

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Twelfth Legislature
7th Day

Friday, February 20, 1953

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

DEBATE ON ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

The House resumed, from Thursday, February 19, 1953, the adjourned debate on the proposed Motion of Mrs. Cooper for the Address in Reply to the spec, and the proposed amendment thereto by Mr. Tucker.

Mr. T.R. MacNutt (Nipawin): — Mr. Speaker, to continue from where I left off, yesterday afternoon, I do not intend to take up too much of the time of this House, but I would like to say something about that great north country in which I have the privilege to live; and especially something about the constituency of Nipawin which I have the honour to represent. What I have to say will probably not be new to many members in this House, but I am sure that there are quite a number of members in the House who are not too conversant with the conditions in northern Saskatchewan. To illustrate my point — a few days ago a gentleman in Regina with whom I was talking, asked me if there was such a town as Carrot River. I do not blame that gentleman too much because I rather think that we from the north have not publicized our great country enough, and I believe a large part of the blame is ours. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that there is a town by the name of Carrot River and it is a very splendid town with a population of around 1,100 or 1,200 people, and that town is going ahead as all other towns in the north country are, and before long I feel that it will be a great deal larger than it is today.

Agriculture, of course, is our basis industry, although we do have a certain amount of lumbering in that constituency. Lumbering, however, is not too much of a paying proposition and is carried on largely by the farmers of the constituency in the winter months, when they feel that they can get out and make a little extra money to help out with their income which they receive from their farms. It is therefore a sideline, but there is enough timber in that country to keep going for quite a number of years yet.

In the constituency of Nipawin there is very little trapping and, as far as I know, there is no commercial fishing. The dirt farmer, therefore, is the man we have to look after and the man we have to pay the most attention to. The texture of our land up there varies, as it does in possibly any constituency; but most of it is a heavy loam which we call gumbo, and I can assure you that if you ever get into it in wet weather you will agree with me that it is gumbo. This land can and does produce an enormous quantity of grain. We can grow anything from 30 up to 60 — yes, and I have seen 70 — bushels of wheat to the acre, but that is not usual, of course; but crops of 40, 45 and 50 bushels to the acre are quite usual up around that country and I contend, Mr. Speaker, that when we can grow crops like that, we have some of the finest land in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Our big problem up there is not drought; in fact it is just the opposite. We have too much water and, therefore, we must consider, to a large extent, drainage. Some years ago that country was practically all under water and there has been a certain amount of drainage carried on throughout the country, but there has not been enough. We still require a considerable amount of drainage. There is a drainage operation scheme carried on at the present time, and I sincerely hope that the Government of this province will continue with that good work and do the job as we require it.

Our main market roads in that country – and I realize, Mr. Speaker, that roads are the problem of the rural municipalities – are not good and the reason for that, in my opinion, is that throughout that country we have a tremendous number of streams, small rivers and creeks that have to be bridged, and by the time the rural municipalities have paid for those to be put on their roads. I am pleased to see that the Government has taken bridges into consideration, and that we will have some relief at least in the building and upkeep of the bridges throughout the country and especially in that northern part of the province. I feel that the Government should take over those bridges. They should be responsible for those bridges as a whole, because, after all, those streams and rivers do not belong to the rural municipalities, they belong to the Province of Saskatchewan and I do feel that the Province of Saskatchewan should be responsible for the crossing of them.

When we look at some of those roads when we go out west of the town of Codette about 18 or 20 miles, those people have not any town very close and last summer I was out in that country and I was stuck right in the middle of a road and the rest of that road was dry. Now that is not altogether reasonable. The Ravendale district, which was mentioned by the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Berezowsky), is a country that has the hardest type of land to go over and it is a very difficult country to build roads in, and I do not think that the rural municipality should be expected to build the roads that are required. A lot of that district, of course, is in the L.I.D., and I do understand that there is some movement on foot to put some roads up through that country and I am very pleased about that.

We go over a little further and the roads to the Co-op farms out near Carrot River; during the campaign I had occasion to go out there to hold a meeting, and it took me two hours and twenty minutes to go from Carrot River to the Co-op farms at that time. I understand that a road has been built in there since, but at that time, Mr. Speaker, if anybody had been sick in that community or had an accident, they might have died before they could have been got out to a doctor, and I do not think that is right. Those people were placed in there of their own free will, of course, and I think that they should have had a road there all the time and not have had to wait until this late date to get the trans that they should have had.

I do believe that the Government of this province should come to the assistance more than they have of those rural municipalities to help them build those roads, and there is no sense in building roads up in that country unless they are covered with gravel, and plenty of gravel at that, because the type of soil that we have will not enable us to move in wet weather. I feel that the north country has been neglected in that respect, because when we come to other parts of the province we can travel on hardtop

and gravel roads, while up there we have to plow mud, and that, in my opinion, is not just the fairest thing to do.

With reference to highways, Mr. Speaker, in our part of the country we haven't got too much. We have No. 35 Highway in my constituency from Pontrilas up to the junction of No. 55 and 35, and we have a highway from Smeaton to that same junction; and then we have No. 35 Highway going off into the blue, and that is all we have up there. It is not too much for the type of country that we have, and I feel that No. 35 Highway, and I am glad that my hon. friend, the member for Cumberland, has spoken on this too, and is supporting the completion of that highway to Flin Flon. It will be very fine if we can get Federal aid to complete that highway, but if we cannot get Federal aid, I feel that it is the duty of this Government to build that highway right into Flin Flon. That is going to open up a market for the people of the Carrot River Valley for produce; it is going to assist the fishermen up in that north country to bring their produce out by a shorter route, and it is going to be a wonderful thing for the tourist traffic and tourist trade in this country. We have a lot of money spent on that highway now, which is largely going to waste, and I do feel that in order to save that money and to give the people something for the money that has been spent, that highway should be completed just as quickly as possible.

Between the towns of Nipawin and Carrot River — and those are the two largest towns in the constituency — we have nothing but a municipal road to travel on, unless we want to go around by Tisdale. At the present time if I am in Carrot River and it is wet weather and I want to get to Nipawin, I have to travel a distance of 90 miles, where otherwise I could make it in about 24. I do feel that we should have a highway between the towns of Nipawin and Carrot River because those towns up there are large enough to deserve some good trans, or some good means of trans between them; and, eventually, we are going to have a highway through there because we must, in time, and as soon as possible, open up that wonderful country between Carrot River and The Pas. I understand that the Government is giving some consideration to that plan and, again, we are looking for Federal aid there and I think rightly so; but if we cannot get Federal aid I say let us to ahead with it anyhow. I suggest to the Government that they go ahead with the opening up of that great country, and if they do, then we must have a highway from No. 35 in the neighbourhood of Nipawin or Codette through Carrot River and on to The Pas.

I do not know how many thousands of acres we have up there between Carrot River and The Pas. I have heard various statements; some say 1 ½ million, some say 1 million, and I think the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Nollet) suggested, yesterday, that it was probably between 600,000 and 700,000; but in any case we have thousands of acres up in that country that can be opened up for people to go up there and settle and make their homes, and that land, Mr. Speaker, is some of the finest land in the province of Saskatchewan. I had occasion to go over it last winter, a year ago now, on the cavalcade between Carrot River and The Pas, while the snow was on the ground, and I travelled with an old-timer who knew that country and he was telling me about it as we went along. I can assure you, Sir, that that country and that land is just as good land as we have any place in the province, and if we can get that opened up it will relieve the situation and will allow many of our people to get up there and make the homes which they are entitled to. But before we get those settlers in there we must get the drainage; we must have that country drained and drained properly, and we must have roads put in there.

