it. Has Sask Tel engaged Crown Real Estate of Regina to purchase property that I referred to earlier, to lease to Simpsons, or to any other department store, for that matter?

**MR. W.E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance):** — Mr. Speaker, I am rather curious about the questions that are being raised. I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, where the member for Regina South and also the member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane) stand on the Cornwall Centre. If they are opposed to that project let them tell us so. Let them tell the people of Regina; let them tell the downtown merchants. If they are opposed to the redevelopment of Regina downtown then let them come out, clearly, and state so, because I am sure the people of Regina are very interested.

We are acquiring property through Sask Tel in that area for the purpose of redevelopment of that area to upgrade it. As the hon. members know that area is in bad need for redevelopment. It has the approval of the city of Regina. It has the approval of the Chamber of Commerce in Regina, has the approval of the Regina downtown merchants. We are using certain people to try and help us in this area, using the private sector to help us redevelop that area. That is a policy of this government. We are interested in seeing Regina's core upgraded.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Mr. Speaker, I have another question or a supplementary for the Minister of Finance.

What right does your government have to interject to assist multinational corporations at the expense of the small businesses?

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member makes reference to Simpsons. Simpsons have a store downtown and as far as I know they intend to maintain that store downtown. We are not negotiating for the acquisition of property for Simpsons in a downtown area.

### **Cornwall Centre**

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister responsible for the Cornwall Development. Would the minister indicate, further to our questioning last week on the expropriation, amendments to The Expropriation Procedure Act. Would you confirm what the Premier has indicated that you made mistakes in your acquisition of property and that, perhaps, you didn't do it properly? Are you now prepared to advise us whether or not you intend to bring in the expropriation procedure amendments to correct your errors in acquiring property in downtown Regina?

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared to admit that mistakes were made.

**MR. LANE:** — The Premier did.

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Well, maybe he did. The Premier isn't here and he can speak for himself. We used, among the best legal counsel to give us advice. There were certain judgments and court proceedings that have taken place. Apparently, there is some flaw in the legislation and in due course you will find out whether there is legislation introduced.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Finance aware of the implications of what he has said today, because Sask Tel, a Crown corporation, has the right of expropriation to acquire this land. Private owners, private organizations such as Simpsons, Eaton's and others, do not have the right of expropriation. Is the minister aware that if Sask Tel interjects itself into the market place it is using the power of expropriation to acquire land for private sector purposes?

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, obviously the hon. member is not aware of the agreements and the terms that have been arrived at. What we are trying to do in the downtown core, or in the Cornwall Centre is to assemble land for the purpose of rebuilding or rejuvenating that area. The city of Regina, for a number of years, has been concerned about that part of the city. We had need for a telephone building; we had need for a government insurance building. We concluded with the city that it would be desirable, in the interest of the city and the citizens of Regina, to help revitalize that area. The result is that we are assembling land.

We have also invited Eaton's and Chartwood to help in the redevelopment. They will put up the buildings. They will lease the land at economic rental. We are not acquiring land for Eaton's. We are not acquiring land for Chartwood. It is land that is being acquired for leasing purposes on a long-term basis. It is true that those people will put up the stores. The land will be owned by the Crown corporation.

### **Cornwall Centre**

**MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek), why didn't the government approach the co-operatives instead of the multinationals to develop this area?

**MR. SMISHEK:** — We did, Mr. Speaker, we did. I have a letter to prove that.

### **Reservations in Parks**

**HON. A. MATSALLA (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources):** — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Wilkie (Mr. Garner) asked a question of me, as the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources, and it was left to me to provide an answer. His question is and I quote:

Will the minister please tell this Assembly if this is government policy to let the people know reservations have already been accepted?

I would like to reply to the hon. member by saying that we do not advertise the availability of accommodation in provincial parks. It is not customary practice to do this

as there is the private sector and I am sure he will agree that we should not interfere with private sector accommodation. Therefore, we do not advertise. Nevertheless, we will let the people know that reservations for accommodations take place. It is the policy of the department not to take accommodation reservations before March 15. Anybody who writes for accommodation prior to March 9 has their letter returned to them. We indicate that if they are unable to write again before the 15th, they should phone. Any letters received after March 9 are held by the park office and opened on the 15 of March. On the morning of the 15th, one staff member opens all the letters. We have two staff members taking phone calls on different numbers, also one staff member at the desk for personal contacts. There is no requirement they have to absolutely have a deposit, but if they phone we give them two weeks to get the deposit in. The important feature is what procedure we go through. Any letters received prior to March 9 are returned, and after the 9th we accept them. We do not feel that much would be gained by advising people in advance. On March 15 quite a number of people come into the office and book for other people. For every weekend during July and August the weekends are all used up.

Nevertheless, for the information part, for example in Kenosee Provincial Park we have 16 modern cabins. All these are reserved for July to August 25, leaving May, June 3 to 7, 27 and 28 still open. Mr. Speaker, 29 modern cabins, May, June, July to August 11 are fairly well open. The motel is also open.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Rent Control

**HON. E.C. WHELAN (Minister of Consumer Affairs):** — Mr. Speaker, as the minister in charge of The Residential Tenancies Act, I would like to report to you and to all members of the Assembly that effective April 1, 1979, the cities of Lloydminster, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert and Weyburn will be decontrolled and placed under rent review. With the decontrol of these cities, only Regina and Saskatoon remain under rent control.

Recent departmental studies and continuous monitoring of the rental situations in Regina and Saskatoon show clearly that decontrol in these two cities would cause undue hardship. The 29 cities and municipalities that are now covered by rent review are: Weyburn, Lloydminster, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Battleford, Yorkton, Melville, Estevan, Swift Current, Assiniboia, Biggar, Canora, Humboldt, Kamsack, Kindersley, Maple Creek, Meadow Lake, Melfort, Moosomin, Nipawin, Rosetown, Shaunavon, Tisdale, Unity, Wynyard and Uranium City. In these centres, landlords will now be required to give tenants at least three months written notice of any increase in rents. Tenants who feel a proposed increase is not fair and reasonable may, within 30 days of receiving written notice, apply to the Provincial Mediation Board for a review of their rent.

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):** — We welcome, of course, the first start of the removal of rent controls. We hope that it's a rapid process to remove them. We would like to have heard some commitment from the minister that the bureaucracy that was established will in fact be dismantled and not just integrated back into the rest of the government service, because it was set up for that particular purpose. The function is over, now the bureaucracy as I say should be dismantled. We do suggest, Mr. Speaker, to the minister that the government, in fact, follow the Premier's leadership and invest some of that money and give tax credits to those involved in rental housing as the Premier has done,

rather than get into rent control because an expansion of the number of rental accommodation units would have done more to keep the price of rental accommodation down than rent control. I suggest that the Premier, himself, although not following government policy, in fact did show some leadership by tapping that vast store of funds and putting them into the rental accommodation market. I would hope that the government would have some tax policies for those involved in the rental accommodation industry to increase the number of units available and thus keep the price down. We think it is a more efficient and effective way of supplying adequate rental accommodation at reasonable rates.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **Resolution No. 1 — Re-institution of Capital Punishment.**

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle)** moved, seconded by Mr. Taylor (Indian Head-Wolseley):

That this Assembly urges the Government of Canada to immediately hold a national referendum on the re-institution in Canada of capital punishment in order to give the people of Canada an opportunity to express their views on this issue.

He said: Mr. Speaker, and members of the Assembly, we have before this Assembly a resolution which I will move later which deals with the matter of capital punishment, a matter that this Assembly urge the Government of Canada to hold a referendum on the re-institution of capital punishment. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that there has been an issue before the people of Canada that has had a greater emotional impact, that has created a belief that governments do not listen to them, an issue that has put politicians in low esteem. I say this stating to the hon. members opposite that that issue crosses party lines. It's not an issue of any single political party and, as I say, proponents of all political parties have some deep concerns about the manner in which capital punishment was abolished in Canada.

I would hope that one of the members opposite would be prepared to second this motion. We know on the federal level the position of the parties, including the party opposite. We also know the position of the federal government, and also of the leader of the Conservative Party in Ottawa. But in all cases, the statements of the leaders of those parties have been ones which do not reflect the true concerns and the desires of the vast majority of Canadians.

The manner of abolition of capital punishment created deep concern in law enforcement agencies, but above all it has little, if any, public support, and that I believe to be a political wrong. I put this motion before this Assembly because I believe in an issue of that nature. The public does have a right to voice its opinion.

We have some conflicting views, I think, in Canada on the use of the referendum. We have the position of the Prime Minister of Canada, who is adamantly opposed to a referendum on capital punishment, but very, very quickly decides that it's in his political interest to have a referendum on the question of national unity, the question of Quebec's separation. In other words, we have a situation where the leader of Canada has stated that for political purposes we will have a referendum, but when we have an issue that concerns every Canadian, an issue that disturbs every Canadian, there was a refusal to give the public a right to speak its opinion.

I believe that the form of a properly established and worded referendum would in fact do more to relieve the bitterness that now exists. I think it would do more to allow us to debate the matter of capital punishment in a reasonable and rational way. I think we've seen in Britain and I think we will see in Quebec, the advantages of a referendum with a yes or no answer, because it allows the two sides to articulate their positions, sell their positions, argue their positions, before the public. And I see absolutely no reason why we couldn't give the people of Canada a voice on capital punishment. I have more confidence that I think the federal politicians have because I think that if the proponents of capital punishment and those that oppose capital punishment are given the opportunity to express their views to the public, their positions, in, as I say, reasonable and rational terms, that the public of Canada will give them a fair and unemotional hearing. I think it's better to do it that way without regard to the partisan political process because as I say and as I said at the outset, the concerns about the manner of abolition of capital punishment cross all party lines.

Why is capital punishment such an emotional issue? I think capital punishment became a symbol. It represents to the people of Canada their attitude to and their abhorrence of murder. I think it represented and reflected a concern by society of threats against the security of society. I think it symbolized a support for our law enforcement officers, prison guards and I think above all, Mr. Speaker, that it symbolized society's rightful insistence that crime must be punished. And I believe that the removal of this symbol, without regard to the public's position, caused this reaction in Canadians.

