

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Thirteenth Legislature
18th Day

Monday, March 11, 1957

The House met at 2:30 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day:

BUDGET DEBATE

The House resumed, from Friday, March 8, 1957, 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).

Mr. John J. Harrop (Athabasca): — Mr. Speaker, I wish to associate myself with the other members in congratulating you upon your election to the honoured position of Speaker of this Assembly. I hope you will continue in good health in this high office for many years to come.

I would like to congratulate also the other members of the Assembly who were — on their initial speeches in this House. I believe they did an excellent job. I also want to congratulate all members in this House who have been elected and re-elected to this Assembly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of this House the constituency which I have the honour and the privilege to represent. I ask that attention, for I believe that the interest which is shown in this area is vital to the economy of the whole of the province of Saskatchewan. I understood one of the members to say here that he had the largest constituency, but I would suggest that we take a look at the map. Athabasca runs from Alberta on the west, to Manitoba on the east, and from the Northwest Territories down south of Lac La Ronge in one portion. It covers over one-third of the total area of the whole province of Saskatchewan, and, with due respect to some of my oil friends, I would venture to guess that it contains over one-third of the total wealth of the province.

I have listened to various members extol the merits and advantages of their various constituencies, but I would say here, Mr. Speaker, that until they have travelled throughout the north, they haven't seen anything. I think this might be a good time to suggest to the Government that it make trips available to members of this Legislature at least once during their term of office, so that they can have a look. I believe, by having the members visit the north, that they will realize the potentialities of that area.

Athabasca has within its boundaries the greater part of the Precambrian Shield within Saskatchewan, commencing at the northwest corner and running diagonally down to the south into the southeast, and partly into the Cumberland constituency. We have permitted Cumberland to have a small portion of this formation. In addition to the miner wealth which is contained

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in the area, we have other important primary industries such as trapping, fishing and lumbering. While these industries are not large in comparison with agriculture, they do form the basis for the livelihood of the majority of our people at the present time. We have also some of the greatest game fishing in Canada. Lac La Ronge is well known as a fisherman's paradise. We also have Stony Rapids, which is noted for its grayling, and Black Lake and Cree Lake, which are noted for lake trout and northern pike. These area or resorts are being visited in increasing numbers by sportsmen from all over Canada and the United States each year. I would say though that, at the present time, these resorts are not a poor man's playground, but they do assist the economy of this province by being in wealth from outside.

Of course further to the west and north we have the fastest-growing community in Canada today; that is my hometown Uranium City. Here is a community which has increased from nothing to nearly 2,000 people in less than seven years. Its infinite percentage increase is going to be hard to beat. Uranium City is also unique in that it has more head-frames concentrated in that area than in any area of a similar size anywhere else on the North American continent. Within a radius of six miles of Uranium City we have no less than 11 head-frames. There are three at Eldorado, two at Nesbit-Labine, and one each at National Exploration, Cayzor, Speech from the Throne. Michaels, Rix-Athabasca, Cinch Lake and Lorado. That does not include those other head-frames out at Gunnar and Consolidated Nicholson, and the one now under construction at Fish Hook Bay. These, of course, are somewhat further out.

I might also mention here that, with the exception of the investment that this Government has in the Power Corporation, we find that the Federal Government has more money invested in Crown Corporations in our small area than this Government has in the whole province of Saskatchewan. I am not objecting to this, Mr. Speaker, but I thought the member from Redberry (Korchinski) might be interested.

There is under construction in the Beaverlodge area at the present time the new Lorado mill which will process uranium ore from the smaller mines in the area. This mill's preliminary output will be 750 tons per day. Eldorado is also increasing its capacity to about 2,000 tons per day which will be approximately three times what it was originally, and Gunnar is increasing its capacity by 50 per cent. So you can see that this area is growing, and will continue to grow.

I have no doubt that the growth and progress of this area would have been much greater had it not been for the policy of the Federal Government in cutting off contracts last year. This, along with statements reported to have been made by the Minister of Trade and Commerce that we had sufficient ore reserves proved up, and sufficient contracts let to meet the demand of the uranium market for some years – these things have done more to hold up and delay exploration in this particular field than any other cause. This cutting off of contracts seems to me to be very short-sighted and show a lack of vision, in that I noticed in a report in the 'Leader-Post' of February 21, wherein the Minister of Trade and Commerce, in reply to a question put in the House, stated that we would be unable

to supply Euratom with uranium contracts for some time to come, because of the lack of sufficient production. Euratom as you may know, is a union of several European countries joined together to develop the uranium for peaceful purposes.

Another thing which I believe has delayed development in the uranium field is the amount of research work done by Canada in the field of atomic power for peaceful purposes. Great Britain, which has no uranium deposits of its own and which has a per capita wealth less than ours, is one of the foremost countries in the world in this field. Sweden also has a program to go into power production; they have slated 10 power plants within the next ten years, while we here in Canada have finally got to the blueprint stage on a pilot plant to be raised in the future. I would say that Canada, which is potentially (if not now) the largest producer of uranium, is lagging far behind in this research.

Since coming to Regina I have heard much of the difficulties in which the agricultural industry finds itself today. I would say that, apparently, the Federal Government's lack of policy in agriculture parallels that of the mining industry. This lack of policy is not confined solely to that of uranium mining, but it is general in the hard-rock mining throughout Canada. One of the foremost urgent needs for the development of mining in Canada is the building of access and all-weather roads. This especially applies to northern Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. The mining industry, as well as that of agriculture, affects the economy of the whole of Canada, and it would seem to me that such returns, visible returns at least, as taxes that are garnered by the Federal Government from mining should be returned, or reinvested in this industry to help development; but very little has been contributed by way of assistance to road construction in these areas, where the cost of road construction is so very high. I believe that some of the money that is taken out by way of corporation taxes, income taxes, sales tax, excise tax and all the other various ones, should be returned to assist the development of this industry.

The road construction undertaken in the Beaverlodge area by the Provincial Government has been a very commendable effort, but we look for more and I would continue to press the Government for more. I do believe that a concentrated effort by this Government should be made to try and convince the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys of the Federal Government that it would be to their mutual benefit, and to the benefit of the whole of Canada, if some contribution could be forthcoming.

I am very happy to see that the budget sets aside funds for the construction of a road through the Anglo-Rouyn property around Wavdon Bay north of Lac La Ronge, and I hope to see more and more funds allotted for this purpose. Since coming to Regina I have heard repeated requests for more funds for health, education, social welfare, roads, assistance to municipalities and various other requests, and all of these are very worthy and very necessary expenditures, but, one might ask, where is this money to come from? The booming oil industry will certainly be of assistance; but can agriculture in its present condition be expected to contribute more? By continuing and expanding the opening of the vast area to the north, I believe we have a basis for raising a very large share of these funds.

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However, the area to the north can only be opened up by cheaper transportation. Saskatchewan Government Airways had done an excellent job in helping to reduce air cargo rates in this area. When Saskatchewan Government Airways announced that they were going to put a DC-3 on the Uranium City run, the competing airlines dropped their rates from 30 cents to 12 cents per pound. This is a reduction of 250 per cent. With as many as four and five cargo planes coming into the area daily, consider the tremendous saving this has meant to that area. But air transportation alone is not the solution to this problem. We must have access roads and we must have all-weather roads, and I hope this Government will continue the policy it has of putting roads into areas where there are mining possibilities. Of course, we in Uranium City are more than urgent that road connections be made with the rest of Saskatchewan.

In pressing for this road construction, we will realize the tremendous cost involved in this work, and in the cost, particularly, of an all-weather road through the Precambrian Shield. You will notice I have said her an all-weather road, for I believe that this is the only kind of a road that will fully meet the needs of this area. The winter road which is just about completed – the last report I heard it was about 10 miles from Uranium city – will be of assistance for a couple of months during the winter time but, because of the lack of back-haul, I do not believe that it can effect a real economy. Because of the tremendous cost involved in road construction, I do not believe that we can build roads indiscriminately, but I would like to suggest that this Government start at once on surveys to indicate the best routes that would best serve the development of that area, and thereby Saskatchewan. If these surveys indicate that the roads should lead from Meadow Lake to Uranium City, I believe that construction on an all-weather road should be commenced immediately.

The Brief that I received from the Prince Albert and Uranium City Chambers of Commerce indicated something like this, and they also suggested that assistance should be forthcoming from the Federal Government. In case that I may be accused of crying for Federal aid for political purposes, I would like to tell the members opposite that I know most of the gentlemen in both these Chambers of Commerce, and I can advise them that they are certainly not rabid supporters of this present Saskatchewan Government.

Mr. McDonald: — Hear! Hear!

Mr. Harrop: — But they are much closer to the problem than most people in this province, and they, being fair, realize the tremendous cost in this construction work. I am very happy to see that the Government had budgeted for northern development in other spheres, such as the electro-magnetic and magnetometer air surveys. This program of mapping an area of approximately 1,600 square miles will be of invaluable assistance to prospectors. It will help them, or indicate to them areas where minerals might be found. The continuation of such programs as the Prospector' Assistance Plan which grubstakes and equips prospectors, and the Prospectors' School, are also steps which will materially assist the program of this Government in continuing and expanding northern development.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is a great deal more that I might say about development problems in the north at this time, but my time is

allotted. I have not too much; I shall have to hurry along. It was fortunate for me that I have no relations in the Federal House, so I am not required to spend half an hour or so trying to defend it. In pressing for continued and expanded development in the north, I hope we will not forget those people who have made their living for generations in other basic industries, primary industries such as fishing and trapping. This Government had done an excellent job in helping these people by means of the Fish Marketing Service, the Fur Marketing Service, Government Airways, by their health education, and social welfare programs. These programs are very worthy, but there are arising, and will continue to arise, other problems.