Do not let us make the mistake that was made in the Connell Creek area where a lot of settlers were placed in that area before the drainage was put in, or before very much drainage was put in. Those people just lost two years of their lives and I know that country very well and I know the people there. They did not have roads, and they did not have drainage and they could not get their crops in. they could only take their cars or trucks or whatever they had just to a certain point, and then they had to walk into their homes and that, in my opinion and I think in the opinion of this House, is not the proper thing to do. So I must impress on the members of this House, Mr. Speaker, the fact that, before anything is done in the way of settling that country between Carrot River and The Pas, the first thing to do is get in there and drain it, because a lot of that land is under water at the present time; but when that water is removed we will have the finest land you can find anywhere in the province. The land in the country in which I live at one time was practically all under water and today, as I said before, it will grow 30 to 60 bushels of wheat to the acre.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to take up too much of the time of the House. I though I was going to take a little longer, but I am getting near the end and I always feel that when I have said what I have to say, it is time to quit; but in summing up, the few remarks that I have tried to put over, today, and I hope that I have told you a little about that great north country. It is a country that, once you live up there, you never move away from. I moved up there about six years ago, and wild horses could not drag me away from there.

Mr. Speaker, I have tried to put over to this House something of the interests of the people of the constituency of Nipawin, and whether they be Liberal, C.C.F., Social Credit or Progressive Conservative, it does not make any difference to me; I feel that I am the representative of them all and I feel that my job, my duty here, is to fight for that country to the best of my ability, and I can assure the hon. Ministers that they will hear a lot from me during this Session and between Sessions because I am going to fight for the things which I have spoken of today, and I am sure they will be rather tired before my term is up.

What we want up there is more assistance to our rural municipalities for the main market roads, more work done in the local improvement districts to allow those people to get out to their market towns. We want more miles of gravelled highway, and we want better drainage. That is what the people of Nipawin sent me down here for, and that is what I am going to try and get. We want that country opened up between Carrot River and The Pas, and we want No. 35 Highway built from White Fox to Flin Flon.

Now that might be a big order. We do not expect it all in one year, but we do expect a start to be made on that, and we expect the Government of this Province to put some of the money – more of the money – that they receive in the Treasury here back into that country, because we pay a tremendous amount into it. I would like to see the members of this Legislature come up and take a look at our country and see what a fine country we have, and I am sure that you will go along with me in what I am trying to do. If I can do anything towards getting these things done I feel that I will be doing a service not only to the people of the constituency of Nipawin, but to the people of Saskatchewan as a whole.

Mr. H.C. Dunfield (Meadow Lake): — Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to hear you announce, a few minutes ago, that there were several groups of high school students in our galleries today, for it so happens that the first of my remarks, I think, will apply particularly to the younger people of our province.

As a new member of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, though not a young one, I have been very interested and at times impressed with the proceedings. The colour, ritual and dignity of the opening ceremonies emphasized anew to me the great traditions with which we are linked to the mother of all parliaments, and from which we derive our high concepts of justice, freedom and the dignity of man.

When I took my seat in this Assembly and looked over the list of its membership, I realized that we are of many racial origins but we have one thing in common: We have the priceless gift of Canadian citizenship. I do not say this lightly, Mr. Speaker, nor for oratorical effect. I believe in it deeply. In this day, when more than half the people of the world live in fear and trembling, I repeat that I think we are indeed greatly privileged in our Canadian citizenship.

With many others, some who are in this House today, I have lived in this province of Saskatchewan under three different Governments — Liberal, Conservative and C.C.F. Throughout those years I have heard, Mr. Speaker, all the members of those different governments tell us as a people what they had done for the people of this province. Mr. Speaker, it has been my experience and is my belief that the tremendous developments that have taken place in our province are due, to a great extent, to the courage and industry of its citizens, tempered at times by the vagaries of nature and economic conditions. And I think that I shall take great pleasure at times in possibly sticking a pin onto some of these inflated balloons of political propaganda.

I might say I am in a very fortunate position, Mr. Speaker, that is politically speaking I am in the position of the army mule — no aspirations, no future, no hope; and because of that, I can concentrate my political activities on the affairs of the people and the district that I have the honour to represent.

The programme of progress, as outlined in the spec, I think is a most ambitious one, and, Mr. Speaker, as a citizen of this province, I sincerely hope that it will be fulfilled completely, and exceeded, and that economic conditions will remain such that our hopes will be realized.

In the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, I found some things with which I could agree in principle; some on which I have a little doubt, and some with which my personal experiences in the north find me in disagreement.

But notwithstanding my doubts or disagreements, nothing can decrease my appreciation for the most gracious address by the hon. junior member for Regina, and for the clear, concise and forceful resume of the Government record by the hon. member from Melfort (Mr. Willis). In fact, in the latter case, the hon. member was so forceful that he almost had me in the frame of mind of the little old lady who inquired of the clerk if the material she was buying was really good and he said, "Oh yes, madam, it's wonderful. There has never been anything like it before;" and she said, "You know, I kind of think that is true because the newspaper advertisements speak very highly of it."

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that in this Throne Speech debate, members on each side of the House are permitted considerable latitude in their choice of topics for discussion at this time. With that thought in mind, I would like to tell you something about the constituency I have the honour to represent – that is the new provincial riding of Meadow Lake. When I say "new", Mr. Speaker, I refer only to the new boundaries as created under the last Redistribution Act of several years ago. From the standpoint of habitation, this is one of the oldest constituencies within our province for, long before the first sod was broken on the prairies for agricultural purposes, there were to be found in the northern part of my constituency, and much farther north, settlements composed of native Indians, those of mixed blood called the Metis and white men, who had developed a considerable commerce in the fur trade, which at that time was the very basis of our Canadian economy. All the traffic of that trade came and went at first through Hudson's Bay, and I believe one of the hon. members mentioned, yesterday, that the first habitation for white men was built at Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan River.

The way of life of those early people was entirely that of the trapper, the hunter and, to a lesser degree, the fisherman, and in the northern part of my constituency today, there are still those whose principal means of livelihood is much as it was in the days of their forefathers. But agriculture and industry have pushed steadily northward and brought increasing problems for the native people. When I first went into that Meadow Lake country many years ago, game was abundant, fur plentiful, and the native people there and the Metis lived very well off the resources of the country. As settlers moved in, they were pushed further north, with the result that their area became smaller as more people were put into it, in which to obtain a living from the remaining resources.

Three weeks ago, I drove almost to the north end of my constituency, a very interesting trip; about 85 miles by car, 85 miles through winding and twisting bush-road, which was quite a thrill – you never knew when you were going to take off a fender; and then about 125 miles over ice,

down the rivers and across the lakes, and that was an exceptionally fine piece of road. I never knew just how fast my car would go, and I did not even find out there because you just could not drive that fast, but it is magnificent to drive on ice, I can assure you; that is if you keep your eyes peeled for the fish-holes, where they did a hole and pile up a lot of ice – you might run onto one of those little piles and it would be disastrous.

