

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Twelfth Legislature
9th Day

Tuesday, February 24, 1953

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

DEBATE ON ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

The House resumed, from Monday, February 23, 1953, the adjourned debate on the proposed Motion of Mrs. Cooper for the Address-in-Reply to the Speech from the Throne, and the proposed amendment thereto by Mr. Tucker.

Mr. E. Kramer (The Battlefords): — Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak in this debate, I want to say, at the outset, that I am speaking in favour of the Motion and against the Amendment.

I want to apologize, Mr. Speaker, for playing hooky, last Thursday and Friday, from this House. I had a rush call up to North Battleford and I got there in time, on Thursday evening, to be in attendance at the birth of a new baby daughter.

Hon. Mr. Sturdy: — Where are the cigars?

Mr. Kramer: — It was a girl, Mr. Speaker, so there are only chocolates for Mrs. Cooper.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I do not intend to do too much cackling over old business. I think you have all heard the story about the ants who were quite happy in their little anthill, and there was a golfer out golfing and his ball happened to land right on the hill (I think it is justifiable to tell this story; it is apropos to this House). He took a real swipe at this golf ball which resulted in killing 736 ants, so he took another swipe at the golf ball and that killed 966 ants, and there were only two ants left on that hill. The one ant said to the other, "Look, brother, if we are going to survive I think we had better get on the ball." And I think that is true in this House, Mr. Speaker,

I want to say, first of all, that I am grateful to the people of The Battlefords for extending me the honour of being their representative in this House.

I want to say, too, Mr. Speaker, that I do not take the vote of confidence in The Battlefords as a personal victory; I accept it as an endorsement of Government policies — the policies that the C.C.F. have followed during the past eight years. I want to say further, I think it was a way for the people of The Battlefords to say 'thank you' to a past member of this Legislature, the member from 1944-48, the member whom most of your people know, Mr. Alex Connon. I think it was a way of saying 'thank you' for the good work that he did while he was a member and while he was a C.C.F. representative in The Battlefords, who left to take up another position and vacated The Battlefords and made it possible for me to take his place.

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I want to say, too, that I think there has been a fairly high standard set by past members for The Battlefords in this House, and I will name two of the men, besides Mr. Connon, that I have had reason to know and have become acquainted with: there is the late Mr. Prince and Mr. Jim Maher, my immediate predecessor. I disagree with their politics, but I think they brought dignity to the position they held in this House, Mr. Speaker. I am a little like the member for Melville – I think there is more satisfaction in taking out a good man than a poor one.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about my constituency. The Battlefords, as you know, are known as the ‘Gateway to the Northwest’, and, truly, they are the gateway to a good agricultural country. There are many good farmers and livestock men in that country, as is borne out by our successful agricultural affairs and livestock shows and sales held there annually and semi-annually.

We have the town of Battleford and the city of North Battleford facing each other across the mighty North Saskatchewan River valley and that valley is a scene that, I believe, is unsurpassed for grandeur anywhere in Canada. Further on out of North Battleford we have some wonderful resorts, and it is truly a hunter’s and fisherman’s paradise. I would like to invite anyone in this House, or within reach of my voice, to take a run up to North Battleford when you want to have a good holiday, and visit some of the places of interest there. We have two good museums – again, I think, a tribute to two past-members of this House Mr. Connon and Mr. Phelps, and the foresight of this Government in providing the money for their respective re-establishment and establishment.

I want to say something about another member who spoke before me, and that is the hon. member for Kinistino (Mr. Begrand). I have a couple of constituents – two French friends of mine – who said how happy they were to hear his little contribution in French and also the rest of his speech. I think, Mr. Speaker, it is a source of gratification for us, who came from many lands into this west, to see men from these various ethnical groups take their place in the community. I, too, came from stock that spoke with a foreign accent, and I am very proud of that accent, and I hope that I will be a credit to my parents who came here from another country. My father homesteaded in the North Battleford area when there was no North Battleford, and it is largely due to his education in the fundamental economics that has made it possible for me to carry on with the Party to which I belong.

I want to say also, with due apologies to the hon. Minister of Education (Hon. Mr. Lloyd), that we, too, will have a ball team at North Battleford, and we have Abbots Field up there, Mr. Speaker, and if you do happen to come up there for a holiday I think you would be sadly remiss if you did not visit Abbots Field and perchance see the North Battleford Beavers trim the Saskatoon Gems and the boys from Delisle – they usually do that. And if you do come up there, Mr. Speaker, or any holidayers come up there, I can assure you that we are going to have some wonderful roads for you to come up there on.

During the past few years we have seen highways built into The Battlefords – seven good all-weather roads leading into The Battlefords from every direction. There is a lot to be done on them, Mr. Speaker; still a lot to be rebuilt, but you can be sure of getting to where you want to go without any difficulty, except in probably extreme weather conditions.

