

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**Third Session — Eleventh Legislature**  
**20th Day**

**Wednesday, February 28, 1951**

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

**BUDGET DEBATE**

The House resumed, from Tuesday, February 27, 1951, 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. T.J. Bentley (Minister of Public Health)(Cont.):** — Mr. Speaker, when the Debate adjourned, last evening, I had dealt at some little length giving a description of the work of the Department of Public Health in its various divisions and branches. However, I was unable to complete the statements that I wished to make, so I wish to proceed for a short time today with matters that I believe are of importance to the members of this House, giving information that possibly is not as well known to many of them as it should be.

Before proceeding into the main part, I would like to refer to some remarks made by the member for Humboldt (Mr. Loehr), the other day, during this debate. The member for Humboldt said that he was going to offer some constructive criticism, and it is granted that he did offer what in his mind was something of a constructive nature for the improvement, in his opinion, of the operation of the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan. It was his belief, if I remember his words correctly, that some form of deterrent payment should be charged against patients entering hospital in order to retard the admissions to some extent in order that the over-utilization would be lessened, and he suggested that some part of the patient's hospital bill should be paid by the patient himself. Now, in supporting that, I believe he made some references to a scheme that had taken place in Humboldt some years ago, which he said he had taken some part in. I have a letter from a person who was a resident of Humboldt at that time, and I will give the name of the person before I am finished. I want to read the letter for the information of the House and for the hon. member for Humboldt. And the letter reads as follows:

“Dear Mr. Bentley; Listening in on my radio today to Mr. Loehr, M.L.A. for Humboldt, when he was speaking of the Municipal Hospital Scheme that he done so much for in the municipality of St. Peters. I was the individual who started this scheme, it was myself who obtained the signatures of 25 rate-payers and presented it to the council, requesting the by-law for the municipal doctor. It is true what he said, the hospital beds were all full throughout the first year. The correct reason for this was so many people in the municipality needed hospitalization

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but could not afford it. That was why myself and a few others worked so hard to get this by-law, the charge being \$5 per quarter-section.

“The first attempt was defeated because we were so strongly opposed by the doctors and some councillors. The second attempt was successful and it included the hospitalization and doctor’s service but before many of the people had the chance to get the full benefit of this scheme it was changed by the council without another vote, ratepayers paying the same \$5 per quarter-section and were also responsible for one-half of the doctor’s bills and one-half of hospitalization, placing many of the rate-payers in a position where they could not afford to enter the hospital.”

Now the rest of the letter it is not necessary to read, but it is signed by W.J. Vowels who says, as I reported on the letter when quoting it, that he lived in that municipality at that time. Now the reason I read that letter, Mr. Speaker, was to point out that the Department of Public Health has not been unaware of the suggestions on the part of a number of people that a deterrent charge of some kind should be made to people entering hospitals. It has been considered, as we consider and study every proposal that will in any way assist in improving the operations of the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan. However, we have rejected that idea so far and the reason we have rejected it so far is that the Plan is a system of Hospital Insurance designed to provide that all the population participate and all the population, regardless of their economic circumstances, will be able to enjoy the benefits of the scheme. Now the setting up of a deterrent charge undoubtedly would have the effect, in many instances, of preventing people who are in difficult circumstances financially, from taking advantage of the scheme, and as long as there are other and more equitable ways of seeing that the scheme works efficiently and fairly, we do not propose to suggest – or I do not propose to recommend anyway – to the Government that we introduce this deterrent charge.

I want to refer to one or two remarks made by the member for Arm River (Mr. Danielson) during his part in the debate, when he said that everyone got hospitalization in the old days and that the Liberals had started all health services. Now I have no doubt the hon. member, when he made that statement, was considering those places that he knew about, and nobody denies that there were some areas that did provide these services. Unfortunately, they were not province-wide at any time and, so far as the statement that the Liberals started all these services, I want to read some quotations from the days of many years ago, Mr. Speaker, from the paper. I am going to quote first a statement by the Minister of Public Health some years ago in the Liberal regime, a gentleman for whom I have a high personal regard and for his position at the present time. But at that time he was not the Lieutenant Governor – he was Dr. J.M. Uhrich and a member of the Liberal Party and a powerful member of that party and well respected by it. Now, he made this statement as reported in the “Western Producer” of January 25, 1934, and I want to quote the statement, Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the House. I am quoting now:

“State medicine and state health insurance is assured when the Liberal Party is returned in Saskatchewan, according to Dr. J.M. Uhrich, M.L.A., Rosthern, former Minister of Public Health in Dunning and Gardiner Governments of Saskatchewan.

“The Liberal Party, when returned to power, will establish a system of state medicine in connection with which a plan of state health insurance will be inaugurated, Dr. Uhrich’s statement sets forth.

“The Liberal Party, when in power in Saskatchewan, developed a number of policies which were regarded at the time as modified forms of state medicine and each one leading to further extension of that principle, said the former Minister of Public Health. Municipal hospitals, municipal doctors, public health units, school and public health nurses, free treatment of tuberculosis at state expense, venereal disease clinics, free laboratory services, free distribution of vaccines, toxins, antitoxins and sera, maternity grants. All these were progressive steps looking to an ever-developing policy of state medicine. However, conditions have changed within the last four or five years, with the result that, from one cause or another, many municipalities are now financially unable to maintain their hospitals in a state of efficiency and provide hospitalization where necessary for their people. Others are unable to maintain municipal doctors as heretofore. The deplorable result is that many people find it difficult to obtain medical aid and hospitalization when it is needed. I consider it the duty of the Government to discharge the responsibilities which such a condition places upon the state. If the Government can assume and discharge the duty of providing for the education of the youth of the province, surely it should assume and discharge the even more important and primary duty of safeguarding the health of the people. That is my belief, and the Liberal Party agrees with me, and will proceed to assume that responsibility and discharge that duty whenever called upon to do so by the people!”

Now that is the statement that is contained in the ‘Western Producer’, Mr. Speaker, on January 25, 1934. Now, I want to go on a little bit further, I want to come to December 15, of 1937, and I am quoting from a press report in the same paper, the ‘Western Producer’:

“Basing his argument on what had happened in respect to tuberculosis sanatoria, the Hon. J.M. Uhrich, Saskatchewan Minister of Health, Friday told the Royal Commission that it was his firm belief that any system of extended state medicine in Saskatchewan, under existing conditions, was not practical. He freely admitted that there was a wide demand for the

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service. State medicine, he contended, must be on a contributory basis. Municipal taxes in arrears, the portion earmarked for sanatoria contributions now amounted to more than \$600,000.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, I made the statement, last night, that I do not believe the Liberals ever really and truly intended to carry out the promises to introduce a health insurance programme in this province; nor do I believe now – and I said I would produce evidence to support my beliefs in that regard – that they intend to, or that the Federal Government intends to, and I will produce some evidence to support that statement in a few moments. I want to produce some other very practical evidence to indicate that I have a perfect right for my disbelief in the intentions of the Liberal Party to ever do this.

As I mentioned last night, and I am going to mention again now, back in the second decade of this century, the Union Hospital Act was passed. From that time until 1944, Mr. Speaker, 26 Union Hospital Districts were organized. Since 1944 up to the present time, 74 more Union Hospital Districts have been organized, making 100 in all now; so that in the period from 1918 to 1944, under mostly Liberal regime with a very short period in between, only 26 were organized, whereas under the C.C.F. Government and the able leadership of the former Minister of Public Health in this Government (the Hon. Premier of the province) 74 have been organized to this date.

Now these are very potent reasons for making me believe that there was not too much real intention in their promises that they were going to introduce any form of provincial health insurance. I say the same thing applies, Mr. Speaker, to the Federal Government. We know what they promised in 1945 and 1946, during the Dominion-Provincial Conferences, things that were recommended by the Sirois-Rowell report. I want to quote from the ‘Vancouver Province’ of June 12, 1950 – that is just last June – when the Federal Minister of Health and Welfare, on a visit to that province, held a press conference according to the paper. And this is what is reported in the paper. He, the Minister of Health and Welfare in the Federal Government, the Hon. Mr. Martin, told a press conference, Sunday night, and I quote his words as they are quoted in here in quotation marks:

“Health insurance is and must remain a Provincial problem. Even if there were no constitutional problems the vastly varying needs and political climates of the ten provinces still would preclude any central plan.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want my friends opposite to remember those statements. If my friends are going to make public statements, when they are in office or out, and promise to do certain things (which they have done over the years) and then nothing happens and then we see, later on, statements made contradicting their early promises, is it any wonder that I and a great many other people in this province begin to doubt whether they really and truly mean what they say. I know that the hon. member for Humboldt probably honestly believes what he says when he thinks a deterrent charge would be useful. I am not going to argue with him that he is not honestly sincere in his belief. As I stated before, we do not

believe that that is a proper way to operate a state hospital or a hospital insurance plan.

Now I notice in British Columbia – again I have a ‘Vancouver Province’ clipping here of February 24, 1951. It is written by Gordon Roote and he deals with the difficulties they are having out there. And he points out – I have a lot of clippings dealing with this too, but it is a very interesting study to follow, their difficulties in B.C. They are having a very hard time to find ways and means of overcoming those difficulties and, if this report is correct, the people out there are being asked to have a sort of a straw vote and to send in a questionnaire to their M.L.A., or to the Hon. Mr. Turnbull, who is in charge of that division out there, asking what the people themselves would like to have. We have not had to adopt any such measure as that here in this province, Mr. Speaker. We recognize the difficulties; any human institution has difficulties; you have them in your own business and your own personal life. Obviously we expect to confront difficulties in any kind of a worthwhile programme. But we, in Saskatchewan, believe that the people of Saskatchewan have enough commonsense themselves to co-operate in making this scheme work. I mentioned last night the great assistance the great co-operation we get from the Saskatchewan Hospital Association, and I am convinced myself that the other two main parties to a hospital scheme, which are the doctors on the one hand, and the potential patients, the public, on the other, will give us the same co-operation and will do their part in helping to remove any abuses, which we know do exist to some extent at the present time.

The hon. member for Arm River also offered some criticisms about our administrative costs, the implication being, I suppose, first, that a Government cannot operate business as efficiently as private concerns, and second, that if a Government is going to operate them, then obviously a Liberal Government, in his opinion, would do it more efficiently than a C.C.F. Government. Now let us examine what happens. We have private medical care and hospital care schemes across the North American continent; everybody knows of the Blue Cross schemes. They are operated privately; they are not government concerns, and they operate a lot. I believe there are over 90 of them across Canada; I do not know how many in the United States, I did not count them. But anyway, we have their record, in their own words – the record is written by themselves – as to the cost of operation and the number of cents out of each dollar paid by their members which actually goes in to paying hospitals for services, and the other moneys that are used for other purposes, and we compare that with our own, and I am going to give the comparisons now, in actual figures.

The average of Blue Cross voluntary plans across Canada and the United States, for the first nine months of 1950 (because we want to be factual, we made no guesses; we took the latest report we could get) show this: out of every dollar paid by their members into the scheme, only 87½ cents finds its way into the payment of hospitals. There is a reserve of 4.3 cents of each dollar held back in reserve. This is not necessary in the Government scheme, so we do not hold a reserve back from the hospitals for the services that we buy. And then the cost of operation, the administrative costs of these Blue Cross schemes across Canada and the United States, on the average, in the first nine months of 1950, were 8.2 cents out of every dollar, Mr. Speaker.

