

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fifth Session — Tenth Legislature
Day 5

Thursday, February 12, 1948

The House Met at 3 o'clock.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

**Continuation of Debate on Motion for
Address in Reply**

The House resumed from Wednesday, February 11, the adjourned Debate on the Motion of Mr. Feeley (Canora) for the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Valteau (A.S.V.R.): — Mr. Speaker, to begin with I should like to give my very sincere congratulations to the worthy members who moved and seconded the Motion which we are now discussing. The hon. member for Canora, Mr. Feeley, and the hon. member for Hanley, Mr. Aitken — I hope you, Sir, will forgive me using their names on this occasion — but I feel they have demonstrated, each in their own way, the great abilities which they both possess. Mr. Feeley's speech was a well-documented analysis of the things which co-operation and social democracy stand for, and a challenge to us to advance in optimism. Mr. Aitken's speech was a drama of literature, which would do credit to Robbie Burns himself, and an eloquent painting of the evils that will surely come if humanity does not adopt new methods in time. It is significant that these men, who are not standing for re-election to the next Legislature, should have made speeches typifying their own unselfishness and sincerity, in the movement to which they both so proudly belong. Because of this unselfishness and sincerity, although the next Legislature may not have them among its honoured members, it will surely recognize them among its immortals.

In like measure, to those other members, who will not be standing for re-election to the next Legislature, I can say that they, too, will be remembered by future Legislatures. I am sure, however, that all of these men will be able to make great contributions to the public life of the province in the future, in or out of the Legislature, as they have in the past.

I would like to convey my congratulations to the member for Moosomin on the courage with which he sits in his seat, despite the illness from which he is suffering. Like others, he has also stepped aside, and I am sure that whatever work he does in the future, will contribute toward the enrichment of whatever path he chooses.

February 12, 1948

I now turn to something that is a little more difficult. The other night in this Assembly, a statement was made by one of the members, which I hope was made hastily and without due consideration. The statement was made that in the career that he has followed, the Premier has bettered himself. I am not going to deal with that in detail, but I would like to remind the House that one of the first actions of the Premier, upon assuming office, was to take action which resulted in the lowering of his own salary by approximately \$1,000, which is not the action a man would take – when he did not have to – if his primary objective were to better himself. I shall not stay on that subject very long, as I rather imagine that the member spoke hastily.

It is my pleasant duty, in the process of congratulation, to extend my congratulations to my hon. seatmate on his recent election as Provincial President of the Saskatchewan Command of the Canadian Legion.

And now to get into the meat of the speech – which I am afraid I am bound to do sooner or later – I find a peculiar situation has developed. The little body of service members who originally sat here and tried to confine themselves to service matters as closely as possible, has found that that is very difficult to do, especially in a Chamber such as this. My hon. seatmate has said that he felt the Opposition needed some assistance since in this Chamber they are so numerically small and obviously the ‘under-dogs’. It is not necessarily correct that they are ‘under-dogs’, when we observe that, ranged against the men who sit on the Government benches we have the Chamber of Commerce, which at the moment is indulging in broadcasts that ten years ago were declared illegal for political parties, namely, the broadcasts which use a little play in a dialogue to illustrate a political point. Also ranged against the Government are such organizations as the National Association of Manufacturers and all of the Press in Saskatchewan with one or two small exceptions, and probably the bulk of the radio stations, as well as vast amounts of money; both Canadian and American money.

It would be with quite a clear conscience – if siding with the ‘under-dogs’ were the only criterion of my actions – that I would align myself in support of the men who sit on the Government side of the House. However, that is not necessarily the thing that should govern us in deciding what stand we should take from time to time on various issues, and in this Session I am going to endeavour, so far as is possible – and we all admit that it is difficult – to avoid a discussion of partisan political issues so far as is possible, and to deal chiefly with the problems of those who elected me.

When the 80,000 odd Saskatchewan boys, and girls as well, enlisted in the Army, Navy and Airforce, part of the enlistment ceremonies included the question: “What do you want to do after the war?” I shall admit that most of us paid little attention to that question. “After the war” was something so far in the future that it did not concern us greatly. The interviewer elaborated on this question, saying “Do you want to farm, for example, or just what do you want to do?” Most of the

answers came quite quickly – “anything but farming!” That was the one thing the vast majority of the recruits did not wish to do. In the Manning Depot at Edmonton where I went for basic training, I talked with hundreds of recruits there and did not find a single one who said that he wished to farm after the war. Later, when it came time to apply for spring leave or harvest leave or things like that, some of them tried to change their answer, and wished that they had specified farming.

I believe that this question may have been used as a rough and ready poll, to help determine the approximate number of veterans who would wish to settle on land after the war. It is apparent that a far greater number of veterans wish to settle on the land now, than wished to do so at that time. Why?

At the time that we enlisted, agriculture was in a very depressed state. Ever since the dawn of the industrial revolution it has been the national policy of the capitalist countries to keep agricultural living standards down, in order that food could be supplied cheaply to industrial workers. This meant that industrial wages could be kept low, thereby increasing the profit of industrial concerns. The recruits were fully aware of this, and did not wish to return to a depressed industry such as agriculture. Most of us felt that the question was slightly comic.

During the war, reports from the so-called “home front” led us to revise our opinions. It became apparent that farming had become slightly more prosperous. Grain prices had gone up. Long term bacon agreements were negotiated; the Winnipeg Grain Exchange was closed. I cannot go into all the details with great certainty, because at the time I was not here; but we were led to believe that the farming industry was better off than it had been before. Farmers suffered chiefly from a lack of labour.

I would like now to quote from an editorial in the Regina Leader Post dated February 9, 1948. The title of this editorial was “What Are We Hollering About?” The general “line” of this editorial is to argue that there is an “unhealthy atmosphere” in Canada today which is caused because the people of Canada are not reasonable in facing the crisis of the rising cost of living. They quote a letter from a farmer of Saskatchewan. I shall not refer to him by name. I do not believe the name matters, because they are using him as a symbol. They state that this man “allows it to be known” – and here I quote –

“Allows it to be known that he himself has made more money farming since 1941 than he had ever made in his life before, or his parents before him.”

If this symbolic figure, representing farmers who lived in Saskatchewan since 1941 onwards, and who became better off – if this story is correct – it is partly the reason why great numbers of veterans changed their minds and decided to try to return to the farming industry.

February 12, 1948

The editorial finished by stating, and again I will quote: "A trip over to Europe in the ration fields might do these would-be agitators and hollers and calamity jammers a lot of good. What Canada needs mostly right now is more such farmers – referring to the man who made more money than his parents before him. I believe I would be speaking for the veterans as I think most of them have made the trip to Europe to the ration fields and that is chiefly why they were not at home in 1941 and onwards to make more money farming than they had ever made in their lives before or their parents before them. I am afraid that if the fervent wish of the Leader Post that, "Canada needs more people like this", to sit at home and make more money, if this wish had been carried out to any extent, Canada today would not be able to boast the proud record of having done here share to stem the Nazi conquest.

