

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session - Twelfth Legislature
23rd Day

Monday, March 14, 1955

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

BUDGET DEBATE

The House resumed from Friday, March 11, 1955, the adjourned debate on the proposed Motion of the Hon. Mr. Fines (Provincial Treasurer): That Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair. (The Assembly to go into Committee of Supply).

Hon. J.A. Darling (Minister of Public Works): — Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. Provincial Treasurer is getting a little tired of being congratulated on the fine job he did a week ago Wednesday. Nevertheless, I think that all members of the House would feel that they had somehow failed to do justice to his fine effort if they did not make some mention of it.

Mr. Lopton: — Oh, he can take a lot of punishment, that fellow.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — To my mind the Budget Debate is the most interesting debate in the Legislature. Oh, of course, I do not want to detract at all from the Throne Speech debate; but in that debate we are inclined to deal with government programmes in general terms, whereas in the budget Debate we get down to details and we have more freedom to discuss future programmes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is a strong temptation for a representative of a rural constituency to spend some time speaking about the situation of the farmers this year, of the losses that they have sustained as a result of the crop conditions, and the farmers in Watrous constituency, of whom I am one, are in the same position as the farmers in the rest of Saskatchewan, although possibly I think we could spare some sympathy for those farmers who have suffered during recent years from flooding conditions, particularly in the north-east of the province. Their situation is more serious than ours, and we can only hope that Nature will relieve them of this overburden of moisture and restore their good crop years.

I must resist the temptation to say more on that line, and I must also resist the temptation to say very much about the Saskatchewan Jubilee Year. It is expected of a Minister that he will deal pretty elaborately with the work of his department and the government agencies under his care, and I think it is quite proper that the Ministers should do that. We have had ample evidence that the private members are well capable of taking care of other matters.

I would like to mention just one thing in connection with the Jubilee Year. It brings to mind, of course, the personalities of pioneers whom we have known. Just recently I read in the Watrous 'Manitou' of the passing of one of the citizens of Manitou Beach. I mention him, Mr. Speaker,

March 14, 1955

because he homesteaded at Govan, and I am quite sure you knew him personally. I am referring to Mr. C.A. Gallagher, a colourful gentleman of strong opinions, whose presence was felt in the community in which he lived. He was very much on my mind, having read just recently of his going, because not long ago he called on me in my office to give me a word of cheer. He was in his 88th year, and we are being constantly reminded of the passing of a generation who knew Saskatchewan in the days when life here was more primitive than it is now, and who laid the foundations on which we are now building.

I want to go on immediately with my departments. I always feel a sense of guilt that I have spent so much of my time in the past with the Power Corporation and said very little in connection with the Department of Public Works. I propose to do the same thing again, because the activities of the Department of Public Works, the major activities, are reflected in the operations of other departments and the other Ministers, when they are discussing their own programmes and activities, will discuss programmes and activities which will be carried on in the accommodation provided for them by the Department of Public Works.

I would like, however, to draw attention to one interesting fact from the standpoint of all of us, and that is that in this Jubilee Year the Department of Public Works is bringing to completion a number of very important projects. There are a surprising number of projects altogether, but the main one is, of course, the University Hospital, which will be completed in this year, by December of 1955. That is a building of which it is unnecessary for me to speak because everyone knows what a fine type of building it is. The construction had just begun when I assumed the office of Minister of Public Works in 1948, and it will be a red-letter day for the Department of Public Works when the key is handed over to the Minister of Public Health and the hospital is no longer one of our charges.

Another important institution which will be completed (insofar as institutions are ever completed) in 1955, will be the Training School for Mental Defectives at Moose Jaw. I would suggest that any member of the Legislature who has not yet visited that institution would be well repaid for the time that it would take for him to visit there. It is a large institution and is indicative of the care of those unfortunate people that is shown by this Government.

We will also complete the Administration Building here in Regina, and the T.B. wing at Weyburn. We will very shortly complete the Natural History Museum, which most of us see on our way to these buildings every day, a building which has assumed very nice proportions, which is going to be a building distinctive in this province of Saskatchewan. I might say that the basement in that building is now completed and exhibits and display cases are being moved there now. The main floor will be finished at the end of this month and the official opening will be on May 16th when His Excellency, the Governor-General of Canada, will officiate. That is going to be one notable event in the Jubilee Year of Saskatchewan.

More than that, I only wish to state my appreciation of the continued loyalty and co-operation of the staff of the Department of Public Works.

It is strange how many anniversaries seem to be taking place at the present time. This is the 50th anniversary of the province of Saskatchewan and, last year, 1954, the year about which I will be speaking presently

was the 25th anniversary of the setting up of the Saskatchewan Power Commission. 1954 was also the 75th Anniversary of the invention by Thomas A. Edison of the incandescent lamp bulb. I think nothing illustrates more strikingly the progress that has been made in this scientific age than the fact that only 75 years ago, when some people who are now living were still in their childhood, the first electric light was invented. Today we have made substantial progress in the development of electric power in the province of Saskatchewan.

Nearly everyone seems to put their prime interest in the farm electrification activities of the Power Corporation and, in 1954, we had the same difficulties which everyone whose work took them outdoors experienced, as a result of the extremely wet weather. We had difficulty with our trucks and tractors getting around, and difficulty in carrying on the work. In fact, it became necessary, last year, to shift crews from one locality to another so that they could keep on working rather than remain waiting for the ground to dry up in the area in which they had commenced. Nevertheless, I think it is a very great tribute to the man in charge of the Power Corporation that they succeeded in completing and meeting their objective, set last spring, of 6,500 farms. At the end of the year we had only completed 5,969 farms, but now we have completed 6,555. That brings the total to approximately 25,000.

I think we have reason to feel well pleased at the progress that has been made in this activity of the Power Corporation, and I am going to go forward in my address, this afternoon, to try to bring home to the members of this Legislature and through them to the people in their constituencies, some greater understanding of the magnitude of the project of power development in the province of Saskatchewan. I have many evidences that people do not appreciate the size of that project. I have said that we have connected 6,555 farms and yet, time and again I have received letters and I am told in conversation that I am expected to know every man's project from my personal knowledge. Now, I am quite sure that in connecting 6,555 farms, the mileage of line would be not far short of the mileage of both our main railway systems in Canada, and I could hardly be expected to have that intimate knowledge. The fact, however, that some people do expect that shows that they do not appreciate the magnitude of the job that is being carried out.

There is one thing that is very interesting and will interest the members of the Legislature, and that is a new development in farm electrification, a development that my hon. friend, the member for Saltcoats (Mr. Loptson) talked about a couple of years ago in the Crown Corporations Committee. I remember him asking at that time and trying very hard to get me to say I would not permit farmers to do the work themselves. As a matter of fact, this year, we had a number of self-help projects on which the farmers worked on a piece-work basis, earning good money, and made a good job of building their own power lines.

Mr. Loptson: — You wouldn't let them do it then. You have changed your mind since.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Mr. Speaker, I remember few things as clearly as I remember the hon. member for Saltcoats' efforts to make me say the farmers won't be allowed to do this work, and I remember telling him that we had never refused the opportunity to anyone who could show us that they had the capacity to build power lines.

