



Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**HEARING ON THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
AGRICULTURE**

Chairman

**Mr. A. R. (Pete) Adam
Constituency of Ste. Rose**



THURSDAY, June 9, 1977, 3:30 p.m.

ME: 3:30 p.m. CHAIRMAN: Mr. A.R. (Pete) Adam (Ste. Rose)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee will come to order. Our first presentation this afternoon will be at of Mr. Roger Lowe. Come forward please, Mr. Lowe. An individual brief. Is this a personal brief, r. Lowe?

MR. ROGER LOWE: We met with a group of farmers out home and it represents that group.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Where are you from, sir?

MR. LOWE: Shoal Lake.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. LOWE: On behalf of a delegation of local farmers from Shoal Lake, Birtle and Strathclair, I am privileged to present this brief concerning Bill 56 - The Farm Lands Protection Act. We wish to emphasize, Mr. Chairman, that basically we are in agreement with Bill 56. Our only criticism or reservation is that the bill is too lenient. Farmers with whom I have discussed this bill are adamant in their belief that 160 acres for foreign buyers are 140 acres too many; and 640 acres for Canadian buyers who are non-farmers are 480 acres too many. As Manitobans we have been much too tardy in our efforts to control the purchase of land in this province.

With these reservations, however, we congratulate the Government of Manitoba on making an honest and courageous effort to provide a common sense land ownership policy.

An important aspect of Bill 56 is the definition of a farmer as a person who produces food and agricultural products. The recognition of a *bona fide* farmer gives integrity to the profession of agriculture. It follows that we also recognize the necessity of preserving agricultural land for the production of food.

The whole basis of land ownership and land use hinges upon the definition of "farmer." Until we establish the fact that the mere possession of land outside the city limits does not make a person a farmer, there is no way to protect agricultural land from being used for speculation and non-productive use. It is obvious that the people who oppose Bill 56 do so because the defining of a farmer eliminates the opportunity for wealthy professionals to exploit and to speculate in agricultural land.

We cannot emphasize too strongly our basic conviction that speculation in land purchase, the purchase of land by non-farmers and corporations, the purchase of land by foreign buyers results in hopelessly negative and inhuman consequences that will eventually destroy the family farm, will ultimately force every consumer to fight the rural farming sector as the single culprit in the ever-increasing high cost of food.

Let me describe this further. Speculation in land purchase clearly and undeniably prevents young farmers from buying land for the purpose of producing agricultural products. There is no way that any farmer, young or old, can compete with corporations and wealthy non-resident buyers who purchase for reasons other than producing food. If the farmer must compete for land under these conditions he can only survive by receiving drastic increases in the price of his products. This means that the consumer will have to bear the cost of a speculative land market. And for this reason, every consumer, which means every person in Manitoba, for we are all consumers, should be in support of Bill 56.

People who oppose Bill 56 for whatever reason, do so by making every effort to scare farmers with the idea that it will become impossible to obtain long-term financing from private lending agencies. They imply that the bill in its present form — "will dry up the very necessary private capital that is required so that the only alternative over a prolonged period of time is for the farmer to avail himself of government agencies." And the bill, they say, "will deny a good many farmers the opportunity of getting the kind of financing that is necessary to successfully operate a modern farm operation."

We who live and farm here in rural Manitoba know only too well the problems involved in obtaining credit for the purchase of land and for the operation of a farm business. We are very aware that money from private lending agencies for long-term loans has never been readily available for anyone who really needed it. We would guess that the latest figures for long-term farm credit is about twenty-four or twenty-five hundred million dollars. We would guess further that only about 5 percent of that is provided by private lending agencies or by individuals, and that's for a select clientele. We know that by far the greatest percentage of farm credit in the past decade has been provided by government agencies.

This idea that credit from private lending agencies will disappear is just a smoke screen, a scare tactic deliberately used in an attempt to convince the people of Manitoba that there is something undesirable in the regulations proposed in Bill 56.

We would urge all members of the Manitoba Legislature to vote for Bill 56. We say that, and I repeat, because it will move us toward a sensible and progressive policy of land ownership. We feel strongly that it does not go far enough, that the limits it places upon non-farmers are still too liberal. However, it gives us at least some hope that the day will soon come when we shall no longer speculate on a resource that provides for one of the basic needs of human existence: food. Thank you, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Lowe. Are there any questions? Mr. Henderson.

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MR. HENDERSON: Yes. Mr. Lowe, when you were talking about speculators in land, are there speculators in every commodity?

MR. LOWE: Yes, I guess there are. The feeling that we have, I think fairly basically, is that resource like land — I suppose we could say any mineral, like natural resources, are not mean speculation. That's a position and opinion we hold and that's why we say what we say.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you not think that a speculator in the meantime would be running it or some other farmer or individual?

MR. LOWE: Well, all we could say about that is that we don't care about that. We simply stand on the premise that land as a natural resource belongs to all people for the production of food and basic needs of life — like those of us who have all kinds of money to speculate in all kinds of ways we have all kinds of different other things to speculate on. We're just not prepared to accept it.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Lowe, I see no difference in the production of food, as long as it's used for agricultural purposes. And so if a speculator buys it and it's still used for agricultural purposes, I don't see as it's putting anybody out of a job. Do you not admit that there's many people who just naturally become buyers at all? Do you not believe that there's many people that are not capable of becoming buyers?

MR. LOWE: Buyers of what?

MR. HENDERSON: Of land.

MR. LOWE: Why? Sorry, I am not supposed to ask questions.

MR. HENDERSON: Well, isn't it an accepted fact that there's many people who have not enough resources to buy land?

MR. LOWE: Yes, right.

MR. HENDERSON: And so they have to rent land. And is there anything wrong with them renting it from somebody else that might own it and live in town?

MR. LOWE: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: There's something wrong with that.

MR. LOWE: Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: Well, you sure differ from me in that opinion. Would you explain what's wrong with a man in town, owning that land and somebody who can't afford to buy land renting it from him?

MR. LOWE: The thing that we see that's wrong with that is the thing that we've experienced a good long time, and I don't think I'm as old as some of the other fellows that we were talking with. The thing that we've experienced for a good long time is that persons who buy land for speculative purposes who rent it out to those of us who farm, very, very seldom, if ever, give us any kind of tenure. And there's no kind of legislation that we're aware of that either protects us or him in that kind of situation. Like I think we'd have to set up the kind of legislation that would protect a lessee, if we moved in that direction. The basic problem we have with that is that we have no tenure. And like somebody says here this morning, all of a sudden, the farmer was off because the lady decided to sell.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you believe it's possible to guarantee a tenant tenure who would not be doing the job right? It's not possible in many cases. And a speculator, as long as it is being done right and that man is being honest, he doesn't mind.

MR. LOWE: We would say that, of course, any farmer has to operate with good farming practices. There's no question about that. So, like that's all the more reason why in rent situations, we need some kind of legislation. — (Interjection) — Of course. But you know, like you can give a person, like the Manitoba government is doing right now with the Land Lease Program, you can give him a lengthy tenure with that built-in that farming practices have to be somewhat acceptable.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Lowe, I noticed when you're talking about — we'll call them landowners as if they're all bad. I happen to be one of these fellows that rented land for 28 years, and we found that the people who owned the land and who had a store in a nearby town were very good people to work with. And if it hadn't been for the close help that they gave us for many years I don't know how I would have got along. So, if they chose to have their money in there for an investment over a period of years, do you see anything wrong with that?

MR. LOWE: Yes, I do, but that's okay, we differ on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Yes. Mr. Lowe, you mentioned in your brief that the majority of funds provided to the agricultural industry had been provided by government agencies over the last number of years. I wonder what research you've done and what statistics do you have to verify that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You speak up, Mr. Blake, when you speak so we could hear you.

MR. BLAKE: I was just asking Mr. Lowe if he could give me some statistics to verify or back up that statement that the majority of funds loaned to the farming and agricultural industry has been been loaned by government agencies over the last number of years.

MR. LOWE: Yes. I guess I probably would be able to get that if I could visit Bill Johnston Johnson's office for two seconds. Or I suppose Mr. Uskiw has it in his hand, I can see it right now.

MR. BLAKE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'll take the figures from the Minister. I would just like to know

ose projections they are and if he would break them down: the amount of money lent by government agencies for land purchases, that is, mortgage funds vis-a-vis operating funds. And could he have the figures of operating funds provided by the credit unions and the banks over the same period of time?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Uskiw.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, it is not in order to proceed in this way although I'm prepared to give the member the data. I refer him first of all to my comments on second reading where we did give absolute statistics on the long-term credit arrangements in Canada and about less than 5 percent of the total long-term credit is provided by private capital. Ninety-five percent is provided by public agencies, provincial and federal. That's the point that Mr. Lowe is making.

MR. BLAKE: He didn't mention long-term credit; he just said credit.

MR. USKIW: Yes, he did, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BLAKE: Does the Minister have, Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, does he have the statistics for operating capital provided to the industry over the same number of years?

MR. USKIW: If the Chair will be patient, I think we can pick that up too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not sure whether we are proceeding in the proper manner now, between the minister and . . .

MR. BLAKE: I could direct them to Mr. Lowe but I just wanted the information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the Committee is agreeable and there are no objections, I'm prepared to allow the Minister to provide that information if he so has it with him.

MR. BLAKE: I just want to get the information out on the record, Mr. Chairman. It doesn't matter whether it comes from Mr. Lowe or the Minister. Mr. Lowe apparently didn't have the figures, so . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it will only be a moment.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, there is a very lengthy list of credit sources for medium and short-term credit involving public and private institutions, so perhaps the best thing I can do is refer the Member for Minnedosa to a copy of the Federal Farm Credit statistics.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Chairman, if he just provides us with a list rather than reading it into the record, that's fine.

