

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Eleventh Legislature
20th Day

Wednesday, March 15, 1950.

The House met at 3 o'clock p.m.

ON ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. W.S. Lloyd: — With reference to the shirts which the Cabinet Ministers wore one day this week, I want to assure the House, Mr. Speaker, that not only did the Cabinet Ministers pay for the shirts, but since they bought them before the Education Tax was abolished, they paid Education Tax, too.

BUDGET DEBATE

The House resumed, from Tuesday, March 14, the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Fines:

“That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair. (The Assembly to go into a Committee of Supply.)

Hon. J.T. Douglas (Minister of Highways): — Mr. Speaker, when I adjourned the debate, yesterday, I believe I was discussing the problems brought forth by some of the Liberal members in their own constituencies, and I had pretty well dealt with the grants given to their various rural municipalities. I do find, however, that I have omitted to deal with one rural municipality that was mentioned by the hon. member for Melfort (Mr. Egnatoff) and I would like to refer to that today before I proceed with the general picture in the province.

Reference was made to R.M. No. 457, and I would take it they were in a rather serious plight because it was necessary for them to increase taxation. Well, running over that municipality I find that they were one of the heavily assessed municipalities in this province, and I presume they have been forced to raise their mill rate because, like many other municipalities, they were able, over the last number of years, to collect arrears in taxes, and now that these are out of the way, they have to assess enough money to provide for their necessities. I expect, like other parts of the province, they are now paying their teachers a better salary, and, as they are in a very fine part of Saskatchewan — I know many people up there — they naturally would want to bring their schools into better condition, and are now taking advantage of the fact that there is material available to improve their schools. So it is only natural that their mill rate should be increased.

The implication, however, was that this Province was not playing fair with them and I have here, before me, a statement showing the grants paid to that municipality by the Department of Highways in the last six years the Liberals were in office — and that amount is the huge sum of \$300. They received one grant during the whole six years. Now I find that in the six years in which we have been in office, the smallest grant we paid them was \$500. They have received grants from us every year during the six years,

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totalling \$5,860, and that is a faint illustration of what has been happening across this province as far as grants to municipalities are concerned. Now, I presume that that was possibly an area where the former administration thought that there was not any great need to make grants — they usually got a pretty good vote in there — and I think it confirms the statement I made yesterday, that grants to municipalities, previous to this Government taking over, were placed where they expected the most political good would come.

Now what is true of that municipality is pretty well true of the entire province, Mr. Speaker. I noticed that when the member for Gravelbourg was speaking, he also bemoaned the fact that the municipalities were not being taken care of in this budget, and I want to draw to his attention and to the attention of this Assembly, that the municipalities are receiving better treatment, today, than they ever have during any other period of time in this province. I find, again, reverting to the entire provincial picture, other than to a local one, that during the last six years of Liberal administration in this province the municipalities only received from the Department of Highways \$796,078. In the six years that this Government has been in office, we have paid the rural municipalities \$2,674,394 — four times as much! Yet they have the audacity to stand up here in this House and bemoan the fact that this Government is not taking care of the municipalities.

I pointed out, last night, and I am going to repeat again, today, the difference in the two policies. I do not think the former administration ever had any policies as far as making grants to rural municipalities were concerned. As I said, last night, the thing that seemed to be given the most consideration was where the most votes would come from, and it is very evident because the year before an election was the year the municipalities received the most money.

I have a very good illustration of what this equalization grant means and that is in the constituency of The Battlefords. There I find that, previous to this Government coming in, for six years the municipalities in that district got \$9,312. When the C.C.F. took office, we instituted a plan of equalization grants whereby those municipalities in outlying areas and those municipalities with a low assessment received special consideration, and I find that the municipalities in that constituency received \$49,581, an increase of 525 per cent.

Now let us take a look at the formula we are using and I want to say that, for the first time in the history of this province, grants are now being made to municipalities on a scientific basis and the matter of political consideration is entirely left out, because all that the Government does is to vote the necessary amount of money to municipalities and then the officials in the Department of Municipal Affairs work out that formula and the amount paid to each rural municipality. Certainly there is no thought being given of political consideration when these grants are determined, and here is the formula, Mr. Speaker, that we have been using: First, we take into consideration the levy made by that municipality; second, we take into consideration the number of farm families in that municipality; then we take into consideration the miles of road that the Provincial Government are maintaining; next we take into consideration the soil conditions, the soil index of that municipality, and the degree of bush coverage. Now when you have done that you are approaching this thing from the scientific basis, and, as I said, this is the first time in the history of this province when such an attempt has been made in the making up of these grants.

I have noticed that the Leader of the Opposition, speaking in the country, has referred to the grants made to the municipalities by the Province of Manitoba. Well, I have checked for the year 1948, and I have here the estimates for the Province of Manitoba that year, and I find that in that year the Province of Saskatchewan paid slightly more—not very much I will admit; but we paid slightly more to our rural municipalities than did the Province of Manitoba. But there is this other great difference which the Leader of the Opposition fails to take into consideration when he is speaking in the country and it is that, while the Province of Manitoba only relieves the municipalities of 2,312 miles of provincial highway, this Province relieves the municipalities of 8,308 miles of provincial highways, and that difference of 6,000 miles in maintenance costs only means well over one and one-half million dollars per year, not to take into consideration the cost of reconstruction of those roads. When you take that into consideration the cost of reconstruction of those roads. When you take that into consideration, Mr. Speaker, I find that the rural municipalities of Saskatchewan are receiving much better treatment from this Government than do the rural municipalities of the Province of Manitoba. As a matter of fact, in the year 1948-49, the total assistance which the Department of Highways gave rural municipalities in this province amounted to 12.4 per cent of our total highway budget. I question very much, Mr. Speaker, if there is another Highway Department in Canada that makes such a generous contribution to rural municipalities.

While I am on the matter of municipalities (and, as a matter of fact, this was brought up here, yesterday), I want to give you an illustration of taxes levies against land on the Manitoba side of the border and land just across the road on the Saskatchewan side. I have here the tax receipt notices from two municipalities. One is from the Rural Municipality of Cote No. 271 in Saskatchewan, and the other is from the Rural Municipality of Shell River in Manitoba. I find that one quarter-section of land in Saskatchewan, which is assessed at some \$3200, pays a total tax of \$76. In Shell River in Manitoba, a quarter-section is only assessed at \$2000 but their total taxation is \$156. On school taxes alone, let's see what the picture is: in Saskatchewan, \$40.30, and that is 1949, and in Manitoba, \$70. Now, if you take a lower assessed quarter in Saskatchewan, a quarter assessed at some less than \$2000, I find the school taxes \$16.90 against the \$70 in Manitoba. And yet they have the audacity to stand up here and tell us that because of the C.C.F. Government in Saskatchewan, municipalities are being taxed higher here than they are in the province of Manitoba. There is the answer, Mr. Speaker, and they cannot deny it.

Well now, Mr. Speaker, while I am on municipalities I think I should say a word about the bridge situation in the province. In view of the statements that have been made in this Assembly and in the country by opposition speakers, I think it is high time that we had a very clear understanding of the bridge situation of the province of Saskatchewan. And I want to point out that, while we have been in office, we have given all the assistance to rural municipalities we possibly can because of the shortage of bridge supplies. During that time we were able to give considerable assistance. During that time we were able to reduce the number of bridges that were over the age of 20 years by some 50. But I find that, when we took over in 1944, there were some 1235 bridges in this province that were over 20 years of age and most of them declared to be worn out and dangerous. That 1235 is more than half of the total number of bridges of 20 feet and over in this province, which is 2317.

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Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that if what the people on the other side of the House say is true, then the Liberals have a great deal to account for. It means that they allowed the bridge situation to develop into that condition. We have never accepted the position that we were responsible for bridges other than those on the provincial highway system, and I do not think the people on the opposite side did either when they were the government. If they did, they stand condemned by the words from their own mouth.

I know the member from Cannington (I am sorry he is not in his seat, today) made the statement particularly in his own constituency during the by-election, that this Government has been responsible for the condition the bridges have got into during the last number of years. Then, after he came to this House, he wrote me one day asking for information as to my authority for certain statements I had made in a radio address, and I sent that information. I pointed out to him that, under Section 231 of The Rural Municipalities Act, Chapter 129, Statute of Saskatchewan, 1940, the rural municipalities were made responsible for the bridges in this province outside of those on the provincial highway system. But to my amazement, after he had been advised of that in the House, the other night, I noticed on the "Provincial Affairs" broadcast he told the people of this province that the C.C.F. Government were endeavouring to place the responsibility on the shoulders of the rural municipalities so far as bridges were concerned. Mr. Speaker, he must have known better. That man has been a councillor or a reeve of a municipality for over 25 years, and surely he would take his duties seriously enough to know, to at least study, The Rural Municipalities Act and to know what his responsibilities were. So it is pretty difficult for me to understand why a man who has served 25 years on the council, after receiving information from me, would get up and deliberately make the statement over the radio to the people of this province that this Government was trying to shove the responsibility of road construction on the shoulders of the municipalities. That statement is not correct. If that responsibility was thrown on their shoulder, it was thrown on their shoulder by former Liberal administrations and not by the C.C.F.

Every year since we have taken office, however, we have included enough money in our estimates to purchase all the bridge material available with which to build bridges in this province, and we have assisted rural municipalities to that extent until last summer. Last summer, after our vote had been arranged for, materials were made available in fairly large quantities. We realized the time had come when this bridge situation could be met and coped with successfully. I asked the members of my staff to prepare for me a statement showing, first, the number of bridges that were worn out and had to be replaced, how much money it would cost to put them in condition, and how long they thought would be required. When I had received that information I found that, at the present time, there were some 1100-odd bridges that were worn out. They estimated it would take at least six years to bring the bridge situation up to proper condition at an expenditure of at least \$3,000,000. Realizing that it would be impossible for the municipalities to meet this huge expenditure over a period of six years, this Government is prepared to assist rural municipalities in their struggle to bring the bridges back to proper condition by taking half the responsibility of the cost of constructing the bridges from 20 feet to 100 feet. We will accept the full responsibility for the construction of bridges over 100 feet. As a matter of fact, I would suggest something along the following lines: -

- (a) That for culverts and structures under 20 feet, the municipalities accept the full responsibility for their construction and maintenance;
- (b) The Department of Highways and Transportation to pay 50 per cent of the cost of all bridges over 19 feet and less than 100, whether they are old or new sites, the balance of the cost of construction to be paid by the rural municipalities; bridges to be built to the standard approved by the Department of Highways and Transportation;
- (c) the Department of Highways and Transportation to pay the total cost of construction or reconstruction of bridges 100-foot span or over; bridges to be built to the standard approved by the Department of Highways and Transportation;
- (d) in the case of construction of bridges referred to in section (b), the Department of Highways and Transportation will provide general engineering supervision, plans and profiles without charge; in cases where an inspector is required, cost of such inspection shall be included in the cost of construction;
- (e) added maintenance: the rural municipalities to be responsible for and to pay the entire cost of maintenance and minor repairs not exceeding \$500 on all bridges of less than 200-foot span and to pay 50 per cent of the cost of maintenance and repairs exceeding \$500 on all bridges of less than 200, and to pay 50 per cent of the cost of major repairs exceeding \$500 on all bridges, the balance of the major repairs to be paid by the Department of Highways and Transportation, the Department to be responsible for and to pay the entire cost of maintaining bridges 200-feet and over.