It was only a short time ago that you might be able to get to Saskatoon on No. 5 Highway – it was an all-weather road; the rest of them were limited, as far as travel was concerned, to dry weather. There is one exception, however, and I would like to remind the Minister of Agriculture of that – it is now in his constituency. That exception is old No. 29 Highway – that is the eighth one out of The Battlefords. And I want to register the disappointment of the people along that highway that it has not been rebuilt before now, and that something should be done about it in the near future. I want to congratulate the people who built that road in the first place, Mr. Speaker, on their nerve and audacity in placing highway signs along such a glorified cow-path.

Now, there are a few other things that I want to say about roads, and that is mainly in my constituency. One of the big problems we have today, as borne out by my friend from Redberry, yesterday, is the market road problem. It is one of the main problems of rural living today. People are no longer satisfied to be snow-bound all winter, and I hope that this Government will see fit, Mr. Speaker, to do something about the road from Hepburn Ferry into Borden, before too long. There is a vast area in there, one of the largest areas in my constituency, that is not yet served by a road. The Hepburn Ferry is not dependable, and I hope that some of these people will have access to a good all-weather market road before too long. There are a lot of good farmers and good stockmen up there. Some of them have been there for over fifty years, and I think they have a right to some attention.

Also, there are roads needed from Hafford to Borden – connecting link; also, Hafford to Radisson, and on further west to North Battleford, as the two highways, No. 40 and No. 5, come closer together. I am very fortunate as far as highways are concerned. We have two good highways traversing the constituency: No. 5 down to the C.P. bridge, and No. 40 east to Speers. No. 40 is not a new road. It needs rebuilding in spots; but is a passable road, and I hope something will be done with that before too many years elapse. But we are quite happy with the road system we have in The Battlefords and are hoping for better, as soon as possible.

We are also happy with the tremendous power development in that area, and I hope that many more will be served, Mr. Speaker, before my term of office is ended.

Now I said I was not going to do too much cackling over old business, and I do not intend to. I intend to say a few words, Mr. Speaker, on a subject that I think is of paramount importance to our Saskatchewan economy and to our Canadian economy, and in order to do that I am afraid I must step into the Federal field a bit. I know that some people do not like us going into the Federal field, but I am afraid that I have a different view to the national economy than some of our friends. I believe that the Federal and Provincial Governments should be likened to a family, Mr. Speaker, and, as a family, should work together for the common good. I think that we should retain our right to criticize the head of the family if they choose to go ‘on a bender’ once in a while and fail to bring home the bacon. Bacon is one of the things I want to talk about.

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I think the livestock marketing situation in Canada, and in Saskatchewan certainly needs a drastic overhaul, Mr. Speaker, and I think it is high time that the producer stopped going to market and saying, "How much will you give me?" He has been doing that for a good number of years; and whenever he goes to buy anything he says, "How much does it cost?" Now, I think that we have grown up to the extent where the producer can come into his own, Mr. Speaker, and handle his own produce throughout. The need of a National Livestock Marketing Board was never as evident as it has been since the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Saskatchewan, last winter. We were faced with that calamity, Mr. Speaker. We all knew that we were going to lose, and the farmer and the livestock producer of Canada lost un-estimated millions because of that outbreak. But not entirely because of the outbreak, Mr. Speaker – not entirely. It was because the 'head of the house', as I mentioned, failed to accept his responsibilities and take a decisive stand to protect the farmers in their hour of need. I think when any branch of the industry, Mr. Speaker, is faced with the loss of un-estimated millions, that that begins to assume the proportion of a national emergency, and a times of a national emergency it is an opportune time for the national government to step in and declare a national emergency and to say to the rest of the economy that you shall not benefit from the suffering of other parts of the community. That is what happened, Mr. Speaker.

For months the Federal Government dilly-dallied around and passed the buck to the provinces, which resulted in one province putting embargoes against another province and further chaos. And who benefited? The packers, Mr. Speaker. The packers benefited from the farmers' misfortune, and the Federal Government chose to stand by and do nothing whatever about it.

Now the Federal Government is aware that there is something wrong in our livestock marketing field, I am sure. They should have been aware, because the Stevens' report on price spreads (and they reported to the Committee in 1948 as well) showed that there was collusion and price-fixing going on between the major packing companies – at least it has never been contradicted, Mr. Speaker. And it has always seemed strange to me that we have this terrific price fluctuation. You find steers up one day, down the next day and so on and so forth, and yet you do not find the comparative price drop in the beef that the consumer buys, and the bacon that the consumer buys. It is always 'way up, and the prices keep on fluctuating up and down.