MR. USKIW: Yes, that's my point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Patrick.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Chairman, I just have one question to Mr. Lowe. He indicated the reason that we should proceed with the legislation and perhaps it should be much stiffer legislation because of speculation. Has he got any evidence that there is really great speculation going on in farm land or, Mr. Lowe, are you assuming that there is speculation? Because from my understanding, I think the legislation was brought in because of foreign buyers, particularly European buyers, buying a considerable amount of farm land, the same as in the other provinces. And I'm sure I'm not mistaken — I wish to be corrected if I am — but none of that land that has been purchased by the European buyers in the last three or four years has not been turned over. They haven't, say, purchased it at \$300 or \$400 an acre and turned it over six months later for \$500 or \$600.00. So, in many cases, from my information, they have come in and settled on that land and in some other cases they haven't, which they are intending to do.

So if it hasn't been turned over, is it your assumption that it's speculation or do you think that they will sell?

MR. LOWE: We feel that it is speculation, like with K-Tel comes out to Oakburn and buy a section and a quarter, we don't know what else that is but speculation. They put somebody on it hoping that they'll gain a little bit that way, and maybe they will. When they shall dispose of that is anybody's guess. We don't know what else to call that but speculation.

MR. PATRICK: Did you make reference to the European buyers or K-Tel? You're concerned about a corporation, is it?

MR. LOWE: Can I have Art respond to that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, indeed. Would you identify yourself, please.

MR. ART NICHOLSON: Art Nicholson from Shoal Lake, who helped draw up this brief and Roger was presenting it for us. My voice is not the best so I asked him to present it.

Speculation in land in this country has gone on every since my father came here in 1900 and it's still going on. You can call it what you like but it's speculation. When my parents came to this country to get away from the very thing that is happening here, in England where the Duke of Nowhere owned the whole county and they must rent from him. He hunted through their crops at will with his friends and they could do nothing about it. So they came to Canada where they said you could own land on your own. When they got here, who owned the land that was available in our area? The Hudson's Bay Company. That land that we live on today had to be bought from the Hudson's Bay Company, which had been given to them by a king who had never seen it, Gentlemen Adventurers Trading into Hudson's Bay. That was speculation then and it's still speculation. My Dad bought half of the section we live on. When he went to his banker and told him he was going to try to buy the other half, what

happened? The banker immediately went and bought it from the Hudson's Bay Company; came and offered to sell it to him at ten times the price. To this day we don't own that land but he told I where he could stick it.

This has been going on, and it's still going on — a hundred years ago nothing. Now, what do you think the people who are buying land here today are doing if they aren't speculating? Probably they are going to sell it 20 years down the road, but they are still speculating. They are buying land in the area right now. K-Tel is one. German and Italian outfits also.

Surely, unless we want to go the road of other countries that have let this happen and let the land get into the hands of a few, then something drastic will have to be done.

I would say Bill 56 is a start in the right direction but if I had my way it would go an awful lot further than that. One hundred and sixty acres is certainly too much; six feet by six would be much better.

If we want to use this land to produce food and there's only 10 percent I'm told, in this country that is top quality land, why should we let people who do not intend to produce food get control of it? My idea of the ideal situation is the family-operated farm, owned and controlled by them if possible.

But as one who has come up through the Thirties, and I worked for ten cents an hour during the Thirties to keep the farm from going for taxes, I have survived it but I don't know whether it was worth it. Why should the next generation have to go into the same kind of thing that my father left Europe in 1900?

I would suggest to you gentlemen to do something now before it is too late. Once these people get control of the majority of land, then it will take drastic action to change it, as has happened in other parts of the world.

MR. PATRICK: I have one more question. What do you think the ideal size family farm should be how many acres? And also, the area that you represent, or the group, are there many tenant farmers in that area? Is a lot of the land leased or very minimum? How many people that you represent are leasing their land instead of owning their own?

MR. NICHOLSON: I lease land myself. I own some and I lease some. But it is going that way again now. Right beside where I live, the three sections across the road were foreclosed by the mortgage company in 1932. They only sold that two years ago. They held it for 37 years. They did nothing; they improved nothing; they bled it white. They took a third of the crop from every tenant there and originally there was less than \$2,000 against any one of those sections. Now they finally sold because they saw the writing on the wall. They sold it two years ago.

But this kind of thing has gone on. Why should they own that land when the people that lived on it had no way of improving it; they had no right to touch anything. They even used to charge them when they cut wood on it, in the Thirties when wood was scarce. I would say that right now, in our municipality, there is a third of the population there was 20 years ago that are actually living in that municipality. It has gone that far. We have corporations; they work all around us; we are surrounded with them personally, who are working ten, twelve, fourteen sections. This is the trend and it is getting worse every year; they increase their holdings every year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I thought I heard you mention recent purchases by outside interests and I don't know if I heard correctly — you were referring to K-Tel, was it?

MR. NICHOLSON: K-Tel, right.

MR. USKIW: Meaning the record people?

MR. NICHOLSON: Yes, the hotel owners.

MR. USKIW: I see. What acreage was involved?

MR. NICHOLSON: Six quarter-sections, I believe, just the north of . . .

MR. USKIW: That's just a recent purchase, is it?

MR. NICHOLSON: This spring.

MR. USKIW: What did they pay for it, do you know?

MR. NICHOLSON: Three hundred and fifty thousand, I'm told, but I can't verify that; my neighbours tell me that. And they have leased it to one of the biggest operators, one of these fourteen section operators I'm telling you about on a per acre cash rent. I couldn't tell you exactly what that is but it wouldn't pay the interest on their investment, I'm quite sure.

MR. USKIW: So they, in your opinion, are buying it for a purpose other than what they can recover from productivity on the land itself?

MR. NICHOLSON: Right. This is what I object to. If they were using that land to compete with us to produce food as we must produce it, at the prices we can get, they wouldn't be there. There's other reasons. And we cannot compete with people that have this kind of backing. How can I go out and compete with the K-Tel organization who we know are leasing that land at less than the interest from their money.

MR. USKIW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Henderson.

MR. HENDERSON: You said that there was only a third of the population there now that was there

ars earlier. Do you not believe, you know, that it isn't just foreign buyers or non-resident buyers at have caused this? Do you not believe that it's because the present farmers have become larger — e present farms have become much larger?

MR. NICHOLSON: They were forced to become larger to compete. When I was a boy there was somebody living on every half-section in our municipality; it would average out at a half-section farm. Today we have no immediate neighbours at all. They are gone. There are sections and sections and sections with nobody. As I say, these corporations, the ones I spoke of are working them.

MR. HENDERSON: You also stated that you rent some land. You own some and you rent some.

MR. NICHOLSON: Right.

MR. HENDERSON: How much do you rent?

MR. NICHOLSON: Three quarter sections.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you rent on a one-third basis?

MR. NICHOLSON: That's right.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you have any trouble with your landlord; do you think he is taking advantage of you?

MR. NICHOLSON: He is a lifelong friend. He has lived on the same section ever since I was a boy and he's 87 years old. I have nothing but a verbal agreement with him and we trust each other completely. I wouldn't do him out of one farm and neither would he do me out of one.

MR. HENDERSON: So you don't think he is taking advantage of you?

MR. NICHOLSON: Why would he?

MR. HENDERSON: Well, I'm agreeing with you.

MR. NICHOLSON: That's an old man that worked as long as he could and when he had to quit he just us rent it.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, but do you not agree that most leases are a third crop?

MR. NICHOLSON: Not any more. In our area I would say there would be a very very small percentage. It's all cash . . .

MR. HENDERSON: Well, if they're not a third crop, what share are they, or are they on a cash basis?

MR. NICHOLSON: Cash basis.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I have you address your remarks to the Chair so that I can identify you for the transcript. Mr. Henderson.

MR. HENDERSON: If they are on a share basis what share basis are they on?

MR. NICHOLSON: What I rent is on a third basis. One-third for the landlord and two for me. On the cash rent, it varies from farm to farm.

MR. HENDERSON: Do you not believe that these people in that area are happy to rent this land, the people that can't buy it are happy to rent this land from these owners, or owners like the man you spoke about?

MR. NICHOLSON: Well, in the case of a lifelong friend that I'm speaking of, this is different altogether. As long as he is alive we'll have that land but we won't have it once he passes on. To the young fellow who is trying to get land, he cannot get it now, and I could name half a dozen half-sections in the last two years that this corporation that has grown so fast — if they compete with my neighbour's boys for that odd quarter that's for rent, the young fellow hasn't got a chance. Why? "The corporations have all the modern equipment. They will put the inputs in it: it. We will rent it to them; we can't rent it to you — you might not be able to finance it."

They haven't got a chance to compete.

MR. HENDERSON: When you are complaining about a corporation, you are complaining about a farm corporation, then, that is becoming larger?

MR. NICHOLSON: It's a corporation, yes.

MR. HENDERSON: And it's actually farming, and one that isn't barred in this legislation.

MR. NICHOLSON: It consists of a university professor and several others. They are farming, yes, of course they are farming. They are friends of mine. I have nothing against them. In this kind of a system they have every right to get all they can, of course, until they are stopped.

MR. HENDERSON: Are you particularly opposed to people who may be living in the town, owning a farm and renting it out?

MR. NICHOLSON: You mean living in our local town or living in the City of Winnipeg?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

MR. NICHOLSON: Well, if it's a case of a retired farmer such as I rent from, no, because he's only doing it to have a little income. He would sooner do that than sell and use up his capital. But as to the absentee owner, yes, I very much object to it because, as this mortgage company I've lived beside all my life, they give not one damn what happens to the community. They contribute nothing and they will not allow their tenants to put any improvements on or if they do so, they lose it. They get no credit for it whatsoever. And I lived beside this for 37 years, with these people, and watched them. That land, until it was sold two years ago, had never had a bulldozer on it. It had never been cleaned up; there

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was no leveling done, nothing. The buildings fell down. They bled it white and then sold it. That I object to, yes, because they contribute nothing to the community.