Today, Mr. Speaker, it is difficult for anyone who talks with those who settled under the V.L.A. to avoid the feeling that they are not entirely content with their lot. Partly the trouble arises from the terrifically inflated prices being charged for land by those who have made more than ever before or their parents before them. Partly it arises from the fact that the V.L.A. was not designed to cope with the present inflated prices for land, buildings and machinery. Partly it arises from the fact that farming today is not quite as prosperous as it was during the six-year period that we have just come through.

I know from talking to many of them that discontent exists and I fervently hope that the so-called freedom of the press will not be used in future to call them "would-be agitators, howlers and calamity jammers".

I am not, sir, attempting to take away from the magnificent record of the Canadian farmers during wartime, and of those who stayed home. They were a gallant bunch; they worked hard and produced tremendous quantities of food-stuffs with a drastic labour shortage. My father and many of my relatives were among this group; but I do not feel that because a man made money during that period he should now seek to make fun of those who are discontented with the rising prices of land and machinery and buildings.

Let us look at the picture and just see how prosperous agriculture is for the returning veteran today. The index number of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics takes a period from 1935 to 1939 as being equal to 100 per cent. I am giving figures from the 23rd Annual Report of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Producers Limited, that is the Wheat Pools'. The 100 per cent index number is 1935 – 1939. During 1946 the prices received for agricultural products in Saskatchewan had an index number of 171.7. The goods and services used by the farmers stood at 156.8. We can see by this that while the farmers income had

risen by a figure of approximately 70 per cent, his expenses had arisen by approximately 50 per cent. To put it another way his expenses rose to 156 while his income rose to 171. If his expenses had remained at 100 per cent and income had risen only proportionately, his income would have risen to 109. To state it in mathematical terms 171 is to 156 as 108 is to 100. This means that in terms of real purchasing power, a bushel of wheat will buy today, 10 per cent more of the things a farmer needs than it would have bought in 1935 – 1939. Now let us look at the period from 1935 – 1939, would a 10 per cent increase in the prices of the things we were selling have put us on a decent standard of living, would that have been parity?

Unless the people who read the Leader-Post and the Chamber of Commerce bulletins should think that the Free Capitalist enterprise is a system of plenty at all time, let us remember back to the price of a bushel of wheat in those days. I will not attempt to follow the ups and downs of the Grain Exchange, that would tire out anyone in this Chamber, but the Board price in 1935 was 87½, and then I guess they did not want us to use the Board much, for in 1938 it was down to 80 cents and in 1939 down to 70 cents. During this period the Exchange was operating as well. But, roughly speaking, possibly the average price for that period would have been around 80 cents. It is clear that a nine per cent increase in the average price of about 80 cents would still have made 90-cent wheat. As the real value of the wheat which the veteran is selling today is worth only 90 cents in terms of 1939 prices and what it would have purchased in 1939?

As far back as 1935 the Liberal Party in the election said that they would guarantee dollar wheat and that dollar wheat was necessary to put agriculture on a stable basis. Today, the veteran is selling his wheat at 90 cents in terms of its real purchasing power. If machinery prices continue to rise at their present rate it will soon be back to 20 cents, and if the crash that started a few days ago continues, it may be back there without any rise in machinery prices.

I base my figures on the index price of the cost of the things that the farmers buy, and that index price is already a year old. Since then there have been further increases. The latest index I am sure would reflect the steep rises in the price of farm machinery in the last few months, I would agree that the purchasing power of a bushel of wheat today, is between 80 cents and 70 cents.

In other words, the veteran who did not want to return to depressed agricultural conditions has been tricked into returning to the same depressed agricultural industry which he feared when he enlisted.

Mr. Speaker, this habit of settling veterans on the land and encouraging the back-to-the-land movement is not new, it has been going on since the dawn of history. We can find it in the country of Germany when they settled their yeoman peasantry on the land to protect it from outside invasion. Probably the earliest graft of all in Canada was the granting of land to the regiments of the United Empire Loyalists, land

February 12, 1948

which in many cases resulted in a lifetime of back-breaking toil to enrich the mortgage companies and speculators. My poor departed ancestors were hooked on that deal.

Solider settlers after the last war can tell much the same story. Unless something is done to stop inflation and give stability to agriculture, the Veterans Land Act settlers will come to feel that they too were hooked. Make no mistake about it, we cannot secure freedom for the veteran to establish a decent standard of living while unrestricted enterprise refuses to allow itself to be controlled in the interests of the people. It is indeed revealing that a paper such as the Leader-Post, which boasts that it stands for free private enterprise, should suggest that tremendous profits made during the war are an ideal which it applauds. Today, private enterprise is preparing for an all-out battle against anyone who would curb its right to make profits. Such organizations as the Canadian Manufacturers' Association and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce are the 'front' organizations which are used as feeder lines for this propaganda. No communist group has ever been more successful in boring from within and capturing whole branches of national organizations, than has private enterprise and big business.

I am reminded of an instance which occurred in the United States. The National Association of Manufacturers in the United States, which is an organization similar to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, had invited Marion Hargrove, author of the book "See here, Private Hargrove" to speak at its convention. Marion Hargrove was a private soldier who enlisted in the American Army and served overseas and later drafted to write for 'The Stars and Stripes' and various American newspapers, and later published a book which became famous. Hargrove was invited to speak to their annual convention in 1945 to give them the viewpoint of the veteran: Welcome home boy. the old story. He chose as his topic, "See here, Private Enterprise". You cannot find the speech reported in many newspapers, and those that do only use a line or two, but on page (A6005) of the Congressional Record of the United States for December 14, 1945, you can find the speech. I am going to read the House a few paragraphs.

"I find it a little difficult to speak to you as an organization, since I have never been able to figure out your purpose as an organization. I have been reading about the National Association of Manufacturers almost ever since I learned to read, and it seemed to me that you were always against whatever was up for discussion. I cannot remember off-hand a single thing you have been for. I know that any number of your individual members are alert, thinking, progressive men; but I cannot remember off-hand a single contribution that your organization itself has made, or a single constructive thing it has done, in the time I have been reading or hearing about it.

"Possibly the organization is a victim of poor public relations. Possibly it needs a definite well-planned program to show the public it is not as bad as the public thinks it is. Maybe it has done constructive things, but if it has you do not hear much about them. The National Association of Manufacturers has such a bad name, a lot of which may be

Thursday, February 12, 1948

a carry-over from its worst days, that even when it is right about something it cannot draw public support to it. Even when a man gets and at the unions, he does not side with the Manufacturers.

“National Association of Manufacturers, to the average thinking person I would say, means something stubborn and reactionary, and obstructionist. Even when it is right it always seems to be right for the wrong reason. In an argument in which the National Association of Manufacturers claims itself to be on the right side, the opposition uses facts and logic, if it is bad logic, and your National Association of Manufacturers’ spokesman gets up and begins to talk about ‘Bolshevism, ‘the American way’, and the ‘forces that are out to ruin the country’, and all of the old-style, ‘gentlemen from Mississippi’ hogwash goes out with the imprint of the National Association of manufacturers, and the apparent sanction of American Industry as a whole, but through public relations.