One problem I would like to mention at this time. This problem which I mention here particularly, I believe it may be partially attributed to some of the beneficial programs I mentioned previously. With the improved diets and improved health care which have been given to these people, they are increasing in population. There are settlements now which are actually overcrowded in relation to the fish and fur quotas, which do not sufficiently supply an adequately high standard of living. Yet these quotas cannot be increased for fear the lakes will be fished out, and, in the case of trapping, that the wild life be seriously depleted. Some of us may say that if there is not sufficient industry in that area, why not move them out? But I would say to you that it was we who imposed our way of life upon these people. We must bear in mind, too that many of them do not trust the white man, and after the way they have been exploited and treated in the past, can you really blame them?

I do think one thing will be of assistance in this problem and that is assimilation in certain areas, and I am glad to see that progress is being made in this regard. The budget provides funds for the construction of a school and a hospital at Lac La Ronge, in conjunction with the Department of Indian Affairs, and I wish to express my thanks on behalf of the people of Lac La Ronge for this commitment. I have seen how joint schooling has worked in other places, for instance, Uranium City, where many Metis are enrolled. I know from experience that my own children have no discrimination against these children; they work and play together in perfect harmony. What the solution to all of the problems are, I do not know. I wish, Mr. Speaker, that I were able to stand before you today and say, if you accept the program which I outline, it will solve all of your problems, but I cannot do this.

I would like to make one suggestion, however, and that is that a committee or a commission be set up – either a committee of this House, or an independent commission, be set up to investigate the Metis and native problems in the north, and at the same time investigate the Metis and native problems in the north, and at the same time investigate fully the best methods of continuing the progress and development of the north. Because this budget provides additional expenditures for continuing development of roads in the north, the construction of schools and hospitals, for social welfare and other worthy efforts, and because it allots increased funds for the same efforts in all parts of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, I will support the motion.

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Hon. L. F. McIntosh (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, might I just endorse the congratulations that have been extended to you by speakers in this and previous debates, and wish you the very best of good fortune in your new position as Speaker of the Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan.

I was agreeably surprised to note the knowledge that the member for Athabasca (Mr. Harrop) has of the constituency which he represents. As he pointed out, he represents an area that is approximately one-third of the total area of the province of Saskatchewan; and what he has said in reference to this particular section of the province, and might I say, coming a little further south, one-half of the total area of the province of Saskatchewan, I wholeheartedly endorse. It is rather interesting to note that, in the area in which the member for Athabasca represents, the village of Creighton was raised to the status of a town just three days ago; the hamlet of Lac La Ronge was raised to the status of a village a short time ago, and Uranium City and district was constituted by a special Act of the Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan a short time ago, and the local government of that area have one of the largest areas in the province of Saskatchewan to give local government service to. That is some indication, at least, of the development that has taken place in the member from Athabasca is so vitally concerned as to the future welfare of the inhabitants and those who will migrate to that section of the province, as he expressed in a very able manner.

On Friday last, the financial critic of the Official Opposition, finished up his remarks by stating that the Government of the Province of Saskatchewan was lax in its service to agriculture, to education to providing the economic climate, and also failed to recognize the crying needs of the people of the province with special references to local government. This afternoon, I propose to deal briefly (I hope) with some of the agricultural problems, and with local government in the province of Saskatchewan.

While it is quite true that the rural population, during the past 20 years (1936-1956), has decreased by something in the neighbourhood of 200,000 people, down to a percentage of 49.8 per cent of the total, with 50.2 per cent of our citizens residing in urban centres, nevertheless, it is extremely interesting to note that, notwithstanding the shift in population, our agricultural people in 1956 seeded 22,296,000 acres, they harvested 691 million bushels of grain, they took care of 2,500,000 head of livestock, cattle, sheep and hogs, and they increased their poultry production by 25 per cent. This does suggest that our agricultural people are exceptionally efficient in the field of production, and have utilized to the maximum the mechanization of farm equipment that has been made available for their service. In 1926 there were some 26,000 tractors on the farms of the province, and last year, 125,000; 6,000 combines, 30 years ago, and there were 45,000 last year; 3,000 trucks in 1926 against 55,000 last year. And our agricultural people have increased their individual acreage, their individual holdings, during a period of ten years, from some 432 acres to 550 acres on the average.

I believe that we must of necessity extend to our agricultural people, and those who are directly servicing agriculture, our congratulations for a very fine job in the production of foodstuffs on the farmlands of this province. We must, however, keep in mind that 80 per cent of the wheat that is marketed in Saskatchewan goes in to inter-provincial, national international trade; 55 per cent of the barley, 43 per cent of the oats, 73 per cent of the cattle and 42 per cent of the hogs, are exported. And those of us who have had some knowledge of trying to develop a constitutional national products marketing Act will have a full appreciation of the control exercised by the Government of Canada over the marketing into inter-provincial, national and international trade channels.

It is rather interesting to take a look at the purchasing power of our Canadian dollar. According to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, it is estimated that in 1939 our Canadian dollar would purchase 100 cents worth of goods and services. By 1945, this had dropped to 83 cents, and by 1957, the Canadian dollar will purchase about 53 cents worth of goods. In other words, it takes approximately \$4 to do the work that \$1 did some 18 years ago. This is an indication, Mr. Speaker, that looks are quite deceiving, because, after all, the best proof of that is the dollar looks just the same today as it did 18 years ago, and has approximately one-half of the purchasing power.

Quite recently, the Government of Canada, with sole control over currency, commenced to attempt to regulate the inflation that has taken place, by regulating the amount of currency that is put into circulation through the increase in the interest rates on borrowing. Probably one could agree that a considerable amount of money has been funnelled into industrial expansion and capital expenditures, but it is rather interesting to note that this does have some effect on the returns that the farm is going to receive for the crop that he is marketing particularly in the present crop year. The borrowings by elevator companies for the purpose of financing the initial and interim payments in the crop year 1955-56 were in the range of 3 to 3½ per cent interest. That was increased to 4 per cent in the present crop year, and later on to 4¼ per cent, and, on March 1 of this year, to 4¾ per cent. Might I just make this statement very definitely, Mr. Speaker, that that increase in the interest cost on the moneys used by the elevator companies to make the initial and interim payments, is going to cost the farmers of the province of Saskatchewan, on the estimated amount of grain they will market during the present crop year, \$1,290,000 in interest charges, over and above the established rate of interest prior to this method of controlling inflation.

It is also rather interesting to note that when the International Wheat Agreement was entered into, the price of the dollar was at 90 per cent in relationship to that currency. Now the Canadian dollar is at 4½ per cent premium, and I think the latest figure today is 4 and 11/16th per cent premium over and above the American dollar. Those who are following the marketing of wheat under the International Wheat Agreement, and those that are following the percentage of Canadian wheat disposed of in international trade channels, will have no hesitation in telling this House that inflation in this particular field, and this field alone, is now costing the Canadian wheat producer 26 cents a bushel on the wheat that he

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is marketing into export trade channels, and the purchaser of that wheat in the foreign lands in which it finally arrives is not receiving any benefits as a result thereof.

One can probably take a look at what the President of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool had to say on November 16, 1956, in addressing the annual meeting of Wheat Pool delegates. He says:

“Our Board unanimously approved the Resolution. It has now become part of our policy, and this is what we say:

‘Whereas it has become evident that agricultural producers are suffering from inadequate income in the sale of farm produce to meet the cost of commodities they must buy to maintain production and to provide a decent standard-of-living; and

‘Whereas in Canada’s buoyant economy the percentage share of the national income received by agricultural producers is near an all-time low; and

‘Whereas in nearly all countries in the world Governments have adopted policies that will guarantee to producers adequate prices for their products that will provide purchasing power equal to other segments of the population,

‘Therefore, this meeting recommends that the Canadian Federation of agriculture immediately approach the Government of Canada seeking acceptance of the principle that all agricultural producers are entitled to a reasonable price for their products, whether sold on domestic or export markets, and if produce is sold for less than a reasonable price, deficiency payments should be made from the Treasury of Canada’”.

And then in his closing remarks – and remember that this Resolution became the policy of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture; and in his closing remarks the President of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool had this to say:

“Now, in closing, Mr. Chairman, let me say this. We have solved many problems through the years. As I have said before, we have passed many milestones in this organization since 1924. I am not going to take time here to go through them. I do want to say to you that the position of the Saskatchewan farmer is so precarious today with his cost of living and cost of production as related to his income at present price levels, and that the biggest milestone we have yet to pass is the cost-price squeeze problem.

“First, we must convince other farm organizations in the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. If we can get unanimity it will be much easier to approach the Government of Canada.”

And, Mr. Speaker, those sitting to your left, the Official Opposition, are trying to convince this Legislature and others that the major problem associated with agriculture is that of belonging to the Government of this province.

Now, might we just take a further look at this question of control of currency as a means of controlling inflation. Another example could be used under the National Housing Act. There have been hundreds of houses built in this province, in this City, and across the Dominion of Canada, where up to 80 per cent of the total cost has been borrowed under the National Housing Act. Interest rates were increased for those loans, and, assuming that the average is one per cent, and assuming that the borrowings are \$10,000, 80 per cent of the cost of an average family home, that means in the first year under a National Housing loan that it would cost to borrow \$150 more in interest, and \$150 is \$12.50 a month – and \$150, Mr. Speaker, is more than the total municipal tax and frontage tax on a property of that kind in the city of Regina in one year. When we come to consider the number of houses built, or we hope will be built in Saskatchewan and in Canada, we get some idea of how this supposed policy to control inflation is affecting a great number of our individual citizens. We might take a look at the cost of municipal debentures as a result of increased interest rates. In 1956, for example, the towns of our province sold debentures to the amount of \$1,783,000, and the cities \$9,043,000, and if you add 1 per cent increase in the interest cost of those debentures, you will find that it cost those towns and those cities that were in the market last year, \$110,000 more to get their money to service the people than it did prior to this policy of control of inflation.

Now, if you wish to take a look at the City of Regina, on the amount of money that they borrowed last year, it is going to cost the taxpayers in increased interest rates about \$46,000; in the City of Saskatoon some \$33,000, and in my own little City of Prince Albert about \$3,000. These urbans will be going back on the market again, and are on the market this coming year for borrowings to assist them in giving service to the people in the form of sewer and water, in the form of educational institutions, hospitals and some of those amenities of life that are essential to an expanding economy such as we have in the province of Saskatchewan.