MR. HENDERSON: Would I be right in thinking that you probably oppose resident people in town — that you are less opposed to people living in the town and owning land than you are to foreign corporations?

MR. NICHOLSON: It depends how much they own. I don't think anyone has the right to control any quantity of land if he has no intention of using it for the production of food to enable the community to keep going. You know, every outfit that gets bigger, and I quote again this corporation that I know of. They don't buy from the local — they buy nothing locally. They have their own agencies. They have a special deal with Simplot Fertilizer. They set up their own agency for all the supplies. They are agents. So they contribute nothing to keeping the local businessmen going nothing at all. And the bigger they get, the worse it gets.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Just one question. I wonder if Mr. Nicholson would be opposed to Hutterite colonies as well if he is opposed to large corporations that don't buy locally in the town? Would he be opposed to Hutterite colonies?

MR. NICHOLSON: We have a Hutterite colony within six miles.

MR. BLAKE: My question was, are you opposed to them?

MR. NICHOLSON: I'm not opposed, no, not at all. They do their dealing right in the local town.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Einarson.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Nicholson, in the bill he indicates the penalty for an individual basis, and the corporation. I say, you are an individual farmer, I take it you are not incorporated?

MR. NICHOLSON: That's right.

MR. EINARSON: If you were to decide tomorrow to incorporate, do you agree with the penalties that are imposed in the bill?

MR. NICHOLSON: The penalties don't apply to a family corporation.

MR. EINARSON: You say the penalty, if you incorporate it doesn't apply?

MR. NICHOLSON: It wouldn't be any different whether I'm incorporated or not. That's not the intent of that penalty. As I read it, it wouldn't make any difference with my section of land whether I have a corporation or whether I haven't. I would have the exact same right and I have no disagreement with that.

MR. EINARSON: There's a penalty insofar as if you violate some rules or regulations or laws as it applies to an individual. Also there is another clause whereas it applies to a corporation.

My question is that you are farming as an individual now, and there is a certain penalty if something goes wrong insofar as the law is concerned between you and the law. If you were to incorporate your business tomorrow, and you can be a one-man corporation, do you agree with the penalty that is applied in this Act insofar as the corporation is concerned?

MR. NICHOLSON: There is no penalty. It would be no different if I had a private corporation of my own. I would not be penalized any more than I am for speculators right now, as I read it, unless misinterpreted it.

MR. EINARSON: Yes. Very good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Einarson. If there are no further questions, I want to thank Mr. Lowe and Mr. Nicholson. Our next witness will be Mike Sotas from Russell, Manitoba.

MR. SOTAS: Gentlemen of the Committee . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is this your own personal brief, Mr. Sotas?

MR. SOTAS: This is a brief that was put together by myself and six other farmers in the Rossburn, Angusville and Foxwarren areas of this province. We got together yesterday and I know it lacks polish. It was put together. We discussed it 'till midnight, and to try and get here by ten o'clock was an impossibility, and I lack a little sleep and it shows in the brief.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you from Russell or Rossburn?

MR. SOTAS: I was born and raised in Rossburn; I still farm in that area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Proceed.

MR. SOTAS: I am pleased to have the opportunity to present some views on this bill to you on behalf of six farmers and myself in the Rossburn general area, and we are happy that some effort is being made to limit the speculation of land in this province. I consider myself an average farmer, farming six quarters of land in that vicinity. I have farmed for 30 years. I began farming under The Veterans Land Act following . . . in the Second World War. I will be presenting this brief in the singular. I am speaking in the singular, but it coincides, it contains the strong views of other people.

Historically in this province, over the last century, since pioneer days, the land was farmed by people living on the land, which created communities, which built roads, schools, churches and the other facilities necessary for modern living. These became the nucleus of the villages and towns that

we have in the province today. This in turn provided the main base of the economy of the province. And I say this could not have been done if we would have had absentee landlords at that time.

After Confederation most of the land was owned by the Crown, which encouraged settlers to come in by offering them land at \$10.00 per quarter-section, except the land that was given to the CPR as a grant following the building of the trans-continental railway, and of course the land that was given to the CPR — I don't know for what reason.

I can't help but wonder when you have this vast tract of land in Manitoba, why absentee landlords and corporations didn't buy it then. It was cheap! The only reason they didn't buy it was because they couldn't see any money made by speculation. It was worthless without people, and it only became valuable when their land was surrounded by other land that was settled by people from various parts of the globe. Today speculation is still there, but different parties and not the two corporate giants, the CPR and the CNR, are endeavouring to make money on land.

In a survey three years ago by the Government of Alberta, it was found that the most viable and economic size of a farm was 800 acres, not only was it economical and productive, but it also enhanced the rural communities and it kept the rural villages and towns going by the very essence of people being there. It helped to maintain the trading centres and these in turn provided the services that are required today. It kept people in the communities. It kept the schools going and the churches going, and I am sure you people are aware how many schools that were built ten years ago, today they cannot find an enrolment to justify their existence, and in larger centres that have become over-congested, they are forever building schools to keep up to the demand of the enrolment.

In Europe over centuries, wars have been fought for the control of the land mass. The elite, mostly dukedoms, feudal monarchies, etc., knew that the control of the land meant control of the people, and when they owned most of the land, the ordinary people, the peasantry, were reduced to semi-slavery. This is very evident in India today, where the hereditary maharajas own the bulk of the land and the people live in abject and dire poverty.

This was also very evident in Great Britain, where large tracts of land — and Art made some reference to it — was inherited by the few, used for fox-hunting and other recreational activities by the people that owned them, and the common folk didn't even have the right to walk on it, and in case of war they were called to fight and defend the land that wasn't theirs at all.

In Central Europe, similar conditions prevailed. The bulk of the land, approximately seven-eighths of it, was owned by landlords, some of them foreign, retired army officers, merchants and churches. The remaining was owned by the peasants, who leased land from the owners and the lease was usually five to one — five bushels for the owner or five parts to the owner and one part to the person that was farming it. In Canada there is quite a difference, generally two to one in favour of the lessee.

In Bill 56 there are features incorporated within it that fail to come to grips with the fundamental problem of land ownership, although it is a small step in the right direction and I will deal with it a little later.

After the Second World War legislation was drafted federally that allowed any veteran with any basic agricultural knowledge to farm on his own, giving him title after a number of years. This, to me, was good legislation. It encouraged family farms, not corporate farms, and the whole plan was a resounding success, despite the fact that it has been said many times that governments can't run anything, and I defy that concept. Anybody that is familiar with the The Veterans Land Act, and it succeeded the old Soldiers Settlement Act, and it was a bit unworkable, I have to agree, but the new Act was quite a bit better. —(Interjection)— Yes, it was good Liberal policy, and if somebody, it doesn't matter what government does something that is good on behalf of the people, then I would be the first one to say that was a good job done. And I believe that what was good at that time, what was a program that was workable then, should be instituted today to keep out this speculation.

To briefly summarize, I would suggest the following features to be amended to Bill 56:

(1) That the non-resident be disallowed ownership of land in this province. Any land presently owned by non-Canadians should be divested of within three years.

(2) The Canadian non-farmers, such as lawyers, doctors, dentists, you name it —(Interjection)— yes, maybe politicians — vets, etc., be not permitted to purchase more than 20 acres. This would eliminate speculation in land to a certain extent. It would enable the person farming half a section to purchase an adjoining quarter-section without having to outbid somebody that made his money out of farming, and it would create the kind of rural condition that is conducive to having the schools run, the hospitals and everything else.

(3) The land lease program to be continued so that those who want to sell for reasons of health or change of occupation, etc., may do so to somebody when no other private farmer is interested in buying. I wouldn't say everybody should sell to the land lease, but if I as a farmer happen to get tangled in a power take-off and I lose an arm and I have no son or nobody's interested to buy in the area, I should be permitted a way out. I have known, in the old days of farming several years ago, I tell you things happened in the area that if a farmer was on the verge of quitting — the speculators

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hadn't got active then at that time yet, they got in on the act a little later on — then the only people that had money was a doctor or a dentist and they waited until the price got away down before they would buy and that created a hardship on the owner. Capital for purchasing should have been available, and if it is not available the land lease program gives it to you.

(4) Since the whole spectrum of land ownership is a real problem in every province of this country and since provinces such as P.E.I. and others are doing something definite about it, it is certainly a right time for concrete action in this province, and that petty politicking be set aside and those issues that are raised be forgotten and buried so we can get on with the very real problem in our province and legislate with an eye open to the future, so that monstrous, large land holdings by corporate giants cannot own and control thousands of acres, and so that children not yet born may, if they desire, be able to farm on their own, thus preserving the family farm and a way of life that is unique to this province.

All of which is respectfully submitted by myself and six other people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Sotas. Are there any questions? Mr. Henderson?

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Sotas, when you were talking about people owning land, you said that you were opposed to it and that anybody that owned over 20 acres should have to divest of it in three years. Is that what you said?

MR. SOTAS: I said that any foreigner that has purchased land in the last two years be required to divest himself or herself of it within three years.

MR. HENDERSON: Oh, you were referring to foreign non-resident now.

MR. SOTAS: Right. Yes.

MR. HENDERSON: And the only amount you are allowing them is 20 acres, is that it?

MR. SOTAS: Right.

MR. SO HENDERSON: Are you talking about a Canadian or are you talking about a foreigner?

MR. SOTAS: No, I am talking about the foreigner should have no land at all, and if he has invested in land, he should divest himself of that land by three years or some such figure that is mutually agreeable to the people that make the statutes of this province.

MR. HENDERSON: I want you to try to separate "foreign" and "non-resident" because we have two definitions of people here who can only own land. I am talking about a person You are opposed to foreign non-residents having any land.

MR. SOTAS: Absolutely.

MR. HENDERSON: But another person in Canada, you are saying they could have 20 acres.