“Mind you, I am not saying that I think this is an Association of righteous and upstanding idealists who have been sinned against in thought and word by the public. I do not think that at all. I think that if you put the Association on a ‘take one, take all’ basis you are prejudiced and behind the times, and more than a shade hypocritical. You talk a lot about free enterprise and the profit system, but we still have monopolists and cartels, whether or not a member of the brotherhood is constantly being prosecuted for violations of the laws governing free competition.

“You are opposed to raising the Minimum Wage, and you are opposed to compensation for all these people who are going to be unemployed. Maybe you have reasons for your opposition besides the ones that come naturally to hand, but I have not heard of any, and cannot think of any.

“Industry has been allowed to build up reserves for reconversion, and it has what looks to me like a very good minimum profit insurance in this business of refunds on excess profit taxes.

“Industry has its own brand of unemployment compensation and its own brand of minimum wage, handed to it by the Government, and if the national Association of Manufacturers has good reasons why labour should not be taken care of too, then I think it only fair to you that the public hear them. It seems to me that as an organization, you have very definite and very great responsibilities, and you refuse to meet them.”

That is the end of the quotation, Mr. Speaker. I think this man Hargrove, who never got his commission, probably was typical of the average infantryman in the American Army. when I came back from overseas it was on an American troopship. I met plenty of ‘Yanks’ and I can say that the author – “Private Marion Hargrove” and the cartoonist “Private Bill Mauldin,” – come as close as anyone can to being the idealized version of the American infantryman.

I am of the opinion that the Canadian Chamber of Commerce today needs a similar lecture from some private soldier such as Hargrove, although I am afraid that it would do them little good.

Today, capitalism is engaged in the process of liquidation of the small business man. As an example: I know a young veteran who has set up an independent hardware store in a large town, in which there is also a Co-op hardware store. I wondered if the Co-op was liable to be running him out of business, so I had a talk with him, and in the conversation I found that his greatest fear was the large mail-order house – for example, the T. Eaton Company. He said – and I am sure that all independent hardware men in the province will agree with him there – “Eaton’s catalogue is my bible. I have to keep it in the store, and any time anyone argues about my prices I open it and show them what Eaton’s are charging.

February 12, 1948

It has forced me in many cases to sell on a ten percent margin and sometimes even below wholesale.”

To my hon. friends of the Opposition I would say that this is the situation which is making it difficult for the veteran, it is not the co-operatives that are pushing them out of business, it is not the working class – it is big business, the cartels and the upper classes, if such exist.

I want to quote from a book by Mr. Walt Hugh McCollum – “Who Owns Canada?”

“The T. Eaton Company Limited of Canada comes seventh in the world in total annual sales and total assets, and is much larger than either Harrods or Selfridge’s, the two largest stores in Great Britain. Simpson’s and the Hudson’s Bay company come fourteenth and sixteenth in the amount of sales among the world’s largest stores.

“According to figures submitted to the House of Commons Special Committee on Mass Buying, in 1934, by Mr. R.P. Sparks, based on statistics compiled by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, the total annual sales of the T. Eaton Company Limited, spread over the entire population of Canada, would amount to \$22.60 for each man, woman and child in Canada, or 7.5% of all retail sales in the Dominion. By comparison the total annual sales of the Sears Roebuck Company, the largest mail-order and department store in the United States, if spread over the entire population of that country, would amount to only \$3.60 for each man, woman and child in the United States, or only 0.9% of the total retail sales in the Republic to the south.

“In percentage of total retail sales and in amount of sales per head of the population, the T. Eaton Company Limited of Canada, is the largest of its kind in the entire world. Canada’s “Big Three” stores, consisting of the T. Eaton Company, Simpson’s and Hudson’s Bay Company, accounted for 14.77% of all the retail sales in 1935 in Canada, in the lines of merchandise which they sell.”

Now let us look at the private retail sales:

“Sales made in 1941 by 43,293 small retail stores, such as the corner store, which formed 31.5% of all the retail stores in Canada, formed only 2.9% of the total retail sales in Canada.”

Compare that with 14.7% of the large mail-order houses – and we haven’t even figured out the edge that goes to Safeways, and A & P, and the Red & White, and the various chain stores.

The opposition has claimed that the sole requirement for a man

to make a million dollars and get from one class to the other – that the sole requirements are honesty and integrity, and the ability to assume leadership. I would assert, Sir, that no class in Canada possesses those qualities to any greater degree than the average veteran returning from the war with nothing to fall back on except his gratuities. But what chance has he in the face of conditions such as these?

The sudden rush toward inflation since the veterans came home, has borne more heavily on the veterans than on any other section of the community. If you have debts, inflation helps you to pay them off, but if you are trying to make debts – if you make them in an inflationary period you are going to have a lot more to pay off when the crash comes. The sudden market crash in the United States, in which the big capitalists are freezing out the small businessmen and again “taking the suckers for a ride”, may result in a depression that will put us back where we were in the hungry ‘thirties.

It is reported that this week one man in the American markets sold grain futures short, and four days later he bought back, making \$200,000 profit. I doubt if all the veterans in Saskatchewan have made that much in wheat since they came back.

Now, I do not want to take up the time of the House, but I would like to give one brief illustration, to illustrate the difficulty that a man has in getting from the ‘working class’ or the ‘middle class’ into the so-called ‘upper classes’ regardless of all the honesty and integrity and ability to assume leadership which he may have. Since reports on how the rich men got that way are not very up-to-date or very recent, I am going back into history, back into the 1880’s.

Mr. John Charlton, speaking in the Dominion House of Commons during the 1880’s, and describing the composition and antecedents of the personnel of the chief owners of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, had this to say:

“A member of this Company was once President of the Bank of Montreal – a responsible position.” (Here he was referring to George Stephen, who later was knighted and later still created Lord Mount Stephen). “When in that position he took \$8,000,000 from the chest of the Bank of Montreal without the consent or knowledge of the directors of that bank – at least he is reported to have done so. He is reported to have invested it in the St. Paul and Minneapolis Railway. How, supposing this gentleman, when he removed the money from the bank and invested it, had lost the money, he would have been a defaulter to the extent of eight million dollars; but I hold that although the investment was successful, though he was enabled to return the money, morally his conduct was just as reprehensible as if he had lost every cent. I say he had no business to take eight million dollars belonging to a corporation of which he was the president, without the knowledge of the directors, and use that money in any speculation whatever.”

Of course, this man later became a “Sir” and later became a “Lord.”

February 12, 1948

Let us compare that with what happened to a clerk in the same bank. In 1876 a man named Barber, a clerk of the Bank of Montreal under President George Stephen, was sentenced to five years in the penitentiary for embezzling funds – small funds, the kind a clerk takes – with which to speculate in stocks. That is the difference.

If my hon. friends sitting to my right say that there are no privileged classes in Canada, I can only reply – “Gentlemen, open your eyes!” Rather than being fearful of the blueprints ruling the country, they should be fearful of the bluebloods, and I repeat the plaintive cry of the hon. member for Rosthern when he said, last Tuesday: “Where are the lights?”

