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Official Report of
DEBATES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
(Hansard)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1974

Afternoon Sitting

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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1974

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers.

Mrs. D. Webster (Vancouver South): We have with us today a class of 35 law students from David Thompson Senior Secondary and three of their teachers. They are here to observe the laws as they're actually being made in British Columbia, and I would ask this assembly to give them a warm welcome.

Hon. D. Barrett (Premier): Mr. Speaker, at 4 o'clock we will be visited by 35 students from Port Coquitlam Secondary School. I ask the House to give them a welcome. Their teacher's name is Mr. Jim Crawford. He'll be with them today.

Oral questions.

STATEMENT ON BCR ASKED OF PREMIER

Mr. W.R. Bennett (Leader Of The Opposition): I wonder, Mr. Speaker, to save time for questions, if we might have the Premier, as president of the B.C. Railway, make a statement on the BCR.

Mr. Speaker: May I ask leave of the House?

Hon. Mr. Barrett: I have no statement to make.

Mr. Speaker: Oh, I see. You are making the statement that you are not making a statement.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Barrett: No, in response to a question about the situation, as I understand the Member.... Is that what the Member is asking for, an up-to-date statement?

Mr. Bennett: Yes. There has been precedent in the House before that statements regarding some important issues have been made, so they didn't detract from the question period.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, but the usual way is to get leave of the House if any statement is sought by any Member to the assembly. In this case, if the Hon. Member does not wish to make a statement at this time, we'll proceed to question period.

REPORT ON SHERIFF SERVICES

Mr. Bennett: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Attorney-General.

I have here a report from the office of the Attorney-General. The public are now beginning to ask questions with respect to the future relationships between the RCMP and the sheriff's office. I would like to ask some questions resulting from a document which has come into my hands.

I'd like to ask the Attorney-General if this document, which anticipates some legislation, is indeed an official document. It's entitled, "Status Report, Sheriff Services," of his department. Well, I would like to ask the Attorney-General, then: has the Attorney-General asked his department to draft regulations for a bill which is yet to be drafted, as mentioned in this document?

The Legislature can give no assurance that it will be passed. It suggests, Mr. Speaker, in this document that at the present time....

Hon. Mr. Barrett: Table the document.

Mr. Bennett: No, I wish to ask the question of the Attorney-General.

Interjections.

Mr. Bennett: Well, I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll pass the document to the Attorney-General; and I will, if I may, rise in my place after he's authenticated it to ask the questions later in question period.

Hon. A.B. Macdonald (Attorney-General): Mr. Speaker, I'll be glad to receive the document and take the question as notice, but I don't know of any legislation or regulations that are being suggested in my department in the police area. However, I'll look at the document.

INVESTIGATION ON FORGED LETTER FROM PREMIER'S OFFICE

Mr. D.A. Anderson (Victoria): A question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Has the Premier instituted an investigation into the publication of a letter on the stationery of his office over the signature of his administrative assistant, Arnie Van Campen, which is clearly a forgery and contains a number of libellous statements?

Hon. Mr. Barrett: Mr. Member, that letter has been turned over to the RCMP by my office.

Mr. D.A. Anderson: May I ask, Mr. Speaker, through you to the Premier, whether there's any truth to the statement that you have also consulted with Mr. E. Gundersen with a view to securing his assistance in this matter, as a result of his experience with an earlier alleged forgery issued over the

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signature of Premier W.A.C. Bennett in the infamous Harry Stonehill case?

Hon. Mr. Barrett: Well, I have not sought any advice other than that of the RCMP. Senator Lawson, to whom that letter is addressed, has been the victim of a similar letter campaign. This is not new in terms of Senator Lawson's experience, but it's certainly new in mine. We have turned the letter over to the RCMP. I've not consulted Mr. Gundersen for advice on his earlier experience, which is somewhat different from this particular case.

Mr. D.A. Anderson: Straight forgery, though.

Hon. Mr. Barrett: Well, nonetheless, the forgery is on a different matter entirely. Forgery, nonetheless, was proven in court, and Mr. Williams, I think, at the time went to jail for three months. It was another Williams — present Williams exempted. The matter is clear forgery, it is libellous, and it's been turned over to the RCMP.

Mr. D.A. Anderson: Thank you.

DISCUSSIONS BY PREMIER WITH FOREST INDUSTRY OFFICIALS

Mr. G.S. Wallace (Oak Bay): I'd like to ask the Premier and Minister of Finance whether he met with

officials of the forest industry today to discuss the current slump in the lumber market, and were any specific proposals put to the forest industry?

Hon. Mr. Barrett: Yes.

Mr. Wallace: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister of Finance tell the House by how much provincial revenues will fall short of the \$246 million figure which was projected in the budget for the fiscal year?

HON. MR. BARRETT: I'll take that as notice.

STICKY SITUATION IN HONEY INDUSTRY

Mr. D.M. Phillips (South Peace River): I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Recreation and Conservation. In view of the damage being inflicted by rampaging bears against the hives of beekeepers on Vancouver Island and the consequences to the economy being caused by the loss of honey in a time of rising sugar prices, has the Minister of Recreation and Conservation any plans to rectify this sticky situation before the beekeepers get stung in the pocketbook?

Hon. J. Radford (Minister Of Recreation And Conservation): Yes, Mr. Member, I met with them over a month ago, and we are taking steps to alleviate the situation.

Mr. Phillips: A supplemental question, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister instituting a fact-finding survey to find out just how troublesome the situation is, or is the Minister prepared to let the beekeepers shoot the bears without a licence? First it's the wolves, and now it's the bears.

Hon. Mr. Radford: As I said, we're taking steps to alleviate the situation. We've met with the beekeepers, and we are looking into the problems.

Mr. Phillips: Well, a supplemental question. What steps are you taking, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Radford: We have discussed it with the beekeepers, and we are advising them of better husbandry situations. We have also put predator people in the areas where the problems are taking place.

DECLINE IN MINES CLAIM-STAKING

Mr. G.F. Gibson (North Vancouver-Capilano): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Mines. Is the Minister aware of a survey and report issued by the B.C. and Yukon Chamber of Mines recently that showed claim-staking for the first nine months of 1974 to be down over 70 per cent over that of previous years?

Hon. L.T. Nimsick (Minister Of Mines And Petroleum Resources): Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge of any report put out by the mining association or the chamber of mines.

Mr. Gibson: Mr. Speaker, I'll be glad to send the Minister a copy, and I would ask him if he thinks that this decline could have anything to do with government policy.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Nimsick: I can answer that now. No.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

SLOW PAYMENT OF

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS

Mr. H.A. Curtis (Saanich And The Islands): Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Finance on the subject of slow payment of government accounts to persons and companies in various parts of the province, which

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have been dealt with at length in the press: the Minister has been quoted as saying that the backlog would be cleared up by the end of last week, November 1. "Almost all" perhaps was the exact phrase. Can the Minister confirm that this job has been essentially completed? Are most overdue payments now wrapped up and cheques in the hands of companies?

Hon. Mr. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I want to answer that question raised, first of all, a week ago by the Member from the Conservative Party, and now raised by this new Member. (Laughter.) Rather than take it as notice, and find the Member sitting in another place next week, (laughter) I would suggest that my original statement stands and the bills will be paid. But if people keep on changing their address as quickly as they change their political stripes, it's difficult to find them around the province. (Laughter.)

Mr. Curtis: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

I think the Minister of Finance will have his jollies over the next few weeks. I recognize that.

Hon. Mr. Barrett: You bet he will! (Laughter.)

Mr. Curtis: But this is a matter of concern to many firms, and if it was possible to accomplish this, to clean up the backlog in the course of a few days, why was it necessary for it to be brought to the attention of the government by a Member of the opposition, in response to many requests from business firms?

Hon. Mr. Barrett: Mr. Member, I don't know why it was necessary to be brought to the attention of the government by a Member of the opposition. You should speak to that Member who first brought it up, and he used to sit down there.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

PAYMENT OF RENTERS' GRANTS

Mr. R.H. McClelland (Langley): Perhaps the Minister of Housing (Hon. Mr. Nicolson) would sooner answer this question, but I wonder why renters resource grants are not being paid. I've had numerous requests from people who have put in their applications in June, and are still waiting for their \$30 renters resource grant. Perhaps the Minister of Housing could tell us what's happening in that department, and whether there's a problem with finding the money to pay these grants, or just exactly what the score is on it.

Hon. L. Nicolson (Minister Of Housing): Well, there is a certain time lag in these payments. However, 99,483 have been paid; there are 27,422 being processed, for a total of 126,905 as of about last Thursday.

Mr. McClelland: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister, then, confirm that of the some 300,000 renters in this province, only about one-third have considered this grant important enough to even apply for it? Is that correct?

Mr. Speaker: I think it's somewhat argumentative and rhetorical.

INSTRUCTIONS TO ICBC NEGOTIATORS

Mr. N.R. Morrison (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Transportation and Communications, as president of ICBC. I'd like to read a statement, if I may first, then ask the question.

The statement is a resolution that has been passed by the insurance agents of B.C., which states:

"Whereas Autoplan agreement between members of the insurance agents of British Columbia and ICBC has been broken by the corporation;

"And whereas the board of directors of the corporation has refused to meet with the association to resolve outstanding differences;

"And whereas the association has exhausted all the avenues in good faith available to it to ensure continued service to the public;

"And whereas the proposal for the remuneration offered by the corporation for Autoplan 1975 is completely unacceptable to the association, it is hereby resolved that unless such outstanding differences are settled to the satisfaction of the association by noon on Friday, November 8, 1974, the association members will at that time withdraw all services from related Autoplan."

Now that was passed this morning with 435 members in attendance, and there were no dissenting votes. My question is: what instructions have you issued to the negotiators of ICBC?

An Hon. Member: Call John Mika out.

Hon. R.M. Strachan (Minister Of Transport And Communications): With regard to the statement — the alleged statement, alleged resolution — I will have to wait until I get a copy of the resolution before I can make any comment on that particular statement.

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With regard to instructions issued: the general executive were negotiating, and they know what the instructions are. They negotiated to a point where, despite the fact — and I should say this — that there is in existence with every agent a signed contract by that agent agreeing to serve ICBC next year for 7 per cent on the basic commission, and 10 per cent on extension, we made an offer increasing that by 20 per cent. You claim they have rejected it. I'll wait until I see that rejection in writing before I make any further comment.

An Hon. Member: Was that before the gas subsidy?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Interjection.

Mr. Morrison: Mr. Speaker, the agents maintain that the contract has been broken. Therefore, my question is: what is your contingency plan if they should carry out their agreement to terminate services on November 8?

Hon. Mr. Strachan: Before I answer that, Mr. Speaker - and I'm glad the Member asked the question — I have in front of me a headline which says: "Socreds Decide to Kill ICBC".

An Hon. Member: Oh, no.

Hon. Mr. Strachan: If it's possible. "Socreds Decide to Kill ICBC," if it's possible.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Hon. Mr. Strachan: ICBC isn't going to be killed. ICBC will continue to operate.

Mr. Morrison: Could I ask him if he would answer my question?

Mr. Speaker: I cannot force anyone to answer a question, except as he does.

The Hon. Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound.

A Voice: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Oh, the Hon. Member for North Okanagan wishes a supplementary on the same subject. Would the Hon. Member for West Vancouver defer?

An Hon. Member: No. (Laughter.)

ICBC USE OF GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPAL OFFICES

Mrs. P.J. Jordan (North Okanagan): The Minister of Transport and Communications and the Attorney-General, when ICBC was first discussed in this House...

Mr. Speaker: We're not into an argument, surely. Have you a question?

Mrs. Jordan: No, no. I have a question. ...indicated that they felt that government offices and municipal offices could function very well as agents and salesmen in the area of real estate, insurance, et cetera. My question to the Minister, in light of that statement and his answers today, is: is his contingency plan to utilize municipal offices and government offices as agents?

Hon. Mr. Strachan: I think the Member surely knows that we have been using municipal offices and government offices ever since the inception of ICBC.

Mrs. Jordan: Supplementary. Is it the Minister's intention to expand this workload, and is it the Minister's intention, if he does expand this work load...

Mr. Speaker: Order. It's highly speculative and theoretical at this time.

Mrs. Jordan: ...to evolve where these costs will be paid?

Mr. Speaker: I think the question is very unacceptable.

Orders of the day.

Hon. E.E. Dailly (Minister Of Education): Public bills and orders, Mr. Speaker. Second reading of Bill 165.

NATURAL PRODUCTS MARKETING (BRITISH COLUMBIA) ACT

Hon. D.D. Stupich (Minister Of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, if I could introduce this bill, or introduce second reading of it by.... I want to be sure the Members could see me as well as hear me discussing this important legislation.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: If I could get back to Bill 165, Mr. Speaker, and say briefly what the bill is all about — in the first place it does make new references to the federal legislation. These are necessary because of the changes in

federal legislation itself. Necessary, as a matter of fact to, I suppose, make in order some of the agreements that we have entered into with respect to federal legislation. It is a legal point as to whether these are new or not, but in any case the references are there so that it will be quite clear.

The second point to which I would like to refer is that it does for the first time mention the possibility of establishing marketing commissions. Some of the producers in the province — that is, the producers of some commodities — would like to have some organization to which they could belong and to which they could encourage or even oblige their fellow producers of that particular commodity to belong to, without actually establishing or going through the formalities of having all of the authority that is granted to them under the marketing board schemes, to the extent that we have them already, and to the extent that the legislation as it has existed, and as it still does exist. The extent to which the legislation does give the government the authority to grant quite a wide power to marketing boards under various schemes.

Some of them want to do something under various schemes. Some of them want to do something short of that and yet still have a formal organization. With that in mind they have asked for something that has been provided with the reference to marketing commissions.

The third point to which I would like to refer — perhaps the most important one — is the new role which is seen for the provincial marketing board. Provision has been in the legislation in the past for there to be a provincial board but its role has been almost meaningless.

Under the changes in the national products marketing Act, as included in the bill before us now, the provincial marketing board will have two major powers that have not previously been in the legislation. One of them is the power to change or even to cancel any orders, rules or regulations approved by the individual commodity marketing boards.

The second authority the provincial marketing board will have is the authority to hear appeals from any board orders, rules or regulations. Previously, the only appeal to something like that has been to the marketing board that has passed that particular order. On occasion people have — as was pointed out during the early days of this particular 1974 session — appealed to the Minister of Agriculture, who technically did not have any authority to interfere with anything the boards had done without actually changing the schemes themselves.

So under this bill before us now, the provincial marketing board will have the authority to hear appeals and to dispose of them.

Having said briefly what is in the bill, I think perhaps the proper question to ask is why are we doing this.

I'd like to reassure the Members, firstly, that in no way does it represent any backing off on the part of this government for the support of producer marketing boards. We recognize how important the marketing boards are. We recognize that in the case of each of the 10 boards that are presently organized, they have all been motivated by a desire on the part of producers of a particular commodity to have some sort of bargaining power in the community as is granted to many other groups in our community. This particular administration and this party for many years has felt this should properly be given to different groups in our community. There's plenty of evidence of our party's record and of the government's record of support for this principle.

There is even some acceptance in the community for support of this principle, but generally it seems the community is much more ready to support this principle if we're dealing with groups other than the producers of food products.

I will just refer to one editorial in a newspaper that is not given to supporting the principles that this government is guided by; the daily newspaper in my own riding. It talks about an entirely different subject, that of nurses, in an editorial dated Friday, July 12 of this year, with the heading: "Nursing Crisis Worsens. Conditions Must Improve."

In finishing the editorial the writer goes on to say:

"The crisis will worsen unless nurses are given better pay and working conditions, higher social and economic status, collective bargaining and even the right to strike."