I made that trip, Mr. Speaker, to meet these people, many of whom I have known for many years, and to ask them about their problems. Last summer, when I was up there during the campaign, I said to them, “I will make no promises other than this, that I will visit you once in the winter and once in the summer to discuss with you your problems and your suggestions for the solution of those problems, and it will be my duty and pleasure to take those problems and your suggestions to the government of the day, and do the best that I can to see that they are implemented.”

The chief problem, and, of course, there are always problems in every area of the country, but the chief problem today, before the people of the Ile á la Crosse – Patuanak – Beauval – Buffalo Narrows area is entirely economic. Prices for fur and fish have been very low this winter; for fish in that area, disastrously low. Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not blame the Government for that. I heard the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. Nollet) say that the law of supply and demand was a myth. Well, today in the north country we are up against that same old myth, for when we sell our products beyond our own province and beyond the confines of our country, I do not think it lies within the jurisdiction or the power of this or any other provincial government to beat the laws of supply and demand.

I think their problem was made clear by one of the old residents who is very observant. He said to me, when we were at Ile á la Crosse, “We have had here, this hospital, for more than thirty-five years, a hospital built by the Federal Government. We have old-age pensions contributed to by both the Provincial and Federal Governments. The Provincial Government has done great things in this north country in the way of improving educational facilities” – I assure you they have, and I am quite willing to give them credit for it; and he said, “All these things have combined to improve the health of the people here, with the result that the population is growing away from its food supply or means of sustenance.” Nature, if left alone, has a marvellous way of keeping the balance of things.

I was up there, some years ago, and had the opportunity of watching instances where they were taking the census of the Indians and, Mr. Speaker, I was shocked time after time. We were to find out not only how many were living, but how many had been born, and in family after family there had been born 12, 14 and 16 children, and at the time we were there, they would run 1, 2 and 3 in the family. That is the way nature kept a balance. It was cruel and harsh but, nevertheless, she kept a balance.

They asked me what I thought about a solution of their problem of the continuously growing spread between the population and the means of supply, and I said, “My good friends, I do not think that is the right way to go about this.” I said, “I certainly don’t know, and I do not think that anybody in Regina knows; but I do believe that you, knowing your own problems, surely can arrive at a decision that will guide the powers that be.” For I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the unanimous decision of any occupational group- in Saskatchewan will give a suggested answer to their problems that is nearer the truth than any experts that any government can ever import can suggest.

As outlined to me there, they do not ask much, I do not think. The pressing problem is trans. From Green Lake north, we have one of the oldest colonization roads in the province. It is not a bad road – there are a few holes and a few spots of black earth that require gravelling, but I have found, time and time again in the north country, that with a very moderate expenditure in the building of a road – not a big road, but with a very moderate expenditure in laying the base of a road, with constant maintenance, it is amazing what can be brought over that road and what it will stand up under.

They told me there, and I have been over it myself often enough to know, that with very little money, compared to what we spend in highway construction, those people could have a road which would improve their conditions greatly. The cost of living would be lowered, because of the lower rates on incoming and outgoing freight. One of the small things from which they would derive an immediate benefit would be their blueberry crop, for we grow in the north country the finest blueberries on this Continent, not even excepting the Nova Scotia berries; but it is impossible to get them out. Bring them down over those rough roads and they become wet – some broken and wet and unsuitable for sale. With a good road they could be brought out quickly.

And also in connection with the fur trade. If these people could get out their catch quickly in the spring to meet the first market, they told me it would be of great benefit to them. They usually are just a few days late and catch the second market which, I understand, is generally the poorest of the year.

And on that particular road, I want to tell you there is one of the finest trout lakes in the Dominion of Canada. It is just five miles from Beauval on the Beaver River. There were two gentlemen went in from Saskatoon last September – and I do not know whether they broke the law or not – but they caught 70 trout in two hours, weighing as high as 30 pounds. That is just an indication of what can be done and probably what is being done.

That particular road has been our main, road into that country. It goes to Fort Black on the Beaver River and to Ile á la Crosse and is the jumping-off-point for all the deliveries in the north, and there is a tremendous amount of stuff going through there.

The other road, No. 4 (I know we hear a lot about roads) going north out of Meadow Lake, is now 52 miles north. It is bulldozed for another 30 miles and another 51 miles will put it into Buffalo Narrows, the centre of all the northern waterways – and what a waterway! I have had friends from the States, and others whom I have met who have been up there, and they say there is just nothing like it anywhere in the States. In one particular cove, at the mouth of the Dillon River at the old chief's place there, one American said to me: "I know men in the States who would give \$10,000 for one year's rental of that place." It is the most beautiful thing you ever say, and it has particular advantages for summer resorts in that they are family beaches; lovely shade trees, wide sandy beaches.

I do not wish to take anything from the famous resort that we have at La Ronge, but I think our country is big enough and rich enough now to support two really large tourist centres, and not have it all concentrated on one.

No. 3 Highway, I have no doubt, will be completed from Prince Albert to the Alberta border, because at the west end lies the great airfield development, and I fully expect to see this Government complete that road. And if it is, then, Mr. Speaker, we will have access from the west, from the east and from the south up that continued north road into one of the grandest countries in the world – great for tourists and great in opportunities for development. I remember, years ago, that Lt. Col. Amery, the Minister of Colonies for Britain, speaking in Winnipeg to The Canadian Club – I was not there as I was chasing rabbits in Meadow Lake at that time – but he said then, among other things, that he was going home by way of Churchill. He said, “It is not new to me. I know something about this northern country. It has long been recognized by geologists that in the pre-Cambrian shield that covers most of northern Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, lies the largest and richest mineralogical body in the world.” Today we are beginning to realize it; others knew it long before, and I do believe that out of that north country will come a wealth not surpassed by the wealth of the prairies.

Along the southern portion of my constituency, and across its entire width – some 125 miles, and about 30 miles in depth – lies the last of the agricultural land in that part of the province. It is the northern boundary. I would like give you just a few figures of the rapid development that has taken place. Some of us went in there of our own accord, naturally seeking rich lands, room for cattle and so on. But in the desperate ‘thirties – those desperate years for which our Party has been blamed continuously – there moved into the north country at that time, it is estimated, a third of the population of Saskatchewan – into the five northern ridings. Every available quarter-section of land was taken up, but progress was slow. Progress by hand, clearing the bush country, is very slow. Even the most industrious might clear a quarter section in almost a half a lifetime, and be worn out.

Progress was slow until 1937, at which time there came into being the Federal Farm Loans Act under which farmers could borrow money to clear and break land. Immediately, and all during the ensuing years, that Act has been worked overtime. I know many farmers who obtained \$3,000, \$4,000 and \$5,000, cleared and broke 100 to 150 acres, and repaid it out of the first crop. That, as far as we are concerned in the north, Mr. Speaker, is one of the greatest things that ever happened to our north country.