Mr. J. Wellbelove (Kerrobert-Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker: In rising to support the motion I do so with a great deal of pleasure after scanning through the Speech from the Throne, and also in listening to that splendid address of the Premier, yesterday afternoon, in support of the motion.

I am not very much concerned whether a man agrees with me or disagrees with me, as far as his politics are concerned. If he disagrees with me, I like to hear something of the grounds upon which he bases his disagreement, and I think we have a right to expect that there shall be an alternate policy to the one which they wish to destroy. In Session after Session we listen to the Leader of the Opposition – and with all the respect that we have for him, and the member for Arm River – and this year, in common with others, there is very little to which you could attach the prefix “constructive.” As I was listening to that address, my mind went back to my boyhood days and the diversion that we used to have. If we stooped down and looked through one particular spot in the window, everything that passed along the road was distorted – the natural growth of the trees was distorted, the telephone poles were distorted, the hedgerows and everything else were out of all proportion. It did not take us long, as children, to realize that if we just stepped to the side, it was only a flaw in the glass through which we were looking that caused the distortions, and not the work of nature or mankind.

I would suggest to the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Arm River that perhaps it is the glass through which they are looking – the flaw in the Liberal window – that is causing all these distortions. I do not know what we can do about it. We used to just step to one side, to get away from that distortion. If they step to the right I am afraid the distortion would be more pronounced. If they would step to the left I do not know what we would do with them. The only thing I

could recommend to them is that they just raise their sights and widen their horizons – look up instead of down – and possibly they might be able to render some service yet to their day and generation. It is a pity that they take such a distorted view.

I am sorry that the hon. member for Rosthern is not here because I enjoyed his address the other evening. He often regales us with quotations from Shakespeare and from the Old Testament, telling us about the fall of the Walls of Jericho and some of the things that befell the patriarchs of old, through the disloyalty of their sons; and I was going to suggest to him that when he gets through his studies in the Old Testament he should just step over into the New Testament and try and reconcile the teachings of the world's great teacher with his beliefs. If he finds that difficult, he should try and carry through the social implications of that great teacher to their ultimate conclusion – and he will find that he will arrive at pretty much the same position as a good many of us over on this side of the house – the practical application of the principles embodied in the teachings of the world's greatest teacher.

Now we come to the member for the Mediterranean Area. He gave us one of those speeches which unfortunately have become typical of him, as he fumes up with all the petulance of a spoiled child, and with that egotism sat here – “There are all the elements there of an ideal dictator if he just had one little kingdom over which he could rule and have full control.” He has all those elements. We have heard him in the House previous to this “side-tracking” of his. He made good contributions to the debate. I do not care what political views he holds, that is his business as long as he expounds them in a way that is fair to us all. We are not the ‘scum of the earth’ on this side of the House, by any means; but if you listen to the hon. gentleman you would often form the conclusion that we were just the off-scourings of humanity, beneath the contempt of the average individual. I think that approach is rather unfortunate. We know he has the ability. Possibly he will not make it quite so difficult for us in the future to hold the respect for him that we had in the past.

I want to give the Attorney-General a word of praise. This idea of sending around – in keeping with the ‘Bill of Rights’ which was passed in the House here – this idea of having handed to every accused person an outline of their rights I think is a splendid thing. I do not know that it has much effect on the hardened criminal, but on the first offender – and that is the man or woman we are interested in – I think it is a splendid thing. I hope that the Attorney-General sent a copy of the Bill of Rights around to all the members; I hope that I was not just selected as the recipient of this one particular copy.

Hon. Mr. Valteau: — The rest of us have not been to gaol.

Mr. Wellbelove: — One thing that I was rather concerned about when I read the headlines in the paper the other day, we have a proverb in the Old Country which goes: “It's the blacksmith's horse that needs shoeing the most,” and I was wondering if the Attorney-General had kept a copy for his

February 12, 1948

own personal reference, or whether he had really handed them all out. If he should need my copy I will loan it to him, but I would really like to retain it in my possession; however if he needs it before I do I shall be quite pleased to let him have it.

One statement that I heard back in the constituency – “you fellows have been doing a tremendous lot of things for the people who haven’t very much.” I pondered over that and I thought – “if you look after those people you also include all of the people in the province of Saskatchewan, because what benefits the person who has not got very much also benefits those who are in a little better position in life.” We must recognize that although the Provincial Treasurer tells us that revenues are buoyant and things are fairly good in the province and we are receiving greater returns for our labour proportionately now than we have for a good many years in the past, yet at the same time there are lots of people, both in the working classes and in the farming industry, who are pretty close to the marginal line. I think it is not a bad thing to be associated with a government – in fact I am proud of the fact – that has done quite a lot in the past, and will continue to do quite a lot, for the people who are not too heavily endowed with this world’s goods. I sat down the other evening and ticked off some of those things which have been done. I will not deal with them at any great length as I pass along, but for instance, there is The Farm Security Act, and all that that has meant to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. In spite of all the jibes and jeers that we hear from the Opposition, they would not dare to remove that Act from the statutes of this province.

Thinking of that ‘challenge’ clause in The Farm Security Act, I was very much interested, Mr. Speaker, when I came across a copy of P.O.4559 issued at Government House, Ottawa, on Friday, November 7, 1947, and found that it contained this clause, which applies to veteran lands:

“Now therefore His Excellency, the Governor General in Council, on the recommendation of the Minister of Veterans’ Affairs, and under the authority of Section 37 of the Veterans’ Land Act, is pleased to order and does hereby order that veterans established or to be established as farmers under the provisions of Section 9 of the Veterans’ Land Act 1942, in the spring areas as defined by the Prairie Farm Assistance Act 1939, and whose farming operations are preponderantly directed to the production of spring wheat...”

...and then other sentences follow, but this was the one that rather intrigued me, “that in any year subsequent to the year 1946, in which the yield of wheat is six bushels per seeded acre or less, the amount payable by the veteran in such year may be extended to the terminating date

of the firm agreement, and interest shall accrue only on the amount of the principal sum so extended.” As I read that, I thought I had heard it somewhere before. I thought our government tried to make that applicable to all the farmers in the province of Saskatchewan.

The second thing that we have done is in removing from the municipal authorities their obligation to provide medical aid to Old Age and Blind Pensioners, and those in receipt of mothers’ allowances. There is a tremendous burden of financial responsibility which has been removed from the municipal authorities; and while I have not heard all the speeches, nor have I read all the speeches which have been reported in the paper, I have not yet heard of a Liberal or a Conservative speaker, when they have been speaking about what the provincial authorities in Alberta and Manitoba have done for the municipal authorities, citing that among other items, with regard to what this province has done to relieve the burden of indebtedness from the municipalities.

With regard to increasing farm exemptions, we have allowed farmers to carry on without being unduly handicapped in putting in his crop, owing to the increased tax exemptions – farm exemptions – which were brought in by this Legislature. When we came into office, we were still in the horse and buggy days, and the quarter-section farm exemption was all that there was in existence. I will not go into it fully, but those of you who are interested, if you will check up the amendments that have been passed to The Exemptions Act during the life of this Legislature – it will be quite interesting to find out what has been done there to assist the farmer.