You know, we use symbols daily in our political activity and I think, given the electronic media that symbols are probably the basis of our political activity. We take a look, whenever we have a public concern, we immediately establish a new department or agency so that we deal. The fact that if we analyze most of our symbols, departments that we have established that their actual effectiveness is not very great. I think we've established consumer affairs departments across Canada and across the United States and there are not too many consumers feel better represented as a result. We established environmental departments across Canada and across the United States and environmental groups don't have the confidence in a lot of them. Public doesn't have the confidence. But we have a symbol of concern established. We had a symbol, for example, on wage and price controls that proved to be ineffective. But we use symbols daily. We use them for partisan political purposes. We should not, nor do we have the right to criticize the public for insisting on its symbols, a symbol of some very basic beliefs in the justice system. I believe that a referendum will do much to restore public confidence in our political institutions. I think that a referendum will show support for our law enforcement people. I think it will do much to ease, what I feel, are the legitimate and valid concerns of our law enforcement agencies that they lack public support. Above all, Mr. Speaker, a referendum will convince people that our criminal law does, in fact, reflect the concepts and the ideas of the people of Canada.

You know it is strange in the field of criminal law that we have great concerns about making the criminal law reflect the realities. We have made major changes in the gambling laws. We talk about changes for laws of prostitution. We make some actual changes in the law of rape to bring it into touch with reality. Why, in fact, did we fail to do this and why did our national politicians fail to do this in the area of capital punishment?

I believe, Mr. Speaker, and I think all members believe, that a system of criminal law must, in fact, reflect the mores of the society it governs.

Capital punishment doesn't mean revenge for most. I think it means a deep concern for the criminal justice system. I believe that capital punishment for the average Canadian citizen doesn't mean revenge, but it means justice. I believe, as well, that for the average Canadian citizen, a vote on capital punishment doesn't mean retribution, but in fact, means for him a respect for the criminal law of Canada.

I would like to digress, for a minute, Mr. Speaker. We came up with what was supposedly a compromise position, a sop to the people, by insisting that rather than capital punishment a 25-year mandatory prison term be imposed. I think sociologists across Canada will indicate that that particular penalty may be the most barbaric that we could have come up with. I don't think there is anyone in Canada who, for a moment, argues that our prison systems in Canada are, in fact, rehabilitative. I think that most sociologists will accept that the prison system of Canada is, in fact, a training ground for most criminals. I believe that that 25-year prison sentence, in lieu of capital punishment, will be a time bomb for future Canadians because I think the sociological data that we have in Canada indicates that a person going in for that length of time will in fact be a more dangerous person coming out 25 years later. How we deal with someone who comes out 25 years later — he has been out of touch with society for 25 years — I think is going to be a terrible problem in the future. I don't envy people in the future having to deal with that particular problem. I don't think it was the answer. I, for one, as members of this Assembly know, advocate capital punishment for murder of police and prison guards. I think that they deserve that protection. I think they deserve and need that deterrent. I'm prepared, after dealing with what I believe to be some very responsible people in the field of law enforcement, to state that they feel and believe that they don't have support and that their risks are greater as a result of the actions of the Government of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, a referendum would have, I think, the result of a cleansing of the political process in this regard. I think it would allow the politicians to forget about the partisanship and it would let the people of Canada speak and make their own decisions. As I say, Mr. Speaker, I believe that if a referendum is fairly stated I have every confidence in the people of Canada that they would make a decision that they believe to be right, morally right and I think that is the tragedy of the actions of the Federal House of Parliament in denying the people a referendum.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

**MR. G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley):** — Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be able to stand in this Assembly this afternoon and speak on a topic that I think is of extreme importance to the people of Canada. This is a very important topic in my view and I think all members in this House should give very careful consideration to the resolution to this motion which is calling for a referendum, by the people of Canada, on the important topic of capital punishment.

As I was campaigning in the last while, as other members were during the months of September and October, this topic came up many times, and I'm sure it did in many of our campaign speeches. I found it was, in my constituency of Indian Head-Wolseley, perhaps one of the most important topics of the subjects discussed. I know that in the parliament of Canada, and throughout Canada, there have been good arguments placed for both abolition and retention; however, before I go further into this discussion, I would like to identify my stand which is similar to my seatmate's stand (Mr.

Lane). I feel (and my words from this point on will probably be shaded by my bias) that although I wish with all my heart and sincerity that we as a people had progressed to a point where the taking of a man's life was not a necessity, I do not see that we as a civilized society have come that far. Therefore, I would have to say that I believe that we should move to the re-introduction of capital punishment.

Now I will ask the members on both sides of the House to just sit for a minute and think of the situation in our country today. Look at the growth of violence that is taking place. One only has to look at the weekly newspapers, listen to the radio on the weekend, go to the movies, or read some of the literature on our news stands and I think he must agree that for some reason, unknown to me and to many other people in this society, there seems to be a growth in what I call abnormal behavior and a growth in violence.

I'd like to cite a couple of cases that come to our minds very readily if we read the paper; last week there was the case at Edenwold, which was a very bizarre and strange occurrence. I'd like to recall the incident of the RCMP in Brandon about a year ago, where the young RCMP Sergeant or Corporal (I forget his rank) was shot in the line of duty. What about the case of the RCMP in Saskatoon? I'm sure the members from Saskatoon will remember that very vividly, as will the people of Saskatchewan as a whole.

Coming to my constituency, there was a very, very sad case two or three years ago of the Sedley farmers. They were at the parish fowl supper doing their duty to their church and their society, and were taken out and slain in the ditch of the road outside of Sedley.

I don't want to see that type of society continue and I'm sure most of us in this House do not adhere to that kind of behaviour. I think we sincerely want to put an end to this type of behaviour in our society.

This, my friends, is nothing more than out and out murder! I don't think that we, as legislators, should allow this type of thing to continue; we must as elected leaders of this society in Saskatchewan stand up and be counted. I realize and we all do, that the matter of capital punishment is beyond our jurisdiction. As you heard the Leader of the Opposition say the other day in discussing PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) and I'm going to say it to you now in discussing capital punishment, that there are times when we must bury our political differences and we must work together for the benefit of the people of Saskatchewan. I think that this is one of these occasions.

I would like to go on to the situation of the policemen and the prison guards. I ask you, members of this Assembly, if we do not stand up and protect these men who are there protecting our society, who's going to take this job? Let's look down the road; our friend was talking about 25 years down the road. I don't think it takes too much imagination to look further down the road from where we are now. We are all mature adults, somewhere between the ages of 30 and 60 in this House and I challenge you to look back into your days and compare the situation then as it is today. You must come to the realization that it is time that the leaders of this country stood up and fought for a cleaning up of our society with regard to murder.

I would like to recall another case which comes to my mind (again I am not picking on the city of Saskatoon at all) the case of the young children. I think it was about three years ago, the young children were murdered and buried in a grave just outside of Saskatoon. A horrifying case, a case that everyone in Saskatchewan was alarmed

about. I have a wife and two young daughters (I know many of you do) and I tell you one thing, I'm not going to stand in this legislature in Saskatchewan and allow these kinds of things to take place without giving my utmost to try to bring about a change. I don't believe that our daughters and wives and ourselves, or anyone else should have to be walking our streets in fear, which is the situation which we are coming into in many of our urban centres in Saskatchewan today.

I would like to go on a little further here. My seatmate said he believes in capital punishment for the murder of policemen and prison guards. I am afraid I have to go one step further. I believe that a life is a life and that we are not in a position to judge which life is the better. I think there is someone somewhere else in this universe who makes that kind of judgment. What I am concerned about in our society today is, who is being supported? Oftentimes you hear a lot about the criminal and how we must rehabilitate society, concerned about the families who are left? The heartache that is left there, perhaps the poverty, the broken home — these things are quickly forgotten. We are so concerned with being just to the criminal that I think that we are at a time in our society where in many things the tail is beginning to wag the dog. I think it's time we took a look at this. I would like to ask the members here, is this the sample of the just society that the Prime Minister of Canada promised us some 11 years ago. To me, it isn't a very good example of that.

Now, I'd like to go on a little further on this topic, Mr. Speaker. I believe that I'm expressing the views of many people in Canada and I believe I'm expressing the views of many of the members on the other side as well. Once again, I would say that this is an issue that, I think, should be above political arguing or bantering or rewording or so on. I think we should come out of this as a group if we feel this way (the majority of us) and I ask you and charge each of you to use your own conscience as, I think, the people of Canada will do if they are given this opportunity of a referendum. I believe that we should insist that the people of Canada be given a chance to express their views on this personal problem. It's a personal decision and I am proud to see that this motion has come from our party, the Progressive Conservative Party. I'm proud to lend support to my seatmate, the member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane) and I will be supporting this motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. C. WHITE (Regina Wascana):** — In giving careful consideration to the resolution placed before this House by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle, I'm uncertain as to just what he and his colleague want. Since this Assembly opened, my observation of the gentlemen opposite has not led me to conclude that clarity of thought is one of their major characteristics. This resolution, Mr. Speaker, begins by calling on this House to urge the federal government to hold a referendum on capital punishment and ends in the fourth line by describing what occurs, not in a referendum, but in a plebiscite. That, Mr. Speaker, is scarcely clarity of thought.

The resolution is also far too vague for this House to consider intelligently. If it is a call for a referendum and a genuine referendum, it should offer some guidance as to the types of crimes capital punishment should apply to and which, therefore, should be placed in a referendum and submitted to the people for their approval or rejection. We know only too well that people will answer different questions in different ways but I'll say no more on that point, Mr. Speaker. There are other more important things about this resolution to be considered.

When I read the resolution, when I listened to the hon. members opposite speak to it and when I think about the distinctions that have been drawn between referenda and plebiscites in Canada and when I recall the application to referenda and plebiscites in this country, I can only conclude that the gentlemen opposite, if they would want anything perhaps aside from political mileage, really want a plebiscite and not a referendum. Permit me, Mr. Speaker, to place on the record of this House what certain informed people have had to say of distinctions drawn between referenda and plebiscites in this country of ours. W.L. Morton, in his work *The Progressive Party in Canada*, when writing about the campaign for prohibition had this to say:

The politicians, and that means Liberals and Conservatives, sought persistently to avoid the issue by resort to local option, to plebiscites, and finally, seizing on the wide support direct legislation had obtained in the West, to the referendum.