We have heard a great deal about our surplus, and that we are faced with poor prices because we have a surplus; that we need an export market. I agree that we need an export market but I also maintain that a great deal could have been done if the Federal Government had stepped in when it should have, immediately after the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, because it was obvious there were going to be losses. If they had stepped in and guaranteed that, even although the farmers were going to take the loss – we were satisfied to take that; but if the farmers were going to take a loss, that the saving was going to be passed along to the consumer, Mr. Speaker, who could certainly use a cut in the price of meat across the counter. They did not see fit to do this. They chose, instead, to open the gate to the packinghouses and say "Go to it, boys; have a field day," and they did have a field day, Mr. Speaker. And we are faced, today, with that 20-per cent surplus which could have been reduced appreciably, if the saving had been passed across the counter to the consumer. You cannot tell me that there are not a good many households which could not use

more good red meat. Canadians, as a people, like their good red meat, Mr. Speaker, and if Mrs. Jones could have stretched her meagre budget and taken home a five-pound roast instead of a four-pound roast, which she would have, much of that surplus would have disappeared, Mr. Speaker.

I further point out that, during the war, we had to ration meat in Canada, mainly because the people of Canada, for the first time, had the purchasing power with which to buy meat; and even though our cattle population was as high or higher than it had ever been, we were faced with the need of rationing, because Canadians were eating more meat almost than we could produce. So let us not pay too much attention, Mr. Speaker, to this so-called surplus.

I say again that decisive action was not taken and that our Federal Government should now give some leadership in improvising a plan that will provide a process of marketing that is going to insure the consumer a fair price for the product he buys, and the producer a fair price for the product he sells. Surely we can do that. I know that it is not as simple as administrating and bringing in the Canadian Wheat Board; that meat is a perishable commodity. But if we have the will we can surely find a way, and this disorganized chaotic condition that arose after the outbreak of food-and-mouth disease, and much of the discrimination against producers that exists today, could certainly be overcome if we had the will to do something about it and bring a little more fair dealing into the livestock business.

It seems strange too – I am talking about beef because I am a cattleman and I suppose that is nearest to my heart; but let us say a few words about bacon. Did it ever seem strange to you, Mr. Speaker, all the different grades of bacon that we accept and the corresponding price spreads? ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘light’, ‘heavy’ – the farmer blithely accepts them. Go and try to buy some ‘A’, ‘B’, or ‘C’ grade bacon and find the corresponding price spreads. You will have premium and you will have pork – and they are all high. They are all high to the consumer.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is a crying need, if we are ever going to have a balanced economy and know the direction we are travelling, to do something about this, and I propose that we do everything we possibly can in bringing this situation about where the farmer will get the break and get the proper returns for the produce he puts on the market, and, likewise, the consumers be allowed a fair price on the meat they must have to feed their families.

Although, judging from some of the remarks that have been made it might be said that some of us are not too happy about the Canadian Wheat Board, I do not think there is any doubt as to the stand of the C.C.F. Party on orderly marketing.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, Hear!

Mr. Kramer: — None at all! We are in favour of orderly marketing, Mr. Speaker; but we retain the right to criticize, also, any faults or failings on behalf of the Board or the Government in the marketing of that wheat, and I see nothing wrong with that, either.

There is a lot of criticism of the International Wheat Agreement, Mr. Speaker, and I think that the International Wheat Agreement (I am

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going to go on record) was a good agreement. It should not be forgotten, though, that when that Agreement was being discussed and signed, our national Leader, Mr. Coldwell, pointed out that it would affect the farmers of Western Canada very seriously if, after signing that Wheat Agreement and, to some extent controlling the prices, the wages of the farmers, actually put the farmers of Western Canada in a price strait-jacket – he pointed out that if we signed this Agreement and then abandoned price controls, it would put the farmer in a very unfavourable position, Mr. Speaker. This happened, and the farmer, the producer, was put in an unfavourable position. It left him with his price ‘way down low.

Other things were at a corresponding level in about 1945 or 1946, and we were getting along fine. The farmer’s price of wheat was controlled; price controls were abandoned, and the result was that the cost of production was going up and up and up, and the farmers buying at away up high, selling away down low. That just does not make sense, Mr. Speaker, and that is what the farmer is faced with.

That is why I am so concerned about this livestock marketing, because, in the park belt, though probably not on the prairies – I know a lot of our friends are talking about the Cadillac and the big house in town; those are the exceptions that prove the rule. But up in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, we still have an average farm unit of about a half-section. We have the exceptions that prove the rule, too, Mr. Speaker. Until last year, the one bright picture on that farm was the price of cattle. Some people say it was too high; but compared to the losses we had taken in other produce, and the losses we had taken in the past, it was not too high, and 75 per cent of the machinery that was bought, was bought mainly from the returns from cattle and, to a large extent, the cattle industry was subsidizing the grain industry.

