

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**First Session — Nineteenth Legislature**

**Tuesday, April 10, 1979.**

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

On the Orders of the Day

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**MR. J. HAMMERSMITH (Prince Albert-Duck Lake):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to members of this Assembly 120 Grade 8 students from Westmore Junior High School in Prince Albert. These students come from the rural areas around the city of Prince Albert, in the Prince Albert Rural School Unit No. 56. They are accompanied by Miss Lanigan, Mrs. Semkiw, Miss Rushbrooke, Mr. Waldner, Mr. Kerr, Mr. Chatlain and Mr. Bettles. This is an annual trip organized and taken by Westmore Junior High School. The students, I understand will be visiting several points of interest in the city and touring the buildings. I will be meeting in company with my colleagues, the member for Shellbrook (Mr. Bowerman) and the member for Prince Albert (Mr. Feschuk) with them at 3:15 to answer questions and enjoy some refreshments.

I trust that the visit will be informative, enjoyable and educational and I would like to commend the teachers, staff and students of Westmore Junior High School because as you understand, it's quite a journey from Prince Albert to Regina. I'm told the students left at 7 o'clock this morning. It has been quite a long day and will be a longer day. I think that they and their teachers are to be congratulated for their interest, for taking the time and making the effort to journey to our Assembly. I ask all members to join with me in welcoming them.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Shellbrook):** — Mr. Speaker, along with my colleague from Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Hammersmith), I want to as well, extend warm greetings to the students from Westmore. For those of you who come from north of the river, you will be in the constituency of Shellbrook and we welcome you to the Assembly this afternoon. I know that it's a rather arduous journey for you to come down and to return, but I think that your visit in the Assembly this afternoon will be worthwhile and that you will accord it as one of the highlights of your school year. I also extend my greetings to the teachers and to the drivers. I want to extend as well, to the unit board, the prince Albert School Unit board, my commendation for their consideration that the students in Saskatchewan should indeed, visit the Legislative Assembly when it is in session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. H. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, a group of 29 students from Rosetown. These are Grade 8 students visiting in the city of Regina and in the legislature today. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Cranston, and Susan Munchinsky, and bus driver, Don Ross. I hope that you're going to find your stay here enjoyable, that you'll find it educational. If you have questions about any of the happenings in the legislature I'd be pleased to meet with you and discuss those with you later in the afternoon. Would you welcome the students from Rosetown.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. D. LINGENFELTER (Shaunavon):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly a group of 17 Grade 7 and 8 students from the Admiral School in Admiral who came to Regina today, leaving home at six this morning to come in and attend question period, and a few other of our sights in Regina. Accompanying them is Mr. Don Friesen, and the principal of the school, Wanda Eddingfield. I hope they enjoy their stay in Regina and enjoy question period, and I'll be meeting with them at 2:30 for refreshments. I hope everyone will join with me in welcoming the group to the Assembly.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## QUESTIONS

### Number of Civil Servants

**MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of the Opposition):** — Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Premier. I ask him again if he has had an opportunity to review the bulletin from Statistics Canada and to explain to the Legislative Assembly why in that bulletin they indicate that Saskatchewan had the greatest increase in 1978 in number of civil servants in a provincial government in Canada — some 13.7 per cent when his budget indicates a decline in the number of civil servants in the province?

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier):** — Mr. Speaker, I regret, I am not yet able to give the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Collver) an explanation. It requires knowing how Statistics Canada arrived at their figures, and that is not easy. In this case we have inquired with Statistics Canada and found that in 1977 they failed to include the Department of Northern Saskatchewan in their figures, and in 1978 they did, and that error when corrected reduces the figure of 13 some per cent to 7.2 per cent. That accounts for some of it. We are still pursuing some of their other working papers which seem to be equally open to question — more particularly appearing to include the university hospital as government employees, but we are not yet sure whether that is in fact an error. We are proceeding to ask Statistics Canada for their working papers. We had their working papers for 1977. We do not yet have their working papers for 1978. We are advised that they have been mailed to us. When they are received we will attempt to analyse them and see why their figures are so far from what appears to be the facts, as we understand them. As I say, we have accounted for 5 per cent or 6 per cent on a straight arithmetic error by them and we expect to find similar explanations for other discrepancies.

**MR. COLLVER:** — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the Premier not agree that another interpretation that might be placed on this variance in the set of statistics, rather than to blame Statistics Canada, since the figures are put forward by your own Department of Finance and by your own government to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, in the main, is that the budget was purposefully misleading and that in fact an increase in civil servants is occurring in the province of Saskatchewan?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I certainly concede that that interpretation can be put on and is being put on it by members opposite. I am equally certain that it could not be put on it by anyone who had examined the material and attempted to arrive at a fair and just conclusion.

### **Office Space Requirements per Government Employee**

**MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister of supplies and services. Your report of government services indicates that your total inventory of office space in the province of Saskatchewan is 1,828,000 square feet, and by your own admission yesterday in the House, you indicated that the required number of feet per employee was 178 square feet for office employees. By calculating at 178 square feet per employee you come up with 10,270 workers indicating that almost all of the employees you are showing in your budget are, in fact, office workers. My question — in the private sector the requirement is 125 square feet . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! I am going to take a new question.

### **Education and Health Tax — Irrigation Farmers**

**MR. SWAN:** — I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Revenue.

I received a call from my constituency yesterday from a farmer who represents the irrigation farmers in that area, and he is raising a concern about education and health tax being charged on power used to drive irrigation pumps. Can the minister tell this House why the irrigation farmers are being charged education and health tax on that energy?

**HON. W.A. ROBBINS (Minister of Revenue):** — Education and health tax does apply to all power bills.

**MR. SWAN:** — A supplementary question to the minister. Since irrigation pumps are on a special demand type of power and in all cases, I believe, on three phase power and easily identified separately from the normal household and farm usage, is it not possible for the government to take another look at this and to give the people using that source of energy the same benefit that you do to people using diesel fuel or purple gasoline to drive their pumps?

**MR. ROBBINS:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, it also is true of a number of other farm operations in terms of seed cleaning, livestock operations, etc. The fact of the matter is the E&H Tax Act is being reviewed. We're making a complete and thorough review of it. I've informed the House of that already. We expect that to be in by the time the next session arrives. We do know that there are anomalies in the act in this respect. There are a number of agricultural implements, for example, that are listed; new implements come on but they are not listed in the act. Therefore, the E&H tax does apply to them.

**MR. D.M. HAM (Swift Current):** — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Since the minister has indicated a review of the E&H tax would you consider a review also on the fact that you're charging emergency vehicles, fire engines and ambulances, E&H tax whereas the federal government is not charging a sales tax?

**MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, the review will be covering all of those items.

### **Program Enhancing Level of Hospitality in Saskatchewan**

**MR. G. McLEOD (Meadow Lake):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources (Mr. Matsalla). Mr. Minister, you announced today a program to enhance the level of hospitality in the province and I agree with the move

you've taken in that direction. I suggest that it may be somewhat overdue. Will this program and all three of its components be equally available throughout the province including northern Saskatchewan where the tourism potential has barely been touched?

**HON. A.S. MATSALLA (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources):** — Mr. Speaker, at the moment the mobile training unit is going to be used in the six travel region associations that already have been organized and established. Consideration will be given to providing the similar kind of service to northern Saskatchewan in time.

**MR. McLEOD:** — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan (Mr. Byers). Has your department any plan to implement a parallel program in the near future and if it's in time, would you give us what that time frame would be?

**HON. N.E. BYERS (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan):** — Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the hon. member for Meadow Lake that with respect to northern Saskatchewan, the hand of hospitality is always out and open.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. McLEOD:** — I can agree with what he says there, Mr. Speaker, but that's no answer to my question. I agree with him 100 per cent, but I'd like an answer to the question now.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — When are you going to do it?

**MR. McLEOD:** — Another question. I'll go back to the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources. He's aware of the problem. I think, Mr. Minister, you indicated about the mobile training units, that's the portion which is of interest to me. Would you indicate how the dispatching of this unit will be handled so that people working in the hospitality field in the more remote areas will have an equal benefit from the training programs you're providing?

**MR. MATSALLA:** — Mr. Speaker, to start with, in introducing this mobile training unit to the various parts of the province, we are going to hold many conferences in each of the travel regions and from there on we are going to be asking the various communities and various travel industry interests to indicate to us of their interests in having the travel unit in the vicinity. Following receipt of this information, we will then arrange for an itinerary for the training unit.

### **Land Bank Regulations**

**MR. R. PICKERING (Bengough-Milestone):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, does the Land Bank Commission have a monitoring system to ensure that land bank lessees are complying with land bank act regulations in terms of their leases?

**HON. E.E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture):** — Mr. Speaker, to the extent that we want to be sure that they are not abusing their lease, we attempt to maintain a bit of contact with them but we don't make a habit of going around to neighbours and asking them whether they think that the land bank lessee is doing his job right, or anything like that. Unless some abuse is identified to us, we are not likely to go around and sit at his door

step watching him.

**MR. PICKERING:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I've been advised of a lessee who has never in fact farmed the lease land which was granted to him in 1974. In fact, he lives in Regina rather than on the farm and was serving a jail sentence during the growing season of 1978. Does this not indicate that the monitoring system is less than adequate?

**MR. KAEDING:** — Mr. Speaker, I suggest to the hon. member that if he has such information it's not only his opportunity or his option, but his duty to provide that information to us. We're prepared to take whatever action we need to take if there is an abuse of the provisions. I would like again to say that I would prefer to have him bring these things to me rather than drag people's names into the legislature. I don't know why he can't supply me with that information so that we can deal with it, if he has some. I would like to see him table it.

**MR. PICKERING:** — A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, how many cases do we have to bring to your attention before you will admit that there is something the matter with your land bank policy?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KAEDING:** — Mr. Speaker, of all of the cases which have been brought to my attention, there are only one or two which I would say are fairly marginal. The rest of them have been totally legitimate cases and I'm prepared to stand up anywhere and defend them.

#### **CCF NDP Publishing Company — Shareholders and Directors**

**MR. G. MUIRHEAD (Arm River):** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Provincial Secretary. After persisting for one week, I finally came up with a list of the shareholders and directors for the CCF NDP Publishing Company Limited, which has done a half a million dollars worth of business with the government in 1978. My question to you, Mr. Minister, is this. Is it not a conflict of interest when in this list I find names of civil servants, MLAs and cabinet ministers? Please explain why this is not a conflict of interest.

**HON. E.L. COWLEY (Provincial Secretary):** — No!

**MR. COLLVER:** — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware of the recent Supreme Court of Canada decision on the Moncton mayor?

**MR. COWLEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I must admit to this House that I have not read that particular decision, but I will, at the earliest opportunity review the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada.

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Supplementary. Is the minister also aware that in 1977 this company was eight months late in filing a return? My company says I have to do it immediately. Why are there two laws? One for my company and one for yours!

**MR. COWLEY:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to make clear to the House that first of all I am not the minister responsible for the CCF Publishing and Printing Company. However, I am the minister responsible for The Companies Act.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are some 22,000 companies registered with the provincial secretary and I must again admit to the House that I don't every evening go through the list and check to see who is in arrears in filing their statements. I think the member, if he knew anything about business, (I would be very surprised if he did), would realize that there are all kinds of companies from time to time who are in arrears in filing various statements. It is not unusual for companies to not have filed all of the required statements. They file them and they are checked up from time to time. The member is obviously able to get his information, so obviously the system is working.

### **Company Arrears in Filing Statements**

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. Can you also tell me why on the weekend they had to make this list up?

**MR. COWLEY:** — Well, if the member wants to know why the CCF Publishing and Printing Company made the list up on the weekend, I suggest he write to them. That is certainly outside of the purview of the government and this House.