In short, Morton tells us, there were plebiscites in use in this country before referenda. For the benefit of the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, let me point out that the phrase 'direct legislation' refers to the referendum, the initiative, and sometimes, provisions for the recall or removal of elected legislators by their constituents. Some of the members opposite are lucky we do not have recall procedures in our constitution.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WHITE:** — The distinction between the initiative and referenda and plebiscites is clearly set out by Cory and Hodges in *Democratic Government and Politics*. In their 1960 edition of their work, they state:

The referendum is applied by requiring that particular laws enacted by the legislature shall be suspended until the whole electorate has voted on them. The initiative, similarly, enables some fraction of the voters to petition for a particular law to be drafted and submitted to the electorate for their decision. These two devices, which generally go together, were in use in several of the democracies of continental Europe, although Switzerland is now the only country in which they are still frequently used. In the first three decades of this century, some 20 states in the United States adopted them. The movement spilled over into western Canada. But the sole remnant today is the Direct Legislation Act of Alberta. Many Canadian provinces, however, made use of plebiscites for getting an expression of opinion on particular issues, particularly the liquor question.

A Liberal attorney general of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, drew similar distinctions between referenda and plebiscites. J.A. Cross, speaking in this House, and that was in 1924, and since then we have not had a referendum in this country, said this concerning a plebiscite on liquor stores:

The bill before us is to provide for the taking of a plebiscite as opposed to a referendum. A referendum is a submission of a proposed public measure or law which has been passed upon by a legislature or a convention to the vote of the people for their ratification or rejection. If ratified by the voters, it is bound to become law. The system of referendum is foreign to our constitutional form of government. The legislature must remain free and supreme. A plebiscite, on the other hand, is an expression of popular will on a given matter of public interest by means of a vote of the whole people. The

result of a vote on a plebiscite does not place any obligation on the government to introduce or upon the legislature to enact any law as a result thereof. It merely is a means of gaining an expression of public opinion.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I could go on at length in a similar vein, but I think I've said enough to indicate that both governments and experts in Canada have viewed referenda as binding on them, binding them to particular courses of action, and plebiscites as merely devices for obtaining expressions of opinion on particular subjects. And, Mr. Speaker, the fact that there's a difference between a referendum and a plebiscite is not the only reason I raise questions about this resolution. For this House to ask the federal government to hold the referendum is to request it to do something it has never done before. The federal government has never in its 112 years held any vote which can be clearly classed as a nation-wide referendum. May I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if we want federal politicians, either Liberal or Tory, to do something, ask them to do something they've done in the past. They are not known to be fast learners.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government in 1920 was involved in what has been sometimes called a referendum on prohibition. But that affair was not a purely federal referendum since it involved only those provinces wishing to participate. The question or questions to be voted upon were framed by provincial governments and were not the same in all provinces where votes were taken. The question placed before the voters in Saskatchewan was this, 'Shall the importation and bringing of intoxicating liquor into Saskatchewan be forbidden?' B.C. voters, on the other hand, were presented with two questions. The day on which provincial votes were taken also varied. And, as I have already indicated, votes were not taken in all provinces. The reason for federal involvement in the affair arose from its control over interprovincial trade. It essentially acted to enable certain provinces to implement liquor policies they desired.

In the two other instances when the federal government submitted questions to the people it provided for nation-wide voting and clearly stated that it was holding plebiscites. The first occasion was the 1898 plebiscite on prohibition and the second involved conscription during the second world war. The latter event received some attention in the October election. Liberals then stated that the vote held in April of 1942 was a referendum on conscription. It was nothing of the sort except in some people's minds. It was a plebiscite which asked the Canadian people to release the Mackenzie King government from promises that it made not to impose conscription.

These two appeals by the federal government raise questions concerning the value of plebiscites and more so about the value of referendums.

At the time of the 1898 vote there were 1,233,627 registered voters in the country. Of these, 543,029 or 44 per cent turned out to vote. 278,487 voted for prohibition; 264,571 voted against prohibition. In short, there was a majority of only 13,916 for prohibition. The federal government concluded that in a case where over half of the eligible voters stayed at home and a majority of only 2.5 per cent of those participating favored a certain course of action, it was not justified in adopting that course of action. The federal government had asked for an expression of opinion — it concluded that it could not clearly assess public opinion on prohibition on the basis of the vote. I ask the members opposite, would they want the federal government to be bound through a referendum to a certain course of action on capital punishment on the basis of such a vote? Hence, I ask them, do you really want a referendum; do you not want a plebiscite?

The second plebiscite is in some respects, even more interesting, Mr. Speaker. In

1942, the King government asked the people of Saskatchewan to release it from its promise not to impose conscription. In this case, there were 6,502,234 voters on the list. Some 4,638,847 or roughly 71 per cent turned out to vote. Of those taking part, 64 per cent voted in the affirmative and about 36 per cent in the negative. Despite the fact that about 29 per cent of the electorate had not cast their vote, over 45 per cent of those eligible to vote cast affirmative ballots. From such figures, one might conclude that the plebiscite gave the government a very good expression of public opinion on the question at issue. One might go on from there to argue that plebiscites are a desirable form or desirable means to gauge public opinion. But such conclusions cannot be supported when all of the facts are known. And, Mr. Speaker, I would urge the gentlemen opposite to weigh carefully the facts I'm about to give them.

A number of public opinion polls were held in the month or so preceding the voting in the 1942 plebiscite. The results indicated that people would cast their ballots this way or that way for a variety of reasons. When people were asked what they thought of the government's decision to hold a plebiscite, 54 per cent said the government was wrong in doing so and 31 per cent said the government was acting properly. When asked what the plebiscite was all about, 45 per cent stated that it was related to freeing the government from its promises. An almost equal number — 42 per cent — said it was a vote for or against conscription. So there's no unanimity on what the vote is about, even. When asked how they would vote on the question of conscription, for or against, 55 per cent said they would vote for conscription. But when asked how they would vote on the question of relieving the government of past promises, 62 per cent said they would let the government off the hook. Now, Mr. Speaker, I think you'll agree when I say that there was massive confusion among the voters when they cast their ballots in 1942 and I think you'll agree that such confusion was reflected in the voting. As Mackenzie King said of his policy, it was 'conscription if necessary, but not necessarily conscription.'

The gentlemen opposite merely ask for a referendum on capital punishment. It would take no mental giant to frame a question on capital punishment which could be presented or interpreted by the voters as 'capital punishment if necessary, but not necessarily capital punishment.' Indeed, we've had such a policy in this country already and I ask the gentlemen opposite when requesting a referendum on capital punishment of the federal government, would they work to gain approval of a proposition placed before the public which is as vague as the resolution that they have placed before this House? I venture to say they would not, they'd do another Tory flip flop.

Let me turn now to the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Since 1905, governments here have held six referenda or plebiscites. Four of them dealt with liquor traffic; one was the 1920 referendum which I referred to a few minutes ago. A second referendum held in 1916 led to abolition of government liquor stores. The third was the 1924 plebiscite which led to the restoration of government liquor stores. The fourth, also a plebiscite in 1934, approved sale of beer by the glass in licensed premises. Of the two other appeals, one was the 1956 plebiscite on the time issue, and the other was a 1913 referendum on the question of whether referenda, together with the initiative, should become part of our system of government.

I want to say a few words about some of these affairs, Mr. Speaker, and I will begin by taking up the 1956 time plebiscite which some people may remember. My reason for doing so is, as I have just pointed out, voter confusion, when faced with a plebiscite on a matter, or for that matter, a referendum. The point I want to make is that not only the

voters, but politicians, and the very best politicians, CCF-NDP politicians can wind up confused.

The 1956 plebiscite might be called the great Saskatchewan time fiasco. Rather than speak at length about it I will simply read into the record of this House an analysis of it. It is from an article on Saskatchewan written about 1970, and entitled, The Referendum on Plebiscite, and it reads, in part, and I quote:

The province's east and west boundaries do not coincide with those of any time zone, and the question of which time zone should be used for setting the province's clocks, has been a vexing one for many years. In 1956 the electorate was permitted to express its opinion on a confusing ballot which not only permitted voters to vote for or against Central Standard Time for the whole province, but also to indicate their personal preference for the time to be used locally. Only 34.1 per cent of the electorate voted. And on the first question 101,292 favored Central Standard Time and 67,950 opposed it.

Local time preferences substantially negated the first part of the ballot; 72,561 chose Central Standard Time; 19,380, Central Daylight Time and 83,267, Mountain Standard. The government, needless to say, encountered considerable difficulty in interpreting these results, but treating the whole matter as non-political, had a legislative committee consider it, and then accepted a recommendation that put the province on Mountain Standard Time during the winter months and Central Standard Time in the summer. The solution divided the cabinet and the Assembly and in due course the public. An extensive confusion developed in many parts of the province as communities chose their own time. The law was repealed in 1959. The time question was again sent to a legislative committee in 1962, and in 1966 following its report, the province was bisected roughly into an east and west time zone respectively employing Central Standard and Mountain Standard Time but allowing for many exceptions.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's confusion for you and I think I can say, on the basis of personal experience, that confusion ran very deep.

In the 1950s I was employed as a telegraph operator by the CNR at Humboldt. Humboldt was a divisional point on the railway and one of the communities where trains passed from one time zone to another. Each spring and fall as the time in use in the community changed, you could expect some extended conversations with members of the public concerning just when a particular train would arrive or leave. To avoid confusion I would often resort to saying it will be in in so many minutes or hours from now. One day when I informed a lady that No. 9 would arrive in exactly one hour she responded, "Is that slow time or fast time?" Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, members on this side of the House learned from experience; they do not see plebiscites and referenda as the be all and end all when it comes to handling ticklish questions. I hope the hon. members opposite will also learn from past experience.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I think it is incumbent upon me to say something about a true referendum. To do so will help the hon. members opposite clarify their thinking on referenda and plebiscites and aid them in deciding what, if anything, they want this House to do. For that purpose I will speak about the 1913 Saskatchewan referendum which asked the voters to approve or reject a bill which had already been drafted and debated and which provided for adoption of the initiative and referendum

in this province. It was in every respect a true referenda on referenda. Recounting this portion of our province's political history, Mr. Speaker, brought a good many laughs in the October election. Mr. Malone and his referendum gang were then criss-crossing the province promising people referenda on all sorts of things. They had evidently not examined the record of previous Liberal administrations on the subject. But we shouldn't be too hard on them, the gentlemen opposite haven't either and I will illustrate that in due course.