Today, we are faced with down prices in cattle as well, and if it were not for the abundant crop that we had, there would be some serious situations among our farm people. You cannot take the exception that proves the rule and point him out and say, “Oh, they are all making money; they are all going to Florida.” It is just not so. There are a good many people still, up in the park belt of northern Saskatchewan, who cannot afford the tarpaper to make their privies draft-proof. I am not pointing them out as an example either, Mr. Speaker. I know that there are some people who are on too small a unit and too poor land to ever be an economic unit, but let us not always be looking at the example that has been very fortunate and has established a good home and a good life for himself and his family. We want a good life for the average citizen too, and that is the person I am speaking for today, Mr. Speaker, the small family farm, because if we do not take care of the person on the small family farm, we certainly are not going to maintain the economy of Western Canada and western agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, there was a great deal said of many things in our ‘Programme for Progress’ by the hon. Leader of the Opposition who said, too, that we did not choose the proper methods for winning an election. I want to say, as far as I am concerned, when I went out on our campaign tour, I used the 1944 platform programme and our ‘Programme for Progress.’ I pointed out to the people of my constituency that we were coming back to them, after eight years, with a record of promises kept, and then I outlined what we proposed to do in the ‘Programme for Progress,’ and that was endorsed.

I also said a few things, when talking about the list of promises kept, about a few promises that had been broken by the Liberal Government at Ottawa over a period of year, and I said that only by comparing these two, only by comparison could you judge which one was the most likely to keep their promises, a thing the people of my constituency realized, and the vote showed what their decision was.

I was quite surprised at Mr. Tucker's concern regarding incapacitated persons, and I hope that if Mr. Tucker does take a seat again in the Federal House, he will go on record in that House...

Mr. Speaker: — Might I ask the hon. member to refer to hon. members indirectly by the names of their constituencies.

Mr. Kramer: — That is right. Mr. Speaker, I hope that he will remember what he said in this House, and I hope that he will prevail upon Hon. Paul Martin, Minister of National Health and Welfare, to do something about this. I believe that that is where the responsibility lies, and I think that Hon. Paul Martin was the man who just recently talked out an amendment which would have provided some assistance to these incapacitated persons. If, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government continues to be so tardy, we should probably extend ourselves just a little further. I think we should do something about it, as I feel very strongly about this. I feel that the parents of these incapacitated children and cripples are providing and performing a great service to the rest of the country in keeping these children at home, and they are also providing a real service to those children themselves, because I know that no institution can give these crippled and incapacitated people the same care that parents can in their homes. I hope, before too long, that something can be done on a national scale, but until something is done, I hope that we will see fit to do something on a provincial scale. I have a couple of very bad cases in my constituency, and I certainly hope that something can be done, before too long, to lighten the burden of the brave mother of these two particular ones I am thinking about right now, in providing a little happier and brighter way of life for them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is much more that can be said – I don't want to take up too much time. I am going to say more about livestock marketing later on. I want to say once more that I am speaking in favour of the motion and against the amendment, and I will now take my seat.

Mr. E.H. Walker (Gravelbourg): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take up a few moment's time of this House to bring a few matters to your attention which, I feel, as yet have not been properly covered. Before doing so, however, I want also, as the other members have, to extend my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the motion, for the very excellent speeches which they gave.

I also want to extend my congratulations to the new members of the House. I think it is something that we in the C.C.F. Party can be proud of that we have such a large number of members added to our side of the House, and we can also be very proud of the quality of those members. They have certainly proven themselves in the caucuses which we had over the last two or three weeks in advising the Government as to whether they are doing the right thing or the wrong thing. They have certainly made a splendid effort.

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I also want to take this opportunity to thank the good people of the Gravelbourg constituency for once again expressing their confidence in me in giving me this opportunity to represent them in this House. I think, possibly, I have the record of being the only member in this House who was elected twice within the year to the same House, and I do consider it a great honour.

I want to take this opportunity, also, of thanking the hon. Leader of the Opposition and the people who have come down there to help me in that election; the hon. member for Arm River, the hon. member for Saltcoats, the Federal Minister of Agriculture, the M.P.'s for Swift Current and Maple Creek, the M.P.s from as far away as Manitoba and Quebec as well as all the other people who came in and, you might say, 'stayed for the duration'. It was very noticeable, however, that on election night they closed their mouths and silently stole away.

I want also to join with the other hon. members in a few criticisms of this Government. I do not intend to bring out particular projects such as some of the members have done; but because I do not do that I do not want the Government to think that I have no particular projects which are problems in my area. I am quite sure the people of the Gravelbourg constituency do not feel that way, and I can assure you that I do not. They all appreciate the assistance which has been given towards special projects – roads, power. I particularly want to thank the Minister of Public Works for the manner in which the Power Corporation has dealt with the people in the Gravelbourg constituency. We know that we are a long way behind, and the people there realize that the Power Corporation has a tremendous problem on its hands at the present time and that they are dealing with it in a fairly efficient manner. We particularly are appreciative of the fact that we are going to get power north of Gravelbourg, and within a few years we hope to be able to solve the big problem around and near Hodgeville. The Corporation has already indicated that if the people in that area are willing to take power, they will get power part way, next year.