That is the first time to my knowledge that there ever has been any policy adopted in this province for the construction and the maintenance of bridges, and we are prepared to go out and assist municipalities to that extent if they so desire.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that I should take some time to deal with the Department of Highways, particularly in view of the statements that have been made in this province, particularly during the last summer, when there was a Federal campaign and also during the by-elections that have been held. I notice from that campaign that the Leader of the Opposition was prone to compare all highways that we have with those in Manitoba. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to accept the province of Manitoba as a yardstick in this controversy, but to do so I will have to possibly repeat some of the things I told this House on former occasions, and I will do it very rapidly. If I find that the province of Manitoba had a highway system of slightly less than 2000 miles, a highway system that was well built to begin with and whose maintenance was well above the maintenance practised in the province of Saskatchewan prior to that time. In Saskatchewan, on the other hand, we had a highway system of over 8,000 miles, a highway system that was largely worn out, a highway system that was never properly constructed to begin with and was recognized as the most dilapidated and run-down of any highway system in Canada. That is 1944. Also I find that in Manitoba in 1944, they had 495 miles of blacktop and concrete roads in that province, most of them

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in pretty good shape. In Saskatchewan, on the other hand, we had a total of 138 miles of blacktop, one-half of which was practically worn out. As a matter of fact there was a 6-mile stretch on No. 6 south that we had to revert to a gravel road.

Now what is the situation today. Well, I have not the figures on what was done in Manitoba, but I do know that, since we took over in Saskatchewan in 1944, we have built or rebuilt a total of around 2,700 miles of highway, and as you know we have built them well. Our blacktop now stands at 599.4 miles against Manitoba's blacktop of 604.9. In other words, we are now just 5½ miles short of the Manitoba system so far as blacktop roads are concerned, and in 1944 we were 357 miles behind Manitoba. That is just the picture in 1944. Now I mentioned what we have constructed, and as I have said we have constructed well. We have constructed roads that will stand comparison with even the roads in Montana and Dakota. If you will take the amount of gravelling done, I find that we have gravelled over 6,000 miles since we have been in power. That, Mr. Speaker, is three times the total mileage of the Manitoba system. I want to say here and now that you can take any province in the Dominion of Canada with a budget anywhere comparable to ours and you cannot find any of them that have carried on the amount of construction work that has been done in the province of Saskatchewan.

I want to say, further, that travelling over this province as I have done, going from one piece of construction to another, I have never seen more uniform work in my life, and I say it is a tribute to the men who are in charge of this work. I want to pay tribute to the men in charge of this work, not only in the field but in the office, because without the co-operation I have received it would not have been possible to have carried on this tremendous programme and to have the work done so uniformly and so well. Furthermore, I find that we are doing this work at a lower cost per cubic yard in Saskatchewan than in any other place on the North American Continent, and there is a reason for this. The reason in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, is because we have set up our own earth-moving crews. We now have eight of them in the province, and I find that those crews are moving earth quicker than even the contractors are doing, and I am making no complaint about the contractors in this province — by and large they are doing a good job for us. When tenders are called they bid closely and they have given good co-operation to this Department. No, there is no kick-back from them, and they know it, and they will tell you that if you are talking to them. As I have said I believe the main reason for the low cost of construction is that we have our own crews. We have equipped those crews with the very best of modern equipment. We have arranged to see that they are properly serviced and maintained. Each crew now has its own service car in the field and each year this equipment is brought in and given a thorough overhaul. Those hon. members who took the opportunity of going over to our main repair depot in Regina, the other day, have some idea of the very thorough job that is being done in this respect. Every machine is brought in and completely torn down and any time a replacement is needed it is made. When those machines go out in the spring they are in first-class condition. And that is the reason, Mr. Speaker, for the low cost of the work to be done in this country.

Now, coming to gravelling, I find that when we took over, in 1944, we had 1482 miles of gravelled road in Saskatchewan. Today, we have 6418. And in addition to the extra miles we have gravelled, we have seen to it that those roads that were classed as gravel roads — and on about two thousand miles of them there was very little gravel — today have been

brought up to a proper standard as far as gravelling is concerned. We are reaching the point in our programme of construction in this province where we have the people of Saskatchewan, as far as our highways are concerned, 'out of the mud.' There is just a short way to go there yet; but we are reaching that goal very rapidly.

In the field of construction — I have not time to get over all we have done, but I want to mention a few projects. I will have to admit that we have in the past loaded our construction programme rather heavily in favour of the outlying districts in this province, because, when we took over in 1944, I found little attempt had been made to give proper road facilities to those people in outlying parts in Saskatchewan. So, today, you will find that we have completed a first-class road to Meadow Lake and put it in good shape. We have completed the road right up to Lac la Ronge. The hon. member, speaking, yesterday, suggested that we give some thought to Lac la Ronge to get tourists in there. Well, Mr. Speaker, I was in Lac la Ronge last year when the fishing season opened, and I found that at that time there were quite a number of American cars in Lac la Ronge, all the cars, in fact, that we had accommodations for at that time. As I talked to those men (they did not know who I was), my friend asked them, how did they find the roads? "Oh," they said, "the roads are good." And they said, they said furthermore, "We find some activity in the roads." They said, "You know we have been coming up here for a number of years, and there is something being done on the roads in this province now." As a result of that trip I was talking to one of the men who runs one of the tourist camps at Lac la Ronge, and he told me that, on one occasion, he had reservations for a party of either 30 or 40 people from the other side of the line. And last summer, when I spent my holidays at Waskesui I found the American tourists were not staying at Waskesui, they were going right on through to Lac la Ronge because most of them were coming up for fishing. And I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that there is a first-class gravelled road from Waskesui to Lac la Ronge, and kept in first-class condition.

Now, some of the other projects — I cannot mention them all, but there are one or two of the outstanding ones I would like to mention. There is No. 40 highway from the Alberta border completed almost continuously from there to North Battleford on to Krydor; with the exception of a portion of either 16 or 14 miles that road has been entirely rebuilt and gravelled. Then we have the one starting at Mantario extending into the constituency of Kerrobert-Kindersley, extending right through to No. 15 highway north of Dinsmore, a piece of construction that was entirely forgotten by the Liberals. I believe the hon. member for Kindersley referred it to us before, and said that they had travelled over many Liberal promises for many years. I think that is correct. Today, you have a first-class road, well gravelled. Then you have the road from Kelvington to Preeceville. When we took over, as the member for Melfort mentioned yesterday, it was a 'cow trail'; today it is a first-class built and gravelled road. Then we could take the road from Carrot River to Crooked River which has now been built, and from Crooked River on towards Bertwell, which is almost completed. Or you can take the other No. 90 highway reaching up to Hudson Bay Junction; that road is nearing completion. Mr. Speaker, we have heavily loaded our programme, I will admit, in the outlying area, and we are going to continue to see that those people are serviced. But as we complete more and more of these roads, I find that the traffic coming into our centres of population like Regina, Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and Prince Albert, is becoming heavier and heavier until at the

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moment we find that we cannot cope with the maintenance of the roads in these large centres and something has got to be done in that respect.

Perhaps I should deal with the maintenance problem we have had, and one of the problems that we have in maintenance is the heavy concentration of traffic on these main centres. The result is, today, that on our No. 1 and our No. 6 highways to the north leading out of the city it is impossible for us on a gravel road to give the maintenance that people require. On No. 2 highway leading to Moose Jaw, the same condition prevails. On No. 14 highway that leads to Saskatoon, the same condition prevails, and on No. 2 highway leading to Prince Albert, on the south, the same condition prevails. There we have got to give consideration to the construction of a better type of a road than we have at the present time.

Now, in 1944, when we took over, as I said earlier, maintenance of these roads was very poor. We found that we had nothing to work with. We found there were only 60 power maintainers in the entire Department of Highways, 20 of which were obsolete. Today, as I have said, we now have one of the best systems of gravel road anywhere in the Dominion of Canada and, in spite of what the Opposition have been telling you, this is correct. I would like to read to this Chamber, at the moment, a few comments by people who are not in Saskatchewan but by people who live out of Saskatchewan but have done some travelling in this province. The first is an article that appeared in the 'Ottawa Citizen', written by James H. Gray, a newspaper man. I am not going to read it all. I am only going to read a short stretch of it written from Calgary:

"In at least one respect this is one of the most sensational stories to go out from the prairies in years. It is a report from a tourist just getting undusted after a 2,500 miles junket from Winnipeg and return. The fact, hard and harsh as it may seem, is that Saskatchewan's gravelled highways in August were superior to the counterpart in either Manitoba or Alberta. So it's closed the Western myth that Saskatchewan is boasted of to have the worst roads between here and anywhere. No. 1 highway from border to border in Saskatchewan was in excellent shape. (and I might say, by the way, that that's one of the worst highways we have in this province). To the tourist, the lack of potholes and signs of careful maintenance was astounding. True there was a rough stretch now and then, but none that required slacking of speed to under 40 miles an hour; over long stretches of 50 to 55 miles at a safe and pleasant speed. More work on highways in Saskatchewan, this summer, than ever before. This was in sharp contrast with both Alberta and Manitoba. Constant grading and repairing the roads. And had allowed in both these province had allowed their gravelled highways to deteriorate badly. The dust menace is bad all over, yet it is less of a nuisance in Saskatchewan than anywhere else. One reason for this is the notable greater courtesy of Saskatchewan motorists."

And so it goes on. That is from a man who is not a resident of Saskatchewan, a man who is an outsider, and I am quite sure, no political

friend of this Government. Then, I have another one here written by a man in British Columbia, Paul Simpson, of Vancouver, and again he said:

“On my return to British Columbia from Saskatoon, I chose provincial highway No. 7 to Alsask. This gravelled road was smooth and beautifully graded, a pleasure to drive on. West of Alsask the highway became Alberta No. 9 (I’m not going to read what he said about that). After traversing 4000 miles of Saskatchewan highways I found most of these roads as smooth as billiard tables, graded regular at frequent intervals. The few bad patches were definitely better than the few good patches of Alberta No. 9. Irrespective of political viewpoint I believe in giving credit where it is due and the Government of Saskatchewan can certainly point with pride to the condition of its roads.”

Now, here is one I think that the Member for Melville will be interested in. He said in regards (I understand he is having quite a bit of fanmail — or should I say ‘panmail’) to roads out of Melville:

“In regards to roads out of Melville I would say that at the time of the Liberal misrule in Saskatchewan, Melville had only trails where buses had to make detours and get stuck in the mud. Beginning with 1944, the first effort was made to keep the roads open during the winter. The Liberals kept them open in the summer. January, 1947, should really have been left a sleigh road, but I saw a crew out there doing the almost impossible, excavating depths of snow as high as a snow plow and open the way for traffic. During the recent springs when the melting of the snow has left the road in soft and in very bad shape, trucks came along with clay and filled the soft spots and put the road in traffic order. Gravel has been spread where needed and when driving to Melville, we passed the maintenance regularly which keeps the road level. We find roads all directions from Melville rather good and it is not only unfair but it hurts to hear an irresponsible individual misrepresent the facts of Melville roads.”

Well now, I have only a couple of other things I would like to mention. I should like to pay thanks to Bob Tyre of the ‘Leader-Post’. It is not very often we get bouquets from the Leader-Post; but I notice that, in the December 31 issue of the Leader-Post, 1949, he had this to say:

“When the year was younger, we travelled No. 1 highway to the Manitoba boundary and wrote some harsh things about the road. In our wanderings thereafter, we discovered some mighty fine stretches of highway in Saskatchewan and we would not want to write ‘close’ to the old year without a word of appreciation to the Highways’ Minister and his road building.”

Now, then, one from the Saskatoon ‘Star-Phoenix’, Bill Wyatt — and compliments to Bill Wyatt:

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“Premier Douglas said that he is to get paved roads to his constituency and J.T. Douglas looked after Rosetown’s building. And in neither case should there be any criticism. This reporter in the last two years has driven over most of the highways in the north. Generally speaking there can be few complaints. They have been well maintained, are better than Alberta roads and are much better than prior to 1944.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have quite a sheaf of these here, but I am not going to weary the House with any more. But it gives you some idea of the work that has been done in the province. Furthermore yesterday, it was suggested that the Bureau of Publications take some time, spend some of their energies, in getting publicity across the line to bring tourists from the other side of the border to Saskatchewan. I want to point out that it is speeches such as are being made by the Leader of the Opposition and his followers that are hurting tourist traffic in the province of Saskatchewan, and not our own.