MR. SOTAS: If he is not engaged in farming, and he has another occupation, then I see no reason why he should be given the opportunity to buy land. And I know some land at Elie that there is a three quarter section with — I don't know what's going to happen this year — but for three years there were two horses running around on it. I don't think it is fair to the economy of Elie or to the economy of the province to have that happen. Surely we can put our land to better use than that.

MR. HENDERSON: In Saskatchewan they have an assessment value of 15,000, rather than the number of acres. Do you think that possibly if something was done in Manitoba, it should be based on assessment or on acreage?

MR. SOTAS: Well, I don't know. I don't know what would be the fairest. If you base it on assessment, it would vary where the land is located. Naturally if it was near Winnipeg, it could be assessed at an awful lot more than if the same amount of land was owned by a party, say, at Swar River or Dauphin or the Interlake or the southeast of the province. So if you had it at an acreage size, it would be the same for everybody. You could use it for recreational purposes.

MR. HENDERSON: But 20 acres in one area could be in a key spot and could be worth an awful lot of money, and 20 acres in another area where you would have to pay for recreation would be worth very little.

MR. SOTAS: I don't think I am here to argue relative value of land or the relative assessed value of it. What I am saying is that I think, in my opinion and the opinion of six other people, that they use the figure of 20, and I think that is a fair enough figure, that a person can build a house and he can have a golf course if he chooses to build one, and things like that, and a fish pond if he wants one. I don't think he is restricted so he is going to be like the poor person in Great Britain that can't even walk on any land. I don't think we are prepared to go that far with the amount of land that we have in this province.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Sotas, I know that we all agree that there is nothing better than the owner working the land, but do you not think that the government would possibly be moving in the right direction if they made loans toward people buying the land so they could become an owner and a worker at the same time, rather than even the lease program they have now?

MR. SOTAS: The lease program gives them the opportunity to own. The lease program does practically the same thing that The Veterans Land Act did. —(Interjection)— Yes, I beg to differ. I farmed on it and I know a little bit about it. The basic qualification — Do you know anything about agriculture and the The Veterans Land Act? Have you some help from your uncle or your parents or

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our neighbour to get started in the crucial years? Machinery was scarce, etc. And we are saying most identically the same thing in the Land Lease Program. And then as you get some equity built up, and as you have some seed, and as you build your collateral and your credit, etc., then you can go ahead and buy. I see a parallel between the two programs.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, I know the Land Lease Program. I know that it has been changed. I know that it had to be a tenant. But now the government gives the person the option of buying it out but they have to raise all the money within a certain period and a few other things. They do not go into the financing of the money now under the MACC. Is that not right?

MR. SOTAS: Well, I wouldn't like to pose as an expert on all the rules that they have in the Land Lease Program, I am not in it, but if those are the provisions, and after you've established some credit and some proven ability that you are a farmer, then generally anybody, any lending agency, if you know what you're doing, and you're producing a fair crop, anybody will lend you money. The only one that you can't borrow money is the time that you have no collateral, you have no experience, and people don't know what your abilities are. And once you've proven yourself, and you know what you're doing, generally it is very easy to obtain credit.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, the only point that I was making was that the Agricultural Credit Corporation do not loan money on farms. If you want to become an owner, you borrow it some place else.

MR. SOTAS: Well, you have the federal people and they have a bigger field, they have the resources of the total country instead of one province, so perhaps they're in a better position to finance purchase of lands for individual farmers. I see, by the latest amendments, they have increased their loan rates a little bit this year and they've upped the amount that can be borrowed.

MR. HENDERSON: That's all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Any further questions? If there are none, thank you very much, Mr. Sotas.

MR. SOTAS: Thank you for your kind attention.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will call on Mrs. Maude Lelond from Miniota, please, to come forward.

MRS. LELOND: Mr. Chairman, honourable members, I have just come from the Women's Institute Convention to discuss this absentee ownership bill and I am ill prepared. —(Interjection)— Morris says I am always prepared so now you know I know Morris here. —(Interjections)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Mrs. Lelond, are you representing a personal brief or the Women's Institute?

MRS. LELOND: No, I was just going to say that I had rushed from there, but that I have a short brief based on the church brief which I gave two years ago. I wish to just abbreviate it and then enlarge on it to deal with absentee ownership.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is this then the United Church? Are you representing the United Church?

MRS. LELOND: No. Well I would be but I have advanced a brief from it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Proceed.

MRS. LELOND: And the church brief, these are just some of the quotes from it, and I am reading from the Church Observer.

"Land must be viewed as a resource, not a possession, according to a policy statement drafted by the United Church Committee on Agriculture and Food. The committee asked the church to act immediately to have food production recognized as the top priority land use in Canada." And it goes on to mention suburban growth and so on, which I will omit.

The church must work within itself and with other agencies. And this was December of 1975 and we have advanced and have been working with other agencies, such as the Roman Catholic Church in Brazil and so on, which I don't care to go into. Canadians realize that the land for food production is limited, and that this issue should concern everyone. The committee also asked that the church try to prevent — and this is very important in absentee ownership — the idling of prime agricultural land through land speculation, by urging government at all levels to provide positive incentives for land designated for agriculture, particularly in the areas affected by urban growth. However, I wish to move into land as a resource, but land . . . and so much for that reference. But I wish to discuss specifically with you, the problem of absentee land ownership.

In Bill 56, we are placing a limit of 160 acres for foreign purchasers. I am very pleased to be told that all members are agreed on this 160 acres, I think, but I've been away from the radio and TV so I am not sure. With all due respect to Honourable Sam Uskiw, I stand alone, I guess, because I'd just give foreign buyers a plot six feet deep and six feet long. And I'd also cultivate flowers and vegetables on the top of it. But that 640 acres for absentee owners is what we're really going to deal with.

Honourable Sam Uskiw, you're too generous. If you are listening to the voices of people like myself —(Interjection)— And I'm going to pick him to pieces, too. I am non-political here. You are too generous. If you are listening to the voices of people like myself and unselfish interests like churches and citizens interested in the option of at least retaining what we have left of our rural communities, you can't allow absentee owners to control sections of land. Why? Because, No. 1, you are defeating

the purpose of the first part of the bill on foreign ownership. It has been conclusively proven that absentee owners in Canada, may very well be fronts for foreign and Canadian corporations. I am not wanting to take very much time on that.

Secondly, what is the danger to farmers here? And let me use Cargill Grain, for example. In a recent investigation into who has the high percentage vested interest in piece farms in B.C. — as this was found out accidentally, when the labourers on the farm formed a union and they began to investigate who owned the farm; there were two other farms and the piece farms — It came to light that no other than Cargill had a vested and almost controlling interest in thousands of acres in B.C. Cargill is only one of the giants in the food-producing industry, who by all forms of integration, is gradually controlling the farmers. I am not singling out Cargill; I am just using it as an example.

Gentlemen of the Opposition, especially during election time, you refer to communist tendencies within this government. But I say to you, honourable members, I and gradually many young farmers, are seeing the light. If we allow absentee owners to control our farm lands, we are in danger of complete corporatism, oligopoly controlled. And we will be labourers and will be striking for a six to ten percent raise when Blue Ribbon Tea, for example, made a 105 percent profit in 1976. Poor things!

Thirdly, gentlemen of this Committee — and I'm addressing all of you — do you really feel that farmers should be secondary to doctors and lawyers and teachers? Is farming a profession or are we labourers? Or should everybody be a labourer? Their profession we do not question nor belittle. But for heaven's sake, leave us the land to practice our very worthwhile — they are the backbone of not Manitoba or Canada, but of the world food production.

Lastly, all gentlemen who in their hearts oppose this bill, any New Democrats, Liberals and Conservatives, if that is the case and it has been whispered to me that New Democrats have a hard time accepting some of the things which Cabinet puts before them, realize that those human beings who believe in freedom, not enslavement, and those human beings who believe that land for food production should be used expressly for that, and not held for speculation, and those human beings who believe that the citizens of this world are not pawns to be mauled and raped by corporations and the business oligopolies. Yes, gentlemen, I am sorry I can't say, and ladies — I think that's a disgrace — (Interjection) — All self-respecting citizens should be prepared to stand by the farmer. Wishing to be the young farmer — well, the old one too if he still wants to farm; I'm getting on in years and I've never done anything else — so I do know a little of which I speak. I am not an expert, but I know a little of which I speak.

Listen, listen to the voices of the churches in Brazil, the voices of the churches and the peasants up on the mountains in Haiti, while the Texan farmer feeds his steers in the valley to bring them to McDonald's in Canada, to feed to the people across Canada. McDonald's who don't serve an ounce of Canadian beef; they're serving Texas steers.

MR. ENNS: They make pretty good hamburgers.

MRS. LELOND: Yes, they do, but they it should be Canadian beef, when we're going broke on the farm raising it.

The church in the world and in Canada is gaining ground. We are becoming more vociferous, and I would ask you, gentlemen, think hard before you vote for this. Even before you vote for the 640 acres, even that bugs me.

I didn't get time to make a conclusion, my apologies to the Honourable Sam Uskiw, and all the other honourable members. I may say that I don't like long briefs so I didn't take any excerpts from these books. But the opposition, New Democrats and the Liberals, should all read this literature. And you should all be up on things. I know you're not or you wouldn't say the things you're saying. This is the church paper. — (Interjection) — There is all kinds of literature that you could be reading. Smarten up, okay? And if you wish to question me, I am ill prepared but I'll try to answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mrs. Lelond. Are there any questions? Mr. Toupin.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Chairman, obviously, you've had AS YOU'VE INDICATED JUST A FEW DAYS TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE PRESENTATION BEFORE THE Committee, but could you tell us in your humble opinion, what could be done to make the bill more presentable or more acceptable to those that are opposing it, and you've heard some of the briefs that have been presented.

MRS. LELOND: Mr. Chairman, I have to admit that I only read this presentation of the bill. I haven't had time. When they phoned me to come in, there was no time, I was leaving on the bus to come to the Institute Convention, and I took sick at the Institute Convention. It wasn't the convention that made me sick — for heaven's sake, don't get that in the newspapers — and all I have read is what's in here about the bill. And so, I am not very well versed except on the 640 and the 160 acres.