We are very appreciative of the fact that the Minister of Highways has seen fit to build a few very excellent highways in the constituency. We sometimes question the advisability of spending so much money on highways, and we feel that some of the special local road problems should be given a little more assistance. We know that the Department of Highways of the Government has been borrowing in the neighbourhood of \$2 million a year to pave roads in Saskatchewan, and we quite readily recognize that certain roads in this province do need to be paved – roads which have particular problems and roads which are particularly heavily travelled and where there is poor soil; but we sometimes question the advisability of, say, paving the whole of the Trans-Canada Highway in Saskatchewan. We are very much afraid that by the time we get our work done, the Federal Government will say to the rest of Canada, "We will give you more than a 50-50 share of assistance towards your portion of the Trans-Canada"; and Saskatchewan, as usual, will be the goat. I want to say that it is a fine thing to say that we are ahead in our paving programme, or in our highway programme; but once again I want to warn that we are liable to be the goat. I want to suggest that possibly during the next election campaign I can just see the headlines in the Rosthern papers, saying, "Vote Tucker to get a better 'steal' on the Trans-Canada." Or a slogan to elect Tucker to prevent Ottawa from carrying out their plans to double-cross the people of Saskatchewan in the

Trans-Canada Highway programme. I can well imagine the Leader of the Opposition's story there – he had a pretty good one for the South Saskatchewan dam and he got away with it. I expect he has thought up a pretty good one for the Trans-Canada Highway by now.

I could not help but think when the hon. member for Kinistino (Mr. Begrand) was recounting some of the hon. Leader of the Opposition's actions in the Federal House that his conscience must have been bothering him a little bit, because he immediately jumped to his feet, not to correct anything that the hon. member for Kinistino had said, but simply to try to explain his actions there, explaining that he, in effect, was more interested in serving the Liberal Party than he was in looking after the responsibilities of the people.

Now I realize, Mr. Speaker, that the particular problem of the agricultural economy here in Saskatchewan has been pretty well covered by most of the members, and particularly the Premier; and I would be the last one to try to cover a subject which the Premier had covered so well. I want to point out that, although Saskatchewan has enjoyed two of the largest crops in its history and the total agricultural income for Saskatchewan farmers will be the largest in history, the picture is not quite as rosy as we might gather. I want to point out, first of all, the danger of the wheat markets being lost. We all know that we have in storage in Canada, today, probably the largest amount of wheat that has ever been in storage; practically all storage facilities are plugged to capacity. We know that foreign markets are in danger of being lost, partly because of the policies of the United States government when they cut down on loans to European countries who are now buying our wheat, and partly because of the policies of the Federal Government at Ottawa. They have not indicated that they are prepared to take any new attitude towards markets; they have not indicated that they are going to look at this problem of getting rid of our produce, and buying our necessities in a realistic manner. We all know that, even as late as last fall, boats were turned away in the Great Lakes because there was not sufficient wheat at the Lakehead to fill them. We know that the Hudson Bay route was not used anywhere near to capacity, simply because the Federal Government would not use it. We realize that if this tremendous volume of wheat that we have in Saskatchewan and in Canada is ever to get to Europe, it must get there fast before the markets go. We must get rid of it because we may have another good crop coming on next year. I think it was very unfortunate that the Federal Government should be so negligent in looking after these things.

We also realize that farm machinery prices, the cost of living, the hidden taxes, the income tax and excise duties are still tremendously high. Those things have all contributed toward making it very difficult indeed for a young farmer to establish himself on a farm, or for people who are already established to have a decent standard of living.

It is a good thing that the Royal Commission on Agriculture is going to study the problem of rural credit, and we hope that they will be able to give some constructive suggestions as to how the tremendous problem can be at least partly corrected. We know that this province has done a great deal towards assisting the veterans on their Crown Lands. I notice in the 'Votes and Proceedings' of today the hon. Mr. Nollet, the Minister of Agriculture, answered a question in which he pointed out there were some 2,123 leases to veterans on the 33-year lease basis. Of those 2,123, there are about 205 which have been terminated for one reason or another and, of course, if this land is re-inspected and found to be suitable then it will be re-allocated to some other veteran.