The 1913 referendum was held under the auspices of a Liberal government headed by Walter Scott and one of the conditions this government laid down for passage of The Referendum Act was that 30 per cent of the electorate vote and that a majority of these vote in the affirmative or the referendum would be considered not to have passed. On voting day there were 161,531 voters on the list; only 31,593 or less than 20 per cent turned out and cast their ballots. To put it another way only 16.2 per cent of the voters, on the list, cast affirmative ballots. Premier Scott thereupon announced that due to insufficient interest the bill providing for direct legislation would be withdrawn.

I don't think you can blame my constituents for laughing at Liberal activities during the last election. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Malone and his colleagues were busily promising referendums and asserting that pretty well everything done by a government should be supported by 51 per cent of the electorate; 51 per cent is a far cry from the 16.2 per cent, who had when given the opportunity by a Liberal government, indicated a desire to use the referendum. And, Mr. Speaker, further laughter erupted when my constituents observed that Mr. Malone and his associates were proposing things which could only influence the way they desired the outcome of the voting on the proposed referendum.

Mr. Speaker, if I didn't see it as my duty or part of my duty to expedite the business of this House I could go on and on talking about particular plebiscites and referendums, which have been held in Saskatchewan and other provinces. But feeling as I do, I will content myself with a few remarks about certain of their aspects.

First of all, a few words about voting in referendums and plebiscites. I have already given some indication of a wide variation in the proportion of voters participating. Such variations can be attributed to a number of things. Some of these factors demonstrate that the results of an appeal to the electorate do not necessarily tell us what they appear to on the surface. They illustrate better how governments can influence voting to obtain the results they want.

The vote on the referendum, which I have just dealt with, is a case in point. The vote in that referendum was low because the Scott government wanted it to be low, thereby providing the excuse to drop the matter. The government publicized the referendum no more than was absolutely necessary. In fact, the advertising was so scanty that some people didn't even know where they were to vote. Just why the government did this, is well illustrated in a letter by Premier Scott to a Liberal colleague in Moose Jaw and I want to read that letter. Here, in part, is what it says, Mr. Speaker:

My view is that nothing ought to be done by the Liberal Party which will give anyone a chance to say that the party did not support the direct legislation principle. The labor element, as well as the average man, who considers himself independently-minded as regards public affairs and a close student of public affairs, and who, by the way, has information at hand which is at best very superficial are warm advocates of direct legislation and I think it

would be detrimental to the interests of the Liberal Party if people obtained the idea that the Liberal Party had not stood by the legislation we framed last winter.

At the same time the more I have been compelled to become acquainted with the whole question, the more honestly dubious I have become of the effects likely to be produced in relation to the public welfare. My innermost conviction is that it will be far better for the province if the principle is not sufficiently sustained at the polls to bring our direct legislation act into force.

You will, of course, understand how necessary it is that the expression of opinion which I am giving you shall be kept entirely confidential between ourselves. In making use of the opinion with others I think it would be better to let no one know that I have expressed it but merely let it be understood as being the opinion come to by the leaders among our Liberal Moose Jaw Party friends themselves.

The letter, Mr. Speaker, needs no further comment. Mackenzie King, on the other hand, obtained a high turnout and a strong affirmative vote in the 1942 plebiscite by extensive publicity and by careful selection of the question to be put to the population.

An early Tory government in Manitoba took yet a different course to influence results. It provided no voters lists and set the stage for many irregularities in a vote on prohibition. In St. Boniface, for example, twice as many people voted as there were judged to be eligible voters in the community. The government doubtless was pleased with such occurrences. The people of St. Boniface, like members of the government, were opposed to prohibition.

Results can also be influenced one way or another by when you hold a plebiscite or a referendum. If a low vote is desired hold the plebiscite by itself or in unseasonable weather. If you desire a heavy vote, hold it, for example, at the same time as a provincial election. I'm sure some members of this House would not mind my illustrating by example what I mean by that. There's an example well worth bringing to the attention of all the hon. members — the 1934 plebiscite on the sale of beer by the glass in Saskatchewan. The number of people voting in that plebiscite was 382,823. That's over 110,000 more people than voted in the 1942 plebiscite. Why did the voters turn out in such numbers? They were just sick and tired of the one and only Tory government we ever had in this province and they went to the polls determined to get rid of it. While they were at the polling stations they also voted on the plebiscite. I need not remind members of this House of the 1934 election results — the election of the first CCF members even to sit in this House and annihilation of the Tories to the last man.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WHITE:** — And a similar fate awaits the members opposite, Mr. Speaker — some of them anyhow, unless they begin clarifying their thoughts and stop shooting from the lip.

While I'm on the subject, Mr. Speaker, let me say something about what appears to have been a recent effort to predetermine the course of a proposed referendum. Ted Malone and his associates in the last election proposed to give the people of this province tax cuts by allowing them to vote to dispense with certain programs provided

by government. It would probably have involved voting on certain health, educational, social services programs, and the like. In their platform published in the papers, this proposed referendum was called Proposition 1. The vote was to be held March 5, 1979. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, who might not have been able to get out and vote on March 5 last? Well-heeled Liberals and Tories? No. It goes without saying it would have been senior citizens, mothers with young children, and so forth — the very people who need and favor the types of programs which would have been voted upon. Mr. Speaker, I know from my contacts with people in my constituency that Mr. Malone underestimated the intelligence of the people of the province of Saskatchewan. They saw through his devious scheme and voted accordingly and they'll have no difficulty seeing through similar schemes put forward by the opposition.

I could also talk about costs of conducting referendums and plebiscites, Mr. Speaker, but I'll say very little on that subject. Suffice it to say, that costs have varied widely depending on when votes were held and how much they were publicized. I sincerely hope the hon. members opposite who do a daily song and dance on economy in government will not support costly procedures which produce highly questionable, perhaps quite useless results. The referendum, such as they propose, would cost far more than the 1942 plebiscite and that was \$1,385,508.43.

While I won't go into costs, Mr. Speaker, I do want to speak about something else. This resolution was placed before this House by Tories and I think members on both sides of the House should know what Tories have said of governments and individuals who resort to or advocate plebiscites and referendums. In doing so, I'll refrain from mentioning what any member of this Assembly has said in the past couple of years on the subject; such critical comments as those by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Moosomin are already well known. Rather, I want to tell you what other Tories have said.

First, John George Diefenbaker, concerning Mackenzie King's 1942 plebiscite, he said on the act providing for the plebiscite:

This act unless amended — and it wasn't amended — may well be just another milestone towards the destruction of that which we are fighting to preserve in these days of war . . . our free parliamentary institutions characterized by the principle of responsible government.

On the wording of the plebiscite, he had this to say:

It is a repudiation of government responsibility and just one more step along the road that leads to the derision of parliament and parliamentary institutions generally.

On the same plebiscite, a Tory from Manitoba Souris, J.A. Ross stated 'to me the taking of a plebiscite seems a most unwarranted evasion of government responsibility.'

The members opposite have also been doing a daily song and dance about responsibility in government. Let them practise what they preach or stand condemned in the words of other Tories. Other Tory spokesmen have been even more unkind to individuals making proposals specifically for referendums. Premier Hatfield, just the other night on the Sunday night TV program, The Referendum Power Play, referred to the holding of referendums as cop-out. Cheating! Dishonest, all this on the part of a

government that does it. E.L. Taylor, a member for Gimli in the Manitoba legislature, a Tory, said direct legislation is favored by the crank, the fadist, who thought himself the people; and Rodman Roblin, the Tory Premier of Manitoba also spoke on the subject. Before telling you what he said, I should tell this House something about him.

The other day reference was made to the NDP 'group of five'. Mr. Roblin was nothing less than a member of a Tory 'gang of four'. Mr. Roblin and three of his ministers were hauled before the courts in Manitoba charged with fraudulent conspiracy to obtain party funds. The people of Manitoba had been overcharged approximately 20 per cent on the cost of their legislative building. A goodly portion of the funds went into Conservative Party coffers. The affair practically destroyed the Tory party in Manitoba for many years — one of the worst political scandals in all of Canadian history.

To return to what I am saying, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Roblin described the referendum as 'degenerate republicanism' which he said was advocated by demagogues in order to pull the underpinning out from under the British Empire.

On another occasion he said, advocating or adopting the initiative for referendum was (and get this) socialistic. The leader-in-waiting and the Tory member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. G. Taylor) are socialists. Their colleagues had better watch them. You know, the next thing, they will be bringing in a whole series of resolutions calling for purchase of the rest of the potash mines, nationalization of Mother Esso, more money for the land bank and confiscation of all property of the Conservative progressive railway. Direct legislation, Roblin said, was socialistic because it was so revolutionary as to destroy what had taken 800 years to build up. Roblin, like Ross and Diefenbaker, described the use of the referendum and plebiscite as destructive to parliamentary democracy and a shirking of responsibilities by government.

Let's have some consistency on the part of the opposition in this House, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, I may wish to speak on this subject later and I therefore beg to adjourn debate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

### **Resolution No. 9 — Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission**

**MR. R. ANDREW (Kindersley)** moved, seconded by Mr. E.A. Berntson (Souris-Cannington):

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan for allowing the Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission to become insensitive to the needs of the family farm.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity on private member's day to pass a few comments on and give some of my thoughts on the Saskatchewan land bank program. I think we have to look at just what direction we are going to be taking in rural Saskatchewan in the decade of the 1980s. And that is not simply a question of land tenure, that's a question of what is going to happen to our rural population. Are we going to allow the trend, the trend of the population to move to the larger centres of Saskatoon and Regina, are we going to allow that trend to continue? How are we going to approach the

problem of increasing production in the field of agriculture? There is another problem that we face. The other problem is the total question of land tenure in Saskatchewan. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps we have five different categories of land tenure in the province of Saskatchewan and I wish to refer to those five categories and basically say a bit on each one of them, hopefully to draw the picture as to which direction we are going.