But how would I make it more presentable? Well, what I am appealing to is all members to be non-political, to sit together and say — (Interjection) — Oh my God, all you need to do is sit in that House and you know why school children won't behave in school. Sit together and say what is best for rural Manitoba. I really am very serious on foreign ownership. Mr. Green has gone out and so I can say that the Jews bought the land where they are fighting now and moved in there as settlers. That was the

ginning of the trouble; there was foreign ownership. And you can go all over the world. I'm glad Sid out. But you can go all over the world and find this. And so, I am very much opposed to foreign ownership. But what I was trying to bring out — and I would like to tell you privately, some of the stances that have been brought to me, which are true, that a doctor in a certain place is a front for foreign buyers so that when you say an absentee land owner can buy a 640 acres and foreign ownership is restricted to 160, you are leaving a loophole for the foreign owner to still get in here as far as I am concerned.

MR. TOUPIN: So I take it that you would not make a distinction between a foreigner or a Canadian wanting to purchase farm lands, but not be a resident farmer?

MRS. LELOND: Mr. Chairman, honourable members, I might make some distinction, but by and large, the one is as detrimental to the little rural community, you understand. Maybe not as detrimental in a national sphere, or even a provincial sphere, but in the rural block, neither one of them are putting anything in, you know, to that municipality or whatever it may be. I know that there is another brief coming on which I don't wish to enlarge upon, from Souris area, which is going to personally elaborate on this to you. So I'd rather not take any more time on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. There are no further questions for Mrs. Lelond. I would thank you very much for your presentation.

MRS. LELOND: Thank you, gentlemen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would call Mr. Bob Smith. Is Bob Smith in the audience? Please come forward. This is a personal brief, Mr. Smith?

MR. BOB SMITH: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Proceed.

MR. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, Honourable Mr. Uskiw, honourable members, I farm in the Carroll district, south of Brandon and I was born in Sudbury, Ontario and moved to Manitoba when I was four, and I have lived on the same farm ever since. At the present time, I farm a half section and run a 100-hog enterprise.

Over the past few years, there has been a trend in the rural areas that disturbs me and that is the consolidation of farms into larger and larger units. In my view, this is seriously eroding the rural way of life and the economy of many of the small towns and villages in our province. As the rural population declines, school divisions and municipalities are faced with the problem of maintaining services in the face of a declining economic and population base.

In my own area, I have witnessed the sale of a number of farms to a pair of large, private corporations. Within five miles of my home, there are at least six viable farm units that have been sold out to larger units. One of these corporations farms in excess of 3,000 acres in two municipalities. And the other corporation that I am familiar with is just nearly as large. These corporations contribute absolutely nothing to the community around which they are situated. I know that their grain is sold in Brandon and Winnipeg, and most of their farm supplies are bought in quantity directly from the manufacturer or supplier. These corporations are able to accept a lower price for the produce because of volume and therefore, they depress the prices to all farmers in Manitoba.

I understand there has been a rather large amount of criticism leveled at Bill 56 in regard to the 640 acre ownership limit imposed on non-farming Canadian residents. I'm entirely in favour with this section of the bill. It seems to me that this section really imposes no hardship on anyone. At present prices, a section of land in my area would cost between \$160,000 and \$180,000.00. I would think that there are very few individuals who have that amount of money to invest. To carry it a bit further, a family of four, assuming that the children are over 18 years old, could own a total of 2,560 acres. At today's prices, this is in excess of three-quarters of a million dollars.

I would hope that the urban MLAs would try to understand the real concerns there are in rural areas regarding the shrinking population in the farming areas of Manitoba. One of the major problems of these large land holdings is that they are almost invariably sold as a single unit, and neighbouring farmers are not able to purchase maybe the extra quarter or half section that they need to become a viable farm unit. Of course the sale of these large blocks of land eliminates the chance of a young man ever becoming a farmer. With the average age of farmers getting higher and higher every year, it is imperative that we as Manitobans and Canadians do everything in our power to reverse this trend. If we do not in the very near future we could easily see the agricultural sector of our economy owned by a very few large corporations. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Smith. Mr. Johnston, Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Through the Chair, to you, Mr. Smith. You mentioned the fact that two corporations bought sizeable acreages near your farm. Did you find out the price that they paid? What I'm getting at is, did they pay substantially higher than what had been the going rate?

MR. SMITH: No, not really. What they are able to do is present the idea that they have the money and that if a farmer wishes to sell out, he can immediately go to them and say, "I have my section of land. Do you want to buy it?" and immediately the corporation buys the land without it ever coming

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on the open market for individuals to bid on it or anything else. In another case, the thing that you say is true — the farm that I am speaking of was put up for tender, and the corporation tendered \$10.00 acre above the highest bid. Now, how can any one farmer individual compete with that kind of financing? It's just an impossibility.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Were these Canadian corporations or do you know that?

MR. SMITH: Yes, as far as I can gather, these are Canadian corporations. The people who are the prime shareholders, or supposedly the prime shareholders of these corporations, are businessmen who have made their money in other enterprises and are buying land because of the rapid increase in land prices over the last few years.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: The land, is it being properly farmed? Are the renters making money by farming this land or is the land lying idle? What's the situation?

MR. SMITH: No, actually these corporations of which I speak have formed farming corporations. Now there's a problem here — what I think is good cultural practice and what another man thinks is good cultural practice, may very easily be two different things. I would in my own estimation, say that perhaps they are not getting the bushels per acre off the land that a smaller more intensive operation could. I've seen their crops and quite frequently they are not up to the standard of the man who is farming a section or section and a half next to them.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: The question had been asked before of someone else. You state that you have a half section. Are you trying to increase your holdings?

MR. SMITH: I would if this were possible. I've seen land sold rather rapidly in my own area. In fact I know of one case where my brother had asked a man who had a half section, that he had retired and was thinking of selling. The man said he would let him know when he decided to sell and a month later it was sold to a large group and that was all there was to it. My brother never heard, it was just sold out.

The great problem as I see it is that this land that is being sold to these large individuals is going to them directly. There's never any chance for the smaller farmer to bid on this land or even express an interest in it. If the man decides he's going to quit, and he walks into this man's office and says, "What will you get me for my land?" That's usually the end of it, the land's gone.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: You made mention of the fact that there should be some limit on the size. Don't you think that among farmers that sorts itself out? I'm talking about an operating farmer, a family unit farm or even a farm corporation which are members or friends, or members of a family, or a group of people who get along well. Don't you think that it sorts itself out in the fact that the farm people concerned — if they overexpand — they suffer and they have to unload some of it? Don't you think that problem solves itself?

MR. SMITH: I don't know, Mr. Chairman. That's a hard question to answer. I can tell you of an instance of a family farm corporation in southwestern Manitoba, that owns a township — they own 36 sections and maybe in excess of 36 sections — but this is a family farm unit and I really don't have a great deal of quarrel. There's four boys and three daughters in the family. They're all over eighteen now and every one of them is engaged in the farming operation. How big can you get?

This other corporation that I spoke of in excess of 3,000 acres, he seems to have no qualms about buying more and more land. Where he'll stop I don't know. You hear of him buying another half or three quarter sections of land every year. The man who owns the corporation or is head of the corporation, owns an implement business. He gets his machinery at the wholesale cost or whatever his cost may be and he seems to get larger and larger every year. I don't know whether there is a limit. I would think that there is a limit, but I haven't seen it yet.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: That's all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions? Mr. Uskiw.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I have one point. I'm trying to get clarification, perhaps I missed it in your initial comments. Did you say you were making a distinction between Canadian and non-Canadian entitlement to land or ownership eligibility?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Smith.

MR. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, not really.

MR. USKIW: Not really. Okay. That's my point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. If there are no further questions, thanks very much, Mr. Smith. I would call on Mr. Jake Froese.

MR. FROESE: I'm speaking on my own behalf so that if there's any criticism it will have to come to me.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I would like to give a few brief views on Bill 56, an Act for the Protection of Farm Land. First of all, I would like to state that my purpose is not to defend the ever larger growing operator or the large corporations. It may appear that way afterwards but I want to say that at the outset.

In my opinion the Act infringes on our basic rights and freedoms and this is my main concern of this legislation. It appears as though there is a smoke screen to hide some of the real things it contains. So in my opinion, the Act will deny the farmers the right to sell their land to whoever they

oose to and this has been very basic all through the history of Manitoba and to the people who have come here from other lands. Our forefathers had to leave another country because of property ownership. They were deprived of it, stripped of it, and as a result they had to leave. So this is something that is precious to them — property ownership. We feel that this is a sacred right and certainly a very basic freedom.

It also in my opinion, denies the right to sell to the highest bidder. We know when auction bills are being put up, auction sales are held, you sell to the highest bidder. From here on I suppose you will have to put a special little notice on it, "Not to the highest bidder," because farm lands cannot be sold on that basis matter if a bidder is there from other countries who would want to bid, and you cannot sell to them. So here is another principle that is being changed.

Thirdly, in my opinion it's destroying a ready developed market by denying people the right to purchase. In so many cases we have to go out and develop markets. This is something that this government is well versed in and they know all about it. Their Department of Industry and Commerce has made many efforts, spent many many dollars in doing so. Here we have a ready-made market and we are going to destroy it to a large degree by denying these people to purchase land.

Then fourthly, robbing farm people of millions of dollars, by the stroke of a pen or by the passing of this legislation. With the prices today, farmers who are selling and are reaping their life savings — something that they have worked hard to obtain all their life in all those years that they worked on the farm — and they are not able to sell it. Now, by the passing of this legislation you'll probably wipe their life's earnings into half, probably 60 percent or so, who knows? We can't determine that completely at the present time, but surely when you limit the number of bidders for your properties, it stands to reason that you will have to accept a lower price.

