

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
May 15, 1981

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you, and to the Assembly, 27 grade 8 students from St. Pius X School here in Regina. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Sylvestre, who was here, I believe, the day before yesterday with a group of students. I want to welcome the students. I will be meeting with them for photographs and refreshments later.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to join the Minister of Education in extending a greeting to the students from St. Pius. I do that particularly because my son is among that group. It is good to see them. Many of them come over to our house quite often. I do hope that they enjoy their stay here and that they find it educational and very exciting.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Government Action on Inflation

MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Finance. We have been presenting proposals to you over the last couple of months. It is our view (and I think it is shared by many) that your programs are not in touch with economic realities today. Some economists are predicting anywhere from 25 per cent to 30 per cent interest rates by September or October. Would the Minister of Finance be prepared to call the session back in approximately September to bring in a new mini-budget to adjust the budget presented to this House last March, and bring that budget in touch with the realities of high inflation and high interest rates?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Speaker, the inflation rate went up again yesterday. It has been going up, and the statistics were released yesterday again showing that the high interest rate policy of the federal government is a bad policy. It is established, they say, with the intention of reducing inflation. If it is doing that, I find it very hard to be able to see it. That is obviously part of the problem. I am not going to say to the member opposite that I will call the House back on September 30. I don't call the House back in September. When the government decides that it is necessary to call a new session of the legislature, it will be announced in due course.

MR. LANE: — Perhaps, by way of supplementary, I should advise the Minister of Finance that the cost of living rate is up to a record 12.6 per cent. I realize Saskatoon

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and Regina are not at that level. Rates are predicted, in some quarters, to reach 25 to 30 per cent. Would the Minister of Finance not now be prepared to accept what the Premier says, that the province of Saskatchewan has a role to play in helping ease inflationary pressures, and to bring in a budget in September 1981 which reflects economic realities and brings significant tax reductions for the people of Saskatchewan to help them fight inflation and finally, gives some evidence to the people of Saskatchewan that the Government of Saskatchewan gives a damn for the people of this province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Speaker, I found it of some interest to read in the paper last night that the finance critic in the House of Commons for the Conservative Party has proposed to the federal government that they reintroduce his budget, on which the electorate of Canada threw the Conservative government out. If those are the kinds of policies the member opposite has in mind, I would say that is certainly not the way to go. Yes, I agree that the government does have a limited ability to cushion the impact of inflation on consumers and people in Saskatchewan. We've recognized that responsibility and that's why we have the lowest taxes and charges for low- and middle-income people in Canada, and the lowest sales tax in Canada, along with the province of Manitoba, and no medical and health insurance premiums, as they have in the three other provinces where their income tax rate is higher and they raise hundreds of millions of dollars through a tax on sick people and a tax on health. We already have recognized that we need to pass on the benefits of a buoyant prosperity to the people who live in this province and we have been doing that.

Guidelines for Consumers in Inflationary Times

MR. BIRKBECK: — I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Mr. Minister, as you're very well aware, we are attempting to express our concerns to the government opposite on behalf of the consumers of Saskatchewan. In light of the fact that the Minister of Finance is unprepared to take any initiatives or steps or even to consider a special standing committee of the legislature to deal with these economic problems, would the Minister of Consumer Affairs put together a proposal which would lay out very clear and succinct recommendations to the consumers of Saskatchewan to give them the necessary guidelines in these times which are drastically changing economically?

HON. MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Finance has indicated, this government in its fiscal policies has clearly demonstrated, in the overall package that has been presented to the people of Saskatchewan, that we are concerned and we are addressing the concerns of the consumers of this province. I want to say, in the area of consumer assistance, we have in place a substantial tax reduction in this budget. We have put together, in respect to the home-owners, a mortgage rebate program, a renters rebate program. We have put in place under our Crown corporations, which the opposition continually attack, the lowest rates for utilities across the country. We have put in place those policies which the people of Saskatchewan endorsed. We have put in place, as a government, a budget which has been endorsed by the business community of this province.

I think the steps that we have been taking are in the right direction. I think that we have

shown fiscal responsibility, unlike the Tory government of Ottawa, in the short-lived term that it had, and the subsequent Liberal government. I think that the people of Saskatchewan will endorse our policies, and we are heading in the right direction.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BIRKBECK: —Final supplementary. In light of the rhetoric that's just been indicated by the minister, Mr. Speaker, I was not asking for the minister to give us a revamp of the history of the government opposite. What I was asking was something very constructive and positive for the consumers. I was asking if you would sit down with your officials and work out guidelines for the consumers of Saskatchewan so that they will be very clear in their minds as to how they should go about borrowing practices, and how they should best manage their money in these tight fiscal times that we have today. Do you not see that as a reasonable suggestion and something that you could take into consideration?

HON. MR. KOSKIE: —Well, Mr. Speaker, we operate here with a continuity among departments throughout government. As a consequence, when we introduce a budget we address the particular problems as we see them and as are brought to our attention. This budget which we brought forward has been endorsed. This budget does meet the concerns of the people of Saskatchewan and, unlike the Tories who don't accept it, the people of Saskatchewan are.

Impact of Recent Election in France

MR. ANDREW: — Question to the Deputy Premier. A story out of Paris by American Press indicates that the newly elected Socialist Party in France will be putting a stop to the proposed 14 nuclear power plants. In view of the fact that France is one of the potential strong future buyers of Saskatchewan uranium, could the Attorney General advise to the impact that would have on the Saskatchewan production and the Saskatchewan market?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Speaker, I'll take notice of that question.

MR. ANDREW: —Supplementary question to the Minister of Mineral Resources.

MR. SPEAKER: —I'll allow a new question.

MR. ANDREW: —Could the minister advise the Assembly (with regard particularly to the Cluff Lake mine) how much emphasis his government is putting on the French market for the sale of the future production of the Amok mine?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Chairman, I think a question like "how much emphasis?" is very difficult to answer. Obviously, we have viewed France as a potential market for uranium and it is indeed, at this point, a market for Saskatchewan uranium from Cluff Lake. It is a market; it's there. I don't think it is viewed as any more important than any other significant nuclear market in the world.

MR. ANDREW: —What you're saying to us, Mr. Minister, is this: you aren't concerned about the stories coming out of France. You are not concerned that this, in fact, puts a cloud over the market of Saskatchewan uranium on the world market?

HON. MR. COWLEY: —I'm always concerned about stories coming out of anywhere, and obviously we'll take them into account. I hadn't read the article that the member refers to so I can't comment on it particularly, but obviously anything that happens anywhere that has an impact on the amount of uranium that's required is of interest, and may or may not be of particular concern to the Government of Saskatchewan and SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation).

Calling of Bill 52

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Attorney General. Mr. Attorney General, since this session is winding down either today or some time next week, I would like to ask you: is it your intention for this Assembly to leave, for six or eight months, the situation of children's rights as it is?

As the Attorney General is aware, there is a bill before this Assembly which has not been debated (it was a private member's bill — Bill 52), about which the government has not really made its position clear. It is a private member's bill, a non-political bill, and is a bill which has varying degrees of support on both sides of the Assembly (and I emphasize varying degrees.) I would like to ask you if you would consider calling the bill by leave today, and at least debate the merits of such, or is it your intention to leave children under the age of 14 with absolutely no rights before the law, for another six to eight months?

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I would certainly, as House leader, consider calling the bill for debate today by leave, if, by common agreement and consent, possible prorogation was in sight for today. I think that would make sense. I think if that, on the other hand, does not prove to be the case as events unfold and we go into next week, then it wouldn't make much sense to call it today, if it were obvious the time would be available next week. So that, I think, would probably depend upon the unfolding of the universe, as it does in its inevitable way, and we'll just have to take that as it comes.

As to the substance of the question by the hon. member, with respect to the bill, I should tell the member (as he knows; he is the author of the bill) what it proposes to do is to give the preference of the child regarding living with one parent or the other in a marital dispute the predominant consideration, before a judge. Our current law allows a child to testify his or her preference, whether to live with the mother or father, but it is but one of the considerations, as opposed to the predominant consideration. That is a major change. I have expressed to the member opposite my general personal sympathy toward the approach that he seeks to articulate in his bill. My lawyers do, too. However, we have now ongoing a full review by the law reform commission, which is in the midst of (I am advised, near completion) this specific issue. They hope by the fall of 1981. I'm being petitioned by my department people, accordingly, not to consent to this bill. They are unable, in the time that is remaining, to devise a new bill. What we ought to do is await the report of the law reform commission and work to proceed to resolve this problem this fall.

I know how strongly the member feels for a number of reasons (I agree that it is non-political), but I do think some of those reasons that I have just set out have some merit for the consideration of the members of this House.

MR. THATCHER: —A supplementary question to the Attorney General. Mr. Attorney General, I think I indicated "debate the bill". I said nothing about passage; I said "debate

the bill,” because this is the first we have heard from the government side, officially. My supplementary question to you then must be: will the Attorney General by leave call the bill? We will then debate the bill, and hear the government’s presentation. Or, is it the Attorney General’s intention to leave things to the law reform commission, leave things in the slow-moving bureaucracy, and, I repeat, leave children with no rights for another six to eight months, and probably, realistically, for a year? Does the Attorney General feel that this is a satisfactory situation, particularly when we lag so far behind, in this area, other province and almost every state in the United States?

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the hon. member’s assessment that the province of Saskatchewan lags behind in this area with respect to other provinces. Indeed, our amendment of 1978, which allowed the right for infants to be heard (children of tender years) in a custody dispute before a court, is only two years old and is still one of the few leading pieces of legislation in all of Canada. I cannot testify as to how that provision relates to provisions in various states of the United States of America. That I do not know. We may be behind in that sense.