There is another matter that the Premier dealt with very effectively yesterday, that I will not deal with at any length, and that is, placing Saskatchewan in the front rank in providing free treatment for its mentally ill; in providing free treatment and modern clinic facilities for those suffering from cancer; and I think it was a great credit to our young people, when the call went out for High School students and some of our University students, to give their life training to assist those of the mentally ill; and I am proud of a province where we find hundreds of our young people rallying to that call, when there are so many demands in the different professions and avenues of business where they could enrich themselves in this world’s goods – that they are prepared to devote their lives to those who are mentally ill in our institutions at Weyburn and Battleford. I think it redounds to the credit of our young people; the oncoming generation are just as good as any generation here in this province.

Then we hear a lot – we heard it from the member for Rosthern – playing up on the business of ‘free’ hospitals – that they were promised free hospitalization and now they had to pay for it. I think that when our

February 12, 1948

Liberal speakers keep emphasizing that they are getting pretty much down into the realm of the ridiculous, for the simple reason that in 1916 there was placed on the statutes of this province the Municipal Union Hospital Act. In my own constituency, part of the constituency has been under the administration of that Act for the past thirty years, and practically every person who speaks about the advantages offered under The Municipal Hospital Act refers to it as 'free' hospitalization under The Medical Services Act. We refer to it as 'free' doctor services. Under our educational system we believe that we do not have to pay for it. All down through the years we have assessed two mills on the assessment of our municipality, which runs to somewhere about \$7,000,000 on the basis of assessment, and we have always assessed one and a half or two mills to run that institution. We knew we were paying for it, and the idea of saying that the Premier has introduced this idea to befuddle the minds of the people with regard to free hospitalization is one of the smallest approaches to a big subject that I have ever heard. It is free in the general usage of the word, Mr. Speaker, and I do not think anyone would ever challenge that, all down the years, when we have been speaking of 'free' education, we know that we have to pay for it; and in talking about our free hospitals and free doctors, it was simply the general usage of a term that has prevailed through all the years.

There is one thing that I have been turning over in my own mind. I would not want to attribute to Liberal speakers any vile motive, but I notice that their attack on the hospitalization plan of this province always reaches its momentum just in that period of the year when collections are due. I prefer to think this is just a mere coincidence, rather than to think that a political party would sink to that level; but we had the provincial Leader of the Liberal Party at the nominating convention in Elrose constituency, and this is a statement attributed to him:

"The present hospitalization scheme is double what the cost was when handled by the municipalities, and if handled by the Federal Government it could be operated at a lower rate than at present is charged in Saskatchewan, and also include medical care."

I replied to that in the Press – I have not seen any reply since, but I would like to think that he was misquoted. But the absurdity of the thing! Trying to tell us that you could also include medical care for less than we are paying now for hospitalization! It was rather significant that just about that time there was a release with regard to the Alberta Health Plan. The details were reported on December 18. This proposed plan, for which legislation is supposed to be being drafted at the present time, is an optional plan – from compulsory. The announcement was made by Dr. W. Bramley-Moore, Registrar of the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons,

saying that the Alberta Hospitals Association would sponsor the scheme, and the College of Physicians and Surgeons would sponsor the medical services. The legislation for both schemes is being drafted. Here, the estimated plan would involve the payment of about \$1.44 per month per individual, approximately \$17.25 per year. For families of four, \$4.44 per month, approximately \$52.25 per year. So you can see what credence we should place in the statements of some of our erstwhile political leaders.

Then we have the Larger School Units. There are many things which deserve to be ironed out, and which will be ironed out from the experience gained by and through the application of the Larger Unit scheme, but it is the first attempt that has been made by any government to put into practice – I do not say the first attempt by legislation, because the Liberal Government in 1940 placed on the statutes of this province an Act called The School Divisions Act, which purported to do pretty much the same as The Larger Unit Act does. They placed it there to palliate some of the more advanced educational authorities in the province, but they had not the courage of their convictions, to place it in operation.

The member for Elrose and myself sat in with a group of people who were quite interested in the Larger Unit at the time the Act was placed on the statutes of this province, and a man who possesses a keen intellect, who is interested in school affairs, said: “We did not know there had been an Act of this nature on the statutes of this province.” Agreed that the desire has to be expressed by the people in a certain defined area, for a Larger Unit to be instituted – I think the government was justified in putting the boot on the other foot. There was a stillborn child there for four years. This legislature gave birth to another child, The Larger Units Act, and it had life in it.

(continued on Page 16.)

February 12, 1948

They had their democratic rights and privileges under the Act if they bestirred themselves to make that legislation effective, or to defeat it if they so wished. It is the first time that the education, which was within the reach of people financially fairly well fixed, is now placed within the reach of the poorest family in the province of Saskatchewan. That is an achievement. It is not what your parents have; it is what education can the child absorb.

I realize that there are objections in my own constituency, where people have paid up their debentures in certain school districts and now there is an assessment levied against them for educational purposes, but I think our people, once they understand the true working of the Act and get the wider vision that we are all collectively responsible for the children of the province, and realizing that those people who were unfortunate enough to file homesteads on marginal or sub-marginal land, their children now have an opportunity to work through to a university education, equally with those who, by good fortune, or good judgment, filed on land which was more productive, and placed them in a better financial position.

While I realize that there are certain things which need to be ironed out, both possibly in the Act and in the administration of the Act, it is a tremendous step forward, and I hope that our people will rally around it and put the thing over in the interest of the oncoming generations of this province, that have to live in a keener competitive world than we ever lived in, in our day and generation, and where intellect is a thing that is going to count; not so much family pull.

Then in connection with the protection through the compulsory automobile insurance – I recall though, that was challenged from the other side of the House – how we heard speech after speech and, when in committee, how keen was the Debate, clause by clause, with regard to that. Opposition was fomented and organized against it, but since people have lived for a brief period under the administration of that Act, they begin to realize the advantages that accrue under the administration of that Act, and I think for the benefit of all; they then begin to realize that it is one of the best pieces of legislation that was ever placed on the statutes of this province.

Then in connection with seed grain cancellation – another load was lifted off of the backs of our municipalities; a total of over 72 million dollars, of which the Federal Government cancelled out 44 million dollars of seed grain indebtedness. There is a tremendous burden lifted off of the backs of our municipalities in the province in debt reduction, well worth talking about.

Then under the Mediation Board, we have given the farmer and his family protection and also the urban dwellers protection against unfair foreclosure and eviction.

It is noted also, that the establishing of a minimum wage scale for the worker, based on humanitarian principles, has done a lot to alleviate the distress among the workers and remove the incentive for striking, as there

has been in a good many of the other provinces in the Dominion of Canada.

There is one thing that we sometimes do not pay much attention to, and that is the connection with our Saskatchewan Insurance Office, outside of the work of the Compulsory Car Insurance. I noted that there were \$66,760 turned back which would have gone down to Toronto or Montreal – turned back into the general fund of this province. In addition to that, under the different classes of insurance, on a three-year basis of renewal, rates have been reduced anywhere from 10 to 35 cents per hundred. That is quite an achievement too.