I should say a word about snow removal. When we took office in 1944, I found that the best the Liberals had ever done was in the year previous, in 1943-44, when they kept open 2500 miles of highway. Every year since that time we have been increasing the number of miles of highway that have been kept open, until this year, on December 31, 1949, we had 6,858 miles of highway open and it is improving each day. Yesterday, after two months of exceptionally bad weather, I find that we have 5,580 miles of highway open, something the Liberals could never have accomplished and never did accomplish. Now there are reasons for this: first, we are getting better equipment; secondly, we are getting a staff that know how to handle this equipment and thirdly every year we bring in our district engineers for conference in Regina where they discuss not only the snow-removal programme but their other problems as well. That is one of the great reasons for the improvement of maintenance of the roads in Saskatchewan during the last number of years. One of the maintenance men, who will soon be retiring, told me: “I have attended more conferences since this Government has been in power than we ever had in all the years I was with the former Governments in this province.” He said: “As a matter of fact, I don’t think I ever attended a conference of this kind in all of those years.” We are giving the men who actually do the job the opportunity of coming in and discussing with those in the office here their problems and making their suggestions, and as a result we are getting these results that I just mentioned to you.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are having great demands for improvement of roads in this province, and I don’t want anyone to think that we are satisfied with what has been done. We are far from it. As I pointed out on certain roads in this province the traffic is becoming so heavy that we cannot maintain the gravelled roads. We have got to give consideration to hard-surfacing in this province, and we are of the opinion that, before this is satisfactorily attended to, at least 3,000 miles of our highways will have to be blacktopped and that cannot be done overnight. First of all, of course, the public are demanding that they have safe traffic on these heavy travelled roads and, as long as you have the dust menace that you have, you will never have safe traffic on roads where traffic has become extremely heavy as it has in Saskatchewan. Second, we will have to take into consideration the rapidly diminishing supply of gravel. Our method today of putting untreated gravel on our highways is not only expensive but it is very wasteful. On the heavily travelled roads the loss is approximately 300 cubic yards per mile. So we will have to give consideration to that.

Then the wear and tear on a road will reduce your grade by at least an inch a year. That means that, in a twelve-year period, you will have lost one foot of your road surface, and you are doing away with one of the main items in making your road snow-free during the winter months. And then again, the wear and tear on vehicles in this province is terrific. We — the Saskatchewan Transportation Company — have found that since we have blacktopped the road from North Portal to Regina our saving per bus mile is three cents per mile. One of the large trucking firms in this province has confirmed that information. They tell me that their saving per truck mile is also approximately three cents. Now, when you take that into consideration, the amount of money which the people of Saskatchewan are paying today because they have not got blacktop roads is tremendous. But the thing is we have got to have greater revenue if we are to take care of it. If we are to complete the gravelling of our roads, if we are to complete the reconstruction of our highways (and we must do this before we can get proper snow-removal surfaces), and if we are to take care of this 3,000 miles of blacktopping, it will take an annual budget of \$12,000,000 a year for the next ten years.

Now, I notice the member for Gravelbourg scolded us, the other day, for spending too much money, and I presume that is on highways, because the Highway Department is one of the heavy spenders of this province. Well, he may think we are spending too much money, but I don't think so, and I know the people of Saskatchewan don't think so. I want to tell this Assembly that the province of Saskatchewan today is spending a fair share of its revenue on highways in this province, and if we are to spend more money then other fields of revenue must be found. I find, in looking over the report of the Royal Commission set up by the Government of Great Britain, in 1929, to decide this matter, they made a recommendation that the cost of highways, maintenance and construction, should be assess 2/3 on the users of the highways and 1/3 on those who benefit from the highways — and I notice, that the Royal Commission of Transportation set up by the Federal Government in Canada, in 1932, agrees with that finding. Now while we have the right to tax and do tax the users of the highways in this province, this province has not the right to tax those who benefit by the use of our highways, mainly our manufacturers, tire manufacturers, parts, and so forth. But if we have not got that right, the Federal Government has, and so again I want to say that we must see to it that the Federal Government assumes some responsibility in the construction of roads such as they do across the line, because there, as I told this House before, through the Bureau of Public Roads Administration, the Federal Government of the United States helps the various states there to as high as eighty-some per cent in the largely-settled areas in the construction of the roads. The State of Montana, immediately south of us, received assistance as high as \$8,000,000 per year.

Now the only assistance — I am not going to say the only assistance we ever got — we have never got a five-cent piece from the Federal Government; but a year ago last December, we were called to Ottawa to discuss the possible building of the Trans-Canada Highway. The Provinces went down there. We met with the Federal people, and they outlined to us what they thought should be done, then they wanted us to tell them whether we were prepared to select a road from one side of Canada to the other and if so what would be the cost of construction on that road and the specifications that we thought would be required. Well, Mr. Speaker, it only took that conference, or the representatives of the Provinces, half-a-day to get together and decide on a route from one side of Canada to the other to come in with the recommendation as to specifications with an estimate as to cost. But having done

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What we could not get Ottawa to discuss with us the sharing of costs. When it came to discussion of the sharing of costs there was no dice, Mr. Speaker. They refused to discuss the matter further. They asked for an adjournment until they would have the opportunity of studying our proposition. We were not called into consultation again until last December to again discuss the matter. Now, I want to mention that here today, because I find that, during the Federal election Mr. Gardiner, speaking in Indian Head, is supposed to have made the following statement according to the 'Leader-Post':

"The Dominion Government proposes the highway (that's the Trans-Canada Highway) be financed on a 50-50 basis and all Provinces from whom replies had been received agreed to pay 50 per cent of the cost in each province, but Saskatchewan did not agree to pay anything of it. The refusal of the Saskatchewan C.C.F. Government to pay its share of the Trans-Canada Highway is one of the reasons for the delay for finalizing plans for its construction, Agriculture Minister Gardiner told a political meeting here, Friday night."

Mr. Speaker, that statement as he made it is absolutely false. At no time did the Federal Government ever offer to pay 50 per cent of the Trans-Canada or any other roads in this province, until December. And when we met last December and were called in to discuss this thing, we were met with legislation which had been passed before the Federal Government forwarded it down. And that legislation said that the Federal Government were prepared to assist in the construction of a Trans-Canada Highway to the extent of 50 per cent of the costs as laid down by the Governor in Council. In amazement when we were called in last December, we found that 50 per cent of the cost of construction meant 50 per cent of the cost less the purchase of right-of-way, less the cost of fencing, less the cost of moving telephone and power lines, less the cost of moving buildings now erected. Well, we were able to get them to modify it down, but they were still at us, and they still refused to pay for the cost of right-of-way or the cost of fencing. Well, Mr. Speaker, that means that if this thing goes through we are still going to be a long way short of getting 50 per cent of the total cost of the Trans-Canada Highway, and I still maintain, as I have always maintained, that the cost of the Trans-Canada Highway should have been borne entirely by the Federal Government as a national road and maintained by them as a national road. It is a road that, as far as this province is concerned, we will not get a great deal of benefit from. It is a road that will not mean as much to us in dollars and cents as the main north and south highway means to the playgrounds in the northern parts of Saskatchewan. Nevertheless, we have agreed to do our share and, as the Provincial Treasurer told you the other day, we have included in our estimate the price to take care up to a two million dollar project on that road in the coming summer. Now, until the other day, we had nothing definite from Ottawa on this matter. The other day I received from them a copy of the proposed contract and I want to say that the contents of that contract followed very closely the decisions arrived at at our December conference. It does need clarification in two or three parts; clarifications are minor things and should not take up any time. But if Ottawa is going to move as slowly in this as they have done in the past, then I am afraid we will have a completed contract possibly next summer.

But if we are to get work started on the Trans-Canada Highway, that contract should be completed immediately. As I said, there is no reason why it should not be completed, at least not as far as this province is concerned. We have co-operated with the Federal Government and with the other provinces 100 per cent. Certainly we have done nothing to impede the construction of this road, and if the Federal Government had been sincere in this project, construction of that road could have been proceeded with last year, at least as far as this province is concerned.

Well now, I promise to be off the air at 4 o'clock, I must not talk very much longer.

Mr. Tucker: — He said they never received a five-cent piece of assistance towards the building of roads. Now I recall to him a meeting that we had up north, and I read the telegram that \$16,000 had been contributed to one road alone, the Nipawin-Flin Flon road, by the Federal Government.

Hon. Mr. Douglas: — That was before this Government came into office. That was on that piece of road from the Flin Flon up to Denare Beach and, as far as this Government is concerned, we have not received a five-cent piece from the Federal Government in road construction. We never received a single nickel from the Federal Government; not a single nickel after this Government took office. Anything that they paid was before this Government took office, and I can assure the hon. member of that because I have checked that very very thoroughly.

Well now, I have been dealing with the Trans-Canada Highway and, as far as we are concerned, we have proposed to enter into this thing and give it full assistance in having it constructed and having the work started this year. If there is any hold up, this year, it is not because of the Saskatchewan Government. I have mentioned, but I want to make this statement now, that assistance on the Trans-Canada Highway by the Federal Government is not enough. We have got to have assistance on more of our main roads if we are to complete the programme that I have just outlined to you, a programme which the people of this country are demanding. As I have said, if you are going to spread that field of taxation over those who benefit because of our highways, then the Federal Government must enter the picture. Now I have not time to fully go into that whole picture, but I want to call your attention to the fact that when you buy a car in Saskatchewan, if you buy a Ford or a Monarch, 1950, you are going to be paying to the Federal Government in indirect taxes \$247.88, and that's just one item. There are many other items that I could mention. Now, if you want to relate that to mill rates as far as taxation of land is concerned, you would find that you would be paying on a half-section of about average land 51.65 mills on your land for the purchase of a car alone. Now when you take that into consideration and also the millions of dollars which the Federal people are taking in year after year for cars, for tires, and for those things that run over our highways, then, Mr. Speaker, Ottawa should be paying more than just a part of the Trans-Canada Highway in this province.

There are a number of other things I would like to have dealt with today, but I have taken quite a bit of time. I would like before I close, however, to draw attention to a statement made by the Opposition during the campaign and that is that we should sell our buses and proceed to build bridges with them. I want to point out to this Assembly that in the last fiscal year ending the 31st of October, the profits made by the

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Saskatchewan Transportation Company of over \$120,000 is just about the same figure as the Liberals spent over a term of years on bridges in this province. So you see that gives you a little idea of Liberal thinking, and it was brought out very clearly here, yesterday. I think it was the member from Melfort who said that we should get rid of these things. Mr. Speaker, the people of this province would not want to get rid of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. It has not only extended services to areas that were never serviced before by such transportation, but they are giving them the best bus transportation service that this province has ever enjoyed. I want the people of this province to realize that one of the things, apparently, that the Liberals would do would be to get rid of those services that have not only improved the services for the people of Saskatchewan but at the same time are making a surplus over operating costs that will enable us to build as many bridges as Liberals ever built in any one year in this province.

Mr. J. Walter Erb (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, as this is the first time that I am participating in debate during this Session, I should like to associate myself with other members who have preceded me, in expressing my sentiments over the passing of Mr. Paul Prince and Mr. Alvin Murray. It is always with deep regret that we learn of the passing of a friend or a gallant opponent. I count it a privilege to have known and associated with men who, very often with great sacrifice to themselves and their families, have given themselves in the service of others; and I am sure that, this being the case of both Mr. Prince and Mr. Murray, we can say they have fought the good fight. For their bereaved, it is our hope that the passing years will soften their sorrow and turn it into cherished memories of their departed ones.