Farming is a business today and as such it should not be singled out for discrimination. I'm sure if this legislation was to apply to business in general in Manitoba, we'd hear a howl and cry across this land as to the discrimination that was going to take place. Now, everything is quiet. Even the press doesn't come out and state what the situation is. I feel this is a sad situation when many people are asleep as to what is happening. Many people don't know the process of legislation and the way the Legislature works, and that they have a right to appear before your Committee. Many are not aware of this and therefore, they don't come. Others should be here who are not here today.

And then too, I feel because the government has found a given situation where there is a certain amount of sympathy for the young farmers who are not able to purchase the land — the farm property — this has received some acceptance and I personally am all too glad to see young farmers take over and purchase land. But it seems as though the government has latched on to this area where you have a certain acceptance, where you have a certain amount of sympathy to bring in a bill to restrict the purchase of land and at the same time, taking away our rights and freedoms. They put it into one bundle and therefore, you're supposed to vote on it and accept it in that way.

Mr. Chairman, I feel very strongly that this should not have happened this way and we should not allow this legislation to go forward. This bill discriminates against those that want to or must sell land for whatever reason. If legislation were passed to restrict people from selling their businesses to buyers, especially buyers paying cash and high prices, as already mentioned there would be a howl and cry across the land. Why single out the farmer? Is he an easy prey? Or is it because he is in a small minority? The supposition of curtailing foreigners from buying land will not necessarily mean that land will be sold to young farmers. I think this should be understood as well, that just by not allowing the foreigners to come in to purchase land, that it automatically means that young farmers are going to be able to buy up that land.

In my opinion here, this is not the answer. I feel that we should go ahead and provide a better means for the young farmers to be able to purchase land at lower interest costs. I think this is one of the keys that we should be lowering the interest, because we find now that foreigners come in and buy land at higher prices knowing full well that the return on it, as far as rent is concerned, will be small in comparison to the outlay, and there is no cry about that. They feel that they eventually will gain that amount in appreciation of the land when it will be sold. Some speculators and investors are satisfied presently with the lower return as earned initially, no doubt counting on further appreciation of land values for years to come. When the time comes they will be selling it and they intend to sell it at a higher price.

When we talk about higher prices I think we should remember that our prices aren't that high yet. Go across the line. I was at a farm management conference last January in Fargo where you had people from all across the States, and you should hear some of the people, at what price their land sales are going — \$1,200, \$1,500 is quite common in many areas. One party sold half a section of land for half a million dollars. Another auction sale was reported in the papers a little later where farm land sold for \$26,000 an acre. And this was in about quarter-sized farms that were being sold. So all things considered farm prices for land are not really all that high yet.

I think the matter of denying or restricting the basic rights of people here in Canada, in Manitoba, and also foreigners, I think this should be dealt with by referendum. Let the people decide for

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themselves. Let us not, as legislators, take away this right and these freedoms from them with giving them a voice and without giving them a say as to whether they want this to happen. I think it is too important a matter to legislate away in this fashion.

We heard people speak this morning from the Federation of Agriculture, presenting a brief stating that they represented certain commodity groups. I just wonder whether their presentation isn't a minority report. I am sure with the different memberships that they have in the various groups that this takes in a large group of people in this province. And I am sure they haven't consulted, or nearly all of them, a very small percentage if they have.

We are going to deny the foreigners purchasing land here in this province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I just wanted to correct you, Mr. Froese. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture did not present a brief. It was the Manitoba Farm Bureau.

MR. FROESE: I am sorry. Did I say Canadian? I thought it was the Manitoba federation. It is the Manitoba Farm Bureau. I'm sorry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I just wanted to clarify that.

MR. FROESE: Thank you for correcting me on that.

This government and previous governments have allowed the Japanese people to invest money in Manitoba in mines up north, and the ore is being shipped out. We have oil companies, foreign companies, coming in, leasing, and the oil is being shipped out. We have these foreigners coming and buying land. The land stays here. I think if we want to discriminate we should be discriminating against the other groups, rather than against these particular people here.

Then, too, we don't know whether history is going to repeat itself, but certainly in the Depression years many farmers in this province lost their land. The insurance and mortgage companies were holding it and when times were better, they resold that land and the farmers were able to purchase again. I don't know whether this is going to be the case as far as the foreign owners, that an opportunity will present itself in future years whereby they will be able to regain control of it. However, in my opinion this is not the right answer. The legislation as it is being presented, I know it has sympathy because of some of the facts that I already mentioned, but in my opinion it is not the answer to the problem before us.

I had had some further notes but I didn't take them with me this morning. I forgot them. So if there are any corrections . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Froese. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, let me say to Mr. Froese that we are privileged to have him back with us, even though it is for a short time here this afternoon. He has maintained his consistent position which of course doesn't surprise me and I respect him for it. I didn't expect any different presentation than what we have received.

Let me say that there are a couple of observations that I would like to make, or at least questions I would like to put. One is the question of the marketplace as it affects land values. And to take it to its extreme, and I take it to its extreme from your own statement, namely that the marketplace should be allowed to function freely and that land could be priced much higher than it is if we look at other parts of the world and so on. Should land prices result in a loaf of bread costing a dollar? Should that not be a matter of public interest? Or do you feel that that is still a sacred position based on the theory of the free market play in land? If land values went to \$2,000 an acre and that resulted in bread having to cost a dollar or two dollars a loaf, do you think that the public should readily accept that kind of a situation based on a free market in land?

MR. FROESE: I don't suppose we are up to that stage yet.

MR. USKIW: No, but assuming that . . .

MR. FROESE: I think that if we worked this the other way around and tried to reduce the taxes on that loaf of bread you would find that it would be much, much less than what we are paying for it at the present time.

MR. USKIW: Well, let me, if I may, follow that up with a second point, Mr. Chairman, if I may. If it follows that we should follow that kind of a pattern, then do you fully want to, as an owner of land, to allow your property assessment to follow that pattern as well, in which case there will be a fairly hefty transfer of benefits to every village in rural Manitoba, on the basis that the farm land will carry the largest part of the cost of operating local government on that new assessment?

MR. FROESE: Well, yes, Honourable Mr. Minister. We have an equalization formula which, if it works effectively, I think that should take care of it. As far as the total amount of tax that will be collected from a given area, if it is just pertaining to farm land itself, it wouldn't make any difference because you would only collect that amount of taxes from a certain amount of land.

The other thing that you bring in, if it is in close vicinity or proximity with a small village, and that they could gain from this, I think there you should have an equalization formula, which you do have at the present time, I think, pertaining to school taxes.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, if you follow that one through and you appreciate the fact that there are many small communities, villages, throughout the province that are not incorporated in their own

ht, but are part of the municipal, local government system, that obviously there would be massive ndfalls in favour of those residents of those small communities at the expense of a much higher tax ad on the land that is being farmed. Wouldn't that follow?

MR. FROESE: Yes, if you strictly went the way you are at the present time, if you won't make any commodation for a formula to operate, certainly that would be the case.

MR. USKIW: Accommodation for speculation. To follow that to the last statement that you made, r. Froese, you say if we didn't do anything else about it, that that would be the result and it would be ifair. You are almost implying that we should do things in order to enshrine speculative value. In her words, that the public, the government, should do something to remove the spin-off negative fects of such a market situation in land. You can see where it is taking is, down the path to an ipossible situation.

MR. FROESE: I don't really fear that that much. There is going to be a limit or saturation point, so speak, beyond which prices I don't think will go, unless there is going to be further, greater and, and that the demand itself will force up the prices, because the return that you get from your nd should be a determining factor, to a certain extent anyway, as to the amount that will be paid. hat brings up the price at the present time is that land is be appreciated and they still figure there ill be further appreciation in the years ahead, and this is why we see what is happening today.

MR. USKIW: On my last point, Mr. Chairman, you mentioned the idea of a referendum to decide ch a question. There are two things that come to mind. Referendums can be influenced by any articular group, one wanting a positive decision, one wanting a negative decision. That's Number ne.

Number Two, a number of provinces in Canada have implemented similar legislation, in fact, uch more restrictive, in some cases, without a referendum. Do you feel that they should not have roceeded as well? I refer you to Alberta as an example which has a limitation of 20 acres to any reigner, as opposed to 160 acres, which is proposed in Bill 56 here in Manitoba. By the way, I might ake another point, that the whole operation of their legislation is left to the regulations under their ill. Very little is spelled out in legislation, so that in essence the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council can se its discretion at any moment in the implementation of those restrictions. Do you think they ould have had a referendum as well?

MR. FROESE: I do. In fact they have held a number of referendums during the many years that the ocial Credit Party was in office there. I recall a number of them, and I think they should have done e same thing in this case. Where you are denying or taking away rights or freedoms from people, I ink they should have a voice in it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Johnston, Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Froese, on a number of statements he as made he has said that the appreciation of land — and he talked about American prices of as high s \$2,000 an acre and the fact that the prices here are below that and he is not that concerned. Would e not agree that the way land is priced in Canada today, it is priced as a world price? Whatever nyone is willing to pay, that becomes the new price. Is that my understanding of the way you think bout it and you agree to that?

MR. FROESE: I think this has been the practice, not only in land, in all the things that we have o sell. If the demand is there and if they are willing to pay for it, we will accept it, and this becomes the asis then for further sales. Am I answering your question?

MR. G. JOHNSTON: I am sure Mr. Froese is aware that other jurisdictions have taken action to put ome form of a limit or control on foreign ownership and on non-resident ownership. P.E.I., New runswick, at least one of the states that I know of, Minnesota, Alberta is now doing it. Do you foresee a time when Manitoba should do it? For example, I believe that foreign ownership is only a beginning n Manitoba, it is less than two percent of the arable land. If that figure got up to 50 percent or over, ould you be concerned?