There is one thing in connection with the Speech from the Throne, which I am very much interested to see, and that was the sentence, “recognizing the dependence of Canadian agriculture on British markets, in order to better enable the United Kingdom to buy Saskatchewan products, my government has continued to stimulate trade with the object of effecting direct exchanges of commodities wherever possible. To this end, a trade delegation of Saskatchewan producers and distributors, sponsored by the government, will leave shortly for Great Britain to attend the coming British Industrial Exhibition.

Now, in connection with us farmers, we are keenly interested in that. I have a clipping here wherein Trade Minister McKinnon stated: “I wish it could be clearly understood everywhere in Canada that the central trading losses, which we might sustain in Great Britain, would damage our trade structure, including our trade with the United States. Retention of as much of our traditional place in the British market as we can obtain in these unsettled times is fundamental to our national trade, and to our national prosperity.” I think the hon. minister rendered a public service when he made that statement, because I, in sympathy with all, do desire to promote the good neighbour policy between ourselves and the great nation to the south of us, yet must recognize, as growers of grain in the province of Saskatchewan, that Great Britain is our market; the market that we have to look forward to if our production is to be stabilized. I am quite interested in some statements that Matthew Halton made with regard to what affairs are in Great Britain at the present time. That is the commentator that quite a few people were desiring – that is, some of the larger interests – were naming as one of the men that possibly should be removed as a commentator from the C.B.C.

A Voice: — He tells the truth.

Mr. Wellbelove: — Yes, he tells the truth, and that is rather irksome to certain classes of people in our national life.

He says, in summing up, that Britain enters the crucial year of 1948, and then he goes on to tabulate: Britain devoted more of her

February 12, 1948

national wealth energies to winning the war than any other country, not excluding Germany or Russia; she gave up most of her export trade; transformed her great industrial system into a war plant; and the job of reconversion to peace production was enormous.

“The big thing for Britain is coal. In 1937, she reached her objective of two-hundred million tons – that is, long tons of coal. Britain is the only country producing more steel than before the war; now she is producing steel at the rate of 14 million tons a year more than in 1938. Great Britain’s ship-building industry is busier than it has been for 255 years – more than half the world’s total of new shipping; twice as much as 1938, has been built in the British yards. There is about 2 million tons of new shipping always on the stocks in Great Britain. Before the war the interest on Great Britain’s investment brought in no less than 500 million dollars worth of imports a year. Britain cashed in on these overseas investments to carry on the war, and today she has to export to win through.” He finishes by saying: “Great Britain will still be great.”

And I think it is a great thing for us farmers to realize that Great Britain will still be great – she is going to win her way back, and I am pleased to see this Government interested, although our efforts may be somewhat limited – but that we are interested in developing a two-way trade between this country and Great Britain.

Graham Spry, our Trade Commissioner over there in Great Britain – his services are at the disposal of all those who wish to use them and I think our Department of Industrial Development is to be commended for the way in which it has sent out those trade booklets; in tabulating the industries and commodities which are available in the old country, to bring this way, and the goods that are available in Saskatchewan, to ship back the other way.

One thing that has been interesting our Liberal friends in the past is the matter of highways. We are, geographically, in an unfortunate position, in the province of Saskatchewan. You find in Manitoba that the main highway system runs east and west, south of Lake Winnipeg. If you look at the province of Alberta, it runs north and south, east of the Rockies – the foothills. And yet, you take the map of Saskatchewan, and from the American boundary, right up

to the north, from Manitoba east and west, you have a regular network of highways. Eight per cent of the people in Canada, have to maintain 38 per cent of the surveyed highways in the Dominion of Canada. A tremendous undertaking! The Leader of the Opposition, when he was in his seat the other day, told us that the highways in Saskatchewan were in the worst condition they ever were. I hoped he does not expect we will take that seriously. He went on to cite something that the commercial travellers said about “the worst is yet to come”, when they had gone through some mud holes. Well, I, possibly, in common with some other M.L.A.’s, when we were out on a series of meetings and staying at the hotels, like to unconsciously steer the conversation around to the Saskatchewan highways, and I can definitely assure...wait until I get through...I can definitely assure the Leader of the Opposition, that the commercial travellers he came in contact with are not representative of the great bulk of the commercial travellers that travel the highways of this province.

I have heard them complain about the detours they have had to make, but they have, in conjunction with that, said that this Government is doing something, and we surely will get highways.

The 4,872 miles of gravelled highways in existence when this Government came into power, were practically worn out. I heard one man comment that they were typically Liberal; a thin veneer of gravel on the top and nothing underneath. Well, that may be a fairly good definition of the highways, but in the last four years...

A Voice: — Did they have anything on top?

Mr. Wellbelove: — I was not referring to the Liberal party. The last full four years that the Liberals were in power – that is, 1940-43 inclusive, they built 671 miles of provincial highway, and 169 miles of secondary roads. The first two years that this Government was in office, 1945-46, they built 757 miles of provincial highway and 25 miles of secondary highways. This past year, they built, or rebuilt, a total of 500 miles. Now, just add that up and what do you find? You find that in four years the Liberals built – I will say it slow so that you can take the figures down – 840 miles, an average of 210 miles. In the three years from 1945 to 1947 inclusive, this Government built, or rebuilt, 1,273 miles, or an average of 424 miles a year – an average of twice as much mileage in any one year than the Liberals ever built.

Mr. Danielson: — And spent three times as much money.

Mr. Wellbelove: — Well, you have to spend money to get results.

February 12, 1948

Mr. Patterson: — Sometimes you don't get results.

Mr. Wellbelove: — We noticed that under Liberal administration – we watched that.

With regard to gravel: in the four years, 1940-43 inclusive, the Liberals gravelled, or re-gravelled 1,099 miles. In three years, our Government in Saskatchewan – which our friends refer to as the CCF Government, but it is the Government of Saskatchewan – have gravelled 3,240 miles. Average that up and what do you find? The Liberals during their last four years of office gravelled or re-gravelled an average of 274 miles a year.

A Voice: — Not bad for an old man!

Mr. Wellbelove: — The CCF, in three years, gravelled or re-gravelled an average of 1,080 miles a year. Besides, this Government has laid down blacktop, in 1944, 138 miles of blacktop in the province. In 1947, alone, this Government laid down 178 miles of blacktop, 50 miles more than there was in the previous years under the Liberal administration. Previous years! I put the plural onto that one.

The “Liberal” Leader-Post, in its anxiety to belittle what this Government had done, carried on quite a campaign with the tourists as they came into the province; and I understand they were going around and photographing some of the mud-holes – you find a lot of them yet in the province; but they forgot to tell them that down in the States, where they came from, the Federal Government there did have enough initiative, during the depression years, to build considerable mileage with regard to their hard-surface roads. But we had a different procedure here in Canada, we kept our men at 40 cents a day...

Hon. Mr. Sturdy: — 20 cents a day.