I see the first category as the large corporate farm. I suppose it is epitomized by Credit Foncier . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . O.K. and I say about Credit Foncier and I'll state our position very clearly about Credit Foncier. It is that we do not support that type of land holding and that we like to see that type of land holding phased out. In fairness to them and in fairness to anyone who wishes to really sit and look at this total problem, I believe the people who are farming the land owned by Credit Foncier have traditionally had very good lease agreements. If you people are interested in fairness, look at the type of lease agreements here and by and large they are one-third, two-third crop share lease agreements. I defy the members opposite to say that that is an unfair type of lease agreement; these agreements have held up in this province for 50 or 60 years. By and large the lease agreements with Credit Foncier, in fairness to them, have been for a long term period of time and they have allowed tenants the right of first refusal in the event of a sale of that property. I think, statistically (and I am sure the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Kaeding, will have these figures). I'm sure statistically that type of farm-tenure holding is on the decrease and we support that decrease of that type of system. We support that the people of the province of Saskatchewan should be living on the farm and that is to be made clear.

The second type of tenure system that I see is what I will call the small and medium size farmer. These are the people that built this province and they are still the backbone of our agriculture system. These are the people that buy their farm machinery in the local towns and support the local stores and the local merchants and play on the local hockey team and go to our local schools. That's, Mr. Speaker, the people, the backbone of our agriculture industry.

Now I said that I was glad to see the Credit Foncier's of Saskatchewan on the decrease. But unfortunately the small, the middle-size farmer is also on the decrease in numbers and I think that's wrong. That's the problem — the fundamental problem facing rural Saskatchewan over the decade of the '80s.

The third type of land tenure system, I suggest, is the communal land system — the communal land tenure system — I suppose typified by the Hutterite system — which I suspect is really the only true socialist type farm land tenure system in this province. That is on the increase.

Now number four is what I class as the big farmer, the four to ten section farmer, the six to ten section farmer. I have a lot of those people in my riding and I am not going to be critical of those people because either they or their families have contributed greatly to this province, have been good farmers, have allowed to expand their farming operation. I suggest one of the great problems facing that type of farmer in this province is basically this — by and large they are successful farmers and being successful farmers they, as a rule, have some excess capital. So you say to that farmer, what should I do with my excess capital? I see perhaps three ways they can spend their money. Situation number one — you can tell him to go and buy some Canada Savings Bonds, or invest in your local credit union or bank. The farmer says, yes, I have been successful in this farming business, but what type of return do I get for that? They are

paying me a 9 per cent return on my investment; the inflation rate is 9 per cent; it has eaten up all my return. At the same time I am paying income tax on that money, so I am a net loser that way. Try to explain that to me! Is that a good system?

Situation number two — should I go to the city and buy some real estate or some shares or get on to the stock market? And I say, the person from rural Saskatchewan, the person who built rural Saskatchewan, also says, oh, those fast talking people from the city never in the past have they ever done us any good. I will stay away from those. So what is he saying? The only system I have left is to buy more land and unfortunately that's what happens. They do buy more land and they do push the price up. I say we must find a solution to that. You talk — as that's our system. I'll tell you that is not our system. I'll tell you in my riding what people have that kind of land and maybe some of the people opposite have been involved in the New Democratic Party and the CCF and maybe you will hear some of these names and see if they are supporters of our party. The Dearborns, 18 sections — PCs? No, NDP all the way. The Johnson family, 36 sections.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Which ones?

**MR. ANDREW:** — There are a whole bunch of them. They are all NDP. The 10-section socialists. That is number four.

The fifth type of land tenure is your system. This is the fourth type of people. That is the land bank people. I say to you people opposite, you speak of the land bank program and its having two pluses, two things that it is supposed to do.

Situation number one is to help the person retire in dignity. Quite frankly, there is no problem any more. Anyone that has a farm in Saskatchewan right now has very little trouble selling that farm land.

The second solution, the members opposite say, is for the land bank program to help the young guy get started farming. I say to the people opposite and I say to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) in particular, is that the position of land bank? Is that the purpose of land bank, or does the land bank purpose go further? Does the land bank purpose go to the point that the fundamental purpose of it is for the government to acquire the equity in farm land? Is the real reason for the government to acquire the equity in the farm land, or is the real reason to help the small farmers? If it is the narrow one of simply trying to help the small farmer, then I say that what you have in mind and what we have in mind is basically the same objective. It is just a matter of how we are going to get to it. What I say, the type of system that we advocate, is to put the money, the expenditure of money the province of Saskatchewan contribute to the land bank program, to dove tail that to the federal Farm Credit Corporation grants. It will take that to the bottom end and help that small guy.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — It won't work.

**MR. ANDREW:** — You say it won't work. It is working in the province of Alberta, my friend, wherein, Mr. Speaker, the size of the farms in the province of Alberta are on the decrease. The size of the farms in the province of Saskatchewan are on the increase. I defy the minister to stand up and state his position. I say our position goes beyond that. We also must try to harness our taxing policies to our land use and to land tenure so that we can maintain that strong, viable, medium-sized farmer in rural Saskatchewan, who is the vitality of western Canada and the vitality of rural Saskatchewan.

The other problem I see with the land bank is that, it seems to me, we're going to bureaucratize the farming system. I had a chap in the other day who didn't seem to have too much success with the government side. He seemed to be bothered by allergies and his doctor informed him that he should take two years off from farming. He had a land bank lease agreement. The first year, in fairness, the program allowed him to sublet his lease agreement because of his allergy problem. He came back this year and the doctor basically again said that the allergy problem had not been solved so he should give it perhaps one more year.

It's not the question of the rightness or the wrongness in this given situation, but here's a case of a guy saying, if I can pass the medical tests then I'll get through this. Where do we go next? Where do we go next, Mr. Speaker, if the guy says, well I can only work so many days on the farm? That's what's going to happen to the farming situation in this province and that's where the danger of this whole system goes.

Now, without belaboring, I would also at this point in time, like to make a few comments on what is called the appeal process of the land bank program. You'll find that in section 59 to 63 of the act, for anybody who's interested in looking it up.

At the present time, I believe it's a three-man appeal system. I call it an appeal court hesitantly because, by democratic standards, I wouldn't clearly think it much of an appeal court. The appointment of the people on the appeal was either by the minister or through his advice to the Cabinet. The minister is to check with his land bank officials and then with any other organizations he considers to be important.

NFU (National Farmers' Union), a great organization — I see in yesterday's paper that the minister is back to the annual contribution to the National Farmers' Union. His press release sets out the reason for the contribution this year. It goes on to say that similar grants are available to any farm organization that can prove it has management capabilities. I read to you, Mr. Speaker, from The Western Producer of December 14, 1978 and this is.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order. The member is obliged to relate to the subject which is under discussion which is Resolution No. 9 which I expect the member . . . Order, order . . . which I expect the member is intending to move at the conclusion of his remarks. At this point, I don't see the connection between what the member is talking about and the resolution which is proposed. If there is a connection, perhaps the member could assure me and hasten to get to the connection.

**MR. ANDREW:** — The only connection, Mr. Speaker, was the reference which the minister considered important and my suggestion, Mr. Speaker, concerning the National Farmers' Union because of the political connections with the members opposite. I simply wanted to make a passing comment with regard to that. Now surely the last speaker had a fair latitude in the speaking of his particular subject and for that reason.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. If the member had some objection to the last speaker, he should have raised it when the last speaker was speaking. I watched the last speaker quite closely and he stayed right on the subject and no one raised a point of order during the time the last speaker was speaking. I wish the member would (if he is trying to make a point of order) confine it to what is before us at this time.

**MR. ANDREW:** — Mr. Speaker, we'll cover that subject again. It's a touchy subject obviously over there. Getting back to the criteria of appointing the so-called judges of the land bank court and the question as to whom the minister considers important, can you imagine his deliberations on that point, Mr. Speaker? What do you suppose the criteria of the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) would be to selecting these judges? Do you suppose it's the question of fairness or the question of independence or the question of educational ability or would you think it's more of a question as to whether he is a member or supporter of the New Democratic Party, whether he was a farmer maybe able to be influenced. So getting back, I'm just trying to speed it up and I'll just take and expedite matters a bit, if you don't mind? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I don't. Who is the chief justice? Who is the chief justice of this great court and I suggest it's the political hack, Lorne (inaudible).

Going back, Mr. Speaker, to the concept of this appeal court, back to 1972-73, a young couple in the Kyle-Elrose area came to me and they had applied and were granted the right to a land bank lease under the land bank program. They were entitled to the lease agreement. They were quite happy about it. They were going to get their start in the farming business. Their father had a half section and he was going to rent that to them — they were going to get a start. Here was a fairly good system. Here was a person who could get a chance to go into the farming business. Lo and behold they got a notice that there was an appeal pending. So in they go. They came to me and asked how do we handle this total appeal problem? How do we handle this appeal question?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Buy a membership card.

**MR. ANDREW:** — That's right, buy a membership card. So they went, I believe, to Swift Current to determine who had this particular program. Do you think they had a right to so determine? Did they have the right to even be present when this appeal was heard? No chance! It was held behind closed doors, Mr. Minister. You know full well it was behind closed doors, everyone of them are behind closed doors . (inaudible interjection) . Garbage nothing! We were not allowed to go in to determine his point structure. So all I say to you, whether it is fair, whether it is not fair, why can't you be open about it? Why can't your appeal be open? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right! Why can't you open your appeal hearing? It's the same as a court.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — It should be the same as a court, but it isn't.

**MR. ANDREW:** — That's right. Courts are open, democratic and independent. Kaeding justice I call it.

Recently there was a similar case in Ituna. A guy came into the office and again he was successful in being granted the land, followed by an appeal.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — No membership card!

**MR. ANDREW:** — No membership card. It went to two other people. He was represented by counsel — the members opposite will be fully aware of who was representing them. I simply say to you, in the legal paternity and perhaps it's not any different, there's a great maxim that says, justice should not only be done but manifestly appear to be done. All I say to the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, is why can't we have a system in the land bank appeal where the same thing applies? Is that too much to ask, Mr. Minister? That justice should not only be done, but manifestly appear to be done? Now, surely, Mr.

Minister, you've heard this complaint a number of times before. I say to you in fairness, make it fair and make it appear to be fair and quite frankly, Mr. Minister, if you do that through your appeal system, you're going to have a lot better feeling out there in the people. They will appreciate your program a lot more and they'll trust your administration a lot more.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Souris-Cannington (Mr. Berntson), that this Assembly condemn the Government of Saskatchewan for allowing the Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission to be insensitive to the needs of the family farm.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington):** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to second the motion put on the order paper by my colleague, the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew) and I do sincerely hope that I am not wasting my sweetness on the desert air.