Mr. Loptson: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, I would like to correct my hon. friend. We had been talking about contracts at that time, and not day labour. You would not allow a farmer to take a contract on that and even now, because I tried to get the price on the material and I was refused the price of material.

March 14, 1955

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says he tried to get prices on materials and he was refused. The company to whom he applied for prices asked the Power Corporation boys, ‘off the record’, if it would matter, and they were told to go ahead and give the hon. gentleman the prices, so that if he did not get them it wasn’t the Power Corporation that stood in the way.

Mr. Loptson: — Well, I haven’t got the prices yet.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Mr. Speaker, anyone who would come forward and show the Power Corporation that they had the know-how to build power lines at that time, the answer was given to the hon. member to the effect that they would be given the opportunity; and I remember very clearly winding up the debate in Crown Corporations Committee by asking the gentleman to come forward with a concrete proposal and let us have a look at it. And that is the way it wound up.

Mr. Loptson: — Well, I haven’t got the prices yet. That’s six months ago . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order! Order!

Mr. Loptson: — . . . a year ago, as a matter of fact.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Mr. Speaker, in connection with the farm electrification programme, I have been personally surprised at the way Saskatchewan farmers are becoming greater users of the utility. We are spending so much money on the development of power here in this province that it would certainly be too bad, if, after spending that money, the farmers were unable to make full use of it, and that it was not making its fullest contribution to their well-being and assistance in their work. This year I have the estimated figures (but they are probably pretty accurate) of the average kilowatt hour consumption of the farmers in Saskatchewan. It is only a few years ago that I told this Legislature that while our farmers were using on the average about 98, (if I remember, 95 or 98) kilowatt hours a month, in Alberta the farmers were averaging 180 and in Manitoba it was something over 200, as I remember it. Now I find that in 1952 our farmers, on the average, were consuming 138 kilowatt hours a month; in 1953, they averaged 160 kilowatt hours a month; and in 1954, 180 kilowatt hours a month. Those figures do not tell the whole story because we have been adding new connections all the time, with the result that those newly connected farms will not have reached by any means their peak, and those figures indicate that the farmers are making extensive and increasing use of the power utility.

I have an example here from Asquith – 112 farms. In 1953 they averaged 217 kilowatt hours per month – a little above the average; in 1954, 270 kilowatt hours. That is a healthy sign and one that is extremely gratifying to everyone interested in power development in the province.

I want to go on to some of the other lines, some of the other departments of the corporation. In the matter of power production, we added a 20,000 kilowatt generator to the Estevan plant; on May 26th, 1954 we had the official placing-on-the-line of that generator. I want here to compliment the people of Estevan on their very excellent and generous reception of the Power Corporation people down there. It was really marvellous. It was a windy, wet day, and we wound up out on the streets with His Worship the Mayor, on a platform, the rain dripping from his hat brim, officially turning on the new mercury vapour lights in the town of Estevan. I may say, Mr. Speaker, just in order that our friends of the Opposition will have something to exercise their

imaginings on, that on that evening I lost my shirt in Estevan . . .

Mr. Loptson: — You lost your shirt?

Hon. Mr. Darling: — . . . and it was returned to me several months later by the Sheriff. I am going to leave it to the hon. gentlemen opposite to figure out just how that happened. I am giving them the bare facts, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Loptson: — Must have been bare if you lost your shirt. I don't want to go to Estevan, if that's what happens.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — A 25,000 kilowatt unit was added at Saskatoon and again the people of Saskatoon showed tremendous interest in that activity. At the same time the Saskatoon plant was dedicated as the A.L. Cole Generating Station in memory of a gentleman, 'Bert' Cole we all called him, who had been active in power development in this province and who was one of the most dependable people, admired by all members of the staff.

The 2,500 kilowatt dual-fuel power station was built at Swift Current, housing two National gas diesel generating units of 1,250 kilowatt capacity each. I believe that hon. members will remember that, last session I announced that those had been placed on order. They were British engines, and it is rather remarkable that while they placed on order then, they were actually producing power on the line by November, and we had to build a building to house those units. Plans call, too, for a further addition to the Swift Current plant of a 3,000 kilowatt generator by the end of 1955.

At the very start of the Power Commission, back in 1929 or 1930, there was the purchase by the Saskatchewan Government of that day of the Saskatoon Power Plant, and now we are in the process of demolishing that plant in order to make room for a 33,000 kilowatt unit which will be installed there, bringing the capacity of the A.L. Cole plant at Saskatoon to 108,000 kilowatts by 1956. This, too, is a British unit, by Parsons of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

A further new 30,000 kilowatt Metropolitan-Vickers generator and a 200,000 lbs. per hour boiler have been ordered for Estevan to increase that plant's capacity from 42,000 kilowatts to 72,000 by 1956. My hon. friend from Souris-Estevan (Mr. Kohaly) said that as a work in order to provide employment, we should start building a power plant at Estevan. Now, I think before I have finished speaking, Mr. Speaker, he will realize that we won't be stopping building power plants for quite a long time in the province of Saskatchewan.

Furthermore, a new project just decided upon very recently is the building of a new power plant at Kindersley. We will build a new building to house this plant, and we have already on order two 3,000 kilowatt Cooper-Bessemer gas engine generating units, and we will use there the natural gas as fuel. It is believed that the pipeline to Kindersley will be sufficient to enable us to increase the size of that plant, using natural gas as fuel, to a maximum of 20,000 kilowatts. This addition to the generating system was made desirable by the closing down of the North Battleford plant which will take place some time next summer. We no longer will use the North Battleford plant in which generation was costly.

March 14, 1955

In connection with line construction, the Power Corporation construction department carried on a heavy programme during 1954, and it has already been indicated insofar as farm lines are concerned, but farm lines are not the only lines which were built. One other project was the construction of a 72,000-volt highline from Estevan to Redjacket near Oxbow, and it is planned, of course, to continue that line up into the Yorkton area, thereby giving to that part of the province a double source of power and make continuity of service more dependable. One of the most serious breaks in service that occurred last summer was on that high-voltage line running north to Yorkton. It was one of the most difficult undertakings to restore service on that line. The condition of the land, which was very wet and muddy, was so bad that someone took a camera out there and took pictures of the conditions under which our men had to work in order to restore that service. They found, I believe, five breaks in that conductor cable which is not much less than an inch in thickness.

Another 72,000 high volt highline was built from Weyburn to Assiniboia. I might say that originally we intended to bring that line from Weyburn up to Regina and then across to Moose Jaw. However, it became evident during the construction season that we were going to need to jack up voltage down in the Assiniboia area and that part of our programme was changed.

In all, we built 315 miles of 72,000 volt line. For reasons which I will leave some engineer to explain, the 72,000 volt line is just the 66,000 volt line which later became known as a 69,000 volt line and is now known as a 72,000 volt line. There is no difference in the line as far as I know and no doubt an engineer can explain why they have changed the description of it.