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Now, let us look at the Saskatchewan plan. It started, as I say, by the energetic and intelligent drive of the former Minister of Health, the Premier, and in the first year of its operation, the cost of operation was 7.9. Now I want the House to remember, Mr. Speaker, that in this 7.9 figure that I give, also includes the cost of collecting the tax, because, in spite of what is said about centralization, we do decentralize the registration and tax collection as well as the administration of the hospitals. They are decentralized now. We pay the tax collection offices a commission, so that the 7.9 cents administrative cost, 7.9 cents out of each dollar in 1947 paid that. In 1948, as the plan began to work and people began to understand it, the administrative procedures were improved in efficiency and the cost was 6.2 cents out of every dollar. In 1949 further improvements, constant supervision by competent administrative and executive officials, had reduced it to five cents out of each dollar. And in the year 1950, Mr. Speaker, it had again been reduced to 4.6 cents out of every dollar. That is a pretty low administrative cost for a scheme of this kind. And I want to point this out also, that 4.6 cents includes the commissions paid to the tax collection offices in the municipalities throughout the country. Now, if you want to exclude that, which amounts to 1.3, then we have an actual administrative cost, apart from tax collections, of 3.3 cents out of every dollar. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, paying tax collection and administrative costs leave 95.4 cents of the people's dollar which goes into paying the hospital bills, what it was designed to do; and I doubt if there is a private industry or any other industry that does any better.

**Mr. Danielson:** — May I ask the hon. gentleman a question?

**Hon. Mr. Bentley:** — Mr. Speaker, I am usually very good at answering questions, but I am on the radio at the present time, another man with radio time is to follow me, and I will ask the hon. gentleman to reserve his questions for later on.

There is also a charge made that there is a bureaucracy in relation with our hospitals and too many accountants and too much red-tape. Now again I want to point out that there is no bureaucracy and there is no red-tape. I explained, last night, that every hospital is a local autonomous body operating under the government or the control of its own board of directors, elected properly and legally by democratic means. We deal with them each individually. Now, so far as there being too much red tape and too much accounting, the difficulty we have is not that there is too much, but that the services that are required from us are greater than we are able to provide as fast as we would like. If some responsible body which is dealing with this matter, like the Saskatchewan Hospital Association, were to come to us and say, "There is too much bureaucracy and too much red-tape", we would certainly take a step back and have a good look at ourselves, because we would regard a suggestion of that kind, coming from them, as having some meaning. But just the opposite is the case. Most responsible people, an association of the hospital boards across this country, are continually wanting more of the services that we are able to give.

I have dealt, I hope, as much as I need to, with the actual centralization, but I think I had better make one more comment. Comparisons,

they say, are odious, but there is only one way to compare yourself. If a person or an institution or a government department is really trying to do an efficient job, it must watch itself, it must analyse itself and see if it is doing as well as other comparable bodies. And so, while I do not wish to bring an “odious comparison”, I do want to point out to the people in this House today, Mr. Speaker, that when you compare the centralization, (as it is called) in Saskatchewan, with the only other province in Canada that has a hospital insurance scheme, British Columbia, I would like to point this out. As I mentioned a while ago, our tax collections and our registration are decentralized into every municipal office and we get wonderful co-operation from the municipalities – I want to pay them that tribute, we get wonderful co-operation. For a per-capita tax of that kind, the hardest kind in the world to collect, to be able to report, year after year, that 96 per cent of that tax has been collected, speaks volumes for the type of people that are in these tax collection offices. Now in B.C. it is a different proposition, Mr. Speaker. They have only three tax collection offices. They are centralized under government control, at Victoria, at Vancouver and at New Westminster, and I am informed by press reports and otherwise that they are even considering further centralizing it and closing the offices in Vancouver and in New Westminster.

Now let us see about the cost of operation, Mr. Speaker, in the number of people that are employed. They have approximately the same population in British Columbia as we have; they had our scheme to study; it was their own difficulties that they got into; they refused to adopt the 30-day waiting period at the start. Saskatchewan was started on a sound foundation, theirs was not. The result is, that last year, they had 600 people employed by their B.C. Hospital Insurance Scheme, whereas in Saskatchewan, serving about the same number of people, we had, at the end of December 1950, 152 people, and that was with extra people employed in the heavy tax collection period and year-end accounting, and we had an average of 142 throughout the year. I would like my friends to remember some of these things.

And again, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member from Melville, (I believe it was) suggested that we were not making as full use of the Federal Government grants as we should make. I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, how we have fared in comparison with other provinces. Do not let us forget that these grants from the Federal Government are grants all across the provinces. They are not making a gift to Saskatchewan because they love her, either because they used to have a lot of C.C.F. members of parliament from here or because they have a lot of Liberal members of parliament from here. This is an agreement with the provinces and all provinces get these grants, on a population basis. I am not dealing with construction grants yet. I'll deal with them in a moment, Mr. Speaker; but in the other grants that are given I want to point out what our usage was compared to the other provinces. For the fiscal year 1948-49, which was the first full year on which a statement could be issued, Saskatchewan used 78 per cent of the grants available and was third in the list of provinces. Only New Brunswick, which used 86 per cent and Prince Edward Island, which was second with 84 per cent used more than Saskatchewan, which was third with 78 per cent. That was in the first year the grants were available. For the fiscal year 1949-50, according to the Ottawa statement, and not including the construction grants, Saskatchewan came first, Alberta second and Prince Edward Island third. And for the fiscal year 1950-51 Saskatchewan again came first,

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with Alberta second and New Brunswick third.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with that kind of a record behind us, backed by the statements that can be acquired from Ottawa, can anyone say that we haven't made in this province full use of the grants that were available to us?

I want to deal with construction grants now for a moment, because I think it is important that the House have this information. I said before and I am just going to briefly repeat that it is considered by all competent authorities who study hospital needs, that the hospital needs of any area can be served by seven beds per thousand. We have that in Saskatchewan now. We have no reason to disagree with the authorities who say that is correct. Consequently, we see no reason for needlessly spending Saskatchewan's citizens' money or Canadian citizens' money on constructions that are unnecessary. Further, I want to point out that we will have plenty of need for the grants that are available at Ottawa with the projects now underway or in the planning stage. I want to refer, Mr. Speaker, to a press report or a comment headed "Failure to Use Grants" carried in the 'Leader-Post' of January 30, 1951. And I am going to read this, Mr. Speaker:

"The Provincial Government was criticized, Monday, by the Saskatchewan Liberal Association for using only a small part of the available Federal hospital construction grants. In its weekly bulletin the Liberal Association said Saskatchewan had taken advantage of only \$812,000 of a potential \$1,613,000 in construction grants in the last three years."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to remember this. First we get a grant from the Federal Government of \$1,000 for a new bed, provided it is new. We don't get it for any other purpose than for the provision of a new bed in the hospital. It is not an elastic grant, and to get that we must match it with a Provincial grant of the same size and the project must be approved by both Departments from which the grants emanate. On top of that the local areas must provide the balance of the costs. Now, I am going to make a very careful statement. I have written it out and I am going to read this one, Mr. Speaker, because it is important that this statement be fully understood:

"Any difficulty in utilizing the full amount is due in a large measure to the tremendous accomplishments in hospital construction in this province before the Federal construction grant was offered in April of 1948."

The other factor is the inflexibility of the Federal grant formula, which confines the use of these grants entirely to subsidizing the actual construction of hospital beds. Other essential hospital facilities such as operating rooms, laboratories, X-ray departments and nurses residences are not considered as projects for which Federal Government grants will be given. What is being done by the Government is to plan soundly and to use the Federal grants most effectively.



What seems to have been forgotten by many persons who criticize the use of the Federal grants so far is that the Federal hospital construction grant is cumulative over the 5-year period. The fact that Federal grants totalling \$839,000 have been approved so far out of a total grant made available so far of \$2,557,000 (the figures are slightly wrong in the 'Leader-Post') has very little meaning. Let us examine the record to see what exactly has been happening in the use of Provincial and Federal construction grants and exactly maybe what is expected to happen in the next two or three years.

A substantial amount of Provincial funds were made available to hospitals by way of grants and loans prior to April 1, 1948. The hospitals which were completed prior to that date could not qualify for matching Federal grants, even though substantial Provincial grants had been made. For those hospitals under construction at April 1, 1948, a portion of the Federal grant was obtainable on a pro rata basis. Total construction grants paid by the Province up to March 31, 1948, not matched by a Federal grant were \$461,165, and the total paid for the Province after April 1, 1948, has been \$840,718, and the total of those two figures paid by the Province, \$1,301,884. Further commitments of Provincial funds have been made for construction projects which are now in progress or in the active planning stage. These total \$505,400, so the total amount already paid out by the Provincial Government, or committed to be paid out in the next year or so, therefore comes to \$1,807,300. The amount which the Federal government may be expected to be committed for, including the commitments I have mentioned that the Provincial Government has already made, is \$1,154,000, and that amounts to \$652,800 less than the Provincial Government has put up in its term of office as a C.C.F. Government when it started to introduce those. Again, Mr. Speaker, I said these grants were cumulative.

We have other projects for which we use Federal construction grants. We will take the University hospital, for instance. When we project a thing, the Federal Government does not pay all the money of their share of the grant right away. It must be paid in stages, which is right; no quarrel with that at all; it is a sensible way of doing business. But that University hospital is estimated to cost about \$7 million and it is anticipated the Federal grant of \$450,000 will be available. As I mentioned in Public Accounts Committee the other day, the University hospital will have 550 beds. Of those 100 will be committed to D.V.A. for which D.V.A. will make a grant, and that will not be matched by the Federal construction grants so there will be 450 beds for which they will make a grant of \$1,000 each – we hope and have every reason to believe that they will – which will amount to \$450,000. On top of that it is possible that we may get some other grants or subsidies for bassinets, and we hope there will be some higher grants on the basis of \$1,500 a bed, these beds to be set aside for chronic diseases. We'll be wanting that grant – it is cumulative.

Again, we have the Moose Jaw training school. I have explained, I think, to this House that we must some day vacate the Airport buildings at Weyburn and have our own training school, for even if the airport doesn't want them back the buildings are getting to the age and the stage now when reconstruction or repairs would be more expensive than the buildings are worth and we must have more permanent buildings. We are

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proposing a training school at Moose Jaw, the cost of which will be approximately \$3 million of which the Federal Government will pay because they are chronic cases, either \$1,500 per bed or one-third of the total cost – that is no more than one-third of the total cost – at the rate of \$1,500 a bed. We will assume that we are going to require a million dollars from the Federal Government in that grant. So, therefore, a rough grand total in Federal grants claimable by this province, according to the plans mentioned is about \$2,600,000, or substantially higher, depending on the extent of the construction programme underway at Moose Jaw by 1953, because we don't know if there will be a continuation of Federal grants after March 31, 1953, or not. We certainly hope there will be.

Now, on top of these things we have other construction projects in planning. If we now take into our calculations certain other general hospitals with construction programmes pending that are now in the planning stage, such as Yorkton General, Moose Jaw General, the Sister Hospital at Humboldt, the Nipawin Union Hospital and a number of others, we will be using Federal grants up to the tune of about \$3 1/4 million. The total grants we can expect from them up until the end of March, 1953, would be about \$4 1/4 million. I have already indicated then with the figures I have given that we will use \$3 1/4 million anyway. That would leave a million dollars.

Now, if we use that million dollars just for the sake of getting it, at \$1,000 a bed, this is what is going to take place. You see you don't build a bed for \$1,000. Get that point very clear, Mr. Speaker, and, through you, the rest of the House! It costs a lot more than that. The Federal grant of \$1,000, the Provincial grant of \$1,000 only take care at the present time of less than a quarter of the cost of constructing a hospital bed. The balance must be carried, by the local area, by the floating of a debenture, and a land tax is levied against the land for the retirement of that debenture. The capital cost is largely local.

The sum of \$1,000,000 would represent an addition of 1000 general hospital beds at \$1,000 a bed. But the total hospital construction programme now under way with which I have been dealing, will give Saskatchewan an overall ratio of at least seven beds per thousand population, which, I have explained already, is considered sufficient. With this ratio of seven beds per thousand Saskatchewan will be extremely well served with general hospitals. Any further construction, rather than the replacement of obsolete facilities to which I have referred, would appear to be foolish.