This right is often questioned in the community on the part of many people and has been questioned in this House.

None of the producer groups represented by commodity marketing boards have, to the best of my knowledge, ever threatened a strike. They have argued among themselves and have tried to stop each other from doing anything like that, but never as a group has a marketing board passed a resolution in favour of a strike or a withdrawal of its services or of its products. And yet the community, generally....

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: Well, I'll come to that.

The community generally recognizes that other groups in our society, and, in this case, even nurses, have to have the right to withdraw their services in order to improve their conditions so that their services will be available to the degree that they are

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needed. With respect to farmers, they too must have some bargaining rights in our whole community. It's not just a matter of denying them the right to bargain; it's a matter of threatening our community with not having enough of these particular products to consume when we want them.

One of the Members opposite mentioned them destroying their product, and it's something that really hit the headlines. On November 1, I took three clippings out of one daily newspaper. All of them, it seemed, came the day after a certain programme on CTV showing two stories: one of them showed calves being butchered, wasted, destroyed in the Province of Quebec; another showed people starving in Bangladesh.

CTV was flooded with phone calls about the first one. "They should never have shown such a programme on CTV." "The farmers, in destroying this food when there are so many people in the world going hungry, were doing a disservice to humanity." "That is a terrible programme to show at an hour when children were still awake and still liable to be watching TV." Everything was wrong about it.

But the picture of people starving in Bangladesh did not bring forth one telephone call, not one letter by the time they reported the story again, I think, the next evening. There wouldn't have been much time for mail; the mail service sometimes takes a little longer than that. But nevertheless, they were flooded with phone calls complaining about this being shown — not so much about it being done; mainly about it being shown. Also the fact that the food is being wasted. Yet nothing at all about the people that were starving.

Yet, look at the first story and read some of the facts in it. Six hundred calves were slaughtered, and it is a terrible situation that 600 young calves were slaughtered when we need that kind of food in the world today. When you read a little further you find out that it was a demonstration. They had tried many ways before to get government attention and recognition of their need for some support and assistance. You find out that after some weeks of fruitless negotiations they decided that they would have to make some dramatic demonstration. So 1,200 farmers got together and sacrificed 600 calves.

Now, watching the programme, one would have had the impression that farmers were destroying several calves each. But the story tells us that they destroyed at the rate of a half a calf per farmer. It's still a terrible thing; but remember, they were trying to prove a point. Whether they were able to prove it or not, we don't know.

Some of the other points when they told their side of the story. They were offered 15 cents a pound for these animals when they said their costs of production were 60 cents. These were young calves that had not yet been fed to any great extent; certainly not to the point where they should be put on the market. So they hadn't put all that cost of

raising them into the animals yet at that point.

Yet the community seemed to feel that these farmers should be prepared to spend at least 60 cents a pound.... In B.C. we calculate in our dairy income assurance plan that it's from 65 to 75 cents a pound. Nevertheless, when they said it was 60 cents the community seemed to think that those farmers, because the world was short of food, should be obliged to put 60 cents a pound into raising animals for which they are currently being offered 15 cents a pound.

Now, that's the situation with respect to the slaughter that the Hon. Member from Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) mentioned at the beginning of my speech.

Destroying beef is a crime. It is a crime when people are hungry; it should never have been done. But, on the other hand, it should not be left to the farmers to see that this sort of thing isn't being done. The rest of the community has to be willing to do something about it.

The story about Bangladesh in the same newspaper talked about one million people, according to conservative estimates, who were going to starve to death within the year. Yet not one phone call in response to this story. The lines were ringing all the time with stories about 600 calves being slaughtered.

What response do they get? Well, an emergency debate in the House of Commons. That's something. A promise that something will happen later on, that there will be an income assurance plan of some kind offered later on. I suppose it's the same sort of plan that I've been hearing about from the federal Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Whelan) since I first started attending conferences of Ministers of Agriculture over two years ago — and with nothing to show for it yet.

Perhaps now that the farmers in Quebec are taking that action, there will be something done. But remember this: in the story that hit the headlines — and properly it should have hit the headlines — there was no marketing board there; nothing to control the price of those animals. So it's certainly not the fault of any marketing board that that kind of thing happened. Possibly, had there been a marketing board of some kind, it might not have happened.

There is another example of a situation that doesn't seem to be nearly as interesting. It did make a headline, but that's apparently the end of it. Sugar. Buyers grabbing it up.

The price of sugar went from 25 cents in January to 59 cents today — well over double. Food, food that is very widely used.

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: You say it should be banned. It's a very essential source of energy, and I

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think we all use it one way or another. Yet how much excitement about this? Well over double in a matter of nine months. No marketing board.

Inquiry? There's talk about an inquiry, but what are they going to find out? That the price of sugar went up from 25 cents to 59 cents. And then what? What are they going to do about it?

Is anybody really excited about it? The 600 calves slaughtered in Quebec is much more exciting than the price of sugar going up from 25 cents to 59 cents. In both cases: no marketing board. Food is very much involved, but no marketing board. Nobody says, "Well, maybe we should have a marketing board for those products."

Bread: 40 cents a loaf. Remember when it used to be 10 cents, Mr. Member? You can remember when it used to be 10 cents. Anybody ever heard anything about a marketing board controlling the price of bread?

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: Exactly. And the cost of production has gone up. Yet people accept a 400 per cent increase in the price of bread and there's no clamour for any controls, no suggestion that any marketing board had anything to do with it. People accept it. There's no marketing board in the middle, so let's ignore it. There can't be anything wrong with the marketing board; there can't be anything wrong — so let's just let the price of bread and sugar run sky-high. As long as there's no marketing board in the middle, it must be all right.

What about turkey? There has been some agitation in the community for consumer representatives on the groups that control these marketing boards. On the Turkey Marketing Board there should be consumer representation. They don't mention it with turkeys; they mention it with eggs because eggs are much more interesting these days than turkeys.

As a matter of fact, they didn't even bother to accept the invitation of the turkey board for consumer representatives to attend and to sit in on their meetings. An invitation was issued, but because turkeys aren't hitting the headlines these days, it's not really interesting enough to bother. So nobody — consumers or trade unions or the retailers or the wholesalers — want to bother with Turkey Marketing Board. They'd all like to get on the Egg Marketing Board because what's happening in the egg board is much more interesting, much more newsworthy than what is happening in the turkey board.

And what about the egg board? Of course the egg board hit the headlines, and the Food Prices Review Board in Ottawa was very happy it did, because at the time, when somebody found out that there were nine million eggs being destroyed back east....

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: When they first found out, there were nine million eggs. You know, it's funny — nine million. If you are eating eggs for breakfast, perhaps one or maybe two, you count them that way.

Mr. G.S. Wallace (Oak Bay): They're bad for you.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: I'm not sure about that; I think that's still to be questioned.

When you buy them in a store — does anybody go in and buy them in a store? — does anybody go in and buy them one at a time or two at a time, or do you buy a dozen? But, of course, if you say a dozen, then it is only 750,000 dozen, and that's not nearly as much.

If you are a small store, you are not dealing in dozens; you're buying them by the box: 15 dozen in a box, 50,000 boxes. Now even that....

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: A box, okay? It's still a lot of chickens, and it's still a lot of eggs, and it is still a terrible thing that happened. But you count eggs by the one when you find them to destroy them.... And when you are fighting for survival of your own organization — and the Food Prices Review Board was fighting at that time.... Remember, everybody was criticizing the Food Prices Review Board at that time for having done nothing except spend taxpayers' money looking into a lot of things, having no power, making no recommendations, not really achieving anything — in our community worthwhile until suddenly they found out that nine million — not 35,000 boxes, or 30,000 boxes, or 15,000 cases, if you like, with 30,000 to the case....

I think I'm mixed up in my figures there somewhere, Bill; I see you looking. I'll have to work it out again. I have to work it out while I'm talking.

In any case, it is not the number of cases — which is the way you count eggs normally — because it is much more newsworthy if you refer to them as individual eggs. You certainly don't say that this represents a half-day's production for the whole of our country. That makes it sound like very little.

It's a terrible thing that nine million or 24 million eggs were destroyed. But when you recognize everything good that has happened with respect to marketing boards, well, then, let's look at the thing with a little bit of balance.

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: Yes, and there are a million people where? It's almost....

Interjection.

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Hon. Mr. Stupich: And it is very important. They should never have been destroyed. Even when they found they were no good, I don't know why they couldn't have used them in animal feed or recycled them. I don't know; that is something that is not under my control. Perhaps it would have been better had it been. I'm inclined to agree with the Member.

In any case, the egg board, even in our own province, largely because of what has happened outside of our province, has attracted a lot of public attention. In spite of the fact that prices of other foods — foods over which there is no marketing board control or representation in any way at all — have gone up considerably — in several cases many times more than prices for those foods that are controlled by marketing boards and for which the prices are at least to some extent controlled by marketing boards — we find that people are interested....

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: I've given you some of the figures. I've shown you that sugar, for example, has gone up 220 per cent in something like seven months; I've told you that bread has gone up 400 per cent. I could tell you that eggs 22 years ago, when I was producing them, were selling at 83 cents a dozen and today 90 cents. I can give you examples if you like. I'm not going to do your research so that you can do a survey and dump it on me here.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: I'm satisfied with my bill, and I'm satisfied with the arguments I'm raising in favour of the bill. If you want to oppose the bill, well, then, you have to come up with some arguments against the bill.

Because a lot of attention was attracted to some of the activities back east, there has been this pressure for some kind of an inquiry into the operations of the Egg Marketing Board — not because anything wrong has happened there but because it is newsworthy. There have been no eggs destroyed in the Province of British Columbia. They came from the Province of British Columbia. There were eggs destroyed that came a long way to be destroyed, though.

I don't deny that there should be some consumer interest in marketing boards. I think there should be consumer interest and more consumer support. I want there to be more consumer knowledge. I'm satisfied in my mind that if there is knowledge in the whole community as to what is actually happening in the farming community, if there is knowledge of that, there will be acceptance of it.

In the case of the milk industry, for example, people are generally satisfied that, when the price of milk goes up, it is going up because the cost of production has gone up. There is a government-appointed board, if you like, and they don't seem to question that when the price of milk goes up....

An Hon. Member: The cost of distribution, too.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: The cost of distribution has gone up, and people recognize that; they can understand it. It can be explained why the price of milk goes up two, three or four cents a quart. There are rational explanations for it. They are not explanations that are put forth by the milk producers themselves; they are put forward by other people,

if you like, on behalf of the milk producers to some extent.

But in the case of the eggs it is left to the egg producers themselves to bear the brunt of the whole attack or the whole approach when they are raising the cost of eggs. They have to make all the explanations. They can't produce all their calculations in a way that people can understand them anyway. They have a hard job making themselves understand them sometimes, and a hard job making me understand some of their figures when it comes to dealing on an income assurance plan, as we are presently negotiating. The consumers accept it; the consumers keep on buying milk. The Hon. Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) may say they shouldn't be drinking even milk — at least, whole milk. But in any case, people will accept it. With eggs, they won't accept it, in spite of the fact that at today's prices it is still the best buy of a complete protein that is available. There are other things as well, but it is still the best way to buy the best protein that is available.

Yet because people have heard so much and imagined so much about what has been mismanaged in CEMA in particular, they suspect there must be something wrong here too, as there is there. They suspect this and have heard so much and have been led to believe so much by the Food Prices Review Board in particular, which grabbed this as an opportunity to renew its own lease on life. Because of this, they turn away from eggs at a time when, as I say, it is the best buy in getting good quality protein.

This legislation is coming forward at this time not in any way at all as an attack on marketing boards or on the principle of producers getting together to help themselves negotiate in the community for a better return. On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, it's recognition that the producers of food have to be able to bargain in the community, need community support for what they are doing, and need a decent return for the work

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they are doing and the investment they are making if we as consumers are going to continue to have access to the food they are producing.

As far as this party and this government are concerned, I've said before that we've given ample evidence of our acceptance of that principle as it applies to all groups within our community. We've given ample evidence of our desire to work with the producers of food and make sure that they have an opportunity to earn a respectable living — real evidence of that.

In this particular case it's an attempt in this legislation to line up not just this party, not just this government and not just the Members in this House. It's an opportunity for the whole community to learn more about what is happening in agriculture so that the whole community will be more ready to accept the principle that it is time the farmers were relieved of the responsibility for subsidizing food prices for consumers — as they have been asked to do in Quebec, where they've been asked to raise beef at 65 cents a pound and sell it at 15 cents.

I believe the legislation before us will give the community that opportunity to know more about what is happening and to accept what is happening as something that is good not only for the producers involved directly, but also for the consumers in our community, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. W.R. Bennett (Leader of the Opposition): I was quite interested, Mr. Speaker, in listening to the Minister of Agriculture mount a defence which mostly seemed to be aimed at the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Hon. Ms. Young). I don't think he presented this bill to the House as a Natural Products Marketing Act; he made a defence for his own cabinet and his own caucus and his own party as to the historical tradition of the NDP in supporting marketing boards.

Now I come from an area where some of the first marketing boards in the province were initiated. The B.C. Fruit Board and the B.C. Interior Vegetable Marketing Board were initiated in the Okanagan in the '30s. Those initial programmes were very necessary at that time, Mr. Speaker, because over and above the normal market problems and the problems of the Depression in the '30s, the growers faced a tremendous loss in their product. Many will

remember — the Minister of Agriculture — that people talked about "a cent a pound or on the rocks."

They had a problem. They were at the whim of the transportation industry and the wholesalers. They fought among each other at a time when the market didn't support any product, not necessarily one that had the additional problem of a short shelf-life and a problem of spoilage and which was subject to climatic conditions.

When the first central-desk selling was brought in for tree fruits, it was necessary in this country. Our growers in the Okanagan had been taking a beating. When they were shipping as far away as New York at that time, they were subject to claims that they didn't have the ability on their own as an individual grower and shipper to be able to fight the claim or go to New York to fight with the big food broker at that time over whether the claim was responsible or not.

At that time our fruit-growers in the Okanagan and British Columbia, some of them, took claims of 75 per cent. Individually they didn't have the opportunity or the funding or the ability to successfully fight these claims or question them. An organization was necessary.

At that time, when this was formed, the single-desk selling was an answer for our fruit industry, as it was for vegetables. From this legislation the Okanagan growers became successful. They became successful through the '40s and, in fact, the late '40s were one of the most profitable times they had. This early legislation led up to the Natural Products Marketing Act, which was passed in 1948. It is the one we're replacing today. It is a marketing Act that covers quite a few different products. It covers the Broiler Marketing Board, the Coast Vegetable Marketing Board, the Cranberry Marketing Board, the B.C. Egg Marketing Board, the B.C. Interior Vegetable Marketing Board — mushrooms, oysters and so on. Yet today we're dealing with solutions that were developed in the '30s to meet a different set of conditions than we meet today.

For the growers and the producers, through communication, through more opportunity to hire inspectors or to get people to act as their agents on these matters of frivolous claims or dishonest claims from the people that receive the fruit — the fruit brokers or the food brokers in far-away places — today this can't happen. The situation that was there in the '30s is not the same situation that faces us today. We're still concerned about single-desk selling in the Okanagan, and we're still concerned on the best way to go. In fact, the Minister himself conducted a plebiscite last year as to whether the single-desk selling was the proper way to go.

Even the growers themselves, Mr. Speaker, who are questioning now their own marketing boards, only voted 62 percent in favour of the existing system. That meant that nearly 40 per cent of the growers who participate in and are covered by the B.C. Fruit Board had some difference of opinion on how they could best be served and how the market could best be served. When we look at this legislation, as the Minister

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says, we have to look not only at how it serves the producer, but how it serves the consumer. In fact, in assessing this whole Act, which is a replacement for the Act of 1948, we have to assess and ask ourselves: does this Act help the farmer and help the producer? Does this Act serve the interests of the consumer? Will the Act clear up the many difficulties and possibilities for abuse of marketing boards — a subject which has been discussed in this House earlier in this session in the spring of this year?