I should like also at this time, Mr. Speaker, to express my sympathy (and I feel that I am expressing the sentiments of the rest of the House) over the passing of the mother of my very good friend and seatmate, the hon. member from Canora, Mr. Alex Kuziak.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate the new members of the Legislature. They are here because, without doubt, they must possess similar qualities to those whose seats they now occupy, and I am sure that their contribution will be a credit to this Legislature and to their Party concerned. We on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, feel especially proud to have with us the Hon. Tom Bentley, Minister of Public Health. Whatever political capital our friends of the Opposition would like to make with regard to the appointment of the member from Gull Lake as Minister of Health, I should like to say, and I think my colleagues will agree, that I believe there is no one in this House who could more ably fill the portfolio of Minister of Public Health than the member from Gull Lake. He has a background of many years in public service; he has an intimate knowledge of the functioning of government, and through his long association with different parties, he has also gained an intimate knowledge of the political skulduggery that goes on in the hierarchy of the Party our friends in the Opposition represent. Now if our friends in the Opposition have any doubt as to the ability of the Hon. Tom Bentley when he came into this House, I am sure they have disabused their minds of this illusion after hearing him in a previous debate.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the hon. member from Gravelbourg (Mr. E.M. Culliton) his very eloquent address. I must say that it is probably the best that we have heard from the other side of the house. I have a very high regard for the hon. member from Gravelbourg, but I don't always have a high regard for what he has to say. He rather facetiously referred to former members of parliament, that is C.C.F. members of parliament, of whose services the Government has availed itself. He even assured this House that that was quite all right, and I quite agree with him; but I really don't know, Mr. Speaker, what impression he was trying to leave. What he probably did — and that inadvertently — was to create a situation of comparison as to the political patronage that might go on in the C.C.F. Party and the Liberal Party. Now I want to assure my hon. member from Gravelbourg that this Government does not hesitate for one moment to take into its employ people of proven ability, even if those people happen to be former C.C.F. members of parliament, and I would also like to say that this Government does not hesitate for one moment to take into its employ people whose political persuasion is that of our friend across the floor.

With regard to political patronage, that is just one thing that this Government had dedicated itself to take out of the civil service, and for that reason the Civil Service Commission was established so that political patronage might be removed from the civil service. So, today, anyone who desires employment with the Government is taken in on the basis of his qualifications and the like, without regard to his political persuasions. When our friends sat over on this side of the House and they were the Government, I don't know what requirements one had to have in order to get into the civil service, but what I do know, is that the basic requirement was a long history of Party fidelity. When the hon. member from Gravelbourg suggests that this Government deals in political patronage, I would refer him to his own party. Almost every judgeship, every senatorship, every postmastership, every P.F.R.A. and P.F.A.A. appointment and other appointments have been made on the basis of political or party fidelity.

There are several members across the floor, whom I should call learned friends, and I am sure they too look to the future and that day when they may inherit the cushioned security of a judgeship. I want to assure my hon. friend from Gravelbourg — my learned friend — that when the C.C.F. become the Federal Government, and knowing that in the C.C.F. we don't have a great many lawyers, knowing too that that might exist even after we become the Government at Ottawa, we are going to have to draw our judges from the Liberal party. And I want to tell my hon. friend from Gravelbourg that when that time comes, I shall use every influence I may have at that time to secure for him this cushioned security.

I want to congratulate the other members who have spoken in this debate. They have spoken well and aired their views to the satisfaction, I am sure, of the parties concerned. The speeches yesterday, were not always on a high plane, but they provided, certainly, amusement. We were very fortunate, yesterday, to have not only a worrybird in the Legislative but a worrywart as well. I am told that the hon. member from Arm River, as he was going home, last night, with a colleague, was discussing the very eloquent efforts of our friend from Melfort and this one

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member said to the member from Arm River, "I think that was a very good speech the member from Melfort made", to which the hon. member from Arm River replied, "Oh, yes, but it was too long."

I am sorry the hon. member from Redberry is not in the House — oh, yes, I was looking at the wrong seat. Now with regard to his speech, yesterday, Mr. Speaker, or a portion thereof, I think that statements such as made by him in this House with reference to the Hon. Minister of Social Welfare are reprehensible, unwarranted and without fact. The Minister of Social Welfare is known to this House and to veterans, whose friend he always has been. The Hon. Minister has served overseas for eight years in two world wars. He has given eight years of his life in the service of his country. 'Jack' Sturdy has never paraded his war service; indeed, Mr. Speaker, he doesn't have to. General Pearkes, the Conservative member from Nanaimo, has this to say about Mr. Sturdy, when speaking in the House of Commons, and I read from Hansard of October 30, 1945:

"I am pleased to say that when I was overseas my senior educational officer, the gentleman who was responsible for promoting education was one who now holds a Cabinet position in Saskatchewan. I pay the highest tribute to Mr. Sturdy. I can speak highly of the work that he has done."

Now, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of his record and on the basis of his service to this country, I believe that the Redberry member owes the Hon. Minister of Social Welfare an apology, and I am sure that, knowing the Minister of Social Welfare as I do, he will accept any apology made in good faith and sincerity.

I want to congratulate the Hon. Mr. Fines because it is much about what he said that we are speaking now. It is always a pleasure to listen to his eloquence and sincerity in bringing down the budget. We, on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, feel very proud in having one of the most able — probably the most able — Provincial Treasurer in the Dominion of Canada. The 'Leader-Post', in describing Mr. Fines through the course of giving his debate, said he looked more like a high-powered executive bringing down the annual report to the board of directors. Well now, I daresay that there is many a corporation that would like to avail itself of Hon. Clarence Fines.

Bringing down the budget is always the highlight in the Legislature. To the Hon. Mr. Fines it is undoubtedly a most important occasion. He seems to make somewhat of a ritual of this occasion as he wears a very special tie. Now this tie has been mentioned in the Leader-Post, but I don't know that its significance has been explained; and I think, Mr. Speaker, anything that is so intimately associated with the budget as is this tie, should be explained. So with the kind indulgence of the hon. members I shall briefly explain. Now, painted on this tie is an emblem, and this emblem is the horn of plenty. This horn is filled with fruit, vegetables, grains and all the good things of life, and this, I imagine Mr. Speaker, is symbolic of the budget.

Mr. W.A. Tucker (Leader of Opposition): — Is the horn upside down?

Mr. Erb: — No, he didn't wear it upside down. It is only upside down when the good things of life fall into the hands of the people, including the hon. leader of the Opposition. Now, Mr. Fines has worn this tie on six different occasions and if the inspiration of this tie engenders the excellent budget that we have had in the past five Sessions and the present one, we on this side of the House hope he continues to wear it for a long time to come.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is quite natural that everyone in the province would be interested in the budget because it indicates how the taxpayers' money is going to be spent. The present budget, as previous budgets under the C.C.F., has been so designed as to bring the maximum amount of good to the greatest number of people, and as a result of this principle, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have been established on a more firm and sound basis than ever before in the history of the province. It is, therefore, obvious that the taxpayers of this province are receiving a better deal for their tax dollar than they ever received before. The Government has been repeatedly criticized for the large budgets in the past, and of course the present one, by the Opposition and the press. Now there is nothing wrong with criticism. It is the function of the press and the function of the Opposition. When that criticism is constructive it will help in providing better government, and providing even better budgets, but if the criticism arises out of prejudices, it can only destroy the true function of the Opposition and the press, and that function naturally becomes lost in the confusion it creates.

A good deal of the criticism of the budget arises out of prejudice. It is quite certain, Mr. Speaker, that if the Opposition sat on this side of the House and had the same conditions to contend with, and had the same social outlook as we on this side of the House have, their budget would be as large, if not larger, than the present budget. The size of a budget, Mr. Speaker, is not determined arbitrarily. It is determined by the demand of the people for services commensurate with their ability to pay for those services. The hon. members criticize the budget because it is too large. They say, Mr. Speaker, that we should save for a rainy day. They have suddenly become conscious of the fact that the days that lie ahead may be not too fair. During the Federal Election, last year, they ridiculed the C.C.F. for saying the times that lie ahead might not be so good because of the policies carried on by the Federal Government. Now, Mr. Speaker, as a result of the Federal policies, we are not only going to have a rainy day, we are going to have a lot of rainy weather.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Government cannot make social services available to the people such as is required for maximum health, education and general economic wellbeing, and at the same time lay aside great sums in anticipation of such a time when revenues may not be so buoyant. To do this, a province would have to have sources of income which would provide money in excess of the cost of services which the people require. My opinion is that the people of this province would not react favourably to a tax policy of any government, if that government had

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such a policy that would take a maximum amount of money in taxes from the people and return a very minimum in services. And this, Mr. Speaker, is what the hon. members across suggest this Government do. They would, themselves, consider this a very poor plank in an election campaign.

The hon. member from Gravelbourg stated — and I quote:

“If there is to be real security in the province, the first duty of the Government is to pursue sound and sane financial policies that will give financial security and stability now and in the future. Such policies would not only enable the province to meet its responsibilities during prosperous times, but also in bad times.”

Now Mr. Speaker, if this was the Liberal policy in the post-war years of World War No. 1 when there was a comparable era of prosperity as compared with the post-war years of World War No. 2, then the results of that policy were woefully lacking in the ‘thirties. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal Government, not only in good times failed to provide the necessary services that the people required, but in the ‘thirties they failed utterly. It is strange and presumptuous that the member from Gravelbourg should take this administration to task when the Liberal Government, in which the hon. member held high office from 1938 to 1944, not only failed to provide the services that the people required, but went out of office in 1944 leaving behind them an accumulated provincial debt of \$213,000,000. The hon. members of the Opposition go to great lengths talking about the \$8,000,000 they left in the reserve fund when they left office in 1944. Well I can say this, Mr. Speaker, that \$8,000,000 is very small comfort in the face of a crushing debt of \$213,000,000.

The hon. member from Gravelbourg stated that the Liberal Government spent millions for mental hospitals. That is quite true, but what he did not say is that this Government today is paying for those hospitals. These hospitals, Mr. Speaker, were and are essential and credit is due to any Government who went ahead with their construction; but it is not quite fair for the hon. member from Gravelbourg to leave the inference that these hospitals had been built and paid for in order to minimize the efforts that this Government has made in making grants to its hospital building programme of somewhat over one and one-quarter million dollars.

The hon. member asserted that it has been the Government’s programme to spend and spend and spend. If this Government is spending, Mr. Speaker, it is doing so for a very good reason. When this Government took office in 1944, we were left with a worn-out highway system; the health of the people of this province was neglected to the extent that 44 per cent of our young men were found unfit for military service, and that has required millions of dollars in hospital services and health. Our highways that were worn out required millions of dollars to rebuild, as we have heard, this afternoon, from the Minister. The Government, Mr. Speaker, in 1949-50 spent \$12,841,000 for social welfare. The Liberal Government in 1943-44 spent only \$3,722,000. In other words, this Government spent \$9,119,000 more for social welfare. Under a Liberal Government patients

of our mental hospitals were required to pay one dollar and a half per day, or those who had property it was charged back to the estate of the mentally incompetent. Now, under this Government all this treatment is provided free for mental patients. In doing so great financial burden has been lifted from the shoulders of the patients of the hospitals or their relatives. Now let us take where a patient may have been an inmate for fifteen years at \$1.50 per day; the cost would have amounted to \$8,287, indeed a crushing burden to bear for those without a large income. Today such financial misfortune no longer exists. For the treatment and care of patients in the mental hospitals and mental defective training schools, this Government spends almost \$3,500,000 yearly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member for Gravelbourg objects to the millions we have spent, that I have mentioned so far. Does he object to the millions that the Government has spent for power development so that our farmers and their wives might have their drudgery eased, so that they might have some of the comforts and conveniences of their city brethren? Does he object to this Government spending \$2,500,000 – five times that spent by his Government for the reconstruction of agriculture, so that it might be placed on a sound and scientific basis? Yes, Mr. Speaker, this Government is not only spending money, it is investing money. It is investing money in the greatest resource this province has — investing it in its men, women and children; investing money in their health and in their education and in their economic welfare, and in doing so, Mr. Speaker, this Government is investing in the future of Saskatchewan.

We of the C.C.F. believe that real security for our people lies in the co-operative approach to our problems and needs, and that we can only attain this end by working and striving together. This, Mr. Speaker, is the policy of this Government. The Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan is a shining example of that co-operative effort, in which all our citizens, by paying a small amount into a general fund, receive individual security. Another example is the Saskatchewan Compulsory Automobile Insurance, about which, at the time of its inception, we had so much criticism. Today, I don't believe there is another service besides the Hospital Services Plan that is meeting with so much favour among the people of Saskatchewan as is the compulsory automobile insurance. This has protected the people, not only the motorists but also the pedestrians or anyone involved in a highway accident. The co-operative principle of these two services which I have mentioned has saved the people not only thousands of dollars, but in many cases has obviated hardship and suffering that might otherwise have resulted.