Let us examine this point closely. To use this additional sum of \$1,000,000 in Federal construction grants, the Province would have to put up an additional \$1,000,000 – but that isn't all. As I have pointed out, you have got to put up a lot more. Now, we'll go down to the actual cost to the locality. Construction costs have increased over 40 per cent since the release of price controls by the Federal Government; that plus the improved buildings and improved equipment have increased the overall cost of a hospital from \$4,000 or \$4,500 (what it used to be in 1945, 1946 and 1947) to \$8,000 or \$8,500 at the present time. The local area that wishes to build the hospital will have to provide the balance of the money and, on top of that, for each hospital bed you put up, the Hospital Services Plan finds an operating cost for that bed of \$2,000.

In other words, an additional 1,000 beds would mean a local construction cost of \$6,000,000. A 20-bed hospital could have been built when price controls were in effect for \$4,500 per bed or a cost of \$90,000 of which the local area would have to provide \$50,000. Now, the same 20-bed hospital will cost \$170,000 of which the local area must provide \$130,000.

Now, I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if our hon. friends opposite there are serious in their suggesting that for the sake of getting an additional million dollars from the Federal Government we should dig up another million dollars from the Treasury here and then promote the spending of another \$6,000,000 by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan to carry their own local load of the capital cost of the hospital – just for the sake of getting that hospital grant! I will dare any of our friends opposite to go out in the country and recommend that the people of Saskatchewan dig down for a hospital capital levy of another \$6,000,000 particularly when they know, Mr. Speaker, that the number of beds in the province at the present time is sufficient.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to quote something that this Government believes in, and which I believe in most sincerely. It is a quotation from the Constitution of the World Health Organization, a part of the United Nations Organization. It says this:

“The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being, without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.”

The C.C.F. believes that, and I recommend that booklet and that sentiment for everybody's consideration. Now, I want to say just again in conclusion; no person who has any regard for the truth can deny the worth of the work for the care of the sick that has been inaugurated by the C.C.F. Government since it came into office, and no humanitarian can call it too expensive. Mr. Speaker, I shall certainly support the budget.

**Mr. Danielson:** — The member promised to answer a question when he was through.

**Premier Douglas:** — The hon. member has had plenty of chance to ask questions on the estimates, Mr. Speaker. He interrupts more than any member in the House and never answers questions when he is on his feet.

**Hon. C.C. Williams (Minister of Labour):** — Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak in the budget debate I would first like to congratulate everyone who has already spoken on it, and I might especially refer to the hon. member from Wadena (Mr. Dewhurst), who referred to himself, yesterday afternoon and last evening, as a “back-bencher”. I believe it is one of the best speeches turned out this session, and it shows that the hon. member has an excellent grasp of the situation, not only of his own constituency but in the province.

The Minister of Public Health gave us an excellent talk last

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night and again this afternoon; perhaps some of the hon. members opposite after hearing him and considering everything that he has said, may desire to move over to this side of the House. We will find that out in a day or two.

I am sorry that the hon. member from Kinistino (Mr. Woods) is ill in the east – he is a very reasonable man and I am sure he must be missed by his colleagues. Today, also, the Minister of Public Works (Hon. Mr. Darling) is away. It was his turn on the radio and I am filling in for him; we trust he will be back in a day or two.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am in the happy position of not having to contend with any road-building in my constituency – Regina City. I get quite a bit of fun out of watching the interchange back and forward from time to time as to who is getting the most for their constituency, and so forth; and it has been my observation, from a neutral point of view, that regardless of who represents any of the constituencies, the money is spent wherever it is needed most. I don't go along with this idea we hear from time to time that some of the members opposite are being discriminated against.

I just have, perhaps, one or two personal remarks to make in connection with roads. I remember away back in the middle 'twenties I happened to be living in Calgary and moved to Dauphin, Manitoba. The next spring I went back for my car, in May sometime, with the fond hope that I would be able to drive it from Calgary to Manitoba without any difficulty. I recall getting to Herbert (I think it was) and wiring my wife: "Owing to rain and Saskatchewan roads I will be at least two days late". I have never forgotten that trip. I recall, too, after moving here in 1931, it must have been during the 1938 campaign, we received a plaintive call from someone over here, in the Government, it must have been one of the heads of the Department of Highways. Apparently the Premier of that day, Mr. Patterson, was speaking at Carlyle that night, and the roads, of course, were of great interest down in that part of the province, as they are all over; and there was some road machinery being sent down. Well, they were afraid that it would not get there in time so they made this frantic call to us and I happened to answer the telephone, and the message was to be sure and do everything we could to get that road machinery into Carlyle that afternoon. The person who made the telephone call wasn't very discreet, perhaps, or he wouldn't have made those remarks, but I believe by holding the train at Maryfield for an hour or so, we got it in. I don't recall who was elected in 1938; I guess it was Mr. Patterson.

I am going to take just a moment and refer to Telephones. I can assure the hon. Minister of Telephones that I am not going to encroach on anything he might have said, but there has been a slight increase in the rates in the two larger cities – I don't know whether you could even call it an increase. It is just an automatic adjustment . . . (Just listen now, you won't laugh in a minute) . . . When there are 10,000 lines in any city in this province, automatically the rate goes up 25 cents a telephone. I don't see any particular increase in that. As a matter of fact, it should have been put in quite some time ago, but the date went by and nobody thought of it, and so it is only about a year, maybe a year and a half ago that it became effective.

There has been a slight increase in Yorkton – I think it had something to do with cradle telephones and wall telephones and so forth, and it didn't amount to very much. Swift Current and North Battleford have come up to the 1,000 telephone mark and a slight increase will go into effect there tomorrow. I think there have been changes in equipment that brings that about. If anyone can call that an increase in rates, I would like to know how they would prove it. It is an automatic increase, and if everyone in the province had that increase, I would go along and say that it was.

A lot has been said, too, about the \$2 taken off, away back in 1934 – the \$2 per year connecting fee in the rurals. I can recall the member for Arm River getting up (it must have been at least three years ago, because the 'Quints' were over there, the Liberal quint, that is) and making quite a point out of the fact that the Liberal Government had reduced that connecting from \$5 to \$3. It had been in effect then, I suppose, for 20 years, but it was reduced in 1934. It was put on again in 1949, to start the 1st of January, 1950, and I don't see anything the matter with it at all; it is just a restoration, and my friends across the way can laugh at that if they want to.

I was honoured, last summer, Mr. Speaker, by representing this province at the International Labour Organization conference held in Geneva, and I think perhaps if I could take just a very few minutes of the time of this House I would like to make a short report on what went on. Perhaps I could take a moment and read a paragraph that gives a short history of the I.L.O. itself, and it goes back quite a number of years; I was really surprised to get this information myself.

“Prior to world war 1, three international conferences were held – in Berlin in 1890, and at Berne in 1905 and 1913, which looked toward the establishment of a permanent international body concerned with labour matters. The war, of course, interrupted these proceedings.

“At the Peace conference in 1918, a Commission (on which Samuel Gompers sat) was appointed to study and report on the international aspects of labour. The work of the Commission resulted in an International Convention setting up the International Labour Organization. The Convention and Report of the Commission became Article 13 of the Treaty of Versailles and the I.L.O. was launched on its auspicious career.”

During the second world war, the headquarters, of course, were moved to Montreal.

I do not intend to take the time of the House to go into the ramifications of the I.L.O. in detail – that would take the rest of the afternoon and most of tonight; but while we were in Geneva, different ones were asked to make broadcasts by the C.B.C., or to be used by the C.B.C. if and when they saw fit, and I made one – I think it was on the 20th of June. I have never heard anyone say that they heard it on the

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C.B.C., so I don't presume it was used; but this is what I said at that time, and I feel, could properly be used now:

“The 33rd session of the International Labour conference, usually referred to as the I.L.O., commenced a few days ago and now is well under way. It is being held in the United Nations building erected here on the shores of Lake Geneva during the '20's, and by modern standards is one of the most beautiful buildings in Europe. Attending are 379 representatives from 44 countries, making a most cosmopolitan group.

“The highlight of the opening day was, of course, the election of the Hon. Jagjiven Ram, Minister of Labour, for India, as president and his speech of acceptance. A well-educated man, he is doing a good job and appears to be a popular choice.

“A few days later delegates from Indonesia were seated, after receiving a warm welcome from the entire conference and its officials.

“This year there are four main matters before the I.L.O. as follows: 1. Equal pay for women for equal work; 2. Industrial relations; 3. Vocational training; 4. Minimum rates for agricultural workers.

“Separate committees have been set up by the representatives of workers and employers and governments. These committees meet separately at first and agree on a policy. Later they meet together and from those meetings usually, by amendments, their recommendations to the entire conference are agreed upon. Naturally, with differences of opinion and conflicting viewpoints there is a great deal of discussion before concrete proposals are arrived at.

“Three languages are used – Spanish, French and English – and interpreters, most of whom are women, are required to immediately translate, verbally, every remark or speech, brief or lengthy, into the other two languages.

“The I.L.O. commenced in 1919, immediately after the termination of the first war, and has been instrumental in the gradual improvement of wages and working conditions of wage-earners, particularly in the less progressive countries. Canada is one of the leading countries in labour legislation and has now many of the things the I.L.O. has of recent years secured for other countries. There, of course, remains a great deal more to be done.

“On the opening day, M. Troclet, the former Minister of Labour for Belgium and now chairman of the governing body, had this to say:

“Every reasonable man will surely agree that the best reward for our Organization is to know that it is present in the lives of millions of workers of all races and every creed and colour, who in the past 30 years have experienced a steady improvement in their conditions. These human beings, whose dignity was often unappreciated in the past, and whose opportunities were stifled, have slowly become aware of their fundamental rights as the various means of social action initiated by the I.L.O. were organized and established nationally and internationally.

“A comparison between the Charter of 1919 and the Declaration of Philadelphia (that was, I think, in 1944) sufficiently emphasizes how much has been accomplished.

“This statement has briefly indicated the achievement and aims of the I.L.O. which is doing a great work for the benefit of millions of people in all parts of the world and will continue to make improvements from year to year.

“Ministers of Labour who have attended this conference, so far, are as follows: The hon. Mr. Tobin, Secretary of Labour of the United States; Hon. George Isaacs, Minister of Labour of Great Britain; the Minister of Labour for France, and, of course, the president of the conference, the Minister of Labour for India; the Minister of Labour for the State of Queensland, Australia, has also been here; and before closing I wish to mention the Canadian delegation which consists of 18 persons – 3 official delegates – one representing the Government, one the employees and one the employers. The other 15 act on various committees and as advisers to their official delegates, All are held in highest esteem by the representatives of other countries.

“I know all members of the Canadian delegation would wish me to extend greetings from Geneva to the people of Canada, and I take pleasure in doing so. I would also like especially to extend my personal greetings to the people of Saskatchewan, particularly the citizens of my home town, Regina.”

That is possibly enough on the I.L.O., Mr. Speaker, and I might just go over some of the names which will be familiar, I am sure, to some of the members of this House. The workers' representative was Claude Jodoin, of Montreal, vice-president of the Trades and Labour

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Congress. Then we had as the Government adviser, Brigadier J.E. Lyon, Assistant Director of Vocational Training, Ottawa; Angus McInnes, M.P. for Vancouver East; Mr. H.R. Rutherford, Executive Assistant, Labour Management Co-operative Service, Department of Labour, Ottawa; R.H. Taber of the Industrial Relations Branch, Ottawa – I was interested to know that Mr. Taber was born in Regina and lived here, I think, till he went through collegiate; Miss Edith Hardy of Ottawa, formerly with the Department of Labour; Mr. J.A. Brass of Montreal, General Secretary of the Railway Association of Canada – Mr. Brass was originally from Moose Jaw, and has quite a number of relatives in this province yet; A.F. MacArthur, Toronto, President of the Ontario Federation of Labour, and Gerard Picard, O.B.E., of Montreal, President of the Canadian Catholic Federation of Labour. I just mentioned those names in passing, Mr. Speaker.