### **Awarding of Gate Plaques for 75th Anniversary**

**MR. G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley):** — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister in charge of 'Celebrate Saskatchewan'. I understand that heritage is one of the themes of the 75th Anniversary celebrations for our province. As you know, many of the homesteads filed by the pioneers of our province are still farmed by descendants of those pioneering families. Will you, Mr. Minister, in memory of these founding families of our province, award commemorative gate plaques to any farm which has been in operation by that family for a period of 75 years?

**HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Health):** — Mr. Speaker, the Celebrate Saskatchewan Corporation and the citizen's advisory committee, which numbers about 75 to 80 has had a large number of proposals under its consideration. These will be outlined when they have received final approval. I will take the member's suggestion under consideration and refer it to the corporation for their consideration.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Thank you very much for taking it under consideration. I would just like to ask you, as a guideline for this, are you aware of the centennial farm plaques which were provided to the farms in Ontario in 1967?

**MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — No, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of those plaques which were presented in Ontario in 1967.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would you not agree, Mr. Minister, that perhaps 100 years would be the most adequate time but with the current rate of land bank acquisitions I am afraid there won't be any of these homesteads left?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — No, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware but I can assure you and the House, Mr. Speaker, that with land bank we are assuring that 75 years from now there will still be a sufficient number of farmers in Saskatchewan to be awarded plaques.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### **SPC Commitment to Buy Gas**

**MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan):** — Mr. Speaker, last Friday I asked the Premier what the possible potential loss could be in the buy back by SPC of the commitment of 82.6 billion cubic feet of gas. I would like to ask the minister in charge of SPC how much of this \$100 million you are going to lose? How much do you plan on repurchasing at the present time?

**HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources):** — Mr. Speaker, this is a matter which we have discussed both in the House and in Crown Corporations Committee and on some occasions in the past. The member knows that there has been a supreme court ruling in regard to a portion of our contract with TCPL (Trans-Canada Pipelines Ltd.). In respect to what we like to term as an exchange, what has been considered a buy back option. The decision of the court is that we do not have the right to buy back at a predetermined price. One might conclude then that we have in effect lost the benefit that was contained in the contract. I think that is correct. We still retain the option of purchasing the gas that was put into the system initially for consumption in Saskatchewan at a yet to be determined price. The effect of the contract in regard to the availability of the gas still remains. There are some outstanding questions in regard to the increase which will be paid and the amount which will be greater — the former contract vis-à-vis the amounts paid when we exercise our option. I can't give a specific figure at this point in time in that regard because one has to know how much gas one is going to buy back and when we are going to buy it back. I do admit to the member that the supreme court ruling does bring about a situation where the Saskatchewan Power Corporation will be paying a higher amount for the gas.

I might also say, Mr. Speaker, there are still legal actions in process in regard to the TCPL-SPC contracts in total. One would also, I think have to await the conclusion of those court actions in order to be more precise in regard to the member's question.

**MR. LARTER:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The reason I am concerned about this, Mr. Minister, is over the past three and a half years you have always been preaching to this legislature, let's leave it in the ground, it won't spoil. All of a sudden you have somebody who has negotiated for SPC on this deal, sold at 23.5 possible buy-back of 97 cents per million cubic feet. Now I think it is especially important when you say leave it in the ground, it won't spoil. Somebody has given you a bad deal or advised you very wrongly on giving away this gas. You could have left it in the ground; it wouldn't have spoiled.

**MR. MESSER:** — The member always amazes me with his logic similar to the beginning of his questioning in estimates last evening. Our policy has been not to leave it all in the ground, but to develop it with a consideration and full understanding of what our resources are, especially energy-related resources, in particular natural gas. We know that we have a reserve of natural gas, but a reserve that is modest by comparison, for example, the province of Alberta. We have felt that it is in the best interest of Saskatchewan consumers to tap that larger supply and keep our gas in reserve, or a quantity of our gas in reserve, so that we will have it at a time when the prices are higher and there may be problems in attaining access to gas outside of the provincial boundaries. We have developed a plan which develops not only Saskatchewan natural gas and oil, but also takes advantage of gas and oil from the province of Alberta. I think that has been a good plan and, by and large, has provided Saskatchewan consumers of natural gas with gas at a cheaper price than any other province of Canada, excluding

**April 10, 1979**

the province of Alberta.

### **Increased Price of Cleaning Seed**

**MR. J. GARNER (Wilkie):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

Is the minister aware that in March this year some of the grain companies increased their price to the farmers for cleaning seed for this coming year, from 10 per cent to over 120 per cent?

**HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture):** — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of those figures, but I believe there is a maximum tariff which they are allowed to charge, which is set by the grains group, the Canada Grains Council. As long as they are not exceeding that maximum they are totally within their rights to raise the rates.

**MR. GARNER:** — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Since the minister isn't aware I will give him some figures. The wheat pool went from 5 cents to 8 cents per bushel ..

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. Next question.

**MR. GARNER:** — Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware of this increase and will he not get in touch with some of the grain companies to find out why . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! I will take the a new question.

### **Answer to Question Re — Coronach Thermal Power Station**

**MR. MESSER:** — Mr. Speaker, the member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) last week, asked a question. I was absent from the House. It pertained to equipment that was being installed in the Coronach thermal power station.

I believe his concern emanated from the Harrisburg nuclear plant. In particular he was concerned about the supply of boilers from Babcock-Wilcox. I want to convey to the member that the plant is substantially different — a thermal coal-fired plant from a nuclear plant. The equipment is not in anyway similar. We have dealt with Babcock-Wilcox in the past. We have been satisfied with the level of equipment they have supplied us. Upon reviewing the equipment that's going to be placed at Coronach, we are also satisfied that this equipment meets our minimum standards, in fact, surpasses our minimum standards and we're quite certain that the boilers will carry out the purpose for which they're being purchased.

### **Assistance to Farmers in Souris Valley**

**MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding). You will recall late last August or early September when the member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) and myself had a meeting with you and the then Minister of Environment (Mr. Byers) discussing the problem of some farmers in the Souris Valley east of Estevan at which time you indicated that you would review what assistance might be available to these people and give us an answer within three weeks. Have you yet come up with an answer?

**HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture):** — Well, Mr. Speaker, at that time we

indicated to you that there was not likely to be any compensation paid in that particular area and that we would look at the concept of purchasing land in the valley as we've done in Qu'Appelle for those people who have flood-prone land. We have made that offer to the people in the valley and some of them have made application to sell to us and at this point in time, there are some negotiations going on.

### **Denial of Meeting Concerning Souris Valley**

**MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan (Mr. Byers). The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) has just admitted that he in fact, met with us last August or September. Why then did you deny to a group of farmers from the Hitchcock Water Users' Association that you had ever met with us on this matter and will you apologize to this House now and make your feeling known to the people in Hitchcock?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. N.E. BYERS (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan):** — Mr. Speaker, I met with the representatives of the Hitchcock Water Users' Association this fall. I agreed to the meeting, I understood that the member for Souris-Cannington (Mr. Berntson) was going to be at that meeting and he didn't show up.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

#### **Congratulations to Prince Albert Raiders**

**MR. J. HAMMERSMITH (Prince Albert-Duck Lake):** — Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day, I meant to mention this yesterday but you were preoccupied with a little exchange between the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Collver) and the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow). I would just like to inform the House that on Sunday the Prince Albert Raiders won the Manitoba-Saskatchewan junior hockey championship.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. HAMMERSMITH:** — They defeated the Selkirk Steelers four games to one and now go on to play the winners of the British Columbia-Alberta series for the western Canada championship. I am sure that all members of this House wish to join me in extending our congratulations to the Prince Albert Raiders and wishing them well in the journey that will bring the centennial cup back to Saskatchewan and back to Prince Albert.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Minister of the Environment):** — Mr. Speaker, I only want to again share with my colleague from Prince Albert-Duck Lake and again remind this Assembly, as I have done on previous occasions, that the coach of the Prince Albert Raiders, a fellow by the name of Terry Simpson, is the one who took the Shellbrook Elks through six consecutive years of winning the intermediate B championships in Saskatchewan. I would want the Assembly to recognize that this good coaching and this good hockey playing really comes out of the constituency of Shellbrook and we are always willing and anxious to assist in any of the other constituencies that may want to confront those Raiders.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## RESOLUTIONS

### Resolution No. 7 — Orderly Marketing of Western Grain

**MR. L.E. JOHNSON (Turtleford)** moved, seconded by Mr. Nelson (Yorkton):

That this Assembly affirms its support for the principle of orderly marketing of western grains through the Canadian Wheat Board and accordingly deplores the continuing refusal of the federal Minister-in-Charge of the Canadian Wheat Board to initiate changes in the Feed Grains Policy, and also opposes the suggestions of the federal Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party favoring a return to the open market system.

He said: Mr. Speaker, events that have taken place since the announcement of the federal election, indicate that a number of the political parties running federally — at least the Liberal Party believes that this issue related to orderly marketing of feed grain is worth changing if they are going to hold any seats in western Canada at all. Each time the domestic feed grain policy has gotten into severe problems, the federal government has found it necessary to take, what I believe for them, was a painful step back to the wheat board approach or orderly marketing. The last time this took place was at the end of March as I have indicated, when the Canadian Wheat Board announced that it would be putting an end to the unrestricted farm deliveries to the domestic feed grain market. Effective August 1, 1979 all deliveries will be controlled by a delivery quota. Mr. Speaker, the implementation of quotas will mean a return to a situation where all farmers will have somewhat of an equal opportunity to deliver grain for sale. I should point out that delivery opportunities will not be totally equal as two quotas will be established: one for delivery to the domestic feed grain market and one for delivery to the Canadian Wheat Board. Mr. Speaker, the two quotas will be structured so that the quantity delivered to a market will reduce the available quota on the other market, and I believe this to be a better approach than what is in effect today, and it will stop the actual theft of quota by some farmers of others. This action taken by the Canadian Wheat Board should assist Conservative in fulfilling export commitments by reducing the congestion in the primary elevator system, and allowing the board to move those grains into an export position which they have market for.

Mr. Speaker, step by step, Conservative and Liberal policymakers are being forced to accept the concept of orderly marketing. The implementation of this concept is what has made the prairie region a productive area, and the stability that it provides is necessary for the family farm to exist. Mr. Speaker, the orderly marketing issue that faces the people of Saskatchewan today is the same issue that faced our grandparents and our parents. Orderly marketing is part of that larger issue of whether the social policies and economic programs are implemented for the benefit of all, or for a select few. The battle lines today remain the same. Those who wish to see investment and wealth rewarded against those who wish to see man's efforts rewarded. The issues are the same because the problem is the same — exploiters seeing an opportunity to secure large gains at the expense of prairie grain and cattle producers have sought the assistance of the old line parties to facilitate their move.

This alliance was not new or foreign, as the two old line parties have consistently helped each other deal agriculture into the hands of exploiters.

Allow me to list a few items that Liberals and Conservatives have promoted to achieve

this. They have promoted plant breeders' rights; they have promoted rail line abandonment, the MacPherson commission under the last federal Conservative government — the same individual is involved with PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) under the Liberal government of today.

The members in this Assembly opposite have taken an approach to destroy a land tenure program, the land bank system, not by attacking it directly but by innuendo and approaching it from problems that are not really affected by it at all. They have even supported the crow rate, Mr. Speaker. Others have or will in detail, discuss these issues which make up the larger issue. I am going to concentrate rather, on the orderly marketing which is the motion before the House.

Mr. Speaker, the most recent attack on orderly marketing was implemented in two stages by the federal government. The process was hidden from direct view by calling the activity a new domestic feed grain policy. The name was new; the concept was old — set up a system that allows money to be removed from the industry without providing anything in return.

Mr. Speaker, in October, 1973, an interim feed policy was announced. This was the first major attack on the orderly marketing system since 1948 when the feed grains grown in the wheat board area were placed under the control of the wheat board. I will return to this interim feed grain policy but first, I would like to look at the industry as a whole.