Teaching, Mr. Speaker, is always done best by example. My good friend from Melfort (Mr. Egnatoff) works on that assumption, too, in bringing his worrybird in here, yesterday; but I certainly am not going to worry the House with any examples like that. I should like to give an example in the case of my constituency with regard to the Hospital Services Plan. I shall, of course, not mention any names. The case involves a man who has suffered from an incurable functional disease for many years. Prior to the Hospital Services Plan coming into being, his family had already paid over \$2,000 in hospital costs. After the Hospital Services Plan came into being, and to the present time, all the people of Saskatchewan

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have paid for the care and treatment and hospitalization of that man — over \$5,000. All that the family of that man has paid is the hospital tax.

We might look, Mr. Speaker, to another co-operative effort on the part of all the people and that is Air Ambulance established by this Government as one of the first on the continent. Mr. Gardiner, speaking at Weyburn during the provincial election said that “indeed we were not the first to inaugurate this Air Ambulance Service — that they had inaugurated it”. Well, if they did, I didn’t see it. This Air Ambulance has flown over three million miles, has carried some three thousand patients, and in many cases has saved lives. This is a service, Mr. Speaker, which costs the people of Saskatchewan \$176,000, and I daresay that, if the cost was two or three times that amount, the people would be quite willing to pay for this service and the security that they feel they have in this Air Ambulance in times of emergency. This, Mr. Speaker, is co-operation. This is Democratic Socialism. This is the way this Government proposes to build the stability and the security of the people in good times and in bad.

On all the coins in the United States is an inscription “e pluribus unum”, and I believe that means “all for one and one for all”, at least I am told so. Now that is a noble and democratic thought. In its last analysis it suggests all the hopes, desires and aspirations of the people for a better day. In the United States, today, there is a great tendency on the part of Government to put into effect the principles of “e pluribus unum”, or in contemporary American-English “a better deal”. Who is against this principle, Mr. Speaker? Is it the farmer, the labourer or the white-collar worker? No, it is rather the large financial groups, the highly-organized professional groups, such as the American Medical Association which is exacting a contribution of some twenty-five dollars from each member for a fund in order to fight the Federal Government on its proposed health legislation. “e pluribus unum”, to this group, Mr. Speaker, means “everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost”. The hue and cry is up that the American way of life is being threatened by a British type of Socialism; that should this happen America is doomed. Reprints of “The Road Ahead” are being offered by thousands of copies, condemning and denouncing a social welfare programme that would enable people to enjoy freedom from want and freedom from fear. The fight is on in the United States — it is on in Canada; it is on in the British Empire; it is on in all part of the world. It is a fight by the people on one hand to win for themselves the right by co-operative effort to gain stability and security; it is a fight, on the other hand, by the exploiters of mankind to deny the people those rights, so that their circumscribed world of power, greed and selfishness may have no end. There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, which of these two groups will triumph.

According to the hon. member from Redberry (Mr. Korchinski), this side of the House has only disparaging remarks to make about the United States. I want to say this, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that all my colleagues agree with me; we on this side of the House have a very high regard for the people of the United States. Having lived among them for several years I learned to know them well. Some of my finest, most lasting friendships were made in the United States. I learned that the American people

are no different from Canadian people. We dress the same, we speak the same language, we drive the same cars, we use the same combines to thresh our grain.

Mr. B.L. Korchinski (Redberry): — Is the hon. member reading his speech?

Mr. Erb: — I am looking you in the eye, am I not? In doing that I couldn't be reading my speech . . . We listen to 'Bing' Crosby and Bob Hope, the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts, the New York Philharmonic, Ma Perkins and Amos and Andy. We have all these things in common, Mr. Speaker, with our good friends in the United States. I learned, too, that the average American has all the hopes and aspirations and desires that the Canadian people have, and I also learned that the common man in the United States is opposed to monopolistic capitalism, cartels and combines, to the same extent that we are in Canada. I learned, too, that monopolistic capitalism in the United States, as in Canada, would like to see nothing better than the liquidation of any movement that would tend to subtract from their power. The people of the United States, realizing this, have banded themselves together and have formed co-operatives, just like the people in Canada have formed co-operatives; and I say again that, as far as the monopolistic groups are concerned in the United States, nothing would please them better than to see the liquidation of those co-operatives. I have here just one little item of their propaganda that is being circulated throughout the United States, and has been circulating for quite some time. They call it 'One Tax-Free Buck':

"This is to advise that we think everybody should pay taxes except us Co-ops. It says 'you pay 'em; we dodge 'em — Federal income taxes,' and this Co-op has no Federal or State income tax liability."

And on the other side it says here:

"Roses are red, violets are blue; Co-ops dodge taxes, why can't you?"

"Now the comptroller of this is 'Soke D. Public' and the treasurer is 'E.Z. Pickins'."

Now on this side they have —

"For use in buying out or bankrupting one more income tax paying business and making your tax still higher."

That is the propaganda these groups are waging in order to destroy the people's movement in the United States.

We in Canada condemn only that in the United States which we condemn in Canada, and that is this monopolistic capitalism to which I refer. If the hon. member from Redberry thinks he has struck a blow for the

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big interests which his party represents, I think he has failed utterly, failed utterly in his attempt to drive a wedge between the people of Canada and the people of the United States.

No, Mr. Speaker, it was amazing to read in the 'Leader-Post', with regard to the one per cent education tax, that our boys from this side of the House were whipped into line. I am quite sure that our friends across the floor can tell us much more about being whipped into line than we can. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, they tell us when they are whipped into line.

I have a clipping here from Flin Flon, and this appeared in the 'Star-Phoenix' during the last Christmas holiday, or recess. It says that:

"The North of 53 Trades and Labour Council was addressed recently by George Weaver, M.P. for Churchill, the main topic of his speech being an explanation why he voted against the exemption of union dues for income tax purposes, when it was put to a vote in the recent Session of the House of Commons. His action in this regard has been criticized for a time. Mr. Weaver maintained that if the council members could sit in on the House of Commons session, they would understand that he had no alternative. Should he vote with the C.C.F. Opposition on a matter of this kind, which he realized was an important one to union members, he would likely discount any chances he might have for obtaining financial or any other Government assistance for projects directly concerning the north, Mr. Weaver said."

Now, if that isn't being 'whipped into line', I don't know what is.

Mr. Speaker, the 'Leader-Post' used to carry a little quotation in the Editorial page which read: "Where all think alike no one thinks very much". Well, Mr. Speaker, while we on this side of the House don't always think alike, we certainly have a similar social outlook, and I can assure the 'Leader-Post' that having this similar social outlook makes for pretty smooth caucus operation.

There has not been a great deal of criticism of the one per cent hospitalization tax. I might say to the 'Leader-Post' that arriving at the one per cent figure, or arriving at the hospitalization tax, wasn't so difficult. I could put it down — actually it was a very elementary procedure — and I can put it down in five steps. The first would be that the Hospital Services Plan was operating at a deficit; the second would be, new revenue had to be found to make up the deficit or services would have to be curtailed; the third step would be that no one was in favour of curtailing services. Now there were two ways to make up this deficit — either by increasing the present hospital tax or, secondly, by finding some new form of revenue to make up this recurring deficit. Now we come down to step five and, as reasonable people, we felt that an increase in the hospital tax would not be fair because it would fall most heavily on those

people most unable to pay. It was also obvious that in creating a one per cent hospitalization tax those most able to buy taxable goods would contribute most towards the revenue.

Allow me to illustrate, Mr. Speaker. On the one hand we have a family of five — the head of this family earns some \$2,000 a year, let us say; now after paying for food which is a very high item nowadays, for rent, for doctor's fees, and dentist's fees, medicines, and after they have put a little aside in savings and insurance, very little is left to buy taxable goods, consequently this family does not have to contribute more than a minimum towards this new hospital tax. On the other hand we have a family of five, the head of which makes some \$4,000 or in excess. It is clear at once, Mr. Speaker, that this family will have a good deal more money to spend on taxable goods than that family I have just mentioned with the \$2,000 income. So it follows that the family that is making the greater income is also more able to pay towards the revenue than is the family with the smaller income.

A great deal of criticism has been levelled at the larger School Unit by the Opposition, both in the House and in the country. Now their main argument is — and of course, it is such an old argument that it doesn't hold much water — that mill rates in the larger units have gone up because of the larger unit. Well, no one denies, Mr. Speaker, that the mill rate has increased in the larger units. The fact is that they have also increased in the non-unit school districts. My hon. friends in the Opposition know only too well the reasons for these increases, or the reason for a great part of these increases. The chief reason, Mr. Speaker, is Ottawa, of course. By the removal of price controls by the Liberal Government in 1945, the cost-of-living index rose from 120.2 in August to 162.5 in August, 1949. The base of this cost-of-living index is taken as of 1939, in August. Now it is even worse if we look at the wholesale price index. The wholesale price index, in 1945, was 103.6 as compared to 1949 of 157.0. I should like to read some of the increases in the costs that we have had in Milestone unit. For instance, teachers' salaries in the Milestone unit are as follows: In 1946, they were \$86,570; in 1947, they rose to \$90,350; in 1948, to \$107,400; in 1949, to \$120,000. Janitor services increased from \$6,750 in 1946, to \$9,200 in 1949. In 1946, chalk was 62 cents per box; now it is 95 cents per box. Paper supplies have advanced since 1946 by 50 per cent. Lumber and building materials have more than doubled, as my hon. friends well know. The price of labour has gone up.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask, in all fairness, is there any reason why the mill rate should not have gone up? Mill rates cannot remain static in the face of rising costs, because the services that the people require have to be paid by levy. When we have a rising cost of living, a rising index of wholesale prices, then a higher mill rate has to apply; and that applies equally in non-unit districts as in unit districts.

I should like to mention, Mr. Speaker, the excellent progress that has been made in Milestone constituency with regard to the larger

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school unit. The audited financial statement of the Milestone unit for 1949 shows a surplus for 1949 of \$45,000. The policy of the Board has been to accumulate a reserve of one year's taxes, and the unit is well on its way to that reserve. Accumulated surplus, today, amounts to \$127,380. In the four years since its establishment, the unit has carried on a repair-building programme to the value of \$180,000. This has included nine new classrooms, ten new teacherages, many major reconditioning jobs, a unit office building including carpenter's workshop, extensive improvements in sanitary services, and interior and exterior painting of schools. In addition the unit has paid off \$20,000 indebtedness of school districts entering the unit. All this has been done on a pay-as-you-go basis.

All who are engaged in education in the Milestone unit — pupils, teachers, boards and others, appreciate the present warm and well-equipped schools. During this time the salary scale for teachers in the Milestone unit has been as high as any in the province of Saskatchewan. As a result of this, we in the Milestone unit have a maximum of highly trained teachers. We also have a library programme that includes provision of a basic library in each classroom and its constant improvement; a circulatory library which guarantees each school a number of suitable books throughout the year; periodical mailing of bundles of good children's fiction, and a lending library of the expensive supplementary reading books for teachers professional reading. About 2,000 books go out from the unit library. The unit has provided about \$8,600 worth of books for about 1,000 pupils. Twenty-four radios and radio record players have been provided, and the number is steadily increasing by co-operative effort of the unit, school district and the Department of Education through grants. Filmstrip projectors and sound projectors are increasing in number. With the co-operation of the town of Milestone school district, a filmstrip library is now functioning from that unit office. To assist the farmer's child to secure a high school education, 60 cents per day is given to the rural high school students who must leave the home district to obtain high school instruction. This can amount to \$120 per year for such pupil.