The last outstanding piece of legislation the Department of Labour put through this House was The Hours of Work Act in 1947, and since that time we have engaged more in consolidation work and the development of more efficient service to the public, and I might add, to allow some of the other provinces to catch up with what we have done. They are doing so but very very slowly.

With the sharp rise in the cost of living index during the past year it is obvious that an increase in the minimum wage is necessary, and I can say here, today, that that is going to be provided in the near future. I am not at liberty to say just how much but I think I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, it will be a fairly substantial amount. I might add, too, that we don't like to see employees being paid that minimum wage. We like to see them get something better; but we feel that it has to be there in order that unscrupulous employers will not go below a certain amount.

Now, referring to the index – when I spoke a year ago, in this House, it was 162. Last June, at the start of the Korean situation, it was 165.4, and has jumped approximately 7 points since then, in a period of about 7 months, to 172.5. A brief history of this index shows it was 119.7 in January, 1946 – 8 months later it had gone up to 125; in December, 1947, it had reached 146 – a jump of 21 points in 14 months as a result of the controls being removed. I went into this fairly thoroughly in a broadcast just three years ago now, and I have no intention of repeating it, excepting one paragraph in that broadcast, which was as follows:

“So much for the high cost of living. It is a headache for all of us and, in my opinion, will become worse instead of better unless controls are again put on and maintained at proper levels.”

Remember it was three years ago I said this. I wish my friends opposite would listen to this now:

“The Federal Government did an excellent job of controls during the war and post-war years, to give them their just



due. Why then, did they take them off and subject hundreds of thousands of people in this country to hardship and a lower standard of living? In my opinion this is the greatest political blunder in decades.”

It is so much the worse now with the spiral going up and up every day. We thought we were badly enough off three years ago, with a 148 index; what must it be like now with a 172 index and thousands and thousands of our wage-earners haven't had any increase, or have had only small increases in the past three years! It is my opinion that prices should be controlled and even rolled back to where they were and kept on a reasonable level. The price tags in the stores have reached fantastic levels, and, to make matters worse, I have been informed that some of the chain stores, chain grocery stores, every once in a while go through and mark up their stock a cent, or 2 or 3 cents, whatever the case may be, on merchandise they have had in there for a considerable period of time. I think, to put it mildly, that is a dishonest practice and the customer just never seems to get a break.

Probably the greatest enemy of this Government, Mr. Speaker, is the small town store-keeper – not all, of course; but I feel quite a percentage of them. They don't like our labour legislation. For years and years there was no restriction on how long they could work their employees, and nothing to say as to how much they could pay them – not even a minimum; no holidays with pay unless the employer was generous enough to give them. Now they can complain to their customers who come in – mostly farmers – as to what they have to do as far as this Government is concerned and its labour legislation, and the employee in the store – the man whom we passed this legislation to benefit – is powerless to say anything about it. He must keep mum. He can't go up and buttonhole the customer very well, and tell him something different, and he can't even talk outside on the street or it gets back to the employer, with drastic results; so as a result, he just has to keep quiet.

Just one example as to what I mean. I think this occurred over in the town of Kamsack. One of our very good farmer friends in that district was in town one day and, in the afternoon sometime, he put in quite an extensive order – a \$50 order. I am not saying you get an awful lot for \$50 nowadays; but he came back to take it out just about five minutes to 6 o'clock and wanted a piece of linoleum. Well, perhaps it was something of an imposition to ask for an article of that kind just at closing time. It was down in the basement; it had to be measured and cut and so forth, and I don't feel the merchant can be unduly criticized for turning him down. But he blamed this Government; he blamed our labour legislation. He said he couldn't give him the linoleum because something in our legislation prevented it. Well, that is actually not a fact, but the person – quite understandably so – was most indignant, and as a result, has been very critical of the Department of Labour since that time.

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Such cases can be repeated many times over, and must have quite a detrimental effect on this Government of doing too much for the wage-earner and not enough for the farmer. I suggest this Government does everything for the farmer as well as the wage-earner, but obviously we are not in a position to set the price of wheat. That is done elsewhere. But we can and do say to the employers of this province they must not pay their employees under a certain amount. Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not think the farmer, generally speaking, begrudges the wage-earner of this province, thousands of whom are originally from the farms in the first place, the benefits this Government has provided, which include reasonable hours and fair wages, holidays with pay, and so forth, and I do not think anyone would suggest that we go back to pre-1944 days where there would be no such thing as two-weeks' holidays, no statutory holidays.

I might just mention in passing that we are the only province that provides statutory holidays; that is, the employee must not be docked for eight of them, Christmas, New Year's, 24th of May, and so forth, and if he or she works on them they must be paid extra. Then, again, I do not think they for a moment begrudge the injured workman the benefits which we have provided in the amendments to The Workmen's Compensation (Accident Fund) Act in this province over the period of the last six years, and I might say in passing that legislation is coming down in a few days which will improve the benefits to widows and children of the men killed in industry in Saskatchewan.

A certain class of employer does, of course, begrudge the employees these benefits, and let us call him perhaps the "petty chiseler" who likes to compete on low wages and poor working conditions, whereas he should be competing on efficiency. Most employers are fair to their employees and want fair competition, and it is only right they should have it.

Another method commonly used to the apparent discredit of our legislation is to itemize extra labour costs on bills submitted, rather than including everything in the total. Items such as compensation, holidays, etc., are shown separately which quietly draw to the attention of the customer the fact he has to pay the wage-earner for these various things. Well, perhaps this is not such a bad idea, the itemizing of these bills, but should be extended to garages, medical men, decorators, plumbers, etc., and, I might add, with no charge to the customer for going back for forgotten tools.

One of the largest hotels in Moose Jaw is reported to have a sign in the dining-room to the effect that meals can only be served during certain hours due to the labour legislation of this province. The eight-hour day is in effect there, and in that particular class of employment a spread of twelve hours is allowed; that is the eight hours must be worked within the twelve-hour period. What kind of an existence would it be, for instance, if a girl had to come on duty at the hotel or restaurant, or whatever it might be, at seven in the morning for two hours, at twelve noon for two hours, at six in the

evening for two hours and then ten to midnight at night to catch the theatre crowd for another two hours! She would be working eight hours all right but it would be a miserable existence. I might say in the vernacular of the cartoon "Them days are gone forever", and the management of the Moose Jaw Hotel might as well realize it.

I am afraid that sometimes our young people, Mr. Speaker, do not give credit to this Government for the benefits which they now receive, and it may be quite understandable. A young person eighteen, nineteen or twenty years of age, who is out working now was only twelve or thirteen years of age when this Government came into office and more or less takes these advantages as a matter of course.

I am going to take a moment or two, Mr. Speaker, and deal with labour as we know it in this province which, as everyone realizes, is predominantly agricultural. Most people, when "labour" is used in the collective sense think of the highly-organized unions in the steel or automobile plants, the mines and of John L. Lewis and Petrillo – the large manufacturing centres. We do not have such industries here, Mr. Speaker, at least not nearly what we would like, and with sixty-five per cent of people living on farms, labour largely consists of clerical people, employees of urban municipalities, governments, railways, schools, stores, warehouses, etc., many of whom have come to the larger centres from farms. We are continually being told the farmer is resentful, as I mentioned a few moments ago, that this Government has done so much for the wage-earners, but I doubt it very much, for he is not going to begrudge his own son or daughter living in the city the benefit of two-weeks holidays, one day's rest in seven, the right to organize into unions of their own choice, better minimum wage, compensation and so forth. I touched on that briefly just a few moments ago.

One thing I am quite proud of, Mr. Speaker, is the rate we struck in 1944 for injured workmen. For many years in this province it was 66 2/3 per cent and that is what it is all over the rest of Canada and practically all of the United States. I think there is one State which has 70 per cent, but ours has been the highest for six and one-half years, at 75 per cent. When a man is injured he must receive 75 per cent of his wages. Eventually I think, we will get it up to 100 per cent, but it is 75 per cent at the present time. The province of Ontario on the 1st of January, 1950, followed our lead and went up to 75 per cent. Now they have, obviously, an industrial province and have just about ten times the number of accidents there that we have here. We have about 1,000 a month and they have approximately 10,000 per month. All those people in Ontario, who are injured, can thank this province for getting 75 per cent of their wages instead of 66 2/3 per cent as it had been for a good many years.

With the exception of the Trade Union Act, which gives employees every opportunity to form or join unions of their own choice, other legislation in this Department is largely concerned with improving the wages and the working conditions of the unorganized or those in the lower wage brackets. During the past year, 4,300 inspections were made; adjustments in wages collected by the Hours and Wages Branch amounted to \$25,000 for the benefit of 806 employees,

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which is \$12,000 less than a year ago. That is, I think, a good sign. It shows that the employers and employees are getting used to our legislation and keep better records and so forth. Just this morning, we got a cheque from one of the larger hotels in the city for \$29,955, which is going to be divided among 239 employees, which will run them a little over \$100 each on the average; the highest was \$273. Now that is net. After their pension fund, unemployment insurance, income tax and everything of that kind is deducted, they receive that amount net. Strangely enough the organization under which this group came did not want us to proceed. They did not want us to insist on any further payments, but we did and, as a result, the employees will in a few days get those amounts through the mail.

I wish to briefly refer to The Apprenticeship Act and the indentured trades. A new Act was passed in the 1950 Session, effective since the 1st of February, 1951. It is designed to increase both the number and quality of skilled tradesmen in this province, whereby the general public will be better served by higher standards of workmanship, and the businessmen themselves protected from unfair competition. Certificates of status for all those working in these trades will be provided, at a small fee of course, indicating the class of workman the holder is, whether he is a journeyman (the highest rating), first, second, third, fourth-year man, or whatever it might be. It is obvious with such a system in effect, the workman will make every effort to improve himself; that is, a third-class man will try to get up to be a second-class man, and so forth. I want particularly to emphasize that no one is going to be put out of work. Let's say the rough carpenter type – he will get a certificate, perhaps it will be the lowest grade; but there is no thought of anyone being put out of work by the regulations of The Apprenticeship Act.

The Department is anxious to increase the number of apprentices, especially in brick-laying, and interested persons are requested to get in touch with this Branch. We expect a fair building project in the next few years, and there is a desperate shortage of bricklayers. I believe there are less than one hundred in the whole province and their average age is sixty-two. We need young men to go into the bricklaying trade and if they will get in touch with the Department we will be glad to help them out any way we can.

The Fire Commission comes under the Department of Labour so I will just take a few moments and hit the high-lights as to what they have done in the past year. It is of interest to note that Saskatchewan has led all provinces in the Dominion on the per capita fire loss. In fact they have led for the past five years, although it is up higher in Saskatchewan this last year than it has been before. We held a poster competition in the schools last summer and I will just take a moment and read off the names of the winners. The first place in the High School Division went to Hedy Kuber of Lipton, second place to Edwin Zeiler of Allan, third place to Irene Hodgson of Chaplin. In the Public School Division, the placings were: Marion Thames of Estevan, L. Prince of Gravelbourg, and Bob Steele of Yorkton, and honorable mention to Eileen MacNegally of North Battleford. They did very fine work, and the more we can keep the people of Saskatchewan fire

conscious, the better it is going to be.

Unfortunately, the losses of life were bad – 23 altogether, although the loss compares favourably with other years. The year before that it was 34; so deaths are going down, although 23 is too many because, as someone has said, there is never a fire that could not have been prevented. Although I do not suppose they could have included lightning, nevertheless too many of them are caused by carelessness.

I have a list here of the fires and perhaps I should just indicate the most common cause of fires, again, is smoking. I just heard of someone the other day, who was smoking in bed and almost suffocated himself and burned the place down. Well I believe that anyone who smokes in bed should take his place in history along with the guy who “rocks the boat” or points the “empty shotgun”. There were 1,552 fires last year; a loss of almost \$3,000,000. We even had a fire in a beehive; another in a popcorn stand; another in a Wurlitzer – perhaps they had a “hot” record on that started that. Last year the Association of Fire Chiefs met in Regina and we got a good deal of valuable information from them, which is, of course, being passed on from our Branch to the fire chiefs all over the province.