Grain production and marketing for western Canada is a large complex, integrated activity. This industry is not ideally located as to market or transportation or climate and therefore, man-made stability is necessary. This has been done by government boards, by co-operative pools for most of the time since the prairies were settled and the production of grain carried on. In general terms the market can be broken down into two segments — the export and the domestic. The export market is the largest segment and it is influenced directly by the international grain trade.

Mr. Speaker, if one disregards a handful of smaller nations, the world grain market is controlled by direct government intervention. Outside of western Europe, all of the important importing countries buy their grain through central purchasing agencies, and control the domestic price of wheat. The European economic community arrives at the same position by using variable import levies.

Mr. Speaker, this knowledge of the world grain market should've indicated to members opposite that competition is not the solution, even though the federal PC Leader, Joe Clark, thinks it will improve the marketing of grain for the benefit of producers. He is out of touch and sadly mistaken in this respect.

The market does not respond in a favorable manner to promotional sales systems generated by competition. I wish to repeat some information found in the 1978 September issue of Grain Matters to support my statement.

Importing countries simply do not allow the price changes in the world grain trade to affect their demand for grain. Less than 5 per cent of the wheat traded internationally in 1976-77 went to countries which allow their internal price for wheat and wheat products to fluctuate with international levels. Similarly, the countries where wheat trading is still left in private hands account for only 11 per cent of the total world trade

**April 10, 1979**

in 1976-77. The other 89 per cent of it was handled by countries having a government purchasing organization. Similarly, wheat sales to countries with central importing agencies that year made up 86 per cent of Argentina's exports, 82 per cent of Australia's, 79 per cent of Canada's, and 90 per cent of the U.S. exports, it being the largest country that does not have a government-controlled export agency. About the only time that world prices actually affect import demand occurs on those rare occasions when market prices are so high that importing countries run short of foreign exchange. At all other times, importing countries will buy only as much wheat as they need and cannot produce themselves. Because of their internal price controls, they won't use any more wheat just because it's cheaper.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about the position of the Conservative Party on the marketing of grain. Their position is an interesting one. Any student of psychology would tell you that it's a perfect example of schizophrenia, with a liberal dose of hallucination thrown in.

At the same time as Conservatives here in Saskatchewan are telling their farmer constituents they support orderly marketing by the wheat board, Conservatives in Ottawa are time and again advocating the destruction of the orderly marketing system. As far back as you care to look, Tories have had orderly marketing under attack. In 1974, the federal agricultural spokesman wrote a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau, calling for the removal of feed grains from the authority of the Canadian Wheat Board. More recently, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Conservative Party, Joe Clark, told an audience in Manitoba that the private organizations should be allowed to sell grain in competition with the wheat board in the world market.

Now, in the Tories' minds, Mr. Speaker, that is just what we need, private grain traders bidding the price down at the local elevator at one end of the system and at the other end, competing with the Canadian Wheat Board in the international market to again bid the price down. Either way, Mr. Speaker, farmers lose. I think the here in this House have to tell us why it is that on an average of once a year during the life of the parliament in Ottawa that has just ended, their federal Conservatives voted against NDP motions calling for orderly marketing of all feed grains.

You cannot have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. Either you support orderly marketing and higher financial returns it brings to farmers as the NDP does or you line up with the private grain trade and help them line their pockets with money that rightfully belongs to the farmers and that's what the Conservative Party has done and done repeatedly. Mr. Speaker, I say that is deplorable and it will be regarded as deplorable by the farmers of western Canada when they go to the polls to express their feelings in the upcoming federal election.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at the domestic market. It is in this case that it is possible to break the market down into a number of distinct parts. There is the marketing of western Canadian feed grain into eastern Canada. There is the movement of the wheat board marketing grain into British Columbia. There is private grain sales in the wheat board area and consumption of the grower's farm and the domestic consumption of grain as well. At the present time, the domestic human consumption is handled in an orderly manner and the only question is related to price — the price that producers should receive, the price that consumers should pay. This is an issue that has some economic effect for all Canadians and could be the centre of another debate. Because this debate is concerned with marketing, we need to recognize that a great deal of the grain is consumed as animal feed on the farm where it is grown. The value of this grain

is set by the price received for that which is sold and it is this situation which makes the cattle industry in western Canada part of the grain industry and the effects on feed sales are directly felt by the cattle operators.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my opening remarks, I believe there are other reasons for the implementation of the domestic feed grain policy. As long as the Canadian Wheat Board remains the sales agency for handling grain, multinational grain companies like Cargill could not exploit the farmer. I want to bring to the attention of this Assembly some information regarding this multinational. I did this once before in 1975 but that was limited to the illegal acts that this firm has committed to become that nice little farmer's company as the member for Moosomin (Mr. Birkbeck) wants to refer to it. Cargill is a multinational firm that threatens the Saskatchewan agricultural community directly and indirectly. It is a company that has integrated itself vertically into the agricultural economy in a large part of the world. This vertical integration has a lot of adverse effect on the Canadian agricultural scene.

In Canada it looks like this: Cargill is engaged in grain trade; it is also involved in the shipment of grain on the Great Lakes; it supplies poultry breeding stock in Canada; it operates a country elevator system in western Canada to purchase grain; it operates terminals at Thunder Bay and in Quebec; it is the owner of a poultry and processing and hatchery plant. What this means, Mr. Speaker, is that at some point or other it is in effective control of the entire grain system.

In the world Cargill is the largest grain trader, the third largest producer of livestock and poultry feed, the fourth largest soya bean producer, one of the largest suppliers of poultry breeding stock, the largest hybrid seed producer, the largest private grain storage company, the largest grain shipping company. It is only in the last 10 years that Cargill has moved into the Canadian agricultural economy and during this period of time it has gained 60 per cent of the rapeseed market and is concentrating on other open market grains.

Mr. Speaker, this acts as a monopoly because once it controls a major portion of the grain trade, it is able to manipulate the prices. The key to the expansion of Cargill in Canada was the federal government's domestic feed grain policy, for Cargill is a trader not a handler of grain and in that sense a company that derives its profits from price differential rather than from the service that it provides. Cargill was assisted a second time by the federal government when they promoted rail line abandonment and inland terminals.

My reasons for concern, Mr. Speaker, are this: it is difficult for any one nation to control a multinational corporation like Cargill. This leaves the company responsible only to itself and in this case Cargill can shift its income from country to country and thus avoid the taxes and social responsibilities that a company in one country would not be able to do. It uses its profits to buy up industries in the country and thus increases foreign ownership which is an economic problem that Canada as a whole is facing. The efficiency approach of corporations like Cargill ignore the resulting social problems created, namely in the area of rural depopulation, rural social decline and over capitalization of farming which limits the number of people employed in the industry.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to now return to some of the stated reasons for the introduction of the domestic feed grain policy. If one look at the introduction of a policy, it will often tell the individual when that policy should be reversed and this is the case with the domestic feed grain policy. The federal government said that it

**April 10, 1979**

implemented this policy at the demand of eastern feed grain buyers. The objective was to lessen the influence of the Canadian Wheat Board on the feed grain market in eastern Canada and therefore, drop the price for these individuals. The situation in the late '60s was low volume sales and therefore, a build-up of excess grain supplies.

The Canadian Wheat Board attempts during period of excess world supplies, to prevent prices from falling and they accomplish this, in part by limiting delivery quotas. This led to a build-up of grain on farms and low-priced of farm sales in western Canada were taking place. The eastern Canadian feed grain buyers believe that western producers would sell feed grain at lower prices during period of excess world supplies. The eastern feed grain buyers, for short-term gains, were prepared to sacrifice orderly marketing and they paid for this decision as I will explain. But western farmers paid more for the implementation of this policy and this is one of the reasons why it should be reversed.

Mr. Speaker, I've given some different information on the grain industry, which I believe shows some of the reasons for changing the market back to a regulated market. The position of the Conservative Party on grain marketing is one of the; others are the federal Liberal government's recent announcement, the world grain marketing system, the domestic system. Mr. Speaker, I now return to the effects the domestic feed grain policy has had on the farmers of western Canada.

First of all, I want this Assembly to understand that the domestic feed grain policy is like a fish in running water; it has always been moving and changing. If a fish does not swim, it drifts downstream.

For the crop year 1973-74 an interim policy was introduced that only aggravated the situation and led to a 50 per cent increase in foreign imports. This was a loss for everyone — 18 million bushels of U.S. corn instead of western Canadian barley and a higher price for eastern feed grain buyers. So much for year one.

The domestic feed grain policy of the federal government was really to be implemented for the crop year '74-'75. In short, this policy did this: anyone was authorized to buy wheat, oats and barley for domestic use from any producer free of Canadian Wheat Board price and quota regulations and have this grain stored in a licensed elevator providing the company storing the grain did not use more than 10 per cent of its storage space for non-board grain. The Canadian Wheat Board was to guarantee a supply of feed grain to eastern Canada. Even those who supported and implemented the Canadian feed grain policy did not have any faith that the open market would be able to provide the grain for the eastern feeders. The domestic feed grain market did not obtain sufficient supplies and the Canadian Wheat Board was required to supply over 50 per cent of the grain at prices established on the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange. The total loss of income to the prairie region is impossible to determine. But estimated costs based on justifiable market costs indicate that the grain delivered to the open market should have returned \$2.50 more per metric tonne to the farmer; the oats should have returned \$6.10 per metric tonne and barley sold at an average loss of \$4.20 per metric tonne for every tonne sold.

In year three this policy remained the same and the loss to the producer in the crop year 1975-76 was \$3.55 per metric tonne on average for all feed grains.

Mr. Speaker, the serious pricing and supply problems generated by the open market during the first two crop years, 1974-75 and 1975-76, forced the federal government

to implement some changes in the domestic feed grain policy. Effective August 1, 1976 the Canadian Wheat Board started to offer for sale more grain competitive with U.S. corn within a margin of 2 per cent for wheat and barley and 4 per cent for oats in eastern Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the August 1, 1976 pricing policy effectively placed a ceiling on the feed grain for the domestic market. The producer was not provided with a floor price at the same time. The lack of a floor price meant that one of the original objectives of the policy about avoiding depressed prices was dropped. The loss for the producer curing the crop year 1976-77, for every metric tonne delivered to the market, was \$5.60. In year five there were no major changes, and the market must have worked well for the grain exchange speculators, for the producer lost \$14.90 per metric tonne. That's the last complete crop year that the market was operated in.

The results for 1978-79 are not available, but it is expected that the loss to the producer will be greater than that in 1977-78. The dollar losses, as I have mentioned, per metric tonne can be used as a percentage loss without a fear of exaggeration because the average sale price for grain was less than \$100 per metric tonne.

To date, if all producer deliveries to the non-board market had been sold at the average fair value since August 1, 1973, the additional return to producers in Saskatchewan would be in excess of \$25 million. With this amount of money going to speculators on the grain exchange I can understand why the grain exchange would be disturbed when the wheat board announced its return to a quota system.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this Assembly must support the orderly marketing of grain, if not for the reasons which I have stated, then for the ones which follow. The grain that we produce is the type of product where the returns to the producer must be maximized if the social and economic structure of our society is not to be destroyed. Grains are a low-value product. They are produced a long distance from their point of use, subject to large price fluctuations and the producer is separated from the consumer by all of these, so that a free market system where the number of purchasers of consumers is equal in number to those who are producing does not hold.

Mr. Speaker, we live in a region where the predominate wealth-producing force may be petroleum production and mineral extraction combined. But Mr. Speaker, these resources are not evenly distributed as agriculture products are and this leaves agriculture as the predominant social and economic force in the region. It is for this reason that one hears statements of this nature as agriculture goes, so goes business.