Milestone has some 'firsts' to its credit. In 1946, the first portable school in Saskatchewan was placed on the boundary between two school districts — the school has served all but one of the children of both districts since that time. Now also, in 1946, the first itinerant working and practical home economics programme was begun in co-operation with the Milestone and Wilcox school districts. Home economics rooms and shops have been set up at Lang, Milestone, Wilcox, Avonlea and Pangman. The Home Economics teacher and the Shop teacher move from school to school throughout the year, spending a week in each school in turn. Now these subjects are taught in Grades 7 and 12 — that means that a practical course in sewing, cooking, home-making is taught to the girls in these five places while the boys have courses in woodworking and drafting. I should like too, to mention this to hon. members: Last year, I had the privilege to be guest speaker at the graduation exercises at the Lang High School, the banquet being held in the church parlours. The Home Economics department of the Lang High School prepared everything that went into that banquet — the rolls, meat, potatoes, vegetables and so on. I

can say that I have never attended a banquet anywhere where the food was better or better prepared than by those girls and their instructors in the Lang Home Economics department.

The third 'first' for the unit is the purchase of a large school bus to serve three rural school districts of Lang. This bus makes a round trip of thirty-five miles and brings in as many as thirty-three pupils; during the snowy season a bombardier carries the pupils. This equipment has not failed to operate a single day this winter. Other units, notably Oxbow, Govan and Kindersley are using similar equipment. This development was made possible, Mr. Speaker, by unit organization, a solution that will go on a long way to solving the problems at schools of low child population.

I should also like to mention, Mr. Speaker, the excellent progress that has been made in Milestone constituency with regard to power and roads, but I have spoken longer than I had intended to. I want to say in closing that this Government has set the pace in Canada for people, through co-operative effort; to gain for themselves the stability and investing in its citizens and thereby investing in the future of Saskatchewan. This Government will not for one moment, shirk its responsibility where human welfare is concerned. We shall fight on, Mr. Speaker, until we have established a Co-operative Commonwealth at Ottawa. It will be then and then only that the people of this nation will be able to look forward with confidence to the future. We are not alone in this struggle; we and countless millions of people throughout the world, of kindred spirit. By our efforts we can achieve our common hopes, aspirations and desires. We shall do that without regard to race, creed or colour; and it is our hope that, after having achieved it, we may live out our allotted years in dignity and peace and security.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Motion.

Hon. I.C. Nollet (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I wish first of all to congratulate the hon. member who has just taken his seat and has given a very excellent address. After hearing the interjection of the hon. member from Redberry, wondering if the hon. member from Milestone was reading his speech, it just occurred to me that he could give just about as good a speech if he were talking in his sleep as the hon. member from Redberry does when he gets into some of his hysterical tantrums that we so often witness in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I want very sincerely to congratulate the hon. member for Gravelbourg on the very able address he gave to this House, and the very able manner in which he organized his material. His address certainly was in good taste and in keeping with his good conduct in this House, and, of course, it was in striking contrast to many of the other speeches that we hear from the other side. I rather liked the constructive criticism offered by the hon. member for Gravelbourg, but, upon closely scrutinizing his criticisms, it is my opinion that here and there there were weaknesses in logic, and many of the arguments presented, of course, were given with the background and particular philosophy to which the hon. member for Gravelbourg subscribes. I think he failed to recognize that governments as such have certain responsibilities to the people, responsibilities for their security

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and wellbeing, and that governments as such should not be impaired or influenced by the breakdown of an unregulated economic system in properly performing the functions of servicing the people in an ever-increasing way to meet the ever-increasing demands for social security provisions. It is principally on that point, I think, that the hon. member's address lacked some logic.

Reference has been made to the fact that there is a prospect that income may not be so good and, therefore, we should adjust our budget accordingly. I wish to suggest that there is no reason in the world the philosophy of diminishing returns either to our farmers or our working people or our professional people. I am firmly of the belief that it is the responsibility of government to see to it that people have a constant and stable income, not only to the end that they can provide themselves with personal security, but also that they may be able to carry the burden of public service without any undue hardship. One should remember we are living in a highly specialized type of society, and a highly interdependent type of society, that certainly calls for a degree of planning not only in government activities but in the economic sphere as well. The day has long since gone when we can let the free play of so-called free enterprise govern the activities of government and the activities of human beings. Human beings have a natural and inherent right to all of the services that government can provide for them, and they should be encouraged in requesting and demanding increasing responsibility of the government for their collective wellbeing.

That has already been recognized by governments in various social security fields. I note that the term is often used that, because of the advent or the prospect of normal times, we may get into difficulties. I assume that the hon. member opposite will refer to the period of wartime and post-war prosperity as being abnormal. I think that that was getting back to a more normal type of economy, the type of economy in which people could once again not only catch up to the tremendous backlog of disrepair involved in their own personal surroundings — the farm home, the home in urban centres, the disrepair in equipment and the same disrepair that is associated with what I term abnormal economic conditions which was in evidence when this administration took over the responsibility of government in Saskatchewan.

As a natural consequence, not only did people seize upon the opportunity to make good a whole lot of the depreciation that took place, but similarly governments were also faced — for instance in the Department of Highways, the highways deteriorated to a vanishing point. There was in addition, terrific depreciation in government buildings and a tremendous need for the construction of new buildings and new accommodations, both at the University and elsewhere. Those demands had to be met, and the sad part of it, Mr. Speaker, is that, under the workings of what is termed the free play of supply and demand in the free enterprise economic world that hon. members opposite uphold so vigorously, when a period of lusty demand takes place, then automatically our free enterprise friends seize the opportunity to ask more for services and commodities than the traffic can bear. Not only are individuals victimized, but governments, both local and provincial, also fall victim to this vicious type of economy. I have said on previous occasions, Mr. Speaker, that the big threat to democratic services local and provincial and Dominion services, is the constant opposition of two types of philosophy. We have the

governmental attitude which ought to be service to the people, and then you have the free enterprise attitude, that is extractive, exploitative, based on greed and has within it the seeds of its own destruction and by creating a situation where we again develop trends towards what our friends call normal conditions, which in my opinion are abnormal, with the diminishing income to our people, quite naturally governments provincial, local and Dominion are going to get into difficulties.

I would like to give some concrete results that have taken place as a result of increased demands for one particular commodity — housing. The Attorney General mentioned, the other day, that because of the tremendous demand for housing which was striking the population, brought to the forefront during the war years and carried into the post-war years, the Dominion Government acquiesced in the demands for increased rental returns, and that, as a result of that decontrol action, there were approximately from sixty-five to seventy million dollars taken out of the pockets of people who are compelled to rent homes. Our friends opposite do not object to those things. They do not object to the increased prices of farm machinery, as was mentioned by the Hon. Minister of Education who illustrated just what these increased prices meant in terms of mills to the farmer. I think he mentioned an increase in mill rates of 130 mills in increased payment for farm implements and repair parts alone. Our hon. members opposite do not object to that sort of thing. They seem to think that the general public should accept those circumstances as being normal and inevitable. We, on this side of the House, object vigorously because we realize, Mr. Speaker, that the more our free-enterprise friends take out of the pockets of the people, the less will be the ability on the part of the people to maintain the type of services that they request from their governments.

Everyone knows, Mr. Speaker, particularly the housewife, that her budget has gone up. The farmer certainly knows that cost of operations has gone up. Everyone is conscious of the increases that have taken place as a result of the Dominion Government's decontrol policy. Everyone has been caught in the upward spiral of increased costs and so has the Provincial Government. I was quite interested in the general remarks made by the hon. members opposite, particularly yesterday, and made careful note of their criticisms, their contradictory criticisms, Mr. Speaker. On one hand, they demand and severely criticize the increased sales tax and bemoan the fact that the rural municipal mill rate was up, that the farmer was burdened with increased land taxes. I cannot see, Mr. Speaker, how, through any stretch of imagination that they can place that responsibility on the Provincial Government. I just cannot see it. It certainly is right on the doorstep of the Federal Liberal Government which permitted these decontrols and resultant spiralling in prices.

Then on the other hand, of course, the hon. members opposite know that people do not like to pay additional taxes. Neither do people like to pay additional prices for foodstuffs, for clothing and all of those things; but they have got to accept it as something inevitable, something like the weather. We have got to take it whether it is good or bad. When it comes to increased cost of services, however, and increased demands for those services, then the hon. members opposite raise a great hullabaloo, and they say, "Look what this Government is doing to you! All they have ever done for you is increase

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your taxes.” Then they turn around and, in the next breath, say to the Minister of Highways, for instance, “The thing to do now is to keep all the snow removed from all of the roads in the province of Saskatchewan so that the farmers will stay on the farms”. And the hon. member from Redberry wants a highway here and another highway there.

Then there is the hon. member from Melfort: I was particularly interested in his suggestion. His suggestion, Mr. Speaker, was a dilly. He said, we should fire 1,000 civil servants. There might be some economies affected by letting a few civil servants go, but the amount saved would not near meet the requirements of the purpose to which he suggested the economies could be used. I would like to have the hon. member tell the House from what particular branch or what particular department of government he would suggest that we begin firing civil servants. Would we abolish, for instance, the people associated with the Hospitalization Plan? Would he abolish some of the staff necessary in the Department of Social Welfare? Or would he fire about a hundred heads in the Department of Agriculture? Or would he fire a few out of the Mental Hospitals and make the rest of them work for twelve hours a day as the Liberal Government did? You might make a few savings that way, Mr. Speaker, but I do not think that it is possible to do what the hon. member suggests and then save enough money to turn it over to the Department of Education. We all realize and are conscious of the demands for better educational opportunities. We are conscious of the demands for better social services, and we are indeed conscious of the need for some very definite action being taken to overcome some of the natural hazards in Saskatchewan. We know that there are heavy financial commitments ahead, and hon. members opposite know that they just simply cannot be avoided. But to constantly go out into the country and tell the people of this province that this administration has only done one thing and that is increase taxes, certainly is far from the truth. I think it ill behooves hon. members to make this thing of sustaining democratic services an unpopular thing. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker that the hon. members opposite are bound to stop this Government at no matter what cost. They realize as well as we do that these services are demanded, and that they are required and that they ought to be carried right into the future on a substantially firm basis. They know all of that, Mr. Speaker; When they criticize increased taxes, I would feel more assured if they would, at the same time, severely criticize the decontrol policy of their own Dominion Government that has resulted in the up-spiral of prices all along the line. It has taken hundreds of millions of dollars out of the people, not only of Saskatchewan, but of the entire Dominion of Canada.

The hon. members say that we are a bunch of ‘spendthrifts’; we have no eye to the future. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Government was a spendthrift government. I went over the records, and I have discovered that, since this province was originally organized, the Liberal administration has spent \$187,000,000 in relief but spent nothing as a provincial administration to correct some of the basic causes that contributed to relief. That heavy financial burden, to a large extent, was placed right on the shoulders of the individual and the municipality. It was only since this administration came into power that the burden of relief on the municipalities and on the individual has been removed, and I would like to remind the hon. members opposite that they ought to get at the Federal Liberal Government to write off some of their own relief accounts that go ‘way back to 1914. They have not written their own off yet.

A good deal of criticism has been directed at this Government

because we have always taken a dim view of the sales tax, but I want to remind hon. members opposite that circumstances and conditions were quite different when the sales tax was originally introduced and levied on everything, necessities and all. I would like to remind hon. members that when that sales tax was brought in, 60 per cent of the people in Saskatchewan were on relief. The hon. member for Milestone made some reference to a family of five in those relief days who was getting the handsome amount of \$22. a month for living — with deductions if the family had vegetables, dairy products or meat. I might say that when the sales tax was levied then, it meant that their relief cheques would be diminished by two per cent and, Mr. Speaker, there was no corresponding increase in relief allowances of those days.

I would suggest that the hon. members opposite should question me on relief, because I had quite a bit to do with relief administration as a reeve of a municipality in those days. I can well recall it. I can recall the \$10.00 a year that was supposed to clothe the school children going to school, for the entire year, and under those circumstances, quite naturally, the C.C.F. took a dim view of the Education Tax being levied.

Mr. Danielson: — Did the Minister say that the sales tax or Education Tax was levied on everything?