Let me close by saying, on this particular supplementary question, that this is a major policy decision which the hon. member is urging upon the House. We are talking about children, in his bill, 10 years of age or over, who would have an automatic right to be heard in a very often, highly charged, emotional dispute between parents in the case of marital break-up. Now, that’s not to take away from what the policy is, but I think anyone would agree (it doesn’t take much analysis) that that is a situation which is ripe for manipulation of the child by one or both of the parents. That is the reason why the courts are currently given a degree of latitude and independence to try to bring some objectivity and reason, in the best interests of the child, to where the child should reside.

That is only a two-year-old amendment; it’s a new amendment. I’m not saying it’s perfect, and I’m not arguing against what the member is trying to move the law further along to. I’m only saying that his current bill is in the midst of a deliberation by the law reform commission. It seeks to amend the law that is only two years old; it seeks to hang a major policy decision for children who are 10 years of age and over. I think that obligates all of us to very carefully consider what we’re doing, if for nothing else, in the interest of the family.

MR. THATCHER: — Another supplementary to the Attorney General. I appreciate the rhetoric, but are you going to call the bill today or not? That is entirely at your discretion. Yes or no?

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I will repeat again my answer to the hon. member. I am prepared to consent to call the bill and have it debated, by leave, on the condition (I don’t mean it as a condition, but if we are proroguing today, and we’re stopping the clock and sitting this afternoon, or this evening, and have extra time to do that) . . . I would be prepared to have a full, wide-ranging debate with the hon. member. I think that is in order, if his House Leader and his caucus agrees.

If, however, we are not proroguing and are going to adjourn at the normal time of 1 p.m., it makes little sense for us to stand aside normal government business in order to deal with private member’s legislation, when there is a full opportunity, when and if we next convene on Tuesday. So I am prepared to definitely call it. If this is prorogation day (if I may put it that way), agreed to by the House Leader opposite, Mr. Taylor, and me, we are definitely prepared to call it, and definitely prepared to debate it, have a full

exchange of views. As the member knows privately, I even had my lawyers looking at new legislation which I could introduce which would try to mitigate some of the concerns that we have, and would go part of the way toward your concerns. He knows that we are working on them. I have seen a couple of the drafts. Who knows, we may be able to further advance those views? Yes. The answer is yes, subject to the developments of the day.

U.S. Antiballistic Missile System

MR. PREBBLE: — A question to the minister responsible for the emergency measures organization. The United States is rapidly working toward implementation of a new antiballistic missile system which is being established to defend existing U.S. nuclear missile silos close to the Saskatchewan and Manitoba border. This new plan is a special low altitude defence system plan, that would be programmed to intercept and explode oncoming Soviet missile warheads at low altitudes, with interception in some cases occurring over southern Saskatchewan.

My question is: because of the obvious danger such an antiballistic missile system would pose to southern Saskatchewan (especially the most southerly communities), in the event of any type of nuclear warhead exchange, would our government, through the emergency measures organization, investigate and take steps to express grave concern over this plan, before the United States gives final approval to a plan for the deployment of these missiles?

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared to have the emergency measures organization of the Department of Urban Affairs investigate this proposal that the hon. member makes.

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the United States has not given final approval to the low altitude defence missile system, but has substantially stepped up its research into this particular area. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is the short-range system that is a matter of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order. I wonder if the Chamber could come to order so we can complete the question and answer.

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — . . . implications in this particular area to the people of Saskatchewan, and it does require attention. As the hon. member knows, there are no governments in Canada, neither provincial nor federal, which have given any priority to this matter. I can inform the hon. member that on June 5, there is going to be a meeting in Ottawa of all the provinces dealing with emergency measures. As well, it is a federal-provincial conference called by Ottawa. I have not received the agenda so far. Hopefully, this matter may also be considered by all the provinces and the federal government.

MR. PREBBLE: — Supplementary. My understanding is that this new U.S. proposal compounds the existing hazards for Saskatchewan residents. First of all, it involves interception of Soviet missiles at low altitudes instead of high altitudes. Secondly, instead of simply intercepting an individual weapon system, it would involve setting up a series of nuclear explosions over, in some cases, communities in the most southerly part of our province with a view to completely taking out a Soviet missile before it hits the United States. Now, my question is whether our government, Mr. Speaker, could . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I am prepared to wait until we get order returned to the Chamber so the member can complete his supplementary. If the members want to waste the question period, I am prepared to . . . Order, order! Could I have order, please? If I can have order, we won't waste any more of the question period.

MR. PREBBLE: — Mr. Speaker, my question simply is whether our government could look at new steps to mobilize public opinion and awareness in Saskatchewan to this plan, and speak out against the continuing militarization of nuclear weapons along our border, and whether the governments could ask the federal government to take steps to oppose this type of planning in the future and give more attention to the question of civil defence on the prairies in the event of a nuclear war? There should be some balance between the high level of preparedness in the '60s, given the concerns which existed then, and the complete lack of preparedness now.

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — The concern which the hon. member expresses is a matter for all of us to be concerned about. Obviously, the members opposite don't seem to want to consider the matter as a serious problem from the way they are behaving. As I said, I share the concern of the hon. member. I share the concern about the build-up of nuclear weapons throughout the world. It is a matter which governments have to look at seriously. Our government, I must confess, has not turned its mind to this problem. I think it is fair to say that perhaps the situation is getting more serious. I believe that we should be looking at the matter more seriously because, in the event of a nuclear attack, there's no question that there would be serious radiation consequences to the people of Saskatchewan because of our location. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it's a matter which we are going to be considering. I hope that we can . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I wonder if we could have order in the Chamber. The Minister of Urban Affairs.

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — The hon. members know that, in the '60s, many people were expressing concern and creating consciousness, but in recent years there has not been very much attention given to the matter. As I indicated to the member earlier, there is a federal-provincial conference being organized by the emergency measures organization in the early part of June. It is possible that this item might be put on the agenda. I can assure the hon. member that it is my intention to raise the matter with the federal government which has the prime responsibility in the area of defence.

MR. LANE: — By way of supplementary, why would the minister be prepared to take such precipitous action on this pressing international problem and refuse to take any action to help the people of Saskatchewan fight inflation by refusing to give any tax savings or tax benefits to the people of this province?

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member presumably . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I wonder if we can have order. Each member has an idea as to the importance of his or her question. The member for Saskatoon-Sutherland apparently thinks his question is important. The member for Qu'Appelle apparently thinks his supplementary is important. I think we should give the same amount of attention to the member for Qu'Appelle's supplementary as we gave to the member for Saskatoon-Sutherland's supplementary.

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HON. MR. SMISHEK: — Presumably, the hon. member for Qu'Appelle asked a serious question. I intend to give him a serious answer and I hope that he will listen. As Minister of Urban Affairs, I can tell him that a number of measures announced in the budget speech will be administered by the Department of Urban Affairs to help the citizens of the province. I can tell him that through the various grant programs, including the property improvement grant, the rental rebate, the senior citizens' tax rebate, the grants to urban governments such as revenue sharing and community capital grants, individual home-owners will be relieved, on the average by \$496 as property owners from direct grants and assistance provided by the Government of Saskatchewan, as announced by the Minister of Finance. That's only part of it. There are other tax measures which were announced — income tax reductions — a whole host of new programs to assist people in the low income categories. In the housing area, new programs have been announced particularly to help people in the low income categories to provide decent housing, as well as housing which they can afford. I think those are substantial measures that we, as the Department of Urban Affairs, will be administering to assist the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — With regard to the priority question raised by the hon. member for Saskatoon, I think it is a serious issue and I can assure him and the House that we will be turning our minds to it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Retirement of Sergeant at Arms

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I should like to move, seconded by my colleague the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, Mr. Taylor, by leave of the Assembly:

That the members of this Assembly wish to record their deep appreciation for the distinguished and loyal service rendered by Mr. A.R. Ponto of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly as Sergeant at Arms from 1963 to 1965 and from 1971 to 1981.

Before I take my place, I should like to say very briefly, that as members will know, it is the intention of Mr. Ponto to retire at the conclusion of service at the end of this Legislative Assembly.

He has served the Assembly loyally for (if my mathematics are correct) 12 years in his capacity of Sergeant at Arms, a very distinguished and historic position in the place of parliamentary tradition and the parliamentary Chamber.

Mr. Ponto has been a man who has fulfilled a distinguished military career, as is obvious by the medals which he has on him during the course of official functions, as well as having fulfilled, in all respects, a very remarkable and notable community career.

Mrs. Ponto is in the Speaker's gallery today to commemorate this occasion. Perhaps, Mrs. Ponto, you might just stand to be acknowledged by members of the House. We

don't see you; we see Mr. Ponto.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — As members will know, it is the intention of Mr. Speaker to invite all of us to a tea to honor the important occasion, at 1 p.m. Perhaps Mr. Speaker will make the formal announcement, at his choosing this afternoon. At that time we can all extend our best wishes and thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Ponto for their years of service to the province of Saskatchewan. So thank you very much, sir, and the best of luck to you in your future years.

MR. SPEAKER: — Before asking if we have concluded the number of speakers on the resolution, I want to warn the Sergeant at Arms to stay around the Chamber — there may be a vote on this one. I also want to say that the tea is contingent upon the motion passing. In the event the motion doesn't pass, there will be no tea. Are there any further speakers on the motion? The member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the Attorney General and, indeed, offer congratulations, for a long and dedicated period of service to this Assembly, to Mr. Ponto. I'm sure that in the back-up position in many cases was Mrs. Ponto, and it's very nice to see her visiting our Chamber today.