Mr. Wellbelove: — Oh yes! 20 cents a day – I was giving them more credit than was coming to them – in labour camps; and the result is, of course, that we haven't got the blacktop roads that they have in the States.

When a paper will go to that extent to further the interests of a “bankrupt” party, — that they will catch the American tourists as they come into this province, and belittle their province and try to discourage tourist traffic; to me, that is sinking down to a pretty low level. One of the American tourists that had been in here for some time was asked “what do you think the prospects are for increasing the tourist trade in Saskatchewan?”. “Well”, he said, “I have been in here for

some little time and there are two things you should do – you should clean up your dusty roads and your dirty press. I do not think he was very far out, if that is what they were resorting to, and, as I understand it, they were.

I think Saskatchewan has a future – I will not deal very fully with that – as far as our tourist trade is concerned. We have places of historic interest; we have that great vast northland, which is now being opened up, with the highway stretching up into there. We have lots of other resorts in the province of Saskatchewan, which we could, and should do well to, publicize, to bring more American tourist traffic into the province. But, first of all, we have to overcome this concerted attack by the papers with regard to what we have in regard to attractions, and the drawback of our roads.

In one of the hotels, I picked up the Hotel and Restaurant Magazine, published by Jardine and Young of Montreal – this was the October number, and this was the kind of a booster we had in that magazine, coming from our home province: “Tourist trade drops – poor roads seem to be to blame, according to F.C. Cooper, the Moose Jaw Tourist Camp manager”. “The operator of Highway Number One, Indian Head Tourist Camp said he had been led to believe that the first rush of tourists from the United States warned later ones of the poor state of the roads, and they completed their journey over the United States roads.”

In the second week of September there was a release from one of the radio stations in the southern part of the province, speaking about the number of people who had come into the Dominion of Canada. I think they estimated the people had spent 241 million dollars while they were in here, of which Saskatchewan got, in round figures, about three million dollars. And this radio station commented “of course we had poor roads and we hadn’t much to attract the tourist to the province of Saskatchewan.” Now, I thought that was a most gratuitous insult to our home province here – I think we have a tremendous lot to offer to the tourists from the industrial centres south of the line; and so I got an individual to get in contact with the chief of the Canadian Travel Bureau, Leo. Dolan, to see if that release was tied up with his official release, and I found it was not tied up with the official release at Ottawa, so it must have been a gratuitous insult from one of our radio stations here, with a commentator ad libbing after he had been given the official release.

February 12, 1948

There is another thing I would like to deal with, and that is one that the Liberals are very much concerned about – that is, rural electrification. I have here an extract from a speech made by Mr. Walter Tucker at Bruno on June 18th, and it is headed up: “Farm Electrification Promised Immediately the Liberals Gain Power”. I think that in our province there are a lot of very sparsely separated dwellings – sparsely separated areas – where it would not be practical to carry rural electrification to them. They will, I expect, have to rely on the wind generator for generating electric current. That is uncertain at times; I realize that. It might be that the hon. gentleman had in mind that when the wind got down he would act as a booster – now he may have potential possibilities along that line, and whether he may have had that in mind or not I do not know, but he drew attention to what was being done in Manitoba. This article directly leaves the impression that they are going right ahead with a ten-year program which would be completed in the ten years, and there will be 50,000 of the 55,000 farms in the province electrified.

I checked up with that just to see what progress they have made and I find in their allocation of 5,000 farms a year, that in the first year of their plan in 1945, they made 674 installations out of 5,000. In the second year they made 1,678 installations out of an estimated 5,000. In the third year, they, in company with all others, were brought pretty much to a standstill for lack of supplies. I thought it would be just as well to check up and see what our government has done here. We realize that insulators and transformers are in very short supply and neither the Manitoba government nor the Saskatchewan government can get anywhere near like a sufficient quantity. Orders which were placed a year ago – in fact at that time they did not begin to commit themselves to make deliveries inside of a period of eighteen to twenty-four months – neither British, Canadian nor American firms, as far as that is concerned. The program in Manitoba is the same, as it will be in every other place, which has been held up in connection with that. I have some notes here as to what we have done since this government took over; the service has been extended to more people in the past three years, than were connected up with the Power Commission lines in the previous fifteen years, and that is exclusive of those connected up by purchase.

Mr. Danielson: — Would the hon. gentleman permit a question?

Mr. Wellbelove: — Certainly.

Mr. Danielson: — I would ask the hon. gentleman if any of these people have been served before.

Mr. Wellbelove: — I cannot tell just how many are receiving service after being connected up with the Power Commission, but I would not think that they would be foolish enough to go very far ahead of their power to deliver the current, but the fact remains that in the last three years, exclusive of purchases, that is, connected up with farms, houses and urban dwellings — a larger proportion of urban dwellings — exclusive of purchases of the companies purchased by this government, there has been connected up in three years more than were connected up in fifteen years previous. Well now, what is the Liberals record? They should have a record because they were in the business.

Mr. Hooge: — Would the hon. member permit another question?

Mr. Wellbelove: — Certainly.

Mr. Hooge: — In connection with those 21,000 installations in the province of Manitoba, does that refer to urban or rural installations?

Mr. Wellbelove: — I think a greater proportion of those would be rural. A greater proportion are rural in Manitoba and that would also be the case in Saskatchewan. That is, a greater proportion of those connected, I think you will find, in the province of Manitoba, are rural, compared with the number connected in Saskatchewan. Then we have the Liberal handbook of 1929 which laid down their policy: “The alertness, vigor and progressiveness which characterized the Gardiner government is well illustrated in its grappling with the power question. Contrasted with the power situation in other western provinces, Saskatchewan’s lot is a particularly happy one. Control of power in Alberta is already definitely in the hands of the private companies. Not a few public men are disturbed at the prospect”. Now if I read that without telling you where it came from, you might think that was a C.C.F. running for office in 1929. “In Manitoba where the provincial government has a limited hydro system, private interests are soundly entrenched. The government system is operated at a loss.” Just compare that statement to what we found here in 1944. I will give you that statement too. “In Saskatchewan, on the other hand, the way is open to the creation of a great provincial system patterned after that of Ontario, which has proved such an outstanding success.” Our Liberal friends in 1929 were going to have a real public utility fashioned along the lines of the hydro-electric...

February 12, 1948

Mr. Danielson: — That is only nineteen years ago.

Mr. Wellbelove: — I will give the House a record of a great portion of that time. In 1929 when this statement was issued, the Power commission was set up – and in 1929 when this statement was issued, the Power Commission was set up – and in 1931 there was a deficit – and in 1932 there was a deficit – and in 1933 there was a deficit – and in 1934 there was a deficit – and in 1937 there was a deficit – and in 1938 there was a deficit – and in 1939 to 1943 they made a profit, but when this government took over there was still the accumulated deficit of \$231,417.00 – during the first year of operation under this government. Compare this with the previous fifteen years – you said they had just been in operation for eighteen years. The first year of operation, 1945, they cut that \$231,417.00 of a deficit down to \$74,000.00...