Mr. Speaker: — That is what he said exactly.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — I said that the Education Tax was levied on the necessities of life that were necessary for the sustenance of the individual in those days. I do not think I am wrong on that.

Since then, Mr. Speaker, we have taken the Education Tax off the necessities of life and, under changed economic conditions, the incomes still at a comparatively high level, why should not this tax be used as a means of providing the necessary funds to maintain the Hospitalization Plan and to assist education? I cannot think of a more equitable levy. Surely we cannot raise the per capita levy without creating inequities and injustice, and under the circumstances, I believe it was only inevitable. I want to again remind hon. members opposite, and it was mentioned, I think, by the Minister of Education that originally we calculated the Hospitalization cost as somewhere around three or four million dollars, and that it is gone now up above nine million dollars. Can you blame the Provincial Government for those increased costs? Surely, no rational citizen of this province is going to blame the Provincial Government for those circumstances?

Mr. Lopton: — The larger school units.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I had intended to endeavour to give a full outline of my own Department, but it has been my understanding that the hon. member for Pelly (Mr. Banks), wanted to give a contribution, this afternoon.

Opposition Members: — Go on!

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Thank you. I was unable to deal very extensively with the activities of my Department during the debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne because, quite necessarily and I think quite rightly, I dealt to a large extent with marketing problems. Marketing

problems are certainly the concern of everyone in Saskatchewan because our whole provincial economy, built as it is on agriculture, is going to depend on the stability of our agricultural income not only for municipal but for provincial government services as well. I would rather, now, Mr. Speaker, deal to some extent with matters in my own Department. I should mention, before doing so though, that there are other provinces — British Columbia for instance, administered by a Liberal government that has experienced the same difficulty of increased budgets. I notice a 'Leader-Post' editorial dealing with the particular problems of B.C. and they said that B.C. now wants more money despite the fact that the new budget calls for an expenditure of \$105,000,000 by a province of a million people. We can readily see that the per capita budget, therefore, is much higher in British Columbia than it is in the province of Saskatchewan.

I was interested too, Mr. Speaker, in a news item appearing in the 'Leader-Post' which made reference to the sales tax in the province of Quebec and, you know, one would think that the matter of making a comparison between the sales tax in Saskatchewan and in other provinces would be of interest to all the people in the province, and you would think that it would rate the proper publicity headlines. But I looked through the Leader-Post, one evening, and I happened to discover this — and I am getting now Mr. Speaker, that as a matter of habit I look for the things in small print and small headings because generally they are the most important, particularly from our point of view. I found this reference to the Quebec sales tax stuck in the corner of a back page, and I can assure you that: "When the three per cent tax comes into effect, April 1st, Saskatchewan residents won't be paying as much in special levy as people in Quebec. That province assesses a total of four per cent sales tax (2 per cent provincial and 2 per cent municipal), and a special one cent tax for education, in Montreal and Quebec." I understand from people who have been in Montreal and Quebec, that that one-cent levy is on meals, too.

I think I would be almost recreant in my duty, Mr. Speaker, if I did not make some reference to some of the remarks made by the hon. member from Redberry, yesterday. His contribution, to say the least, was most entertaining.

Hon. Mr. Fines: — To say the best!

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — It was the best entertainment we have had in this House. Some of the most illogical statements made by the hon. member you would attribute to a six-year-old school child. You would think that a man would be broad enough in his thinking, and not so befuddled because of his belligerent political pugilism, to be at least logical in the presentation of his own argument in this House. He mentioned, for instance, that the C.C.F. Government was responsible for rural conditions. First he said it was because of the C.C.F. Government that people were leaving Saskatchewan — just like that; nothing to it — overlooking the fact entirely that the great exodus took place right after the relief years, and that during the early war years a whole lot of people went to war industries. Why, I scarcely had a neighbour left in my country after the war started, and farmer after farmer, — good solid farmers, the good Scotch-type farmer — told me that they had had about enough. That was in 1943; and they went to B.C. and elsewhere either to seek employment in the war industries or in any other capacity where they could find remunerative employment. They were just sick and tired of sitting on the farm and getting

nothing for their work and taking all of the raps.

Now, that is a natural condition and is peculiar particularly to the North American continent. You don't have to remain in Saskatchewan to find that situation. I happened to be looking through the news stand one day, and I took a look at this magazine, 'US NEWS and WORLD REPORT', and I want to tell the hon. member from Redberry that this is down his alley. It is a magazine that expresses his particular economic and political philosophy right to the letter. Here is what they had to say about the shift in population from rural areas to urban centres in the United States:

"Fewer people live on United States farms today than at any time in nearly 70 years. It is necessary to go back to 1880 to find a farm population as low as the present 27,700,000. The farmers still are declining in actual number and in proportion of total population. Farmer influence however, is as high as it ever has been and is tending to rise. Both political parties are vying for the farmer's vote".

And they do that up here too, but by different means.

The pictogram shows what has been happening to farm population as against non-farm population. There it is, Mr. Speaker; since 1910, the population in non-farm areas has gone up from 59,000,000 to 119,000,000 in 1949. Similarly the rural population has diminished: in 1910 it was 32,000,000, in 1949, despite the fact that millions of more acres were brought into production, farm population stood at 27,000,000. The article goes on to say.

"Now there are 27,000,000 persons living on farms or 4,300,000 fewer than there were before World War 1. In cities, towns and villages, however, there now live 119,000,000 people or 59,000,000 more than back in 1910".

I was interested in another news item that showed this in regard to the increasing size of farms, which of course, is associated with the decreasing population in rural areas. It showed that three per cent of the farmers in the United States owned 41 per cent of the land area there. Now, Mr. Speaker, if you only wish to look for the basic contributing factors to this situation (and it is giving us a whole lot of worry) you have got at once to relate it to the mechanization of agriculture. I want to say that, back in the 'thirties when the little farmers had to leave the farms because of insufficient income to seek employment elsewhere, those farms were usually incorporated into a larger holding, until today, we are witnessing ever-increasing acreages going into the hands of fewer and fewer farmers; but surely there is no government that can be held responsible for that situation, and this Government is conscious of the dangers in this particular trend. I wish the hon. member for Redberry would come up with some logical answer to this problem instead of suggesting that by keeping the roads open in the wintertime you can keep them on the farm. I am inclined to think, Mr. Speaker, that if you kept the roads open, they would go to town that much quicker. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member physically might be driving around in a model automobile but mentally he is right back on the ox-cart — and, Mr. Speaker, back in the 'thirties, you could not get off of the farm. You did

not have enough money to get off of the farm, you were just simply hog-stuck.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was most interested the other day — I got another little pamphlet from my good friend, Stanley Jones, of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, that ‘fellow-traveller’ in philosophy with the hon. member from Redberry. It is entitled, “I believe in freedom of Choice in the marketing of grain because . . .” and then they go on and offer prizes to unsuspecting farm people to write in just why they would rather market their grain through the Winnipeg speculative grain system than they would through wheat boards or any other farm organization. They offered prizes. It reminds me, Mr. Speaker, of these people who used to peddle herb remedies — rattlesnake oil and what have you — and solicit testimonials from the people. The only differences these old free-enterprisers exhibited is that they paid for these testimonials and victimized a whole lot of unsuspecting farmers. Some of the quotations here are good. If I had a little more time, Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to delight the House by reading a few extracts from this.

I was still more interested when, a few days later, I got a letter from Stanley Jones, President of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange — and, by the way, Mr. Speaker, every time I think of Stanley Jones, I think of that museum at Saskatoon. I have often thought, Mr. Speaker, that both of them are out-of-date, that both of them ought to be placed in the museum side by side, one depicting agricultural progress that has been made and the other an outworn old system that the farmers have put up with for years because of the type of campaign and appeals to people’s unsuspecting desire for real freedom and associating that desire with the desire to exploit the people. I think it is about time that we get Stanley Jones and his own Winnipeg Grain Exchange in a museum as a relic of the exploitation that has taken place on these prairies over the years. Well, he says: “In view of present trends in Canada the enclosed reprint of a condensation of John Flynn’s book ‘The Road Ahead’ is worthy of your perusal. This article appeared in the February issue of the Reader’s Digest. What a philosophy! It is good to know that Stanley Jones and the hon. member from Redberry are philosophical bed-fellows — and they have some terrific nightmares, Mr. Speaker. I would not mind so much when they suffer from these hallucinations, but as I said, when listening to the hon. member’s speech, yesterday, I think it sounded to me like a nightmare or somebody talking in his sleep. I want to read an extract from this little pamphlet, very interesting all through:

“We’re just pikers alongside of the old Roosevelt administration. They were Socialists; they were paving the way for Communism.”

But, Mr. Speaker, they used this method to hide the obvious facts that the conditions that prevail of necessity create the urge for a different type of economy.

Mr. Tucker: — Anything there about American soldiers? About General McArthur and Hirohito?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Don’t bother me! Mr. Speaker, you know when I listen to this from the Opposition they all just remind me of the babblings of a mere child. “The crash of 1933”, he says, “at the inauguration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt brought into Washington swarms of men and women with blueprints for the reconstruction of civilization, upon every conceivable

model, such a miscellaneous menagerie of social philosophers as had never been gathered before, because of the transition of position of power of men like Frank Bertram Cogswell, Walsh and the rest of them." Here's what they say: "What brought these people to Washington? The crackup of 1928 and the rise in unemployment created the opportunity for a new type of radical who called himself an economic planner." But why don't they explain and take the responsibility for the crackup of 1928, of the depression of the 'thirties? They don't want to accept that responsibility, and hon. members opposite always want to gloss over the fact that an economic depression really did take place; and, of course, they want to blame it on world conditions. It is something like the weather, something that is inevitable, over which man has no control. Mr. Speaker, these depressions are man-made all the way through and there is no justification and reason for the ups and downs that we experience, first, an upsurge and an inflation and then a depression. It is precisely because of that that I sit on this side of the House and hon. members on the opposite side of the House. I would not subscribe to that philosophy. I think that the way is to make our economy function in the proper manner, and when that is done, Mr. Speaker, only then will we have guaranteed success to democratic institutions, and I suggest to the hon. members opposite that the job is not done yet. I would like to tell the hon. member from Rosthern that when the complete job is done and the eradication of this obnoxious seed takes place, we will then have a different type in the new environment and the logical crops will rebound to the benefit of people and will enable those people to pay their taxes and to pay for the services demanded, and why shouldn't it be that way? I certainly will not accept the premise that we should be thinking in terms of retrenching. Why should we retrench? Why should not government services and everything else be on a rising crescendo? Why should not our standards of living constantly increase and improve? That is inevitable and right and proper, and, correspondingly, Mr. Speaker, in any properly functioning economy there should be that much more purchasing power in the hands of the people, and nobody is going to see that it gets there unless governments assume that responsibility. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I dwelt to some extent on marketing problems during the Throne Speech debate.

Now I want to turn to my own Department. I think the hon. members opposite will be relieved to some extent.

Mr. Tucker: — Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — These are problems that are within the jurisdiction of the Province and, again, Mr. Speaker, problems that the Government of the hon. members when in power did nothing about. They were mollified. They say we have no eye to the future. We are planning for the future; they had no eye for the future. All they could think about was to hand out a pittance of relief. They had to hand out quite a bit, too. The employees of the Department of Agriculture in those days were largely relief inspectors. In looking over the figures the other day, Mr. Speaker, I note in the records of 1935-36 that \$9½ million was paid out of two of the Department for relief; in 1937-38, \$12 million; \$2 million in 1938-39, and over \$2½ million in 1939-40 — as late as that. It never seemed to occur to the hon. members that at that time, instead of having relief they might have instituted corrective measures, long before. I want to say to hon. members opposite that they should have known as early as the 1920s that there was something basically wrong with our Saskatchewan agriculture. It was at that time that we had the Good Farming Conferences at Swift Current precisely for the purpose of canvassing the general farm situation in Saskatchewan relative

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to natural hazards. As a result of those conferences, as you know, the Soil Surveys were undertaken. But it was known then that corrective measures would have to be taken if we were to get stability in our agricultural economy and abolish these large expenditures that I have just referred to. Nothing was done. The hon. member for Maple Creek instead of encouraging corrective programmes sees fit to ridicule corrective programmes. I do not mind constructive criticism — we should have it. If hon. members do enough homework to know what they are talking about they would be in a position to offer some constructive criticism.