Being a relative rookie in this House, compared to some of the other members, I haven't known Mr. Ponto as long as have some of the members in the House, but since I came in here in October 1978, we have gotten to know each other quite well. I appreciate what he does in the Chamber. I think at times, as we all know, his job is rather tough, because when the final authority comes, he is the man who must enforce order in here. I suppose there have been times when you've wondered whether you should rise from your chair or not. However, I think I speak on behalf of our opposition when I say that we have appreciated your efforts very much. I wish you and your wife a good retirement. I do hope that you find time to drop back and visit us here from time to time, and renew acquaintances. Thank you and have a very fine retirement.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the Deputy Premier and the House Leader for the Opposition in extending our congratulations and thanks to Mr. Ponto. I rise to thank Mr. Ponto for the service he has given to this legislature and to wish him well in his retirement, because Mr. Ponto is a constituent of mine. I hope that Mr. Ponto and I will be able to keep contact from time to time, and I do wish Mr. Ponto and Mrs. Ponto a very happy retirement.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

MR. SPEAKER: — I think I can conclude that's nemine contradicente.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cowley that Bill No. 104 — **An Act to amend The Election Act** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and by leave of the Assembly referred to a committee of the whole later this day.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Romanow that Bill No. 116 — **An Act to amend The Members of the Legislative Assembly Superannuation Act, 1979** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and by leave of the Assembly referred to a committee of the whole later this day.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 100 — An Act to amend The Cattle Marketing Voluntary Deductions Act

Section 1

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, the money that you're trying to confiscate, the money that you're trying to steal by making it legal (and any other derogatory terminology which could come to mind) is all producers' money that they contributed voluntarily into a fund. I would like the minister to put on record: why does the minister feel it necessary, when your department has already done so many wonderful and so many benevolent things to producers, to put through a bill to steal a mere \$90,000 or \$100,00 (and I would like the exact figure)? Why do you need that? Why can't you simply leave it where it is? You have a \$2 billion budget. Why must you extort, steal (everything else that goes along with it) this amount of money?

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for Thunder Creek will recall my second reading remarks. He will have noticed that when the changes were made in this legislation to The Cattle Marketing Voluntary Deductions Act by my colleague, now the Minister of Rural Affairs and the member for Saltcoats, that the fund which was in place there was not, by legislation, transferred to the new act and to the new committee. The amount in the fund at that time was \$90,000. The auditor froze that fund and it was not available for use by the present committee. All this legislation does is to unfreeze that fund so it's available for use by the committee that administers this fund today. If the hon. member wishes to oppose the unfreezing of \$90,000 to be made use of by the committee responsible for this program, then I leave that up to him.

MR. THATCHER: — There's no question that I oppose it. While you're on your feet, why don't you tell us who is on that committee and where they're from. I don't care about the names, tell us who the representatives are on that committee and what segment of the livestock industry they represent.

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, the current legislation provides for a committee to administer funds, made up of: two persons nominated by the

Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association; one person nominated by each of the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, the Saskatchewan Cattle Breeders' Association, the Saskatchewan Dairy Association, the Western Canadian Cow-Calf Association (Saskatchewan section), and two persons appointed by the minister. The present committee consists of Mr. Barry Andrew and Mr. Boyd Anderson of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association, Mr. Bill Marshall of the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, Mr. Frank Edenoste of the Saskatchewan Cattle Breeders' Association, Mr. Leo Fuhr of the Saskatchewan Dairy Association, Mr. Evans Thordarson of the Western Canadian Cow-Calf Association, Mr. Walter Jess of Speers and Mr. Bob May of the Department of Agriculture. These are the committee and they remain in place.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, in the present fund where you are going to put your \$90,000, what amount of money, on a yearly basis, goes in from government contributions?

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — This is a checkoff of the cattle sold. There is no money which goes to this fund from the provincial government. It comes from the voluntary deductions.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, if this is all producers' own money which is voluntarily contributed, tell me why you are making appointments to that board? It is the producers' money. Why don't you leave it to the producers to spend the money as they see fit? I have no quarrel with the people who have been listed. The two from the SSGA (Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association) are capable people. Frank Edenoste is an excellent choice.

I note, with amusement, the Saskatchewan section of the Western Cow-Calf Association. I am wondering whether their membership has reached 35. The last I heard, they only had 27 paid-up ones. I understand their objective is 50 for this year. I question the choice of Mr. Thordarson because he is an individual and I don't think they are a viable group. Someday they may be, but they are not. The two I take exception to are your appointments.

Bob May is a public servant. He may be a very capable civil servant or may not be. I don't know. But the producers need Mr. May's input into the board about as much as they need two heads. They don't need a public servant, whether it is Mr. May or anybody else from the public service, on that board to tell them how to spend their money. We were doing a pretty good job with the checkoff money on a national basis until the big brother hand of the Saskatchewan NDP government decided to impose its benevolence upon us. The people who are on this board now (and were previously) are quite capable of spending their own money very adequately. I don't know why we need the likes of Mr. May (and I don't mean that on a personal basis) or any public officials sitting on that board to put forward the ideas of the extremely politicized Department of Agriculture. The Department of Agriculture doesn't make a move unless that move is in the interest of the New Democratic Party. I don't know why we have to have two appointments from the minister. I don't know the other gentleman, Mr. Jess.

AN HON. MEMBER: — He is a good guy.

MR. THATCHER: — I am sure he is. Whose campaign did he manage in the last . . . That would be facetious, and I will restrain myself from that. We don't need your appointments, Mr. Minister. The \$90,000 was producers' money which is in the fund

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already. You bet I oppose, and we oppose on this side of the House, the setting up of this board. We say the producers can look after the funds very adequately without the heavy hand of big brother New Democratic government.

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, the amendments which are before us deal with the unfreezing of the fund and do not deal with the committee which is to administer the funds. The committee which I outlined is in accordance with the provisions of the legislation which was debated in this Assembly in 1978 and subsequently passed by this Assembly. I agree with the hon. member that the committee is an excellent committee. I might say to the hon. member we had some thoughts and discussions, with respect to the administration of this fund relating to the stabilization board. We made a decision after the discussions and after consideration to leave the committee in place and the fund and the operation of the fund separate from the stabilization plan, because of the work that it's been doing.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, this bill is part of the overall framework of why the livestock industry and the cattle industry distrusts your government. You simply cannot leave them alone. I suppose it's their independent spirit that is an annoyance to you, an irritant to you, but you just don't seem to be able to leave them alone. I don't really think that it's your government's intention to do long-term harm toward the industry, but I believe producers all around this province are suspicious of government because, basically, governments — whether we are talking the Trudeau government, the Blakeney government, or others — inherently, with their bureaucracy, are incompetent and don't do a good job of looking after their business.

I point to the herd maintenance program very briefly to make this point. Is there anybody in this Assembly who will say that the herd maintenance program was successful? Does anybody want to stand up and say that was a good, well-run program that really did a job? No way — nobody is going to, not even the member for Morse. I'm glad to see that a minister of the Crown stood up to endorse the Eugene Whelan-Hazen Argue mismatch.

Mr. Minister, at the risk of repeating myself, I suggest that your government should get out of this whole area. We need a checkoff fund. When we had it, in its former form, going to the Canadian Cattlemen's Association for the promotion of beef, the money was used better than it has been by government. Mr. Minister, you know in the make-up of this board, the legislation gives a preponderance of authority to the two individuals you appoint. Whether it reads that way, the use of an "if" or an "and" gives you complete control over this money. We object to that part violently. That money comes voluntarily from cattlemen when they market their cattle. When those funds went to our national association, we think the interests of the cattlemen were served better than they are now. Some places this money is used now are questionable in respect to their value to the beef industry — very questionable. We knew what the function was before. The function was to promote the increased consumption of beef by Canadian consumers.

It's interesting, Mr. Minister, when you took over this fund and removed it from its original purpose, the beef consumption in this country was well over 100 pounds per capita. You know, since we had the incursions of politicians into our business with this fund, it is interesting to note the per capita beef consumption dropped about 20 lbs.

Is that the kind of job that your agencies are going to do for us? Is this typical? I suggest to you that it is. And I suggest to you that you drop this bill, leave that \$90,000 and invest it well. After the election this fall, when some degree of common sense returns to

that side of the House, we can return that money where it belongs, into producer control. I ask you to drop this bill. You don't need that money. It is producers' money. Leave it; preferably drop the entire board and the concept.

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, I make two points. I will be glad to inform Mr. Barry Andrew, Mr. Boyd Anderson, Mr. Bill Marshall, Mr. Frank Edenoste, Mr. Leo Fuhr, Mr. Evans Thordarson and Mr. Walter Jess that the hon. member for Thunder Creek and all hon. members opposite say that Bob May is running them. I'll be glad to inform them, because that is what the hon. member said — that they can't, as a committee, collectively decide the best use of these moneys.

Mr. Chairman, If there were any other way of freeing up the \$90,000, other than the legislative route, to make it available for the use of this committee to spend as they see fit, then we would have done it. There is no other way than the legislative route to make this \$90,000 available to the committee and therefore the legislation. We intend to proceed with the legislation, based on the advice we were given legally and, if the hon. members opposite wish to oppose the freeing up of the \$90,000, making it available to the committee (because as the hon. member for Thunder Creek attempts to imply they are not capable of making decisions of this nature because they are dominated by a staff person of the Department of Agriculture), then I think we will let them know that.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, most of the names that you have put out, I've been to bull sales with. I have roped with them. I don't know how many things I have done with them. Mr. Marshall's career within the wheat pool doesn't . . . Well, you know very well he is a person of unquestioned ability and integrity. Thordarson, I may disagree with philosophically, but he is a capable individual within the framework of his own views.