Mr. Speaker, the history of the grain trade shows that the orderly marketing system is necessary to maintain the agricultural-based family farm. It appears that survival is possible as long as 50 per cent or more of the grain is handled in an orderly market but conditions are improved for the farmer when grain transported from the region is all handled through an orderly marketing system.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to move Resolution No. 7.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

Debate continues on the motion.

**MR. R.N. NELSON (Yorkton):** — Mr. Speaker, it is, indeed, a pleasure for me to second

**April 10, 1979**

the motion for the member for Turtleford (Mr. Johnson) and also to speak on behalf of the motion that he presented.

Mr. Speaker, the farmers in my constituency are concerned about what is happening to the wheat board. They are concerned that it should not be destroyed. The farmers in my constituency have expressed strong concerns that the wheat board is being destroyed.

Mr. Speaker, the farmers are concerned that they are unable to sell their grain through the wheat board. There is an open quota for off-board grains at the same time as that quota limits the sale of wheat board grain. A quota that allows them to sell only so much grain on the wheat board market, but allows them to sell unlimited amounts on the open market, is certainly going to destroy the wheat board that has served the farmer so well in this country for so many years.

It is a strange situation, Mr. Speaker, but it is one which reminds me of a situation that developed in Yorkton in 1975 when our friend the Hon. Otto Lang from Saskatoon, shot down an airline that was ready to start flying through Yorkton. As you recall the former Minister of Transport, the Hon. Jean Marchand, has agreed to supply planes for a regional carrier from Winnipeg through Saskatoon via Yorkton and Dauphin. When the Hon. Otto Lange came to take Mr. Marchand's place as the Minister of Transport, he changed the rules. He said when you get the licence then we will make sure that you have the planes, knowing of course, when they appeared before the Canadian Transport Commission, the CTC, that it wouldn't work quite that way. When the proposed airline, Sky West appeared before CTC that honorable body said, well as soon as you get the planes then you will get the licence. It was the neatest little catch 22 that you ever saw to prevent the Yorkton area from getting an airline service back in 1979.

**MR. THATCHER:** — A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — What is your point of order?

**MR. THATCHER:** — The point of order, Mr. Speaker, is somehow the relationship between airplanes and the Minister of Transport to motion number three, escapes me. I know he is very difficult to listen to, Mr. Speaker, but surely we have something better to do than worry about airplanes in the wheat business.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — There is a lot of that going around these days. I expect the member is going to relate his remarks to the subject that is before us.

**MR. NELSON:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said it was a neat bit of footwork, a neat bit of catch 22, that left Yorkton without an air service.

Now, in relating that to the presentation, Mr. Speaker, we find there is another neat little catch 22 that has been developing, developed and designed by the same Hon. Otto. The farmers can sell through the wheat board if they wait, if they want to. They are free to do so, but the problem is that the elevators are glutted with off-board grains and the farmers have to sell off-board grains because they have to pay their bills. You can sell through the wheat board and get the proper value for your grain if you can wait, but

you can't wait, so you have another of Hon. Otto's catch 22s. Does that tie it in neatly enough for you Mr. Member for the south? It's a very costly Catch 22, Mr. Speaker, very, very costly indeed for the farmers of Saskatchewan and western Canada.

Let's just examine the crop years from 1977 through to the end of February, 1979. During the crop year 1976-77, 3-CW wheat sold at a loss to the farmer on the open market. The farmers who were forced to sell that wheat lost a very neat total. The total for the three western provinces in that year was \$8,585,000, in the 1976-77 crop year for farmers who were forced to sell on the open market because the elevators were glutted with off board grains.

So, Mr. Speaker, the big supporters of the corporate elite . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The big supporters of the corporate elite say, like the members opposite, who are making so much noise today trying to muzzle the opinions of the farmers in my area, just as they tried before . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . But, Mr. Speaker, the farmers in my area shall be heard in spite of the attempts of the members opposite to muzzle them.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. NELSON:** — The big supporters of the corporate elite say, well, the farmers had no confidence in the wheat board. They are busy selling it through the off-board market. The farmers have the freedom to choose, and they are choosing the off-board markets, naturally, they have to pay their bills.

Mr. Speaker, who in his right mind would sweat to produce a product and, by so doing, willingly hand over \$8,585,000 to the corporate friends of the Liberals and Conservative? Not many that I know, Mr. Speaker, not very many.

Mr. Speaker, the farmer is the only group in society who is told — Mr. Farmer, produce, work hard, and then turn the fruits of your labor over to the speculators so that the speculators can make millions of dollars by the sweat of your brow.

But let's look again at the 1977-78 crop year (and I am using the Canadian Grain Commission and Stanley Jones price card figures) so you can check them if you like. The farmer who was forced to sell in the 1977-78 year, if he sold 3-CW wheat, lost an average of 35.2 cents per bushel. For 3-utility wheat, he lost an average of 39.7 cents per bushel. For No. 1 feed oats — 11.9 cents per bushel. If he had to sell his barley — No. 1 feed cost him 37 cents per bushel. The total loss on those grains in the 1977-78 crop year (on that 3-CW wheat) was \$9,037,000. On No. 1 feed oats — \$2,861,000. On barley, Mr. Speaker, the farmers lost \$23,671,000 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Now the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher), Mr. Speaker, is obviously sitting over there making a lot of noise. But he likes to buy barley so that's . . . (inaudible) . . . to sell his cattle, it's obvious why he is supporting the open market. He benefits at the expense of these farmers who lost \$23,671,000. But what was the total loss to the farmers in the three prairie provinces because they were forced to sell those grains on the open market? — \$35,569,000, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the 1977-78 crop year, \$35,569,000 of farmers' hard-earned cash was handed over to the corporate elite, handed over to the grain speculators, the friend of the Liberals and Conservatives. And following this same procedure, Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the crop year 1978-79 to the end of February 14, 1979. What was the loss, again to western farmers on wheat? — \$6,601,000, Mr. Speaker. What was the loss on the oats and those similar grains? — \$1,050,000. And what was the loss for barley? Mr. Speaker, it was \$21,646,000 for a total so far in the 1978-79

**April 10, 1979**

crop year of \$29,279,000. But let's look at the three-year loss to the prairie farmers. Mr. Speaker, it was a staggering \$73,451,000. I say that is a fat sum to stick in the pockets of the grain exchange friends of the Liberal and Progressive Conservative parties.

Mr. Speaker, again as a means of comparison, so as not to disturb the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) I would like to deal with what happened in the beef industry, to show what happens when there's no orderly marketing system. A year and a half ago, approximately, farmers were getting 30 cents a pound for their cattle on the hoof. They were in distress. One farmer told me that he was in an impossible situation. He owed more than he could pay even if he sold all his cattle. The cost of his feed, his input, was far more than he could get by selling his livestock. For every animal that he sold, he lost on the cost of production. If he kept his cattle, the pasture land could not take them. If he sold them he lost money. He couldn't afford to sell them. One man in Killaly, Saskatchewan told me that he sold 80 head in the fall of 1977 for 30 cents a pound. In the spring, six months later, he could have got 70 cents a pound. The orderly style of marketing such as we see in the wheat board if it had been used for cattle would have allowed my friend to stay in business, stay in a business that he was equipped to operate.

The value of a marketing board such as the wheat board is really obvious when we look at the sale of beef, Mr. Speaker. Let's see how a marketing board would help a farmer. Let's assume that a farmer sells a 1,000 pound beef. Last March he would have got 79 cents a pound but what would happen when the meat reaches the store? If the whole 1,000 pounds were sold as hamburger the price would be \$1.79 a pound. That is what it would cost in the store. If it were all sold as steak in the store, the store price would be \$3.55 a pound. In other words, without a marketing board there is no relationship between what the farmer receives and the value of the produce that he produces. Hence, on this side of the House, we say that national marketing boards or commissions are the only way that the farmer can get true value for his work.

An orderly marketing system is the only way that the city worker will get a consistent deal. Mr. Speaker, an orderly marketing system allows the city worker to buy at a consistent good price and not have to live in the feast or famine that we see in the meat industry today. The up again, down again nature of the open market is what we in the NDP wish to avoid in this our fight to preserve the wheat board . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Could we ask the member for whatever he is to get up and talk about this a little bit later? Moosomin that's where he is.

Let's examine the effects of this drastic fluctuation in the prices for city workers. Again it's a little bit more clearly evident in meat, Mr. Speaker, so I would like to use that as a comparison if I could. In March of 1978, the hamburger cost 98 cents a pound, in March 1979, \$1.79 a pound. A year and one-half ago you could buy a five pound roast for \$7 or \$8. You would now pay close to \$18 for that same roast of beef, Mr. Speaker. Just imagine, Mr. Speaker, what such changes do for the working poor and not only to the working poor but to many other people who work in the cities. Such prices simply make it impossible for poor families to have meat, Mr. Speaker. For both the city worker and the farmer, marketing boards, like the wheat board, are absolutely essential.

The corporate supporters of Liberals and Conservatives do not need to make millions on speculation on food. City working people and farmers alike need protection from the corporate bum who does nothing creative for society, but fill his own pockets by the seat of somebody else's brow . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — And put money in Tory coffers.

**MR. NELSON:** — . . . and put money in Tory coffers.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the wheat board, when it comes to all marketing boards and the economy of this country, the working people and the farmer are in the same boat, and it is a pretty leaky boat. Mr. Speaker, it is a very leaky boat that has had Liberals and Conservatives as skippers for the past 112 years. If we, the people of this province and this country don't move together to replace the skippers, then we will be all wet, in more ways than one.

Why do I say Liberals and Conservatives? Why, Mr. Speaker, the main objective of both parties is expressed in a few words — bigger is better. Whether the members opposite know it or not (and many of the, I have a notion, don't even realise it) their attack on the wheat board is part of an overall attack on the family farm.

In the early 1970s — sit and listen, Mr. Member for Moosomin (Mr. Birkbeck) — the Liberal government came out with a study that said two thirds of the farms in the prairie provinces have to go. The small farmer has to be squeezed out. Bigger is better, according to both Liberals and Conservatives. That is their philosophy, Mr. Speaker — bigger is better. By what methods do the Liberals and Conservatives help to push their philosophy that bigger is better? They have many ways, Mr. Speaker. Besides the fantastic prices on machinery, machinery repairs and the cost of chemicals, they have other ways. One is through rail line abandonment. We have dealt with that in this House before. The other is, kill the wheat board, Mr. Speaker. Another is, kill the land bank. Do away with anything that will help support the small farmer. Bigger is better, they say. Leave it to the money man. He is the one who knows how to farm. The family farm is an outmoded concept, say the Conservatives.

As I have said before, this attack on the wheat board is just part of an overall attack on the family farm. An attack on the wheat board is an attack on the family farm, Mr. Speaker. The Progressive Conservatives can say that the family farm is an out-moded concept.

Mr. Speaker, all you need to do is to listen to the words of the member for Moosomin, (Mr. Birkbeck), the PCs former agriculture critic. On June 29, 1978, the Western Producer reported what the member for Moosomin had to say, and I quote, just in case there might be somebody here whose memory is just a little bit short.

Mr. Birkbeck said the economies in agriculture dictate that bigger is better and that should be given priority over the outmoded concept of the family farm.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Who said that?

**MR. NELSON:** — That was said by the member for Moosomin.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Read that again.

**MR. NELSON:** — With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I'll read his comment again. 'Mr. Birkbeck said the economies in agriculture dictate that bigger is better and that should be given priority over the outmoded concept of the family farm.' The people who

**April 10, 1979**

operate the family farms in western Canada, Mr. Speaker, have had to withstand fantastic pressures to maintain their way of life. We on this side of the House support them wholeheartedly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. NELSON:** — We on this side of the House offer the farmers our heartiest congratulations for being able to resist those fantastic economic pressures. Mr. Speaker, it is not the family farm which is outmoded; it's the policies of the Liberals and the Conservatives that are outmoded and should be relegated to the scrapheaps of history. While we say that the wheat board is one of the methods to help maintain the family farm, so does the land bank. The Liberals and Conservatives constantly attack the land bank, they constantly attempt to discredit the land bank. As their attack against the wheat board is an attack against the small family farm, so is their attack against the land bank.