Here is something that came up as regards cigarettes, and a lot of our fires are started from cigarettes. It was recommended by our local Fire Commissioner, Mr. Tiffin, to the Association in Ottawa, and here is what he says:

“We recommend that the Dominion Association of Fire Chiefs urge the Dominion Government to prohibit the manufacture of tailor-made or manufactured cigarettes which contain in either the tobacco or the paper saltpetre, or other ingredients, which increase the burning properties of the cigarette. Further, the President requests the co-operation of the Association of Fire Marshals, through a letter to the President for similar action, and that a letter be sent to every member of the House of Commons.”

That, I believe, is an excellent idea but whether they will ever follow it through I do not know. A cigarette thrown away, that would burn itself out in a few moments, would reduce our fire hazards in this province and all over the country a great deal.

The Department also administers four important Branches, on which I would like briefly to report. First, there is the Boilers, Factories and Elevators Branch, which includes regulations and inspection of passenger and freight elevators, refrigeration, pressure vessels and liquid petroleum gas. The year passed without any serious accident in connection with the operation of any of these units. Quite a number of elevators were either replaced or subjected to major repairs with added safety to the public. Liquid petroleum gas can be very dangerous if improperly installed or handled, and every care should be taken.

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Our inspectors have done a good deal of educational work along these lines.

Secondly, the Electrical Inspection and Licensing Branch. The work of this branch has greatly increased, with 56,000 inspections in 1950 compared to 23,700 in 1945, due to increased construction in urban centres and the rapid expansion of the Saskatchewan Power Commission. It is encouraging to note that, in spite of the large number of inspections, it was found necessary to prosecute in only nine occasions, the same as the preceding year. I might say we do not prosecute except with great reluctance, and it has to be a pretty glaring infraction before we take the extreme of going to court. There are no reports received of persons losing their lives or receiving bad injuries due to electrical installations during the past year.

The Department administers the Theatres Branch in the province and The Travelling Shows Act. Last year, there were 31 travelling shows, three circuses, nine rodeos, then carnival rides, 1004 licences, also a number of smaller shows, riders, and carnivals throughout the summer – and here is a point, Mr. Speaker, which I hope everyone takes notice of. Travelling shows operating in conjunction with Agricultural or Industrial Fairs are granted a substantial reduction in the amount of licence fees. There were three circuses, last year, and two years ago, I think it was, there were one or two circuses that went through this province fleecing the general public with three or four admission prices. That is, you would go in one door or opening in the front and pay a certain amount there, then go through another and another, and the general public was rooked terribly. It is proposed to make a change, and it will now be necessary for those groups to post at the entrances the amount the public is required to pay. It is also proposed that chattels may be seized without warrants.

These same circuses, two years ago, caused a great deal of trouble and I think gyped the municipalities quite badly before we caught up with them. They came up to Moose Jaw and then swung west through Swift Current, North Battleford, Humboldt, and the first complaint we got was from the town clerk at Humboldt. He called up, one morning, to say they had slipped out and had not paid them near what they thought was coming to the town for its share, although they admitted they did not have anyone on the gate to check up, and while there was a full house it was surprising the few numbers there were between the opening and the closing of the tickets; but, anyway, they could not do very much about it. At Melville, they were in some kind of a difficulty with the town council almost right away and nothing much could be done about that. They could be taken to court, but they would be gone, the next day; and if they were fined, what about it? They could still pay the fine and be money ahead. So I went down to Weyburn to see them – that was the last place they showed in Saskatchewan – and the old gentleman who was the treasurer of the corporation was very apologetic and his voice stumbled when he explained that he would never think of doing such a thing as to give false declarations to these municipalities. However, I think a certain amount of good was done, as I was talking to the Mayor of Weyburn a few days afterwards and they did not have a bit of trouble with them there, but they will get away with anything if they think they can.

The Fairs we have here, not only in this city but in many other points in the province – I am thinking, for the moment, of the fairs which

show in the two larger cities – have a midway and the concessions where they give away dolls, blankets, clocks and so forth; but the catch is that the general public very seldom ever wins anything. I took it up with the Fair Boards, and they were quite sympathetic, too, that there should be more merchandise passed out, the odds are heavy enough against the visitor as it is. I am hoping for something better there. The old build-up game, which was a nuisance for so many years, where a young fellow would go in with a girl on his arm and lose \$150 to \$200 on this build-up game, has been pretty well done away with now. Operators who take more than ten dollars from any one person are put off the grounds by management if they are caught. But, it is pretty hard to watch them all, I must agree to that.

Then there is the entertainment itself. We had a complaint, about a year ago now, from the Knights of Columbus about the shows which they have on this midway. Some of them were pretty lewd. I had the Fair Management take it up with the owners of the show, which was wintering in Florida, that they would have to cut out some of the rough stuff the next time they came back. I have not heard anything since, and as no one was interested enough to complain about what they saw last year, I presume things have improved. But, at the best the entertainment is cheap and tawdry, and I think we would all agree to that. It does seem, sometimes, that the original intent of these Agricultural Fairs – that is the showing of stock, poultry, farm machinery, grain, etc. – has been overcome by noisy entertainment of doubtful value, and I think the calibre can and should be improved.

During 1950, a total of 1282 inspections were made, including 681 theatres, but I will not go into that as the figures are as dry as I am.

I came across, Mr. Speaker, (as a matter of fact I take this publication, which comes to the house every week) – “Labour” is the name of it and it is printed in Washington. I just want to mention that this paper is not one which depends on advertising; and here is a little description of it:

“‘Labour’ is owned by fifteen organized standard railroad labour organizations and is their official Washington newspaper. It is not conducted for profit and does not accept any paid advertising of any kind. Its editorial policy is determined by the following committee selected,” . . . and so forth.

This paper is non-political. Around election time in the States, you will see where different candidates are recommended to the wage-earners, and in fact there are as many Democrats as Republicans.

I was quite surprised to find (and I thought these days passed long ago) that some of the firms down there hire gangsters to keep labour down. Here it says, “Hoodlums get contracts from big firms in return for slugging Unionists”. Now, this is no wild-eyed rag of a paper, but is a responsible paper which prints nothing but news; in fact it devotes almost one page entirely to the Canadian news. Here is what they say in this connection – I only wish you could all see this cartoon, which describes pretty well what the mobster does for some of the employers. They had an

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investigation down there, and we read of it from time to time. I don't see his name for the moment – yes, Senator Estes Kefauver, from Tennessee, has been having this investigation and he gets these gangsters and hoodlums in and tries to find out where they made their money in the past few years and usually they refuse to answer. They have their lawyer there and there is very little that can be done with them. But here is something which happened – and this is the last issue dated February 17. This is what Senator O'Connor, from Maryland, says:

“To our amazement we find that ‘public enemies’ had infiltrated key industries and men with criminal records had forced their way into respectable enterprises, enabling them to live in luxury. It is a pretty sorry state of affairs if American industry has to deal with hoodlums to get its work done.”

And then later, it refers to the fact that one of the automobile companies down there, the Ford Company, have tried to “perfume” their actions with the alibi that the late Henry Ford wanted to rehabilitate the criminals and instructed that they be hired. The Secretary of the United Automobile Workers – and some of us will remember Emil Mazey who was up here, two or three years ago, with Victor Reuther – told the committee that the unsolved attempts to assassinate Walter Reuther, the Union President, and his brother Victor, might be traceable to the hoodlums who had infiltrated into the auto industry. I will skip the next few paragraphs. Another excerpt shows the extraordinary disclosure that the Detroit Stove Company had awarded a lucrative contract for handling its scrap to Santo Perrone who had served six years in Leavenworth Penitentiary. Perrone, unable to read or write, had been employed as a core-maker in the plant at \$1.65 per hour, but the twelve months after he got the contract his income jumped to \$60,000 per year. Perrone's bland explanation was that he got the contract just by asking for it. Committee investigators, however, set out to show that it had been the pay-off for his work in keeping unions out of the plant.

Well, “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy” – they do have a column “Is that So”, and you do see some good things in the joke column, and here is one of them:

“The economically young bride was about to have her first baby. She 'phoned her husband and then frugally took a bus to the hospital, reaching the entrance just in time to meet her husband arriving in a taxi.”

I have here a book put out by the Dominion Government and dated September, 1950 – “Provincial Labour Standards, concerning Child Labour, Holidays, Hours of Work, and so forth, by Hon. Mr. Gregg, V.C. Minister, Mr. MacNamara, Deputy Minister”. It had been my thought to go through this comparing Saskatchewan's legislation which it does show very fairly, and everything they have in here is correct insofar as our province is concerned. We do compare favourably, and are ahead of other provinces, in



most cases. Holidays with pay, for instance: Saskatchewan has two weeks while all the others have one week. The minimum hours of work in mines, factories – we will not bother with that one. I originally planned to go into some of the minimum wages they have down in Quebec and some parts of Ontario, and in fact Ontario is now up to \$16.80; that is where we left off four or five years ago. There they only have minimum wages for females, and it is a fact that, back during the 'thirties they had a minimum wage for females of \$12.50 per week, and some employers used to fire the girls and take on men as they did not have to pay them any minimum at all – they could pay them eight dollars, nine dollars, ten dollars, or whatever they wanted to.

I will not go into all of these. I think we all know that Saskatchewan has the best labour legislation of any province in Canada, so what is the use of telling either the members on this side or that side something they already know. I do not doubt that when they go back to their constituencies next summer, they will be more or less bragging about the wonderful labour legislation we have in this province.

I should just mention briefly, before I take my seat, the office of the Provincial Secretary. It is a very small department which handles The Insurance Act, The Companies Act, The Prevention of Frauds Act and other small Acts in addition. I had some figures prepared just a few days ago, going back to 1942 and bringing it up to the present, on the number of companies incorporated. In 1942, there were 29 with \$664,000 incorporated capital; in 1946, 186 companies with capital of \$24,273,000; in 1949, 155 companies with \$23,100,000; in 1950, 214 companies with \$22,803,000. I really haven't anything further to report insofar as the Provincial Secretary's Department is concerned.

The last time I spoke, the matter I am going to bring up now, was down toward the end of my notes and I did not get to it; but I referred to men who were getting on, or middle-aged, or up in the sixties, and the difficulty they had in maintaining employment or getting employment should they need it. I am glad to say that the Deputy Minister of the Federal Department of Labour is in entire agreement with me on that score; or perhaps I am in agreement with him. Here is what he said on one occasion:

“‘Too old at forty’ was the popular slogan in the depressed 1930's when the supply of workers greatly exceeded the demand, and the prejudice it aroused has not been entirely removed.”

And further information as I have stated:

“It has been proven over and over again during the war that the older men were, generally speaking, quite able to keep up with the younger fellow-workers in industry. In addition to this, they were found much more careful and their rate of injury was much lower.”

I am referring at the moment to factories and so forth; they will not take the chances the younger men will – quite naturally.

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“Piece workers reached their peak at the age of fifty to fifty-five. They did better piece work and got out greater quantities than the younger man from twenty to twenty-four.”

Here is a quotation from the “Christian Science Monitor” which appeared in the February issue of the “Labour Leader”, last year:

“Business is paying the high cost of retiring many of its people at the age of sixty-five and the skills they represented are being wasted. The life and the duration of the productive years in the United States are constantly increasing. Fixing the retirement age arbitrarily at sixty-five is in many cases thoughtless and poor judgment. The man and woman of sixty-five who can still do a first-class job either in his own position or a new one has value to his employer and deserves better than being automatically cast aside. Many who have put in forty or fifty years of work find it a disaster to be suddenly cut off and sunk into idleness whether on a pension or public assistance. Roads must be open for those who want to continue their employment to do so. Hundreds of thousands will be healthier and happier and they will add to the productive labour force of the nation and contribute to improving the general standard of living.”