Will these marketing boards discourage food production at a time when there are apparent world shortages? It's been brought up time and time again that the very fact of the marketing boards and the tight control they have over the production of food actually discourages the growers from increasing their supply. It acts as a deterrent from expanding the development of their own product.

[Mr. G.H. Anderson in the chair.]

I know the Minister used some figures earlier this year in discussing the B.C. tree fruits to say: "No, as a matter of fact, the marketing board hadn't discouraged the planting of trees; that in fact the number of plantings had come up in the last 20 years." But in reality, at the same time, he was arguing on Bill 42 that agricultural land was

going out of production in the Okanagan.

Now it is true that we are shipping less pounds of fruit out of the Okanagan than we were. We do not have the same market that we had in the late '40s; we do not produce the same amount, because our costs have gone up and the marketing board there hasn't been able to solve the problem yet of relating cost to selling. In fact, the Minister himself almost admits the failure of that marketing board to meet the needs of the producer, because he's had to bring in a guaranteed income assurance plan.

So perhaps we're attacking the problem of meeting the needs of the producer in the wrong way. Perhaps the authority of marketing boards and the restriction on production that it brings, Mr. Speaker, is the wrong way to attack this problem in light of the needs and the conditions of today.

We talked a little while ago — in fact, the Minister brought it up — about the hungry people of the world. Right now in Rome there's a world food conference going on. The United Nations is meeting to discuss the very subject of food production in the world.

One of the startling facts that comes out — perhaps not to all of us, but to many — is that Canada is one of the few nations left in the world that still produces a surplus of food. We have the opportunity, along with the United States, to be the breadbasket for the world in the supply of grains and in other agricultural products as well. Yet here we are, while this important conference is going on and while the federal Minister, Mr. MacEachen, is over there expected to make a very dramatic statement, if we can believe the news reports, as to what Canada will do to participate and to help solve the food problems of the world with commitments, still discussing the solutions for dealing with producers that were developed in the '30s and refined in the '40s.

Today, with a different set of market conditions and different concerns in the world, we still just have an elaboration, an expansion of the same old solution — and that's an expansion of another board — more authority, but no incentive there to increase production.

We're not working with marketing legislation. The Minister didn't cover the very necessary task that we have to help solve the problems of the Third World, the emerging nations, who right now, in Bangladesh and other areas, are starving.

When he talks about 28 million eggs and tries to rationalize it down that if you multiply it...that it really isn't very much if you take it into dozens or cases, he isn't serving his purpose very well, because any food spoilage — one egg, a dozen eggs — at this time is a tragedy in this country and in the world. It's the same with the calf slaughter, dramatic as it was. Surely there must be a better way to bring to the attention of parliament the need for a debate — surely.

We have predator legislation. The ranchers in this province are concerned about predator legislation to protect far fewer calves than the loss of 600 that are slaughtered wilfully. Yet we take extreme precaution to patrol our ranges, and worry about predators on our calves. It's one of the problems we deal with, yet you can't brush off lightly the wilful destruction of 600 calves. It's something that can't be rationalized.

Yet here we are today with all of this being discussed in the world, all the problems of under-supply, overpopulation, and we're discussing a mechanism, a series of mechanisms that were developed at a time when that wasn't the primary problem, at a time when transportation and communication...a time when growers had no opportunity to fend for themselves and legislation was necessary, very authoritative legislation that gave them powers beyond what we're prepared to give any other segment of society. In fact, the type of powers that we've argued in other Acts in this Legislature, Acts outside of the control of the Legislature to boards and commissions. Yet I know that this Act, as in 1948.... Many of the extreme powers that are still in it were in the previous Act.

What we've done now, rather than a general reappraisal, rather than a commitment to study, to look for a positive solution at this time, meeting all the requirements, those of producers, those of the market and those of the world, we've just expanded

on the same old system. More boards, more people, more authority.

In fact, we're going overboard on boards. In fact, the people of B.C. are getting "board" to death. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I think the only thing with these boards is that they become all aboard for the gravy train for the fellow travelers and friends and appointees of the government. These boards aren't elected. There's no guarantee in here that this new expansion of the board will be representative of the producers; no guarantee that it will be representative of the consumers; no guarantee that they even have to be Canadian citizens or living in British Columbia. We're talking about a B.C. Natural Products Marketing Act to deal with B.C., and yet there's no guarantee, no requirement, no statement that they have to be Canadian citizens or live in B.C., that they have to have some knowledge of the production or be part of the market.

How will they be appointed? Will it be the type of appointments we see on other boards and commissions from the government? Will it be the opportunity for them to reward, and not in meeting the needs of the market and the producer in this province? Will it just be a haven for those few who are left that haven't already got a job somewhere?

That's what we have to be concerned with, Mr. Speaker, because I would have thought that that Minister of Agriculture, with the speeches that he's made in this Legislature before, would have some and made an attempt and presented legislation that looked at new possibilities, at innovations, that looked at new ways to meet the needs of the people of British Columbia.

I would have thought that he would have dealt with his earlier motion that he has on the order paper — one that surprises me because he has a motion.... Here he brings in this legislation, this new bill, the big change, while he still has a motion on the order paper to authorize the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture to investigate the operations and management and policies of the B.C. Egg Marketing Board and the Broiler Marketing Board and the Turkey Marketing Board. I would have thought that if the Minister was concerned with marketing boards in the spring, how they function and if they were meeting the needs of the producer and the consumer and the people of B.C., that we would have had just such a study, that when he had this motion to refer it to the Standing Committee on Agriculture he wouldn't have circumvented this very committee, that he would have chosen to have them act as the instrument to receive presentations from the consumers of B.C. We wouldn't have had to witness what we've witnessed recently, both in Canada and the province — open confrontation of conflicting statements between Ministers in the same cabinet and the same government, where it appears that we're on a collision course between the Agriculture Minister and the Consumer Services Minister (Hon. Ms. Young).

Now, there's no reason why at this time if the Minister was interested in a new Act, in reviewing the situation, that the situation isn't compatible, that we can't serve both the consumer and the producer. It's necessary that if we're reviewing the Act, introducing new legislation, it shouldn't just be for the sake of legislation for legislation's sake, Mr. Minister; it should be that you're definitely concerned about arriving at solutions to the problem. Rather than sit with your back to the Minister of Consumer Affairs, why not have her participate in the discussion, rather than the open conflict that develops and has developed in the newspapers?

I was interested earlier when the Minister was talking about what the relative worth of different products were, because just in the *Vancouver Sun* of November 2, we had a very interesting chart about how you could relate products to hours of time worked rather than to dollars, because in this inflationary period dollars don't compare. Forty cents a pound today isn't worth the same as 40 cents a pound the other day.

He's right in saying that it now takes 31.1 minutes to earn a pound of sirloin steak on the average wages, whereas in 1949 it took 47.5 minutes. He's right — in most commodities, lawn food as well as food, all our people are better off. For gasoline, for haircuts, for telephones, electricity, there has been dramatic changes in what we earn through our labours — if you're fortunate enough in B.C. today to be one of the employed.

But there is a dramatic illustration contained with this: it shows some areas where this hasn't happened. It shows that while the consumer may be, because of the climate of prosperity and the prosperity that exists, getting a

better break in buying the food products and none-food and services, he isn't getting a better break in the cost of government.

Now this one table only gives us income tax, but it is a good guide in comparison with other government services as to how they have accelerated to the consumers of this province, because taxpayers are consumers, Mr. Speaker. Income tax, which used to take 0.2 parts of a week in 1949 for the average person to pay his income tax, it now takes 8.1 weeks of labour to pay your income tax. This is the cost of government, yet what does this Minister do in going to solve the problems of introducing new marketing legislation? He talks about expanding the cost of government as it will administer the marketing in B.C.

More employees: we have the employees, the expanded board from three to 10; we have the marketing commission; we have the opportunity for them to hire staff; we have the opportunity for the executive council to designate positions, almost like

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provincial officers. Where it says: "The Provincial board, marketing board, or commission, with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, may, subject to terms and conditions he may impose, designate any person or class of persons to exercise, on behalf of the Provincial board..." and so on, we have an unlimited opportunity for hiring and expanding bureaucracy. We're going to get into a bureaucratic control — the old same solution of more bureaucracy, more people, more government, more cost, either directly or indirectly, onto the cost of production. More government and less benefit.

How can you rationalize that, when there could be a more simplistic approach? We are short; we can't possibly overproduce food in this province, in this country. We can't possibly overproduce food.

If the federal government, and if the United Nations, now is talking about a world food bank — and whether the federal government is talking about a national food bank that works as the intermediary before it goes to the world food bank — it's impossible, with the shortage of food, for us to overproduce. Yet we're still talking about a system that may bring restrictions on production. Mr. Speaker, in this day, in 1974, the solutions of the '30s are just as inappropriate here as they are for the other solutions from the '30s that you've developed in other areas of government today.

The day of the big stick and control for control's sake instead of meeting the needs of today, is not relevant in British Columbia or in Canada or in the world. Yet here we talk about a whole new board: supercrats. These supercrats are going to be able, if we take the Act as it deals between the marketing commission and the marketing board and the executive council, to do almost anything in British Columbia. They can go into production, and they can go into distribution. In fact, in the marketing commission a new addition is processing. They can go into processing and, presumably, wholesaling and retailing.

I would think that with this government's penchant for getting involved in what's normally been the private sector, that in the future instead of Super Valu, it will be "supercrats" dealing with the people, but the savings just won't be super. There won't be savings for our people; it will be added costs, indirectly through government and directly onto the product.

I think we've got to be concerned, too, that the new marketing commission is probably, in the outline of its services, going into an area that was normally served by the department itself, Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister, because in the guide to agricultural services they have a Markets and Statistics Branch; they have a market commissioner, a director of food promotion, a food consultant, a market intelligence officer, food scientist extension officer — all of these services that we expect from the normal department of government. Now is this commitment to boards and services, and committees and commissions outside government taking away the very authority of the service itself? Is it taking away, without discussion, those decisions and that aid to our people from the professional civil servants, who have served the province well in the past and will continue to serve well in the future? It's a category that serves in our whole style of government. We must have confidence in our civil service, confidence in the employees, that they will serve any government in their service to the province and to the country.

Yet here we see the same in this Act, as we have seen in other Acts in this Legislature, the creation of boards that take more and more of these controls out of the control of the department.

What else do they do, Mr. Speaker? They also take the accountability to this Legislature with them. They now become only accountable to the executive council. It's difficult for this Legislature to deal with those areas that aren't directly within the department. In fact, it is of concern to all of us, and it is a concern in other provinces as well, that governments today seem to be taking more and more authority to the executive branch and those who it may determine report directly to it. No more reporting to the Legislature. No more use of the regular departments of government, which are accountable through their Minister to this Legislature.

These are the things that concern all of us. It concerns me too, because of the very trend and the attitude of this government for getting into areas normally considered within the private sector that through competition, I believe, can serve the people and the province as an entity well. They may use this legislation, legislation that has mostly been here before, with the addition of being able to enter these very services — wholesaling, retailing and other areas.

It is no good the Minister giving us his denial, that it is not his intention to get into the distribution of food or into retailing. I can remember in the House when he said that it was not the intention of his department to get into farming, or the intention of the Land Commission. But here the Land Commission just the other day announced it has bought a ranch and is going to operate it. This isn't the normal operation that would be carried on under the greenbelt fund. This is now the Land Commission moving into a new area of operating farming in this province.

Now if we want to talk about farming and how it operates, it will not work either in the corporate sense or in collective farming or the state farms that were established in both China and the Soviet Union. Corporate farms in the United States have been a failure, and the state corporate farms in other countries have also been failures. None of them have

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ever been able to get the production or solve the problems of food.

In the United States, in California, in the last 10 years the Del Monte corporation and others.... A lot of them have been selling off the individual farm holdings, because you can't run from a big bureaucracy, whether it's in the private field or in the public field. You can't run farming from a state monopoly or a business monopoly. Farming is something that is individualistic and seems to depend on the individual and the family and the small unit. It needs that extra attention, that extra dedication to survive in the market as it has existed.

We know the failure of the kulaks that Stalin tried in Russia. They were spectacular failures. Their great state farms did not produce food, just as the great corporate farms in the United States have been a failure also. In fact, those corporate farms that have been tried in the Okanagan where I am, Mr. Speaker, and in the Fraser Valley, from some of the corporations.... To all intents and purposes, most of them have failed. Even the wineries that have had their own grape plantings have gradually been disposing of them. Those acreages have not been profitable until they've gone into the initiative that can be shown by private farming. They haven't been successful.

I don't think that it should be the intention of the government to entertain the thought of going into any sort of farming or retailing or wholesaling as they could do or as they have started to do under the B.C. Land Commission.

Now we've talked about marketing boards. We've talked about their history, and in this Legislature earlier this year we talked about alternatives. We've heard different Members. I heard the Member for Shuswap (Mr. Lewis); in fact, just the other day I read a report in the paper where he said that marketing boards weren't working. I think that was just in September of 1974. He spoke specifically against them.

Mr. L.A. Williams (West Vancouver–Howe Sound): Someone got his quota too.

Mr. Bennett: I'm sure, because as a British Columbian he's looking for a solution, not just as a producer. He's

not serving his self-interest, when he sits in here, as an egg producer. He's concerned with the consumer, as we all are. He said himself that marketing boards, as they existed right now, were not serving the interests of the producer in B.C. I can't remember exactly, because I can't find the quote, but I think he also said the consumer; and I don't think they are either.

I think the Minister had the germ of an idea when earlier this year he talked about referring it to the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture. I think the Minister at that time had the opportunity for the committee — a committee which the Premier has said will sit all the time to serve the needs of British Columbia — to invite submissions not only from producers but from consumers — and not only from consumers, but from those people who aren't professional consumers, as some people are, or producers, but those people who have something to offer and opinions to develop in the interests of coming up with a satisfactory solution for marketing.

I also think that nowhere during the Minister's speech did he indicate that there were new initiatives being taken with the federal government. I listened carefully. Yet, as I said, it was announced that one of the federal Ministers at the World Food Conference is going to make a major announcement this week with regard to food production and Canada's commitment in the world.

Why would we hurry to rush through a solution that may change? Conditions may change after the Minister makes an announcement. Why would we be in a hurry to rush through this bill at this particular time when it obviously isn't a well-thought-out solution but merely an extension of the old ideas and old solutions of the '30s and the '40s — the old solutions of giving the producers control and authority that you would grant to no other aspect of society?

Those controls were necessary in their day and, in light of a better system coming, may be the only answer today. But I had no assurance from this Minister during his talk or during his presentation of this bill. He gave this House no assurance, Mr. Speaker, that he had given that type of thought before he presented this bill. He gave no assurance to this House that he was prepared to look for new solutions to the problems facing the B.C. producer and consumer.

Instead, it is the same old answer, the same old approach, the same old thing: more boards, more bureaucrats, more supercrats, more authority, more cost, more government, more restrictions on production, higher prices for the consumer. Yet nobody seems to be served.

Our growers and our producers are still caught in a squeeze. They have had to be bailed out — during this inflationary period — with guaranteed-income programmes. The marketing programmes are failing them during this time. They aren't benefiting. They are not benefiting by the system, and neither are the consumers.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

The Minister of Consumer Affairs (Hon. Ms. Young), who I know will be speaking in this debate...

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MR. SPEAKER: Consumer Services — No Affairs.

Mr. Bennett: My apologies, Mr. Speaker.