If you are going to quote me, Mr. Minister, at least do it accurately. What I am saying is that you should turn everything over to these people. Give them total control. Get your government people off that board. Let these people that represent an association or some segment of producers or whatever — let them control it all. Don't you misquote me by saying that I'm saying these people haven't got ability. I know most of them better than you, far better, and they have ability. I was talking about ability. That is a word you would not understand, something you have really never been associated with. So when you are out of your league, why don't you simply remain silent, because your contribution, when you do have the floor is usually so negligible that . . .

Again, if you are going to quote me, quote me accurately. I say very clearly, get rid of your government types and turn all of the money — this \$90,000 — over to those people. I am saying quite the reverse. Get the government people out of there. Put that money where it belongs and let the producers, the proper people who should be spending this money, spend it free of political interference such as from your department.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, in 1978 you moved a bill in this House to give the veto power to the minister (at that time it was Mr. Kaeding) over the final decisions of an existing board, one which had existed for a long time previously. The difference between the bill you brought in in 1978 and what existed before (be it by bill or by practice, take your choice) was that the board in place made the decision; the minister did not have veto power. At least he never did it before, and the current custom has developed such that the board made the decision, and that's how the money was spent. The minister did not interfere. In 1978, you brought in a change that allowed the minister to have the final say. Am I correct in that statement?

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HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, I don't know all of the history, but I understand that the principle to which the hon. member refers has always been there. The principle (as he described it) of veto power, in my time dealing with this legislation, has been that the board has always made the decisions. I think they are competent in making the decisions. I've left those decisions to them. Mr. Bob May is with me now. I think that Mr. Bob May makes a valuable contribution to that board. I think the hon. member for Rosthern would agree to that.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, yes, part of what you say is correct; the board does make valuable decisions. But the point is, Mr. Minister, prior to the 1978 bill, which legalized or changed a custom which had always existed, the cattle checkoff board had made the decision where the money would be spent. They made the decisions, and it became an automatic thing after that. There were members of your department on that committee giving assistance. In fact, I think Ernie was the name of the fellow that used to be there before. Bob May, Ernie Spencer had many good contributions, I am told.

The point is that the majority of the producers, the majority of those putting the funds in, made the final decision. They made the final decision. The minister did not put his sticky fingers in it by saying, "No, that can't go through." It was just automatic.

During the time Mr. Kaeding was the minister of agriculture, something changed. He changed the procedure by saying no to some particular amount of money that was being allotted. If I remember, the case regarded the cattlemen's information centre out of Ontario, into which we paid a portion, the same as your government pays a portion into the Yellowhead Route, or the same as your government pays portions into many other national associations promoting something that we have some interest in.

That being the case, am I incorrect when I state that that's the first time the Minister of Agriculture interfered, and the board was not left autonomous?

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — I'm trying to be, Mr. Chairman, in a position to respond to the point the hon. member is attempting to make. I don't think the legislation, in terms of legislative power, has changed from before to now.

The hon. member says that there was a change in custom, that the custom was always that matters were left to the board or the committee administering the fund. He says that the break in the custom occurs when the Minister of Agriculture interprets, as he did in one case, the direction of the fund. There has, in that sense, been a break in the custom, according to his interpretation of the allocation of the funds.

MR. KATZMAN: — That's the point we are arguing. There is one simple solution to this, which nobody has talked about: we should handle that \$90,000 plus interest that has been sitting in the fund by the old method rather than by the new method. It's the same act, but let's back up a step and suggest that the fund could be used under the old method. Have you checked to see if the auditor, or whoever is freezing the funds, has indicated whether, if done under the old concept, before the 1978 bill, these funds can be released to be used by the producers for the benefit of producers in the way they so choose? Have you got a ruling on that type of discussion?

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — I don't follow the hon. member. It's \$90,000 frozen, and to unfreeze it we have to legislate the thaw, according to what all the legal advice is and what the auditor says. The only committee in place now is the legislated committee,

representation of names I brought before the Assembly. So they are the committee to discharge the funds.

MR. KATZMAN: — The committee that existed when this money was put in the account should still have the authority, under law, to spend it. The new committee may not have (and you may be right there), but the old committee, which existed prior to the time of the change, should still have the authority to use those funds. Therefore, you may have to go back to that committee to allow them to disperse the funds under the old rules, making this bill unnecessary. Therefore, the producers should be allowed to use the funds in a method of their choice, without the interference of the government.

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, our legal advice says that that's not possible. The legal advice says it must be possible to distribute the moneys, and that they should be distributed through the existing committee. This is the same representation as the previous legislation. The only change was that the consumer representative was moved out, and the Western Canada Cow-Calf Association was brought in. I am sure the hon. member would not disagree with that.

Our legal advice (and we have to base it on legal advice and the advice of the auditor) is that we have to legislate the fund, to make it free for the committee to distribute.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could indicate to the committee if he feels that it was a fair basis to transfer the funds which existed in the original checkoff fund to the new plan? If so, could you give us some reason for your supporting that particular change of the funds over to the new one?

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, obviously what happened, when the 1978 legislation was drafted, was that somebody missed the cog or the fund would have been transferred as part of the 1978 legislation. The auditor identified the problem; the legislation wasn't complete in terms of handling the fund. He therefore closed it. After a couple of years of searching as to how that could be accommodated, it was said that it has to be by legislation — hence, the legislation.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Chairman, we'll just move back to that question in a few moments. I wonder if I might have leave of the committee to introduce a group of students to the Assembly?

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. BIRKBECK: — I would like to introduce to you, Mr. Chairman,, and to the other members of the Assembly, a group of grade 5 students. They're seated in the Speaker's gallery. They're from the Whitewood School in my riding. They're here, of course, to visit the legislature. I'm sure that they have a busy and full schedule for the balance of the afternoon. They are 23 in number. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Santo, the principal, Mr. Russell Hamilton, parent, Mrs. Bouton, and the bus driver, Mr. White. The itinerary for the visiting students is to be here until approximately 11:30. They will be meeting with me in the rotunda area for pictures at approximately noon. Then they will meet with me in the members' dining hall for questioning and refreshments.

I would want to take the opportunity to advise the students in the Speaker's gallery that

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what we are doing now is a committee of the legislature. As you will note, the Speaker is not in his chair. The chairman is in his place. We're in what we call the committee of the whole. We are in the process of discussing a voluntary checkoff bill as it relates to the cattle industry. With those few words, I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming the students here this afternoon and in wishing them a good afternoon and a safe trip home. I appreciate your being here and I look forward to meeting with you later this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 100 (continued)

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, you didn't answer the one question which I asked before. Did you or did you not check with your legal solicitors? By allowing the board which existed prior to the new legislation (the '78 legislation) . . . if the funds were turned over to that board, I believe it would have the authority and the right to spend them under the old rules. They cannot be turned over to the new system because the authorization is not there, as the auditor and other people have said. The difference between the two systems is that in the one system, it is very precise that the Minister of Agriculture (and now with this particular bill, also the deputy minister) will have the authority over the account and the final decision. Under the old system, and by custom and practice, which is defined by law to be a law in itself . . . If you talk to some young lawyers who are going to university, they will give you a long speech about daughters and mothers, and all the rest of this. That's how custom and usage is just as good a law as written law.

With that particular argument I suggest that the former board has the right to take that \$90,000 plus interest and put it into any particular program, events, or whatever they think will help the industry. We don't need this bill. The difference between this bill and what I am suggesting is giving the deputy minister control of the money. That is the whole difference we are discussing. I say we don't need the bill. Allow the old board which had a consumer on it (as you indicate) to decide how the money should be spent for the betterment of the producer. It is producer money. The minister should be left out of the picture, other than signing the cheque or whatever procedure is involved there. The old board should have the authority. That is why it is tied up. When you moved it over you didn't take the authority with you. Have you had that legal opinion, or are you just guessing?

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, the legal opinion is that in order to do what the hon. member wants to do we would have to have an amendment in this act. That's the legal opinion. So, we would be debating an amendment in this act to give the old board power.

Additionally, Mr. Chairman, and I say this sincerely, the hon. member for Rosthern is saying, "I don't have confidence in this existing board to make proper use of the \$90,000. I don't want to agree with this amendment, but I would agree with another amendment to establish the old board to spend the \$90,000." I think we would be debating the amendment one way or the other, according to the legal advice we're given. We think this is the most sensible one.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, you are developing the habit of the Attorney General of

twisting words. The facts are that there is no dispute against this group of people. The whole difference is in the control the minister and deputy minister will have. That's what it's all about.

Under the old system the board made the decision; the minister was not to interfere. The former minister did interfere and that was what started the problems. Then you brought in the 1978 legislation to allow the former minister to interfere as he so wished. The fact is, you people didn't have the confidence in the producers — not us. You are the people who put the veto power in the hands of the minister and deputy minister. When former persons sat on the committee they made their decisions with a member for the Department of Agriculture who gave them advice and made suggestions. The veto power was not there until the former minister put his big foot in it and said, "I want veto; I'm not letting you spend the money where you want to spend it."

That's what we're talking about. Now, you're trying to say that the \$90,000 the old board left in the bank at the time should be under the control of the minister. We're not even talking about the competence of the board because everyone on both this board is, and the former board was, very capable. Some on this board were on the old board.

The only different animal in the thing is your minister and deputy minister. We're saying to you that the trust should be put in the hands of the producers who put the funds in the kitty. Those producers should make the decisions. We said that in 1978 when you . . . we spoke against the bill you brought in then. We said the producers should have the right; the government should keep its fingers out of it. The minister should keep his fingers out of it and let the producers decide when to spend their money.