Just before I leave this question of wheat marketing, I would just like to quote, if I have your permission, Mr. Speaker, two or three lines of the Provincial Treasurer's Budget Address as on page 5. He said:

“... Moreover, earlier prospects for near record levels of Canadian wheat and flour exports in the 1956-57 crop year now appear to be waning.”

He was taken to task and ridiculed by the financial critics of the Official Opposition on Friday, for that statement. I wonder if the member for Maple Creek (Mr. Cameron) has taken a look at the statement recently mentioned by the Alberta Wheat Pool. I wonder if he has consulted other Wheat Pools in Western Canada. I wonder if he has any knowledge of the opinion of the Advisory Committee to the Canada Wheat Board, as to whether or not, the exports of Canadian wheat are waning.

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The Opposition critic has something to say in connection with the total municipal tax bill. I was trying to solve the figures as set out in the press report of Saturday, March 9. I came to the conclusion that it was one of the great gymnastics of juggling of figures and research that I have ever seen published in the press in relationship to municipal taxes, school taxes, arrears of taxes, assessments, etc. The real property, business and occupancy tax bill in 1955 (and the figure he gave was correct), amounted to \$59,180,100. That was for all purposes – schools, hospitals, municipal tax, etc. And in breaking that tax bill down, we find that \$14,156,000 was urban, \$5,739,000 was towns, \$3,732,000 was villages, making an urban total tax bill of \$23,628,990; rurals, \$34,639,000, and the local improvement districts \$912,000 for all local government services in the province of Saskatchewan.

A little later on I wish to deal with the question of tax arrears. The total taxable assessment in the province of Saskatchewan, at the end of 1956, the equalized assessment was \$1,045 millions of taxable assessments, of which \$691,762,000 was rural, \$351-odd million was urban. Now one of the interesting points about this, Mr. Speaker, is that of that total assessment \$23 million in round figures comes from railways, oil and gas pipe lines, oil well and gas well equipment. I trust that the hon. members opposite will keep that in mind, because, up until 1948, the Provincial Government collected the railways taxes, that is, the taxes paid by railway companies. In 1948, the Province withdrew from that field and passed The Saskatchewan Railway Taxation Act, whereby the municipalities themselves could assess and collect the taxes on railway properties. And when the Province withdrew from this field in 1948, they were receiving \$430,000 per annum on C.N.R. properties and C.P.R. chartered branch lines. The C.P.R. challenged the validity of this Legislation as it applied to non-chartered branch lines, and last December, the C.P.R. paid over to a substantial number of municipalities tax arrears and penalties on non-chartered branch lines \$1 million which was approximately 90 per cent of the tax arrear and penalty bill on non-chartered branch lines. This means then, Mr. Speaker, that when the Province withdrew from the railway taxation field, now that the C.P.R. recognizes its responsibility on non-chartered branch lines, \$600,000 additional of taxes to the rural municipalities annually in that one field alone, in that one field of railway taxation that the Province steeped out of in 1948.

Now, take a look at the assessment on all gas pipelines, oil wells and oil equipment, because these companies approached the Department of Municipal Affairs on more than one occasion, suggesting that they would prefer to pay their local tax bill to the Province. We suggested to them that we as a Government would prefer to see that that bill was paid into the local municipalities affected. There is \$13 million of taxable assessment on oil lines, gas lines and oil well equipment, and \$13 million of taxable assessment at the average mill-rate in the Province last year, would return to the municipalities in the neighbourhood of \$525,000 in that taxation field.

Then, if we take a look at the Trans-Canada Gas Pipe Line that is now crossing the province of Saskatchewan, and use the same mill-rate that was in effect in 1956, we find that, by this fall, that Pipe Line will be assessed and the returns to the municipalities which the line crosses will be in the neighbourhood of \$300,000.

You will note that I didn't say anything about the vacating of the Public Revenue Tax field. It has made some substantial difference to the municipality located in the hon. member's constituency of Cannington (Mr. McCarthy).

Premier Douglas: — He would like to forget all the years they had it on.

Hon. Mr. McIntosh: — Might I then, just say a word or two about the expenditures, about the assistance rendered to the rural municipalities in the field of public works, and later on, I hope to mention other fields of local government service. The expenditure by the rural municipalities in the field of public works in 1955 amounted to a net of \$7,712,000. That included \$1,350,000 for machinery and repairs. Of that, the Province supplied 18 per cent; 18 per cent of the total public works bill of all of the rural municipalities in 1955 was by way of grants to the rural municipalities of the province.

Then we move into 1956, the first year of the road grid construction program, and in that year the total amount of money spent by the rural municipalities from their taxation field was \$8,288,000. The Province's contribution to assist the municipalities in the 1956 road construction season was \$2,756,000, which works out to 25 per cent of the total expenditure by the rural municipalities in the field of public works. One-quarter of the total amount of money spent was supplied by the Government of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Might I then just take a look, Mr. Speaker, at some of the expenditures over a period of 15 years to assist rural municipalities in their public works programs. If we take the first four years, 1941 to 1944-45, inclusive, the total amount was \$752,000 in round figures; the next four years 1945-46 to 1948-49, inclusive, \$1,955,000. Then let us take the next four years 1949-50 to 1952-53 inclusive — it went up to \$2,797,000, and in the past three years \$3,088,000 of Provincial Government tax money has gone towards the assisting of the rural municipalities in that one single field, the field of public works.

Again, if I might refer to the hon. Provincial Treasurer's remarks on page 7 in his Budget Address, he referred to the Unemployment Assistance Agreement entered into between the Province and the Federal Government, and he pointed out that:

“ . . . This was effected by raising the provincial sharing of municipal social aid costs from 50 per cent to 75 per cent, retroactive to July 1, 1956.

“ . . . It is interesting to note that of this total, (and I am quoting the Provincial Treasurer) the Federal Government provided \$523,000 or 24 per cent; the Provincial Government 61 per cent of the total; and the municipalities 15 per cent.”

Whereas less than two years ago, they were paying 50 per cent of the total cost in this particular field of service.

Now, a word or two in connection with tax arrears. It is rather interesting to look over the quotations as printed in the 'Leader-Post'

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and I am sure the hon. member for Maple Creek (Mr. Cameron, the Official financial critic of the Official Opposition, would not care to criticize what has been printed in the official publication of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Cameron: — I took mine from the financial reports.

Hon. Mr. McIntosh: — Tax arrears of 1955 – rurals . . .

Mr. J. W. Gardiner (Melville): — We're orphans now.

Hon. Mr. McIntosh: — . . . \$17,264,000; local improvement districts, \$870,000. This is all taxes for all purposes, school as well as municipal, hospitals, etc. In the urbans, the cities had arrears of \$1,777,000; villages and towns, \$3,254,000, giving us a grand total of tax arrears in 1955 of \$23,168,000 – and the official financial critic, the hon. member for Maple Creek, mentioned that the arrears were \$29 million. He was just approximately \$6 million out.

Mr. Cameron: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege . . .

Mr. Kramer: — Sit down!

Mr. Cameron: — I don't have to sit down, I rose on a point of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: — State your point of privilege.

Mr. Cameron: — My point of privilege is, Mr. Speaker, that I quoted the \$29,357,000 directly from the Report tabled by the Minister himself from page 39, giving the accumulated arrears of taxes for all municipalities. If the amount of \$29 million is wrong, then it is wrong because he and his Department put it in his Report, and every one of the figures that I quoted on these arrears of taxes are taken right from the Report tabled here by the Department of Municipal Affairs of which he is the head.

Hon. Mr. McIntosh: — Mr. Speaker, again I note the press report, and I can only state again. . .

Mr. Cameron: — Read your own statement.

Hon. Mr. McIntosh: — . . . the greatest juggling of figures that ever took place in relationship to local government taxation, and if the hon. member would understand the figures that are published on page 39, he would appreciate that the tax arrears that I speak of, and am now mentioning, are the total tax arrears of municipalities in the year 1955.

Now then, it is rather interesting to note that he then projects his thinking into the future, into 1956, and he says the tax arrears for 1956 are \$36 million. It is true that the end of the tax year is December 31, 1956, for that particular year. Where this figure came from I have no idea. We have not all the returns from all of the municipalities into our office, but we have a sufficient amount of returns in from the rural municipalities of the province, 206 in number, to satisfy us that there will be a decrease from the \$29 million figures quoted by the hon. member from Maple Creek, of some \$3 million. So, instead of the projected tax arrears for

being \$36 million, we say it will be not more than \$26,357,000.

Mr. McCarthy (Cannington): — You're just guessing at that.

Hon. Mr. McIntosh: — Now, Mr. Speaker, it's not very much guessing if we just take a look. We find that, in the area of the country in which the hon. member from Maple Creek resides, the tax collection in 1955 was 90 per cent of one year's levy, and as of December 31, this year, 106 per cent. If we go up into the north-west corner, we find there that tax collection in 1955 was 88 per cent of one year's levy, and as of the end of December, last, 103 per cent of the 1956 levy. If we go into the northeast corner of the province, the tax collection in 1955 was 83 per cent of one year's levy, and up to the end of December of last year, 98 per cent. Then if we move down into the southeast corner of the province, taking a look there at some 52 rural municipalities, there was a collection of 83 per cent of the 1955 tax levy, against 101 per cent of the 1956 tax levy. That is the reason we say that the estimate made by the hon. member for Maple Creek for the tax arrears for 1956 is many millions of dollars in excess of what they will actually be.

Now we take a look at the debts. What is the debt position of the municipalities of the province of Saskatchewan? In 1945, the debenture debt was \$34,282,000 and in 1955 this had gone up to \$70,294,000. And here is a breakdown: the urbans' debenture debts, 1955, just under \$50 million; schools, \$13,691,000; union hospitals, \$6,133,000; rural telephones, \$487,000 of debenture debts; but the poor rural municipalities that have been suffering down through the past 12 years, according to the Official Opposition, had a debenture debt in 1955 of \$149,000 on \$691 million of a taxable assessment.