Again quoting this June 29 edition of the Western Producer, Mr. Speaker, to support my contention for this point, the member for Moosomin attacked the land bank as follows, 'The land bank program hasn't lived up to the government's expectations and should be disbanded.' Again I say, so is their attack on the land bank an attempt to do anything that will do away with the family farm. Now, it's strange to say that the land bank hasn't lived up to expectations, because I have a few figures to refute that statement as well. Over 3,000 young people are now on the farm, back on the farm where they could not have been had it not been for the land bank. Young people are back on the farm, yes, and I say young people because the average age of people who have come back to the farm through the land bank is 32 years while the average age for farmers in Saskatchewan is now 55 years. Mr. Speaker, I say that the land bank has lived up to the expectations of the provincial government. We on this side of the House say that land bank is doing what it is set up to do. It is putting people back on the land and is helping to retain the family farm, the thing that the Liberals and Conservatives — especially the Conservatives opposite despise.

Mr. Speaker, Conservatives say that the land bank hasn't lived up to expectations. It's not quite that way. It's just that the land bank isn't living up to expectations that the Conservatives have for the farmers of Saskatchewan. The land bank isn't living up to their expectations that there should be only huge farms. According to them, small farmers should be squeezed out. They attack the land bank, attack the wheat board — anything to build their policy that bigger is better.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservatives talk about a policy bulletin that they wave around so often in this legislature, but they refuse to table it. Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative's policy has nothing to do with what they wave around on pieces of paper. Their policy is illustrated by what is done when Progressive Conservatives are in power, and by what sneaks out around the corners when they are caught unawares and make true statements of their policy, such as, the family farm is an outmoded concept. Mr. Speaker, there is a many pronged attack on the family farm by big business — big business in league with the Progressive Conservatives and the Liberals, whether in Saskatchewan or in Ottawa. Bigger is better, say the Progressive Conservatives and Liberals. The family farm is an outmoded concept say the Progressive Conservatives through their former agricultural critic, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order.

**MR. McLEOD:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I was wondering what the hon. member has been saying in about the last 10 minutes has to do with Motion 7.

**MR. NELSON:** — Mr. Speaker, if I may continue.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order. I was listening to the member and I thought he was relating to the subject before us, which is Resolution 7, and I don't believe the point of order is well taken. The member for Yorkton.

**MR. NELSON:** — Mr. Speaker, their whole concept of bigger is better, as I see it, is an attack against the wheat board and is an attack against the family farm, and this is why I was relating this whole thing in this way.

Mr. Speaker, we say that bigger is not necessarily better, but sometimes bigger is necessary to fight the multinationals, to fight the grain exchange, and the speculators that grow rich by the sweat of the brows of other people. To fight those who would destroy the wheat board and the family farm, we had better be organized into something that is big and touch and militant. Small farmers like every other person of lesser means are invited to join a group that has a direction and a plan. I invite them to join in a united battle against those multinationals and their Liberal and Conservative pals who are out to control their lives. We in the NDP have asked the people of Saskatchewan to accept a plan and they have, Mr. Speaker, they have full heartedly and the wheat board is a part of that plan nationally, a plan that gives stability to the family farm.

It's all part of a plan such as we have presented to the people of Saskatchewan in the past that started with New Deal for People in 1971. New Deal '75 was also accepted and in their acceptance of our plan in this election of October, 1978, the people have said yes to a planned New Decade of Progress; a New Decade of Planned Progress in Saskatchewan led by the best Premier in Canada. Our fight to save the wheat board is just one part of an overall plan to give Canada the same chance the people of Saskatchewan enjoy today.

Mr. Speaker, I say let's give Canada a chance and let's start this by passing this resolution on the hope that we can save the Canadian Wheat Board and thus save the small farmer and squash the outmoded notion of the Progressive Conservatives that bigger is better in the economics of agriculture. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support this resolution.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few brief remarks on medicare and land bank and potash and SaskOil and at the conclusion of my remarks, I'll tie it in and draw an analogy somehow to the wheat board.

I would like to touch just for a minute on the social's definition of family farm. It seems to mean those farmers who can afford \$300,000, half a million dollar apartment building in the city of Regina. It seems to accommodate those who can somehow handle their farming operations from the provincial corrections centre. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the member's comments as they relate to the family farm are just so far removed from fact that it's mind boggling. In fact, since 1971, under his happy little land bank system, the big farmers have gotten bigger and the small farmers have disappeared to the point where we have lost 6,000 family farms under this

**April 10, 1979**

government.

Now, I'll touch on the resolution just briefly because quite frankly, I think we should take this whole debate as read; it's the fourth time the same thing has been brought to the House. We've heard those two speeches so many times. But on the way in this morning, I stopped at the library and I picked up a copy of the Canadian Wheat Board Act. One of the duties of the board:

To offer continuously wheat for sale in the markets of the world utilizing and employing its own or other marketing agents or channels.

There is a similar section dealing with who may purchase for the wheat board. The purchaser for the wheat board are the prairie wheat pools, big nasty mean old Cargill, high in the air National Grain, Patterson, UGG (United Grain Growers). These people are licensed among others, to purchase for the wheat board. Let's take a look at who the people are that are licensed to sell for the Canadian Wheat Board. There are 30 of them. I won't go through them all but I want to touch on a half-a-dozen. The first one is Continental grain. The second one is Dreyfus. I don't know if any of you guys have heard of Dreyfus. They don't have an office here in Canada. The third one is Cargill, a big bad multinational. Cargill's whose head office is in the U.K. Fourth one is Bunge, How about Northern Sales? They sell a little bit — nice little Winnipeg operation. It sold more wheat than the wheat board did directly over the last several years.

Quite simply put, Mr. Speaker, the reason I bring this out at this point is that I really don't think the member who moved this resolution or the seconder is aware of what's going on in this happy world of international wheat marketing. Eighty per cent of the wheat we sell for export is sold by these four big bad multinationals, Cargill, Dreyfus, Continental, Bunge, not one with its head office here in Canada. They are the people who are ripping the farmers off right but through the auspices of the Canadian Wheat Board.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Give them a copy of the Canadian Wheat Board Act.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — I'm going to send one over to them in a minute. Another thing that the mover touched on just briefly was his government (certainly not his ) but the government of that side of the House and its ability to at least pay lip service to the crow rate. It was the Premier of the Government of Saskatchewan who I think at the most recent SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention commented that perhaps the time isn't right for an upward adjustment of the crow rate, Well, perhaps the time isn't right but I would like to know, in his view, when will the time be right? When will the time be right? He says that it will be adjusted upward, but when? Will he tell us when? We don't think it should be adjusted upward. He seems to? What is the position of this government as it relates to the wheat board buying hopper cars? You guys on that one have come down firmly on both sides of the fence, adopted a position of firm flexibility ..

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — NDP against sufficient movement of grain.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Exactly, exactly and through the back door, in effect, raising the crow rates.

**MR. MOSTOWAY:** — Hey, Eric, telephone call from a Mr. Cargill.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Thank you. Take a number for me, please.

You people, in no way, shape or form, are serious or sincere in your desires to help rural Saskatchewan, the farmers of rural Saskatchewan. You have demonstrated it in the way you have bungled your land bank program. You have demonstrated it in the way you pay lip service only to the crow rate. You demonstrated it again, when the grain elevator tariff thing was negotiated about a year ago, in Saskatoon. Your government didn't even have a representative there. They went up 300 per cent in the last four or five years. You had no representative there, despite a cost to the farmer equivalent to the crow rate subsidy.

Just a couple more comments, Mr. Speaker, because I don't want to drag this debate through one more time. I think it is an abuse of the legislature the way they bring this thing in every year and drag out the same old speeches.

Mr. Speaker, our position has been put very clearly on this matter. It is a matter of record in this House for the last four years.

Briefly, I will tell you the position of the Conservatives on the Canadian Wheat Board. It is this: We support 100 per cent, a producer controlled wheat board. We support 100 per cent a wheat board that is not the tool of Otto Lang. We support 100 per cent a wheat board that sells wheat between elections.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Mr. Speaker, I would personally like to see the wheat board under the purview of the Auditor General of Canada so that Otto Lang cannot use it as a political tool.

**MR. KATZMAN:** — He won't be anymore, shortly.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — I support a wheat board that moves our grain, a wheat board that doesn't find itself in the position where it has to admit that the producers of western Canada lost \$450 million last year because they were not able to get the grain in export position . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . My friend, intellectual giant, the Canadian Wheat board has an officer that is responsible for the allocation of grain cars of both railroads.

Mr. Speaker, while I was in the library, I stumbled onto an old book called The Debates of the House of Commons — 1935. I was looking through it. What did I find. An Act to Provide for the Constitution and the Powers of the Canadian Wheat Board assented to July 5, 1935. One Prime Minister Bennett moved the motion.

Mr. Speaker, with those few sort comments, I would like to move, seconded by the member for Rosthern (Mr. Katzman) that Resolution No. 7 be amended by deleting all the words after 'Board' where it appears in the second line and substituting:

commends the PC Party of Canada for its foresight in enacting An Act to Provide for the Constitution and the Powers of the Canadian Wheat Board assented to July 5, 1935.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern):** — Mr. Speaker, as seconder of this motion, I would like to make one comment. The seconder for the other motion indicated, watch for what the

**April 10, 1979**

PCs did when they were in power. You now know what the PCs did federally in 1935 when they brought in the wheat board. They bailed out the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, which was having trouble in those days. It was the Conservatives, not the people who talk in funny languages and do other things. It was your Premier that is saying the crow rates are going to have to be changed, but not right now because there is an election. We say the crow rates have to stay because that was a part of the conditions that western Canada came into Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KATZMAN:** — It is interesting to note that the seconder in his speech, seconding, rambled from one end of the farm agriculture section to the other end, Mr. Speaker, he even referred to airplanes. So I would like to study his comments and be allowed the same range of latitude to speak on the comments of both he and the mover and therefore, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

### **Resolution No. 13 — Transportation Problems in Northern Saskatchewan**

**MR. G. McLEOD (Meadow Lake)** moved, seconded by the member for Estevan (Mr. Larter):

That this Assembly condemns the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan for their failure to recognize the particular transportation problems of farmers and ranchers of northern Saskatchewan, which result in these farmers and ranchers having to haul their agricultural products great distances for delivery.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to rise and explain to this House a matter of concern to many agricultural people in northwestern Saskatchewan, the area which I represent.

It is my sincere hope, on their behalf, that someone on those government benches will listen to their concerns and act according to the special needs of that area.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — We're listening!

**MR. McLEOD:** — I'm glad you are. I assure you it is extremely interesting for people of northwestern Saskatchewan to note the recent discussion regarding the Prairie Rail Action Committee and the rail line abandonment and the effect of this abandonment on small communities in southern Saskatchewan, but, Mr. Speaker, how can people who live in areas like Goodsoil and Pierceland, Loon Lake, Dorintosh (to name some) how can they be anything but cynical about what they hear coming from the federal Minister of Transport and his provincial counterpart, the Member for Last Mountain-Touchwood (Mr. MacMurchy). These are ministers who have been entrusted with great responsibility.

On behalf of producers in northwestern Saskatchewan, I must condemn in the strongest possible terms both the federal government and provincial government for their lack of concern for the particular transportation problems in northern Saskatchewan. Before I go into the reasons, I must give a short history of the railways and their involvement in the transportation history of northwestern Saskatchewan.