That is not what you fellows are doing. That's not what this amendment does. You are now taking in another member of the government to have another bit to say over the producer who put the money there in the first place. It's a voluntary checkoff fund. You mark either yes or no, when you go to the stockyards and sell you cattle, for some of you city members.

When I go to the stockyards I mark yes or no. That puts the money in the fund and the board makes the decision. It shouldn't be the Minister of Agriculture who makes the decision. It should be the producer. He is putting the money in there. It's what is best for the producer that we are talking about, not what is better for the Minister of Agriculture. That seems to be your attitude.

MR. GARNER: — Looking it over very closely, Mr. Minister, it is quite obvious that you're taking the powers from the Minister of Finance. Now, instead of giving it to the minister or to the cabinet, you are going to start throwing some powers out to the deputy ministers. Let's just regulate the cowboys some more; let's just control them some more. I'll point it out to you — section 6(1):

The Minister of Finance shall establish a trust fund to be called The Cattle Marketing Voluntary Deductions Act trust fund in a chartered bank or credit union.

Now, we go to the amendment, Mr. Minister — section 2, clause 5:

The deputy minister of agriculture is deemed to have authority and control over the special trust account established pursuant to section 6 of The Cattle Marketing Voluntary Deductions Act, 1970, as it existed on July 31,

1978, and shall transfer the assets and liabilities of the special trust account into the fund, and upon completion of the transfer, the special trust account is terminated.

So you are just taking (correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Minister) the power away from the Minister of Finance and giving it to the deputy minister. When are you going to quit regulating and quit asking for control and authority over the cattle producers in Saskatchewan? When are you going to get off their backs? Governments are there to assist and help, not control, an authority. Then you wonder why they doubt your stabilization plan. Of course they doubt it because they can see another amendment coming down later on, where you take a little more control, a little more authority, and it's no wonder that the cattlemen in Saskatchewan not only do not trust you, but now they won't even be trusting the deputy minister. Whom are they going to go to when they have problems? When they have a problem, what happens? They get controlled some more. Mr. Minister, you know it's wrong. That is the truth. You're taking the power from the Minister of Finance and giving it to the deputy minister, who next year, in another amendment — who knows? When are you going to start trusting the people to handle their own money? That's the key to it.

You birds have to grab it, control it and maintain it. So to try to ease things, you take the power away from the Minister of Finance and give it to the deputy minister of agriculture. Are you going to start giving the secretaries in your department power next? It's wrong. That's why the cattle producers in Saskatchewan don't trust you. They never have, and this surely isn't going to help improve any trust or relationship. They cannot trust your government, Mr. Minister.

That's why we voted against the stabilization bill; there is not trust between the cattle producers and the NDP government in Saskatchewan.

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — I note that the hon. members opposite are having an awful time struggling with the stabilization act and the stabilization plan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It seems to be getting into every debate here, including this debate.

Mr. Chairman, the simple facts of the bill are that we have a frozen fund of \$90,000, and we want to turn it over to a committee to be spent. Our legal advice is that this is the way to do that. Now, the hon. members say that we shouldn't do it at all, that we should leave that \$90,000 frozen, and not turn it over to the committee for the use of the committee. I find that very difficult to accept, because that's what the bill does.

They can talk about all of the powers of the minister, and all the powers of the deputy minister, and all the politics of the minister, and all the politics of all the staff of the Department of Agriculture, but what this bill does is unfreeze \$90,000 to be spent on behalf of the farmers, on behalf of the beef industry; it's farmers' money. If the hon. member wishes to oppose it — fine. But I think the opposition's arguments are not strong in terms of dealing with this particular piece of legislation.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, I think it is fair to say that we know where you stand on the question of the cattle industry. You are a politician and you represent a philosophy. You are in charge of the department. When we say we don't trust you, I want to make it clear that we don't trust your government. When we say you (sometimes my colleague and I slip), we are not talking about you personally; we are talking about your government. Every cattleman out there knows we can't trust your philosophy or your government.

Mr. Minister, as you present Bill 100, you use the term “deputy.” Now, normally deputies are impartial. Your deputy isn’t impartial. Your deputy is not immune from political criticism in this Assembly, because he has thrown that immunity aside by his own choice. Your deputy, as have several of his predecessors, entered the political arena of debate. The moment one does that, if he is a public servant, he is wide open and fair game. We make no bones about it; there’s no question about it. After the fall election and you are not there any longer, deputies, who have made the choice to enter the political arena of debate, and have discarded their normal immunity from criticism, have a very bleak future with a Conservative government. Make no mistake about that. I am not saying anything shocking.

You brought your deputy into the debate on Bill 100. The deputy minister is normally impartial. You introduced this bill saying your deputy minister will run the debate. This is a deputy minister who is a partisan (in our view) politician, who put forward an NDP philosophy; this is a deputy minister who sent out internal documents, instructing Department of Agriculture employees to further and promote the overriding NDP philosophy toward agriculture — orderly marketing. Knowing full well this deputy minister’s personal philosophy, and the philosophy he put forward to everyone in his department by personal memo, you expect that he will impartially use the cattlemen’s money? Every cattleman knows that if your deputy had his way, they would be under an ironclad marketing board.

I agree that something must be done with this \$90,000, but not in the fashion that you are proposing in this bill. The livestock industry does not trust your deputy to be impartial. You will get up in a moment and kick the blazes out of me for attacking a public servant; go to it, and we’ll have a debate all day about that. I make no apology, because your deputy (by his own free will, I assume) lost his immunity from criticism the moment he jumped into the political arena of debate. Get up and kick me, and we’ll go all day on the subject.

Mr. Minister, the livestock industry would much sooner, I believe, see this money stay where it is. At the very least, if we are going to proceed with this bill, I would like to ask the minister if he would delete amendment 5 under section 2. Then we could perhaps support the bill.

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member knows that the deputy minister is the administrative head of the Department of Agriculture. He may disagree with our appointment of a deputy minister. He probably disagrees with my appointment as the Minister of Agriculture. Fine. But that’s not his decision to make; it’s our decision to make as a government, and we have made it. We are convinced that the deputy minister is doing an outstanding job for agriculture in Saskatchewan. I’m not going to argue that. I only make the point that since he is the administrative head of the Department of Agriculture, legally he assumes responsibility to make sure that the funds which are frozen are transferred to be available for use by the committee. That’s what the bill does. It says: “You, sir, are responsible to make sure that that money is transferred. As soon as it is transferred, the special trust account is terminated and the money is available to be spent by the committee.”

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, responding to your initial comment, I think I welcomed your appointment as Minister of Agriculture. I don’t know whether I ever said it publicly, but I think you are a pretty good Minister of Agriculture as such. But you are also a

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politician and I know where you stand. But that's just fair game; you know where I stand. I say none of this disparagingly.

Mr. Minister, it is the philosophy of your government that we disagree with in the cattle business. We don't trust your government. We don't trust your philosophy. We don't think that you should be involved in the spending of the cattle industry's own money. I object to the guise of neutrality that you give your deputy, this kind of what you term authority and control over the special trust account. Your deputy minister is committed, in his own hand and in his own internal memos, to having the Department of Agriculture promote and enunciate the philosophy of the New Democratic Party on agriculture.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Why not?

MR. THATCHER: — Because the role of a deputy minister is certainly to perform the task that his minister instructs him to do. I cannot believe that there were very many deputies in the public service who would take a directive from their minister and circulate an internal memo in their department which would instruct employees, department heads and field staff to promote a certain ideological concept. I can't believe very many deputies would do it in that form. They may say that the minister has ordered me to say this, or that, or this. But I can't believe very many deputies would take an order from their minister and put out a memo such as the deputy minister of agriculture did.

As I have said many times before, when he did that and when the document became public, he became an NDP partisan politician and fair game here or anywhere else in the Assembly. I doubt very much if the Attorney General's deputy minister would have circulated a memo like that. I'm quite sure Mr. Goose wouldn't do that. I don't think Mr. Douglas would do that. I don't think Tom Gentles in highways would do it; in fact, I'm sure that he wouldn't. But certainly you get these partisan deputy ministers in agriculture. They're dangerous because they set a precedent. Look at the member for Regina Lakeview. There is the gentleman who finally got out from under the guise of the public service commission and got into the Assembly where we could talk to him. Talking about precedents, you're the one who established that; you're the one who took one of the most prestigious posts in the public service and turned it into a political gamesmanship role.

Mr. Minister, we have spent too much time on this already. We're going to oppose this. I hope you'll reconsider. This is producers' own money. Mr. Minister, with the make-up of this board that you have with your appointments and the role of your deputy minister that you're describing ("authority control over the special trust account") were there government funds in this, then yes, you would have justification for what you're doing. I want to say categorically that we oppose this government control over what is exclusively producers' own funds.

I hope you will have second thoughts about that. In many ways, what you are doing is really very contradictory to the traditional forms of democracy. I agree where there are government funds, certainly there should be government input — maybe even some government control. But this is producers' own money, voluntarily given, and I ask you to have second thoughts about this. I'm all done.