Mr. Danielson (Arm River): — It's the 'inefficient' farmers.

Hon. Mr. McIntosh: — Now, Mr. Speaker, may I again refer to page 10 of my hon. colleague the Provincial Treasurer's remarks in connection with the total amount of money that is going from Provincial funds into all fields of local government service.

“Both the Premier and myself (the hon. Provincial Treasurer states, in remarks to the Conference) re-affirmed the Government's long-standing program of dealing local government in on the Province's increasing revenues. Our budget studies had advanced to the point, last December, where we were able to announce that we should recommend to the Legislature a substantial increase in direct payments to local jurisdictions. The increase proposed amounted to some \$7 million, not including the estimated higher payments to local and union district hospitals under the Hospital Services Plan. If these latter are included, the increase in transfers over the current year amounts to about \$9.2 million. In 1957-58, the total amount of the specific provincial transfers of all types referred to here will exceed \$38 million.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, \$38 million out of a total revenue budget of around \$119 million is a pretty substantial portion of the provincial taxes going into the servicing

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of local governments in the province of Saskatchewan. But, the Provincial Government also says that, as the provincial revenues increase as the result of increased development in our natural resources, municipal governments in the province of Saskatchewan will not be overlooked.

What was the fixed assets of the rural municipalities of our province in 1944? In the neighbourhood of \$3 ½ million was their fixed assets. In 1955 the fixed assets were slightly in excess of \$16 million. The revenue surplus in 1944 was slightly in excess of \$9 million, and in 1955, \$11,697,000, and yet, with a debenture debt of \$149,000, we hear the Official Opposition stating that the rural municipalities are on the verge of bankruptcy.

Now, might I just say a word or two in connection with the main market road grid. Briefly, Mr. Speaker, in the construction season of 1956, we had a series of area meetings with the rural municipalities, 20 in number embracing the entire province, to which rural municipalities were invited, and 278 rural municipalities attended; 95 per cent of the total attended these meetings. The municipalities that participated in the grid program in 1956 were 198 rural municipalities, 14 towns and villages and 11 local improvement districts, and the mileage of work they covered was 1,100 miles, and of the 1,100 miles they completed 673.5 miles of grading and they gravelled some 392 miles, and they made application for the removal of 119 miles of Saskatchewan Government Telephone lines, and 94 miles of Saskatchewan Power lines. Mr. Speaker, might I hesitate here for a moment to extend to the rural municipal governments of this province, on behalf of our Department and on behalf of the Government of the Province of Saskatchewan, our sincere thanks for the maximum measure of co-operation shown by the municipalities in this main market road grid program in the first year of construction.

Then when the hon. members opposite say they cannot afford to participate, might I just draw to their attention that this is the 11th day of March, and as of the 8th day of March we had applications from 100 rural municipalities to participate in the 1957 construction for a mileage of 842 miles; 100 municipalities making application to construct 842 miles of the grid; 93 miles in local improvement districts, and 3 towns and villages have also made application to participate in this program.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is because of this response that the Budget is asking the Legislature to consider \$2 1/2 million of provincial funds to assist in the main market road grid construction; \$500,000 in equalization grants; \$400,000 to assist the municipalities in their bridge construction program, and \$260,000 to assist the ratepayers in the local improvement districts with their road program.

Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation in supporting the Budget that is now before the members of this Legislature.

Hon. I. C. Nollet (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I regret very much that I will, first of all, have to turn my attention to some of the statements and some of the over-simplified figuring down by the official critic in the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the hon. member for Maple Creek intended to prove when he referred to a statement made by someone

on a Citizens' Forum discussion in regard to the productive efficiency of our farm people. Perhaps he intended to prove that professional agronomists and specialists are unnecessary, and are a bunch of 'know-nothings', because he read a letter that he said appeared in the 'Western Producer' which indicated that a sample of 'quack-grass' – he called it 'buck-grass'; I don't if he knows a buck from a doe; but I think he meant 'quack-grass', and he said that this sample was entered in a competition...

Mr. Cameron (Maple Creek): — The 'Leader-Post' called it 'buck-grass', not I.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — . . . with slender wheat grass, or what is known as western rye grass; and because the person who was appraising the samples didn't know the one from the other – I take it, Mr. Speaker, that is was principally the basis for his contention that agrolologists and such don't know anything.

He went on and a little while later, Mr. Speaker, suggested that we should increase our educational grants by some \$4 million, and I wondered why he wanted more people educated, unless it was to graduate more specialists so he would have more people to sneer at and ridicule, Mr. Speaker.

Some Government Members: — Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — I take it, Mr. Speaker, that a critic is expected to know more than the person he is criticizing, and for the benefit of the hon. member, if that is so, I pass on to him, Mr. Speaker, five samples of slender wheat grass, containing samples of 'quack-grass', and I want the hon. member opposite to select the quack-grass seed from the slender wheat grass seed and I challenge any member of the Opposition to point out the difference. It is very difficult, Mr. Speaker, to pick quack grass from slender wheat grass. I am prepared, Mr. Speaker, to present to the House this \$64,000 question and I am willing to wager my money that an agriculture-representative. will come out 90 per cent correct more often than any member of this Legislature.

Mr. Loftson (Saltcoats): — You admit that you made a mistake then?

Mr. Cameron: — Send over an expert, 'Toby'.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Well, the hon. member from Maple Creek seems to pose as the expert. Apparently the hon. member places an extremely low rating on agricultural scientists and other professional graduates from our universities. I want him to know that the agricultural representatives serving the farmers of this province are Saskatchewan boys who received their education at our University of Saskatchewan under the tutorship of some of the most outstanding agricultural scientists in Canada, and in the selection of professional people for the agricultural services of this province we consult with the university people and consult other sources in order to make certain that we have the highest possible qualified field services. I am sure that the agriculturists concerned will rate the speech of the hon. member at the level where it rightfully belongs.

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His statement, Mr. Speaker, instead of heaping scorn merely reflected ridicule on himself. I know of no single person in this Legislature who has such outstanding qualifications for sneering, scorning and ridiculing obvious facts, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Loptson: — You're pretty good at it yourself.

Mr. Cameron: — You might as well lay an egg, 'Toby'.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Mr. Speaker, I can say this much — that at least my attitude, I think, in this House and my home attitude would be such that the dog would stay home rather than spend most of his time at the neighbours, which could easily be the case if the hon. member from Maple Creek carries the same attitude as he has in this House into his dwelling place.

Now I want to deal with some of the figures quoted by the hon. member for Maple Creek. He mentioned that because the Provincial Treasurer in his address, said that the cash farm income for 1956 was higher than for the previous year of 1955, this indicated a general condition of farm prosperity; and that the hon. Provincial Treasurer had painted an exceedingly bright picture in regard to agriculture in this province, in contrast to the views held by many members on this side of the House. the hon. member for Maple Creek completely ignored certain statements contained in the Hon. Provincial Treasurer's address that more than qualified any optimistic expression he might have left in the minds of anyone. He said, for example, that 1955 farm income reflected the poor crop year of 1954, and that, therefore, any comparison made with the previous year was bound to be better. He also said that the farm cash income for Saskatchewan was short of the previous five-year average. the hon. member for Maple Creek completely overlooked this and other pertinent statements made by the hon. opt in reference to the general condition of agriculture.

Mr. Loptson: — You'd better hurry 'Toby', there's only one minute left.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — The facts are (and the hon. Provincial Treasurer knows them as well as we all know them) that cash farm income does not reflect the farmer's take-home pay, and that farm costs must be deducted; and he is also aware of the fact that D.B.S. figures show that farm costs in Saskatchewan went up over \$150 million since 1945, or nearly double. He then suggested, knowingly or unwittingly, that because the hon. Provincial Treasurer stated that between 1951 and 1955 Saskatchewan per capita cash farm income averaged just over \$5,00, this meant that all farmers were getting over \$5,000 per year for the past five years; because, he said, and I quote:

“Imagine, a C.C.F.'er going out into the country and telling farmers their cash income for the past five years averaged over \$5,000.

Mr. Speaker, we all know this is simply dividing the number of farmers in Saskatchewan by the total cash farm income, and that this does not reflect the cash each farmer actually gets because of the varying size in farm units.

I want to say too, Mr. Speaker, that my counterpart in Ottawa, the Rt. Hon. J.G. Gardiner, used exactly the same figures to try to prove that all farmers in this province were prosperous.

Mr. Cameron: — Would the Provincial Treasurer stoop to that?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — It is well know, Mr. Speaker, that after deductions for operating costs, for example, according to Dominion Bureau of Census figures – in 1951, 50 per cent of the farmers in Saskatchewan received less than \$500 a year net income, and the hon. members know that. The Rt. Hon. Mr. Gardiner knows that. Why do they constantly endeavour to misconstrue facts and figures, Mr. Speaker? The hon. member for Maple Creek is particularly adept at this practice, especially so, . . .

Mr. Cameron: — They're your figures.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — . . . Mr. Speaker, when by a simple calculation in which he divided the estimated cash income for eggs, being \$9,900,000, by the number of estimated eggs that were disposed of in the province, he came up with an average price for eggs of 32 cents a dozen.

Mr. Lopton: — That's right.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — And he said Mr. Argue had stated in the House of Commons that the farmers were only getting about 14 cents a dozen for eggs. "Why", he said, "in 1955 they received an average price of 32 cents a dozen." That again was on the basis of his calculations.

Mr. Gardiner (Melville): — Yours.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — He was taking estimated calculations into consideration. Mr. Speaker, what are the facts?

