

Plant Breeders' Rights

Mr. Soetens: On a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Ontario on a point of order.

Mr. Soetens: Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, the news media in Canada has tremendous ability not only to report the news but to make the news. It was just announced on CTV not five minutes ago that earlier this evening this House had adjourned for the summer. I find it rather interesting. I hope it was a portent of things to come this evening.

My point really is to make sure the House Leaders here are aware that we have already adjourned for the evening and that they get the message. The speeches which you have heard from the Progressive Conservative Party are of course live. I cannot comment on the others.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Prince Albert—Churchill River. I know he is alive.

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to lead off the late show tonight for the benefit of those of us who are still here participating in this important debate.

It is an interesting debate for a New Democrat or any Member from Saskatchewan to be participating in because it very much parallels what is a very hot debate in that province. That is the debate between two competing visions which are becoming more and more clearly into focus.

Mr. Schneider: One is foresight and the other one is hindsight.

Mr. Funk: The Hon. Member for Regina Wascana (Mr. Schneider) said one is foresight and the other is hindsight. Those are my sentiments exactly.

I do not think the Members opposite do know any more and that is why I think they will no longer be the government of Saskatchewan, for example, after the next provincial election. I will put any money on that, although I am not a gambling man. What this debate is all about is the privatization of seed versus a vision of the modern family farm which can survive a corporate onslaught which the Progressive Conservatives are unleashing on the farm community.

As I stand up to speak here tonight, I am not only standing up as the Member for Prince Albert—Churchill River, approximately 20 per cent of that population are

farm families. There are quite a few of them because they are relatively small farms, probably averaging four quarters of land in our constituency. About half of the farmers are combined income farmers and work off the farm. It does maintain a large rural population, with 3,000 people in the area of Buckland alone.

I speak also as a Member of the Spruce Home wheat pool committee, something I have been on since 1975 when I moved there. My father was the chairman of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool committee in Laird, Saskatchewan for 46 years, which I think is the record tenure for any president in that job within the wheat pool. He fought very hard to keep the railway, when Ray Hnatyshyn, the former Member for Saskatoon West, who was defeated in Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing, was their Member. That was one of the reasons. He promised that if the Progressive Conservatives were elected there would be heavy steel on the rail line to Laird. That steel is still not there. The elevator company no longer has the confidence on that point and is letting it run down. My dad feels that his 46 years as chairman of the wheat pool has gone down the drain because of the type of philosophy that is embedded in this Bill.

It is not because I believe that profit is a dirty word or that Members on this side of the House believe that profit is a dirty word. It is a methodology that from time to time Conservatives do manage to sell. They sold it successfully in 1982 in Saskatchewan. They sold it again in the last federal election to a large portion of the population, certainly not though in Saskatchewan, British Columbia and the Maritimes. Nevertheless, they do sometimes try and convince people that people on this side of the House, be they New Democrats or Liberals, somehow or other with New Democrats profit is a dirty word.

There are all kinds of business people who are members of the New Democratic Party, including the MLA for Prince Albert—Duck Lake, whose campaign I managed and who had strong support from the Prince Albert business community. When we speak of Prince Albert, that is the seat that I represent. I do not have to remind the Members whose seat that was up until 1979, until his death: the Right Hon. John G. Diefenbaker. The first election I remember hearing anything about is when I went to the polls with my dad at the Ebenfeld school in 1957. I had the feeling in that election that my dad voted for John Diefenbaker. We were in that constituency. Years later, it turned out that he had. That was some-