In 1928, the CNR made a pre-line survey and applied for a charter to build a line running north from Spiritwood to Leoville. I would like the hon. member for Turtleford (Mr. Johnson) to listen very carefully to this. This is part of his area but it affects mine as well and he could learn something here. This line was to go through the timberlands of Chitek Lake and the excellent farming country of Meadow Lake, and it would then continue westward through Goodsoil, Peerless, Beacon Hill and Pierceland, hooking up at Grand Centre, Alberta.

In the fall of 1929, the Canadian Pacific Railway decided to apply for a charter for a similar route from Nipawin all the way to Meadow Lake. First of all, in order to do this, they needed the running rights over the Canadian National Railway line from Prince Albert to a point near Debden, Debden is on the CNR line that runs from Prince Albert to Big River. The CP was granted those running rights, and for some reason, the Canadian Pacific decided not to build an east-west line, approximately 20 miles to 30 miles north of Prince Albert.

I can say, Mr. Speaker, that after investigating this whole question objectively, there is no question in my mind that when Canadian Pacific decided not to build that line, they should have been forced to give up their charter to Meadow Lake and should have lost their running rights over the CN line from Prince Albert to Debden. Instead, Canadian Pacific built an unnecessary line from Debden to Leoville, an area already well served by the CN, from Prince Albert to Big River.

The CPR then built only 90 miles of grade to service the large Meadow Lake area, and the proposed line west of Meadow Lake to Grand Centre, Alberta was never built.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is very timely that this motion is being debated now, just after the recent federal election call. With that federal election call came the retirement of a gentleman, Mr. Bert Cadieu, after 40 years of distinguished service, 21 years in the municipal area (and I'm glad that the Minister of Environment is agreeing with me on that) and also 20 years as the federal member of parliament for the constituency of Meadow Lake.

These transportation problems that we are debating here have been a major concern of Mr. Cadieu's for all of his years in public life — very distinguished years. I might add. In a recent statement, Mr. Cadieu said and I quote:

I feel the CPR betrayed the people of Meadow Lake. The rail line proposed by the CN would have given the area the service it needed at the time and would have given an easy access to the great northern developments taking place today at Cold Lake and Fort MacMurray in Alberta. What a difference this line would have made to the economy of northern Saskatchewan.

I don't believe that there is anyone in our area who can disagree with that statement.

I believe that this Assembly should condemn the present federal government, especially its PRAC report which states among its recommendations that farmers in areas affected by the proposed line abandonments, who are forced to haul over 20 miles, would be paid a subsidy of 1 per cent per bushel per mile. I want to point out that I am opposed to the total concept of PRAC, and the way this committee report was thrust onto our province. Producers in my area who have been hauling distances of 30 miles to 50 miles for over 40 years have every reason to laugh at the federal Liberals'

**April 10, 1979**

attempts to show concern for producer transportation problems, when in fact, they have never shown concern in all of the years they have been in government.

At no time has any Liberal or NDP government for that matter, ever taken the railway companies to task for their sweetheart deal that virtually abandoned a whole corner of the province. Now those same Liberals — we're coming to you in a minute, Mr. Minister — now those same Liberals presided over a situation where the original inadequate line that was built into Meadow Lake has deteriorated to the extent that trains must literally crawl out of northwestern Saskatchewan with the products of agricultural and lumber producers. I don't for a minute suggest that resurrecting the old railway battles of the past will bring about solutions to present problems. When transportation in my area of northwestern Saskatchewan is put into historical perspective and when we listen to things that Mr. Cadieu has been saying for all these years, it becomes clear that the present and the future must be addressed by both senior levels of government and that some positive action must be taken now.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me turn to the so-called deep concern of this provincial government for producer transportation problems. The minister responsible for transportation opposite has been condemning the PRAC recommendations loud and long both inside this House and around the province, telling everyone about his government's commitment to producers. You see, Mr. Speaker, government members nod and applaud about that. I only wish my constituents could hear and see that, or better yet that some of you members over there would come and see the area and see what I'm talking about, not just fly into Meadow Lake as you did before the last election. Look around the area and see what I'm talking about. Mr. Speaker, residents of a large part of northwestern Saskatchewan certainly cannot be blamed for wondering at this show of concern demonstrated by the government members. After all they know that this is the same government that's responsible for Highway 55 in the Goodsoil area to Meadow Lake. They also know that this is the same government that's responsible for Highway 4 in the Dorintosh area. They know that it's also responsible for Highway 304 from the Loon Lake area to Meadow Lake and for Highway 26 from Goodsoil to St. Walburg. They are aware of what government is responsible for those highways, and they know that so-called deep concern can't be that deep. When we judge concern in our area, Mr. Speaker, we assess the action taken. There's been very little action in building roads that will stand up to the large loads necessary when people are forced to haul great distances. Speaking of large load, this is a provincial government that does not allow multi-axle farm trucks to be licensed as farm trucks, so farmers needing larger trucks because of long hauling distances are not doubly penalized.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that any government that was truly concerned about transportation problems would certainly have demonstrated that concern by building highways and by recognizing the large investment necessary for farmers to own bigger and better trucks because of their hauling distances. I want to point out clearly that this is a very serious concern of the people that I represent here. I respectfully request that the appropriate ministers of this government move immediately toward recognizing the special transportation problems of an area that has been historically abandoned by the railway companies, the federal Liberals, and the provincial NDP government. And I say to the hon. members opposite that your party has been in power for a good portion of that time, you must necessarily accept responsibility and demonstrated your stated concerns through action.

You mention that big airport, Mr. Minister, and I'd like to respond to that. I ask you how my producers in my area are supposed to haul their grain and their cattle from that

airport?

For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I move Resolution No. 13.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

Debate continues on the motion.

**MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan):** — Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to second this motion, as being the member the furthest southeast and seconding the motion for the member from the furthest northwest. Many years ago having moved from Swift Current to Prince Albert and living at Prince Albert and travelling out of Prince Albert in the farm machinery business. I found out very soon the difference between farming in south Saskatchewan and farming in central Saskatchewan. It was indeed something that only a person who has made that move would know. I think what happened, many years ago in the South when the dirty thirties hit, many of the people from the area around Swift Current and Shaunavon moved to northern Saskatchewan. Not only were they blessed with more rain as they reached the North but they also found that the difficulties in farming the northern lands were quite different from those in the south country.

One of the first things which came to my attention very loud and clear was the fact that the farmers up North were farming from one-half to a section of land, when I was travelling that area, and using tractors just as big as the section and a half, two section farmers in southern Saskatchewan. In many cases they had more tractors than the farmers in southern Saskatchewan, as well as large self-propelled machinery to work on this half, three-quarter or section of land. I couldn't understand this until I was a part of living there for a while and saw that where we were working out summerfallow in the southern part of Saskatchewan four, five or six times. It wasn't unusual to work your summerfallow ten or twelve times in northern Saskatchewan. We had rocks in the South and central Saskatchewan but we didn't have roots to contend with and in the damaging and upkeep of our family machinery, especially when it comes to combines. I think most of the members from the North know what a root can do to a feeder chain and the cylinder of a combine. I was also . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . they won't hurt John Deere combines. I did also spend a few days picking roots up there so I do know what root picking is like and I found that I wanted to move back to southern Saskatchewan when it came to picking roots.

I think the added expense of farming up North as I mentioned through the conditions — I did travel with the minister of STC. I travelled his country and I knew his folks many years ago and I knew what they went through. I don't think the minister had to go through the same thing, though. But I truly believe that the farmers of northern Saskatchewan have been short-changed as far as getting equal things to people in other parts of the province. I'm speaking of the good roads; they have longer distances to haul, not only their cattle but their farm produce. As the member mentioned certainly one of the things — the licensing of the three-axle trucks with a farm licence and giving them the option of using purple gas — would've been a great assistance to them. I share his feelings on the PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) report. It really was a laugh to the farmers in the North because you can't take away what you haven't had and the farmers in the North haven't had these things. So, it is with great satisfaction that I support completely the member for Meadow Lake (Mr. McLeod) and urge all the members of the House to vote for this motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. L.E. JOHNSON (Turtleford):** — Mr. Speaker, I found rather interesting some of the initial remarks of the mover of the motion, the member for Meadow Lake (Mr. McLeod) in the areas that he's covering regarding the railroads in the northern portion of the province of Saskatchewan.

One of the members opposite has just indicated that the individual knows what he's talking about. He forgot to mention that at the same time as the railroads in that area of the province were being dropped, it was the government of the day in Ottawa that was doing it, a Progressive Conservative government. In the early '30s lines that had been set out to start were dropped at that particular time. I think I came in, Mr. Speaker, right on the point of what the member was saying. He was attempting to say that there was a need for rail lines in northern Saskatchewan and he wanted to lay the blame for them not being there on the federal Liberal government and this government in the province of Saskatchewan and shift it off the Conservative Party policies and things that it was doing during the early '30s.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to point out that the member opposite disagrees with the PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) report. I would just like to bring to the attention of this Assembly that the chairman of the commission which wrote the PRAC report was also the secretary and director of research for the MacPherson Commission, commissioned by the member in the Prince Albert federal constituency, when he was the Prime Minister of Canada. This report, Mr. Speaker, gave a number of things that they felt should be done.

One of the things is that the uneconomical branch lines should be supported over a period of time sufficient to enable adjustments to be made both in rail investment and investment tied to rail movement. In our view, 15 years is a reasonable period to expect the process to continue.

Now that was back in 1961. It was a Tory government then. We have already passed the 15 years and we are starting to feel the effect of that particular study.

Mr. Speaker, I am interested in what the member has said regarding the activities of the provincial government in transportation in northern Saskatchewan. I am aware specifically of what the member is referring to in retention of the Government of Canada, but I would like to agree that the federal government's record in transportation is rather dismal.

On that issue we have already had a spirited debate recently in this Assembly. With respect to the record of the provincial government in northern transportation, the facts show that the accusation in the motion is quite false.

The member for Meadow Lake (Mr. McLeod ) may be interested in some statistics for his own constituency. From 1964 to 1971 the Liberal administration spent \$4 million on capital road improvements in the Meadow Lake area. The \$4 million went on a rather random distribution of oil treatment and gravel on a few roads that were upgraded.

If one looks at a road system to provide long-term service to northern areas, one does not need to look to oiled road. They simply will not stand up because of the climate and the rainfall of the area. The best that can be expected of cheap oiled roads is that they provide dust control for a few years and this is what the northerners got under the Thatcher administration.

When the NDP came into office in 1971, we inherited a road system in the North that was literally falling apart. It was not only a matter of repairing the existing system, but there had to be massive improvements made. They started on a major road rebuilding program and the roads that are being constructed will provide long-term service to the area. From 1971 to 1979 in the Meadow Lake constituency, a riding which is much smaller now than the 1964 constituency, our government has spent over \$17 million in rebuilding roads and oil-treated highway to upgrade them to a pavement standard. Mr. Speaker, that is an increase of over 400 per cent and the member for Meadow Lake (Mr. McLeod) still complains about it. Would he have liked to have gone back to what was there previously?

Additionally, the government has spent \$6 million on a meridian bridge, a bridge of major benefit to the people of the Meadow Lake constituency and requested particularly by the Indians of the Onion Lake Reserve in the constituency of Meadow Lake. Our government has provided a high quality airstrip at Meadow Lake, one of the best of its kind anywhere in the province. The record, Mr. Speaker, goes on.

The increase of money to rural municipalities from \$19 million to \$32 million within two years of revenue-sharing has given municipalities in the area the financial capability to upgrade municipal roads to a standard beyond their wildest dreams in the lean Liberal years.

With respect to the rail lines, our government has used every mechanism possible to reverse federal abandonment efforts where they are not in the interests of rural people. In every case of northern branch lines, this government supported their retention, from Paradise Hill to Spruce Lake, which is in the member's constituency, from Speers to Glaslyn which covers the constituency of Redberry and Turtleford and also the Spiritwood subdivision. As well, the government supported the retention of the line between Spiritwood and Shell Lake which formerly was not supported by the Hall Commission.