I think that there shouldn't be this type of conflict that has developed on the federal and provincial levels. It is a unique situation in Canada today where you have on both levels of government the Consumer Affairs and the Consumer Services — the Consumer Affairs on the federal level and Consumer Services on the provincial level — fighting with their counterparts, the Ministers of Agriculture in this country and this province. Yet there should be compatibility; there should be a solution of mutual benefit.

Interjection.

Mr. Bennett: I welcome the Minister of Health (Hon. Mr. Cocke) back.

Interjection.

Mr. Bennett: For these reasons, and for the reason of more discussion with the federal government, and for the reason that we need more input into this legislation, I would like to move that the motion be amended by deleting the word "now" and substituting therefore the words "six months hence" on this bill, Mr. Speaker.

I believe that this bill should be referred to the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture. I think we should have the type of inquiry that the Minister asked for earlier in his motion. We should have the type of inquiry that will allow the input from the Minister of Consumer Services (Hon. Ms. Young) in this province. I think we should have that type of discussion in British Columbia. We shouldn't be tied into old solutions for new problems. We should be prepared to meet the challenge not only in British Columbia, but our challenge as part of Canada in meeting the food supply for the world.

Mr. Speaker, I present this motion.

Mr. Speaker: If I may suggest, I think the Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bennett) would want the motion to read: "On this day six months hence." Is that correct? The motion appears to be in order. Is there any further debate on the amendment?

Mr. D.M. Phillips (South Peace River): I'd like to speak in support of this amendment to the motion, because I feel after serving on the agricultural committee last year, and knowing the feelings of some of the people who were involved in food production in this province, that they have not really had the input that they should have in a bill such as this.

What we need, Mr. Speaker, is certainly more time to allow the farmers of this province and the farmers who have served conscientiously on the producer boards in this province for years to have a say and to get back to us and let us know their reaction to this superboard bill.

From information I have, Mr. Speaker, as late as last Thursday, the Poultry Board, for instance, did not know that this superboard bill was going to be introduced into this Legislature at this time.

From information I have, the cattlemen did not know that this superboard bill was going to be introduced at this time. If this is more of the open government that the Minister has been talking about, more of the cooperation that he was going to seek from the farmers in this province, I don't think, Mr. Speaker, this is a very good example of it.

I would like to know why the rush to get this bill through the Legislature at this time, introduced on Friday and debated here this afternoon? I wonder why the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Stupich) wants to rush this bill through the Legislature. Is it because, Mr. Speaker, he changed his mind since he brought in Motion 26 on the order paper, to have the House authorize the Select Standing Committee, on prorogation of the House last June, to investigate the operation, management policies and activities of the B.C. Egg Marketing Board, the B.C. Broiler Marketing Board and the B.C. Turkey Marketing Board?

The Minister went at some length in introducing the bill to talk about world food shortages, and the slaughter of calves, and the destruction, Mr. Speaker, of 28 million eggs, but he didn't say one word when he introduced this bill today about the motion which is still before this Legislature to allow the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture to do their investigation into these boards. Instead of that, this superboard bill is brought into the Legislature. It certainly was not referred to the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture — no mention of it — and yet we heard about how the committees were going to function, how they were going to study all aspects of agriculture. So, Mr. Speaker, this leads us to question why is there such a rush to get this particular bill through the House.

Now we have seen, Mr. Speaker — and the reason we question this is because of past experience. I remember

in the spring Legislature when we asked to have Bill 31 hoisted for six months.

Mr. G.F. Gibson (North Vancouver-Capilano): They wouldn't do it, and they should have.

Mr. Phillips: No way. No, this bill had to get through the House because they wanted to get the far-reaching implications of this bill foisted onto the mining industry, to give the people of this province more results from the natural resources of this province. Mr. Speaker, less than three months after Bill 31 was rushed through the House, the Minister of

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Mines (Hon. Mr. Nimsick) did a complete about-face and implemented some of the very recommendations that the opposition wanted him to do in the first place.

I realize it was too little, too late, but we have seen this government implement legislation before in a rush — conceived in a rush, pushed through in a rush — and we know that they do not have the capacity to foresee the results of their legislation. It has been proven time and time again, Mr. Speaker, in the last 24 months since this government took power. Even legislation that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Stupich) has introduced himself — for instance, the bill which supplements agricultural income — he took to himself all of the powers of that bill without coming back to the Legislature. We will never know what the entire results of the legislation will be, but he could not foresee the cost to the taxpayers of this province of his own legislation. I would predict, Mr. Speaker, that there has been insufficient study done by the Minister on this particular legislation. I would like to question, Mr. Speaker: has the Member for Shuswap (Mr. Lewis) pushed the Minister to have this legislation introduced at this time and bulldozed through this Legislature to make it into law?

We have seen the case, Mr. Speaker, of where... I won't say that the House has been completely misled on legislation in the past, but I remember specifically during debate on Bill 42 where I implied that the government would be going into the actual production of food in this province; that there would be state-run farms. I remember at that time, Mr. Speaker, the hue-and-cry from the Minister of Agriculture, "No, no. This is not the case." But the legislation was bulldozed through without everybody having the proper time, or the Minister of Agriculture being able to tell this House what the entire results of that legislation would be.

What do we have today, Mr. Speaker? The Land Commission buys a ranch and the Land Commission are going into the production of beef cattle — a complete about-face from what we were told would not happen under the legislation of Bill 42 when the Land Commission was set up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Excuse me. I wonder if the Hon. Member would try to keep his remarks pretty well close to the amendment that has been offered to the House, in that it deals with why this bill should be, in effect, hoisted or put over for six months.

Interjection.

Mr. Phillips: Well, Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate your comment, but I'm trying to point out to you...

Hon. D.G. Cocke (Minister Of Health): You're trying to mislead everyone.

Mr. Phillips: ...why we have to ask the Minister to set this bill aside for six months because of what has happened in the past.

An. Hon. Member: In the past.

Mr. Phillips: Yes, in the past. And there's the Minister of ICBC....

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Mr. Phillips: He should be well experienced in knowing that he should do more study before he brings in

legislation, Mr. Speaker. He, of all the Ministers in this House, should know.

Now the Minister spoke at quite some length on the destruction of calves, which really I don't think had any bearing on the creation of a superboard to rule over....

Interjection.

Mr. Phillips: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture knows full well that dairymen have in the past, many times, slaughtered the young calves as soon, as they're born. This has been going on, off and on through history, since time began.

An Hon. Member: It's not a Roman holiday.

Mr. Phillips: It's not a Roman holiday, I realize that. But, Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Agriculture was introducing his bill, he said nothing about the destruction of hundreds of full-grown cattle in this province by the predators — not one word of mention. Neither did he say anything while he was talking about this — and I don't know whether it had any direct relation to the bill or not — neither did he say anything about the \$40,000 damage done to the honey industry of Vancouver Island by the bears.

I didn't notice that the Minister was taking the Minister of Recreation and Conservation (Hon. Mr. Radford) to task on this dreadful waste.

It concerns me, Mr. Speaker. This is the reason we need more input from the very people that are going to be involved. From the information I have garnered in the short time since this bill has been introduced, there has not been the input from the farmers and the producers and the people who serve on the very boards that this bill intends to rule over. There has been no input from these people.

It leads me to believe that one of the purposes of this bill is to gradually take over — by the government — more control of the means of production of foodstuffs in this province. Also, it is another means

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of taking over more control by the government of the distribution of foodstuffs in this province.

Now the Minister must have known he was going to bring this legislation in. I ask him why he did not consult with the very people this legislation is going to deal with.

During the introduction of the bill, Mr. Speaker, the Minister said that he was concerned about the producers and the producers who were on marketing boards. Yet there was no assurance given by the Minister in the introduction of this bill that there would even be a majority of producers on the board. He went on at great length to tell us that there would be consumer representation on this board. I guess that sort of makes the Minister of Consumer Services (Hon. Ms. Young) feel good. But how do you think it makes the producers feel — the very people who are producing — when there is no guarantee that they will even be in the majority on the board?

As a matter of fact, in the Minister's press release the other day, after this legislation was introduced, he said — and I think that I can quote him correctly: "We may have some producers on the board."

Now I want the producers of this province to be able to get back to the Minister and have the time for him to give them assurance that indeed they are going to be in the majority on this board.

There is another reason, Mr. Speaker, why we would like to have this bill set aside. It is because of the past history of this government in setting up boards with government appointees. I know that after the last federal election there are a lot of defeated NDP candidates around; I suppose they are looking for a job. Mr. Speaker, is this really the reason for the rush to get this legislation set up — so that we can find a job for those defeated candidates from the last federal election?

Mr. J.R. Chabot (Columbia River): The Frank Howard bill.

Mr. Phillips: Yes, he'll be on the board; I'll make that prediction — at a handsome salary, and a salary that will be paid for by the consumers. But, Mr. Speaker, we want consumer input. I did not hear one single, solitary word about the benefits to the consumer of this bill when the Minister spoke at length in introduction today. Not one word, not one solitary fact did the Minister of Agriculture give us as to how this bill will benefit the consumer. There was not one word by the Minister of Agriculture, when introducing this bill, as to how this super-bureaucracy would benefit the producer. So who is it going to benefit?

This is why we need more time. It is so the Minister can think up some excuses as to who is going to benefit from this bureaucracy he is establishing here today. Is it going to benefit the consumers?

Please, Mr. Speaker, have the Minister of Agriculture tell us in what direction and how.

Is it going to benefit the producer? Have the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker.... Give him time to explain to the producers how they are going to benefit.

I would also like time for the consumer to be told how much this new super-board is going to cost him. The Minister of Consumer Services (Hon. Ms. Young) has stated that it is the consumer who pays for marketing boards. The cost of this marketing board.... I don't know what it's going to be. But it's another board with 10 members that will have travelling expenses, that will have to be housed. Who is going to pay for this?

If I take the word of the Minister of Consumer Services, it will most certainly be the consumer. If the consumer isn't paying for it, it will certainly be coming out of general revenue, and then the taxpayer will be paying for it; and who is the taxpayer but the consumer? They're the same people.

This government gives little heed to the way it spends the taxpayers' dollar and then charges it back to them.

There has been no mention by the Minister of Agriculture about what kind of marketing board he is going to set up in the lumber industry — not one mention. Yet this is clearly in the bill that the Minister of Agriculture, under the definition of a natural product, can create a board or scheme to look after the sale and distribution of all the forest products in this province. Yet the Minister did not mention that.

Sure, the Minister can say: "Oh, yes, but it was in the old bill." But the old bill did not give the cabinet the power to set up the scheme unless they were self-initiated by the producers themselves.

An Hon. Member: There's a big difference.

Mr. Phillips: Yes, you had better believe that there's a big difference.

Has the Minister of Agriculture discussed this with the lumber industry in this province? Are they even aware of it? Is this one of the reasons why this bill is being rushed through this Legislature today, before the lumber industry become aware that this government can take over the distribution and selling of lumber products?

But there's the problem now, even different to what it was two years ago: now we must realize that the government is in the manufacturing business — not only of lumber products, but of poultry products and other agricultural products. I can concede that where there is a government-owned-and-operated manufacturing process, there could be no scheme to allow them a free market, no curtailment on their production. But over here where private industry and

private enterprise reign supreme the cabinet has the power to initiate a scheme which, in essence, could control their production, put limits on their production, hamper their distribution and curtail that industry so they could move in and take over.

We definitely need for all segments of society to know what all the ramifications of this piece of legislation are before it is passed through this House. This is one of the reasons why it is absolutely mandatory that this bill be suspended for six months: to allow the input that is needed and to allow all segments of those in the production of both agricultural products and lumber products to have their say.

It is the purpose of this bill to give the government the clout over marketing boards that they have been talking about. Instead of the Minister or the Premier threatening marketing boards in his office, this will no longer be necessary. Now this board will give the cabinet the clout they need. There won't have to be more threatening meetings in the Premier's office, as so well laid out by our chicken-and-egg war last spring.

Is this, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill, to give the cabinet a club over the head of all of the producers in the marketing board?

This bill could be a slap in the face to every farmer in this province; a slap in the face to every producer in this province; a slap in the face to every man who has ever served on any marketing agency in this province, because you were in essence, Mr. Speaker, telling them that they can't rule their own affairs, that we're going to have....

Interjection.

Mr. Phillips: Yes, and the Attorney-General says "Hear, hear."

So this is more government intervention; this is more of saying to the people of this province: "You do not have the intelligence to govern yourself." This will be the axe that will be hung over their heads! more power to the Minister of Agriculture; more government control; more bureaucracy which will cost the consumers of this province more dollars. And the Minister of Agriculture didn't say anything to the contrary. Never did he mention what the benefits would be to the consumers of this province.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture goes ahead and sets up an interior poultry processing plant. I don't know whether, again, he didn't consult with the producers in that area, but now they're unhappy because they are not having majority of representation on the board.

This new superboard that will be established, I predict, will not have a majority of representation either. No, Mr. Speaker, this is just more government bureaucracy.

I cannot foresee any great or immediate benefits to the consumer. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I support the motion to have this bill hoisted for six months so that we can have some of the open government that the cabinet and the Members of the government have been talking about.

But it seems to me they talk one thing and do something else, because we haven't had the consultation with the people involved that they promised us before they became government.

Will this solve the problem, Mr. Speaker? Will it help the consumer? Will it help the producer? These are the questions that we want answered, and the only people that can answer are the people who are directly involved. And I don't want to see this bill rushed through the House without having the proper feedback that is necessary from those involved.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: Mr. Speaker, just very briefly, the government will not accept this attempt to buy time for the official opposition to make up its mind how it wants to vote on the legislation, which is what they're asking for — six months so they can think about it and decide whether or not they want to move one way or the other.

Some Hon. Members: No way. No way.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: The seconder of the motion who asked me for the delay to give them time, said that there has not been discussion with the people who are going to be directly affected — the marketing board — and, of course, he's quite wrong again. But being wrong never stops that particular Member from speaking. The contents of

this bill have been discussed with some of the marketing boards over the past eight months.

An Hon. Member: Not on those boards.

Hon. Mr. Stupich: The bill itself.... And it was available to any of the marketing boards that wanted to get into the discussion. Only those who were having trouble with the community, with the official opposition, with the press — they were the ones who were most interested in some changes in legislation. The cattlemen wanted a commission-type of organization; the fruit growers were having trouble; the egg producers were having trouble. All of these people wanted some changes in the legislation.

They had an opportunity to make representation. They saw some of the material that was prepared, but as the Member well knows, the message bill itself could not be discussed with any of the boards, nor could the precise hour and day of introducing the bill in this House be something that was going to be discussed with the marketing board. Surely that is something that has to be left to the

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Lieutenant-Governor — the timing of the presentation. But all of the boards have had some eight months in which to make representation for this legislation.

The government does not accept this overt attempt on the part of the official opposition to give them time to make up their mind once again — an administration, of which he was a member, that wanted 20 years to decide whether or not it was going to do anything for anybody anytime and in 20 years couldn't decide to do anything for anybody anytime. The new administration took over, an administration that is ready to take action...

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Hon. Mr. Stupich: ...and in this legislation will be taking action.

The government does not accept this motion, Mr. Speaker.

Interjections.

An Hon. Member: Could we have that Member moved back in the corner again?

Mrs. P.J. Jordan (North Okanagan): I don't believe you're going to have to move the Minister of Agriculture to a corner; by the sounds of that tirade, his position's going to move him into a corner pretty soon, in his own interest, because, Mr. Speaker, the debate in this House to this point...

Interjections.

Mrs. Jordan: ...to my knowledge....

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order! Order, please. Would the Hon. Members allow the Member to proceed?