I would like to begin by reading from Hansard, April 24, 1972. Here we have the former member for Kinistino (Mr. Thibault) during the land bank debate, talking about the Liberals:

I also want to point out they had seven years to do something about the depletion of the farm population in this province. I want to point out also that there were no constructive suggestions before. What we have been doing in the past is that bigger farms were able to get the money to buy more land and got bigger and bigger. The weaker ones were encouraged to sell. I had that develop in my district . . .

.and so on. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that nothing has changed. From '72 until '76, in fact, during the time we had land bank in Saskatchewan, the family farm in number decreased in Saskatchewan by 6,000. During the same period, by comparison, in Alberta the number of farms actually increased and the number of farmers under age 35 in fact doubled. In Alberta . . . (inaudible interjection). . . My initial suspicions I think, are being confirmed and I am in fact wasting my sweetness on the desert air. The Alberta fact was accomplished by the government's guaranteeing loans at regular financial institutions to help the young fellow get on the farm . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BERNTSON:** — . . . by government's guaranteeing agreements for sale and, in some cases, by governments making direct loans as a bank of last resort. The only thing that increased in Saskatchewan during this same period was the rate of decline in the number of farms. One of the reasons that the number of family farms has decreased in Saskatchewan is it seems that land bank policy tends to discriminate in favor of the rich, the very fear that the hon. member for Kinistino put forth back in 1972. Nothing has changed. We've seen at least three brought up in the House: the Eston country . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . just wait a minute, the Argue case, the one where we have land bank policy defining the family farm as also including a \$500,000 apartment building. The size of the farms in Saskatchewan has in fact increased. These aren't my numbers; they're from the federal Farm Credit Corporation. The size of farms in fact has increased in Saskatchewan; the size of farms in Alberta during the same period has decreased.

I'm going to send a little package over to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding). The reason I'm going to send it over to you is because I'd just as soon the names weren't bandied around. Just to illustrate what has been happening, we've had a situation where a young farmer had five quarters of land, most of which he has owned since 1968. In August of '76 he bought another quarter of land which cost him \$32,000, somewhere in there. It put some financial strain on him, bearing in mind the quotas, etc., at the time. He also had some land bank land. Because of the financial strain, poor quotas, etc. (and remember, this was back when the lease policy was considerably different than it is now), he found himself in arrears to the land bank.

The land bank went out and hung a lock on the door. They sent the sheriff out and hung a lock on the door of the bins. The young fellow, realizing that he was behind the eight ball, offered his land for sale to the land bank. They refused to make an offer on the land so, in desperation he sold it to his neighbor — five quarters of land — on January 16, 1976, for \$82,500. A funny thing happened on the way to the Land Titles Office, March 20, three months later, certificate of title — the Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission, \$97,700, a very tidy profit of \$15,200 in two months.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the program has failed. This is but one example. I have more in the holding pattern and as I get them documented I will pass them over to you too, Mr. Minister. I would ask that you hand that to the Minister of Agriculture.

My point, quite simply is, that the land bank is not strengthening rural Saskatchewan. It is not helping the small family farm. Quite, frankly, I would urge the minister to seriously consider conducting an investigation into the activities of the land bank. I am very, very pleased to second the motion, Resolution No. 9.

**MR. E.E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture):** — Mr. Speaker, I really thought when we got into this debate I was going to hear some substantial arguments in favor of or in opposition to land bank. I thought I would probably hear of some serious criticisms, which I would really have some difficulty answering. I thought maybe there might be something that I didn't know, that might have been in the operation of land bank, which they might have brought forward to me. I was somewhat disappointed, in fact, at the very, very shallow kind of argument which came forward this afternoon.

In the mover's remarks I tried to find something there to which I could reply. I had real difficulty finding anything of merit worthy of a reply.

I suppose the only thing I really want to comment on is his criticism of our appeal procedure. The fact is that we have three people on there who are legitimate farmers, good farmers, people respected in the community. I have not yet, in the four years I have been in office, heard any criticism from anyone of those three people. If he has heard criticisms, I want to hear them, because I talk to all kinds of people all over the country and I have not heard criticism of our appeal board in terms of the personnel. Some people don't like the decisions they make, because you can never make a popular decision when you are looking at five or six people; you are going to become unpopular. But no one has ever told me that they didn't get a fair hearing.

Mr. Speaker, I have been somewhat saddened by the irresponsible statements, sniping and unsubstantiated accusations made by the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew) and from the members opposite. He started the accusation a couple of weeks ago about lessees in his own constituency, trying to prove in his own distorted way that the land bank was working contrary to the intent of the act. He tried to make a case that the

land bank was wrong in paying less for a farmer's land than the farmer had paid from the neighbor.

The fact was, Mr. Speaker, that we paid a fair price. But that doesn't seem to enter into his thinking. The member for Kindersley then complained that we leased this land to the farmer's son without competition. Even he knows that father to son transfers are part of our agreement and that part of the agreement is that the designated descendant be given the sole right to lease, providing he meets the standard criteria of the program, and in this case there was no question.

The member for Kindersley insinuates that the father was a large operator. Well, I have checked into that and the father has a section of land, he is leasing a little extra, but the fact of the matter is that we were not setting up the father. The purpose of the land bank is to set up the son; we are interested in getting his son started, not the father.

Now it may be possible that the father could have started the son up in some other way, but obviously, their decision was to sell to the land bank and lease back. If he chose to lose a few thousand dollars to do that, I am sure that's not for us to judge.

Then he drags in a farmer from Strasbourg who sold land to the land bank. He leased it back and then later used some of that money to purchase an apartment block. Now, Mr. Speaker, we don't necessarily approve of that kind of activity, but again, it was a matter of the personal choice of the individual involved. When his application for sale and lease back was approved, his financial statements showed him to be in a severe financial position and he chose the land bank route to help himself out of a difficulty with his outstanding accounts. We would have expected that he would have used his money to clear those accounts. However, we do not have the right or the responsibility to force him to do so. Possibly the members opposite feel that because he has a lease from the land bank, somehow we should be able to control his chequebook as well.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we said when we introduced the land bank program that we would not interfere with the personal lives of lessees, that they would be free to live their own lives so long as they lived up to the terms of the lease. The members opposite may think we should ride herd on them. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, this party doesn't believe that we should do so.

Next, Mr. Speaker, they drag in Senator Argue and his sale to the land bank, suggesting that he had leased his land to his daughter. Again the facts are distorted. Senator Argue's farm was leased to another sister and her husband and it was a totally legitimate transaction. The land which was leased to Susan Argue was purchased from Gerry and Linda Spenarski, who is a sister of Susan. The charge was made that Miss Argue is not farming the land but had contracted others to do the work for her. That charge is also false and I should tell you, only two weeks ago before this matter ever came up in the House, I had an occasion to be with Senator Argue. I met Senator Argue and his daughter, Susan, at an agriculture banquet in my constituency. I can tell you that I didn't invite them there. I was a guest as he was, and he was the guest speaker at that banquet. Mr. Argue, in the course of his remarks that evening, told of his daughter's love for the farm and her involvement in farm activities, from tending the milk cows to running the tractor and to picking stones. Now it is possible that she may have had some work done on her behalf since she's a single woman. However it looks to me like members opposite are again showing their bias against women, by suggesting that because she is a woman she should be denied the right to farm land on her own. As

I understand it she has her own machinery which she shares with other members of her family — and that's totally legitimate. She has her own quota book. She pays her own income tax. And generally, within her physical capacity, she does her share in the farming operation. During the winter she's taking courses at the university. Now, Mr. Speaker, would members opposite deny her that? I'm sure they would. Or do they think it's more appropriate that she should go out and curl all winter as the member for Milestone (Mr. Pickering) does? Or should she spend her weekends in Banff skiing? Or should she go to California for the winter? Maybe that's a more appropriate thing for her to do during the winter time. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe it is our duty to regulate the private lives of our lessees. That may be Tory policy but it certainly is not ours.

In a program as wide ranging as the land bank there will be many marginal cases, and the commission is not infallible. There will be lessees who do not abide strictly by their contracts and there may be others who abuse the privileges which they receive under the lease. Within the power of the commission every attempt is made to avoid this from happening but if a flagrant violation occurs and leases are abused, there are provisions for cancellation of contract. However, that is not something which the commission would enter into lightly and a substantial amount of staff time is spent on such lessees to try to encourage compliance on an advisory basis before more strenuous efforts are undertaken. We try to allocate as fairly as we can. We try to ensure that the lessee abides by the spirit of the program but we do not wish to be a gestapo, as members opposite suggest that we should be.

The resolution moved by the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew) reads as follows:

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan for allowing the Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission to become insensitive to the needs of the family farm.

At the outset, Mr. Speaker, it becomes obvious to me that the hon. member is either not aware of how the land bank works or how it has changed over the years or he is not at all familiar with the needs of the family farm; I'm not sure which of those it is. One of the needs of the family farm is to secure land at a price which will permit a return to capital plus enough to provide a decent living for the family. There are really only two ways for a beginning farmer to secure control of farm land; one is by way of lease and the other is by way of a purchase. If land prices are forced up beyond his reach by manipulation and manoeuvres by outside forces then purchase is no longer an option for him. He is forced either to lease or he is forced out of farming. To suggest that the Land Bank Commission has not changed with the times and thus become insensitive to the needs of the family farm is simply making a broad statement in an attempt to mislead the public and hoping that no one will challenge it.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to state emphatically to the member for Kindersley and to this House that this government and the commission have worked hard and long to ensure that the program continued to perform the purpose for which it was designed. The land bank cannot be all things to all people. Funds have sometimes been limited; decisions therefore have to be made to determine who the program should be molded to serve.

As a government program it must be bold enough to take chances on untried and inexperienced people. People that the average landlord would not deal with if there was a large farmer nearby who would be prepared to lease. I think that's what the member for Kindersley thinks we should do. I say this, Mr. Speaker, I am in no way trying to insinuate that land bank lessees are second-class farmers. A good many of them are

unproven because no one else would give them a chance. Given a fair deal as offered by the land bank, these young farmers, many of them, will become our leaders of tomorrow. In 1971 it was decided that anyone who had a net worth of \$60,000 or less and had a net income of \$10,000 or less, averaged over the previous three years, would be eligible to apply. In other words, the commission was looking to lease to those who appeared to have the least opportunity outside of agriculture, certainly not the land barons which the members opposite seem to indicate.