During last year we extended power to a number of additional villages. We now have 704 villages and towns served on our system. Also, we built distribution facilities in some villages that were too far removed from our highline to be served immediately and rented to them small generating units that we had purchased as we had replaced them with transmission line service. We also built distribution facilities to supply pumping power for over 150 oil wells during the year in Cantaur, Midale and Coleville producing areas.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note – I am afraid I have not got the thing I was going to refer to: I was going to quote from the ‘Commission News’ of an earlier day to show how our power development in this province has grown up in recent years. I may come to it as I get down further into my notes. But it is surprising how we raise our sights and what seemed to be a large achievement at one time becomes very trifling in the light of greater experience and expansion.

Mr. Danielson: — Hear, Hear, Hear!

Hon. Mr. Darling: — My friends are very glad, very proud, or otherwise . . .

Mr. Danielson: — Of the common sense you are expressing.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — . . . of comparing our development here with the development in Manitoba. Now, the last thing that I would want to do would be to disparage what has been done in Manitoba, because if they were to go forward building power lines like beavers building dams, whether they needed them or not, they would certainly be subject to censure. They build

what they need over there and then, when their wants are supplied, they stop. But, one thing is interesting and that is that in our province we served our 100,000th customer some time last summer. The province of Manitoba reached its 100,000th customer in January of this year, and our customers are more difficult to reach than they are in Manitoba. At the present time we have 111,000 customers on the power service of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, and I might point out that that does not include the customers in the cities where we sell in bulk to the cities. Those customers are not included. Those are the ones we sell to direct and bill direct.

Sometimes there is surprise expressed that the Power Corporation, in spite of the growing demand for electrical energy and the urgency that is continually present to increase generating capacity, is at the same time carrying on a programme of load building. Load building is an essential part of any utility, and when the Power Corporation people are able to persuade the customers to make greater use of power, they are helping the customer just as much as they are helping the corporation. In fact it is perfectly obvious to anyone that the Power Corporation is not in existence to make money for the Government. It has not made one dollar for the Government during its entire existence. It is there to give service to the people of the province, and when people can be shown that it can be used to advantage, then a service is being even further extended and the people themselves are the beneficiaries.

We are one of the few electrical utilities on the North American continent which does not retail electrical appliances; most of them go into that line of business. We have steered away from that because we have just about all we want to do without going into that line of work. We are, however, co-operating with suppliers and retailers of electrical equipment and appliances in order that there will be greater use made of our utility. I do not propose to spend more than a moment or two on this, but during next year it is proposed to hold eight gas shows in the province, at Melfort, Melville, Kindersley, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Shaunavon and Assiniboia, and North Battleford. The manner in which these gas shows are organized is to secure the co-operation of the manufacturer, who secures the co-operation of the dealers in those areas, and they put on exhibits of their products. A considerable attendance was experienced in the show held last year, and at the same time demonstrations are held on cooking, on adequate wiring, on electrical safety, and woodworking and farm electrical equipment; and, of course, they have to bring in a little of something new and something novel, and they intend to hold a hair style and fashion show. This show is set against a background of electrical appliances. Models, when coming on the stage, work, briefly, the different appliances, while a commentator describes what electrical living means to the housewife. He then describes the hairdos and clothing, and gives credit to local business people who co-operated in supplying them. A special feature, this year, at these shows will be to tie in with Saskatchewan Golden Jubilee; there will be the incorporation of old appliances into the show, as a contrast to modern methods.

The Power Corporation is interested in developing the use of electrical energy at all peak periods. The capacity to generate is determined by the peak load, but in most utilities the load factor will be something around 50 per cent; that is to say, we are only using, on the average, 50 per cent of the generating capacity installed. The objective of these shows and of the load-building programme is to increase the average use of the generating capacity and so reduce actual costs.

March 14, 1955

I want now to go on to natural gas. In 1954, a sort of off-year insofar as expansion of the natural gas system was concerned, we did build distribution systems in the town of Sutherland and the villages of Hvas, Tessier, Vanscoy and Zealandia, along the route of the pipeline. Many new customers, of course, were connected in the city of Saskatoon and in those towns and villages which already have been served. I had hoped that, this year, we would have had knowledge that the Trans-Canada pipeline would have been constructed, so that we could have gone forward with the large programme of taking natural gas to the three cities of Swift Current, Moose Jaw and Regina. As far as we know at this time, we have no assurance that the Trans-Canada pipeline will be proceeded with this year, although as far as one can learn it has not been definitely decided that progress will not be made this year; so we are kept in the dark. The cities of Swift Current and Moose Jaw have expressed their willingness to permit the Power Corporation to build and to operate the distribution systems in these cities. We have not yet had an assurance from the city of Regina one way or the other.

I would like, if it were possible, for us to continue with something fairly substantial year by year in the extension of the natural gas facility in this province, but we must, of course, make those extensions only in the light of the reserves of natural gas which are proved up from time to time. There is little that I can say, therefore, as to what may transpire during the coming season to increase our present plan insofar as natural gas extension is concerned. We are, however, intending to add four more small communities to the pipeline which runs from Brock to Saskatoon.

Hon. Mr. McIntosh: — Prince Albert?

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Yes, well, Prince Albert is all I am going to say. It is interesting to notice how those who are enjoying the services of natural gas are appreciating it. I have never spoken to anyone who is making use of this fuel in the city of Saskatoon or anywhere else who has not found that his experience has borne out the forecast of the Power Corporation that it would prove to be a satisfactory fuel, and more economical than either coal or oil. That has been proven to be correct.

In the city of Saskatoon we have increased the number of customers served as at December 31, 1953, from 3,672 to 7,635 on December 31, 1954. Over the entire province we have increased the services from 4,749 to 9,432, or an increase in the number of customers by 98.6 per cent. I hope that later, in another Session, I will be able to report a greater programme of natural gas expansion than I am able to do this year. The hold-up in the building of the Trans-Canada Pipeline, have not yet succeeded in arriving at a figure acceptable to us. Whether or not we will reach that point is, of course, something that will be decided in the future.

I have spoken longer than I intended about those things. I want, before I finish, to say something about this business of comparison between the Manitoba power development and power development in Saskatchewan. Almost since our farm electrification began, in 1949, the Opposition in the Legislature and throughout the province have been making comparisons between our system and that of Manitoba, and emphasis has always been placed on one single fact, one single resemblance, between the two projects, namely, that in Manitoba they take it to the farmer's yard without cost and that, in Saskatchewan, we charge a construction charge which probably averages about \$500.

I intend, now, to take the time to make perhaps a more complete and somewhat more detailed comparison than I have done before of the two operations – the Manitoba Power Commission and the Saskatchewan Power Corporation; and I want again to repeat that in doing so I am not criticizing the Manitoba Power system. I have nothing but good to say about what has been done in Manitoba, and I can remember speaking to some of the officials of the Manitoba Power Commission, just a very short time ago, and they were so happy that they had got the pressure off, that they had got most of their farmers connected, and that when a farmer came in and made application for electrical energy they could supply it to him within a matter of weeks or a couple of months. That is a position that I am certainly looking forward to in this province of Saskatchewan, and yet it is still some years off.

I would like, too, if I have time, to say something about the system that is followed in the province of Alberta, but my hon. friends never raise that issue for reasons which I am sure everyone can readily understand.