The staff of the transportation agency have worked with each and every retention committee providing them with information and helping them to prepare their briefs to the Hall Commission. This was followed by the PRAC report. Local people in retention committees were extremely grateful for the helping hand they obtained from the agency. As I am sure you can appreciate, any hearing can be a trying experience for people not familiar with the process. I challenge the member opposite to ask any retention committee about the support they received from the agency and other government MLAs. It is interesting that the government MLAs and staff have been able to brave winter storms to attend meetings of retention committees only to find that local members from the opposite side of the House have been unable to attend. The weather was too bad.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Shame, shame.

**MR. JOHNSON:** — Mr. Speaker, I ask this Assembly, who is committed to fighting for rural people in their struggle to maintain rail transportation service for local communities? Mr. Speaker, the record and the facts speak for themselves. This is a record of commitment and dedication to fight for the concerns of rural people. It is not a record of failure to respond to the transportation needs of rural Saskatchewan. Where we have the jurisdiction, the record of the NDP government is one of action and performance. One can dedicate it to the long-term needs of rural Saskatchewan. In

**April 10, 1979**

areas beyond our jurisdiction we are fighting with all the resources to influence the federal government to make decisions in the best interest of rural Saskatchewan. And therefore, I move, seconded by my seatmate that the resolution be amended as follows:

That this Assembly commends the Government of Saskatchewan for continual action in meeting the transportation needs of ranchers and farmers of northern Saskatchewan through its provision of an efficient road system and its opposition to rail branch line abandonment.

**MR. D.F. McARTHUR (Regina Lakeview):** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to second the motion on this amendment, because I think the amendment as stated brings a perspective on the question here that's important. The amendment pints up the fact that we are dealing here with an area of the province in which effective transportation planning is internal, important. It points out that the province of Saskatchewan with respect to its responsibilities has been acting responsibly, and that the problems in that area — and we recognize there are problems — quite clearly rest with neglect and lack of planning and lack of foresight on the part of federal governments, both Conservative and Liberal, that go back many years. What we need here is to implement effective plans that will take care of the needs of that area in terms of transportation. The province has been playing its role. The problem is that the federal government and past federal governments have not.

There is much more I want to say with respect to that question because it is an interesting and important question. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

### **Point of Order — Amendment to Resolution**

**MR. H. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose):** — I have been in a lot of different areas where they moved amendments to resolutions and at all times an amendment is supposed to maintain the general thought of the resolution, not change it completely. So I wonder if the amendment is in order or not. It has changed the complete intent of the motion. Is that type of an amendment acceptable here and if it is what kind of rules of parliamentary procedure do we follow?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — The general rule that governs the amendments that are offered is this:

Every amendment must be relevant to the question upon which it is proposed.

The question here is the transportation needs of ranchers and farmers in northern Saskatchewan. The amendment must be intelligible and I feel that the amendment is intelligible. I think the amendment must be looked upon as an alternative suggestion to the one which is contained in the main motion which has been moved and to which it amends.

**MR. SWAN:** — Could you tell me where you are reading from, what rules you are using to decide that the amendment is in order?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I would appreciate it if the member would rise earlier because we have already passed the item on which he is raising the point of order. Perhaps, since it

is holding up the business of the House because we have passed that point in the business of the House, I would be glad to give the member a notation later on to what I am referring for his own information.

### **Resolution No. 14 — School Bus Transportation**

**MR. G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley)** moved, seconded by Mr. J. Garner (Wilkie):

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan for its failure to provide adequate safety provisions for students transported in the school buses of this province.

He said: I'm very pleased to rise on this motion which concerns me greatly, first of all, as a teacher and having dealt with students in Saskatchewan for a number of years, as a parent who has four of my own children who are transported daily on school buses and especially in a province like Saskatchewan where we all realize that at many times the weather conditions and the conditions under which our students have to be transported to and from school on a daily basis are not conducive to safety. The other factor that is affecting the situation at this time, as we all know, is that changes in our rural society are inevitably causing students to be bused farther and farther each year. Now with these areas in mind I would like to address a few comments to this Assembly concerning what I think is an important topic, the school busing of our children.

I would like to draw your attention (and I am to sure you are all aware of this) to a new program which has been instituted by your government into the schools of Saskatchewan. It is a program from Grades K to 6, called the Human Preservation Program. It is a program which I personally support. In this program the emphasis is upon child safety. It seems very strange to me that there is no mention of seat belts in school buses. It encourages students to use seat belts in their parents' cars, again something I agree with, but all of our students in rural Saskatchewan (and many of them are your daughters and sons) are transported each day in school buses that I maintain leave a lot to be desired in matters of safety. Also, I would like to bring this to the attention of this Assembly in this year because of the International Year of the Child. That is of paramount importance in our discussions and in our legislation and, therefore, I think it is timely to be discussing this topic.

I also should point out, as many of you know, I have issued press release on this, that the response from the people of Saskatchewan has been very encouraging. I have had many letters, and many private phone calls. Many people have approached me on the streets of my constituency and throughout Saskatchewan encouraging me to bring this topic to the floor of this Assembly. One of the things which I found the most interesting was the interest shown in the high school of Ituna, in which this topic was taken right into the classroom, studied, and debated. Letters were forwarded to me on this concern. I believe the students of Ituna (I don't know which member's constituency that is), represent fairly adequately the feeling of the people of Saskatchewan. The vote in the Ituna school was 50-50 and I think that is probably a pretty accurate look at this situation.

Now to get into some of the things which I feel are important in school buses, I am going to go through many. The first one is the matter of seat belts. Now we all know that this is a bit of a controversial topic at this time because of the existing school buses and the

type of seats that are in there with the metal backs and so on. To put in a lap belt would be causing more injury if they were in an accident than if they didn't have a seat belt. I think this is what the safety inspectors tell us. I am inclined to agree with that. However, I would like to quote from a man who I think is a respected authority on safety, a Mr. Carl Shiels, whom we were discussing about yesterday for the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. Mr. Shiels says the following when consulted and asked about seat belts, not only in school buses but in the STC buses. I quote from the Leader Post, January 28, 1978:

Carl Shiels, Director of Traffic Safety Programs in Saskatchewan Transportation Agency says that it has been under study by both provincial and federal transport people for some time.

Now, I am wondering about the members opposite, how long are you going to put this type of study on before you do something about it. What I am suggesting to you is that perhaps you should look at a pilot project. Perhaps we should be designing a bus in which seat belts could be safely installed. I understand that the federal government is asking school buses to be designed in this manner and I would say that for us in Saskatchewan it would be a very worthy pilot project. It would be in the best interests of our young students and, of course, in the interest of our society, if we were to institute a pilot program of this type with a bus that is designed with padded back, seat belts (I suggest the shoulder type of belt) and just see how uncomfortable this is for the students, how it is accepted by students and take a look at the situation. I know the questions that have come. Many people say well, how do you enforce this type of thing? Well it's very simple, just the same as we do in our cars. You could put a light on the dash and if the light is on, then there's a seat belt undone. The driver can say O.K., you're not complying with the rules, then you don't ride the school bus. Furthermore, it's the parents' responsibility. I've had experience in my school system of when students misbehave on buses and all I did was call that parents and say, look it, this student's conduct is not conducive to the type of conduct we expect on school buses and the parents will back you up on pretty well every situation. I'll bet there isn't one of you who has ridden on a school bus with your students. Maybe you did, one time. If you did, I compliment you. But I know many of the vocal fellows have never been near one and if you ride on a school bus you will see the standard of behaviour on some of these buses. It's appalling, I'll tell you that and I think we can look into this.

Another thing I want to mention to you is that I was talking to a school bus operator the other day and he said, you know, I would put them in myself, Graham. He's even gone out and he's priced what it would take to put belts into his buses. Now, I know that some of the arguments are that one will say, we have a very good safety record. There haven't been accidents in Saskatchewan. And perhaps, this is correct. But on the other hand, if you've read the newspapers and if you looked at other areas of Canada and the world, you must realize there are accidents in school buses and also in public buses. What I say, I'm always the type of fellow who believes in a bit of prevention rather than cure and I still think that is the cheapest remedy. I say, let's not be so naive as to sit in Saskatchewan where our buses are going on icy roads, where our traffic is increasing on some of our highways, where we have blizzards and say that we're never going to have an accident. That to me is false thinking.

Now, another feature of school buses that I would like to mention is the fact of the CB radio. CB radio is here in our society. I would suggest that many of the homes and many of you people opposite, as well as my colleagues here, possess CB radios. They are a very excellent piece of machinery when used in their place. I would like to quote the

Western Producer, of February 1, 1979 regarding CB radios:

Ken Anderson of the Saskatchewan Safety Council agreed CB equipment is a good idea for anyone driving in prairie climatic conditions.

We must realize that our buses are out every week day of the winter, in all kinds of climatic conditions.

Now, I am going to relate a little personal experience to you that happened to me in January of this year, when the play Hamlet, was on at the Centre of the Arts. I happen to teach Grade 12 English and I brought the class in to see it. It was an enjoyable experience. We were going home and it was about 1 o'clock on the No. 1 Highway. Our bus failed on us. Luckily, the bus was equipped with a CB radio. With a few calls on channel nine, we soon had contact with a person who contacted the bus owner and within half an hour we were on the way, on a very cold and chilly night. I can tell you from my personal experience, in that situation, that I think the CB radio was a very good addition to that bus.

Now, you know as well as I do, that many of the parents have these base sets. I hear criticism. Some people say the drivers will be talking to the truckers. I say, that is a bunch of nonsense, because I have dealt with school bus drivers for 15 years and in the main they are a good bunch of people. They are a bunch of people who take their job seriously and they will not be chatting to all the bus drivers that come along.

Now, the other thing is, the topic of skip. I realize that some time there is skip, but I don't see too many of the fellows, with the CBs in their cars, yanking them out because of skip problems. I think you can contact in many cases.

Now there are a few other minor things that I want to go to regarding school buses which you may not be aware of. Some of these things are that school buses are required to keep a first aid kit. A good idea! But did you know the drivers are not required in any way, shape or form to have any type of first aid training? It seems to me that, perhaps, a logical step would be to have a St. John's Ambulance course. It is a good thing for any citizen in this country to have the St. John's Ambulance course and especially a man who may have 20 or 30 young children in his care on a school bus. An extra sun visor is also needed. You go into the school buses. They have one sun visor. You know what it is like to drive into the sun and be blinded and you wouldn't want that responsibility looking after your own life, in a single vehicle. How do you think it feels to be a school bus driver and have 20 or 30 people depending on your judgment and not be able to have a sun visor to shield you from the sun?

I understand the regulations don't even require you to carry a shovel. This is nonsense in this country in the winter and thank goodness most of the drivers have enough brains to take one. But I am just trying to point out that we should take a look at the situation, my friend. Listen instead of talk some time and you will learn a lot and you will find out that probably there are areas in school bus safety that need the attention of this Government of Saskatchewan, today.