Now, from time to time, Mr. Speaker, I have men fifty-five to sixty-six come to see if they can get some employment. Some worked for the City of Regina until the age of sixty-five and then are off. It is the same with the railways. I had a man come to see me a month or two ago. He had worked for the C.P.R. for twenty-five years, but he was over forty when he started, so when he was retired back in December he was cut right off and did not have five cents of a pension coming to him, and he had been there twenty-five years with steady employment. He was not just casual help. However, their regulation says ‘no pension’, and employees cannot be included in the pension scheme after forty. You cannot blame the local officials as they did everything they could for this man to try and get him something. He is hale and hearty and perfectly able to do the work just as well as he was fifteen or twenty years ago; but they have that regulation, and although they did everything they could from the local office here, Montreal decided and turned him down. Some of the schoolboards cut their employees off at sixty-five, whether they have any pension coming or not, and I do not think it is right, in spite of the fact they may have some by-law or moth-eaten regulation which calls for it. It should not be a dismissible offence to reach your sixty-fifth birthday.

I am not going to touch very much on the international situation as I have gone a little over my time now; but we all know the efforts the United States to the south of us made during and since the last war, assisting to win, stabilizing Europe and so forth – lend-lease, the Marshall plan. We give them every credit for what they have done. But, there is an element in that country, Mr. Speaker, which is always ‘twisting the lion’s

tail'. This is being done by the press, in magazine articles, over the radio and so forth. I would just like to throw out the suggestion that whatever that country may have done in the past few years, let us look back into the nineteenth century and take a look sometime, Mr. Speaker, at the map of the whole North American continent, including the Pacific Ocean, and I think you will be surprised to find to what an extent the American flag is extended. It goes away into the Pacific – dozens and dozens of islands, hundreds and thousands of miles from their mainland. Well that is not so bad. They acquired them many years ago; but I have always been a bit resentful of the gouge they took out of Canada away up into the province of New Brunswick back during the nineteenth century, and again a little later on the Pacific Coast. At one time there was a dispute, I think Spain was involved, with the United States, Great Britain and so forth, and the boundary should have been down around the Columbia River. Great Britain had had explorers in there: Captain Cook, Lord Vancouver and others; but finally, after years of negotiation, it was placed at the 49th parallel and at one time the United States wanted to take the south half of Vancouver Island, but they were not able to get away with that. But just to show the extreme they would and did go to at that time, there is a little tip of land through which the 49th parallel runs, which I do not think could be any more than fifteen or twenty square miles in area. They even took that even though it is entirely surrounded by water on three sides and then the Canadian Territory on the north. It showed the greed that must have predominated among the negotiators at that time – to think they would stoop to take that small piece of land and not leave it where it obviously belonged as part of the mainland of Canadian territory. Then there is a group of eighteen islands, the San Juan Islands, between the mainland the Vancouver Island. They got the best 'break' there and practically all of them are American territory, and you might say the same of the division of islands through the Great Lakes and so forth.

The point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is just that anything the United States may have done in the past fifteen, twenty or thirty years has been well paid for in advance by the territorial 'grabs' of the nineteenth century. I neglected to mention the Alaska boundary disputes. It is in history at the turn of the century. Alaska, as you know, was bought by the States from Russia back in the 1880's or 1890 for \$8,000,000 and at that time they claimed down to the 54th parallel. The President, "Teddy" Roosevelt, said he would put those boundaries just where he wanted to and would send troops, or threatened to send troops, if he did not get his own way. A Commission was set up consisting of three Americans, supposedly impartial jurists, one of whom was Henry Cabot Lodge. Canada had two representatives, a Mr. Aylesworth, I think, and Sir Louis Jatte and England had one, Lord Alverstone; but in spite of the Russian claim which did not extend very far from the coast, they went as far as thirty miles into Canadian territory and the map will show you that, Mr. Speaker.

I will use that as another example showing that they have been well paid in advance by the territorial grabs of the nineteenth century, and we do not need to consider that credits of favourable trade agreements or tourist traffic as being anything but perhaps deferred payments. Here is what one noted statesman of Canada said, in that day, about the whole thing. The statement was made by Sir Wilfred Laurier shortly after the boundaries were settled after the Alaskan dispute, regarding which there

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were some pretty hard feelings:

“The Canadians feel they were simply the duped victims of American and British Imperialist power politics and in the first days of furious indignation which followed the rendering of the award, even Sir Wilfred Laurier gave expressions to this resentment.

“I have often regretted, Mr. Speaker’, he said, speaking in Parliament, ‘and never more than on the present occasion, that we are living beside a great neighbour, who, I believe I can say without being deemed unfriendly to them, are very grasping in their national actions and are determined on every occasion to get the best of any agreement they may make. I have often regretted, also, that while they are a great and powerful nation, we are only a small colony; a growing colony but still a colony, and I have often regretted also that in our hands we have not the treaty-making powers that would enable us to dispose of our own affairs. It is important we should ask the British Parliament for more extensive powers so that if we ever have to deal with matters of a similar nature, we shall deal with them in our own way, in our own fashion according to the best light we have.”

Now, I do not think that at any future time the British Parliament would have the right to sell Canada down the river as they apparently did in this particular case.

Mr. Speaker, I am just about to finish my remarks. I had a lot of other things here, but I will just finish by saying this, and referring directly to the budget which has been brought down; the largest in the history of the province, \$58 million. I think our friends opposite, those of them who were in this House prior to 1944, missed a bet. They thought taxes had to be cut down, everything had to be cut down – no increases in salaries, no public services; but they had to keep down the taxes. Well, they have found out, we have found out, that the people are quite willing to pay taxes for the services they get, and I believe the hon. members opposite realize they made a pretty bad blunder when they tried to run this province on a shoestring.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to take my seat and also indicate that I shall support the budget.

**Mr. A.L.S. Brown (Bengough):** — Mr. Speaker, I notice that my friends across the way are in a very pleasant mood, and I think that I will keep my remarks on a level at which they can retain the same pleasant mood which they apparently have enjoyed here this afternoon.

I wish, Mr. Speaker, to associate myself with those who have preceded me in congratulating the Provincial Treasurer on the budget speech which he brought down, last Wednesday. I do it not only for the manner in which it was brought down — and that in itself indicates the capability of the Provincial Treasurer to conduct the financial affairs of this province — but I also want to congratulate him for the content of the budget which he brought down at that time. While it was true that the budget contained numerous figures — and I am somewhat like my friend, the hon. member for Shellbrook figures in that especially the type of figures which the Provincial Treasurer brings forth sometimes confuses me; but there was one thing upon which there can be no confusion and no question and that is that the budget which was presented here at that time continues along the same line which we had decided to adhere to in preceding budgets. It indicates another step forward to the point of economic justice and social security.

While it may be, as has been suggested, that the budget was not particularly spectacular — and possibly it was not particularly spectacular; but it was spectacular in comparison with budgets which used to be introduced here seven or eight years ago. I think, however, there is one thing about it which is spectacular, which stands out, and that is that through the medium of the Provincial Treasurer and his associates who sit with him on the treasury benches, they were able, in spite of the fact that we have inflation rampaging in the Dominion of Canada, to maintain the same level of services without an increase in the taxation or new sources of revenue. I think that that is indeed a credit to the work which went forth in preparing this budget and preparing the programme for the coming year.

It appears to me, Mr. Speaker, that the true test of a society — and after all a budget is more or less nothing but putting into practice the effect of the feelings of the society and the proposals of that society; I suggest that the true test of a society and of a budget can be classified in three or four general parts. First, and possibly foremost is how we, through the medium of the budget, are prepared to take care of those less fortunate than ourselves, and I refer specifically, possibly, to our aged people in this province; I refer to those who are afflicted with illness or accidents. I think that this budget indicates, as previous budgets have, that as far as the rest of the provinces of Canada are concerned we stand head and shoulders with them and head and shoulders above them in some respects, in how we take care of those less fortunate than ourselves.

I think I can refer in particular to the story which was told here, last night, by the Minister of Public Health. There is a story that not only we on this side of the House should be telling the people, but those people on the other side should be telling the people of

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Saskatchewan and of Canada, and telling it with pride, for the treatment and the improvement of treatment and care which we have been able to give to those people definitely less fortunate than ourselves who are afflicted with mental illness. I think it is a story that the people of Saskatchewan should know and the people of Canada should know, and the people of Saskatchewan should indeed be proud of it.

A second function of a society is how we take care of educating and preparing the rising generation to take their part in society when the time comes. And once again I think this budget, as has immediate preceding budgets, indicated that we realize that that is an important factor in our society. I was rather surprised here, this afternoon, that, when the Minister of Education indicated that one of the larger school units, I believe he referred to the unit of Shaunavon, had passed the 5 year and 6 month stage and the larger unit was an established fact in that particular area, the statement did not receive some sign of enthusiasm from the members of the Opposition. For instance, in the period this Government has been in power, we have had in operation the system of larger school units, and it has been indicated very definitely that there are advantages in the system, maybe not particularly in the total amount of finances spent, but it has been indicated that we are able to improve the educational facilities and the educational standards of the children. I think that this budget, in co-operation with other factors which have been established by this Government, indicates that we are keenly aware of the necessity of continued improvement of our educational facilities.

A third criterion of a budget as it affects society is, in my opinion, how, through the medium of that budget, we direct our society and our economic development in such a way as to improve the economic and social welfare and well-being not of a particular group of the society, but of all members of that society. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that on those three bases this budget well deserves the approval of this House and well deserves the approval of the people of Saskatchewan. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that we on this side would be the first to admit that this is not a perfect budget. It does not meet all that we hear and see as desirable and maybe, in some cases, necessary; but it does indicate a trend which we here in Saskatchewan are blazing, a trend towards the stage when we will have a budget which we are able to present to the people of Saskatchewan which does meet all our needs and all our desires.

Some questions have been raised on the size of the budget and I agree that it is the biggest and the largest budget that has been brought down in this House, and, as I suggested, some times the size of the budget has a tendency to confuse the people. I would like to point out, however, that the increase in the size of the budget is due to the increase of revenue which this Government has at its disposal to spend, and those increases in revenue are not entirely due to the inflationary period under which we have been operating. I think it should be pointed out also, Mr. Speaker, that, by virtue of adjustments within our sales tax or hospitalization tax, with the inflationary period that we have got at the present time, if we retain the 2 per cent sales tax that was inaugurated by the Liberals on the same basis it would bring in approximately the same amount as does our three per cent sales tax on present goods with the numerous goods which are presently exempt. But I do suggest that there are other

means by which this Government has had revenue made available to spend in the interest of the people and I can refer to one or two of these briefly. One of them is in respect to the liquor profits. It is true that the liquor profits are up because of the increased spending in that respect, but the profits of this Government are also up due to the fact that we have been able, through legislative action and otherwise, to remove much of the profit on that liquor traffic which otherwise went to profiteers and which is today made available through action of this Government to be used for revenue purposes. And another one is in connection with our natural resources.

I can refer back for instance to 1933 and 1944 when there was only some \$224,000 being made available as revenue from that particular Department in connection with the development of natural resources, or the already developed natural resources in connection with mining. Today, in our 1951-52 estimates of revenue, we indicate somewhat over \$2,000,000, an increase of revenue made available to be spent in the interests of the people from one particular branch of one particular department of some \$1,800,000. Now, in anybody's language that's not peanuts. And even if you translate it back to terms of dollars of 1943-44, it is still a lot of money.