The first point of difference lies in the fact that the Manitoba Power Commission was set up 36 years ago. They had a ten-year head-start on the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. That isn't just a matter of time, Mr. Speaker; it doesn't mean that if we had another ten years we would be in the same position as the Manitoba Power Commission. The Manitoba Power Commission had the advantage of the construction of the generating plants in the 'twenties and in the 'thirties when the cost of constructing those generating plants was little more than half what it has been in the time of Saskatchewan's major development.

Another rather remarkable thing, Mr. Speaker, is that while I have frankly admitted in this Legislature that previous governments might be pardoned for not making too much progress in the construction of power lines during the 'thirties, because they were naturally concerned with finding food and the necessities of life for the people, yet, in Manitoba, they did, during the 'thirties, succeed in expanding their grid system. The Manitoba government was thinking of farm electrification at a time when there was no thought, apparently, in this province, no plans being made for farm electrification. The Manitoba Power Commission prepared a report for the Manitoba government in 1942 respecting farm electrification. It probably took them a year or two to make their studies and prepare that report, so they must have been thinking about farm electrification in the late 'thirties. There is no evidence whatever that the governments of Saskatchewan were even thinking of making additions to the power system during those years.

Mr. Danielson (Arm River): — That's your opinion.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — I would like now, Mr. Speaker, to quote what was done during the 'thirties, in this province – just examples. In 1936, the 'Commission News', a publication by the Saskatchewan Power Commission, speaks quite well of what they had accomplished up till that time in 1936. It says:

“The year 1927 saw the first transmission lines in the province, when about 30 miles were built by private interests. Since then, up to 1936, transmission lines extending to 2,429 miles have been built, of which, 1,363 miles or more than the combined mileage of all the other utilities operating in the province are owned and operated by the Saskatchewan Power Commission. In 1936 the investment – capital investment – in power development of the Commission was \$7,686,545.”

March 14, 1955

Now that was fine. But in 1939, 10 years after the Commission was set up, Mr. Speaker:

“Today, 1939, ten years later, after the Commission was set up, it has a staff of 159 employees, has built or acquired 1,430 miles of transmission lines and distribution systems in 129 hamlets, villages and towns.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, between 1936 and 1939, the Commission built 67 miles of line – in three years they built 67 miles of line.

Mr. E.H. Walker (Gravelbourg): — Great!

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to say that that was too bad . . .

Mr. Danielson: — There was a good reason why.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — . . . Mr. Speaker, that was in the 'thirties when people were not thinking of power lines; but the capital investment, in 1939, let us take it on from there, was \$7,765,571 or \$79,000 more than it had been in 1936. Now, we will let that pass, Mr. Speaker. You can make some excuses for that sort of thing, but in 1944, five years later, the capital investment in power development by the Power Commission was \$8,939,920, or they spent, in five years, \$1,174,349.

Mr. Danielson: — It was 1947 before you could buy anything to build the lines with.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Mr. Speaker, farm electrification was impossible until we had developed the 24,000-volt grid from which the farms were tapped in. If my hon. friends opposite had been interested – not my hon. friends, but their predecessors; if they had been interested in power development in this province, would they not have taken the initial steps, which did not need materials, to secure that grid? There was the purchase of the Dominion Electric, the purchase of the Prairie Power and The Canadian Utilities. Those three systems had to be purchased by this Government, and they cost \$7,000,000 in round figures; and when we came to this House, in 1944, we will all remember how they bragged about the \$8,000,000 that they had salted away against the next depression.

Mr. Danielson: — That is just your statement – nobody else's.

Premier Douglas: — Sitting on it.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — When we took office in the year 1944, the total generating capacity in the province was 35,000 K.W. We have jacked that up to 160,000 K.W., more or less, in 1954, and we have scrapped most of the original 35,000 generating capacity that was here at that time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that I was going to try to give the members of the Legislature and the people of Saskatchewan some idea of the problem which lies before us in power development in this province. We have now reached a total generating capacity of 160,000 K.W. in the province. We are adding more this year, as I have already said. In 1955, we are looking

forward, and providing that the load growth experienced in recent years continues, (and it very probably will; we see no reason why it should not, at least for the next five years), we are going to have the peak load, not just the generating capacity, but the peak load, in this province, of 162,000 K.W. in 1955, going up to 194,000 K.W. in 1956, 236,000 in 1957, and in 1959, 332,000 K.W. If you want to go on further and assume, or are optimistic enough to believe that we are going to continue with the present rate of load growth – by 1963, which is only eight years away, we are going to have a peak load of 605,000 K.W.

I am telling you those things because they are significant. We are going to require – and I hope the Provincial Treasurer doesn't take a shock; but to meet those needs we are going to need something like \$10,000,000 annually for the next five years for generating capacity alone – just for generating plants, apart altogether from transmission lines and from service into farms and so forth. In order to meet those demands, which can be anticipated unless something happens to taper them off, we will have to supply, between 1955 and 1959, some 250,000 K.W. of generating capacity. I have been talking about power units of 33,000 being installed in Saskatoon, and 30,000 in Estevan. We are going to need, before 1959, as I have said, 250,000 K.W. of additional generating capacity, and, if the load growth continues, a further 375,000 K.W. by 1963. Those figures show what a tremendous development in power is going forward in this province, and I want you to bear those figures in mind because of what I intend to say later.

These heavy capital expenditures for generation were not shared by the Manitoba Power Commission. All they had to pay for their power was the power bills as they came in every month from the City of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Electric in the first years of their development of farm electrification. They began in 1945 with their farm programme. Like us, they could not reach their maximum which they had set for themselves as 5,000 farms per year; they couldn't jump up to that level in their first year. In that year they did something like 600 odd farms. We did 1,100 in the first year. It is easy to appreciate the different problems facing the expansion of farm electrification where you didn't have to think of supplying generation, but just had to extend the lines and buy the power from another source, and that power from the other source being generated in plants which had been constructed very largely at a period of low capital cost.

Then there is another difference, of course, that I have repeated over and over again: the area served by the Manitoba Power Commission is very much smaller than the area covered by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, and the natural result of that is that the load is much closer to the source of generation. We have heavy expenditures in Saskatchewan and long mileage of high-voltage lines to transmit power from generating station to the consumer, so that it could be said with some truth that, if the Manitoba Power Commission has one power system, we have, in this province, several power systems of almost equal size. For example, our first comparative area is served out of Estevan with a 69,000-or 72,000-volt line running to Yorkton and extended to Canora, with smaller lines to Saltcoats, Bredenbury, Pelly and such towns. This, in itself, is a considerable power system, considering the length of transmission line and that power cannot be delivered at Canora or Yorkton at the cost of generation at Estevan any more than you could deliver a ton of coal to Canora from Estevan at mine-head price at Estevan.

That is one of the factors in the cost of electricity that people are very much inclined to overlook. Hon. friends opposite talked about

March 14, 1955

the generating costs, as if that was the cost of power anywhere in the province. You still have to provide those hundreds of miles of transmission line. There has been no way yet found that will escape line losses of electricity as they travel over that mileage of transmission line before you know what the actual cost of generation is at any point on the system – generation and transmission go together.