Section 1 agreed on the following recorded division:

YEAS — 35

Pepper
Smishek
McArthur
MacMurchy
Vickar
Dyck
Engel
Cowley
Matsalla
Johnson
Nelson
Chapman

Kaeding
Tchorzewski
Gross
Mostoway
Hammersmith
Thompson
Feschuk
Cody
Shillington
Lingenfelter
White
Miner

Romanow
Baker
Rolfes
Banda
Kowalchuk
MacAuley
Byers
Koskie
Prebble
Long
Solomon

NAYS — 14

Berntson
Duncan
Rousseau
Katzman
McLeod

Thatcher
Lane
Swan
Garner
Ham

Birkbeck
Taylor
Pickering
Andrew

Section 2

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, on this bill, is there any thought you could delay this for six months or something, or give it sufficient time to get a legal opinion to allow us to do it the other way? This would mean the former producers, who were on the former board, would get to choose to spend the money. I don't believe you have an interpretation that says the old board, which was in existence prior to 1978, couldn't take the money to do as it pleased under the old rules.

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, in response to the hon. member we have been researching this in a legal way for over a year. This is the conclusion, the legislation which is before us.

MR. KATZMAN: — Well, I assume your researching was not along the lines of letting the old board handle it; everything was about getting that doggone political deputy minister to be able to handle it, rather than allowing the old board to handle it. That's what we want to see.

Section 2 agreed.

Section 3 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill, on division.

Bill No. 113 — An Act to amend The Agricultural Implements act**Section 1**

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HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, during committee of the whole last evening I indicated to the hon. member for Qu'Appelle, the hon. member for Rosetown-Elrose, that I would phone the Saskatchewan-Manitoba Implements Dealers' Association. The phone call was placed this morning to Mr. Truman Smith, secretary-manager of the association, to ask him about the issues raised here in the Assembly. He reported that he had received no such complaints from any of the dealers of the association and that as far as the association was concerned, they are satisfied with the legislation that is before us.

MR. SWAN: — What you are saying then, Mr. Minister, is that the implement dealers feel they will not be unnecessarily hindered by any additional charges from the company. Is that the essence of what you are saying?

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Chairman, I report what Mr. Truman Smith said. I think one can imply from what he has said, that as the secretary-manager he has had no such complaint from any of the dealers in the association, and so far as he is concerned and the association therefore is concerned, they are satisfied with the bill.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Minister, I think that all of us appreciate some change in this bill coming forward because of the concern raised by the court case. You have made an indication before that you are willing to go partway to help the farmers there and I hope that once this bill is in place that will indeed happen before too much time lapses. A number of these young people are in trouble because of the court cases that are being held. Now, with those few comments, our caucus is in agreement that we will support the bill.

Section 1 agreed.

Sections 2 to 6 inclusive agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

Bill No. 104 — An Act to amend The Election Act

Sections 1 to 16 inclusive agreed.

Section 17

MR. LANE: — Why do we need the provision? I know that the NDP in the last election had its candidates' representatives identified at the polling station. I always felt that if the candidate knew who his representatives were it wasn't necessary. I frankly don't agree with the section. It's kind of like Tammany Hall politics. That's what they used to require. In the old days of Tammany Hall the representatives were required to wear an identification so they could keep track of the voters. So I ask the minister why we break with a long-standing principle to endorse an activity which started, after 25 years, in the last election, and why are we now enshrining it in the law?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Well, I'm told that the reason for it is because some political parties are using colored tags (and I'm sure the member is aware of it) to identify their scrutineers from other people's scrutineers. The chief electoral officer tells me that he had a couple of complaints about it. The federal act allows for a white tag to be worn. The provision here is a white tag with only the person's name on it, if indeed the

organization wants to have them. Otherwise no one has to have a tag on.

It's permissible legislation, not a requirement. That's the rationale for it. I don't feel particularly strongly about it. The recommendation came out of the chief electoral office because they had had a couple of difficulties. It's not a big problem, and this seemed to be a way to solve it.

MR. LANE: — Where did the problems arise?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — North-West and the by-election in Estevan. In North-West the complaint was from the Conservative organization with respect to the NDP using pink tags. I don't know why that would be thought to be identifying a political party particularly, but in any event that was the complaint. In Estevan the complaint was from the Liberals that the NDP were wearing orange tags which were close to their party colors. The chief electoral officer asked the party to desist from using an orange tag. This seemed to be a way to solve the problem. The person's name on a white tag obviously doesn't identify a political party. The objection seemed to be that the people were identified politically because of what they were wearing. The member for Kinistino at this rate won't be able to wear his orange suit on election day.

MR. LANE: — Well, there should be a law on that anyway. The way that the section reads is that there is no prohibition about putting the party affiliation under the name. The way it reads, is that the representative's name, printed in black ink, that tag must not resemble or display any campaign literature or emblem, ensign, badge, lapel, etc., that could be taken as an indication of support of a candidate or political party or group.

I come back to the basic question again: Why should we allow any candidate's representatives to be identified?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — I don't know how you run campaigns, but from my experience you often have people from outside the poll working as outside scrutineers. They may know who the inside scrutineer is, but they perhaps haven't met the individual. It's a convenience for political parties. I don't think it is anything more than that. That would be the rationale. It is just a convenience so that then you walk in and you're looking for Gary Lane who is the inside scrutineer, there's the guy with the Gary Lane tag on and if you've never met him before, you're able to identify him. The other option, of course, is simply to ask, "Who is Gary Lane?" (of the three or four people sitting there). Anyway, that's the reason for it.

MR. LANE: — Under other provisions of the act, the scrutineer's papers are filed and it is very easy for any outside scrutineer to merely ask the poll clerk who the representative is. That is without any identification.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Chairman, I don't feel very strongly about this. If this is going to hold up the bill, I am quite prepared to drop the provision. If the Clerk will advise me how to do that without having the bill defeated, which I presume is to put in an amendment deleting section 17 and renumbering all the other sections from 18 to 27 (as whatever) . . . So if you will give us a couple of minutes, we'll get the amendment and do that. I understand we're not in a big rush right now anyway, so everybody can have a cup of coffee.

I have an amendment to offer, seconded by my colleague, the member for Kinistino,

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which reads as follows:

Strike out section 17 of the printed bill and renumber sections 18 to 28 as sections 17 to 27 respectively.

Motion agreed to.

Section 17 agreed.

Section 18 as amended agreed.

Sections 19 to 25 inclusive agreed.

Section 26 as amended agreed.

Section 27 agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended.

Bill No. 117 — An Act to amend the Statute Law

Section 1 to 2 inclusive agreed.

Section 3

MR. LANE: — Could you explain section 3(7)?

HON. MR. KOSKIE: — It is just a matter of relettering. Apparently there was some improper lettering under the revision and as a consequence that has been corrected. Accordingly, you end up with the (d) and (e) items instead of (e) and (g).

MR. LANE: — Would you be a little more specific?

HON. MR. KOSKIE: — In the revision it goes (a), (b), (c), (e), (g) and so that has been corrected.

Section 3 agreed.

Sections 4 to 9 inclusive agreed.

Section 10 as amended agreed.

Sections 11 to 37 inclusive agreed.

Section 38 as amended agreed.

Sections 39 to 54 inclusive agreed.

Section 55 as amended agreed.

Sections 56 to 60 inclusive agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended.

Bill No. 116 — An Act to amend The Members of the Legislative Assembly Superannuation Act, 1979

Sections 1 and 2 agreed.

Section 3

MR. LANE: — Okay. Would you explain the effect of section 3, please.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — This just makes clear that the additional contribution of 2 per cent and 4 per cent in the money purchase plan, by the employer, is paid to members who elect to transfer to the new plan after April 1, if you were between 40 and 50 and over 50. This was a provision in the money accumulation plan, which was brought in two years ago, whereby the contributions are 9 per cent by the member and 9 per cent by the government. If the member is under 40 and between 40 and 50, it's nine by the member and 11 by the government. If he's elected when he's over 50, it's nine by the member and 13 by the government. The rationale for that, at that time, was that when an older member is elected, with the money accumulation plan, the money doesn't have as much time to accumulate. That was the rationale at the time. That is the provision. This is simply to clarify it. The policy has not changed.

MR. LANE: — In fact, you're better off waiting until you're over 50 to get elected.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Well, no, I don't think that's the case because your contributions will not grow very rapidly if you're 53 and you're in there for four years and take your pension immediately. With any money accumulation plan, the advantage is that the younger you are, the longer the money stays in. That's all other things being equal, not getting into inflation, etc. That was the rationale behind it.

MR. LANE: — It was never expected that someone who's elected when he's close to 55 retirement age is supposed to have a significant pension. This is really what this does.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — This doesn't do anything. As I said, the provision has been in there for two years. I don't think that the additional 4 per cent paid by a member over a four-years term is going to triple his pension or give him some huge pension if he retires immediately. What he would have in extra contributions . . . Let's say he was contributing on a basis of \$20,000. The extra 4 per cent would be, if my math is correct, \$800 a year. In four years, there would be an extra \$3,200 in the fund which would buy him an annuity of \$300 a year or \$25 a month. It would be a little more than that because of the interest over the four years. That's the effect of it — to increase the allowance by \$25 to \$50 a month depending on what assumptions you make about interest rates and the cost of annuities.

MR. LANE: — The contribution being made under the act from \$350,000 to \$500,000 annually is nearly a 50 per cent increase. That's well over any cost of living, consumer price index or any other schedule. Is that not a little extravagant?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — It's just a matter of trying to keep the fund somewhat closer to being actuarially sound. As with most pension funds, this fund is not actuarially sound. There was a study done and a recommendation made three or four years ago that there be an ongoing extra contribution made to the fund. It's deemed, because some of the provisions in this act with respect to increasing the pensions of people already on pensions and the fact that we have, as the members have noted in question period, some inflation in Canada, that these funds have been found not to be sound actuarially. It was deemed that it was reasonable to put the money in at this time to increase the annual contribution to try to bring it close to being actuarially sound.