I also suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this budget is not necessarily as great as it might be, or as it might be in the future, and I say "not necessarily as great" when you translate the dollar into purchasing power, in spite of an inflationary period or a deflationary period. In terms of actual purchasing power this budget is not necessarily as great as it might be. I suggest to the hon. members of this House to make some suggestions as to how we can increase the services which we feel the people (and we are representing the people) feel that they need, and I suggest that there are certain ways, or avenues, whereby we might actually increase the purchasing power of this budget. In searching those avenues of revenue, Mr. Speaker, I think we should keep in mind that we place a burden of providing this increased purchasing power to the budget on those people in one or two classes: either the class of people to whom society has made some direct benefit and they are in turn receiving a benefit from some activity of society, or, secondly, on those people most able to pay.

Referring particularly in this instance to those first group of people – people to whom society (and I refer particularly to Saskatchewan society) has brought some direct benefit and some direct advantage to, and I make reference to our improvement of the highway system, and the people using our highway system. And it is recognized in the Britnell-Cronkite report that on the basis of the improvement that we have made in our highway system there is justification in increasing our gasoline tax and thus making it possible to expand our highway programme to the point where we can bring these services, which are presently being provided to a few of our communities, to a greater number of our communities and so equalize the services which are being provided for them. It is also recognized in that report that there are other means by which increased revenues can be obtained from our highway system and used to extend that particular type of service, and that is in connection with the question of increasing the licence fees or the charges made to commercial truckers of a larger nature. I do not propose to suggest that a horizontal increase across the board is justifiable; but I do suggest that, in view of the fact that society has,

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in its wisdom, selected certain areas to develop on a high standard of transportation highway system, that those people and those classes of trucks who are given the privilege of operating upon those particular routes should make a greater contribution to our society than do some of the people who are, by necessity, as yet compelled to travel either on a gravel road or upon a municipal ungravelled road. So I think that there is either a new source of revenue or there is a means by which we could equalize the contributions to society.

Being a farmer myself, I think possibly I should suggest that there is a means by which we farmers can make a greater contribution to the increased purchasing power of the budget, and I refer to one possible tax which, in my opinion, is an equitable tax and is one worth consideration. That is the question of establishing a highway tax, along our high standards of highways, on the land which borders that particular improved transportation system. I think there is justification for it, and, as a farmer, I can see a lot of justification for consideration being given to that. In the first instance, by virtue of the fact that we have placed a highway by an individual's property, we have given him a capital gain by an action of society and, on that basis, he should be prepared – I think the majority of them are prepared, and willing – to make some counter-contribution back to society. On the second point, we have reduced his production costs by virtue of that highway. So I think, Mr. Speaker, that we have still some ways and some means by which we can increase the actual purchasing power of this budget so that we can reach that stage and that day when we will be able to extend these services at a considerably greater speed than we are at the present time. I am not criticising the speed at which these are being done, Mr. Speaker, I realize that, within the limitations and the scope of the facilities at our disposal, they far exceed the efforts of any other government in Canada.

There is another way, Mr. Speaker, in which the purchasing power of this budget could be increased as far as the people of the province of Saskatchewan are concerned, and that is, if the Federal Government would fulfil the commitment which was made and upon which they were elected in 1949, and assume full responsibility for the building of our trans-continental highway. In this budget there is an item of \$1,900,000 of capital cost towards the construction of that highway; \$1,000,000 in our budget of 1950-51 – in those two years, approximately \$3,000,000, we are compelled to make because the Federal Government refuses to fulfil its responsibility, not only a legal responsibility, in my opinion, but a moral and an implied responsibility and a promised responsibility to the people of Saskatchewan and the people of Canada in 1949. I suggest that there is a definite moral responsibility upon them to build this road, other than the commitment which they made. To make commitments which they have no intention to fulfil or making commitments which they will fulfil only on condition that somebody else makes a contribution to the fulfilling of that commitment, may be a good type of politics upon which to get elected but it is certainly, in my opinion, not in the best interests of the economy of Canada.

I suggested a moment ago that there was a moral obligation. My hon. friends across the way have, on numerous occasions, suggested that we were not spending all of the money which is obtained from the motorists of this province, plowing that back into highways. Well, I suggest that we have not only done that but plowed more than that back into our highways. But if that argument is valid, as it applies against this Government, then it certainly



must be equally as valid applied against the Federal Government at Ottawa. And if the Federal Government's revenue account was prepared to spend, in Saskatchewan alone, the amount of money which, in the last ten or fifteen years, they have taken out of the motorists of this province, they could build a trans-continental highway east and west through this province and certainly build, as well, one north and south, out of current revenues which they have taken out of the motorists of this province. So, if they are going to raise that objection against this Government, then I suggest that they raise the same objection against the Liberal Government at Ottawa. I also think, Mr. Speaker, that if that Government is not prepared to do it out of the revenue which they have taken out of the motorists of this province, then they owe it to the Dominion of Canada to do it on the basis of a public investment programme; and if they are not prepared to do one or two of those things, then I suggest that the least that they can do is to make available to the province of Saskatchewan the treasury bills to cover this, without interest, so that we, here in Saskatchewan, out of revenue account, will not be compelled to pay an interest charge upon an investment which is for the betterment and in the interests of the whole of the Dominion of Canada. But they make that sort of promise; promises made during the campaign by their chief leaders. They made it not only in connection with the trans-continental highway but they made an equal promise in connection with the South Saskatchewan dam. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, if some of my hon. friends suggest that some of the revenues that are being made available are not high enough in some particular departments, that they would like to see more roads built in their constituency, there is a way that they can help to have more roads built in their constituencies to serve the immediate needs of the people of those communities – and that is, to have the Federal Government, of the same political party they belong to, fulfil the commitment which was made to the people of Saskatchewan and fulfil the moral responsibility which was placed upon them by the Constitution of Canada. And now, Mr. Speaker, indications are that they are going to hedge even on the commitments which have been going out, and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that hedging on even the little bit that we have got is an indication of an extenuation of bad faith, bad faith which was evident when it became clear that they were not prepared, or unwilling, to fulfil that commitment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have never on any occasion, in either a Throne Speech or a budget speech debate, made much reference to my home constituency. Possibly some of the members do not even realize that I do represent a constituency; but, for a moment or two, if I might, Mr. Speaker, I wish to refer to the constituency of Bengough. I could refer to many of the improved services which have been made available to the people of that area since 1944, the advent of this Government. We could make a general reference to the improved services made available in connection with social security measures which, by and large, are general throughout this province but of which the people of the area which I represent are fully aware, and are indeed grateful that they have been able by collective action with other people in the province of Saskatchewan to bring to themselves that social security. I could refer also to the improved service which we have got through the medium of power. In 1944, there were only two communities in the constituency of Bengough which had the facilities of power, and in a very short period of time following the programme which has been started, and which has been extended every year, it will not be very long until every community in the constituency of Bengough has the facilities of power. Not only will they have the facilities

of power within the communities, but many of the farmers in those communities will have the facility of that power through the rural electrification. I could refer to the improved services which have been brought to those people in connection with the telephone system. I might even be rather boastful of that, because in the town of Assiniboia we got the automatic exchange before it was even brought in to the Premier's city of Weyburn.

**Premier Douglas:** — We have not got it yet.

**Mr. Brown:** — I could also refer, Mr. Speaker, to the improved services that we have got through the activities of the Department of Highways. In 1944 there was not one single community in the Bengough constituency which received any consideration so far as winter maintenance is concerned. There was not a community in that whole constituency which could proudly boast of an outlet or an inlet that was properly maintained and properly kept; and to every community in that constituency there has been improved service given as far as the highway system is concerned, and I think the people are aware of it and are indeed glad of it. But, when we started spending and expanding our services there are still some communities in that constituency which are not at a par with other communities in the same constituency. We have, running east and west to that constituency, No. 13 Highway, which incidentally connects up with the Premier's seat in the east and the highway to Willowbunch on the west. A few years ago, back when we were discussing the question of where a trans-continental highway should be in the province of Saskatchewan, I no doubt could have put up very valid arguments as to why the trans-continental highway should have been No. 13 Highway; but nevertheless, in spite of the fact that it is only the secondary trans-continental highway — No. 1 is assumed to be the first — it is the only one between No. 1 and the international boundary and it must be No. 2 as a trans-continental highway. But, in spite of the fact that it is only No. 2, it is becoming one of the main east and west arteries through this province. I am interested more in that highway as a connecting link between communities and an outlet for the communities which it does serve. Complementary to that particular highway, there is Highway No. 34 which crosses the two railways and crosses two communities which do not at present receive very good railway service and are depending upon this particular transportation system for their outlet.

I could also refer, Mr. Speaker, to Highway No. 2. Some reference has been made to that in this House and it is, along with one or two other highways in this province, being developed and gradually reaching the stage where it will become or may become one of the north and south routes through this province. I refer to that particularly as it affects the area south of Moose Jaw. Last year, a portion of that highway, which serves the people of the Bengough constituency, as well as the Notukeu-Willowbunch constituency, was brought up to a high standard. Once again, at the present moment, an extension of the work on that particular highway is, in my opinion, not a question of yet developing a through route down to the boundary. There is no all weather route yet that touches the international boundary connecting up with No. 2 Highway, and there is, in the minds of some people at least, some controversy as to which route No. 2 should follow after leaving the City of Moose Jaw or after leaving the point to which it is now brought up to the high standard. There is some question, if it is to be brought up to the category of a through route and an international route,

whether it should serve the communities such as Assiniboia, Rock Glen and south down to the border or whether it should serve such communities as Crane Valley, Willowbunch, Coronach and thus down to the international border. So, the thing to be arrived at in any improvement to that particular highway should not at the moment be considered in the light of two north and south routes, but rather as an improvement of the service to the communities through which it travels; and after the service has been brought to these communities it is on that basis that further improvements can be made to bring it up to the standard of an international north and south route.

I would point out that there are, as I said a moment ago, one or two communities in my constituency to which, by virtue of their position and of certain physical advantages which they have, we have been able to give greatly increased services. One of the communities which I could refer to is the community of Sinnett (?). I could refer to the improved services which we have given to that community in the form of highways, particularly in the form of maintenance. We have given them greatly increased services in respect to power and in respect to telephones; and I suggest to the Minister of Highways that when he is considering his expenditures for 1951 that he give greater consideration, realizing that we are not yet in a position where our highway is a through route, but rather a highway service to serve our community, to the extension of a minimum amount of service to those communities which are not yet on a par with other communities. And on that basis I suggest that there is a priority of some 70 miles to which consideration should be given rather than increased service to those points which already have a high standard of service.

Referring also to the Department of Highways, I think that the story which the Minister told yesterday in Public Accounts Committee should indicate something very clearly to this House. It indicates in my mind very clearly that, through the administration of the Department of Highways and through the policies of this Government, we are getting a great deal more for our dollar spent today, in spite of the fact that it is an inflated dollar, than we were getting back in 1943. I suggest that one of the reasons we are able to obtain this increased value for our dollar is that the Minister and the Government has introduced into the Department of Highways, the principles of Socialism and, through the medium of our own crews working from the Department and working in the interests of the people of Saskatchewan, are definitely able to bring better-valued dollars to the people of Saskatchewan than if it is given out in contracts, particularly when the contractor must, as he would back before 1944, demand some additional payment that he may put that payment into the "kitty" of the Liberal Party; and, in some cases, I am informed, the set figure used was 10 per cent for the kitty.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, briefly to make reference to the Power Corporation, a Crown Corporation set up by this Government. The members opposite have claimed some credit for the birth of the power development of this province. They may claim some credit for the fact that they put on the state books the Power Commission Act, which was not put there in an endeavour to supply, on a publicly-owned basis, or even on any basis, electricity and power to the outlying areas. Within the activities of the Power Commission during the period from the time it was inaugurated up until 1944, those activities could not, if carried on for another hundred years, ever possibly bring facilities of power to the outlying areas in this province.