Due to inflation, the rising cost of land and the rising cost of living, it became obvious by 1974 that the above guidelines were picking out a completely different clientele than the program was designed to serve. In order to remain sensitive to the needs of prospective young farmers these guidelines had to be adjusted annually and that's exactly what the commission did using 1974 as a base year. The setting of net worth and net income criteria is now adjusted annually based on the change in the wage index for Saskatchewan. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, is that being insensitive to the needs of the family farm?

In 1972 land prices had fallen from a 1968 all-time high and grain was just not moving and interest rates had again stabilized. Everything pointed to a percentage of land value as being a logical, fair and equitable land rent. A decision was made to rent at 5 per cent of what the commission paid for the land and peg at that amount for the first three years of the lease. In the fourth year the rent was to be adjusted to 5 per cent of the present value of the land regardless of whether it had gone up or down. By the spring of 1976, when the first leases were to be adjusted to the new land value, it was determined that the land on the average had almost doubled in price since it was purchased by the commission three years earlier. To go with the original regulations, land bank regulations would have doubled. Being sensitive to the needs of the family farm, regulations were changed to be 5 per cent of the previous three year moving average of land prices rather than just the present land value.

Mr. Speaker, it looked like a realistic method of establishing rent had at last been found. As land prices fluctuated up or down, lessees would pay an average rent. They would not be asked to meet the highs and the lows of the land market. Land prices continued their rapid upward escalation. By 1978, even 5 per cent of the three year average land value was no longer realistic in some areas. Under the formula, rent continued upward while the previous three years had seen the net returns of farmers decrease. So rent was out of step with the returns to farming.

Mr. Speaker, this government and the commission again went to work with the result that a rent based on previous yield records and the last known product prices was arrived at. Because the rent is tied to product price, it will fluctuate in relation to net returns to farming and thus coincide with the lessee's ability to pay. Mr. Speaker, is this being insensitive to the needs of the family farm on the land bank land? The commission did not force that change upon the lessees. Of their own free will and in their own best interest, each one decided which rent formula would best suit them. Then there has been the long and tedious complaint from the opposition that the land bank was a front; it was a plot to buy up all of the land in Saskatchewan and because of this the commission would never sell an acre of land . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, come on.

We all know that 350 lessees had the opportunity to purchase in 1978 and about 50 of them did. If the owning of land is a need of the family farm, then the commission was sensitive to that need. Indeed, this government assisted the purchase of one quarter by introducing what is now known as the homestead rebate. A lessee can now get a rebate

of up to 20 per cent of the price paid to a maximum of \$5,000 as assistance in buying one quarter section of land. Does this indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the commission is insensitive to the needs of family farms? I suggest that that \$5,000 rebate will be one of the most valuable parts of that program.

Another example of how the commission tried its best to assist family farms in 1978, occurred in the area around Kindersley, Saskatchewan. For years, the rural municipality owned farm land in that area and leased it to local farmers. The municipal act is clear, in that such land can only be disposed of by tender or public auction. The municipal council knew full well that if they moved in that direction those family farmers who had leased for years would have had the land sold from under them to the highest bidder, another case of the big getting bigger and the family farm being pushed out of business.

Mr. Speaker, the municipal council found that if they tendered the land, the land bank could tender on it. In this way the majority of those leasing from the municipality would become lessees of the land bank. The merits of what was intended was obvious. The municipality would be out of the land lease business and would have money to invest. The present renters, for the most part, would be permitted to carry on. The most important aspect of the whole thing was that in five years time the lessees, if they wished, could buy the land at average market price from the commission and no one would be in competition with them. This, for the majority, would be the only way that they would become owners of the land they had leased for so many years.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, was the Land Bank Commission acting in an insensitive way towards those family farms in the Kindersley area? The commission offered a chance for a long-term secure lease with an option to buy, with no threat of a sale by tender or auction hanging over those farmers' heads.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the mover of the resolution, the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew) was not sensitive to the needs of those family farmers. It was through his interference that the plan was dropped.

In a statement in the Kindersley Clarion, dated January 3 — and I have a copy of it here — the member for Kindersley said that he was pleased that the municipality was going to continue to lease and not sell to the land bank, because he was opposed to the principle of the government owning land. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a rather funny statement. What is the difference, Mr. Speaker, between the municipal government owning land and the provincial government owning land? After all it is only a different level of government.

Mr. Speaker, of all the members opposite who could have moved Resolution No. 9, the member for Kindersley was the least likely. His actions in this matter, in Kindersley, indicate without a shadow of a doubt that he is insensitive to the needs of family farms. In fact, it leads one to believe that he doesn't give a damn about the family farm.

Mr. Speaker, to my mind the member for Kindersley clearly owes his constituents an apology. He has committed a good many of them to a lifetime of leasing with no option to purchase. Is that what the member for Kindersley wanted? Or did he want an opportunity to get some of that business through his firm? I think, Mr. Speaker, it will be a long time before the voters in that constituency forget that their chance to secure control of a family farm was upset by their elected representative.

Mr. Speaker, members opposite, in the last two provincial elections, both Liberal and Tory Parties, came out . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! I don't know about the other members but I am having trouble hearing the person who is debating the issue. I am sure all members are anxious to get into this debate, which I am sure must be important. I think the best way to accommodate it would be one at a time. Since the Minister of Agriculture has the floor now, I would ask members on both sides to restrain themselves until an appropriate time and then they can get into the debate after the Minister of Agriculture.

**MR. KAEDING:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm not surprised that the people in Kindersley were misled by their Tory member. In his usual Gestapo-like manner, I'm sure he was able to scare the hell out of them. I'm sure that he told them that if they were to receive a lease from the land bank, they would be harassed by the commission every time they made a decision. I'm sure he would have told them that if they sell their land to the land bank, the commission would watch with eager anticipation to see whether they spent their money and rule on the validity of that spending. That's probably the way he would have wanted to see it. I'm sure that he would have told them, especially if the lessee was a woman, that the commission was going to watch every move. Don't you dare leave the farm in the winter time to improve your education!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KAEDING:** — It's O.K. for you to go and curl! It's O.K. for you to go to Florida.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — I've never been to Florida in my life.

**MR. KAEDING:** — Oh, come on.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. What's the point of order?

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — As you said, we can't hear what he's saying but from what I was able to ascertain, he was suggesting that I had been to Florida. Now, if he was then . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. I didn't hear the member that is speaking refer to the member for Moosomin (Mr. Birkbeck) as having gone to Florida. I consider the member's point of order to be a specious point of order and I'll ask the Minister of Agriculture to continue.

**MR. KAEDING:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, we don't go around asking them if they are going to go to California or whether they are going to curl all winter. We don't think that's any of our business. They can even sit around and pick their nose as some of the members opposite may do but don't you dare go back to school.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order. What's the point of order?

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Do I have the floor now, Mr. Speaker? If any member on that side of the House wants to lower themselves in debate in this House to those kinds of remarks to members of the opposition party.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order. In order for a member to raise a point of order, some rule of the House must have been abridged. Now, the member must, immediately upon rising on a point of order, to prevent me from thinking he is getting into the debate, cite

what rule has been abridged so that I can decide whether there is a point of order. Now, the member has not done that.

**MR. KAEDING:** — Anyway, you want to be sure that you are not a woman, if you are dealing with those guys, because you know they sure don't like to see a woman taking advantage of this FarmStart operation. So, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if the member for Kindersley was around his constituency telling his constituents that, it is no wonder that some of them decided that they didn't want to deal with the land bank.

Mr. Speaker, in the last two provincial elections both the Liberal and Tory Parties came out in violent opposition to the land bank as a land transfer program.

Both of those parties, Mr. Speaker, are still wandering in the wilderness. They propose, instead, an interest subsidy program which would subsidize interest rates on purchases of farm land for the first five years. They're not being very specific. The figures being used were that the rate for the first five years would be about 5 per cent.

Now, on the surface this looks pretty attractive, since it appears to provide protection against high interest rates in the early years of the purchase.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You're not quoting our policy.

**MR. KAEDING:** — Well, that's pretty close to yours, not quite but pretty close.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Yours is worse.

**MR. KAEDING:** — But what really happens, Mr. Speaker, and it happens in the case that you mentioned, is that a farmer who has a preferred interest rate opportunity immediately becomes more aggressive in the market place; that's understandable. He will quickly calculate that at a lower interest rate he can pay more for a given parcel of land than can his unsubsidized neighbor, so he will increase his bid price. However, his well established neighbor already has a low cost land base and he will also increase his bid price. What really happens is that the price of all land is quickly capitalized at a new level which takes into account the value of the subsidy. The subsidized purchaser is not better off because the purchase price of land has increased accordingly.

In the meantime, the government will be picking up a rapidly increasing subsidy cost. Our calculations are, given a subsidy which would reduce the interest rate to 5 per cent for the first five years, the cost to the treasury at the end of the fifth year would be in the order of \$50 million a year. You can figure it out for yourself. That would be an annual cost which equals the entire budget of the Department of Agriculture. Yet, as already shown, the final figures would not be a better opportunity for young farmers, but simply an escalation of already high land prices to a new threshold level.

One would wish that this would not happen, but all financial institutions we have consulted agreed that this would be the ultimate result. It would not provide the needed opportunity for young farmers to get into the industry; it would not reduce the overall financial burden in the early years of farming; and it would not provide an opportunity for a young farmer to get into farming without immediately being burdened with a high debt load.

For this reason, Mr. Speaker, we rejected that concept and determined to forge ahead with a new and responsive land bank concept which is now being examined with

increasing interest in many parts of the world.

Mr. Speaker, The Land Bank Act is up for amendment in this session of the legislature. The amendments, for the most part, are designed to permit the commission to serve the family farm better. If it is really the desire of the members opposite that the commission be given all the assistance possible to be sensitive to the family farm, then I'm sure that the amendments will no doubt be passed without argument.