From some 20,000 bushel in 1931, we will market this year, out of Meadow Lake, nearly 4½ million bushel. Yesterday, I heard the Minister of Agriculture say that the cattle population of our province was decreasing very rapidly. I have no reason to doubt it, but it so happens that in our particular district it is increasing. It has risen from 1931 to 1952, from 6,000 to 25,000 head. The hon. minister also said, or inferred, that this decrease in the cattle population was due, more or less, to the price, and to the very low floor price set by our Dominion Government. I am not an expert on these things, but I know the cattlemen and the farmers in my part of the country do not complain against the prices today, particularly. It is only two years ago one of my very close friends, a successful rancher, said that cattle prices were just out of all reason; that his costs in ranching had risen 10 per cent, and the value of cattle had risen several hundred per cent.

I think one of the reasons we have this increase in cattle is that we have not the vast farms in the north country, and probably we have larger families, and it pays to handle cattle, whereas on the prairies, because of the easier living from grain farming, people are going out of cattle.

I remember, some years ago, I lived in Regina and was on the road selling machinery; and talking to a farmer on the Soo line, I asked him about cattle. Coming from the north country, I was very much interested in cattle, hadn't seen any down in that particular area. I asked him whether or not he had any. "Oh, no," he said, "We used to have a milk cow, but it was too darn much trouble to look after." I think, Mr. Speaker, that the drop in the cattle population of our province today can be attributed in a very large measure to the abnormal growth and development of cereals on the prairies.

I think another point, in connection with floor prices, is that the Old Country can buy cattle much cheaper than even our floor price of today, and even if we raise the floor prices as suggested, I do not see how that can help us to sell any more cattle. I do not think it is a much better solution than trying to make a poor hand better by bidding higher.

Our great need in the Meadow Lake area, is roads – as in every other place; but I think we have, probably, a greater right than some places. I asked some questions today or yesterday. Unfortunately, because of lack of experience, I did not word them properly. In them I am inquiring of certain things for a very definite purpose. I want to find out what our income is, or what money we send in to the Government. I have a very good idea, but I like to be accurate in my statements.

On that gas question which cannot be answered, I think I am very close to the mark when I say – and I got these figures from the oilmen – that they would, last year, something like 750,000 gallons of gasoline on which there is a tax of 10 cents a gallon.

I know that our tax for municipal purposes based on the general assessment in the area that we call the Larger School Unit, which takes in all the agricultural land in that area, will be in the neighbourhood of \$100,000 for municipal purposes alone, besides all the other sources of tax. So I know that we send to this Government a great deal of money, and we really feel that we have not had, in return, a fair proportion of expenditures on one of the most vital needs of that country. When you realize that every pound of that tremendous crop, every pound of 252 carloads of cattle, of 288 carloads of pulp, and so on, millions and millions of pounds, has to be drawn on wheels from one miles to 75 miles, that gives you the background for the needs of roads in that constituency. It is of vital importance.

Just to give you an example of what poor roads cost, Mr. Speaker. A few years ago we had a wet fall and the roads froze up deeply rutted, and just on my business truck alone, or probably with my car too, I have over \$350 road damage – just what you get from rough roads. One of my neighbours, a farmer from Dorintosh, out of which corner will come a million bushel of grain, told me the other day, about one particular hill. He said, "Remember that slippery hill? My truck could not make the top and came down into the

ditch, and had \$800 damages.” But last summer, just previous to the election, there was a little bit of gravel put on that road, and we are very pleased to have it. There is no question about it, I do not try to make any capital out of it. We were very pleased to have it, because that same man can go up that road right now without any fear of going back. If that had been put on the year before, he would have saved \$800.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch briefly on some of the real accomplishments of this Government, and the way we look at them. In our district we have no particular complaint about the end result of our Larger School Unit but, nevertheless, we could offer suggestions in the way of administration and cost.

We hear a great deal about our hospitalization programme, our health services plan, and it is a good plan, Mr. Speaker. I believe it is the best plan we have in the Dominion of Canada today; but we are told everywhere that it will only cost \$10, \$20 and \$30. If this Government said to me, today, this health service plan will cost you \$50 a year, Mr. Speaker, I would say that is perfectly all right with me, for the simple reason that I pay \$50 and more, and a great many people pay more than the \$30. We have to pay it, and no matter what it costs – I do not care what and I do not think anybody cares, particularly, what the hospital services will cost, we have to pay it; but, Mr. Speaker, I like to know. I always did prefer to drive in daylight rather than in a fog.

Now in respect to these hospital costs, I do not think that the truth is all being told to the public, particularly from a political platform – and that is not confined to one Party at all. I would like to just quote an instance, when I say that my hospitalization is costing me more than \$50. I spent quite a lot of money, this year. Now I will admit these possibly were deferred expenses that all came this year – or investments; but nevertheless they came this year. I spent considerable money on material for a new house, all of which was taxable; I bought a car, which was taxable, and a number of other things – some of them may have been on time; that makes no difference, we have to pay the tax right off the bat. You know, one of the things that kind of worries me is that if times get bad and I should lose my car and my home, I will have paid for something which I never had.

Now I like to know what these things cost me, and which you no doubt do, too. In connection with the hospital services plan, I would like to say this, too. I do not know whether the services have been distributed in an equitable manner. I hear many different stories but, fortunately, I have never had occasion to be in a hospital as a patient. One of my friends, whom I have no reason to doubt whatever, said that in the Moosomin hospital they obtained practically everything needed in the way of drugs and so on. They tell me that a man who occasionally went in there for treatment for arthritis could well afford to pay, but he got all these things free, and I don’t blame him at all. He said they even got cortisone and gold dust for arthritic treatments. Now I do not begrudge them that at all, Mr. Speaker. I am very happy to think that anyone in Saskatchewan can obtain these things; but I know, definitely, that it is different in Meadow Lake. We have still a great deal of rough work to do in the clearing and breaking

of land and, insofar as I know, these services, other than the beds and so on, are not greatly in excess of emergency services; plaster casts, bandages, iodine, aspirin and so on. We are very glad to get these things, and I am very pleased that we have them, because, as I say, there is still a lot of rough work to do and there are broken limbs, cuts and bruises for which the bandages and the plaster casts are required. But, Mr. Speaker, when we look at our tremendous need for trans, in our primary production, and then on the other hand see the money that is being squandered in Crown Corporations that are worthless, we are very glad to have the aspirin, because we need it!

I think the only other matter that I will touch upon is the timber, and this we could talk for hours on, and get nowhere. But, speaking of honesty in public statements, as I did a minute ago, I would like to have a clarification on two statements that I have heard and in which I am very much interested. Years ago, when the Liberal Party was in power and the C.C.F. coming up, speakers whom I heard, personally, told of all the terrible things that the Liberal Government had done in the north. They had even burned the timber. Remember, we had come through seven or eight years of drought and there was a great deal of timber burned, but I know that the Government of that day spent, in one year alone, \$240,000 in fire prevention and they did do a great deal of good. However, I was shocked when I heard these speakers say, and some in high positions in government, that there were not 2½ million cords of pulp left. We were so destitute of timber that there were not 2 ½ million cords left.