Mrs. Jordan: The Leader of the Opposition got up and pointed out some very good reasons why there was concern about this bill. I don't recall him becoming irate, or passing insults. The second speaker for the official opposition was remarkably calm in his presentation, for him, and all of a sudden, without any opportunity for the other opposition parties to speak, the Minister of Agriculture jumped to his feet in a tirade and attempts to close this debate. I find this most difficult to understand.

An Hon. Member: You just had to tell him what the message was.

Mrs. Jordan: Yes, indeed he did. The Minister of Consumer Affairs (Hon. Ms. Young) and I were competing for a place on the floor in this debate. But I noticed, after the Minister's tirade, that she sat down. I didn't offer to stand up, I sat quietly and expected her to do so — wanting to defer to her as the Minister, and give her first position.

But one must wonder if, in fact, the Member for Shuswap (Mr. Lewis) wasn't going to stand up and speak and perhaps bring forth some very factual arguments, some very real argument, as to what might be done for the consumer's interest and the producer's interest in this province. Maybe he was afraid that the Member for Comox (Ms. Sanford) might happen to speak and remind the House of her strong position in previous debate, opposing marketing boards, suggesting that they should be disbanded and a number of other colourful suggestions which seemed to have no substance in terms of serving the interest of the consumers or the producers in this province.

Or perhaps the Minister was concerned that the Premier himself might stand on his feet and repeat some of the charges that he has made against marketing boards before he became Premier, and also in his office on a confidential basis since he's been Premier.

The tirade that the Minister responded with, in response to the Member for South Peace River's (Mr. Phillips) suggestion that there was some reason for this bill to be hastened to the House, certainly makes me stop and think that there might well be some substance to what that Member suggested. To close this debate is going to give many producers in this province the idea that perhaps the Minister is indeed trying to force this bill through the House in a hurry. That in itself, Mr. Speaker, should be sufficient reason to hold the bill over so that there can be proper dialogue.

I agree with the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bennett) when he brought forth the fact that there is indeed a meeting going on in Rome where the federal government has announced that they will bring forth dramatic, and hopefully, effective new policies for the world food situation, as it relates to production in Canada. And I would ask why British Columbia doesn't have a representative there.

If the Minister, as he says, is intent on truly solving the problems of wise and profitable use of agricultural land in British Columbia, which is now frozen, and the farmer is frozen to his land, and if on the other side he says he is indeed interested that the consumer in British Columbia has the best quality food at a reasonable price, surely it is only proper that before rushing through such a bill with such extensive powers, we should hear what comes out of this conference and should hear, indeed, what the federal Minister has to say.

Of all the junkets that have been taken by these government Ministers to China, to Japan, the Middle

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East, the Far East — all at taxpayers' expense — surely it would have been prudent and wise use of taxpayers' money to have had a member of the agricultural department attending this conference.

He could phone the Minister of Agriculture in order that the Minister of Agriculture would have had the latest information, and then be able to decide whether or not he was going to bring the bill in or not. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, in asking to have this bill laid over, one can't forget the comments that I certainly heard made by the Minister of Agriculture as I was driving to Victoria last Wednesday, when he went on the air and said that he was contemplating some legislation to do with the British Columbia Natural Products Marketing Board, but that he really didn't know whether he'd bring it in during this session or not. It depended on whether the legislative slate for the session was crowded.

When we got here, Mr. Speaker, we found there was no legislative slate. So we must ask the question, and the producers are asking the question: did indeed the Minister of Agriculture bring this bill in even more hastily than he had planned? Did the Premier pick up the phone and say, "Davie, baby, we've got to have some legislation. We've called all these people down here to debate serious problems, but we're not ready to debate them, so you put in your bill"? This is another question that comes to mind.

If the bill was laid over, the Minister of Agriculture would have ample opportunity to dispel any concern that

he was either rushing this bill through, as may well be confirmed by his irate, rapid-fire action and his agitation, or if, in fact, he was forced to bring the bill in prematurely by the Premier of this province because the Premier's own, and government's own Legislative programme on very serious matters was not yet prepared.

It's interesting that the Minister of Agriculture talks in terms of wanting new solutions and has brought in an old solution; that he considers that an investigation or a study into production and costing of foods in British Columbia is not imminent; in fact, it's not important, it's not a priority subject. The Minister of Consumer Affairs (Hon. Ms. Young) has repeatedly, since taking office, tried to exercise in accord with her responsibilities some airing and some responsibility to the consumer of this province, but repeatedly she has been shot down by her own colleagues.

Mr. Chabot: They've even silenced her now.

Mrs. Jordan: Indeed, you're quite right, they silenced her in this debate.

This Minister of Consumer Affairs who was set up, who is costing the taxpayers money in her own position, and her staff — and I'm sure the taxpayers don't object to this, if this Minister can carry out her responsibilities. She was very concerned about the high cost of sugar, and I praise her for bringing this matter forward when there was a sudden jump in the price. But then the poor Minister finds that, oh no, that's in the federal jurisdiction.

Mr. Bennett: She says all monopolies should be investigated — ICBC.

Mrs. Jordan: Indeed. You're getting ahead of my speech, but I'll go into it now. This is a very serious question, because the Minister of Consumer Affairs has repeatedly said that all monopolies should be investigated, and I suggest there's no one in this House who would wish to support any monopoly that was not in the best interest of the consumer and fair marketing.

But she has been frustrated by the powers that this government has invested in outside bodies. ICBC, and we must mention it here because it's quite possible that the powers that are invested in this bill for this supercrat board could very well have the same effect on the consumer that ICBC is having. That should be studied, Mr. Speaker. But there is no private company in the Province of British Columbia that could carry out the questionable business practices, the sloppy management and the disregard for public interest that ICBC has that would not be investigated by this government, or any other government, if it was as common knowledge. Yet the Minister of Consumer Affairs is frustrated by her own government. This is important here, Mr. Speaker, because we see in this supercrat board the potential of another body that is beyond the courts of British Columbia, that is beyond the power of this Legislature, and is very much beyond the power of the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

This is a matter of great concern to producers and consumers alike. It's a matter that could be well improved upon if this bill was held over. Why not let the public say whether or not they would like such boards, such super-board as the Land Commission and this commission and ICBC, subject to the careful and responsible scrutiny of the Minister of Consumer Affairs? What could be fairer than fair?

Interjections.

Mrs. Jordan: This board reflects the concern that has been expressed by the civil liberties people in British Columbia when they have, in fact, sent one of their employees away to study the ramifications of courts being set up that are beyond the jurisdiction of the public courts of Canada. There is the potential for this type of establishment in this board.

It's all very well for the Minister of Agriculture to say, "Oh yes, but those powers were there before." There are added powers, and I agree the powers were

there before, but you have to parallel the potential powers in this bill with the other powers that this government has

incorporated in other bills and how this government has used those powers. And while they are telling the public, "Don't worry. Trust us. We won't use these powers," they have in fact, Mr. Speaker, gone right ahead and done this, often in the name of motherhood, but a motherhood that is now coming home to such a position that it's almost leaving the people of British Columbia as foster children.

Mr. Speaker, the potential powers in this board, when one parallels previous government action in other areas and when one recalls statements that have been made by Members of this government — the Hon. Minister of Human Resources (Hon. Mr. Levi), who made it very clear in his maiden speech as a Minister that his objective was to stamp out every vestige of enterprise in this province. Statements, and I won't attribute them to the Members because it was informal conversation, but statements by members of the agricultural committee made it very clear that they feel the ultimate aim should be to have government control through a board of the internal and external flow of all foodstuffs in British Columbia.

There's been expressed in this House by some Members an almost pathological dislike of any form of enterprise, good or bad, whether it's in the wholesale business or the retail business. Those factors, Mr. Speaker, add to the concern of the opposition, and add strength to the argument that this bill should be held over in order that the Minister can make clear, to producers and consumers alike, what is the real intent of this bill and how far does he intend to go in the utilization of its powers.

In speaking of the real intent of this bill, contrary to what the Minister of Agriculture says that we need time to make up our mind, I've had very close contact with a number of producers and producer groups around the province, as have my colleagues, and there are a number of points that concern us. One, on the basis of the Minister's own statements, some producer groups have been very closely informed of the drafting of this bill and the intent of this bill; other consumer groups haven't been informed. I would pose the question to the Minister: why are you only informing some groups and not the other? What is this game of playing one against the other? Because quite obviously, when one examines the bill and knows the agricultural problems in this province, they'll see that there are very special designations in this bill for very special commodity groups, but which in fact could be empowered and forced upon other commodity groups. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, why were not all commodity groups as fully informed?

The second question I'd like to ask him is: which were the commodity groups that were fully informed, and which were the ones that were left out? But there is information that the commodity groups that were reasonably well informed of the possible content of this bill are under the impression that this bill has but two purposes. One is the updating of the present British Columbia Natural Products Marketing Act and the strengthening of some of the legal forces within that Act in order to take stronger action against dissenting members of any agricultural group who wish to operate outside the group. The second reason that they are led to believe this Act is brought in, and the intent of the Act, is to strictly set up an appeal procedure.

Most of these commodity groups feel from their conversations with the Minister, whether he intended this or not, that the rest of the Act isn't going to be enacted. Many of them feel that the chairman will be a civil servant and will operate very much on a part-time basis.

I see the Minister is looking confused. I appreciate his listening, because, Mr. Minister, this is the impression. This is a very good reason for holding this bill over and having it examined by the people involved. If you as Minister are not aware of these impressions, then I know you would want to see that the misimpression is cleared up before any binding legislation is imposed.

There is a feeling that there would only be appointments to the board if there was a specific complaint laid against a specific commodity group, and that this 10-person commission won't in any way function on any type of permanent basis.

They feel that if they in any way delegate powers to the government which they have been enforcing before, as some groups have, there will be every opportunity to recall that authority or that practical application of those powers. From listening to the Minister, I question very much whether in fact they do fully understand that if they wish to have their authority delegated back to them, this is going to be an extremely complicated procedure.

That's another reason, as I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, why we feel it's important that the Minister hold the bill over. There is this area of concern or misinterpretation or misimpression of what the bill is all about. Unless, of course, the Minister intends to stand up in the House and say that the sole purpose of the bill is to upgrade or update the commodities marketing Act and that there is no way that there will be a permanent board, and tell us the composition of the board.

One of the points we all find most mysterious and which certainly concerns the producers and, I would suspect, concerns the consumers is the appointment of the board. It's extraordinary that a superboard which, in the Minister's words, is to represent the interest of the producer, shows no evidence that it's

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going to be producer-oriented.

There's no question that any marketing board has to make unpleasant decisions, Mr. Speaker, and this board will. They're unpalatable decisions. But I suggest the consumer or producer will accept those decisions in far better grace if he knows that the board making the decisions is not only impartial but that it is knowledgeable. One of the most serious concerns to the producer, I suggest, in this bill will be whether these appointments are knowledgeable people, and whether they understand the practical application of agriculture in this province and the practical problems involved in agriculture. If they have to face an ivory-tower board with people like Professor Forbes on it....

Mr. Chabot: Frank Howard is still with them.

Mrs. Jordan: Frank Howard. He doesn't know very much about farming. He doesn't know much about consuming either, as I understand it.

But there are very few pieces of legislation on the books where it isn't spelled out that representation on a board with such tremendous powers as this will guarantee representation from the groups involved, the producers and the consumers. There's many a bill here dealing with labour and management in which it's spelled out that labour will have so many representatives and management will have so many representatives.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, you are, I think, really debating the bill in principle. The purpose of this exercise, as I understand it, is to have the consideration of the matter entirely held back for six months. The argument has been put by a number of members that it's for the purpose of further study, and other reasons that they gave.

Therefore, it seems inappropriate to study the bill and to debate the terms of the bill at this time. I think the advisability of either not delaying or of postponing it, or of delaying and postponing it is really the matter under discussion, or should be.

Mrs. Jordan: Oh, you're quite right, Mr. Speaker. My point is that if the bill is delayed, this matter of extreme concern to the producers and consumers in British Columbia, which has not been explained, could be studied. There would be an opportunity to amend this bill so that there was a guarantee of fair representation on this board, if it is to exist, for the producer — particularly the producer. I'm just pointing out....

Interjection.

Mrs. Jordan: This is be-nice-to-Mr. Speaker day.

Interjection.

Mrs. Jordan: Yes, I've already had my exercise this morning; I went to swim.

It's rather disturbing to me that your comment on exercise might indeed reflect the thinking of the government. Is it the Minister and the government's thought that any debate on this bill is merely an exercise — an

exercise in futility? This certainly has been their attitude on bills before.

The mining bill, Bill 31, that my colleague mentioned, where this opposition fought and fought and fought and positively suggested and gave relevant reasons as to why that bill should be changed and what the problems were, was obviously an exercise in relevance as far as the government was concerned. They wouldn't act; they denied it. Then they went home and did their homework and found that they had to do what the opposition suggested.

Is this another case of that? Is this another case where the Minister doesn't know what he's doing, doesn't know the powers he's incorporating and doesn't know the discrimination and the possibilities of discrimination that he could set up in this board? Surely not.

Hon. G.R. Lea (Minister Of Highways): Keep calm, Pat.

Mrs. Jordan: Well, it's all right for the Minister of Highways to say, "Keep calm," if he collects his \$40,000-a-year cheque. But I assure him that the producers in this province aren't collecting \$40,000 a year, and they are concerned. There are many consumers in this province who would eat the one egg, who need the one egg that the Minister dismissed so lightly. They don't get \$40,000 a year. They're on fixed incomes, Mr. Minister.

The Minister's desire to put consumers on the board or to involve consumers in the activities of agriculture is very evident in this bill. If we held it over, it would give the producers the opportunity to ask some questions that come to mind.

Now, I don't think that under proper negotiation and proper circumstances, which would take place while the legislative committee was sitting on this bill, they would mind having the consumers understand their business, maybe even be on their board and take part in trying to solve some of their problems.

But the question they're asking — and it must come up in relation to this bill and it should be answered before these powers are imposed — is: is this a forerunner of what the government intends for unions, for example? Does the government intend to legislate consumer representation onto union management?

Interjection.

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Mrs. Jordan: Well, the Minister of Agriculture says it's a good idea. So I take it he's on record as wanting to legislate consumers onto union management. The Teamsters, the IWA, the B.C. Federation of Labour. Perhaps the Minister of Labour (Hon. Mr. King) announced this afternoon that you were going to legislate it.

They're asking if, in fact, the government intends to set up the same type of superboard or superunion or supercraftsmen over all the unions in British Columbia in which there will be no guarantee that organized labour will have any representation or will even have a strong voice on the superboard.

Is this a forerunner of the government considering a superboard over management where they will legislate control of all management's activities in the hands of this board? They can veto their sales; they can veto their prices, with no guarantee to management that there will be fair and strong representation for them.

Is the Minister telling us in this bill that before long the government will be putting consumer representation on the B.C. liquor board? Good idea. I suggested the Member for Vancouver–Point Grey (Mr. McGeer). Is this what the Minister is saying to us?

Is there going to be consumer representation on ICBC?

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, I point out for the second time that you're debating the relative merits of the bill and not the purpose of this particular debate, which is whether it should be delayed six months. Will you kindly address yourself to that proposition?

Mrs. Jordan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My point is that these are the questions that are being asked out of this legislation. If the bill was held over for six months, or until the next session and there were public hearings, the Minister himself would have — the opportunity to explain his position on these concerns.

The public, the consumer, the producers, organized labour would have their opportunity to put their input in before such a powerful Act is enacted. Because, Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a powerful Act, and it could be very helpful in the Minister's opinion, and in our opinion it could be antiquated and very discriminatory; or it could, in fact, just be a sop to get the flak off the Minister's back.