Mr. Danielson: — As the Premier; he'll explain them.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — The hon. member ought to be more careful in quoting figures. The facts are that the price of eggs received at the licensed egg grading stations – which is the only accurate method we have to determine what average prices really are; in 1955, the price was 28.5 cents a dozen and in 1956, the price was 29.8 cents per dozen. But he overlooked this fact too. This isn't what the farmer gets. A great many of our eggs go to the first receivers where a deduction is made for handling and transportation costs, so the farmer doesn't actually get those prices. Now what is the egg price situation at the moment? Eggs, Mr. Speaker, are down to the floor. He failed to mention that, in the last month or two of 1956, eggs dropped down to the floor price. I am sure that many farm housewives in Saskatchewan got a big kick out of his address to this House two days ago. As a matter of fact, I have in my hand some correspondence from a farmer's wife who very promptly wrote to me in regard to the hon. member's statement, and she attaches the receipt she got from the grading station, which indicates that she sold 15 dozen eggs, Mr. Speaker. It's true that quite a few of her eggs didn't grade in the top grades, but nevertheless

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she received a net total, less transportation cost for 15 dozen eggs, \$1.68. Figure that out, sir.

Mr. Cameron: — You're the guy that made the statement, not I.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Hazen Argue was perfectly right, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Loptson: — That's not 32 cents, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — And every farmer in Saskatchewan knows that he is right. Why go back and take the average price in 1955 to prove eggs are a good price now.

Mr. Cameron: — What did you put it in your pocket, for?

Mr. Loptson: — Yes, but you said she got 32 cents for them.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — It looks like, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to have my usual egg battle with the...

Mr. McCarthy: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, is the hon. Minister prepared to table that document.

Hon. I.C. Nollet: — Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member has a point of privilege, let him state his point.

Mr. Cameron: — Well he has, but you out talk him all the time!

Mr. McCarthy: — Mr. Speaker, I asked the hon. Minister if he is prepared to table that document he is reading from?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — I'm not prepared to table it. It is private correspondence; but if any of the hon. members want to look at it, I'll send it over to them. Some of them might be interested in what this lady said. She said, "After listening to Friday afternoon's Legislative broadcast I decided to forward to you the enclosed egg statement dated March 4. You will notice by this statement the average price of this shipment is 14 cents per dozen". (She was figuring it on the gross, Mr. Speaker), "and if you can make use of those enclosures on a future broadcast, you are much obliged to do so." I don't need to table this document; all we need to do is to go down . . .

Mr. Cameron: — Send it over here.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — . . . to the egg grading station and find out the price.

Premier Douglas: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I have no objection to the Minister tabling it, but the fact remains that we can't have two sets of rules, one for the Government and one for the Opposition. Members from across the floor have repeatedly quoted from private letters and have refused to table them on the grounds they were not compelled to table them. The Leader of the Opposition insisted that a letter from which he was quoting was one for which he would accept responsibility, but he would not table it.

Mr. McCarthy: — You insisted on his tabling it, thought.

Premier Douglas: — We can't have two different sets of rules. I don't think our ruling was different; it would apply to both sides of the House.

Mr. McDonald: — One egg – Grade A large!

Premier Douglas: — There's one egg that's cracked . . .

Mr. Cameron: — That's the one that just sat down! That's the one that 'Toby' laid, the one that is cracked!

Mr. McDonald: — There's three dozen and 11 cracked here, Tommy. That's your side!

Mr. Loptson: — Especially when the Premier picked Grade A!

Hon. I.C. Nollet: — Hon. members opposite don't need to search the receipt to determine how many eggs grade A, B, small or anything else. The facts are, Mr. Speaker, that when eggs are down to the floor price as they have in this particular case, most of the eggs that dropped below Grade A, on which there is no floor price, dropped to a greater spread from the price of Grade A as indicated in this statement. In other words, when eggs go down to the floor price, and since the supports apply only to Grade A's, as hon. members know, anyone who has eggs below Grade A eggs gets that much less proportionately than when the price of eggs is above the floor price.

Mr. Loptson: — Sure, that's right? You don't buy eggs . . .

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Maple Creek says that taxes are high. That is nothing new.

Mr. Danielson: — It isn't since the C.C.F. came into power, anyway.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — In 1940, for example, the annual capital investment by municipalities in public works, which includes road equipment mostly, was \$235,000. In the period 1950-54 this went up to \$1,347 million. And the surprising thing about this is, Mr. Speaker, that it parallels the increase in price of farm machinery and farm production costs generally. This inflationary cost, of local governments and farm operation costs is taking place at a period of time when the rest of the country is booming to inflationary levels. The hon. member from Maple Creek says taxes have nothing to do with the cost-price squeeze. We say that taxes . . .

Mr. Danielson: — Who says that.

Mr. McDonald: — Just the opposite!

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — . . . have risen with the cost-price squeeze. Correct, correct. We say, Mr. Speaker, that taxes and increased

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farm cost are indivisibly a part of the same general cause that has contributed to high costs insofar as municipalities are concerned, and also as far as farm operations are concerned. No amount of misconstruction and derision from the Opposition will change these fundamental facts.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, if it is logical for the Opposition to suggest that the C.C.F. Government in Saskatchewan is responsible for high taxes and high farming costs (because the two are inseparable), it will naturally follow, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal Government of the province of Manitoba, and the Social Credit Government in the province of Alberta are also responsible for high taxes and high farm costs in those particular provinces. Of course, this suggestion is too simple and too farfetched for anyone to presume that this is a logical reason why taxes are high right across Canada, Mr. Speaker. It all stems from the one fundamental cause, and results from the Federal Government's management of fiscal policy. The rural areas of our country have not been getting proportionately their share of the national income, because costs have gone up to inflationary levels and our national government has done nothing to bring up farm income to a level similar to that enjoyed by other segments of the economy.

Government Members: — Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Nollet: —The hon. member from Maple Creek made another odious reference when he endeavoured to make a comparison on the basis of the per capita municipal tax in a designated area of the province, and he chose the thinnest populated areas of the province to prove his case. Everyone knows, Mr. Speaker, that, in a province like Saskatchewan with a very sparse rural population, if you transpose the property tax to a per capita basis then it will appear high, and he chose to take areas in the southwest of the province where we really have a thinned out rural population. I call this misconstruing, deliberately misconstruing facts, Mr. Speaker. I could say this. The Provincial Government has extended itself to the very limit of its resources to help municipalities to carry the burden of inflationary costs for service. The situation is the same right across the country. Practically all provinces have the same general complaint. The province here is also doing its best to provide more jobs in Saskatchewan by borrowing large sums of money for self-liquidating projects to provide electric power and natural gas for industrial development.

We are trying, Mr. Speaker, in a few short years to overcome 30 years of neglected indifference by previous Liberal administrations, which made no similar attempt to give concrete encouragement to industrial development in our province. Progress today, Mr. Speaker, compared to the period prior to 1944 is truly phenomenal. Saskatchewan is certainly getting into its stride now in the direction of industrial development.

The hon. member stated that borrowing money for these self-liquidating projects would adversely affect the borrowing power for other things. Would he have us neglect basic development for strengthening and broadening of our economic base, and instead borrow large sums of money for deadweight debt purposes? That is a new approach on the part of the financial critic of the Opposition. Nothing is very new politically for my hon. friends opposite, but it is hard to keep track of them; they twist and turn in so many directions that it is hard to keep up with them.

Mr. Speaker, I hold to the accepted point of view that borrowing money for self-liquidating projects strengthens the economic base, and improves our borrowing power for other worthwhile services of a deadweight nature. It is strange that the hon. member now has a most fertile mind for deadweight borrowing, instead of first proceeding, as we are, with the development of our great natural resources. We maintain, Mr. Speaker, that an enlarged and strengthened economic base will provide increased borrowings to progressively build a better public service structure for our province. To do otherwise would probably be, and could very easily result in, borrowing ourselves into a burden of indebtedness that could never be repaid. We realize there is much more to be done. However, the Hon. members opposite, knowing that all things cannot be done because of the limits to our financial resources, endeavour to indicate indifference on the part of this administration. The people of Saskatchewan understand fully the tremendous progress that has already been made, and they know and appreciate the problems presented by being committed to push development projects, such as the two new power plants at Saskatoon and Estevan, costing some \$80 million. They appreciate, too, the millions of dollars involved in bringing power to rural areas. They also appreciate the added assistance, as outlined by the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs, to local governments for all purposes, while at the same time reducing tax burdens from rural people, as has been so plainly indicated by the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. They also appreciate the increased provincial responsibility for hospital benefits, medical and social services generally. Saskatchewan people know of these progressive achievements. They know too, that in this period of agricultural crisis, they can depend on this Government to persistently fight on behalf of our farm people for economic and social justice. I am sure they will properly appraise the politically inspired unlimited proposals for additional obligations to be assumed by this Government, for what they are worth. The people of this province know that the political tactics of the Opposition are merely an unworthy attempt to prove indifference on the part of this administration.

Mr. Danielson: — Amen!

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Mr. Speaker, it is now my intention to...

Mr. McDonald: — To sit down.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — ...give some indication to the House as to the progress made in a field of jurisdiction that certainly comes completely within the scope of the Provincial Government, in this case within the scope of the Provincial Department of Agriculture. The hon. member for Maple Creek has said, "What have you done for agriculture?" I hope in the short time at my disposal to indicate to him some of the things that have been accomplished over the past few years.

I wish, first of all, Mr. Speaker, to indicate to the House some of the reasons why governments have assumed increasing responsibility for the conservation, development and utilization of our soil and water resources. Perhaps it is in the knowledge that people generally throughout the world now know that we have reached the limits of great undeveloped soil resources; that we must now, of necessity, do a better job of conserving and

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utilizing the soil resources which we have available to us. We all know, too, that the pressures of increasing world population make the introduction of soil conservation and utilization policies that much more imperative. It might interest members of the House to know that there are approximately 50 million square miles of land throughout the world, and that the average population per square mile is 40; but when one considers that only half of the total land resources of the world – namely, this 50 million square miles – is unfit for human habitation, then we must conclude that, for all practical purposes in gauging the relationship between human population and remaining soil resources there are approximately 80 people on the average per square mile. It might interest the hon. members to know also, that studies reveal that 50 per cent of the world's population live on 1/20th of the total land area of the world, with an average density of 400 people per square mile. These figures certainly indicate the seriousness of the problem, of increasing population and the need for conserving and properly utilizing our soil and water resources.