Since then, I have heard of a survey that has been made and we have now as high as 43 million cords. In eight years we have increased from 2 ½ million to 43 million cords. That was reading from the New York "Tribune" of November 27, when Mr. Fines gave a talk there to newspapermen – 5,500,000,000 cu. ft. of lumber. Now I really would like to know – I think it is somewhere between. But you know, Mr. Speaker, some people read detective stories to increase their powers of deduction. I have had a great deal of pleasure in delving into some of these statements of our Government; not the official statements as we ask, you know – I believe those excellent. But, when you get such statements as this, you wonder why they are made. Well, it is very easy to see that the first statement of only 2½ million cords of wood was made to libel the Liberal Party before election time, to discredit the Party, and this one of 43 millions is made, I think, to induce pulp companies to come in here. I would like to know the truth about these statements.

There have been times when I have had to defend the C.C.F. Party, believe it or not. I like to boast about Saskatchewan, because I am proud of Saskatchewan. I think it is a marvellous province and I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that when we begin to develop the unbelievable resources of the northern part of our province that we will have the greatest and the wealthiest province in the Dominion of Canada.

I have a news clipping here, which tells something about Uranium City, which I had heard, some time ago, may expect to produce \$250 million worth of uranium in a very short time. They have four shafts, and only one will be operating this year, and yet they expect to have that amount out of it. However, getting back to this interview the Hon. Mr. Fines gave in New York – it is an excellent review of the development of Saskatchewan and of its possibilities. I am inclined to boast about Saskatchewan a bit myself at times, but I could not have done better than this.

Speaking in Toronto before a group of friends I carried on in this manner, just as the Hon. Mr. Fines did in New York. I told them about the vast deposits of coal in the south that underlay our prairie and the vast forests we had, our minerals and our unbelievable agricultural wealth, and I said then, as I have just said a minute ago, that we have in Saskatchewan the province with the greatest potential wealth of any province in the Dominion of Canada. And one of my friends said, "Then why are you always running to Ottawa crying for help?" You know, friends can be brutal and cruel at times.

In Cleveland a year ago, talking to an industrialist there, he made some very snide remarks about this Government. And you know, we can quarrel among ourselves, within the family, but the minute an outsider says anything we are in arms. He asked me, "What is their policy?" Well, that was a rather difficult question for me to answer because, naturally, I am not well up on the C.C.F. philosophy. But I put up the best struggle I could in defence of the C.C. Government and in a most defiant manner I said, "But their slogan is production for use and not for profit." This manufacturer looked at me in amazement and he said, "You silly Assembly, that applies only to babies." I lost a great deal of faith in the C.C.F. Party.

I see that I have exceeded my time, Mr. Speaker, and I shall say no more. I hope that, at some future date when I get information that I require, I may be able to offer some constructive suggestions to this Government. As a matter of fact I expect some of them may be accepted.

Mr. James Ripley (Athabasca): — Mr. Speaker, first of all I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Berezowsky) for his support of the very good project, the "35 Highway." It is a very important project in the north. Although this highway does not enter my constituency being farther north of that, the greatest amount of our supplies to and from the north are handled through Flin Flon, and we have no direct connection with the southern part of Saskatchewan from our northern district.

One of our important industries in the far northern part of this country — I have been accustomed to calling it the "Far North", but I notice that the hon. Premier mentioned that they were going to have some farms in the far north, so I guess we will have to call our country the "Far, Far North", because we will never have any farms up there, Mr. Speaker. It is all rock — the pre-Cambrian Shield, as has been mentioned before, and sand, trees, lakes and rivers.

One of the important industries of this north country is the production of fish. Hundreds of tons of fish are produced in the northern lakes, Wollaston Lake and Reindeer Lake, which extend up to the 58th parallel of north latitude, and that is within 150 miles of the Northwest Territories. These fish are brought out by tractor-train across a distance as much as 400 miles in the wintertime from the central and eastern part of the province, and are handled through Flin Flon. A great deal of this could be diverted directly through Saskatchewan by the use of the 35 Highway.

This industry in the north makes it possible for the people who are living there now to pioneer that great country. My constituency alone covers 86,000 square miles of that area, and it makes it possible for the people living there to pioneer that great country as the pioneers in the south did in the early days of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out some of the conditions as they exist in the fishing industry at the present time. As has been mentioned before, some of the food commodities have declined in value, such as poultry

and eggs. This is also true of fish which has never been protected by a basic floor price. Take the winter of 1947-48 as an average period. Previous to that, during the war years, all of these things reached extremely high value, fur and fish amongst them, and we normally expected a certain amount of settlement in those prices. But take the winter of 1947-48. At that time frozen whitefish sold at the railhead at Flin Flon at 17 cents to 25 cents a pound, and pickerel was in the region of 20 cents. At that time cotton nets, which were in general use, cost from \$8 to \$12 depending on the size of them, and another material used greatly in fishing is the cordage used to handle these nets. The price of that cordage at that time was 90 cents. Just before I left the north to come here to attend this Legislature, I enquired about fish prices at the present time and the price of pickerel being offered by buyers at Flin Flon was 15 cents a pound for frozen pickerel. I understand that the fish Marketing Service is paying in the area of 8 cents for frozen pickerel. At the present time the prices of nets have gone up to a point where they are becoming almost prohibitive when the fish prices have declined to the point they have. The cost of nets in cotton has doubled during the time when cotton staples went up, as they did all over the country, and we are now using extensively nylon nets which cost the fisherman from \$22 to \$356. The sideline and cordage in general use is now \$1.65. So the fisherman is paying more in outlay for his necessary equipment, and the prices he receives for his fish have declined.

The food prices delivered into the north have remained at a pretty constant level, and added to that are the costs of transportation which are quite high when you consider the inaccessibility of the country. The freight rate by winter roads extends from about 1 cent a pound in a very close region to 7 cents a pound in the farthest areas. When you add these amounts to the staple items such as potatoes and flour and sugar, you can realize the cost of some of these operations in the north. Just before I left Flin Flon some of the northern fish was being brought in from Reindeer Lake, and I had occasion to meet several of the fishermen from that area and they told me that in this winter's season operations they do not expect to do very much more than clear their expenses from the winter's operations. These people in the north in fishing have very little alternative means of making a living. There are no other sidelines which they can go to such as the farmers have in the south where they can produce various types of livestock and have other sources of income. The fisherman has no recourse to that type of thing.

Another thing I did notice: It was advertised in Winnipeg very recently that pickerel fillets were being sold for 96 cents a pound, which is quite a high price to the consumer while, on the other hand, the price to the fisherman is comparatively low. Neither are benefiting very greatly. As the fish in itself is a staple and very nutritious item, I think that something could be done, Mr. Speaker, in investigating the difference in price between producer and consumer, and getting a little equalization in that way; some means of setting a basic price to the producer so that he may be sure of making a reasonable living from his labour and investments. This, I understand, has been under discussion at Ottawa recently, and they are attempting to establish something in that line, and I think that if there was a presentation made of our own particular problems in that way from this Government concerning the conditions as they are in the fishing industry in this province, it would be well received and help them in determining what could be done to establish a basic price for this commodity.

I would like to present some views on another industry of the north, the production of fur. The trapper is in very much the same situation as the fisherman has been, in regard to the declining values of fur and the remaining constant high price of supplies and the similar conditions of transportation. He is also faced with increased cost of his necessary materials due to the shortage of steel, the increased cost of traps and rifles and the necessary ammunition. General living conditions for these trappers in the north who are mainly natives – and I include non-treaty and treaty in that term; they are having a very difficult time in the last few years to maintain any reasonable standard of living. The lack of adequate diet and proper clothing amongst these people would amaze you, Mr. Speaker. It is especially unfortunate as there are quite a number of small children amongst these people, and they are the ones to suffer; it interferes in the long run with their present development and will certainly have some effect on their lives in the future. I think, with the “humanity-first programme”, we could use a considerable amount of that in the north, Mr. Speaker.