MR. LANE: — I have some reservations about the timing. We've been urging, for a couple of months, that the government opposite take some action to help the taxpayers deal with inflation. We seem to be protecting members of the Legislative Assembly without difficulty. I question the minister's timing as to that significant increase.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — That increase has no impact on members' pensions. The government has the liability for the pensions anyway. It's a question of whether it puts the money in now or allows the fund to run down and puts it in later. That's the issue. With the public service, we have introduced The Public Service Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Act to increase public servants' pensions as well. There the fund is not actuarially sound. Indeed, there isn't a fund for people outside of the money purchase plan. The government simply makes annual contributions in the amount of whatever the pensions are the people are receiving. It's apples and oranges, but it's one way or the other. The government's liability does not change with this provision and this increase from \$350,000 to \$500,000. The liability is there for the pensions. There is a liability for the pension of the member opposite, when he takes it. It's there and whether or not there is money in the fund, the government is liable, as it is for public service pensions, to pay the pension. Changing this is not enriching the pension at all.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Chairman, I submit to the minister that there is no reason in the world why this should not be actuarially sound; there's no reason at all. You are not facing the problems in this pension plan as you do in some others, where you may have an increasing number of people to be pensioned off and a decreasing base. You have the same number of members in here, basically year after year. There is no reason it should not be actuarially sound. Frankly, there seems to be something relating to pensions for MLAs almost every year. What are we here for? Are we here for a retirement program or are we here to do a job? Certainly, it may need upgrading from time to time, but about this time of year in the session, every single year, there's always something pertaining to pensions. Particularly in this year when everybody else is being ravaged by inflation, you don't seem to have legislation to deal with high interest rates; you don't seem to have legislation to deal with pensions on fixed incomes that are being crucified. You don't seem to have money to come to grips with our economic problems, yet we seem to have time and the ability to deal with pensions for MLAs. That's a bit of a contradiction. I submit to the minister that perhaps he should take another look at this one.

MR. LANE: — I think it is worthy of a response. We have been trying since last year to get some significant tax relief for the people of Saskatchewan. Obviously, we have been unsuccessful, but at least we kept fighting on it. You have come in protecting the pension of the MLAs. I think the minister's priorities leave a lot to be desired. I would ask

the minister if he feels that the timing of this bill is less than opportune?

HON. MR. COWLEY: — No, I think it's consistent. We passed a supplemental act with respect to public servants and former employees of Crown corporations. To pass an act with regard to former MLAs and MLAs' spouses, who face the same difficulties in terms of inflation as other people, I don't think is inconsistent. That is what this act attempts to do. It has been done in the past for MLAs at the same time as it has been done with respect to public servants. The number affected isn't large. I believe there are 69 persons, former MLA and spouses, who are on pensions. I think some of those are people who have been retired for a long time and their pensions are relatively small. I don't think there's anything inconsistent with what we are doing here.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, I don't know how your government has the gall, when you have refused to take action for people who can't afford a house, or to help people who are on a fixed income and, as I indicated earlier, are being crucified.

You absolutely refuse to take any action to soften the effect of terrible interest rates and overriding inflation. You bilk (with a capital B) car consumers with gasoline at exorbitant prices, because of your provincial gasoline tax. You force everybody to pay 40 cents more in Regina for a gallon of gasoline than they do in Edmonton. You don't do anything to help our young farmers who, even in the best of times, have difficulty making it. You don't do anything to help them, when they haven't a prayer to make it with these interest rates — you have no money for that. You don't have any money to help the first-time home buyer. Suggestions that are brought to the Minister of Finance are scoffed at. But we've got lots of money for an MLAs' pension package, that may be eroded slightly . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, it's a very sensitive subject. I tell you, it must be hitting a nerve when I start hearing that crap over there. Let me tell you, I know I must be doing something right when I start hearing that.

But when everybody else is suffering, you can't help them. You won't help the home buyers. You won't help the young farmers. You won't help the people being ripped off on gasoline prices. But oh, yes, the MLAs' pension is being eroded. It's probably the most actuarially unsound pension plan that's in existence. It's a totally unfunded program; it never was actuarially sound. When the minister suggests that he's trying to make it remotely actuarially sound now, he is, in effect, misleading this House. Well, maybe not, because it was so grossly unsound before, maybe this manoeuvre is making it one iota's worth more actuarially sound. But who is trying to kid whom? As usual over there, look after number one . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order! Let's have a little order here. The member for Thunder Creek has the floor.

MR. THATCHER: — I'm quite prepared to yield the floor to the member for Regina Lakeview to let him tell us what he believes about his government's refusal to act on the crisis situation in this economy, and why everything else out there is not a crisis situation — but MLAs' pension, oh, that is a crisis. We have to act. We've got to look after number one.

I challenge the member for Regina Lakeview to get on his feet and tell his constituents where he stands on the fact that first-time home buyers aren't going to be helped in his constituency. Tell them why young farmers from his home area around Watrous are going to be allowed to go under, into bankruptcy, with no help from his government. This government is going to say, "Let the banks do it." Let him tell them how he justifies

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his government's inaction, and all these awful things that are happening. But yet this government has the time and money to look after number one — all 45 of them over there I invite, I suggest — I'll sit down — I challenge the member for Regina Lakeview to get up and tell us about that.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Chairman, I listened with interest to the member opposite speak on this bill. First of all, the basic intent of the bill is to provide supplements to members who are on existing pensions, which doesn't include any of the members on this side of the House or that side of the House. I don't know where the member opposite is at best, but regardless of whether I'm re-elected or not, I'm 20 years away from a pension. While it is of some interest to me at this point in time, I tend to think it's a more or less academic interest.

On the other hand, I make no apologies whatsoever for bringing the bill into the House. We have provided supplements for public servants; we're doing that for MLAs, former MLA, MLAs' spouses, people who have been on pensions (some of them for 20 years) when salaries were a lot lower and pensions were lower. I make no apologies whatsoever for that and I am quite prepared to go out in public and defend the action we're taking. If the members want to take some cheap political shots and get a little mileage out of it, that's fine with me. I'm prepared to take that; it's part of the game. I make no apologies at all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — The Provincial Secretary has just mentioned that he is 20 years away; that would make him 35 years of age. I wonder if everyone in this room will believe that today.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — I'm sorry. I'm 36. I'm 19 years away.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, I can assure the members opposite that I would not support this bill. I can assure the members opposite that our concern for the senior citizens of this province is a heck of a lot deeper than the concern we have for members opposite who may not be running the next time and who want to fatten their own pockets.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I can assure the members opposite that I, for one, did not come into the legislature for how much money I can put into my pocket, whether or not . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right and I would challenge again the member for Regina Lakeview to stand up and defend this policy.

I would ask the members opposite and I would ask the minister, are you as prepared today to bring in legislation to assist the senior citizens of this province who are on fixed incomes, as you are to look after the incomes of the MLAs who won't be coming back next time, who won't be running again and those who quit prior to today? Are you as prepared to look after the senior citizens of Saskatchewan who can't afford the high cost of living, who can't afford the taxes that you're imposing on them, as you are to bring in this bill to help out the MLAs who will collect this money at 55 years of age?

Mr. Minister, that's not being responsible to the people of Saskatchewan. They elected

you; they expect you to help them, not to help yourselves first. They elected you to assist them; they elected you to make it easier for them to live, not to make it easier for yourselves to live and that is exactly what this bill is doing.

I suggest that you have forgotten what compassion is for the people of Saskatchewan who elected you. I suggest that the only compassion you have is for what you can put into your pockets at this point in time. I say that is disgraceful. I say to you that is not the role of members of this legislature. I say that it is going to be a shameful day in the history of this legislature when we put ourselves ahead of the people of Saskatchewan who elected us. That is not the role of members of this legislature.

Support the bill, if you wish, on the other side. Support it and explain it to the senior citizen who can't afford his light bill, can't afford his telephone bill and can't afford to operate his automobile. Explain it to him. I have never seen anything as disgraceful as this kind of bill that is being introduced in the legislature today. Explain it to the senior citizen who can't even afford to buy the proper food and necessities of life. You come first and he gets whatever crumbs you have left over. We have asked you throughout this session to reduce taxation. You talk about taxation that was reduced \$15 a year for the average person in this province — a few crumbs for the people, and fattened wallets for you. That's what it amounts to.

Mr. Chairman, there is absolutely no way I can support this kind of legislation. The people of Saskatchewan must be recognized before the members of the legislature are recognized.

We asked in this legislature to have \$100 million, at no cost to the government (it wouldn't cost the government; in fact, it could make money on it), for mortgage assistance for first-time home buyers. They scoffed at the suggestion. We wanted \$100 million to assist first-time home buyers. What would it do?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Let's not go into that at any great length. I think we should try to stick with the provisions of this bill. You can make analogies, I suppose, but we shouldn't be having a general kind of debate.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — That is exactly what I was attempting to do — make an analogy. The amount of \$100 million, put into the construction and housing industry in this province would generate a business of \$300 million to \$400 million. In turn, they would make more on income tax, sales tax, and everything else that they so deeply desire to charge the people of this province.

Mr. Chairman, what steps has the government taken to reduce taxes for the number of people in this province who are below the poverty line? Of our population, 16 per cent is below the poverty line; 37 per cent of the unattached is before the poverty line. Are they concerned about that?

Their concern is what they can put in their pockets for their retirement. Not many on the other side are going to retire this year. Many of them are going to say, "I've had enough now. I've put in 15 years or 20 years. Now I can go home and collect from the taxpayers of Saskatchewan a decent income for the rest of my life. I don't give a damn for the rest of the people of this province." That is exactly what they are saying.