In holding the bill over, the Minister would have a greater opportunity to advise the producers and the consumers in this House about the financing of this board. Is it going to have unlimited access to public funds? Are the producer groups and the present marketing boards going to have to subsidize this board and make a financial contribution to it? What happens to the marketing boards that presently exist when the superboard brings down a decision that they feel is completely unacceptable in their industry and they have to hire more staff — lawyers, accountants — to fight their own superboard? Who is going to bear that cost?

Surely if we are concerned about the cost of foodstuffs to the consumer, we have to recognize that every drain we put on the farmer's income, whether it is through the actions of his board or the actions of this superboard, is going to reflect itself in the higher cost of food to the consumer. If we held the bill over, Mr. Speaker, then the Minister could make this very clear and the producer would have an opportunity to know what he is dealing with.

There are many other comments to be made about the bill, and I believe many other reasons why it should be held over, but I shall save those for the full debate. I would again ask the Minister, through you, Mr. Speaker, to consider the debate that there has been and will be in the House, to consider the concerns, and consider these shadows of concern and doubt that are growing around his handling of this bill, and take the opportunity to fully inform the producers. Let them have the bill. Let them take it to their locals. In our area, the members at large of the Fruit Growers' Association know nothing about the intent of this bill, nothing about the details. Let them know, let them discuss it in their locals; that is what they are for. Then let them discuss it at their annual meeting and vote on it, and bring back a positive or negative decision — whichever they want — to the Minister in this Legislature. Let him take the opportunity to explain why some boards are fully aware of it and others aren't. Let him take the opportunity to clarify why there is a misimpression around this province as to what the real actions of this board are going to be. Let him clarify the costs, and let him, most importantly, listen to the potential for better solutions to a problem which we are all concerned about.

Mr. R.H. McClelland (Langley): I think, in rising in support of this amendment, probably the major reason why this bill should be set aside for six months is because it is like so many other bills that have been brought in by this government: it is so very badly drafted. It's sloppy, it's confusing, and it is very difficult for anyone to understand what the real intent of this government is in connection with this bill.

It is, however, easy to see that there isn't any benefit to the consumer and there isn't any benefit to the producer, and those are the two people with whom we are most concerned. If those people don't benefit out of this kind of legislation, Mr. Speaker, then I don't really see the need for the urgency. Rather than being a bill which could, with some additional looks and some new drafting if the Minister

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had six months to look at this bill, provide some benefit for the consumers and the people who are paying for groceries in this province, rather than that, it is just another trip to the patronage pump for some good NDPers.

It will, if it is left in its present form, Mr. Speaker, be just another expansion of what is already a mushrooming-out-of-control bureaucracy, and the cost of running this new bureaucracy is going to be tacked on to the price of eggs, and the price of meat, and the price of chickens, and the price of all other agricultural commodities. Instead of helping the consumer, the bill will effectively inflate the grocery bill again, and that is the last thing in the world we want. We would hope that the government will take the opportunity to put this bill on the shelf for awhile and have a look at what it will really do to the consumer, who is the person in whom we must all be interested and

the person to whom we must direct our attention at this time.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but the bill, because of some of the things it doesn't say and could say, asks the farmers and the primary producers to be the whipping boys for the increased costs, so that the farmer is going to be the guy who gets the shaft while the government is effectively setting the prices.

Other things have been left out of the bill which would help the opposition, and help the people in this province, understand what the bill wants to do in the long run. The Minister's press release probably should have been included in the bill when he said that what he hopes to do is give competent direction and control by government. That is the key to this bill. They want to give more control to the cabinet-in-council; more control, more cost, and ultimately the person in the supermarket pays more money.

[Mr. Liden in the chair.]

The bill doesn't say, Mr. Speaker, and it could say if this government had a little while longer to work on the bill, who will be on this superboard. I would suggest that the government should take a leaf from the federal government's Bill 176 and include in that bill a provision that the majority of the people on the superboard be active producers. I stress the word "active", rather than people like Professor Forbes or some other people who are known to be interested in jobs with this government.

I would also suggest that the bill should be given the opportunity to be amended to include, as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bennett) mentioned earlier, that the people on the board must be Canadian citizens residing in British Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other reasons, perhaps, that this bill should be hoisted for six months is that it would give the government an opportunity to go talk to the marketing boards. I would suggest than rather than talking to the marketing boards when they started to draft this bill, they talked too much with people who had axes to grind — individuals, not boards — people who really don't have very much knowledge in the field of agriculture, yet wish to have a lot to say. I refer again to the instant expert from UBC who is going to get a job one way or another with government from the looks of it.

But anyway, Mr. Speaker, this six-month hoist would allow the government to get back and talk with the marketing boards, because it is our information that several of the marketing boards, as late as Thursday of last week, the day before the bill was brought in, had been told that the bill would not be brought in until spring so that they would have a chance to have some input. But, as it turned out, Mr. Speaker....

Mr. D.A. Anderson (Victoria): Name names. Name names.

Mr. McClelland: Would you shut that noise off in the background there?

Mr. D.A. Anderson: Can you tell me who?

Mr. McClelland: Mr. Speaker, it would give the opportunity for the government to at least talk to some of these consumers, because they're not concerned with having consumer representatives on their boards. In fact, as the Minister himself pointed out earlier, the Turkey Marketing Board offered to invite consumers to their meetings, offered to listen to their input, and offered to act on their input if they felt it was in the best interests of both the consumer and the agriculture industry.

The producers would be happy to have consumers on their boards, if that's what this government really wants, because they know that they can convince the consumers that they are not ripping anybody off. Maybe where we should be looking, and contrary to this report in Saturday's *Sun* by Forbes again, the marketing boards don't set the retail prices. It's not the marketing boards at all. It's the supermarkets and the stores that set the retail prices.

If I could just give an example, Mr. Speaker, in the broiler growers example, for instance, the broiler growers set the price at about 68 cents a pound at the present time at the producer level, yet it is retailing in the supermarket

— chicken — for anywhere from 92 to 95 cents per pound. Well, how does that stand in relation to the comments that the producer is the person who is ripping the consumer off? It seems to me that we might be better directing our attention to the supermarkets and the big chains rather than the farmer, who is only trying to make a living. I must congratulate the Agriculture Minister for standing up

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on behalf of the small producer rather than the big independents.

I would suggest that a hoist of this bill for six months would allow the government to take another look and just see what it is going to do to orderly marketing in this province with this bill, because I suggest that it will bring that orderly marketing to a halt. Not only that, but it will bankrupt the present marketing boards, because this bill in its present drafting doesn't say anything anywhere about who is going to pay the tremendous costs that are going to be imposed because of the appeal procedure that is included in the bill.

I would suggest that the marketing boards are going to have almost every order that they ever give out appealed by someone unless this bill is changed in some way to allow some guidelines for appeals. They will have to hire lawyers who will be before the appeal board on a permanent basis. And who pays for that but the poor person who is going to the supermarket and checking out their groceries on a Friday evening?

It would seem, Mr. Speaker, that a hoist of this bill would allow the government to take another look at what seems to be a delegation of authority to Ottawa to mess up further commodities, just as the national marketing agency has messed up the egg situation and the turkey marketing situation. The turkey industry has now already taken a 25 per cent cutback in production just since it went into this new scheme. There are some eight million pounds of turkey in storage in British Columbia right now, and there are no sales in sight.

CEMA, the Canadian Egg Marketing Association, is in a total and utter mess, and we see the destruction of millions of eggs because of it.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the government should take another look at this bill to see what kind of authority they're giving to the federal government to force other commodity groups into national schemes just like CEMA and the turkey marketing scheme. I say that if we allow that to happen, Mr. Speaker, we're in serious trouble in the marketing of our agricultural products in this province, where we're in better shape than in any other province.

There are so many other questions, Mr. Speaker, that should have been answered in the bill, and the bill's vagueness is causing concern among both producer and consumer groups. We'd like to know what happens, for instance, when an order is appealed. Does that order get set aside? If a board is attempting to take advantage of a fluctuating market situation and wants to bring down prices for a consumer, and makes an order which a producer may appeal, then does that artificially high price have to be maintained until the appeal board gets around to hearing the appeal? If it does, the consumer suffers again by paying higher prices for his commodity.

Just as an aside, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to just say something on the argument that Forbes and some of these other people have been making about the difference in food prices between here and Bellingham. I don't see what the difference really is if egg prices are a little lower in Bellingham than they are here, because so are cars, and so are stoves, and so are refrigerators and, for the benefit of the housing Ministry, so are houses by a heck of a large measure. So that really is a specious argument. So is land, Mr. Speaker, in that province.

There isn't any doubt that by the way the bill is drafted at the present time this provincial board is going to be a full-time board, working for what may be \$30,000 to \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year for the members, because they're going to be hearing appeals 12 months a year. So we've got 10 members now instead of three, who are drawing down full, fat salaries from the government.

The government should take six months to sort of study how this bill affects negotiations for income assurance programmes. I believe that because the government has negotiated individually in relation to this bill, it will affect the future negotiations on the various assurance programmes for the various commodity boards which

aren't in yet.

On that same subject I'd like to ask the Minister of Agriculture — and I hope someone will take a message to him — if he and the Premier have been subpoenaed to appear before the courts in the case against the producer in Prince George, laid by the egg producers' association and, if so, if they intend to appear in court. Or do they intend to come to some kind of a deal with the egg producers to jump them into the income assurance programme ahead of everyone else, in order for the egg producers to drop the case? I'd just like some answers to that question, Mr. Speaker.

In the meantime I'd like to say that it's very important that this bill be pulled out of this House for six months and that we go back to square one — go back to the order paper where the Minister of Agriculture himself has set down the sensible course, and this is to allow the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture to look into procedures and operations of marketing boards. The sensible way, the responsible way to run government is to take this bill out for six months until they come up with some answers that this Legislature can then debate.

So, Mr. Speaker, I fully and wholeheartedly support the withdrawal of this bill for six months.

Mr. H.A. Curtis (Saanich And The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I notice that the Minister has returned to the House for this discussion.

The point has been made, and I think made very well by previous speakers, that this does appear to be a very hasty action on the part of the Minister of Agriculture.

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We have two questions which have not been answered in his opening statement, and also in his rebuttal to one of the earlier statements when he interjected with some anger. The questions are: Will this new superboard offer any assistance to the producers? Will this new superboard offer any assistance or relief to the consumer? I do wish that the Minister of Consumer Services (Hon. Ms. Young) for the present government would participate in this debate as to whether the bill should proceed or be held for six months, as the motion to which I am speaking is addressing itself.

Surely this is another move to bigness, and it's a big move. It's a major move in the Province of British Columbia. Whether the Minister of Agriculture has made the statement or not, whether he denies it or not, it appears that existing marketing boards in British Columbia have not had an opportunity since Friday morning to comment on the legislation. Some have seen it. Some have met in emergency session over the weekend, but others have not had an opportunity to get together.

On Vancouver Island, as an example, I know that members of the Vancouver Island Egg Producers Association have simply not had an opportunity to meet and discuss the ramifications of the legislation which is now before us. Perhaps they're doing it today, or tonight, but surely they are entitled to some kind of delay in order that they, other producing groups, other organizations and, perhaps most importantly, consumer groups themselves, can also respond to the principles that are set out in the bill. From Friday morning to Monday afternoon, and debate called on second reading as we gathered this afternoon....

I again make the observation that has been made by other speakers that in the spring session the Minister of Agriculture, under Motion 26, considered it important and timely and worthwhile for the House to authorize the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, upon prorogation of the House, to investigate the operation, the management, the policies and the activities of at least three marketing groups. They are named: the Egg Marketing Board, the Broiler Marketing Board and the Turkey Marketing Board.

Now if the Minister felt that it was important for a committee to get out into the provincial community at that time, why is it no longer important? Why do we have this legislation which, in effect, tosses the motion out the window? What's wrong with getting out into the province before citizens groups, before the producers, before the individual operators in various commodity groups, before consumers, before everyone who wishes to make a

presentation, to respond to the principles that have been set down in this particular bill?

The motion not being called in the spring session, I think, was puzzling to many people who are concerned about marketing boards. Now it must be of even greater concern to those individuals and various organizations who have a direct interest in producing food in British Columbia for export or for consumption here.

As an example, Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any consumer reactions thus far. If I'm to be corrected, fair enough, but I'm not aware of any consumer group reaction to the legislation which came to us just about 72 hours ago.

The point made by the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Education (Hon. Mrs. Dailly) at the close of the session on Monday was: "You have homework to do over the weekend." Well, a number of us have done our homework, but we have not given an opportunity to the interested groups and individuals to do their homework — indeed, perhaps in some cases to even get copies of the legislation and sit down in small or large groups and discuss it in detail.

Why the change from Motion 26 in the spring session, which was never called at that time? I think the Minister of Agriculture owes the House an explanation as to why that was not called, and why the rush in this legislation which is being debated today. Of course I support the motion to hoist this for a six-month period.

Mr. D.E. Smith (North Peace River): You know, it's interesting to look at this legislation. I think it was pointed out by earlier speakers in this debate that there is a great similarity in some respects between the Act that we have before us and legislation which was presently on the books with respect to marketing of products and the control of marketing organizations in the Province of British Columbia.

I have a list before me of at least 11 marketing boards which presently operate in the Province of British Columbia. They are all basically concerned with the marketing of some farm or horticultural crop in this province. They came about, Mr. Speaker, as a result of farm organizations some years ago realizing that there were problems in marketing their product, and that perhaps the collective knowledge of themselves applied through a marketing organization could provide for them a better economic return and thus allow them to remain in either the horticultural or the farming vocation of their choice.

It would also seem reasonable to me, then, that these organizations which operated under the then existing legislation could have suggested to the Minister, or the Minister could have suggested to them, that because of changes in conditions he was not entirely happy with the way things were operating and perhaps some changes should be made.

It would seem reasonable to me that the Minister would have followed up on the motion that he presented to this House and never called for debate

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that the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture should investigate some of the problems within the marketing process in the Province of British Columbia.

The Minister, in speaking to Bill 165, the Natural Products Marketing (British Columbia) Act, really skated all around the fundamental problems of marketing, the fundamental problems of production, the fundamental problems of people who are consumers in this province. He skated all around the problems and suggested that the solution was in the adoption of Bill 165. If that's so, then was it not incumbent upon the Minister to provide the Members of this Legislature with the reasons that this bill is required immediately?

Was it not incumbent upon the Minister to check with the marketing organizations to see if they, in fact, approved this particular type of step? Was it not incumbent upon the Minister to check with the consumer groups in the province to see if they really thought this bill would do anything in terms of reducing the price of the commodities that we produce in this province?

While some people, and many of those who are employed, may spend less of their income today on the basic farm commodities we can produce, it is a fact that those people on fixed incomes spend today far more of their income than ever before to buy the basic essentials of sustaining life. It shouldn't be up to the producer to subsidize those people. It shouldn't be up to the people themselves to do without because they can't afford it.

Somewhere there has to be an answer. We already have a number of marketing boards within the province. If they, with the experience they have and the knowledge, cannot come up with the answers to this problem, I'm sure that the Minister of Agriculture will never do it with the introduction of another bill.

A superboard is to be set up for what purpose? For what purpose, Mr. Minister? Will the creation of this new board, in conjunction with a commission, solve any of the problems of production in British Columbia? I doubt it. I doubt it. Will it bring any order to marketing in British Columbia, any more than we presently have? I doubt it. Will it solve any of the problems of the consumers in the Province of British Columbia who feel, quite frankly, that sometimes they pay an exorbitant price for the products that they have to consume? I doubt that it's going to help them solve that problem.