In years past it has been the custom amongst traders in the north to carry some of these or most of these people over their slack periods, such as when they finish their trapping in the spring and gradually use up their income, the proceeds of their trapping, they reach a time in the Fall when they have practically nothing left to start again on their trap lines. It was the custom then for the traders who were interested in dealing in fur to finance these trappers and grubstake them so that they may go out on their trap lines and produce fur until the time when they came in for the Christmas season and have brought their fur in to trade and pay up the debts they have accumulated by that time. Since the programme of compulsory delivery of rates and beaver has come in these traders have generally discontinued or curtailed this credit system to a great extent, and I have known cases where a trapper has had to go out on his trap line, usually long distances with dog teams, in sometimes severe conditions, with a very small supply of food and when he did produce a slight amount of fur he had to run back to the Trading Post to obtain more supplies.

These people in the northern constituency which I represent have been suffering considerably from this curtailment of extension in credit through the traders, and also in the compulsory fur marketing programme they find it difficult, when they receive payments at spaced-out periods, to use these payments to obtain the costlier items such as canoes, rifles and outboard motors. They are a simple-living people; they do not understand the modern ways of handling money or such things as economy. They understand that they produce fur and it is worth so much, and they would like to have that money to use as soon as possible. In the fur statements that they have received from the Fur Marketing Service on their fur, they cannot understand too well the reason why the cash amount received is about 20 per cent less than the gross price the furs brought when they were sold at auction.

There were times, in past years, when we have heard of the exploitation of these people, and great amounts of fur were taken out and traders became rich by exploiting these people, but that was long in the past. Not so long ago they had fairly high incomes, and at that time the institution of a programme of spacing out their payments, when they could be made in amounts of \$500 or \$600 over a period of three or four months, would have been quite all right; but at the present time a trappers income up in that northern area is less than \$700 a year and in very many cases less than \$500 a year. When these are broken up into payments they do not seem to be

able to hang on to enough money to supply themselves with a fairly expensive item like a canoe.

As a case in point there, I happened to be in a trading post at Pelican Narrows, last summer, and saw a tag hanging on an outboard motor. It was a three-horse-power outboard motor, and the price, which drew my attention, was \$110. I thought that seemed to be awfully reasonable, but it was not so. What had happened was that one of the trappers in the region had been making payments on this outboard motor over a period of a year and had managed to pay \$75 and he had a balance of \$110 still to pay. It is possible that by the Spring of this year he might produce enough to have the use of that motor this summer – something that is very essential to the people of the north. That country, especially up in my area where the Churchill River and Reindeer Rivers are, is very rough country and is very hard on canoes, and most of them are in very bad shape at the present time.

These are a few of the reasons why people from that region are not in favour of the compulsory marketing of furs. The 14 delegates who voted against this compulsory marketing at the trappers' convention in Prince Albert were mainly from up in that area, and I would also point out that at the previous convention the year before, there were also 14 delegates who voted against compulsory marketing. So they are reasonably consistent in their ideas, and they have not been encouraged very much in that time to change them.

In the last Legislature, Mr. Lorne Blanchard, who represented Cumberland, brought up this very same type of thing that I am trying to do, and he did the best possible for two or three Sessions of the Legislature and we are still not any better off. If anything, I think the natives in the north are becoming worse off year by year.

There is another matter of importance which came up in the Pelican Narrows district. There is a reasonably good stand of timber scattered around in that region. It does not stretch very far north in my constituency. It peters out quite rapidly and the growth is very small towards the north, but in the Pelican Narrows area the timber is fairly well concentrated. The people there thought that to add to their incomes in their in-between seasons – which they have quite a lot of for if they are fishing they usually finish in the middle of January, and there is no more fishing until June; and they have a similar condition over the freeze-up period; they thought that possibly they could produce some rough lumber in that area, bring in a small sawmill, bring in some rough lumber and pile it up on an island for the summer where it would be safe, and ship it out in the winter time. There is a considerable amount of supplies that go in their by tractor and truck in the winter time, and it would make a back-haul for these vehicles going back to Flin Flon which, at the present time, are going back empty except for a few gas drums and things like that. But they were informed by the local government official that they would have to sell this lumber to the Timber Board at \$30 per thousand feet. This lumber would have to be transported out of that country to Flin Flon and the lumber dealers in Flin Flon were paying \$65 a thousand feet for rough lumber. When you consider their cost of operations there, it becomes fairly obvious they cannot operate even a small mill profitably at \$30 a thousand. The winter freight rate to Pelican Narrows is 3 cents a pound and at 8 pounds to the gallon that makes the freight on gasoline 24 cents. The drum weighs 80 pounds, which adds another 2 cents to the freight rate on gasoline, plus the cost of the gasoline. There is not such a great deal of timber in there that it would be a commercially feasible operation for a big company to go in. It is scattered and it would then be a matter of sending it out.

I think we should have some means of administration in the north to correct these matters and give these people as much assistance as possible in correcting their own way of life and getting them away from the present trend towards dependency on government assistance of all kinds, the welfare agencies and so on. If we could help them to become more self-supporting and independent, I am sure there would not be any great difficulty amongst the natives themselves. There are some, of course, — there are amongst all races — who will continue to be indigents, but there are very many of them who are ambitious, industrious and, given the proper assistance, they would go ahead with some projects to assist themselves; but they have not proper means of communication, and they are mostly shy in speaking to white people. They do not particularly like to speak in English; they prefer Cree or Chippewyan and it is very difficult for them to get these ideas across. So far they have not been assisted in any great way by the services of this Government, but I would like to see if something could be done along these lines to help these people and not be of hindrance as in the past. Their case is quite a special case, and I believe it deserves special attention.

Mr. A.L.S. Brown (Bengough): — Mr. Speaker, I was rather hesitant about rising to take part in this debate, this afternoon, for fear that I might interject a controversial issue into the rather harmonious discussion that we have had thus far.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the remarks which were made by the immediately previous speakers, particularly as they come from an area of the province with which I am not particularly familiar, and they, along with the member for Cumberland (Mr. Berezowsky) have told us a story which I think is of great interest not only to the members of this Legislature, but a story that is of great interest to a large number of the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

In their remarks they did indicate their problems in the northern areas are much the same problems that we in the southern part of the province have to contend with. They indicate, particularly the member for Athabasca (Mr. Ripley), that the main problem facing at least a portion of their people in respect to the fishing industry is that they are not getting a large enough return for their products in relationship to the cost of production, and that the returns from their fishing products had not increased with the cost of production of those items which go into the fishing industry. That is identically the problem which faces us, whether we are in the livestock business or whether we are in the grain-growing business or what feature of primary production we may be in. That is a problem which faces us, and it is a problem which I feel can only be solved through collective action taken at respective levels within our own primary producers' organizations, within legislative ability and activities of this Legislature and upon a national level as well.