Mr. Danielson: — \$110,000.00 was income tax.

Mr. Wellbelove: — In 1946 they worked out the deficit and built up an accumulated surplus of \$359,700.00, and I just have not got the statement that the Premier made with regard to this years earnings, but we will get that in good time. Yes, the Liberals have a record, there is no doubt about that.

Then I notice that my hon. friend from Hanley was taken to task in connection with some remarks he passed about the press. I think that the greatest compliment he is making to the C.C.F. is that they are afraid to place before the people of this province the true state of affairs with regards to this administration, and allow them, in mass, to arrive at their own conclusions. I will show you why; our capitalistic friends, with mock righteousness, they talk about the Russian domination of the press – it is a most objectionable thing. I want to know what is the difference between a Russian dominated press which would lead to enslavement under a dictator or a capitalistic press, which leads to economic slavery. I resent one as much as the other.

I had the opportunity of hearing the editor of the Leader-Post speak on the Bill of Civil Rights, and he emphasized the rights of the press, and I think we should all be jealous of our rights, in preserving the rights of the press. But as he was speaking, and since I have been thinking over his address, it appears to me that the public have some rights, somewhere. I think if some of the old standard Liberal papers that used to circulate in the old country, when I was a boy over there, the Yorkshire Post and the Manchester Guardian – everybody knew what their politics were, but you could read one of their editorials and you could, by and large, take them as a fair, unbiased appraisal of the merits of an opposition government. You cannot find that in the province of Saskatchewan – only here and there do you find a complimentary editorial. I watched for years and the only complimentary editorial I have seen – really complimentary – is in connection with the Forestry Commission. That was one of the first; there have been others since, — one or two the other day in connection with the hospitalization, but, by and large, with regard to what this Government does, it is either “slanted” news, or the emphasis is deliberately misplaced.

I will give you a couple of examples, Mr. Speaker, just to give you an idea, and to prove my statements; in one of our Liberal press, they were commenting on the releases from Ottawa in connection with the debts of the province – the Dominion Bureau of Statistics – and the interest on the bonded issue, and they left the impression, which is quite correct so far as it goes, that Saskatchewan’s interest is possibly the highest of any province in the Dominion. The per capita debt – I think I am right in this – in the province of Saskatchewan, when this Government came into office, was the highest of any in the Dominion of Canada. Of the bonded indebtedness, a good many of those bond issues had been floated at five and one-half per cent. That accounted for the high interest rate. Since this Government has been in office, as you are aware, Mr. Speaker, they have refunded bonds where they have paid off a portion of the maturing bonds and refunded the balance; they have refunded them at three and one-quarter per cent; the lowest in the history of the province. And we have the “slanted” news that comes in with an editorial review, and they haven’t the courtesy, the manliness or the courage, to draw a comparison with the bonded indebtedness and the rates, when this Government took office, and what they are at the present time. I think they are perfectly right in drawing attention to the bonded indebtedness, and the interest on that, being higher in this province than any other, but, in all fairness to this government and the province of Saskatchewan, they should let the world know that our financial position has improved to such an extent, Mr. Speaker, that we can float bonds at a lower interest rate, than at any time in the history of the province of Saskatchewan. That is what I call deliberately “slanted” news, and that goes all over the world.

Another, with regard to the misplacing of emphasis, is in connection with an article which appeared in the Leader-Post, January 23rd. “Tim Buck throws support to the C.C.F.”

February 12, 1948

I looked up a great weekly paper, which has a large circulation in the province of Saskatchewan, and I found the heading there: "C.C.F. rejects Labour overtures". But on this Third Page, of our local press, we find in black type "Tim Buck throws support C.C.F."; in a column by Chester Bloom Ottawa, "Red Policy Line Alters". If you turn over to page 18 of the same issue, in a paragraph heading of very fine type, you find "repudiated by Coldwell". If a paper had any sense or semblance of fairness, instead of placing Chester Bloom's comment on Tim Buck's offer, they would have placed the repudiation of Mr. Coldwell's, side by side with that; but that is the class of stuff you get from a Liberal paper which is subsidized by capital interests.

I followed this Ottawa dispatch down, and you have to turn over to page 18 again, and you find there, without any heading – just a continuation of the article – "the executive of the Ontario C.C.F. party stated Wednesday night...it had heard reports that offer of Labour-Progressive support would be made", and added" "the C.C.F. will reject support from the Communist party, and will not collaborate with them, or make any electoral arrangements of any sort with them." That was put on page 18 without any heading at all.

That is what I think, Mr. Speaker, is a failure to recognize that the public, as well as the papers, have some rights.

I have just one more item I would like to deal with, very briefly, and that is an endeavour which is underway at the present time. You may have noticed an editorial in our local paper here, with regard to a one-sided development, where the Canadian Congress of Labour leaders have seized the C.C.F., they say, as their political limb. It is the old party trick of trying to divide labour and farmers. It took us a long time to wake up to that, Mr. Speaker. I have been associated with the Grain Growers Association since 1913, and I remember in one of those early conventions, where we, as farmers, were realizing that we were not getting a fair deal, but our membership in that organization was divided between the political parties so that, numerically, no group would be very strong – and some of our leaders were fishing around to see if there could not be a common meeting ground between the farmers and labour, and we used to be assured from the platform that there was no such thing as a common meeting ground between farmer and labour, because their interests were diametrically opposed. As farmers we had to receive the most we possibly could for our produce and the labouring man had to buy it in the lowest market that he possibly could. That was correct, that part of it, before labour got properly organized. When labour got properly organized, and brought its standard of income up to a fair decent level of purchasing power, we, as farmers, realized that right on our own doorstep we had a far better market for a lot of our products than we had ever had in the past; and we began to realize the uniformity of interests, between the farming communities and the working people. coming through one of those conventions, we were turning over in our minds as to the possibility of the farmers taking the initial step and going into the political field and joining up with labour.

I remember, those were the days – the member for Arm River will remember – when Liberal cabinet ministers used to adorn the platform of the Grain Growers, and dominate the convention from the platform – we have got away from Platform domination in these days. They bored from within and controlled from without. I well remember this convention where there had been quite a lot of preparatory work done and the vote was going to be taken on the farmers going into the political field, and it was a pretty tense moment for some of those cabinet ministers. I remember the Hon. Chas. A. Dunning was in the audience – not on the platform at that time, — and after the vote was taken, the motion to go into the political field was defeated, and Chas. A. Dunning left the hall and he said: “Well that is over; the operation was successful, but the child died”. Well, that child did die, but another one has been born in a stronger, healthier child, and this one did not have to be wet-nursed by the Liberal party – this one was able to survive without being wet-nursed by the Liberal party – and it is a real husky child. And I am pleased to see that out of those earlier efforts there has developed a virile organization, in the province of Saskatchewan, able to mutually combine the interests of farmer and labour, working toward a common goal for the enrichment of our individual lives, and the furthering of our community interests.

Mr. Speaker, I will support the motion.

Mr. Danielson: — I beg leave to adjourn the Debate.

Agreed.

The Assembly then adjourned at 4:55 o’clock p.m.