And it was my hon. friends, or their counterparts, who sat in those benches in that period from 1944 to 1948, who used everything at their disposal to prevent us bringing power as a public utility and, as such, make it available to the people. I suggest that it would have been impossible for the private enterprises in this province to undertake rural electrification. Rural electrification in Saskatchewan, as in any other part of Canada, must be subsidized by some means and it is impossible and impractical to expect that the people who are engaged in the agricultural industry of this province should bear the entire cost of rural electrification. It is only through the medium of a public utility such as the Power Corporation that it is possible to do just that very thing, for it means that any surplus made through the sale or the use of power it is immediately possible to plow that surplus back into the Power Corporation for use in extending its facilities. If it was privately owned, or under private control, that surplus, a part of it may very well be plowed in, but the bulk of it could not be plowed back into it, as it would have to be used to pay the dividends and the profits to its shareholders. So I suggest that it is only through the medium of a power corporation, socially owned, that we are able to bring these benefits to the people.

I think also, Mr. Speaker, it is a credit to the Power Corporation and to the management and administration of that corporation, that the balance sheet which is presented to this House indicates the surplus that it does. It indicates that we have available from the activities of that corporation a considerable amount to plow back; and a lot of the credit for that must be given to the management and the administration of what is today a great public utility in this province.

Referring in general terms to our Crown Corporations, to me, Mr. Speaker, a better name than Crown Corporations would be to refer to these corporations as "People's Corporations", but in effect, that is what they are. It is you and I, through the medium of our Government, doing business on our own behalf. I think, Mr. Speaker, it is clear now, as it was clear to us three or four years ago, that in the record of this Government we have provided beyond a shadow of a doubt that it is in the interests of the people, be they in Saskatchewan or be they in Canada, to go into public enterprises and develop that type of ownership. And we are told by the record of the Government in business, it is good. But the balance sheet does not tell all the story. Far from it. It only tells part of the story. The whole story of government in business, or people's corporations is told in the service – in increased services and the new services which are provided to the people whom they represent and whom they serve.

I could refer, for instance, to our Government Insurance Office, a people's corporation. It indicates on our balance sheet that, through the years of operation of this particular enterprise, the people of Saskatchewan have saved for themselves a surplus of some \$707,000. But that is only part of the story, and it is possibly not the most important part of the story. When we compare the rates we are paying here in Saskatchewan with rates which people are paying in other parts of Canada and in other provinces, in spite of the rising cost of insurance, we have been able, by keeping the insurance rates at a point where the average person can obtain this insurance, we have definitely rendered a service to them. We could take, for instance, one insurance company which is in competition, or suggests that it is in competition, with the Government Insurance in certain fields of insurance, and that is the Wawanesa Insurance. I might say, Mr. Speaker, I imagine I, along with a number of other people in this House, previous to

the interest of the Government in the insurance business, did our business with the Wawanesa Mutual Insurance. It is a company which did and has in those days rendered a service to the people of Western Canada. But it is now in line and working along with other line companies. I suggest that that is one company which is in competition and which does receive considerable publicity. And particularly in the field of automobile accident insurance. I could refer, Mr. Speaker, to a policy which they sell in the province of Manitoba for \$52 – an automobile insurance policy sold in Manitoba by the Wawanesa for \$52. A similar policy sold just across the border in Saskatchewan, sold by the Government Insurance Office for \$28.50, plus an addition, which is not available in Manitoba but is available in Saskatchewan through the Saskatchewan Government Insurance, of personal accident liability within it, which is denied them in Manitoba. No one can argue that the risk of operating a car immediately beyond the boundaries of Saskatchewan is greater than it is within the bounds of Saskatchewan. That indicates in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, that the Government Insurance of this province has not only saved Saskatchewan \$707,000 in actual surpluses, but for every person who purchased an automobile insurance policy in Saskatchewan it saved them \$24 by virtue of the fact that we had it here in Saskatchewan and they didn't have it in Manitoba.

Other classes of insurance are of a similar nature, personal property floater policy, for instance I am told that the minimum anywhere outside of Saskatchewan is \$35; in Saskatchewan \$25 is the minimum charge, a saving there for every person who uses the service of that facility of some \$10 of fee. The same is true of fire insurance. It is true of every type of insurance into which the Government has gone, and in those types of service which I think tell an additional part of the story rather than the story that is told in the balance sheet. The pioneer work which this Government has done here in Saskatchewan in respect to an enterprise such as the Government Insurance is bearing fruit in the United States and in other parts of Canada.

I can refer also to one of our other people's corporations, the Transportation Company. The balance sheet shows that we have a total surplus of some \$217,000 over the period of years which it has been operating. But here is a corporation whose story is definitely not told on the balance sheet. It is told in the service which we are able to bring to the people of Saskatchewan through this medium. If a company such as that was operated under private ownership – and it was operated under private ownership in the days of my friends, the Opposition, and as they suggest they would operate it in the future, if they are going to “throw the whole caboodle out the window”; if they operated it on that basis the only routes which they would choose, and naturally the only routes that they could choose, would be those routes that showed some profit to them. They simply could not operate the service routes that are presently being operated. But when they are operated as a public utility we can and do definitely operate routes which are for the service of the people living in those communities and many of those communities are outlying communities. I think it can be proven beyond the shadow of a doubt that, through the medium of our transportation company, we have brought transportation services and facilities to people who otherwise would never have seen or had the use of a bus. And we have operated and do operate lines complementary to what we might call our

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heavy travel lines, or those which could be termed the profitable ones. The complementary lines are of assistance not only to those heavy travel lines, but in many cases they can be justified only on one basis and that is on the basis of service; and I am proud to associate myself with that type of enterprise which does not place profit above desire and the need of providing increased services, particularly to those communities in our outlying parts.

The same story could be told, Mr. Speaker, of our other people's corporations. The same story could be told of the woollen mills. The balance sheet in that case does not tell the whole story. It indicates that we have some so-called loss, that my friends refer to in the terms of profit and loss. It indicates that we have not got a surplus to place upon the balance sheet, but we have a surplus to place to the credit of this Government and the credit of this province, and it is that we have brought a new industry into this province, an industry that is certainly standing up and proving the economy of this province, and at the same time we are providing employment within our province for people who are born and raised within this province. In addition to that we are developing an industry which is complementary to our basic industry, agriculture, in this province. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that any industry which is developed complementary to our basic industry cannot be judged on the basis of whether it makes a profit or whether it takes a loss.

The same story can and should be told about our other people's corporations. They are all in the same category; the balance sheet only tells part of the story, the whole story must be told by those people who are interested in promoting the welfare of the people of Saskatchewan, promoting their interests, rather than to work against them, and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Opposition has a duty to perform in respect to these people's corporations. These people's corporations represent money invested by the people of Saskatchewan through this Government, and it is not their duty to attempt to destroy these institutions or to discredit these institutions, but rather, if they want to make a contribution, let them make a contribution in respect to making them work more efficiently and more effectively in the interests of the people whom we serve and whom, I expect, they should serve.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that the history of our people's corporations would indicate we have reached the stage where once again we could fly the flag of victory for social ownership. We indicated that public enterprise is a good type of enterprise and we have indicated that public enterprise can work very well and very effectively along with other types of social ownership, the main one of which is the cooperative movement. I can refer, Mr. Speaker, to our Public Accounts Committee, and once again indicate that the Opposition is not rendering the service that they should be to the people of Saskatchewan or rendering the service that the people of Saskatchewan expect. They are using, as I presume, they are prepared to use anything, our Public Accounts Committee and our Crown Corporations Committee not in the interests of the people, but rather to further their own political aims and ambitions. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that they have a duty to perform, and that it is their duty, along with us on this side of the House, to see that we get dollar value for the money which has been spent in the years under review. To the extent that

they are not attempting to find out or to see if we are getting dollar value for our money spent, I suggest that they have failed to fulfil the responsibility which we have a right to expect from an opposition.

I would like to refer, Mr. Speaker, rather briefly, I notice the time is approaching 6 o'clock, but I think, Mr. Speaker, for a moment or two I could refer to our estimates which were placed on our desks the day the budget was brought into the House. I would like to indicate and suggest that there is much in our proposals of expenditure for this year which if the members opposite were in power they would like to see and would see wiped off the books and as such reduce the budget to a point possibly where they could have it. I could refer to increased expenditures which have been made in regard to Education. They suggest that they are going to have increased expenditures on education. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, by virtue of the fact that they have not yet come out and endorsed the main improvement in our educational system which has been made in this province, namely that which I referred to at the outset of my remarks, the larger school unit of administration, they would possibly (they have never indicated otherwise) remove that from the statute books and throw the responsibility for education back upon the local school districts. Well, if they do that, Mr. Speaker, the money which we are today expending through the medium of our vote for education could certainly not be as effectively spent and as such would be materially reducing the purchasing power of the budget as translated into educational services to the people or for the children of this province.

The same thing is true, Mr. Speaker, of the Highways and Transportation vote, which is on our desk. Two policies which they have advocated in the past, and no doubt policies which they are advocating today, namely returning this back to the contract basis and adding to the contracts the 10 per cent which was added in those days, certainly would not give dollar value for the money spent, and as far as the purchasing value of this budget is concerned, it would be reduced to that extent, and we would not get, even for a similar amount of money, the standard of highway which we are getting today, and we certainly would not get the mileage which is being built and being maintained at the present time.

We could turn over the page to Public Health and the same story is true. They talk about decentralization of this hospital scheme. They don't mean decentralization, they mean destroy this hospital scheme which has been inaugurated and put into effect this Government. We listened to the Minister of Public Health this afternoon indicate very clearly to us how it is possible to have an increased purchasing power in this budget, in the Department of Public Health, through a change which he has suggested. It indicates very clearly that we are constantly striving and looking for means by which we can improve our services and can extend our services within the same purchasing power of the budget. And I think that is to be laid to our credit.

The same, too, in respect to Social Welfare and the work which we are doing to alleviate to a degree the suffering of people less fortunate than ourselves, particularly in respect to our old-age pensioners. It is only through the medium of socialized activity that we are able to get the value which we get for our money through the expenditures in this Department as well as in other departments. My hon. friends suggested, as they have

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on numerous occasions that they do not believe in the principle of socialized activity. I presume therefore, they would withdraw those activities, those socialized activities which are presently in our department and which are saving the people of Saskatchewan money and making it possible to render greater service to the people with the same size of a budget.

We come now to the Department of Agriculture, and the same story is there. It is only through the medium of applying certain socialistic principles to our agricultural economy that we are going to get an agricultural economy adaptable to the soil and climatic conditions which exist in this province. The Minister of Agriculture has indicated, and this vote further indicates, that we are prepared to give increased public assistance to promoting and developing the agricultural industry and we are doing it on a basis of the interest to the public. If the hon. friends opposite suggest they are not prepared to operate these in the interest of the people of Saskatchewan generally then I suggest that they will be reducing the services which are presently being provided to the people, particularly the farming people, through our Department of Agriculture.

The same is true of our Natural Resources. The criticisms which we have heard here in the past in connection with our Natural Resources, I am positive were not made in the interests of the people of Saskatchewan, but rather in the interests of the Liberal Party, and that in time perhaps some of their friends could get their hands once more back into the pork barrel, rather than have these industries developed in the interests of all the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I wish to assure you that I shall support this Budget. I support this Budget, Mr. Speaker, because it furthers the day of the socialistic viewpoint and thoughts of the people of Saskatchewan. I have heard several definitions given of Socialism. One which appeals greatly to me, at least as regards the ideology and the philosophy behind the theory of Socialism, was, "Socialism is a protest against human suffering." In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, in this budget and through the medium of the budget we are indicating a means by which we can eliminate some of the human suffering, eliminate it at least as far as within our ability it is possible to do so. I am not yet satisfied that we have reached the ultimate in our protest against human sufferings. I am looking forward to the day, Mr. Speaker, and it may not be so long, when we shall see a budget brought down in Ottawa in which there are the same general principles of protesting against human suffering. Mr. Speaker, I will support the motion.

**Mr. L.M. Marion (Athabasca):** — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

(Debate adjourned)

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