Now that is one system, out of Estevan. Another system can be described as centred around Regina and Moose Jaw – not that we take all the power from there, but for purposes of describing areas – that is sending power to Assiniboia, Shaunavon, Eastend in the west, and east to Indian Head, Qu'Appelle and Govan areas. If you take all that area away from an area the size served by the Manitoba Power Commission, you won't have a great deal left. We have another big system, served out of Saskatoon, with service as far as Eston and Kindersley; another served out of Saskatoon, running south to Aylesbury, Imperial, Holdfast, Watrous and Wynyard; and there is a third large system in the North Battleford area extending east to Radisson and north throughout the Lloydminster-Marsden area and north to St. Walburg. If you have a map of Saskatchewan in your minds and a map of Manitoba in your minds then it will become apparent to you that all of those systems, while they may not equal the Manitoba system, are not much short of the Manitoba system and the area served by it.

We have another large system, out of Prince Albert, running north to Big River and east to Nipawin, Melfort, and as far east as Weekes; and then for good measure we have three small separate units at Maple Creek, Hudson Bay and Meadow Lake.

Another way of illustrating the difference in the size of the area to be served in Saskatchewan and Manitoba is this: the most remote part of the Manitoba system is in the Swan River Valley. The Swan River Valley is in townships 34, 35 and 36, which is no further north than the city of Saskatoon. It might come as a surprise to you, Mr. Speaker, to know that we are serving farms as far north as township 60. The major construction of Manitoba's farm customers is in the Red River Valley, and this area has a concentration of farm population from 150 to 200 farms per township. Of course those are market gardens. There is a substantial market garden area in there, and they are called farms and they are served by the Manitoba Power Commission; but if you take the province as a whole, served by farm electrification, the density per township is 50 per cent greater in Manitoba than in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have taken much more time on those than I intended to and I must apologize to the hon. gentleman who is going to follow me; but I would like to say just a few more words before concluding.

We all know that one of the first activities of this Government, even when materials were scarce, was to build, before 1949, a substantial 24,000-volt grid in the province; and when that was done we began our farm electrification programme. It has often been asked "why should we charge the farmer?" My hon. friends opposite say, "why should we charge the farmer, and not the fellow living in the village?" I would like to point out that when we had completed that 24,000-volt grid, we had a system in itself that was an economic unit, that did not need any farm services in order to enable it to carry on. It was complete in itself; and when we went forward to bring power to our farmers, I don't know why we should not have taken steps to make sure that the farm electrification should be as economically sound as the electrification of our towns and villages. The farmer needed the power lines that have

been built, and would have been paid for by the towns and villages; he needed them. The towns and villages did not need the farms, and the construction charge which we levy against the farmer is only to pay for the line from the point at which it taps the 24,000-volt grid.

Mr. Walker (Hanley): — And not all of that.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — And not all of that. I want you to think back to the tremendous sums of money that I have indicated will have to be spent in this province to provide generating capacity. We are going to have, in a remarkably short time, a \$200-million power corporation. Our Provincial Treasurer — I hope he is the same one — is going to have to go down among those hard-headed businessmen in eastern Canada and New York, in the money markets of this continent, and persuade them to buy Saskatchewan bonds. He is going to be asking not for small amounts but for tremendously large amounts for power development. Does anyone think that we can operate a \$200-million utility here on a subsidized basis and borrow that money on favourable terms? I suggest to you that the only way that it will be possible for the Provincial Treasurer of Saskatchewan to borrow the money necessary will be that he is able to show that the Power Corporation is being operated according to strict business principles.

There was much more that I meant to say, but I want to show that my hon. friends opposite do not think straight business principles are necessary to operate a utility such as this.

Mr. Danielson: — You talk like a capitalist.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Hon. Mr. Darling: — I am going to quote from a radio address of the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McDonald) on December 14th.

Mr. Walker (Hanley): — Did he make a speech?

Hon. Mr. Darling: — He said this:

“For years the Liberal party has advocated in Saskatchewan a scheme of providing the farmers with electrical power similar to that in use in the province of Manitoba. In Manitoba, power is conveyed to the farmer’s yard without any direct outlay by the farmer. In Saskatchewan, this service is costing the farmer, on the average, \$500 or \$600. The Liberal party believes that the Power Commission should pay the cost of taking the power right up to the farmyard. Since farms are scattered, it naturally costs more to take electrical power to the farm than it does to the urban home. It would be unfair to levy even part of this cost on the urban users of electricity.”

Who is going to pay for it, then, Mr. Speaker? “It would be unfair to levy even part of this cost on the urban users of electricity . . .”

Mr. Walker (Hanley): — Double-talk!

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Manitoba overcomes this difficulty by having the provincial treasury pay subsidies to the Power Commission for the purpose

March 14, 1955

of building power lines.

Mr. Danielson: — Sounds like the Crown Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Mr. Speaker, I am afraid I just do not believe that the hon. Leader of the Opposition meant that. As a matter of fact, in the last analysis, no one is going to pay for the Power Corporation but the users of the power, and I farmed long enough to know that any farmer who bought anything on time when he could pay cash was doing something very foolish; and all we ask him to do is pay half cash so the utility can be on a self-supporting basis and command the . . .

Mr. Loptson: — You are repudiating the ‘Manifesto’ now.

Hon. Mr. Darling: — Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude with a statement which I am sure will be of immense interest to all of us. As you know, Mr. J.W. Tomlinson resigned as general manager of the Power Corporation in December last to take a position with the Trans-Canada pipeline company. Mr. Tomlinson, it will be recalled, came to us from the Manitoba Power Commission in April of 1949, at the very beginning of our farm electrification programme. Saskatchewan is indebted to him for his energy and drive and his dedication to the job which helped the Corporation to achieve the phenomenal development during his term of office. No one knows that better than I.

I am pleased at this time to announce the appointment of Mr. David Cass-Beggs to the position of general manager of the Power Corporation. Mr. Cass-Beggs is widely recognized as an expert on electric power development and his name has frequently been mentioned in this Legislature in connection with his work as consultant to the Power Corporation periodically since 1947. His surveys of system development and his accurate forecasts of load growth have been dependable guides to the Corporation, and it is on the results of his studies that our farm electrification programme is based.

Mr. Cass-Beggs was born in England and came to Canada in 1939. He and his family were among the survivors of the S.S. Athenia, torpedoed early in the war. He joined the University of Toronto as Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering, remaining there until 1953. In the summer of that year he left Canada to head the Department of Electrical Engineering at the University of Wales, a position which he now holds. During the second World War he developed for the R.C.A.F. the Allies’ first automatically controlled man-carrying centrifuge or accelerator – important in the study of blackout on pilots. Mr. Cass-Beggs will assume his new duties in September, and I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I, for one, am very glad indeed that, in this crucial time of development in our province, we are going to have a gentleman of Mr. Cass-Beggs’ outstanding capabilities to give guidance to that development.

I will support the budget.

Mr. Loptson: — He doesn’t think much of the South Saskatchewan dam business.

Mr. Louis W. Larsen (Shellbrook): — Mr. Speaker, in speaking on this budget, I must congratulate the Treasurer. I have listened to seven of his budgets now, they always sound nice, and I think the province is very fortunate to have Mr. Fines as the Treasurer of this province, particularly when we look over our rural constituencies. I am sure a lot of the farmers, including myself, find it plenty hard to balance their budgets today, through no fault of their own. I am sorry to say that I think there is very little the province can do about it. The remedy is a long way from home; we have to look as far as Ottawa to find a remedy for those conditions whereby our farmers of Saskatchewan cannot balance their budgets.