Because the mover of this motion has failed miserably in his attempt to make a decent case of his resolution, I would like to move an amendment to that resolution. I want to move, seconded by the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg (Mr. Engel), that:

all of the words after 'this Assembly' be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

commends the government of Saskatchewan for the admirable way in which the Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission has met the needs of the family farm by:

1. Developing a bold and innovative method of land transfer in Saskatchewan;
2. Keeping in touch with reality by annually adjusting the lessee qualifying criteria of net worth and net income in accordance with inflation and the cost of living trends;
3. Changing to a production-based rent which is in tune with net returns to farming;
4. Assisting land bank lessees in the purchase of at least one leased quarter of land.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. A.W. ENGEL (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg):** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this resolution and second the motion of the Minister of Agriculture for several reasons. Firstly, because the land bank is a good program, and secondly, I want to make a few comments about the arguments the members opposite are developing.

Mr. Speaker, members opposite have cited some examples and arguments that add up to the same kind of debate as the opposition has mounted many times in this House. They root around in the muck looking for ways that they can do a character assassination. The opposition tries to raise a dark, shady cloud of suspicion over a person. Have they ever attacked the program? Never. Because they are good working programs, they don't bother attacking them. Mr. Speaker, 2,000 farmers in Saskatchewan are a testimony of how good this program has been working.

Members opposite have made it very clear that they do not like the land bank program. They believe that farming should be done by a select few. Would you believe 80 per cent less than are doing it today? Large corporate farmers. Mr. Speaker, they have no room in their thinking, none at all, for creating an opportunity for young farmers who want to get started.

This program, the Saskatchewan Land Bank, has helped many young farmers. In the budget debate, I mentioned 64 or 65 in my own constituency. There are many more comments I want to make.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ENGEL:** — Maybe I can make them when I can get the floor, so I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

### **Resolution No. 12 — Control of Ranching Leases**

**MRS. J. DUNCAN (Maple Creek)** moved, seconded by Mr. R.A. Larter (Estevan):

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan for its failure to recognize the need of the ranching community for long term control of their lease to maintain their economic viability by arbitrarily and without cause cancelling leases and further that this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to rescind such powers as set out in the Provincial Lands Regulations.

She said: Mr. Speaker, as I rise to speak on my proposed motion, I would like to divide my remarks into two categories. One, the failure of the government to recognize the basic needs of the rancher; secondly, the uncertainty to this industry caused because of the arbitrary powers of this government concerning lease land.

First, let me say, Mr. Speaker, that my proposed motion has been met with widespread support by the ranching community in this province. One of the main concerns of ranchers is that this government does not truly understand the importance of tenure of lease to these producers. Ranching is not like grain farming or mixed farming; ranching is done for the most part on marginal land. Ranchers do not have the same options open to them as other producers. A rancher should be and must be considered as a person who derives at least 50 per cent or more of his income directly from raising sheep or cattle. This particular producer is highly dependent upon his lease. More often than not the viability of his holding is directly related to the amount of leaseland he holds. In many cases, a rancher may own but a small portion of his total acreage. In the drier areas it is not uncommon for an operator to have only one-half section of deeded land along with perhaps 10 to 15 sections of lease land. But does this make him a land baron? It does to this government. But what this government cannot comprehend, and will not comprehend, is that the support ratio of this land may only be five to seven head of cattle per quarter section.

This government must come to grips, Mr. Speaker, with the various types of lessees in the province. This government must come to grips with the different requirements of the different lessees. There is ample opportunity for the government and specifically the Department of Agriculture to consult with the various groups concerned. But do they? That's just asking too much. There's the Cattlemen's Association, Saskatchewan Sheep Breeders and Stockgrowers but to name a few. Why shouldn't the government consult with these groups in order to come up with an equitable lease policy rather than arbitrarily making decisions from an office in Regina? This has always been a bone of contention with the ranchers of our province.

Today ranching is becoming a highly specialized field. Technology is enabling meat producers to produce a high quality, high protein product for which there is a great demand and a growing demand. Much emphasis today is being placed on good breeding, supplementary diets and increased efficiency. To accomplish this, Mr. Speaker, it takes money and long-range planning. It is rather difficult to plan 10 to 15 years down the road if one can only get a five year lease, five year lease with no guarantee of an extension. Many leaseholders would like to have the option of buying their lease in order to remove this uncertainty. The government should give this option serious consideration.

Why would any government want the power to cancel long-term leases at will? Is there some overt reason? I believe there is and many ranchers of our province believe there is. This government is quick to state that it is not interested in purchasing grassland; that the land bank is interested only in cultivated land. But, Mr. Speaker, we now have a situation that seems to contradict that.

Today we have many elderly ranchers who would like to retire and who do not have children to whom they can give their lease. But can they sell their holdings? No. No one is interested in purchasing one or two sections of deeded land, and if the purchaser can't be guaranteed the lease of that holding, he won't invest in an unprofitable operation. In situations like this the operator has no choice but to sell his deeded land to the land bank commission. I believe, Mr. Speaker, along with many others, that this government will not stop until they control every acre of agricultural land in our province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MRS. DUNCAN:** — This government will not rest until it becomes the biggest land holder of all. I say that if this government was not attempting to gain full control of these lands, they would not want these arbitrary powers and they would be more accommodating to the wishes of the people concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

**MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan):** — Mr. Speaker, in seconding this motion I find it's a motion that all members of this House can support. I have dealt with many of these ranchers and farmers for many years through the farm machinery business. I've found them to be some of the most honourable people that live in this province of Saskatchewan. They are the backbone of our farming and ranching community. Their operations have been built up through sweat and tears during the hard times and they . (inaudible interjection) . I can't understand why, every time we stand up, we have to chastise you and give you heck for infringing on somebody's rights in this province. Every time you introduce a bill or stand up in this House, you introduce something that is going to infringe on one more group in this province. This is again what is happening on this leased land. Why doesn't this government just spend more time worrying about people's problems rather than interfering with people? I think probably one of the things that you're very good at is interfering with people's lives. I think this has been proven over the years with the hog marketing, the beef checkoffs and the 4-H clubs. You seem to blame the federal government for just about everything. Whenever you can use them as a scapegoat to get out of some of your own follies, this is what you do — it's the feds.

Mr. Speaker, in supporting this motion, I might say to this government to leave the

pioneers of this country alone. They or their descendants came to this country many years ago and were the first to settle these ranch lands and some of these farmlands. They have gone through tough times and they've gone through some good times. Recently they've gone through some very, very bad times in the cattle industry. We ask you not to interfere with these ranchers and farmers who have this leased land. These farmers and ranchers in all our districts — everyone in this legislature here — are the basis of the steady economy of every community that they surround with their holdings. They are the pioneers who have made life on marginal land, and they are the pioneers of the cattle industry in Saskatchewan.

Some of the younger members of these families have counted on a certain size of herd to create a viable operation in getting started. Now that you've cut them back on the numbers of cattle they can put into community pastures, these leased lands are very, very important to them.

You have cut out the old farmer, the rancher, from placing cattle into the community pastures as well. The trouble is, there's just too many bureaucrats making these decisions. There's not one of you gentlemen on that side of the House who is making these decisions. You've got somebody pushing your button. You're elected by the people of this province, and you're letting the bureaucrats push your button and ring your bell.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. LARTER:** — You're doing exactly what they want . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Nobody pushes my button ever. You depend on these bureaucrats to carry out your whole political program and, as I say, pushing your button and ringing your bell. And I ask you to please don't cut the rug out from these ranchers and farmers who have this lease land in their families for years. Leave them a viable unit to work with or to pass on to their relatives or even to sell it — leave them a viable unit because without this lease land they just cannot pass this land on.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — And the big get bigger, the small die. Like Big Al over there farming 40 odd quarters . . .

**MR. LARTER:** — Are you giving this speech or me? Mr. Speaker, above all I ask you to leave the farmers and ranchers alone so they can have a little bit of peace of mind and enjoy their lives in this province that they love and have made their living on. Please leave them alone. It's a pleasure to second this resolution. I urge every member in this House to vote for it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KAEDING:** — Mr. Speaker, again I thought I was going to hear something sensational. Again I heard what I've heard so many times before — statements which are not true. I hear the member for Maple Creek telling me that because leases are not allowed to be passed on when there isn't a family member who wants to carry on with the lease, that somehow they can't sell their deeded land. Now, Mr. Speaker, I was in the Maple Creek area and I was in the Shaunavon area and all through that area last summer and visited a lot of farms, visited a lot of young ranchers in that area. I asked them what the price of land was in that area. You ask the Bascom's what they got for their land. The average multiple of land down in that area from what I was able to

determine from the questions I asked was around 25 times the assessed value. Now in my area which is not a ranching area, the average multiple is about 15, and so the argument that you can't sell land at a reasonable price in that area is not a valid argument . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . So that's not a valid argument. Then she said that one of the reasons the government is doing this, was not selling land, was because they wanted to buy all of that land. She said the land bank wanted to buy all that land. Well, I think even the members opposite should know that it's not the policy of the land bank to buy leased land. The only time when we acquire grazing land, is when it's part of a larger parcel which contains a substantial amount of cultivated land . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) said we're interfering with people's lives and we should leave them alone. I think the member for Estevan knows that lease land has been around for as long as he and I have been around.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Longer.

**MR. KAEDING:** — Even longer, and many of the old leases are 33 year leases. Now I don't think you're harassing a guy very often if he has to come back once in 33 years to renew a lease.

He talks about the fact that decisions are made by people out in the country and I can tell you some of them are. We have lease committees all over the place, in our community pastures. Our lands branch people go out there and meet with them on a regular basis and they talk to these people. Many of the policy decisions which are made, particularly in community pastures, are made on the basis of recommendations of those lease committees. If that is interference, then I think we are happy to have some interference.

He tried to insinuate that land could not be passed on to the next generation. He knows better than that. In our lease policy, anytime a rancher has a member of his family whom he wants to pass the lease on to, that is done without question. The only consideration might be, in such a case, if his land holding was so large that it went above what we call a land size limitation, which is 500 work units. Mr. Speaker, 500 work units is a pretty large operation.

The member for Maple Creek (Mrs. Duncan) said that we never consult with anybody. Just very recently, just a few weeks back, we had the members of the Stockgrowers' Lease Committee in here and we had some lengthy discussions with them. We heard some of their concerns.

One of the things that they said to us was that they didn't want those operations to get too large because they knew they had sons and daughters who wanted to get on some of those leases.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KAEDING:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, it is almost 5:00 o'clock. I have a lot to say on this motion; I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:56 o'clock.