We are concerned with the senior citizens. We are concerned about the people who live below the poverty line. We are concerned about the young people who can't afford to

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buy their own homes. We are concerned for the population, in total, of this province, and their income below the national average.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot comprehend why the members opposite are so anxious to have this kind of legislation, and to hell with everyone else.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Chairman, I find the performance of the members opposite just short of incredible. A little over an hour ago, this bill received second reading, which is agreement in principle. That is when I would have thought members would have discussed whether or not the principle of doing something for MLAs who are already on pension would have been discussed. Not a single member on that side of the House said one thing — not one thing. I can't believe that in the last hour and a quarter the world has changed so much so that a bill to which they had no objection in principle is now a major principle problem for the members opposite. I can't believe that. It would seem to me that any reasonable observer sitting here would come to some different conclusions about the reasons for the tactics advanced by the members opposite.

I want to leave it to the spectators here to decide why the members are giving this great acting display that they have given us for the last hour or so. I suggest to you that it has nothing at all to do with the bill before us. I make no apologies for introducing this bill. I am quite prepared to go out in the country and defend this bill. I won't have any trouble in my constituency. The member for Thunder Creek can spend another three or four days in there the next election if he wants and he will get the same reaction he did last time. He will get the same results. I think that is really what is at the bottom of the problem of the members opposite. They know where the people of Saskatchewan's views are. They know they are doomed to sit over there for another decade or two. That is what is really the problem.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — So that the hon. minister understands, I believe that when the matter came up earlier we had some very deep concerns about the provision which allows former MLAs to become members of boards and chairmen of commissions and government agencies and still collect their full pension. We raised that in this Assembly at that time and expressed our concerns about it. Let me tell you that our concerns have not changed. Why do we need the power to allow former members who happen to become chairmen of boards and agencies to maintain full pension? They are getting money from the public and they don't need to receive their pension.

We have had examples where defeated members have become chairmen. That should be the prerogative of any government which makes the appointment, but it shouldn't be a doubling up. I put it to you that we raised that the other night when this bill was brought up. We expressed our concerns at that time. So I suggest the statements of the minister really don't hold much water. In fact, I suggest that type of provision, which allows us to double up on payments to former members, is inappropriate at the best of times. The point we have tried to make to you is that the timing of the legislation is, I think, more inappropriate. So I ask the minister if he would be prepared to repeal that section.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a couple of comments. First of all, the member's comments about the provision with respect to a member continuing to be in some sort of employ with the government was mentioned, but it certainly wasn't mentioned today prior to the member's speech. It seemed to me he

wasn't following at all whatever the concerns were today. I want to say what the provision was before, and I will read it to the members just so you are clear:

Subject to subsections (ii) and (iii) any allowance payable to any person under this act or any former act shall be discontinued while that person is a member, is employed in the public service of the province, or renders service, remuneration for which is paid out of the consolidated fund or by a corporation board or commission that is an agent of Her Majesty in Saskatchewan. And where that person is a member or so employed or renders such service at any time during a month, the whole amount payable on account of the allowance in that month shall be withheld. A person mentioned in subsection (i) may be employed in the public service of the province or render services mentioned in clause 1(c) for any period or periods not exceeding the aggregate of six months in any fiscal year without discontinuance of the allowance. (I may point out that is being reduced to 100 days.) Where any person mentioned in subsection 1 is employed as a member of a board or commission or is chairman of a board or commission, the appointment does not require the person to be engaged in continuous full-time employment in carrying out the duties of the position, the person may be so employed for any period of time without discontinuance of the allowance and no periods of employment in such a position shall be taken into account for the purposes of subsection i(ii) 1979 ch 12.1 S24.

All I want to suggest there is that the existing provision, I believe, entitled the member to work for the government up to six months and continue to receive his allowance. It was put in here. We changed it to clarify it, to make sure we reduced the six months to 100 days. I don't think there is any dramatic change there. It clarified the thing with respect to corporations as chairmen of boards, which was in before. It is simply a clarification and nothing else.

MR. LANE: — I think there's a significant extension in the individuals appointed as chairmen of the corporation, board or commission. I know that, should the hon. member who just opened his mouth want to run in Qu'Appelle again, he may have to be appointed to another board, agency or commission. I know he has a great deal of concern about this.

I suggest to the minister that there is a significant extension of the bill, in the provision, as it pertains to the positions of chairmen of any corporations, boards, or commissions, which agencies of Her Majesty in right of Saskatchewan.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — I think it's a moot point. I didn't want to put the thing in the bill originally. The lawyers advised me to. As far as I'm concerned and as far as some lawyers are concerned, the old provision was fine, which said:

. . . is employed as a member of a board or a commission, or chairman of a board or a commission, applied equally to Crown corporations as to other boards.

It's a moot legal point which you can get a lawyer to argue either side for, and it's simply a clarification and a reduction from six months to 100 days.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, I won't support this bill, just as a matter of principle, simply because of this kind of a session. This is the kind of session where we haven't

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done anything for anyone. We haven't attacked any problems; we haven't attacked any of the economic malaise that is affecting us; we put some money into a marketing board which no one wants; we've passed legislation which makes it illegal for a cow to step on a prairie lily. We haven't done very much of anything that we can be proud of in this session.

I can only endorse all of the comments made by the member for Regina South, and those of the member for Qu'Appelle, and go along with them 100 per cent, and again, ask the question when you have done virtually nothing for anyone in this session of the legislature, how, or by what stretch of conscience can you do this for yourselves?

You can say, "All right, you guys are speaking against it, and you're taking it over here." If you gave me the option to get out of that pension plan, I would get out in a moment. The only reason I'm in it is because by law, I have to be. I want no part of it. I think it's shameful that the government places all 45 of you ahead of everyone else — ahead of the home buyers, ahead of the senior citizens, ahead of the young farmers, ahead of everyone! Oh yes, "Our 45 MLAs will be looked after. We're number one." This is ironic, coming from the government that says, "We care about people." Have you seen the NDP's little decals — "We care"? Yes, you care all right. Why don't you just add to that slogan — "We care for me"? That's the NDP slogan that very clearly emanated from this House today.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I reiterate that the changes in terms of the allowances affect only members now on pension. That's the purpose of it; that's the effect of it. Some members opposite might not have any concerns with respect to pensions. They might be in the very fortunate position of being able to provide their services to the public of Saskatchewan and not be concerned about the future. Some of the people who are affected by this bill have provided many years of service to the public of Saskatchewan, at great personal cost to themselves. Whether or not it was financial depends upon their circumstances. Some of these people on these pensions undoubtedly don't need any additional funds. There are other people who are marginal and there are other people who have very little in the way of income. I think it would be irresponsible of us, as MLAs, to ignore the needs and the concerns of former MLAs on pension. It seems to me that that would be irresponsible. But I take the member at his word. He says he is going to vote against it on principle. I hope he will not accept his pension on principle, too, if that's the way he feels about it.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Put an opting-out clause in there; I dare you.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — If the members opposite want to raise it some day, we'll take a look at it. He has never raised it before.

I said before, and I say again, I don't make any apologies for putting this bill forward. I'm quite prepared to defend it. I think the opposition which is coming from members opposite makes me somewhat skeptical as to the rationale for it. Be that as it may, I'll let the public be the decision-maker there.

Section 3 agreed.

Sections 4 to 6 inclusive agreed.

Section 7 as amended agreed.

Sections 8 to 10 inclusive agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill as amended, on the following recorded division:

YEAS — 30

Pepper	Romanow	Smishek
Tchorzewski	Baker	McArthur
Gross	Rolfes	MacMurchy
Mostoway	Banda	Vickar
Hammersmith	Dyck	Thompson
MacAuley	Engel	Feschuk
Byers	Cowley	Cody
Koskie	Matsalla	Johnson
Long	Nelson	White
Solomon	Chapman	Miner

NAYS — 14

Berntson	Thatcher	Birkbeck
Duncan	Lane	Taylor
Rousseau	Swan	Pickering
Muirhead	Katzman	Garner
Andrew	McLeod	

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 100 — An Act to amend the Cattle Marketing Voluntary Deductions Act

HON. MR. MacMURCHY: — I move the bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division and bill read a third time.

YEAS — 29

Pepper	Kaeding	Romanow
Smishek	Tchorzewski	Baker
McArthur	Gross	Rolfes
MacMurchy	Mostoway	Banda
Vickar	Hammersmith	MacAuley
Engel	Feschuk	Byers
Thompson	Cowley	Cody
Koskie	Johnson	Long
Nelson	White	Solomon
Chapman	Miner	

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NAYS — 14

Berntson
Duncan
Rousseau
Muirhead
Andrew

Thatcher
Lane
Swan
Katzman
McLeod

Birkbeck
Taylor
Pickering
Garner

Bill No. 104 — An Act to amend The Election Act

HON. MR. COWLEY: — I move the amendments be now read a first and second time.

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — By leave, I move that the bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and bill read a third time.

Bill No. 117 — An Act to amend the Statute Law

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I move the amendments be now read a first and second time.

Motion agreed to.

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, by leave I move that the said bill be now read a third time and passed under its title at the next sitting of the House.

Motion agreed to.

Bill No. 116 — An Act to amend The Members of the Legislative Assembly Superannuation Act, 1979

HON. MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Speaker, I move the amendments be now read a first and second time.

Motion agreed to on division.

HON. MR. COWLEY: — By leave, I move that the bill be now read a third time and passed under its title at the next sitting of the House.

Motion agreed to on division.

MOTION

House Adjournment

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, before you call it 1 o'clock. I would like to introduce a motion, by leave of the Assembly, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Smishek.

That when this Assembly adjourns on Friday, May 15, 1981, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, May 19, 1981.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:09 p.m.