It would seem to me that somebody, somewhere, perhaps not even in the business of marketing or of production, suggested to the Minister that he had to do something. Where did the pressure come from, Mr. Minister? Did it come from the Minister of Consumer Services, (Hon. Ms. Young) who is unhappy — she nods her head — with the price of some products on the shelves? Is that so? Well then, Mr. Minister, perhaps if you've told the Minister of Consumer Services, you should have told the rest of the Members of this House exactly how Bill 165 will solve any of these problems in today's complex economy.

We haven't even heard from the Minister of Consumer Services in this debate. It is interesting to note that the Minister of Agriculture not too many months ago, when speaking about tree fruit marketing schemes in the Province of British Columbia, directed a reply to one of the people who was vitally concerned with tree fruit marketing in the Province of British Columbia.

Part of the letter that was directed to this gentleman reads.... And I will quote from the letter. The Minister is apparently trying to point out what he is doing to help solve some of the problems of marketing in the tree fruit industry in the province. He says:

"Because the present system was apparently not satisfactory to everyone, I decided to hold a plebiscite early this year to determine whether there was still support for this system. As you know, the majority of growers reaffirmed their faith in the present system and in the present tree fruit marketing scheme.

"If and when the majority of tree fruit growers tell me that they no longer want an orderly marketing scheme, or that they want a different kind of scheme, I shall be prepared to consider such a request.

"Up to this time I have not had a request of this kind from the industry. On the contrary, those representing the tree fruit industry have asked me to make their marketing scheme more workable by ensuring that, except for roadside sales within the production areas, there will be only one sales outlet."

So the question we have to ask is: if the request did not come from those involved in the production end, where did this request come from? Why the urgency, Mr. Minister, and who are you taking your directions from? Is it collectively from the consumers in the Province of British Columbia and, if so, through what organization? Is it through the voice of a few dissidents, or through the voice of an organized group which truly represents a fairly substantial number of the consumers in the Province of British Columbia?

No one disagrees with the fact that there are problems involved in marketing. But if the existing marketing board, in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and your officials who have expertise in this field, cannot solve that problem, cannot find where the bogeyman is — if, in

fact, a bogeyman exists — you are not going to do it by creating a superboard and the appointment of a large number

of political hacks at well-paid salaries to follow the position of the NDP.

I can't see, Mr. Speaker, that rushing this bill will in any way solve any of the problems at this time. You do have a number of marketing boards in existence. You do have a motion on the order paper which would have referred some of these problems to the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture. Certainly if that motion had to be enlarged upon, I would think that the Members of this House, provided you could give us justification, would accept an amendment to the motion to enlarge upon the actual need in the Province of British Columbia and the recommendations that they would act upon.

No, Mr. Speaker, the Minister, I do not feel, has satisfied anyone that the introduction of this bill will solve any problems. So the question we must ask is, why; what is the urgency; who is actually in the background orchestrating the...?

Hon. Mr. Cocke: The fiddler on the roof.

Mr. Smith: The fiddler on the roof. Probably that's what's happening in the Department of Health, but in the Department of Agriculture I suggest we need somebody to do more than fiddling to correct the problems that we have facing us today.

But who are the people who direct the Minister and influence his decisions? Certainly, in speaking to second reading and moving the adoption of this bill, he didn't in any way point out to those of us in the opposition why it is required and why it is required right now. If this would do something of a substantial nature to correct any of the problems or the disparities that are involved at the present time, then there would be good reason to support it. But you do have the organizations presently set up.

With some input from the consumer groups and those people who are directly affected in purchasing products, which is everyone, really, in the Province of British Columbia, you could have solved the problem, Mr. Minister. But I'll tell you one thing, you'll never satisfy the people of the Province of British Columbia that you have acted in a responsible manner by superimposing another board and another commission on top of the existing marketing boards in this province.

Mr. H.W. Schroeder (Chilliwack): I'd like to speak in support of the amendment for the simple reason that I don't believe that the Minister has had enough time even to consider that what the bill suggests is really what he intends. A study of the bill tells us that this bill, No. 165, simply creates a three-level bureaucracy that the Minister himself, I believe, decries — certainly the Minister of Consumer Services decries — because this three-level bureaucracy just removes the problem from the source of an answer to that problem.

I don't believe, particularly in the area of the superboard, that the Minister has had opportunity to decide the purpose of that board. He hasn't really decided whether it is to be a buffer zone where the superboard is to act as a cushion between the problem and the source of the answer, something similar to the position of the rentalsman that was created.

The rentalsman was to act as a sort of a buffer between legislation that was brought down in this House and the problems that exist in the rent industry. Now, the rentalsman... The ball was thrown to him in his court, and he was left to make some decisions as to what rents actually should be. Percentages, for instance, were left for him to decide, and the bureaucracy that was created through the position of the rentalsman has proven to be unsatisfactory because the rentalsman has thrown back on the Legislature again the ugly decision of trying to decide what the percentage should be.

I see a parallel here in the creation of this superboard. I think that the Minister needs a little more time to consider what the real purpose of that superboard is. Is it to be a buffer zone? Is it to create a three- to ten-man commission that is supposed to act something similar to what a rentalsman does, where we can anticipate that this same superboard will only throw the responsibility of making a decision back onto this Legislature?

I don't know whether the Minister has considered that it should be an appeal board; he hasn't really decided if

it's a buffer zone or whether it is really an appeal board, and that's all. He hasn't really decided whether it's to be another level of control, Mr. Speaker. He certainly hasn't given consideration that any expense incurred by this three-level bureaucracy, and by the way there sure must be considerable expense, that this further expense has to be borne by the industry, either directly or indirectly. Whether you call it subsidy or whether you call it general taxation, it has to be borne either directly or indirectly by the industry, and as a result, has to be reflected in the cost of product.

I would suggest that the construction of this superboard just causes further alienation from this forum. It doesn't act as a true cushion; it doesn't act as a true buffer zone, just causes further alienation. I don't think that the Minister has had the opportunity to give that point consideration.

It does give another delay, another reason for delay for action. There is no question that in the province, particularly in the Fraser Valley, there are marketing and production problems. But to say that we can cure the problem by creating yet another level of bureaucracy, I think, is futility. All it does is to

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offer another level of bureaucracy to which we can pass the buck. It's another delay for action.

Instead of being part of a solution, we become an extension of the problem. I think the Minister needs more time to think in terms of real concrete solutions for the marketing and production problems. I think that he needs to have time to listen to the real producer to find out what their real costs of production are, and to bring into this House legislation that would be an answer to the real problems of distribution.

He needs to decide whether or not the cost of production is going to be reflected in the cost of the product on the shelf. He needs to decide if he wants to go the route of subsidy. For all of these things he hasn't had the time to have the input from the producer — neither from the milk producer, nor from the egg producer, nor from the fruit producer, nor from any other area of production in the province.

Now 72 hours, as the Hon. Member for Saanich and the Islands (Mr. Curtis) suggested, is hardly enough time for these folk to give thought to it, let alone to give input. I believe, for these and various other reasons, that the Minister would enjoy more time before he brings this bill to us, and certainly given more time, would bring it to us in an amended form.

Mr. L.A. Williams: I'll be very brief. We're going to oppose this motion. I think that if the Members will look clearly at the legislation, they will recognize the complete fruitlessness of the proposal which the Leader of the Opposition has put forward in this amendment.

The legislation as it stands before us today is just a very pale reflection of the existing natural products marketing legislation in British Columbia, with one significant change, and that's to provide additional and extensive powers of search and seizure to be applied against the person who might offend against an order of a marketing board. It's just dressed up with some other appeal provisions, but essentially that's the purpose.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

The Members should recognize that the Minister is bringing forth this legislation now, more than one year after the need for those search and seizure provisions was made obvious in this province. I speak of the events that surrounded the actions of dissident fruit growers in the fall of 1973. That's when the legislation was needed, and the Minister is coming forward with it now.

I fail to comprehend how a motion to delay consideration of this legislation for a further six months is likely to have any beneficial effect on the legislation at all if it has taken the Minister a whole year to bring forward legislation.

Particularly is this true when you consider that in the past year there have been major outcries against the functioning of marketing boards to such an extent that the Minister himself put a motion on the order paper, to which

reference has earlier been made by other Members in this debate. Yet he hasn't acted upon it. He is completely unwilling to place this matter before the select standing committee for review. He is completely unwilling to take cognizance to those matters of general knowledge in bringing forward this legislation. I for one don't believe that the Minister would be served at all by a further six months hoisting of this legislation. If he has failed to learn over more than 12 months what the needs are for changes in marketing board legislation in this province, then six months more isn't going to help him one bit. He has embroiled himself in a dispute with the Hon. Minister of Consumer Services, and I can only assume by her silence in this debate that she has been put in her place.

I think what we should do is get on and debate the merits of this legislation in second reading so the people of this province can clearly understand how each Member of this House feels about this kind of legislation. Then, Mr. Speaker, is an appropriate time for this bill to be sent to committee for study. That is the purpose of this Legislature, and the purpose of the committees of this Legislature — to deal specifically with this legislation. Let us have the second reading debate and then I challenge the Minister and this government, rather than dealing with this legislation in Committee of the Whole, to send it to the Select Standing Committee on Agricultural Matters or to a special committee of this House so that people throughout the length and breadth of this province can come before that committee and make their views known with regard to this specific piece of legislation.

Let us not have the debate carried on in the press — that serves no one. Let us have it carried on by this House and committees of this House so that appropriate recommendations for amendments can be brought forward, recommendations adequately considered on the basis of hearings by parties from all sides.

Let us hear from the consumers. Let us hear from the producers. Let us hear from the people who transport and store these natural products, and market them, as to whether or not this legislation is in the best interests of the producer, the consumer or any of the people who fall in between.

To delay this bill for six months without any indication that the Minister is prepared to treat approaches made to him in any way different than Members who approached the Premier of this province were treated, is complete fruitless.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, in all the problems that face

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our producers and our consumers today, it is inappropriate to delay dealing with these matters, but it is appropriate — and I challenge the government — to take this legislation following second reading and send it to a committee so that it can receive consideration from people throughout the length and breadth of this province. Put it to the test. Treat it like a White Paper. Then when we come back to deal with the matter in third reading, let us see what proper amendments can be brought forward by Members of this House in direct response to the committee's recommendations.

Mr. Wallace: I do not support the idea of hoisting this bill for six months for the very basic reason that I'm opposed to the bill as such, and as the Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound has pointed out, I can see nothing to be gained by waiting six months in the hope — little more than the hope, certainly not the promise — that the Minister is prepared to explore the problem in more detail.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw the analogy with the mess which this government is in over assessment. It set an example there by passing legislation which got itself and got the taxpayers of the province into a real state of confusion and chaos as far as assessment on real property is concerned. Having realized the mess it's in, it submitted that kind of problem to the standing committee of the Legislature. It is based on that very intensive study by that committee that we now have a report before the House.

Certainly, nobody, in the light of the evidence, would suggest that marketing of natural products is anything but very complicated in our modern society. The Minister smiles, and I agree. It's very obvious from the immense amount of documentation and the publicity given in news media that, whatever the rights or wrongs of marketing boards, there is a great degree of public concern and consumer concern that somewhere along the line there is need

for change. The impression I have from this bill, and the reason that I don't support the amendment, is that this bill, I feel, is rather a hasty attempt to try and pacify some of the people in society who have expressed their concern about marketing boards. Perhaps even worse than that, in terms of motivation, I think it's an attempt to patch up the obvious rift in cabinet which exists as a result of the rather courageous position taken by the Minister of Consumer Services (Hon. Ms. Young). I would like to comment on that at greater length when we debate the Bill.

I think there are many basic reasons why we oppose the bill as such. I've listened to the debate this afternoon and there's no evidence that the Minister is prepared in any way to change his initial approach. The Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound has made it plain, and I agree with him, that in the absence of any such promise that this will be explored in detail by either the standing committee or a special committee, there is no sense, in my view, in just putting the bill off for six months. Therefore, I oppose the amendment.

Mr. Chabot: It's again a pleasure to be in your company in this assembly and to speak regarding the amendment before us to hoist the bill which we are debating.

Hon. A.B. Macdonald (Attorney-General): Good speech.

Mr. Chabot: Mr. Speaker, I never cease to be amazed by the argument put forward by the Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound (Mr. L.A. Williams). He's going to oppose the amendment. Nevertheless, he was given to understand if he'd been listening, if he'd been in the House, that the reason for the six-month delay in the reading of this bill was to give the Minister the opportunity of having additional input prior to moving in this direction. That's what we have attempted to do by the asking of the delay for six months of this bill. And that's not a serious request. It's serious in the sense that it's put forward in that light, but it's not that drastic as far as the government is concerned to ask the public to have an opportunity to express its opinion.

Interjections.

Mr. Chabot: Now the Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound makes a typical legal double-flip in this assembly regarding his position. How frivolous can that legal man be? He can't have it both ways; he has to take one position in this House.

Mr. D.A. Anderson: Get your facts straight. He's no longer heading the Unity Party — he knows that.

Mr. Chabot: He'd better stick with the Liberals because, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the Second Member for Vancouver–Point Grey (Mr. Gardom) will support this amendment, because basically he's always been opposed. I've listened to him on many occasions speak out against superboards and marketing boards, and I'm wondering what position he's going to take when the vote comes. Is he going to flip-flop, Mr. Speaker, such as the Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound did?

An Hon. Member: Sit down.

Mr. Chabot: Is that what he's going to do? Well, I'm looking forward to hearing from that Member regarding his position to see whether there is a flip-flop.

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An Hon. Member: Are you sitting below the salt now?

Mr. Chabot: No, Mr. Speaker. (Laughter.) Mr. Speaker, I've moved down that way, and I don't know if the heckling is any better here (laughter) than it was back there.

Mr. Speaker: I think you could say it's saltier.

Mr. Chabot: How do you spell it? (Laughter.)

Mr. Speaker: Saltier? (Laughter.)

Mr. Chabot: Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons why I support this slight delay is because any delay you can initiate in the establishing of an additional bureaucracy in the province, as far as I'm concerned, is progressive. There's nothing within this bill, and it has been said before, that really benefits the producer or the consumer of British Columbia.

And the Minister, I listened to him in his slight outburst here a few moments ago. Oh, he talked about input — he'd heard from some boards. Well, the Minister apparently.... One day he says he's willing to listen to some boards, yet when he put his motion on the order paper — Motion 26 in the month of April — he suggested there was a need for ample input because the board calls for full investigation:

"That the House authorize the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, upon prorogation of the House, to investigate the operations, management policies and activities of the B.C. Egg Marketing Board, the B.C. Broiler Marketing Board, the B.C. Turkey Marketing Board and the schemes under which they operate." Then there's all the rules and regulations and the rights and authority of the committee to investigate.

Now how come the Minister all of a sudden has taken such a drastic turnabout regarding his motion that was on the order paper? And it's still there, because what we are in today is an adjourned session that adjourned in the month of June, and what we're doing with this amendment, Mr. Speaker, is asking for the Minister to have sufficient time to allow the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture to examine the concerns he so well put and so well expressed in this motion last April. What's wrong with that motion? Has someone suggested that you shouldn't have input; that this government is no longer a so-called open government; that this government is frightened by some of the witnesses that might be called before the standing committee? Is that their concern for not striking this committee to examine this very critical question in British Columbia today?

Yet the Minister said that we've heard from some boards. In other words, he doesn't want the full story. That's basically the reason for this amendment — to give him an opportunity to hear from all interested parties in this province, be they consumers or be they producers, or be they the Minister of Consumer Services in this province, because she's had a lot to say, and she should have an opportunity to express her position before the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture. On October 7, she had some pretty strong statements to make, which I had hoped she'd have an opportunity to express to the committee on agriculture. She said on October 7:

"I wish to speak tonight on the egg-marketing situation in the Province of British Columbia.

"As Minister of Consumer Services, it is my duty to serve the interests of consumers in this province. In my view, those interests are not being served by the B.C. Egg Marketing Board. Rather, those interests are being exploited beyond endurance by that board."