Before I go on into the main remarks which I intend to make this afternoon, I wish to associate myself with those who have preceded me in congratulating the mover and the seconder on the contribution which they have made to this debate, and particularly on the high level in which they started out this debate. I think it is interesting that on that occasion there was the member for Regina, an urban centre, proposing the motion, and it was seconded by a member who represents a constituency which is primarily agricultural. When we come into this Legislature, we may, according to our occupation or according to our situation in the province,

feel that we do represent certain interests and are better able to express those interests and viewpoints than possibly some other interests or some other viewpoints, but when we made our decisions upon matters in this Legislature we are representing all the people of the province, irrespective of their occupation or irrespective of their situation. It is indeed gratifying that it is possible to get one member representing the urban centre of Regina and one member representing practically a rural area who can so adjust their thoughts and their thinking to the position where they can work in the common interests of both areas concerned.

I think, Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss in my duties if I did not draw the attention of the House to one other peculiarity of this particular Legislature. The Brown name has always been famous in the province of Saskatchewan, but for the first time in the history of Saskatchewan the Brown name is actually coming into its own, with the net result that the Browns have the numerical strength in this Legislature for the first time; and to sort of reverse the well-known phrase, "what we lack in quality, we make up in quantity." But I think it is also interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, referring to a statement that the Attorney General oftentimes has made, and I think what indicates the ability of the Brown boys is that they were all able to think their way into the C.C.F. and sit on this side of the House.

I also want to associate myself very closely with one of the remarks made by the hon. member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Dunfield). He said – and I am not going to quote him verbatim – but the general tenor of this remarks was that the general development in this province of ours was due to the courage and to the vision of its citizens. I certainly want to associate myself with that thought and with that statement, because it was due to the courage and to the vision of those early pioneers who came out here some 50 or 60 years to break new furrows in this western province of ours, that we have the development and the production that Saskatchewan is able to contribution to the economy of Canada and the whole world. It is that same courage that is, today, sending people into the last physical frontier of Saskatchewan, into the northland which the member has the privilege to represent. It was that same courage that initiated the farmers, in the early days of Saskatchewan, into the spearhead of developing organized marketing. It was that same courage and that same vision of those identical people, in the dark days of the 'thirties, than enabled them to organize the C.C.F. political party of that time; and it was that same courage that made it possible for the people of Saskatchewan, in 1944, to elect the first Peoples' Government on the North American continent. It is because the people have, in the past, first, by virtue of the fact that they came out to this province to pioneer and to open it up; and by virtue of the fact that, under enormous difficulties, they have been able to make a society here in Saskatchewan that has some semblance of security and stability that convinces me in my own mind that it will be the courage of the people of Saskatchewan that will lead the rest of Canada into building, in Canada, a complete co-operative commonwealth federation.

It is because of that fact that I believe the people of this province will endorse the Speech from the Throne which indicates the intentions of this Government in its immediate year's programme and indicates the tenure of the five-year programme of this term of office, and because they have had the courage to re-elect this Government, they will have the courage to endorse this ambitious programme which is laid out in the Speech from the Throne.

I think, Mr. Speaker, in giving an analysis to any Speech from the Throne we should do, in our own minds, as the Premier did here in his remarks, the other day and that is we should relate it back to the programme on which we were elected. I think we should go even further than that and we should relate it back, as the member for Regina indicated in her remarks, to the motivating force behind the organization which elected the Government. I think that, if we do that in our own mind, we can get a better analysis of it and a better perspective of the future programme.

It has been indicated in this House, on several occasions, that we on this side of the House took as our key word in 1944 and for that four-year term; the word 'security'. During that four years we attempted to build a system and a semblance of social economic security in this province, within the limitations of a provincial legislature. It has often been said, in this Legislature and outside this Legislature, that our next four-year programme was based upon development, and our programme in the next years will be based upon expanding those social securities which we were able to provide in our first four years and to continue expanding that development which we were able to inaugurate, together with some of those which were started in the first four years. I think, based upon that theory, we must give our analysis on the basis of how well can we expend those social securities and continue the development programme which has been started in this province and, again, it must be related back to that 'Programme for Progress' which the Leader of the Opposition was so kind as to draw to our attention during his criticism of the Throne speech.

Giving an analysis of the 'Programme for Progress' as it is related to the Speech from the Throne, I think possibly the most important thing is not what we are going to do but it is why we are going to do it, and, secondly, how we are going to do it. We are going to do it, first of all, by implementing the programme in the Speech from the Throne because we believe it is possible to build a better type of social society and economy than we have had in the past, and we believe it is only through collective and co-operative and collective basis, much of the programme outlined in the Speech from the Throne, and practically all of the 'Programme for Progress', is done on the basis of co-operative and collective action.

I doubt if there is one thing any government in Canada can undertake which requires more collective action than that of building a transportation system to meet the economic and social needs of the people of this province. All three members who have preceded me, this afternoon, have referred to one common problem that they have in their areas and that is the problem of building up a transportation system, and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that is something which can only be done through co-operative and collective action – a co-operative action which involves the Federal Government, the Provincial Government and the local authorities in their respective areas. I would suggest to you that, if we attempted to follow the policies which existed in this province previous to 1944, irrespective of the amount of money which could be made available out of the wealth of this province, we could not hope to come anywhere near meeting the needs of this problem, because, by virtue of the programme inaugurated from 1944-1952, we are able to get greater dollar value relative to 1944 than we would have been able to

get had we followed the policy which then existed.

I think, the primary reason that we, in this province, are lagging behind in transportation systems which we need to meet our economic and social needs is because the agricultural industry on which Saskatchewan depends for its wealth has been the 'poor relation' among industries of Canada. If, from the time Saskatchewan was pioneered, agriculture had got its fair share of the wealth which it produced, we could have built here, in this province, a transportation system more nearly meeting our needs. But, in spite of the fact that agriculture has not received in the past, and is not now receiving, its fair share, an ambitious programme has been suggested in the Speech from the Throne, as outlined in the 'Programme for Progress' – a \$75-million programme spread over the next five years, a programme which the Premier indicated to us, the other day, might possibly be extended to somewhere near \$80 million within that same term. It is an ambitious programme for a province the size of Saskatchewan to undertake, but I would like to suggest that \$80 million spent upon a highway system during the next four or five years will certainly be far from meeting our needs, even with the efficient methods and means that we have of building roads in this province, and in spite of the improved policies which the Minister of Highways and this Government have put into effect. It is my sincere wish that it will be possible, within the next four or five years, to place the agricultural industry in a position where the wealth will come into this province by which we can increase that highway programme to 4160 million or, if necessary, to \$200 million, because it is needed and it can be done. If those who control our Canadian economy are unwilling to suggest that agriculture as an industry should receive a greater share of our Canadian wealth production, then I suggest that it is the Federal Government's responsibility to come into this province, as it has gone into other provinces, and invest their money in a highway programme and a highway system to meet the economic needs not only of Saskatchewan but of the rest of Canada as well.

The same can be said in respect to the power programme; the same can be said in respect to continuing development of Saskatchewan's oil and mineral resources. No one suggests that 40,000 farms electrified in this province is going to come anywhere near electrifying those areas which are in need of power, or that it is going to satisfy the ambitious programme and the ambitious desires of those people who inaugurated this electrification programme. The only thing it does indicate is that Saskatchewan, in the next five years, is undertaking the most ambitious programme of rural electrification ever undertaken by any province in Canada, or possibly by any state in the United States.