Now, another thing that I wonder about is whether there has been any tests or has anyone looked at the exhaust ventilation in those buses? You know how they are going along. I follow them every day to school and I see that exhaust coming right up. There is a back door in them. I challenge this government to do some tests on those buses and just see what level of the pollutants in the air may be in the school buses of

Saskatchewan. Let's not be like the ostrich and stick our heads in the sand and say it isn't right. I say if you're the government and if you're concerned with the students in this province, you'll get out there and you'll do some tests and take a look. I'll support you 100 per cent in anything of that nature. Now, I mentioned the school bus drivers before and I want to point out one thing about school bus drivers. I've been associated as I've said with many of them and most of these people have been very diligent. I want to cite a case that happened in our own jurisdiction of a man . . . He was very proud of his job. In fact, he wore a hat that made him look like a bus driver. He would never leave that job. He would never leave bus. If he had to go out to the bus and I admired him for that because once those students were in that bus, that was his jurisdiction. That man when he finished his driving for Wolseley Consolidate School District was given a citation, a nice plaque that he could hang on the wall, for his service to the students of that jurisdiction. I think that's the kind of treatment that the school bus drivers in Saskatchewan need. They have an important job and I think we as the government and school boards should be encouraged to give these worthy people a pat on the back. Another thing that we have to do is thorough checks of the buses. I understand that there are regulations that the buses have to go to be checked. I question, in some cases, how thoroughly they are checked. I would like to quote from a recent happening out in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, where we have a school and bus supervisor refusing to comment on an accident. I'm just going to quote from one of the observers who witnessed the accident, and said the driver was losing his axles coming in the lane. This was in a farmyard. He said, it's a good thing that he missed the big fuel tank. He just about hit the fuel tank and here's what the driver had to say. The driver said this following the accident:

I had no brakes, no handbrakes. The power steering gave out so I did what I could to steer away from the pole. I just missed the fuel tanks and ended up in a snow bank just past them.

I could go on and tell you that he ripped down the power pole . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, this is Swift Current. Now is that the kind of safety that you want with your boys and girls going out in buses like that on any morning? Thank God that didn't happen on the highway. It happened in some farmer's yard. I think if you were a teacher, my friend, you would do well to quit commenting and pay a little bit of attention because if you're a teacher, this should come close to your heart. However, no more.

Now another thing and I've watched this for some time. I know you haven't watched it; you don't watch an awful lot. But on the other hand, I've seen school buses in many of the areas unloading in a situation like this where students have to go out, cross the street in front of that bus and go on to the school grounds. Again, I say that I think you as the government in charge of education, in charge of school bussing are lax in these practices. These are some of the regulations that should be put on a little stronger and should be policed or monitored so that we are not putting young children in a situation where they may be losing their lives.

Then lastly, the thing that of course upsets me the most is your legislation here under The Motor Vehicles Act in which it states the following and I read from Section 152 of The Motor Vehicles Act. It says:

The driver of a school bus equipped as provided by Section 21 of Section 123 shall unless driving on a public highway and a posted limit of 55 kilometres, (that's only 34.18 miles per hour) activate the flashing signals when stopping for the purpose of loading and unloading school children at

least 350 feet before the point of loading or unloading, maintain the operation of the flashing signals for a stop to load or unload school children, and when unloading school children discontinue the operation of flashing lights, after the school children have reached a place of safety before continuing along the public highway.

My contention is that whenever students are unloading on or off a bus, Mr. Attorney General, the life of those students demand that those lights be activated.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. TAYLOR:** — I quoted to you 3,800 buses. Approximately 10 per cent of these buses are in your urban centres. I know the Minister of Transport says, oh, it's going to cause the traffic to slow down. Well, I don't give a hoot if it does cause the traffic to slow down because I believe the life of the child is a very important thing. And as I say, 90 per cent of them are in the rural area where we aren't in that big of a hurry to get from point A to point B. I think that you as a government should look very strongly, and I challenge some of you fellows in the back bench to, and I know you agree with me, stand up and let's change this type of legislation. Let's get out there and protect our children. I can't understand why the government would pass legislation like that to speed up traffic at the expense of children's lives. It's beyond my comprehension.

Now, the other thing I'd like to take you to task on is the signs on the highway. I drive up and down the highways. I never see a sign about what you do if there's a school bus. Nothing. They say, Graham, you can play golf here, or you can get a drink of water here, or so on and so forth. All those signs are on your highways, but nothing to protect the children of Saskatchewan. I think protecting them is a little more important than playing golf or finding a motel or something of this nature. I'm not casting stones against the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources (Mr. Matsalla) for his signs, but I just wish to have a few signs because many people living in the cities don't know what the rules are regarding school buses, because they don't pass them. They're driving by. I see this on the highway when I drive in. I'm telling you the truth. I see guys just zooming by. That kind of thing, if we're a government and looking at the interest of students, should not be allowed.

However, I've expressed my views. I hope you've taken them into consideration. I can tell you that I am expressing the views of many concerned parents, and many concerned educators, and many concerned students, in the province of Saskatchewan.

Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to move, seconded by my colleague for Wilkie (Mr. Garner) Resolution No. 14.

**MR. J. GARNER (Wilkie):** — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise and second the motion for the member for Indian Head-Wolseley. It is pretty hard to speak on a motion when my member has done such an adequate job of it. I would like to add a few more points.

With regard to The Vehicles Act, there was a very serious accident in my constituency . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Look, if you will be quiet I can continue, otherwise we are going to be here until 12:00 o'clock. It is up to you. You had better straighten him out, Roy.

**April 10, 1979**

Mr. Speaker, we had a serious accident in the Wilkie constituency because we don't have a proper law in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, as one of the members opposite has stated, I was the president of the Home and School Association when this accident took place. I was in touch with the Highway Traffic Board . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, they most likely are. I asked for a representative to come out from the Highway Traffic Board and explain the law to the people in the Wilkie constituency. I got great promises from their department until the day of the meeting. Then one of the gentlemen from there phoned up and said, Mr. Garner, I'm sorry we can't come out. Politics are involved. Well when we start, Mr. Minister, in this Legislative Chamber, and the Government of Saskatchewan, putting politics ahead of children's lives, something is wrong.

What I am trying to do with the member for Indian Head-Wolseley to prevent accidents like this from happening again because I am concerned about the children in Saskatchewan.

I would like to quote to you, Mr. Speaker. The mover of the motion has already done so, but I would like to read it into the record once more. It's on page 6718 of The Vehicles Act.

The driver of a school bus equipped as provided by subsection 21 of section 123 shall, unless driving on a public highway with a posted limit of 55 kilometres per hour or less . . .

He doesn't have to have his lights flashing. Now, as the member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) had stated, (I'm from the country myself, a great rural way of life that some of the members opposite are missing) we have to have an amendment to The Vehicle Act to cover this because if people are going to be in such a rush, such a hurry, to get from point A to point B, and we have to sacrifice lives or accidents like this, then the system is wrong, very wrong . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Oh, the members opposite can make light of this. It's a very big joke. I defy any one of you to come out and carry a nine year old girl into the house, with wires sticking out of her legs. Do you still think that's a joke?

Now, all of a sudden, we have no smiles any more. Mr. Speaker, these things have to stop and we have to have a government that will listen to the people. Give us this amendment to The Vehicles act so that it doesn't matter where that school bus is parked, those lights are flashing and all traffic has to stop.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to quote from the Western Producer, February 1, 1979.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — That's not a good paper.

**MR. GARNER:** — Yes, it is a good paper. It happens to be one of the papers that I don't think the government controls.

Mr. MacMurchy said this section of the act refers to operating school buses in urban settings. In the opinion the safety committee, he said, stopping traffic in a city when school buses unload would create more hazards than it would cure. He said the safety feature is applied on highways where the speed is 90 or 100 kilometres per hour and the motorist is required to stop . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Their signs are excellent.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think we have to prove it anymore. I could read you the accident report. Maybe I should read you the accident report.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You said their signs are excellent. Why don't you read us the other one?

**MR. GARNER:** — I'll get to that. Just hang tough. I'll get to that.

Accident Report, February 14, 1978

At 3:35 p.m., after school was adjourned, a car hit a pedestrian and then collided head-on into a parked school bus, in the school zone. A nine-year-old girl was waling on Seventh Avenue to her school bus.

Oh, big joke again, by the members opposite. It's a big joke, a lot of talk.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — What would the flashing lights do in that case?

**MR. GARNER:** — The flashing lights were not flashing because they didn't have to be flashing.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — What if they were?

**MR. GARNER:** — Well, members opposite are not getting the point whatsoever, so there's not much point in continuing this, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know how else to express my very deep concerns about, not only just this accident, but other accidents. I can only add further that I and the members on this side of the House are very concerned about the safety of the children riding the school buses or getting on to the school buses in the province of Saskatchewan.

I would further like to say that it's been a pleasure to second the motion by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. Taylor).

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — How would you vote on seat belts?

**MR. GARNER:** — O.K., members are going to make jokes about seat belts . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order.

**MR. GARNER:** — O.K., Mr. Speaker, I'll take no more time then.

**MR. R.N. NELSON (Yorkton):** — Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak to this, I do so with some amazement, especially at the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, in presenting this resolution. As a teacher like him ( a conservative-style teacher) one would suppose that he should believe in homework, but the fact that he even presents this resolution tells me that it's very obvious his homework has not bee done. His speech shows even more that his homework has not been done.

I was very interested, particularly in his comments about seat belts, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to remind him and the other people on that side of a great debate that went on in this House over seat belts, sometime in the past.

**April 10, 1979**

The member for Swift Current (Mr. Ham) is quoted as saying, seat belts are a personal choice, and I'd like to read a little quote from what he said:

Swift Current MLA, Dennis Ham, said that the question of seat belt use should be a matter of personal choice and that the provincial government has no business forcing people to buckle up.

Further he said, 'We would suggest that we have a look at insurance rates, police costs, and the providing of medical care.'

Mr. Speaker, this comes from the Swift Current Sun of November 30, 1978.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to quote a few things from an interview that was held with the leader of that party over there with a fellow by the name of Drake McQue, Mr. Collver in that interview with Drake McQue, says, 'I happen to believe that Saskatchewanians are law abiding people. I believe also, in terms of something as personal as seat belts . . . whether you put one on, whether you are in the car by yourself. We are not talking about passengers in a car. We are talking about people who are in the automobile by themselves, as to whether they buckle up. I happen to believe that they should. But whether or not they should, the government should not tell them that they must. Surely people should be able to decide.'

I could go on quoting all sorts of other instances where the members opposite spoke in opposition to seat belts and never once, Mr. Speaker, did they insist or suggest that children should be buckled up. Never once! Never once did they suggest that there should be any changes in the act, that there should be seat belt arrangements for children in cars or any other suggestion.

Now, the member for Indian Head-Wolseley comes out in direct opposition to this. Mr. Speaker, this government is very concerned about children and about the children in those school buses. The two members who spoke tried to imply that there was a lack of concern here. Let me tell them, Mr. Speaker, that should one child even cut his finger in a school bus, we on this side would find it regrettable. That there should be serious accidents is of very great concern to every one of us over here and don't try to tell anybody in the public that we are not concerned.

But Mr. Speaker, there are 70,000 children in this province that travel 250,000 miles every day. If any one moves on the road — anyone — there is a potential for disaster there whether it is collision with another car, collision with other vehicles, railway crossing, or what have you, there is always a potential for disaster. And you cannot eliminate all causes or all possibilities of accidents. It is not possible.

But I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the minister and the people in the Department of Education, the minister and the people in the Highway Traffic Board are doing all in their power to reduce the accident rate and to improve safety provisions in the school buses.

I am rather amazed, too, that the member should go ahead and condemn the Government of Saskatchewan. Does he attempt to prove that conditions are worse in Saskatchewan than they are in any other province? Not at all, Mr. Speaker, not at all. He condemns, that's all. But by doing so, Mr. Speaker, since he has not proven that conditions are worse in other provinces than they are in Saskatchewan, he also

condemns the Progressive Conservative governments of Manitoba, Ontario, Alberta and all other ones across the country.

Mr. Speaker, the other jurisdictions, the other provinces across this country do not have an extensive driver education program. They don't have a school bus inspection program that's any better than ours. If it's as good. They don't have safety standards for vans that have been converted into school buses. So, Mr. Speaker, by his condemnation, the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, (Mr. Taylor) has also condemned the other provinces in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal more to say on this subject but the member for Saskatoon Centre (Mr. Mostoway) is pushing me to adjourn so I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly recessed from 5 until 7 p.m.