In Saskatchewan, our chief concern stems from the fact that, because of the early settlement that took place, many mistakes were made. We were a comparatively new agricultural country only 50 years ago. Settlers came here, took up homesteads, and began to farm, in many cases in areas of the province that were unsuited to farming. No one could guide them or give them advice. We had no knowledge or long-term records on soil and precipitation, with the result that mistakes were made. The mistakes of early settlement were brought to a head in the 1930's, when it was recognized that the Provincial Government here, as well as the Federal Government, would be required to assume very heavy financial responsibilities, first of all, for correcting the pattern of settlement that had developed in a haphazard manner, and secondly, to reclaim some land resources, and generally to conserve and properly utilize all our soil and water resources.

When I became Minister of this Department, all of the knowledge and experience that had preceded me was made available to me. I also had the experience (as we all did) of the 1930's — the days of millions of dollars of seed and relief obligations. So, in light of all of this experience and knowledge gained, we adopted an overall policy for the Department of Agriculture which had two principal objectives in mind, one of which was to bring about a greater degree of agricultural stability against natural hazards, and, secondly, to improve the productivity of our soil. In order to achieve that simple objective a complete reorganization of the Department was necessary, and it was also necessary to expand the activities of the Department both as to staff and also in terms of equipment, machinery and new materials to do the job.

The Department of Agriculture was roughly divided into five main branches for this purpose; the Conservation Development Branch; the Agricultural Representative Service; the Plant Industries Branch; the Animal Industries Branch, and the Lands Branch. I hope very briefly to deal with the progress and activities made in these branches of the Department, in order to illustrate to the hon. members that there has been coordination of programs followed in each of these branches, in the implementation of the two-point overall objectives which I set out previously.

First, dealing with the Conservation and Development Branch, this was an entirely new Branch. I often hear criticisms from the Opposition regarding the activities of this Branch. I would like to draw their attention to the fact that, when I assumed responsibility for this Department, I think we had just two engineers in the Water-Rights Division at that time. We faced a development program in this province without any engineering knowledge to speak of, being made available. The first step was, therefore, to increase the engineering staff. We now have very nearly 30 permanent engineering positions in the Department of Agriculture, and believe me, Mr. Speaker, it took all of that staff to catch up the back-log of engineering required for both irrigation and drainage activities.

I should mention too, Mr. Speaker, that the province never before from the date the resources were turned over to the Province for administration, did anything as a Provincial Government on behalf of drainage reclamations, irrigation development or dry-land reclamation work. All of those activities were ushered in, expanded and developed since the present administration came to power. What has been accomplished? In the case of irrigation, we had some dozen water users' organizations set up in 1944. At the present time there are 44 irrigation Water Users' Associations set up, and there is presently under development for the growing of crops some 59,000 acres of irrigatable land. A great deal more needs to be done outside of the large South Saskatchewan project, but the experience we are getting in the field of irrigation and other work, is placing us in a position where we will have trained engineering staff and other trained personnel and an organization, if and when our National Government feels that the South Saskatchewan project should be proceeded with.

In the field of drainage, I recall, Mr. Speaker, we passed The Conservation Areas Act a number of year ago, and a year later the hon. member from Maple Creek got up on his feet, and asked me "how many conservation areas have you organized under this legislation." I think at that time we had two or three. the legislation had just been passed, but he expected that there should be innumerable conservation areas set up. Had the hon. member taken the time to inform himself, he would not have made that statement; but I can say to him that, today, there are some 93 conservation areas set up and in operation, chiefly in connection with drainage activities.

To give you some indication of progress made in connection with both irrigation and drainage since 1949, when the Conservations and Development Branch was organized, the Department of Agriculture has spent very nearly \$5 million to build 1,040 miles of flood control and irrigation culverts, etc. This is a record of accomplishment, and this is something, in this one particular branch, that has been done on behalf of agriculture. In the emergency flood control program alone, in 1955, there were some 168 miles of ditches constructed, small ditches by using dynamite. These are shallow ditches with shallow cuts from two to four feet deep, but this phase of the emergency program helped over 1,000 farmers in reclaiming for crop, last year, some 39,000 acres of land.

In regard to dry land reclamation work, the development of fodder projects principally, the acreage reclaimed for forage production by this Branch since April 1, 1949, totalled nearly 60,000 acres of land with yields on this land as high as 2 ½, and in some cases three tons per acre.

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There were some 15,000 tons of fodder produced on a part of these projects, and utilized by local farmers last year. Sometimes people will say, "Well you are spending a lot of public money in this reclamation work." Certainly it costs money, Mr. Speaker, but we feel that the investment in reclamation and conservation work is a matter that cannot be ignored, and we feel that it pays off.

Of the projects mentioned, and the yield of 15,000 tons of feed a year multiplied by \$10.00 per ton gives you a return at that nominal price of \$150,000 a year in compensation for the money spent in reclaiming this land. In addition this Branch has built over 885 miles of fence for Provincial Community Pastures since 1949. A noteworthy feature of our commission pasture program is the work presently under way in northeastern Saskatchewan. We are putting the emphasis on commission pasture development in the northern area of the province because they are needed more greatly there than in any other part of the province at the present time. It is expected that, in the coming year's program, we will seed and develop for commission pasture purposes approximately 1,500 acres of land in the northern part of the province.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, to turn now to the Plant Industries Branch. Here again, we have endeavoured to direct the activities of this Branch towards the same objective – better land use, greater agricultural stability and increased production. It is interesting to note that in the ten-year period, since the forage policy was started 31,000 orders have been filled for forage grass seed to provide forage for some 500,000 acres of land. In 1956, 6,000 orders were received from farmers. This was a banner year, and we supplied seed last year for some 100,000 acres of land. As a result of this program, many acres of grass and alfalfa mixtures are to be found in all sections of the province. Prior to 1947, few livestock producers in Saskatchewan were seeding these mixtures.

I would like to mention, too, the policies of the Plant Industries Branch in connection with grants and aid to municipalities. During the period 1949 to 1956, over \$400,000 was contributed as our share on an earned-assistance basis for perennial weed control, and also for the purchase of high-pressure sprayers, shelter-belt spraying, warble fly control and many other projects undertaken by local municipalities. Another earned-assistance program with the Plant Industries Branch is assistance towards seeding roadsides to grass. During 1956, an estimated 800 miles of municipal roadsides were seeded to grass with half the cost, amounting to some \$5,000, paid by the Plant Industries Branch. It is expected that this particular program will accelerate with the development of the grid road system in the rural municipalities.

In addition to the roadside shelter-belting, we also give assistance to farmers who wish to undertake field shelter-belting, either alongside the road or within their fields. To ensure that good care is taken of the trees in the first year after planting, assistance of half the cost up to \$16 per miles will apply to the year of planting, and to the second and third years, also. We feel that these programs are all directed towards not only improving or bringing about a greater awareness of better land-use practices, but we believe that they have particular value with reference to good farm practices generally.

The Plant Industries Branch also gives assistance in the bulk movement of good seed. It might interest hon. members to know that, during 1956, 40 carloads of good seed were shipped under this policy to various parts of the province towards encouraging the use of better seed, and of varieties suitable to a particular district.

I should like now to make a very brief reference to the Animal Industry Branch. Again, here is a Branch that has undergone tremendous expansion. We have added specialist staff to this branch to encourage the improvement of the quality of our livestock, and to encourage more livestock production. Some normal gains have been made. One merely needs to look over the great increase in the number of purebred herds in Saskatchewan, and the tremendous increase in the number of sires that have qualified under our assistance policies.

The activities of the Veterinary Division are particularly noteworthy. I noted the fact, before coming to the House that in 1944 we were testing around 500 cows for Bang's disease at that time, and vaccinated calves at the rate of 1,000 per annum. I am glad to say that today we are now testing cattle for Bang's to the number of approximately 50,000 a year, and we are vaccinating calves at the rate of something like 48,000 head per year. We hope to increase this particular disease-control activity in the years ahead.

I would like to turn now to the Agricultural Representative Branch. There again a tremendous increase in staff took place. When I took over the Department, if I remember correctly we had some 18 or 19 agricultural representatives, most of whom had headquarters in the two large cities of our province. Since then we have raised the number of ag reps to 37, with each of them living in their respective districts. It is true that we need more agricultural representatives and many more specialist staff of all kinds, particularly in the field of farm management, and we are gradually making additions to our staff to meet the demand for them.

When hon. members make their snide references to experts, they should keep in mind (and I hope the hon. member from Maple Creek will keep in mind) that agriculture is a completely different kind of agriculture today than it was even 10 years ago. This is the day of great revolutionary changes that are taking place in the agricultural industry not only in regard to mechanization, but in the general application of scientific knowledge to improve agricultural production techniques. And the whole question of economic factors and farm management is being pushed immediately to the forefront because of the tremendous added cost of farming in a modern mechanical way. So there is consequently a tremendous demand for specialists in all fields. I often wonder, Mr. Speaker, what our agricultural situation would be at the moment, had we neglected to expand the agricultural representative service; had we failed to provide the specialist people in many fields, in animal husbandry, plant industry, weed specialists, soil specialists, and all the rest of it. I am sure that we would be lagging very seriously behind all other provinces had we neglected to properly service our basic industry.

I would like to mention that we have transferred our Earned-Assistance policy to the Agricultural Representative service.

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This earned-assistance policy was formerly with the Conservation and Development Branch. Roughly speaking, in addition to the larger projects undertaken by the Department itself, we make earned-assistance available to municipalise or co-operative groups for various types of agricultural development — it might be initiating the development of a community pasture, or a fodder project. I am glad to say that over the years since this policy was inaugurated we have contributed over \$500,000 to such projects. A good example is in the field of co-operative pasture development. I would like to mention that as a result of these policies, starting with just a few pastures, we now have 74 co-operative pasture organizations, covering very nearly 400,000 acres of land on which graze some 15,000 head of cattle. This is in addition to the pastures undertaken by the Conservation and Development Branch, and the other project activity undertaken by that Branch as well.