I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, at the same time that these veterans were, as we all know, the responsibility of the Federal Government to establish them in something in which they could make their living after returning from the wars. Any of those veterans who received the 33-year lease were only assisted by the Federal Government to the extent of \$2,300. Those veterans who did not take the 33-year lease were assisted by the Federal Government to the extent of about \$6,000. In other words, Mr. Speaker, this Government has helped those approximately 2,000 veterans to the extent of in the neighbourhood of \$2,000 each, at least, because of lands these people got, by and large, were some of the best lands in Saskatchewan. It was the last remaining Crown Land available, and I think it would be very foolish indeed of this Government to turn around and sell that land completely and wash its hands of all Crown Land. Unfortunately, we had to sell part of that land to those veterans – it was in the agreement; and I do not think the Government has any intention of renegeing on any of those agreements. I do hope the Government will give serious consideration to setting up a special fund of money which may come out of the sale of Crown Lands for the purchase of other Crown Lands so that in the future we may be able to help other young farmers, or other veterans, if necessary – we hope not – but it may help other young farmers to get established. Under this type of a system, the capitalist system, this Government has got to help young farmers and that is about the only way they can help young farmers.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it has been quite noticeable in the House lately that there has been a considerable lack of constructive criticism. I would not criticize the new members among the hon. members opposite, but it has been very noticeable that the Opposition has been rather quiet. I think it has also been very noticeable that some of the hon. members on this side have taken on the job of critics of the Government. I think that is a good thing, Mr. Speaker, although the amount of criticism which this Government may get in this House, and maybe from this side of the House, may be rather limited. I do want to point out to you, Sir, that we do have caucus meetings quite regularly. The policies are pretty well all covered in caucus meetings, and it is in those caucus meetings that the private members do their real criticism. I want to remind you that we have spent a good many hours going over certain policies lately, and it is there, as I say, that the real job of this Party is carried on, and we do that in our caucus because the C.C.F. people throughout the country, through their conventions, tell us what the caucus should do. We feel that we are not in any way losing our democratic rights, because the hon. members opposite fall down in their very important job.

I notice that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is purported to have used the statement that we did not use proper methods to win the election. I would suggest to him that I do not think he used proper methods either, at least according to the results.

I will support the motion, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. R.H. Woof (Turtleford): — Mr. Speaker, on rising to take part in the debate on the Reply to the Speech from the Throne I would like to add my word of compliment to those members who have already spoken; to those members who have moved and seconded the reply to the Speech from the Throne. I think that this Government and this Party has been most fortunate in the calibre of member and candidate material that they have brought forward, and that has been especially true, Mr. Speaker,

with regard to the lady members who have been members of this Government. I think, Mr. Speaker, that I detected a rather plaintive note in the voice of the speakers of the Opposition as they paid their compliments, the other day, to our fair member for Regina.

Then, too, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate you on your re-election to the Speaker's chair. I understand that you are setting a record for years of service as Speaker of this Assembly, and I feel sure that you will guide the affairs of this Assembly as impartially and as justly as you have in the past.

Before I enter into other matters I would be remiss if I failed to congratulate my hon. friend from The Battlefords on being presented with another member to his family, a fine daughter. I am sure that while we missed him from the Legislature, we will excuse his absence on such an occasion.

Probably most of us like to consider ourselves unique in one way or another. Sometimes perhaps we take on rather doubtful distinction. I believe I am the only member of the 1944-48 Legislature that was washed out in 1948 and washed up again in 1952. However, Mr. Speaker, I consider it a great privilege, a great honour, but at the same time a tremendous responsibility to represent the Constituency of Turtleford in this Assembly, and I do thank them, not for giving me a job, but because of the confidence that they have placed in me.

It has never been my privilege up to the present, Mr. Speaker, to sit opposite the hon. Leader of the Opposition. However, I must confess I was rather disappointed a week ago. There was a lack of fervour, of assurance, a lack of positiveness that I had expected. It was not the approach of one who really believed that he was on the right track. However, I suppose there are limits of endurance even of big men. The first time I heard the major portion of the hon. Leader of the Opposition's address was some four or five years ago in my own constituency, and at that time, Mr. Speaker, it was delivered with something of a prophetic smack as he feverishly attempted to stampede the people of Saskatchewan from their own leaders, their own government and their own organization. Once again the hon. Leader of the Opposition played the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde act of the Liberal Party when he attempted to accuse this Government of not applying his interpretation of all-out Socialism in one breath and in the next breath accuse them of following the 'Regina Manifesto'. I notice, too, Mr. Speaker, that when the hon. member for Kinistino (Mr. Begrand) reproduced the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde act of the Federal House, even the soft swivel chairs of this Chamber were not too comfortable; and why not, Mr. Speaker?

I would like to deal, as some of the other members have done, with affairs in my own constituency. There are some things that happened there in 1952 that I would like to draw to the attention of the House. Since I represented Turtleford before, I think most of you are aware that the boundaries have been changed. We used to run 50 miles wide and 100 miles north from Township 48. Today we run better than 100 miles east and west, from the Alberta boundary, and 50 miles north and south. The change necessitated parting with many friends and supporters, those with whom I had become associated in more than one election campaign, and though I regretted losing them I must say that my hon. friend from Meadow Lake has many good people, though perhaps not supporters, in the north end of the old Turtleford

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constituency and I have gained many new friends and many good supporters in that new area that was added to the south end of the old Turtleford constituency.