I think Shellbrook constituency, which I have the pleasure to represent, is one of the most beautiful constituencies in this province, with our parkland and bluff areas and even a few remnants of the old forests that the people forgot to take out in the early days when they were cutting our forests in this province. We have nice little creeks and small rivers going through, lakes by the dozens, good fishing. It is really a sportsman's paradise, a hunter's paradise. You can go up there in the fall and you can get your jumper and you can get your moose and elk. These animals have a tendency to stay in the park area and up in the northern part of my constituency, and they are not so particular whether they are in the Park or out until the hunters arrive. It is a wonderful constituency and I am proud to represent a constituency of that kind.

I might mention that if any of you people in this audience decide to take a holiday next summer, you should go straight north of Saskatoon and when you get on No. 40 Highway you will have a good gravel road all the way to the back door of Waskesiu park. You could stop at Leask, where they have good accommodations for tourists, and another 30 miles on, if you should get thirsty, there are good taverns and accommodations for tourists at Shellbrook, and then up through the back door there is gravel all the way to Waskesiu too. You go straight north from Shellbrook, you come into Cookston, then into the Park and you can also save about 75 miles instead of going down to that little town of Prince Albert, and you will see scenery that is not equalled practically anywhere. I would recommend to everybody who goes to Waskesiu and up to Lac la Ronge to go straight north of Saskatoon up through that wonderful constituency I have the pleasure to represent.

The problem is how we are going to preserve these beautiful spots in the different constituencies in this province. There is a big influx into the urban centres from the rural areas. No doubt the 8-hour day appealed to our youngsters, with a 40-odd hour week, with higher wages than the farmer is able to pay. I do not think that anything is more important than to keep our farmers and our people on the farm; we should have a movement back to the farm as soon as possible, if it is possible at all. I am sorry to say that is not within the limits of the province or the Legislature to keep the sons and daughters of the farm people on the soil, instead of going into the cities.

There might be a lot of faults in the rural set up. The farmers are caught in between two forces — our manufacturing monopolies, and for that matter, also, our well-organized labour on the other side. To my way of thinking, labour should realize their responsibilities to society. Some of the unions, such as in transportation and power should realize they practically mean life and death to families who rely on these commodities today; and if they should forget to realize their responsibility to society as a whole, just as sure as I am standing here, Mr. Speaker, there will be a tremendous

March 14, 1955

demand from the public for the Government to put the control of these necessities of life in the same category as our police department or fire department is, today, or to do whatever may be necessary.

The other force, of course, the big monopolies, is something over which we have no jurisdiction – no jurisdiction over the price we have to pay. For instance, we have heard a lot of criticism on this budget from across the floor. I am just wondering, if we moved these gentlemen across the floor with a majority to this side, would our grain price or our livestock price go up, or would the prices on our combines and our trucks be cheaper, etc. if they were moved over here. Well, if not, I think I will stay where I am then.

There is only one way the people of Saskatchewan, in my estimation, can be prosperous, and that is as long as farmers make a decent living; all the trouble of labour and businessmen are pretty well taken care of. I have never seen so much prosperity as I saw a year ago. Everybody was busy. If you went into a clothing store or any store that was selling goods over the counter, they were busy. I had the pleasure of going in to buy a suit of clothes and a hat and shoes, and when I went in and bought my suit here about a week or two ago, eight clerks were serving me – I was the only customer. I went to the shoe store and the same thing happened – there were only six clerks there; and when I bought my hat they acted as though they hadn't sold a hat for a couple of weeks. I really got service. But as I say, if the farmer is doing well, it is a pleasure to watch all the stores and the labourers all busy and fully employed, with more to do than they can handle. We only have one government – we have eight or nine or ten Legislatures, but it is the Government at Ottawa who has control over how we get along in this province and in the other provinces. They control costs and what we receive for our produce.

Going back over the years, I cannot complain. Canada has been good to me. I came here 47 years ago, and I used to go out and fight in elections for the Liberal parties in days gone by, and even the Tories – because we had to have a little change once in a while; but how could a farmer sitting out on a homestead turn down that grand old Liberal party, which appealed mostly to the people of the west, with their low tariffs, and yes, even free trade policies; but, Mr. Speaker, that only applied up to the election. After the election, things were different: high tariffs as usual. I missed a lot of the Session here, last winter, but just for curiosity I did go and look at the small speech I made here, and I remember I quoted the tariffs, and with your permission, I would like to quote them again.

This high-tariff gentleman, Mr. Bennett – God bless his soul! – managed to collect \$109 million, or a little over that, the last year he was in office, in 1934 I think it was; and then when I look up the last record I have of the Liberal administration, of 1952, instead of collecting \$109 million, the low-tariff party collected just \$588 million, Mr. Speaker, and then it is not even mentioning the dumping duties and one thing and another, the obstructions they have set up against the people we sell our goods to. Now I know we pay, a lot of times, two prices for our commodities; but I am sure that we would have no trouble selling our commodities raised on our farms, today, if we could take some goods back in trade, because dollars and cents, after all, are scarce in the countries to whom the farmers of this country must sell their commodities.

Since our free enterprise is in competition I would suggest we should reduce that tariff and perhaps even modify the dumping duties some, because I am sure that our solution to the farmers of this province is not increasing our wheat or our livestock price too much, because we would just

price ourselves out of the market. The only solution there is left is to buy our commodities at a low price, which I am sure we would, Mr. Speaker, if we had some competition from these friendly countries who would be willing to buy from us, and the reason they do not buy as much as we would like to see them buy is because they cannot sell anything to us on account of the walls of tariffs, dumping duties and one thing and another.

I could mention one thing – I don't know how I got into binder twine, last year, for 26 cents; everything has been going up and up. Two years ago, I paid 40 cents a lb., but after they got us all loaded up with \$5,000 and \$6,000 combines, I suppose their sales maybe slumped a bit and they saw fit to charge a little more reasonable price; but that is only one instance. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, I will go into any details; we have been quoting figures and one thing and another on the budget.

There is one thing I would like to mention before I sit down. I do read the papers, morning and night, and I would like to quote some of the newspaper articles I have been reading – for instance, Social Credit advise, if they were in power that they would print \$5 billion worth of currency. I like money, too. It might be a solution, but the way I look at it, Mr. Speaker, is this way; it wouldn't be hard to get that \$5 billions printed as I said before, we have a little remnant of the forest of the Prince Albert Company left up in Shellbrook constituency. I could ship them down a couple of big logs, and I think there would be enough to print that \$5 billion. So instead of having a 50-cent Liberal dollar as we have now, we might have a 25-cent Social Credit dollar. I would supply those logs free of charge. So whether that would be a solution or not, I will let the Social Credit argue that out.

Mr. Danielson: — The only thing worse than that would be a C.C.F. dollar. It wouldn't be worth anything.

