

little by that. We did not want to petition cold, as it were. We requested their opinion and consent first and when we received it, went ahead. We did not get it formally, but they said "please present the bill."

Senator Grosart: So there are no objections from the governments of these provinces?

Mr. Golden: No, none at all.

Senator Grosart: Or the departments?

Mr. Golden: No. If anything, they seemed to be enthusiastic about it.

Senator Grosart: What is the position of the predecessor corporations? Have they themselves voted for this amalgamation?

Mr. Golden: Yes. Each of the predecessor corporations, plus some other organizations which are unincorporated, have agreed to unite to form the National Farmers Union. They have signed agreements which are more or less operational, agreeing to give up their facilities in favour of the national organization and take their members into it. All this has been done, without benefit of counsel, and we are now attempting to put into legal effect something that has been de facto since last August.

Senator Grosart: You say "de facto". Have the members of the corporation voted in favour of this?

Mr. Golden: Yes. There have been conventions in each of the provinces.

Senator Grosart: Could you give detailed information? The reason I ask is that we are setting aside a very important rule, number 95, which requires that bills such as this shall rest for a week, so that anybody who has any objection will have an opportunity. I am not saying this is the position, but I am suggesting, Mr. Chairman, that we should be thoroughly satisfied here that we are not curtailing the rights of anybody who might want to object, by setting aside our own rule. It is a good rule and its purpose is to give everybody an opportunity to know that this matter is coming before this committee at this time and may be reported without the normal lapse of time. I would therefore like to be sure that we have detailed information on each one of these.

Mr. Golden: Yes. I would be pleased to do so.

Senator Aseltine: We have representation here.

Senator Grosart: I would like to have in the record the name of each organization and, if possible, the date on which members endorsed this amalgamation.

Mr. Golden: Mr. Atkinson is here now. He was president of the Saskatchewan Farmers' Union and is president of the new organization. May I ask him to join me. I am sure he would be helpful. It is a question of precise dates?

Senator Grosart: This does not matter. I am perfectly prepared to accept the statement by the witness, naming each one of the predecessor organizations that have assented to this.

Mr. Roy R. Atkinson, President, National Farmers Union: Mr. Chairman, the Farmers Union of British Columbia, by resolution of their annual meeting in 1968, moved to agree to this amalgamation.

The Farmers of Saskatchewan Union, at the convention of December 1968, agreed to this amalgamation.

Also, the Manitoba Farmers Union and the Ontario Farmers Union agreed by resolution at their last convention, September 1969.

The Acting Chairman: What is the date of the Manitoba one?

Mr. Atkinson: December 1968, the same as the Saskatchewan one.

Senator Argue: Some did not agree, but are not mentioned here?

Mr. Atkinson: That is right, but we are not dealing with those corporate bodies.

Senator Hollett: How could you call it a national union, then?

Mr. Atkinson: Because we have membership of it in every province.

Senator Hollett: You have? When you say "we", whom do you mean?

Mr. Atkinson: The National Farmers Union.

Senator Hollett: Why was it called The National Farmers Union?

Mr. Atkinson: Originally The National Union was a federation of provincial farmers unions. Then there was an amendment to the national constitution, which provided for direct membership to the national union.