MR. FROESE: I think I would be concerned, and I would be concerned because of one of the facts hat I think was the purpose in originating this legislation, that our farmers should be able to purchase it as well. And probably we should, rather than what is being proposed here, bring in something here if land was offered to the foreigners, that probably this offer be made public to the local parties, if there was anyone interested in it, that they would have first option to purchase.

I think I believe in the will of the people, whatever the people want. And this is why I am speaking of a referendum. Why not bring it forward in a referendum and let them decide on it? I think they should be the ones to decide on issues of this nature.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: But you don't think that government has any place in regulating? You just say let it go, and if it becomes of concern, then let the people affected have a vote, and that's it.

MR. FROESE: The point is here that by restricting foreign ownership, and that is what we would be oing if we went along the lines that you suggest, if a certain percentage would be affected, I still e come back that we are denying ourselves certain freedoms and certain rights that we have held heretofore, and I don't think we should bypass them. I think we should give the people the right to

decide.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Well, I don't want to argue, Mr. Chairman, with Mr. Froese, but would he agree that his great, great grandson, who did not have a chance to buy a land because it was owned by wealthy foreigners, wouldn't he turn that argument around to you and say, "I never had a chance to decide this. Why did you let it happen"?

MR. FROESE: I think this is good ground for a referendum because at least then you could say that people decided that this would be the case, whereas people individually cannot determine this. It has to be determined by either the Legislature or the people themselves.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Enns. Mr. Einarson.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Froese if there is any contention among farmers in his area about foreign purchasers of farm land who are non-resident in his community?

MR. FROESE: In our immediate vicinity, I don't really know of purchases, and a little further out purchases have been made by foreigners, and I think they are more affected. Maybe if there had been more sales in my immediate area I might have changed some of my thinking, but I doubt it. But I doubt this would have a bearing on it, I am sure, on the concerns that people have.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Froese again, if I understood you correctly in your brief, that you were opposed to the bill entirely, without going to a referendum to the farmers?

MR. FROESE: This is my basic view.

MR. EINARSON: Right. Now supposing the bill merely contained legislation pertaining to foreigners purchasing land in Manitoba were non-residents. If the bill would just pertain to that would it be more acceptable to you?

MR. FROESE: I think I'd stick with my principle that I have already enunciated.

MR. EINARSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Uskiw.

MR. USKIW: Yes, I have one point. If we were to proceed by referendum, should every person who is of the age of majority, vote in such a referendum in Manitoba?

MR. FROESE: I would think so because it concerns all the people of the Province of Manitoba.

MR. USKIW: You would not simply make it exclusive within the framework of the agricultural community?

MR. FROESE: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If there are no further questions, thank you very much, Mr. Froese. I call Mr. Borowski, La Salle, Manitoba.

MR. JOE BOROWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am a farmer and I have a large spread of 11 acres at La Salle, so I suppose I could speak as a farmer. But I am really here as one Canadian citizen to protest what I consider to be a violation of our human rights, the human rights of all Manitobans who are non-farmers, and I think if I recall the statistics, there is something like 35,000 farmers. Subtract that from 1,100,000 Manitobans and that will give you a pretty high percentage of violation.

I further believe the bill is discriminatory as Levesque's racist language bill; I believe it will make two unequal classes of Canadians; I think it is unconstitutional and violates The Human Rights Act of Manitoba. But I'll bet you a rhubarb pie, Mr. Chairman, that that gutless, left-wing Human Rights Commission will not touch it. It sticks its nose in every other issue but I am certain it will not challenge this Act if it passes and I hope that the opposition raises enough hell that it will not pass.

The land control legislation is being brought in. I suppose the basic reason for it is because foreign buying is pushing the price of land up to unrealistic levels and I think it happens in many areas. It certainly happened in La Salle, for the last sale, something like \$600 an acre across the road from us. But I think there are methods that this government and the Federal Government certainly has ways of dealing with that situation. And might I say, Mr. Chairman, that is not a situation that is just prevalent here. Other countries face it and I am going to read from an article of April 10, 1977. It's Our Sunday Visitor, it's the largest Catholic paper in North America. They write an article about the problem in the United States, which they are trying to grapple with, except there the issue is not so much foreign ownership, it is corporate ownership. "The key issue," and I am quoting now from this article, "The key issue — corporate investment in family farms — had been discussed in Congress for years, but never on such a broad-based alliance as that which denounced Agland Fund. Part of the problem is the spiralling cost of land. In 1976, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture figures, land values rose 33 percent in five major corn belt states, and increased by as much as 41 percent in Illinois. Land value inflation has made the prospect of starting a family farm a luxury for many. One estimate set farm credit needs last year of \$91 billion. And by 1985, it is estimated they may soar as high as \$225 billion. All the tools available to assist small farmers must be coupled with keeping the corporations out," said Peggy Borgers of rural America. "The feds have to take leadership in providing some financing that leaves control with the farmer. Senator George McGovern, Democrat, South Dakota, reintroduced his Young Farmers' Homestead Act in this session of Congress. The proposal which is backed by many of Agland's opponents including the NCRLC, which would establish a government corporation to buy farms farm as they come off of the

arket, and lease them to farmers for a period of seven years. When a lease expires the farmer would have to buy the farm at 75 percent of or appreciated cost leave the land.

Senator Hubert Humphrey, Democrat, Minnesota, has proposed a measure based on Minnesota law providing family farmers with long-term low interest loans to buy land. And both Houses of Congress were considering a bill that would prohibit non-farm corporations from buying and operating farms. The effects, said Steve Bosey of NCRLC would be to get Greyhound and other corporations out of the farm business."

Well Mr. Chairman, it seems that the problem in Canada, is, as I understand it from the press reports that I have read, is not corporations but rather foreign ownership. And I know that Sid Green — and he's not here at the moment — does not believe that there is a difference between a Canadian or a Cuban. He said that on more than one occasion and in my opinion that statement is outrageous and insulting to most Canadians.

A MEMBER: It's insulting to the Cubans too.

MR. BOROWSKI: The next thing he'll propose will be to allow absentee and foreign landlords to sit in office and the right to vote. We have always found the distinction between Canadians. We know during war that Canadians can be conscripted and sent to war; foreigners cannot. And for example — and this would be of interest to Mr. Green — if Castro was a Canadian, he would probably be in jail today and one of the reasons he isn't is because he is not a Canadian citizen, he fled the country, we can't get him back and justice cannot be done. So I suggest that there is a difference notwithstanding what Mr. Green would suggest.

Some years ago when there was a debate on in Parliament, Diefenbaker worried about hyphenated Canadians. I don't recall what the issue was about. Maybe some of you members remember, but if he had seen this bill, I wonder what he would call us after it's passed. I am sure it will make us a lot worse than hyphenated Canadians.

I think there is a real difference between a foreigner, a corporation and the rest of us non-foreigners. Many people throughout Canada and especially in the west are cursing that little corporal in Quebec of introducing a racist bill which makes non-French speaking people like dogs. Mr. Chairman — and I don't want to impute motive — but I suggest to you that this bill, although it deals in a different area, as far as the citizens are concerned, non-agricultural, it may as well be the same, because you're saying to guys who are not farmers, "You have no bloody rights." And that's what Levesque is telling the other guys that if you're not French or you don't speak French, you're nothing in this province and that is something that I am not going to allow to be passed without stating my opinion — there is nothing else I can do except perhaps run against Mr. Green because I believe that he is probably the shadow author of this bill, I don't think a nice guy like the Minister of Agriculture could possibly author a bill like this any more than he can author a pornographic book.

As a matter of fact, speaking of books, Mr. Chairman, I worked in Ninette and they sell cookbooks, which I am not promoting here, but the edition is almost sold out and when the next printing is going to go, I think I am going to put in some different recipes, some maybe, Uskiw and Green recipes — and I am not talking about salads.

Mr. Chairman, I find this legislation coming from this government really very strange because for years the NDP has been famous and well-known and very articulate on foreign ownership. And there is, I believe, a bill right now before Parliament dealing with foreign ownership and control and take-overs. And the champions of and crusaders of that legislation are the federal NDP. They say, "Let's get these damned foreigners out." It seems particularly of the U.S. that the NDP government, federally with NDP Party, has a paranoia about foreigners, yet Mr. Green will have us believe in Manitoba Smog there's absolutely no difference. A guy in ville in the States and a guy in Nova Scotia or in Manitoba, they're no different. And I disagree with that and I hope that the bill as it is proposed here will be changed drastically — foreign ownership, I think, you have reduced to 160 acres. I am not going to quarrel with that, I think that that area — and I agree with the speakers that spoke previously — I think that that is an area that certainly needs looking into. You can do that if foreign ownership is the problem, then pass legislation against foreign ownership. If corporate farming is a problem like it is in the States, then do what Congress is doing, pass appropriate legislation if you would but don't lump us, Canadians and Manitobans, in the same bunch and tar us with the same brush and treat us in the same way. We are Canadians. We have certain rights that they do not have, they should not have. And corporations are not people. Anybody knows that. A dumb lawyer knows that a corporation is just a piece of paper and there is enough of them around.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, in closing, there are three basic freedoms which we must all protect and I am certainly going to speak on it when I can. One is the freedom to worship, the other is the freedom to vote and the last freedom is the freedom to own a piece of our country, whether it means only a piece of land or owning a house, provided one has the money. Let's face it, that's an important factor in any commercial transaction. The previous speaker said that rental of land is totally unacceptable. Yet, Mr. Chairman, a home in the city for a guy who lives in the city, the home is just as essential as a farm is for a farmer. Now if you're going to say to the city dwellers, whether he's a doctor, or a lawyer

or a politician, that you can't own land unless you're going to farm it, can you not then say or the people say, — which by the way they outnumber the farmers — that unless you're going to live in the house you have no damn right to speculate on city property.