There are 11 co-operative fodder projects involving some 4500 acres of land that produce some 5,000 tons of fodder annually. Again, this is in addition to the dry-land reclamation projects undertaken by the C & D Branch that I previously referred to, and that produce on the average some 15,000 tons of fodder annually.

When I am saying this, Mr. Speaker, I hope that all hon. members will bear in mind the beneficial effects of these programs in stabilizing the pattern of farm settlement by providing farmers with an enlarged economic operational unit. There are several ways to assist people in organizing co-operative pastures and fodder projects and utilizing Crown lands for this purpose, all of which has a stabilizing influence; secondly, in the disposition policy of the Lands Branch in the administration of Crown lands that are allocated on an individual basis. I will deal with that activity in just a moment.

I brought with me a report of the Lands Branch in regard to its particular activities. I find that lease Crown lands suitable to cultivation increased to a new high last year of over one million acres, as of March 31, 1955. Of this acreage about 750,000 acres were under cultivation at the end of last November, with about 272,000 still to be brought under cultivation. Most of the remaining acreage that can eventually be brought under cultivation is land that will involve considerable cost for reclamation and development for farming. And again I would say to the hon. member for Maple Creek, take note of the assistance to the agricultural industry in this regard. I would say that the total expenditure associated with developing Crown lands, bringing it under cultivation, by this one Branch alone is in the neighbourhood of \$5 million of interest-free money. This sum has been provided on behalf of Crown lessees to encourage them to bring more land under development, and also to reclaim land.

I like this policy, Mr. Speaker, because it is consistent with all of the facts and findings of many investigations that have been made over the years. In fact since 1921, when the first conference was held on good farming practices in Saskatchewan, all subsequent investigations have suggested that the province as such should remain in control of the administration of our Crown land resources and not alienate any more land by sale.

That is not a new concept by this administration, and it is not because of any perversity of mind on our part that we have adopted this lease policy. In the case of cultivation leases it is the most practical and the best way I know to establish young farmers in the occupation of agriculture. My only regret is that we don't have sufficient remaining good land resources to provide for all the demands made upon us.

I wish to illustrate, too, that in the disposition of land other than for cultivation units, we have assisted very nearly 15,000 farmers in this province to obtain additional land and acquire more economical farm units in this province to obtain additional land and acquire more economical farm units. When one reads all of these activities in conjunction with the earned-assistance policy, the pasture development both by ourselves and the P.F.R.A., one immediately gets some idea of the tremendous benefit the proper administration of Crown land has been towards stabilizing the economy of the province, and being of assistance to many of our farm people at the same time.

I think, Mr. Speaker, these are matters that we should look at objectively. And when the hon. members opposite wish to criticize, I can assure them there is ample opportunity for criticism and prodding us to still greater efforts, but the peculiar thing in regard to our Opposition here, is that I never once yet heard them criticize us for not doing enough in a particular field. That is not prodding us along progressive lines; they always seem to take the position, when we move into a particular progressive direction, that they instead endeavour to criticize and discredit that particular activity. But I can assure you here is a field where there need be no controversy, and where some progressive and constructive criticism would indeed be welcome.

I would like to give the hon. members some indication now of the dry-land fodder project developed by the Conservation and Development Branch, which is in addition to the earned-assistance policy for projects developed by co-operatives. I find, for example that there are some 16 projects that were developed by the Provincial Government itself, and that there were over 15,000 tons of fodder produced from these projects. You can add to that the 5,000 tons that were produced on eleven co-operative projects and then you get some idea of the contribution that has been made in this particular direction. I should mention that, a few years ago, practically all of our hay permits were granted for native hay harvest; practically all of our hay permits were granted for native hay harvest; at the present time the native hay harvest is in the neighbourhood of some 5,000 tons. The amount of hay now produced from permits issued for domestic hay and from land which has been developed by ourselves or under earned-assistance on various parcels of Crown lands, amounts to about 89,000 tons per year, which indicates the progress given to our livestock people.

I would like to restate now the figure that I referred to a moment ago. I was a bit conservative when I said the total amount that had been spent on behalf of new land development was \$5 million. The exact figure is \$5,545,000. Now, Mr. Speaker, I did wish, and I had hoped, on this occasion that I could deal in greater detail and more specifically with my own Department's activities, but I understand there are several others who wish to speak today. I hope perhaps when our Estimates are before the House I will have an opportunity of giving to the hon. members more information in regard to the activities of my Department. Before

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sitting down, I noticed I have had returned to me the samples of the slender wheat grass seed, and the quack-grass seed, but I don't see any indication as to what is quack-grass, or what is slender wheat grass.

Mr. Cameron: — Send it back to me. Someone lifted it from me and wrote a note on it for you.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Yes, I'll go into a secret conference with the hon. member from Maple Creek and point out to him the difference, which I am sure he doesn't know. I should say, Mr. Speaker, these two seeds are so similar that it takes a real expert with a magnifying glass plus a lot of other things, to determine the difference, and anyone who ever took a sample of quack-grass and put it in an exhibit where there was slender wheat grass, certainly should not be very proud of that, because it does take the very best of detailed knowledge to know the difference.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do hope that all members of the Legislature will give consideration to the need for continued activities, as I have endeavoured to very briefly outline. I am certain that, as time goes on as industry develops, and as more people depend on agriculture for food as a source of energy and livelihood, that automatically makes the agriculture industry that much more important. When I read, for example, the forecast of the Gordon Commission which indicates that in the years ahead the industrial output of wealth in Canada will far outstrip our agricultural output, this merely indicates to me the increasing importance of agriculture. One needs only to go to countries like the United Kingdom or to European countries, or practically any other country outside of Canada, and one will know the tremendous interest on the part of governments in agricultural process from the stand point of conservation and the proper and full utilization of soil resources, and the various types of subsidies paid in this direction. It means, simply that we are all now acknowledging more and more that there are no great areas of new land resources, that we now have to live within present resource limits, and that we must make the best possible use of the resources we have in order not only to feed the increasing population of Canada, where we are still, comparatively speaking, very thinly populated as a nation, but also meet the demands on our doorstep now for the export of our foodstuffs to other countries, as I have mentioned, where the need is so great, and where population densities run up to 400 people per square mile.

Mr. Speaker, when I speak in this House and deplore the fact that we are not fully utilizing our total resources, I am merely pointing out that this Canada of ours (contrary to what the hon. member from Maple Creek said) can produce foodstuffs, livestock, dairy, poultry and grainstuffs far in excess of our present production, to bring food to some of the needy areas of the world. That could be done; but the thing that grieves me more than anything else, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that our livestock population has been going down as compared to the war years, when we had a pretty good balanced agricultural production program in terms of price relation. It seems to me that, if we have proper price relationships and stable prices and some guarantee to our farmers that they will have protection of income against crop-failure years, we would

have automatically a balanced agricultural program, which would be of tremendous assistance in helping us in our programs of better land-use practices. For example, in sheep production during the war years we had some 500,000 sheep in Saskatchewan; we have actually dropped down to 150,000 head. We can talk in terms of extension and point out to farmers that it is good farm practice to have more sheep, for example, but they can figure just as fast as we can, on the side of a barn, and they can prove to us that perhaps it does not pay. It is the same with hogs. Our production has been up and down, and the facts are that, as our war-time export markets fell away, our livestock population and production in Saskatchewan decreased to a similar extent. I am saying, though, Mr. Speaker, and recognizing, that our decreased production here for livestock was made up in Ontario and Quebec, because they are approaching a time when they can consume all of their products within their provincial boundaries.

When the hon. member for Maple Creek suggests that we could go into the Farm Loan business as Quebec and Ontario did I want to point out to him one vast difference. In the provinces of Quebec and Ontario, most of their farm products — practically all — are consumed within these provinces, and they must, in fact, go beyond their provinces for additional foodstuffs. It is also a principal market for many of our farm commodities from Saskatchewan.

Mr. McDonald: — What about Alberta?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — That being so, they have a ready market, and export policies do not affect them to the extent that we are affected here. So I say, a province of this kind, depending as it does on export markets and interprovincial trade, is in a different position; and if for no other reason at least for this reason, the national Government, the same agency that has the responsibility for fiscal policy, the responsibility for farm income and price relations, is the proper agency to do the loaning, and also because a national government can get money much more cheaply than a provincial government. When I say that, Mr. Speaker, I am not dodging the responsibility of any provincial administration to do much more on behalf of agriculture; but I think I am on sound and logical grounds, as is the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, which recently approached the National Government and asked that the Canadian Farm Loan system be expanded into a proper long-term loaning agency. This would be much easier to do, and one would suspect the support of hon. members in that direction. I should say to them too, that it is everlastingly to the discredit of our National Government that, actually Quebec, I know, has loaned far more money to her farmers than was ever loaned through the Canadian Farm Loan Board scheme to all of the farmers of Canada. In the United States it is well recognized; they have the Commodity Credit Corporation. The National Government there has been in this field for years and recognized that it was a proper field for their activities — and I say the same should apply here.

I also say, Mr. Speaker, that not only has our National Government lacked vision and foresight in this field, but in other fields too. In the field of conservation and development, for example. For Years now the Provincial Ministers of Agriculture have been asking our National Government to bring in a comprehensive soil and water conservation policy for Canada. Where does it go to, Mr. Speaker? The matter has been referred to a Committee

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of the Senate, of all things! Surely cannot hon. members opposite, members of the liberal party, convince our National Government that things like that shouldn't be referred to the Senate; they ought to be referred to a proper committee, yes, of experts, economists and soil people. Agrologists, who know something about these things. And I would like to see a greater will by our National Government to step into this particular field. I am not only talking for my own province, but like yourselves, like all of you, I can see a tremendous potential benefit from resource development in our country. For example, in the field of irrigation and power development. I have to stand enviously on this side of the American line and watch a National Government there go on completely at its own expense, with the development of tremendous projects under circumstances that are identical to our own. Just recently an announcement has been made for a \$3 billion program carried entirely by the National Government for water and power development in the north-western part of the United States. Why doesn't our Government wake up?