In the Turtleford constituency we have many growing, thriving, urban centres. I would just like to say a word or two about a few of them because there are certain things that have happened during the year. St. Walburg is the north end of the railway in the northwest corner of the province, and it is also the southern end of the truck line from some 90 miles north, and it has grown consistently and rapidly. This year it has attained the stature of a town. It is the only official town that we have in Turtleford constituency. Then Turtleford town itself passed another milestone this year. Amongst other community projects they erected one of the best closed-in skating and curling rinks in that part of the country. Probably the outstanding feature about it was that they only started to collect money for this project a year ago in January. The total cost will be something like \$30,00 and that area in one year, by one means and another, raised \$24,000 out of the \$30,000 necessary. That was done, Mr. Speaker, besides collecting a great deal of money for other community undertakings.

This Fall while I was out, prior to coming to the Session, I found that Glaslyn and Spiritwood were laying plans for like community centres. And so we cross the constituency and find all our main centres are growing very rapidly. Leoville lies some 25 miles north of Highway No. 55, against the forest reserve, and it is one of the largest of the villages in the whole constituency. There is a great deal of new farming land being opened up, some of it of a very good quality, and I think that you are going to see Leoville very much on the map within the very near future.

I would be remiss, Mr. Speaker, while I am covering what had happened in 1952, if I did not compliment the Minister of Public Works in that Turtleford got its first taste of power, this year. I wish to assure him that it has certainly whetted our appetites, and they cannot get back into that area too fast to suit especially the agricultural people of Turtleford constituency. I think they are all, from one end of the constituency to the other, looking to us to develop farm electrification just as soon as possible throughout the entire area.

Much has been said by one member and another about roads. It seems to be one of the main concerns of the private members. I would like to compliment the Minister of Highways for the extensions and the improvements that have been added to Highways No. 26 and No. 4, both of which cut across the present Turtleford constituency. Those highways for the most part have been kept in good shape. That does not mean, Mr. Speaker, that we have not other projects that need attention. I do not need to mention the need for Highway No. 55 running east and west. There are some 40 miles in that length that are still un-gravelled and are not built up to regular standards. However, we have had a start at both ends. There has been 25 miles built between No. 26 and No. 4 and, last year, we had some eight or nine miles built from the east end of the constituency into Mildred, a very fine extension to this highway.

Then, too, I would just like to say a word with regard to the bus service which runs into the northwest of Saskatchewan. I think it is outstanding. You can leave Loon Lake or you can leave Meadow Lake in the

morning and be in Regina that evening. On three times a week you can leave Pierceland by private bus that connects at Loon Lake with the Saskatchewan Transportation bus, leaving a point within 30 miles of the Federal Government's bombing range in the northwest in the morning and arriving in Regina that evening. That is something, Mr. Speaker, that the people of both the old and new Turtleford constituency had hardly dare dream of eight years ago.

I think main market roads are one of the problems troubling all of us, not that we have had no improvement in our highways and our secondary roads. I think the problem rises from the fact that the traffic is growing in both volume and weight, and it seems to be destroying our roads faster than we can build them.

So far as our own area is concerned, Mr. Speaker, I consider there has been a tremendous improvement in municipal roads. In the first place, the generous equalization grants over the past few years have made it possible for municipalities to purchase heavier construction equipment and we have had a decided improvement in both the standard and mileage of roads increasing mileage and quality of roads, but one of preserving the roads that we have built. I have seen very good municipal roads torn to pieces within two or three weeks of wet weather by the truck, car and tractor traffic and, by the way, Mr. Speaker, it is we farmers who do the most damage to our municipal roads by going to them with our tractors when they are wet and soft. While we do expect the Minister of Highways to give some leadership and to give some definite financial assistance, I also believe it is a question, Mr. Speaker, that the rural municipalities and we farmers ourselves are going to have to face up to. There are some schemes, I believe, some projects, that are being undertaken as joint endeavours between municipalities and individual farmer groups whereby financial cost was borne by the municipality but the work and the trucks were contributed by the farmers along a given road. I see no other way, if we are to get these roads within the time limit that most of us have set, and that is as rapidly as possible.

We have had much new land brought under cultivation, during the last few years, in the northwest corner of Saskatchewan and I think, Mr. Speaker, that I am safe in saying that, in 1952, we harvested the biggest average crop, both in yield and acreage over that area of the province, that has ever been taken off in its history. True, we suffered some frost damage; there is much Grade 5 grain, but the yields were high. Unfortunately, the quotas have not been too high. At the time I left home they were from 10 to 12 bushels. That was not too serious for the larger operator, but the small farmer has found himself in a very difficult position. In discussing the all-over picture with some of our business men, Mr. Speaker, I find they are concerned with the drop in sales, and I think that it was not so much the price of grain – wheat is selling at somewhere near the same price that it was sold in 1945 – but the cost of production is another matter altogether. Because of the broken promises of the Federal Government to maintain controls, the cost of producing those grains today has gone up 60 per cent, and along with the increase in the cost of production we have a multiple increase in freight rates to contend with also. We have lost, as has already been pointed out, our overseas markets for bacon and for all meat products. Mr. Gardiner's feed grain policies, coupled with the loss of those markets, has virtually put the hog business in Saskatchewan off the map. We, today,

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are holding a tremendous volume of coarse grains, probably the largest in the province's history, with really no guaranteed outlet.