Mr. Larsen: — Anyway, Mr. Speaker, there is only one solution, and that is to keep agriculture prosperous and the rest will take care of itself. Let us get back to a sane policy whereby every farmer in this province also can balance his budget as capably as our Provincial Treasurer has done in the last seven years. I certainly will support the budget.

Mr. S.H. Carr (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak on this Motion I would like, first, to congratulate the Provincial Treasurer on delivering his 11th Budget, and particularly for one part of his address and it is this:

“The last decade of our half-century seems to me to bear more than a passing resemblance to the first decade, which, as I noted, has been described as ‘Saskatchewan’s Heroic Age’. Evidence to support the claim and title can readily be adduced. A certain dynamism in government characterized both: the courage to take risks in breaking new ground. As they built, we have attempted to build. In creating new, and extending old, services, we, too, took ‘calculated risks’ – with more assurance perhaps, for we had great expectations from our natural resources, which they did not have.”

March 14, 1955

The reason I mention that, Mr. Speaker, is because it is somewhat different from some of the other speeches we have heard from the other side. It seems to me that many of the speeches from the other side have failed to give credit to those pioneers who went before them. There is one thing about those men of the early days. They solved their own problems; they did not run to Ottawa every time they had difficulties.

When I said that those remarks of the Provincial Treasurer were somewhat different from the speeches on the other side I had the address of the hon. member from Hanley (Mr. R.A. Walker), on Friday, in mind, when he accused the members of the Opposition of being politically dishonest in some of their statements, of making statements calculated to mislead the people. He referred to a statement made by the hon. member for Maple Creek (Mr. Cameron) referring to mineral production in Saskatchewan. Of course, the hon. member for Maple Creek was referring to a statement that has been made many times by the Premier of the province when he said that Saskatchewan now produces more base metals than Manitoba and Alberta combined. The member for Maple Creek went on to say that Saskatchewan had always produced more, considerably more, than Alberta because they had not produced any, never had; and that they had produced more base metals than Manitoba even before the advent of the C.C.F. Government. The hon. member for Hanley said that this was not altogether correct, and he quoted the metal production figures for 1938 to show that Manitoba produced more than Saskatchewan. Then he reprimanded the member for Maple Creek for giving misleading statements.

Now, to put the matter straight, as hon. members know, the mine area is on both sides of the border of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The ore was taken first from the Manitoba side, or the bulk of it, and the mine started in the 'thirties and Manitoba did produce more than Saskatchewan.

Mr. Walker (Hanley): — Why did it start over there?

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Mr. McDonald: — Dry up!

Mr. MacNutt: — Read your paper.

Mr. Walker: — You heard what I read.

Mr. Carr: — Mr. Speaker, Manitoba did produce more than Saskatchewan, but about 1938 or 1939, the production was becoming more equal, and by 1942, Saskatchewan was producing almost twice as much copper and zinc as Manitoba. By 1943 they were producing more than twice as much, and by 1944 Saskatchewan production had started to go down some, but it was still almost twice as much. If you would like the figures, I will quote them. This is for copper and zinc:

“Manitoba, 1942, 77,500,000 pounds; Saskatchewan, 141,243,000. In 1943, Manitoba, 85,799,000; Saskatchewan 182,299,000. In 1944, 89,701,000 for Manitoba; 160,645,000 for Saskatchewan.”

But an interesting thing is that, since that time, Saskatchewan's production has gone down. In view of these facts, I think that it is not altogether fitting that the member for Hanley should lecture this side of the House on political honesty.

He referred again to the speech of the member for Maple Creek where he had mentioned that this Government should do something to encourage a railroad to go into the northern part, and the member from Hanley said:

“This Government does not want to spend millions to steal part of the transportation business from our neighbouring provinces . . .”

believing, I suppose, in peaceful co-existence with our neighbour. Yet, he failed to tell this House that this Government spent approximately a quarter of a million to buy a big plane to steal freight business away from the C.P.A. flying out of Edmonton. The hon. member for Hanley tried to do what he accused us of doing – he tried to mislead the people.

If he wishes to do some house-cleaning and get all the political dishonesty out of this House, perhaps he should start over on the other side.

Mr. Walker: — Have you finished your house-cleaning yet?

Mr. Carr: — I'll finish with the hon. member for Hanley in a minute. Then I will deal with somebody else.

A statement was made in this House, last year, in a Resolution dealing with Federal aid for highways. It was made by the hon. member for Morse (Mr. Gibson). I am sure he did not wish to mislead the people, or he was not being politically dishonest, but the same statement was made by the hon. member for Melville (Mr. A.P. Brown) this year, almost word for word. It was made in a previous debate, so I will read the words the hon. member for Morse used last year. Both of these statements were made to show how difficult it was for this Government to deal with the road problem in Saskatchewan. This is what the hon. member for Morse said:

“We have 24 miles of surveyed road for every man, woman and child in the province. With such odds against us, Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder, with 24 miles of road for each and every one of us to build and maintain, that we have not got the roads nor the highways sufficient for our needs?”

Now, I thought that he just made a mistake last year, and maybe he was nervous like I get nervous sometimes; so I did not say anything. But when the hon. member for Melville made the statement again, this year, I thought that perhaps the people of this province should know that the statement is not correct. The Minister of Highways knows it is not correct. Actually, the figure is .24, or a quarter of a mile. Yet that statement has been made not only in this House, but it has been made by government

March 14, 1955

supporters to create in the minds of the people that there is a terrific problem in Saskatchewan that other provinces do not have.

Mr. Cameron: — Does that mean they are 100 per cent out?

Hon. Mr. Douglas (Minister of Highways): — You're wrong!

Mr. Carr: — I'm wrong? I will let the Provincial Treasurer figure it out; he can calculate very quickly in his head. There are approximately 860,000 people in Saskatchewan. There are 212,000 miles of road. That is pretty close to correct.

Hon. Mr. Fines: — You are right on your miles, but you are wrong when you say it is not a big problem.

Mr. Carr: — Now, actually, that is for surveyed miles of road. But there are really about 85,000 miles of road looked after by the municipalities and something around 9,000 miles by the province, that is the Department of Highways. So, there are about 94,000 miles that are used, and that is the problem we have to deal with, not all the surveyed roads. I know the hon. member for Morse did not mean to mislead the people; he just forgot the decimal point. That brings us to about one-ninth of a mile for every man, woman and child. Still, I don't mean to say for one minute that we in Saskatchewan do not have the biggest problem of building roads of any province in Canada. I realize that perhaps as well as anybody in this House. But, when the member from Hanley takes up part of a statement and tries to create the impression that members on this side of the House are misleading the people, I wanted to bring that up to show that many people are misled with the same kind of a statement, when really it is not meant that way at all.

I would like to deal for a few minutes with this question of roads, and I would like the Minister of Highways to understand that I am not speaking as an expert, but only from what the people tell me. The problem of roads in Saskatchewan can be divided into two categories, because there are different policies in each one – the provincial highway problem and the municipal roads problem. The provincial highway problem is 8,300 miles; the municipal road problem is 85,000 miles.

The Minister of Highways in his address made a statement that bothered me and it is this:

“I repeat, Mr. Speaker, at no time in the entire life of the Liberal party have they ever shown any indication that they had a grasp of the needs of this province insofar as roads and highways are concerned.”