The hon. member for Maple Creek indicates and he still insists that the entire programme of this Department can be gauged by the number of conservations areas that we have set up. Well, you don't gauge physical development by the amount of areas you have set up. You set up those areas to get them in an organized condition so that you can deal with a specific problem and only when that is done can the Department go in and give financial assistance to overcome the entire problem.

I should make perhaps, first of all some reference to Conservation Areas before going on to deal with other branches. For instance, there are three main Conservation Areas noted at the present time. As I have mentioned very briefly before, one has to do with the Souris valley. I notice a question on the Order Paper: you want to know how much it cost us to organize these districts. It is going to be difficult to find that out unless we find out the number of days that our field staff have employed their time in promoting the organization, and that sort of thing. It is noteworthy however, what the Department has done within the past year. The Conservation area in the Souris Valley will take in approximately 1,600,000 acres. It is a combination drainage, water storage, irrigation proposition — something that could not be dealt with on any other basis. Now, if the hon. member from Maple Creek will read The Conservation District Act he will readily see that that was done. We have other Conservation Areas being established in the north to take care of a multiple drainage problem, and similar ones elsewhere here in the province. We can also use that Act to declare any area a conservation area. We could declare all of the reclamation projects conservation areas if we wished, and if we did that we would show several hundred thousand dollars of expenditures; but there is no need to do that immediately. It can be done.

Now, before dealing specifically with the different branches, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make some reference to the background to our agricultural problem in Saskatchewan. Again, we can attribute it to the unplanned manner in which the province was settled. We can attribute it to land-hungry, profit-hungry real estate 'sharks', and colonization agencies, too, who induced people to settle on sub-marginal land and in areas in the province where the type of agriculture in which they engaged was not suited to that particular area. As a result of that, and again it was the urge of free enterprise, I think that had we had low real estate charges there is every possibility that some planned settlement would have taken place in this province. As a result of this the Government has been compelled not only to spend millions of dollars on relief, but now it is compelled to spend millions of dollars in rectifying the basic atrocities.

Now, to briefly outline our corrective programme I would like, first of all, to give some explanation to long-term corrective programme. They consist of the large areas that are too large for municipalities to handle.

The Provincial Government will undertake the development of such projects with the immediate objective of building up fodder resources. That is our greatest deficiency and our greatest need, if we are going to have any balanced agriculture, particularly in the south-west of Saskatchewan. Then there is provision for the smaller projects that a municipality can handle and develop by way of earned assistance grants on a 50-50 basis between the Department of Agriculture and the municipality concerned. In addition to that we have assumed responsibility under Order-in-Council, No. 2298, which sets out the division of responsibility between the Dominion Government and Provincial Government on organized irrigation projects. In the last year, for instance, we organized 18 new Water Users' Associations which represents a terrific organizational job, and we have the responsibility of not only organizing these districts but of assisting in giving engineering services and assistance in the construction of the laterals and the land levels, which cost runs to about 50 per cent of the entire project, including the reservoirs and main canals. So the Provincial Government and the organized irrigation districts are carrying about 50 per cent of the load.

It was with reference to that type of development that the figure was given by the hon. Minister of Public Health — I gave it to him because I did not have the opportunity to reply directly to the criticisms made by the hon. member from Maple Creek; he mentioned 30,000 acres of land brought under the ditch. We can rightly say that that is an accomplishment. It is a real accomplishment, because it is the first time in the history of Saskatchewan that a Provincial Government has accomplished that much acreage under the ditch. I might mention that along the Saskatchewan River adjacent to Dundurn on both sides, Valley Park on the north side and the Dutchman Flats on the South — between the two we brought under the ditch here, last year, 6,000 acres of land. Some of it has been flooded already, but the ditches are in. That does not mean that you have got the irrigation district functioning. I would like to remind hon. members that this matter of irrigation development is something that is going to take some time and we are going to have not only to be properly organized, but people who are engaged in irrigation farming not only will have to be assisted by technical advice but will have to become accustomed to many factors that tend towards the success of irrigation.

In regard specifically to the projects for which the Provincial Government has assumed full responsibility, the hon. member from Maple Creek wanted to know where these projects are. I would like to make reference to the dryland projects, indicating the specific location: for instance, the R.M. of Mortlach. I think the hon. member for Gravelbourg thought it went out there. North of Mortlach there are 8,000 acres of land there under development. We have worked since 1946, 4600 acres; we have seeded to cereal crop last year, 2000 acres, and now we have got about 3000 acres seeded to alfalfa in that particular area. I think it is an excellent project. We may have some difficulty in establishing forage crops there, but the forage crop that we seeded two years ago has given us an excellent harvest — two crops, as a matter of fact, of alfalfa. I think it is just about as good a return as you would get on any irrigation project because, in this particular area, we have a high water table; it is self-irrigated, and it is my thinking that any projects that we can find like that we should develop very speedily. There is another project at Chill Lake, north of Prince Albert, 21,000 acres in the entire project, 1800 . . .

Mr. Tucker: — Just along that line, what is done with what is grown there by the Department in the way of hay?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — This year, what we grew on the 200 acres, or 160 acres

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harvested, we turned it over at a very nominal price to the Moose Jaw Milk Producers who were in bad circumstances for feed, but we hope this will be a provincial feed reserve, these projects that are too large for municipalities, and we hope eventually then to turn the management of them over to several municipalities and we will develop them because they are too big; but later on we will turn them over completely to the municipalities.

Mr. Tucker: — Did any of the farmers not want to get any of that hay grown in their neighbourhood?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — There was some demand locally but there was a sufficiency of fodder in that area, this year.

Mr. Tucker: — Another question if the hon. Minister will permit it. He referred to an Order-in-Council: has that been made available to the membership of the Assembly? If it has not, I would suggest that the hon. Minister make it available. I don't recall it being published in the Saskatchewan Gazette and it seems to me it should be made available to us.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — I shall make copies available to hon. members.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can see by the clock that I am not going to have time and I wanted to very much to go into details in all the aspects not only of irrigational developments, but of reclamation work. I think, though, that I have sufficient time to make one more reference. However, I want to say to the hon. member for Maple Creek that if he wants to know where all these projects are, he can come around to my office and I will give him the information. They are very numerous, I can assure him.

I want to make some reference to the re-settlement in northern areas by just saying briefly that many people are labouring under the delusion that there are still millions of acres of agricultural land available in northern Saskatchewan. We have been carrying on surveys for the last three years and our most optimistic estimates will be that if we farm one million acres of good agricultural land we will be doing very good, particularly in north-eastern Saskatchewan, so our remaining good agricultural land resources are not bad. It is our thinking that we should develop the remaining land resources that we have in connection with assisting farmers now living on sub-marginal units in becoming re-established. I thought I would mention that, Mr. Speaker, because there is a good deal of misinformation on that particular subject.

I would like to have time, Mr. Speaker, to give (and I will very briefly) the extent of expenditures by the Department of Agriculture as a result of drought and insect infestation — grasshoppers. We have spent in all for grasshopper control and various relief measures, somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$800,000 this year, in various forms of assistance.

I should mention that, in the case of the southwest, our first assistance there was to pay one-half of the storage charges on grain maintained within the drought area. The second form of assistance was paying the transportation costs of haying equipment both going and coming, in the two areas where there were surplus supplies available, and in addition, half the freight up to three dollars a ton on hay harvested under that policy.

Then, to the farmer who was unable to leave we offered assistance, freight assistance; half the freight up to \$2.00 a ton. In addition to that the field staff in these surplus areas contacted the farmers and encourage farmers who had surpluses available either standing in the stack or harvested loose in the stack or bin, to have these lists placed with the Field Crops Commissioner. There were approximately 60,000 of surplus hay listed with us, and we made those lists available to the people in the dried-out areas. Under those two policies we moved, before November 1st, approximately 3,000 carloads of feed into southwest Saskatchewan. Now, I want to say to hon. members, 3,000 tons of feed is a lot of feed, but there is no limit to the use that can be made of the policy. Any farmer that wants to utilize this policy can do so and he can obtain for himself very reasonably prices for feed. There are several good reasons for this policy. One is that it enables the farmers to help themselves; third one, of still greater importance, is that it keeps the price of feed down, and, in the fourth place, you have your feed in before the winter begins.

In addition to that we have been paying freight assistance on feed grain. To date there has been approximately 175 cars of feed grain moved into the southwest. When we knew that they were going to have a first-class crop disaster we informed the Dominion Labour people that we would not require any extra harvesters. Because of that we were able to place in employment, harvest employment, very nearly 5,000 people from southwest Saskatchewan. So, under present conditions by making these policies available to the people of the southwest, I think that they have come through in a pretty good manner. In addition to that the Department, as you know, has developed for emergency provincial feed reserves, and I want to place the emphasis on 'emergency' feed reserves. We have approximately 5,000 tons in the emergency reserve, and we are going to make this available after March 15th.

I have noticed a few statements in some of the weekly papers in certain areas of the province. I have noticed a letter from a gentleman from the Stewart Valley south of Swift Current, and Mr. Speaker, I have been informed, today, that this particular article was taken to the editor of another weekly paper by a few local Liberals. They thought it would provide an excellent opportunity to embarrass the Government. Instead of looking for the facts, they were prepared to take this man's letter — anything at all; the worst type of criticism — in order to embarrass the Government rather than to get the actual information. Now, this particular gentleman wanted to get into the provincial emergency feed reserve, I called the municipal secretary up: We had not done anything to obtain feed for himself whatever. Now, you cannot do anything for people that won't help themselves, and under our policy the opportunity is there for anyone that wants to help themselves to make use of the policies available. As a matter of fact one man up in the Beach area received from the Department nearly \$900 worth of this assistance in transportation charges. I talked to the gentleman and he told me he was able to bring hay home from down at Alameda clean up there for \$8.00 a ton. Now that is what the policies mean to people who are willing to accept some responsibility. Now . . .

Mr. Tucker: — What are you going to charge for this fodder?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Out of the emergency hay bank, we are charging our actual cost. We expect to recover our actual cost. We don't want to begin to make any reductions there, because if we do we are going to affect

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the other emergency assistance policy.

Mr. Tucker: — What are you going to charge to begin with?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — The cost now would run around from \$16.00, \$18.00, \$19.00 a ton depending on the quality of the hay. We are going to make it available because we realize that this is an emergency situation. It was not an emergency situation in February. But I am a stock man. I know that when you have a long severe spell like we have had, it takes about twice as much feed. We knew, too, that we could not say an emergency situation would develop until some time in March. So we are making that hay available, and I am certain that everyone will be well provided for, as far as feed is concerned, in the southwest.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I almost regret that I am not like the Attorney General. He said that just as quick as he was off the air he was through, or he regretted that he was not on the air so he could talk longer. I would rather talk longer when I am off the air. I would particularly like to deal with the various aspects of my Department for the information of hon. members both on this side of the House and on the other side of the House. But, not having sufficient time, Mr. Speaker, I want to suggest to hon. members that when we are in our Estimates, I would certainly be delighted to give them just as much information as I possibly can.

I think I have indicated, Mr. Speaker, in my previous remarks, that I am going to support the budget because I believe that the demands for services not only should they be met, but I fully realize that Government services as such to the people spell security. I see no reason in the world, Mr. Speaker, why Dominion Government, who are in charge of fiscal policy, should not assume the responsibility for seeing to it, in the case of Saskatchewan, that our farmers have an assured and guaranteed income at a level that will not only give the individual security and a proper standard of living, but also sufficient income to maintain not only this budget; but we hope that, as a result of improved agricultural practices, we may some day be able to carry even a little bigger budget. I will support the motion.

Mr. Maher: — I move the adjournment of the debate, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to and debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 6 o'clock p.m.