Mr. Speaker, our free-enterprise friends sometimes ask me why I belong to the C.C.F. and why I am a Socialist, and I would like to give the House my answer as briefly as possible, this afternoon. Like many others present, I have put a good deal of time into Sunday School and church work, because I believe our Christian ideals are the foundation, the starting point, of any truly great nation. I believe, of course, that faith is a personal and inward experience. But, Mr. Speaker, if that faith is genuine it must give an outward expression of service to one's fellowman. If the great tenets of our Christian faith, the Golden Rule – 'doing unto others as we would be done by' and the 'strong bearing the burden of the weak', those ideals, Mr. Speaker, that have inspired men and women through countless generations, if they are to achieve results they must be interpreted into everyday living. They must be interpreted into the statutes of our provinces and of our Dominion.

As I have watched our hospitalization scheme at work, as I have seen the air ambulance take in emergency case after emergency case, as I have seen the people who have met with accidents on our highways picked up, taken to hospital and given medical treatment without asking who was going to pay the bill, as I have seen people suffering from cancer and suffering from mental illness given free treatment, as I note the two-fold policy in the field of our natural resources, one of conserving them for the generations to come and the other of using them to make the services mentioned available, not for a few but for all the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, it is with humble pride and a deep satisfaction that I played a small part in helping to formulate the policy which implemented the vision of the C.C.F. people in Saskatchewan.

It ill behoves the Leader of the Opposition to criticize this Government for not applying more socialism. I sat in this House for four years, Mr. Speaker, and saw the Liberal Opposition fight for hours and for days to prevent almost all those social services mentioned from being put on the statutes of Saskatchewan, and I just want to say this: if anybody can show me a more democratic party which comes nearer implementing the Christian ideals that we claim to stand for than the C.C.F., I'll join with it and work with it tomorrow, Mr. Speaker. But until that time I get a little weary of the kind of criticism that we receive from the hon. members opposite.

I was never prouder of our Premier, Mr. Speaker, than last Wednesday, when he put on the records of this House the broad policies of this Government and this Party on certain national and international issues: that while we believe in collective security, we also believe that with our potential for production and with the tremendous food stocks that are piled up at the present time in the western world, that we not only must relieve the immediate hunger and suffering in the under-developed areas of the world, but that we must go out and help them to help themselves. We must endeavour to understand their problems and help them to throw off the shackles of slavery and exploitation that they may walk the earth in liberty and freedom, in their God-given right as human beings and as brother men.

Stanley Jones, one of the great missionaries to India, had this to say about Communism:

“The only way you can beat communism is to beat them to it and to give to these people that communism is endeavouring to capture the best that we to offer and you will have knocked the feet of communism from under it.”

I would like just in closing, Mr. Speaker, to read a quotation. I am taking it from ‘The Commonwealth’. It is entitled “A Thought for the Weak” and it is a declaration of Friends’ World conference, 1952:

“The Christian faith which we believe is the hope of our troubled world is a revolutionary faith. It is rooted in inward experience, but wherever it is genuine it leads to radical changes in the ways in which men live and act. We rejoice in the movements appearing in many parts of the world at once which are inspired by the desire for social justice, equal rights for all races, and the dignity of the individual person. These changes can neither be achieved nor prevented by war. War leads to a vicious circle of hatred, oppression, subversive movements, self-propaganda, rearmament and new wars. An armaments race cannot bring peace, freedom or security. We call upon people everywhere to break this vicious circle, to behave as nations with the same decency as they would behave as men and brothers, and to substitute the institutions of peace for the institutions of war. Let us join together throughout the world to grow more food, to heal and prevent disease, to conserve and develop the resources of the good earth to the glory of God and for the comfort of man’s distress. These are among the tasks to which in humility for our share in the world’s shame and in faith in the power of love we call our own society and all men and nations everywhere.”

Mr. Speaker, I will support the motion.

Mr. J. Walter Erb (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part in this debate I should, first of all, like to congratulate the speakers who have preceded me, particularly the mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne, upon their fine addresses. Their grasp of the fundamental aspects of our problems, Mr. Speaker, was ably demonstrated, and I am confident that they shall continue to make contributions to this House, of the same high calibre. I believe that the constituencies of Regina and Melfort are to be commended upon their excellent choice for their respective representatives in this Legislature. I am confident that the hon. lady member for Regina and the hon. member for Melfort shall, through the years, continue to warrant that trust and confidence.

Mr. Speaker, at this moment I should like to beg leave to adjourn the debate.

The Assembly adjourned at 6:10 o’clock p.m.