I would suggest to the Minister that if he is concerned about certain basic rights, and one of them seems to be, is there a roof over your head, that he should investigate why the cost of housing is so high. How many farmers do you and I know that have several houses in the city? Should they have that right? Aren't they speculating? Isn't a house for the city worker just as basic as a piece of land for the farmer? How can you turn around and say to the farmer, you can buy all the homes and apartment blocks and hardware in the city that you want, even though it drives up the price, and there's no question the prices are ridiculous in the city and yet when it comes to a farmer you say, you guys have no rights. You have no rights to buy land here. Well, I shouldn't say no rights. I think you are restricting it to a section of land. I mean, how can you when we're dealing with principles, we're not dealing with this two-thirds and one-half as they were dealing with in overtime the other day. The principle is long established.

But here we're dealing with principle and that principle, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, is that if you are saying to the majority of Manitobans that you are not going to be allowed to buy land beyond a certain acreage. If you can get away with that in this session, what'll happen in the next session when what one of the previous speakers suggested. If this is a step in the right direction then they'll say let's reduce it from 640 to maybe 320 and then to 160 and then they'll say, well of them 11 a 6 by 6. I think some may have the bloody audacity and the sacrilege to suggest, we'll even grow potatoes on the grave.

That's the kind of people that are proposing and pushing this legislation because that is the kind of mentality and hatred that they have. They would even desecrate a grave by growing vegetables on it. I suggest that their brief should be thrown in the garbage where it belongs. They do not come here with a sense of fairness. It seems to me they come here with a sense of hatred against somebody who's got a buck — (Interjection)— Yeah, that's right. They don't like winners. They'd like to drag everybody to their level. I'm opposed to that, Chairman.

One last item: Mr. Green was on Peter Warren's line about a week ago and they were discussing various subjects and one of the things that Sid Green said, "I would like to see a society that moves in a direction of equality." And I don't recall — I've got a very bad memory — I don't recall the subject they were discussing, but there was quite a hot debate on it, as there always is when Sid's around. He talked about equality and yet, Mr. Chairman, in this area of land ownership, there's probably as close to true equality as you will have in any human area of dealing with people or things or bricks and mortar. And this very Minister is prepared to destroy that equality. I cannot understand how a person with a straight face could make that kind of a statement and then introduce legislation like this. I do not understand how the Minister of Agriculture, who I know is a decent guy and sensible and generally a reasonable person, could possibly bring this bill before this Legislature. I hope that the opposition will dig in their heels and not budge until that section is taken out of this bill.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, that's my contribution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not surprised by the style of our witness here this afternoon. It's certainly in keeping with our experience over the years. I want to say that it's nice to have you back with us for a moment, Joe, in the same form, notwithstanding the fact that we're going to disagree on some points.

The question of discrimination, as you suggest it is, I want to deal with. The Act does not discriminate against any one or group of people who wish to take agriculture as their vocation. In other words, there are a million Manitobans and every one of those who wants to participate in the industry has the full freedom to do so. So it's one's choice whether one wants to participate in the industry. It's not a governmental choice, it's the individual's choice to do so. So, if you want to be an agriculturalist of course in the bill, there is no limitation on the amount of land that you can own for agricultural productive use. Therefore, it is non-discriminatory. One could be a city person today but tomorrow could buy up all the land he wants if he wants to use it for that purpose. So, it's open to everyone.

Now the other point that I want to make is really the question of freedom which was introduced a moment ago because the notion was suggested, at least it was suggested that freedom is limited by the amount of money in one's pocket and that certainly is not a socialist philosophy or a left-wing political philosophy. And, Joe, you indicate you're surprised that a left-wing government would introduce this kind of measure. Well, I point out to you that I have no respect for money as being the criteria for my right to own a home or for my right to have a piece of land on which I can raise my family. I don't think money should decide whether I'm in and you're out or *vice versa*. Society has to allow certain basic rights to everyone and that is the spirit of this legislation to make sure . . .

MR. BOROWSKI: Would you mind telling me, Mr. Chairman, pardon me for interrupting, how this legislation is going to help the poor guy to buy a farm?

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MR. USKIW: Well, all right. You see I can appreciate the problem that we're having with our fitness. He perhaps doesn't fully understand why we are here with this bill. We are here because it has been pointed out to us that it is unfair and impossible for a young agriculturalist, young farmers or would-be farmers, to compete for the same land that other interests are competing on, but who don't have as their purpose agricultural production but rather some other interest. There is an artificial value that enters into the picture, and based on the prices of farm commodities in Canada there is no way our young farmers are able to buy that land in competition, so their freedom is totally wiped out — (Interjection) — we are talking about freedoms.

MR. PATRICK: A point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Patrick' on a point of order.

MR. PATRICK: Yes. Well, Mr. Chairman, my point of order is, I believe that the purpose of the Committee, the Minister or any member is to elicit information and ask questions, not to make speeches, and the Minister is making speeches.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I think it's fair to say that perhaps because of the comments that were made by a witness, it's quite evident that perhaps he is not fully aware of the purpose of the bill; and I think that to get the full value of our witness that it does not hurt to elaborate on the intent of the legislation on which he is presenting a bill. But anyway, I accept the point made by the Member for Assiniboia.

Do you not, Sir, agree with me that freedom should not be limited on the basis of the size of one's pocketbook?

MR. BOROWSKI: Well, Mr. Chairman, that is a pretty difficult question to answer, because if I said agree with you, then we would turn around and say everybody should get the same salary as Sam Uskiw and I do not believe that.

MR. USKIW: I didn't say that.

MR. BOROWSKI: And I do not see where this bill is going to help the guy who's got no money. If you propose a bill where you're going to assist the young farmers as they're suggesting in Congress, then you are dealing with a problem. But how making me, and everybody who is a non-farmer, a second-class citizen by saying, "You can't buy land." How in hell are you going to help the guy who wants to farm but has no money? What are you doing about that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Uskiw.

MR. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm glad that the witness makes that point because we have already dealt with that problem four years ago, wherein a young person or any person does not have to resort to mortgage capital in order to acquire a land holding or a security of tenure, and I'm referring to the Land Lease Program. We have already done that in this province.

MR. BOROWSKI: Obviously it hasn't worked because you've got another bill.

MR. USKIW: Well, the point is that people in Manitoba, as I understand it, have a desire to own land. They have a desire to own it. Their problem of ownership, of course, is the competitiveness of the market and that's what this bill is attempting to deal with in terms of the foreign influence on the price.

Now with respect to impingement on rights, do you really think that a family — be it two people, three people or four people — are really set back because they cannot own more, if they are not farmers, than 640 acres per person in the family? If you take your own family as an example, then perhaps you might advise us what that would add up to in terms of everyone being of age to own property. How much acreage would you be allowed to own under this legislation?

MR. BOROWSKI: Mr. Chairman, I will answer your question first of all by saying, I do not believe that you really were listening to what I said. We were talking about a principle. We are not talking about the old story about the rich guy who asked the girl who was to sleep with him for \$2.00 and she says, "No." "Will you sleep with me for \$1 million?" Or was it the other way around? And it ends up by saying, "Well, what do you think I'm a prostitute?" He says, "Lady, we've already established a principle, we're now haggling over the price."

We are talking about a principle. It's not a question. If you said it was 1,000 acres I would still be here opposing it, because you are creating two classes of citizens. I don't think you have that constitutional right. I do not think you have that moral right to say to a fellow Canadian or Manitoban that you don't have the right to own land. If you're going to say that for practical reasons as you pointed out, to help some poor farmer, then you should turn around and bring complimentary discriminatory legislation in saying to the farmer, "Stay the hell out of the cities," because there are just as many parasites and greedy retired farmers who have sold their — some of them have sold their land, some of them will still farm who own apartment blocks — and you know some of them and I know some of them — and who have several revenue houses and they are taking the full benefit allowed under the rent control; and they are contributing to the problem in the city which is as basic to the people who rent as it is out in the country.

So if we are going to accept the principle of discrimination to help a certain group of citizens, whether there are 35,000 or 900,000, then let's be at least fair in that area. You are simply trying for

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political reasons — I don't know how many votes there is in this legislation. The farmers I have talk to don't seem to be any more enthused for that than they were for the cattle bill that you introduced, Mr. Chairman. So I don't know what your motives are. I know that the bill is bad and I'm opposing it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Einarson.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, yes. I just rise at this point and suggest that the Committee rise and surely I think Mr. Borowski could come back when we meet again and pursue this further. I am sure that the other question . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. On that point there was an agreement that we continue until 6:30.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think I can verify that.

MR. EINARSON: No, Mr. Chairman, there was no agreement that we go on sitting, not to our knowledge.

MR. USKIW: The arrangement is, as I understand it, that if we think we can finish by 6:30, then we carry on. If we think we cannot, then we reconvene at 8:00 o'clock. That is the understanding that we have.

MR. BURTNIAK: I think the understanding is to come back after supper . . .

MR. EINARSON: That's my understanding.

MR. USKIW: Yes. Well, all right, so if it's the wish of the Committee to end with our present witness and reconvene at 8:00 o'clock, there is no problem.

MR. BURTNIAK: I would suggest, if I may, that perhaps we should finish with this witness and then return.

MR. EINARSON: Of course, absolutely.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Of course, absolutely.

MR. EINARSON: Well, Mr. Chairman, I just bring a point. I think that there could be others that want it, but it could go on for another half hour with Mr. Borowski. I don't know. What I mean to say is that I think that there's going to be a . . . can the member not come back tonight?

MR. BOROWSKI: I can't come back.

MR. EINARSON: Oh, I'm sorry. All right, okay. Then the Minister could pursue then.

MR. USKIW: No, I'm through.

MR. EINARSON: Maybe we've got the answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If there are no further questions, I would thank you for your presentation, Mr. Borowski.

Is it the will of the Committee to rise at this particular time to reconvene at 8:00 o'clock? (Agreed)

MR. EINARSON: Yes. You can say it out loud so they can hear you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee will reconvene at 8:00 o'clock. Room 200.

MR. EINARSON: Say it out loudly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In Room 200. Committee rise.