Hon. Mr. Douglas (Minister of Highways): — Perfectly correct.

Mr. Carr: — “They have never shown that they have any idea of what was required to help this province proceed to the destiny that is ours if it was given good,

dynamic, progressive leadership. This province had to wait until this Government took office before that leadership was given.”

I would like to tell this House just a little bit about the leadership that was given, and to criticize to some extent the so-called ‘dynamic, progressive leadership’ that we have now. What I am going to say about the road policy in this province before this Government was in power I take from the Committee on Municipal-Provincial Relations. All members have read it. The first action taken by a Liberal government of this province to assist municipalities in the road problem was in 1912, when the Highway Board was set up. The Board undertook to assist any municipality to the extent of 50 per cent of the cost of road improvements, with a maximum of \$5,000 in any one year. The need of the municipalities for roads was probably greater at that time than it is now, but the road that was required then was not nearly as expensive as it is now . . .

Hon. Mr. Kuziak: — We have raised the standard.

Mr. Carr: — But that was the first step. Of course, there were no highways at that time. The question was to get a road to the town so that a man could get his wheat out, to fill up the sloughs so that he did not have to drive around them, and, where there were creeks, to have some bridges put in. The Board’s policy was directed towards channelling this money into the improvement of main roads and giving aid to those municipalities confronted with special road-building problems, such as those presented by ravines and river valleys, large sloughs and marshes. The provincial government undertook the construction of the larger bridges directly. That was in 1912.

Just a little later the plan was that municipalities were given the contract to build roads with government funds. I suppose in some cases it went more than \$5,000 per municipality. In 1917 (or 1920 – I’ll just skip that date), a programme was developed with the Federal Government, whereby provincial highways would be built and, by the end of 1925, some 2,000 miles of these highways had been completed.

Of course, hon. members opposite say that those highways could not compare with what we have today. Neither could the municipal roads compare with what we have today. Many municipalities have quite a few miles of gravel roads. Radiating out from Saskatoon there are three or four municipalities that have over a hundred miles of gravelled road. But, you could not gravel roads in those days. The farmers did not want them because they hurt the horses’ feet. I remember in the ’thirties, in the municipality where I was, the council decided as a relief measure that they would grade up the main road – it was a sort of secondary highway and I believe the Minister still has it as a secondary highway. They would grade up the road and let the farmers gravel it to pay their taxes. I remember a delegation coming to the council asking them not to gravel the road because it hurt the horses’ feet.

The problem today is entirely different from then, but the government of that day did assist the municipalities up to 50 per cent of the cost. During the relief years, of course, there could not be much help.

March 14, 1955

After that this report says:

“although these grants . . .”

Regular grants were resumed in 1936 to be used on roads approved by the Minister:

“Although these grants were steadily increased during the war years, reaching a total of \$182,950 in 1944, municipalities and local improvement districts were often unable to take full advantage of them due to equipment and material shortages.”

The Governments that went before this one, according to their ability and according to the needs of the people, in my opinion, assisted the municipalities to a greater extent than this Government.

Mr. Danielson: — All the bridges.

Mr. Carr: — This great demand for municipal roads, as everyone knows, came about when people got rid of their horses, when they had no other means of getting out, when they had to go to town with the car or the truck in rainy weather – that is because they had no horses. They did not like getting stuck, and the demand came for gravelled roads.

To satisfy the demand for a fairly substantial grade and put gravel on it is almost beyond the average municipality’s capacity to pay. If they only had to build for their own people it would be a different thing; but as soon as you put in a gravel road many people, because of the heavy traffic on the highways, because of the big trucks and the buses, will take the gravelled municipal road in preference to the highway.

I was rather interested in a statement made by the Minister of Labour the other day. He just referred to it slightly, but he said that commercial trucks are probably one of the most dangerous hazards to safety. He said that about one-third of insurance paid out involved commercial vehicles. Since there is a highway running through my constituency and through the municipality of which I am a secretary, I know how true that is, because No. 11 Highway going north from Saskatoon has probably the densest traffic of any highway in this province, and the result is that the people keep from that and go on the municipal roads. The Minister of Labour went on to say – and this is the part that interested me:

“Roads should be returned to those whom originally the highways were intended to serve, our farmers, our city and town people and tourists. The trucking industry should be able to afford its own right-of-way.”

That is where I cannot agree with this ‘progressive, dynamic’ policy of the Department of Highways, because the trucking industry is scaring the average

citizen off the highway and yet is not paying its fair share of the cost of that highway.

No doubt all the members received these 'Transportation Topics' from the Railway Association of Canada – and they say that:

“Passenger cars pay from 4½ to 8 times as much per gross ton mile of highway use as do diesel tractor-trailers and from 3½ to 6 times that of gasoline tractor-trailers.”

And in the comparison table at the back:

“In Saskatchewan, the passenger car pays about .501 cents per mile per gross ton mile to use the highway while the big semi-trailer diesel, or the big tractor-trailer diesel pays only .1011, or a little over one-tenth of a cent a mile.”

And yet, it is for those big trailers that we have to spend so much money to keep up our highways. They are the ones that destroy our highways, and yet they are only paying one-fifth of what the average fellow who drives a car has to pay and, as I said before, he chases the other fellow off the highway. According to the Minister of Labour's figures it is not safe to be on the highway with them.

Hon. Mr. Williams: — You have to be careful.

Mr. Carr: — There is a definite need for a more fair distribution or division of the cost of roads. It used to be that the municipalities just needed to make a dirt road for the horses to go on. Now, when they have to have gravel roads for their people, the truckers are coming out into the country to do business there. This is putting a very great strain on municipalities. For instance, in those municipalities around the city of Saskatoon there are a number of dairymen, and it is in the dairyman's interest (it saves him a lot of time) if the milk truck can come to his farm. He knows what it would mean if he had to make a trip every day to the station to ship his milk. It would take a great deal of his time. By the truck coming out there, he is able to go right on with his work. But, he needs a road. You can imagine what it would be in a municipality where most of the farmers are dairy farmers and you have four milk trucks going out on a rainy day, and you have not got gravel roads, each covering about 40 miles of road apiece, when they had finished gathering the milk almost every road in the municipality would be torn to pieces. Yet the municipality does not get five cents from those truckers.

Mr. Walker (Gravelbourg): — The farmer gets the service.

Mr. Carr: — The Department of Highways gets that money to build highways and the milk trucks use them very little. Unless the municipalities can get some share of this money, it is very difficult for them to keep up the standard of road that is needed.

Hon. Mr. Kuziak: — How about the sales tax on those trucks?

Mr. Carr: — Now, this Government does not think it is wrong to build a road for the mining companies for an industry in the north, but the

March 14, 1955

Dairy production is three or four or five times what the mineral production is.

Hon. Mr. Brockelbank: — Oh, no! About equal.

Mr. Carr: — I thought the hon. Minister said in his report that mineral production was equal to almost one-third of the dairy industry. Yet, the dairy industry is something that we must have if we are to have healthy children. It does not seem unreasonable that, in those areas particularly around the cities, something could be done to keep those people in business.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to take any more time today. I would ask leave to adjourn the debate.

(Debate adjourned)

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