I think this also must be related back to the questions I asked at the start – why we are implementing this programme, and how we are implementing it. We are implementing it because we had the courage, as suggested by the member for Meadow Lake, in the same manner that the people of Saskatchewan had the courage to go out and build a publicly-owned power corporation which has made it possible to suggest this programme to the people, and to suggest it through the medium of the Speech from the Throne.

This is equally true with respect to the development of our oil and mineral resources in this programme, and I think that in this year it is possibly more important than to any other item on the programme in the Speech

from the Throne. It is the duty and the responsibility of the members of this Legislature to assure that not only do we get this continued development of our resources, but that they are developed in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan, and that we retain that heritage and that birthright to pass on to the next generation to assure them that they will not be 'sold down the river' as has our generation and as have previous generations by forces whose main purpose was to exploit the resources and to exploit the people.

I could continue on, Mr. Speaker, in respect to the other items on our programme as outlined in the Speech from the Throne, but I would just like to make one brief reference to another item. I made reference to it because the Leader of the Opposition raised it in his remarks, and that is in respect to the construction of the South Saskatchewan dam in co-operation with the Federal Government. The hon. Leader of the Opposition suggested that the Liberals would support the project more than ever after reading the report of the Royal Commission. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if they are sincere in their support of this project, that the way they can indicate their support is to associate themselves with those people who have, in season and out of season, fought for the development of this project which will be of primary interest not only to the agricultural industry in that area, but it will be of primary importance to the whole Canadian economy, and as such, will give to Canada a more stable economy than we have had in the past. I suggest that the attitude which the Liberal Party and the Liberal Government are taking towards this development is exactly the same attitude they have taken towards other aspects of the agricultural industry. It is a continuation of the same philosophy and the same ideology which has compelled or started the Federal Government in their programme for reduced aid and assistance for agriculture.

I can make reference to the reduction which has been made in floor prices for our agricultural policy; reduction made in the floor prices in spite of the fact that the cost of production has gone up. A few years ago, there was a drastic cut in the Federal Government's estimates for agriculture, which indicates that they do not regard the agricultural economy as being of importance in our Canadian economy. It is the same attitude that has enabled them to regard the loss of overseas markets for our agricultural products with little interest and little concern. They are adopting the same attitude with the South Saskatchewan River development programme in that they are apparently prepared to disregard that project because it is related to agriculture and as such they do not consider it important in our Canadian economy.

The same is equally true in the budget which was just announced, last night, and which was in this morning's paper. I say, if anyone reads that budget or the report of the budget, they would find in it no relief whatsoever for the agricultural industry. There is no indication at all in it that they are prepared to remove the dumping duty from agricultural necessities being imported into this province. There is no indication that they are attacking the problem of the increased cost of production of the primary producer, particularly in agriculture, and I think the same would be equally true if one made an analysis of that budget in respect to the fishing industry to which my friend of Athabasca referred. I think it is that general attitude which has led the Federal Government to show its complete disinterestedness about Saskatchewan River development. I do feel and sincerely believe

that this report indicates the belief of the Liberal Government at Ottawa, that it is their intention to follow that report and not undertake to implement that project.

I would also, Mr. Speaker, for one moment or two, like to say a few remarks about the general agricultural economy in Saskatchewan and in Canada. I do so, because I realize that there is little that we as a Legislative body, can do in respect to direct action to improve our general agricultural economy here in Saskatchewan; but one thing that we can do is that we can draw to the attention of those people who do control our economy the situation that exists in Saskatchewan and the situation that exists in respect to our agricultural industry. I do not think any better story can be told than is told in the story in the Dominion Bureau of Statistics issue for, I believe, December 11th, when they relate back to the month of October, and they quote as the farm prices for that month, the average farm price as related to the 1935-39 basis, as being 243.5. That is to say that over all agricultural prices, from 1935-39, the basic period, it has increased by some 243.5 per cent. This is the lowest it has been since April, 1948.

At the same date the farm index cost, that is the cost of the things that the farmer has to buy stood at 243.6. That is to say, the cost of those things which enter into our production has increased in the same basic period by 243.6. The interesting thing about it is, Mr. Speaker, that for the first time since 1935-39 the cost price index of things which we had to buy exceeded the price we received for those agricultural products which we had to sell. In other words, Mr. Speaker, in October of this year, for the first time we were in a worse position relatively between cost of production and return prices than we were since 1935-39. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if the agricultural industry is in the position where it can receive no greater returns for its products than it did in that basic period of 1935-39, then the agricultural industry is not in a position of going into a depressed industry; it is a depressed industry. For anyone who has lived through the period of 1935-39 knows that the agricultural industry was a depressed industry during that same period. Since that time, since the time in which it was apparent that the cost of those things which we had to buy had exceeded the cost of the returns, for the price which we received for those things which we sell, in spite of that fact, the Federal Government allowed the support price, using as one example the support price on hogs, to drop from \$26 to \$23 on the first day of January, just accelerating the trend in which our costs of the things we have to buy are going to continue to go up and the price of returns which we receive for those things which we have to sell are continuing to go down.

I think that if we look at the overall possible agricultural prospects, taking into consideration the fact that the United States' market will be open for our livestock products in the near future, it may give some people somewhat of a false hope insofar they have the feeling that possibly our agricultural industry will once again be tied, to some extent at least, to the livestock industry in the United States. A casual glance at the livestock industry and the livestock marketing in the United States goes far from giving us any satisfaction or any comfort. We find that in the last year livestock prices in the United States have declined by 20 per cent. What is true of the livestock prices is equally true of the whole farm commodity sale in the United States. Taking all the farm commodities sold in the United States, in the last three months, they have declined by 11 per cent. That indicates

that there is little hope that we can look to as far as the United States is concerned.

As I suggested a few moments ago, due to the lack of Liberal policies on the Federal level we have lost our overseas market. We have seen the Federal Government continuing to lower its support price on agricultural products. It has come forth with no concrete proposal as to how it can meet the economic and social needs of those people engaged in agricultural industry. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that one of the best things the members of this Legislature, the people of this province can do, is to show to those people who are controlling our economy, in no uncertain terms, that unless agriculture is given a fair share of the wealth that is produced in Canada, that unless the people engaged in agriculture are given some assurance of economic security and social stability, we will never rest content until we have elected a government there who is prepared to give to agriculture and as such, to the common people, assurances in that connection.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken longer than I intended to, but in conclusion I once again endorse the Speech from the Throne which has been presented to this Legislature by His Honour for this Government. I do so, Mr. Speaker, because I see in it, that, through this medium, Saskatchewan can make its contribution towards building a new order in Canada, and through this medium we can make our contribution towards building a co-operative commonwealth here in Saskatchewan and in Canada. I look forward to the day when I, along with fellow Canadian citizens, will be able to stand on the platforms as we were in 1952 and say of Canada, as we said of Saskatchewan, that we have the best government Saskatchewan has ever had, and we have a government that has got things done.

Mr. D. Zipchen (Redberry): — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave of this Assembly to adjourn the debate.

(Agreed)

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