It's a strong statement, Mr. Speaker, very strong. She says:

"From the countless letters I have received from the representations made to me by the Consumer Association of Canada, B.C. branch, and from the stench arising from 28 million rotten eggs, it is obvious that the B.C. Egg Marketing Board as it is presently constituted and operated has lost its credibility in the eyes of the general public."

And she goes on to link them with the problems of CEMA.

That's the reason for our amendment, Mr. Speaker: to give the government and the Minister an opportunity to examine these problems which have been so forcibly put forward to the public by the Minister of Consumer Services.

The Member for Shuswap (Mr. Lewis), I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, would like to have his say before that select standing committee because he has expressed concern with the operation of CEMA and its cost. He suggested that as a producer it cost him over \$1,000 a month to be part of CEMA. I think that the Member, being a long-standing producer in this province, should have an opportunity to express his point of view.

The Minister on that same eventful night of October 7, where she was concerned — but she's not concerned now in this Legislative Assembly where she has an opportunity to speak out to the people of British Columbia —

said:

"Therefore, I intend to recommend to the Government of British Columbia to commence an investigation...."

An investigation. Well, that is what the Minister talked about in his motion 26 which is still on the order paper: an investigation of the B.C. Egg

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Marketing Board with a view to restructuring it to include consumer and processor representatives as well as producers.

Well, this legislation doesn't do that, Mr. Speaker. She says:

"The B.C. Egg Marketing Board has operated in the dark and in camera so much that, in my view, it has not served either consumer or producer. The whole situation needs a thorough airing, and it's this government's job to do it."

It's quite obvious to me that the Minister has been sitting on his eggs since last April and has no intention, Mr. Speaker....

Interjection.

Mr. Chabot: Well, it has hatched in this bill right here.

Mr. Phillips: Hatched a superboard.

Mr. Chabot: But it's prematurely hatched.

An Hon. Member: Too bad.

Mr. Chabot: We won't have an opportunity for people to be heard, which the Minister of Consumer Services has so eloquently put in her speech of October 7: "The public should have an opportunity to be heard."

There's nothing specific in this legislation that says producers will form part of that superboard, that consumers will form part of that superboard, that members of the Department of Agriculture will form part of that superboard. There's nothing specific, and there should be.

I don't think that board should be solely loaded with political hacks. I think it should be spelled out in the legislation. That's why, if we have this inquiry, if we have this examination of the problems which no doubt exist in marketing in British Columbia, certainly some conclusion would come that there is a need for representation on these boards of other than political hacks.

We've seen the appointment of Ron Harding, a friend of the government, on the university board.

Interjection.

Mr. Chabot: Frank Howard hasn't got his job yet, Mr. Speaker. Maybe that's why there is all the rush about the establishment of this board. If the government feels there is a need for Frank Howard to have a job, well, appoint him — but don't rush into it. Wait for six months so that people will have an opportunity to express their point of view.

Also, there could be some very sloppy legislation.

An Hon. Member: It is; it is.

Mr. Chabot: Oh, I'm giving him the benefit of the doubt, Mr. Speaker, not being a legal individual. I've seen what has happened with some of the problems created by the sloppy processing of bills. Just today former Alderman

Rankin viciously attacked the Landlord and Tenant Act as being a sloppy piece of legislation once he had an opportunity to examine it. Maybe this bill should be put into the committee as well. The motion should probably be amended to include this bill's reference to the committee. There's no need for further sloppy, hasty legislation as we've experienced in this province in the last two years.

I wonder if there is a possibility that Terry Ash from Kamloops will be on this superboard of political hacks. We've seen what has happened, and we think there's an opportunity for further examination. We've seen the flip-flop from the Provincial Secretary (Hon. Mr. Hall) regarding daylight saving time. Is that what's going to happen with this bill? A flip-flop. Is it a bill that's going to be amended before the end of this session, or is it a bill that will have to be amended next spring?

Interjections.

Mr. Chabot: Let's put it before a select standing committee. Let's be open, let's be frank, and let's delay it for six months.

Mr. G.B. Gardom (Vancouver-Point Grey): It appears, Mr. Speaker, that the former speaker considers that postponing an execution is an act of compassion. I very much differ with his attitudes.

I think, perhaps, one of the most significant parts of this heretofore repetitious debate has been the muzzlement and the silence of the government Members. It's almost deafening. It's curious to find why the government Members have not, with so many of them coming from rural ridings and having specific interest in products of the land, seen fit to make a contribution.

I look upon this rotten bill, Mr. Speaker, as a rotten-egg bill. It's a rotten-egg bill. I would say, as such, its most evident characteristic is not likely to improve with the passage of time. It shouldn't be hoisted or delayed for six months, or any months. I say it should be absolutely defeated and wiped off the books.

The Member for Langley (Mr. McClelland) was talking about "vagueness." There's no vagueness in this bill at all, Mr. Speaker. It contains an absolute delegation of absolute powers. I would say it's the most doctrinaire example of socialistic regulation and control and rigidism that has ever been introduced in this province. I say, let's get on with the second

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reading so we can discuss its lack of principle and vote against this bill.

It's not only as bad as that which it is seeking to repeal, but it's a great deal worse. We're compounding an obsolete, antiquated, bureaucratic and inefficient means and method of state intervention and economic muddling.

What we don't want in the Province of British Columbia is Moscow marketing. I say vote against the principle of the bill today, but, for goodness' sake, let's get on with it. None of this Social Credit delay tactic which is only for political purposes and nothing else.

Interjections.

Mr. Gibson: Mr. Speaker, I'll be very brief at this stage. I'll have something to say on the substantive motion later, but I have to say something about the notion that this motion should be hoisted for six months.

The leader of the Social Credit Party (Mr. Bennett), in moving this motion, said there was a need for new solutions to old problems. Why are there old problems? They're old problems because his government let them fester for 20 years when they were in power. What was done with that marketing board legislation...?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Interjections.

Mr. Gibson: So we finally get the solution, Mr. Speaker, from the Hon. Member for Columbia River (Mr. Chabot). What is his policy?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Hon. D. Barrett (Premier): Stop that fighting. The last one who fought them joined them. (Laughter.)

Mr. Gibson: Not from this party, Mr. Premier.

What's the answer when we finally get it from the Hon. Member for Columbia River? A policy of progressive delay.

An Hon. Member: That's right.

Mr. Gibson: Do nothing. Do nothing for six months. And do nothing is exactly the policy of that party, Mr. Speaker. It's what has led us to this situation today.

I have a lot of things to say about this bill and its defects when it comes up. But this is simply a motion to delay. What should be done with this problem is to send it to committee, as advocated by the Hon. Member for West Vancouver-Howe Sound (Mr. L.A. Williams).

Mr. Speaker: Is there any further debate?

Motion negatived on the following division:

YEAS — 11

Jordan	Smith	Bennett
Phillips	Chabot	Richter
McClelland	Curtis	Morrison
Schroeder		Cummings

NAYS — 37

Hall	Macdonald	Barrett
Dailly	Strachan	Nimsick
Stupich	Calder	Brown
Sanford	Levi	Lorimer
Williams, R.A.	Cocke	King
Young	Radford	Lauk
Nicolson	Skelly	Gabelmann
Lockstead	Gorst	Rolston
Anderson, G.H.	Barnes	Steves
Kelly	Webster	Lewis
Liden	Wallace	McGeer
Anderson, D.A.	Williams, L.A.	Gardom
	Gibson	

Division ordered to be recorded in the *Journals* of the House.

Hon. P.F. Young (Minister Of Consumer Services): At last we're getting to the yolk of the problem...

Interjections.

Hon. Ms. Young: ...after dilly-dallying around for quite a while now.

I am very pleased with this legislation, because I think it will serve the objectives that the consumers of the province have been wanting for quite a while.

Mr. Wallace: More bureaucracy.

Hon. Ms. Young: The concept of marketing boards is good, the basic concept. It is quite obvious to have orderly marketing in British Columbia and in Canada.

I think that the experience we see to the south of us demonstrates the validity of the value of marketing boards. However, as has been pointed out by previous speakers, these boards were developed in the '30s and the '40s. With many institutions of long standing,

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gradually strictures grow in them; attitudes become rigid and methods become outmoded. Times change, but they don't.

Therefore we run into the problems that we find in many of the marketing areas we have today. I think, of course, the most prevalent one, the one that has all the public attention focused on it; is in the case of egg marketing.

I would just like to make a comment. The Hon. Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) said that eggs are bad for you. Well, I recall a little item in the paper saying that supposedly the cholesterol content of eggs is very high and that this is not good for your heart. Based on that hypothesis, as soon as a chicken is hatched it should drop dead. So I don't think that quite fits.

Mr. Phillips: That's a hard-boiled joke.

Hon. Ms. Young: The reason I think this legislation is good is because heretofore marketing boards, most of them, have been totally controlled by their own members, by the producers. Unfortunately, some of them have not taken into consideration the public interest. They have not been subjected to market pressures. They have not taken into consideration — in fact they have flouted — the consumer interest. I think that the B.C. Egg Marketing Board is an excellent example of this kind of a board. I'm happy to discuss that particular board.

With the exception of Newfoundland, we have the highest priced eggs in all of Canada.

Mrs. Jordan: Highest cost of production too.

Hon. Ms. Young: It's interesting to read in some of the poultry reports about the problems of CEMA, and we all know that CEMA is having problems. Under the Federal Farm Products Marketing Agency Act, section 22(B) set up and provided for organizations or agencies such as the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency specifically — and this is direct language from the Act: "To have due regard to the interests of producers and consumers of the regulated product or products."

Now in the case of CEMA, when they appointed the board, they appointed a member of each egg marketing board across Canada. As a result we had an agency totally comprised of producers.

The scheme was then set up in such a way that support prices were placed on the various provinces with the idea that the provinces would only produce eggs sufficient to their own market. If there were overages, these

overages would be able to flow into other provinces where there might be shortages.

Unfortunately, in the case, in my view, of British Columbia, the support price from CEMA was so high that it encouraged overproduction. If they couldn't sell their eggs to the consumer or the processing market, they could dump them on CEMA at over 60-odd cents a dozen. Then CEMA had to unload these eggs. Of course, they ran into quite a problem finding markets for these eggs as a result. We were exporting eggs to breaking plants in the United States from 27 to 35 cents a dozen while our own breaking plants here in British Columbia were paying 61 to 63 cents a dozen for breakers.

I have it on rather good authority that so-called breakers were going south of the border to Washington and Oregon at 35 cents, and showing up on the supermarket shelves there for 59 cents. They somehow managed to bypass the breaking plant. My source is an Oregon egg producer.

In effect, what was happening was that B.C. consumers were actually subsidizing the American consumer by paying these huge amounts of money for the eggs.

Then we ran into a situation in B.C. which is not unlike situations that we found in other areas of industry — I'm thinking of the automotive industry and others, appliances — where when the market shrank, instead of lowering the price to increase the consumption, they raised the price to maintain the profit. This is what happened just in the last few months in British Columbia. When consumption dropped due to the high prices, the people just began to stop buying eggs in any....

Mr. Wallace: They're bad for you anyway.

Hon. Ms. Young: The B.C. Egg Marketing Board raised the price of eggs, and they have the sole right to do anything they want with their price. I have read the bill; they do not have to account to anybody but themselves. As I've said before, they're not accountable to market pressures; they're not accountable to anybody but themselves. They can set their own price. That's pretty much what the oil cartel in the world is doing today. And that is why it was wrong. They were not accountable.

We had a situation just a couple of months ago where they raised the price of Grade A large by 6 cents because "of a shortage of Grade A large", and they ran ads urging people to buy mediums instead. So people went out and bought mediums. So then they came along a week, week and a half ago, raised the price of mediums, and large and Grade A large.

Manitoba eggs are coming into the province and being sold 10 cents cheaper, and they're doing very well in the marketplace.

Then we had the situation where CEMA tried to do away with the retail sale of cracks in order to force people to buy whole eggs. Well, a lot of people buy cracks, an awful lot of people — people who cannot afford, perhaps, to buy whole eggs. A lot of

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people who are very careful with their pennies, and even if they can afford to do them, they pickle the eggs, they boil them and they bake with them.

Speaking of baking, I have received countless letters on this subject, and one of the most interesting was an anonymous letter from a person who was obviously in the processing business. He brought out the fact that the price of frozen egg mélange jumped this week by 25 per cent when the latest report indicates that it should have dropped with the surplus eggs that are about. Price fixing again.

Also attached, he sent along the actual poultry report showing that, in fact, British Columbia, during that particular week, had an overage, yet they had put up the price of breakers to the processing plants.

The whole business of egg marketing has been a disaster area. There is an incentive right now to overproduce. CEMA is attempting to somehow control the size of the flocks, and thereby the production. But what they found out is that they can figure out how many birds go into a flock of layers, but they can't estimate how many are coming out. When the birds are no good anymore.... They're supposed to last for so long and be productive for so long, and then automatically, after a certain age, be killed. What they're finding out is that, in fact, as long as the price of eggs is up, the producers are not slaughtering the hens, the layers, so there's quite an overage.

How I think this bill will solve many of these problems is that the Minister has indicated that the board will have representation from consumer groups, from processors and producers. He has indicated, and I believe him.

I think that the appeal procedures are especially good, because it gives the right to anybody, any person to appeal the decision of any marketing board. If a marketing board sets a price or does something that anybody can feel is unjust, they can appeal to the provincial board and have that reviewed.

There is a further appeal procedure, and I think these are adequate safeguards, because there was nothing before. There were no market pressures, there was nothing; there was no public interest. There was nothing to prevent these boards from going their own merry way, doing their own thing in their own time frame with total disregard for consumers, processors, et cetera.

I might add here that the processors were just as unhappy about it as were the consumers.

I think this bill will restore some balance to the marketplace.

Mr. Phillips: Control by the government.

Hon. Ms. Young: No, I don't think there's any control by the government.

Mr. Phillips: Read the letters then read the bill. Control.

Hon. Ms. Young: No, I disagree with you totally. The provincial board will have the power and to capacity to act, and they, I'm sure, will be composed of all sectors of the community, and will reflect the public interest as has not been reflected heretofore in most of the boards. There have been boards that have been responsive, have been responsible, and they have done a good job — the Hog Marketing Board, as a matter of fact, is one example.

As far as Professor Forbes goes, I think Professor Forbes has done a real service to British Columbia and to Canada for bringing forward some very detailed and thoughtful analysis of various boards.

I would point out to you that the so-called Forbes report is not the sole writing of Professor Forbes. There were about eight or nine people involved in the writing of that report. Everyone of them was an expert in the field from the Department of Agriculture of Manitoba and other provinces. I don't think he wrote the egg marketing portion of that report. I have since read other reports dealing with broilers that Professor Forbes has written. I truly think that man has provided a great service to this country and to this province. It has been a very rational, very logical thing.

He has not at any time even suggested that marketing boards be done away with. He merely expresses the desire that the public interest be reflected in some manner on orderly marketing in this province.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to support this bill.

Mr. L.A. Williams moves adjournment of the debate.

Motion approved.

Hon. Mr. Barrett presents a message from His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor: a bill intituled *Assessment Amendment Act, 1974*.

Bill 170 introduced, read a first time and ordered to be placed on orders of the day for second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

LANDLORD AND TENANT
AMENDMENT ACT, 1974, No. 2

Hon. Mr. Macdonald presents a message from His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor: a bill intituled *Landlord and Tenant Amendment Act, 1974, No. 2*.

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Bill 169 introduced, read a first time and ordered to be placed on orders of the day for second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

Hon. Mrs. Dailly moves adjournment of the House.

Motion approved. The House adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

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