Mr. Kramer: — A Tory Government, at that!

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Let's get on with these programs, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Lopton: — Why don't the C.C.F. wake up!

Mr. Cameron: — Yes, that's what we asked: why don't you wake up?

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — Similarly I notice the official opposition press coming out with this cartoon 'The Cry Baby'. We were depicted as the 'cry baby'; we were trying to blame Ottawa for everything, Mr. Speaker. But do you know who the cry babies are when it comes to disposing of surplus farm commodities? You will find them down in Ottawa, crying about what the United States is doing . . .

Mr. Cameron: — Pager Hazen Argue!

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — We're going to ruin our markets, they say. They stand helplessly by. Why, they say, we haven't got the resources to begin to compete with the great American treasury. I think this is just a cover-up for the fact that they are too tight and don't see the benefit of doing something about finding export markets, if necessary subsidizing them in order that our food commodities can reach the areas of the world where they are more greatly needed.

We certainly need a broader concept of international trade policy in this regard.

Mr. McDonald: — Let's take yours 'Toby'.

Hon. Mr. Nollet: — And I would think that the members from western Canada, at least, would raise their voices in unison and demand more comprehensive policies in the field of marketing and farm income, and also in the field of general resources development. I will support the Motion.

Mr. Eldon A. Johnson (Kerrobot-Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate. (Debate adjourned).

(TIME QUESTION)

Moved by the Hon. Mr. McIntosh, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Brockelbank:

“That the detailed results of the Plebiscite on the Time Question held concurrently with the 1956 Municipal Elections throughout Saskatchewan be referred to the Select Standing Committee on Municipal Law, with instructions that the said Committee shall have power to pursue its study of the question in such manner as it deems fit, and to report from time to time its observations thereon;

and, further, that, for purposes of the said study, the Committee be augmented by the addition of the following Members: Messrs. Walker, Kramer and Cameron.”

Hon. L.F. McIntosh (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, Government Motion No. 1 deals with the results of the Plebiscite on the Time question that was taken during the 1956 municipal elections throughout the province. I move this motion for the consideration of the Legislature.

Mr. R.A. McCarthy (Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, have I the privilege to say a few words on it?

Mr. Speaker: — Go ahead.

Mr. McCarthy: — I was really surprised to see this resolution on the Order Paper. I sat on that previous Time Committee, I think for four years, and if I remember correctly it was for two years under the present Attorney General and the next year under the member for Notukeu-Willowbunch.

Hon. R.A. Walker (Attorney General): — I was never Chairman of that Committee.

Mr. McCarthy: — I may be wrong, but at any rate we went into this thing very fully. We had delegations make representations both written and oral, and at one time we had written presentations, I think, from almost every municipal body in the province. I think that the members at that time (at least some of them) will agree with me that, after looking at all the information we were able to gather, we came to the conclusion that there wasn't very much that we could do. We recognized that it was not a serious problem, but an annoying problem; but I think the conclusion of that Committee was that there was nothing we could do about it.

Then in the last year it was handed over to our Minister of Municipal Affairs, and he decided to take a vote on the municipal level. Now, I think the result of that vote (if you can call it a result), is

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pretty well exactly the same as the conclusion that that Time Committee arrived at. To start with, the questions were very confusing, but to take the final result, I think that the vote was very much in line with the submission we had before that Committee.

I can see no reason now for setting up that Committee and going all through that again. If anybody has got anything they would like to bring up then can do it in the House, but we have hashed it and rehashed it from every direction, and arrived nowhere; I can see no reason now for reconstituting that Committee without some more information to go on, and personally, I am going to vote against the motion for that reason.

Mr. A.C. Cameron (Maple Creek): — I was asked if I would go on this Committee. I said I would go on the Committee if this resolution passed and it was referred back to this Special Committee; but I expressed the thought at that time that I didn't see the purpose of referring it back to this particular Committee.

As you will remember it was the 'baby' of the present Attorney General (Hon. Mr. Walker); that that was one thing he was going to do if he was going to do anything – he was going to straighten out the time business of this province. So we set up these Committees. For three years the Committees have been sitting on it each time we came to the Legislature. Facts and figures and delegations and letters, all were considered from all over the province. Viewpoints were assessed and yet the same Attorney General, after the first year, said we should carry on again for another year, while he was assessing the situation in a determined effort to correct the time zones in the province. Then we had Committees meeting the next Session. Then to sum it all up the Committee decided that they were not in a position to assess what should be done, so the present Attorney General passed this baby over to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and said "You carry the ball from here on in." He has washed his hands completely clean of it.

Then we find the Minister of Municipal Affairs prepared a plebiscite. I don't know where he got his guidance. I am sure it wasn't he who prepared the ballot that was submitted in the plebiscite last year that did nothing but confuse the issue in every person's mind who went to vote. They didn't know. It said: "Are you in favour of Mountain Standard Time. If you answer Yes to 'B', what is your answer to 'A'? If you answer No to 'A', are you answering Yes to 'B'?" "And it was No and Yes and Yes and No until the people didn't know what they were voting for. How could we vote for Standard Time? It said, "If you vote for Standard Time, are you in favour of Daylight Saving Time? If you vote for Daylight Saving Time? If you vote for Daylight Saving Time..." It was such a conglomeration of confusion that the people today are no more enlightened about the time zones than they were before this Committee was set.

Hon. Mr. Walker: —Speak for yourself.

Mr. Cameron: — Not a bit. And I say, for my view, so long as they keep the Standard Mountain Time from Swift Current west, and don't tamper with our time zone, they can play around with the rest of the province the way they want, because we want Standard Time in that area,

and as far as I am concerned, I can't see the purpose of setting up the Committee.

Mr. Loptson (Saltcoats): — We want Central Time in our area.

Mr. Cameron: — The Government has all the information at their fingertips. They have had three years of investigation; they have presented it through a Plebiscite to the people, and yet they are not in a position to make up their minds. They don't take a look at the problem and take the bull by the horns and say we are going to do this, or we are going to do that; but they have played around with this time issue, until it has become the laughing-stock of the country, and now they want to set up a Committee and send it back to carry on this thing again for another year or another two years.

Mr. G. H. Danielson (Arm River): — Another election.

Mr. Cameron: — I would say you found it a 'hot potato', and you are not prepared to deal with it. So I would say if you are not, then let's drop it and tell the people that you are not. I cannot support setting up this Committee again, because I can't see what purpose can be gained by so doing.

Hon. Mr. J.H. Brockelbank (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, it may probably be that not all of the members of the Legislature wish to advocate a solution to this problem. Some will recognize that this, though not a momentous problem, is one difficult little problem to deal with. The hon. member for Maple Creek appears to be only interested in his particular corner of the province, but I think members of the Legislature should be (and I think most are) interested in an endeavour to find a solution to eliminate some of the confusion that arises through this time question. And I can see plainly now why the hon. members don't want to touch it by the expression used by the member for Maple Creek when he talked about somebody taking the 'bull by the horns'. Well, I hope that members of this Legislature have enough courage to face up to issues like this, which are controversial, and to accept some responsibility for it, rather than trying to shake it off altogether.

Certainly it is a proper subject for a Committee of the Legislature to discuss, and to recommend solutions. A Committee has not discussed the question since the results of the Plebiscite were known, and the plebiscite was a result of the Committee's work, I believe — I wasn't on the Committee. I find I am on this Committee as set up by this motion, but it was the result of the work of the Old Committee that the Plebiscite was taken. Now I think, when it happens that way, we probably should pay some attention to it and see if some solution can be found.

Mr. L. M. Nicholson (Nipawin): — Mr. Speaker, I was going to speak on this for a few moments tomorrow, but now that it has come to the attention of the Assembly, whether you set up

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a Committee or not, I would like to see a decision brought forward before this Legislature is prorogued.

As the Minister of Mineral Resources has just said, it is a sort of touchy problem. In our area, I believe the majority would want fast time; we happen to be very near the Central Time zone. I recall the town of Shellbrook having been boycotted by the farmers because they went on daylight time. I recall the town of Choiceland where the mayor and council discussed the feasibility of going on fast time with the other businessmen, and they seemed to agree. On the Saturday evening before (they were to go on fast time on Monday), there was a notice went on the screen at the theatre saying that the farmers would boycott the town. The result was the mayor and council n a body resigned. In the town of Whitefox for the last two seasons, the town of Whitefox has been on daylight time, and the school has been running on standard time.

Now, the farmers don't want it, and apparently labour does want it; but the point is this, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it is imperative that if you take it into Committee, get it out of Committee and make a decision before this Legislature prorogues. I think honestly that within six months of the time a decision has been made, we will hear no more about it; but it is a source of creating disunity among people in local area, and I don't think it is that important. If we make a decision one way or the other, in six months we will hear no more about it. I would certainly like to see it brought to a head before this sitting of the Legislature is prorogued. If it is necessary to go into Committee first, all right.

Premier Douglas: — Mr. Speaker, it seems impossible to please the Official Opposition. When we were discussing The Vehicles Act, the member for Melville (Mr. Gardiner) was complaining that he couldn't vote for the Bill because we hadn't given sufficient information. He said the matter should have gone to some Committee or something, where the members could get full information regarding tests that have been carried on and experiments that have been carried on, regarding the matter under discussion on that Bill.

Now, here is another matter on which there is a good deal of information. I don't know how many members have had it, but the figures are available, not only for the entire province, but they are available by municipalities, and they are available by districts. They are available by areas and regions, and maps have been made up so that one can almost tell at a glance how different areas voted on different questions. It seems to me that members would want that kind of information, before trying to come to a decision.

The criticism is that this is a 'hot potato' and we want to avoid it. It is not a matter of being a 'hot potato'. It is not a political question. This is a question of trying to find what the people themselves want. As far as I am concerned, I don't care whether we have Mountain Time, or Central Time, or Daylight Saving Time, or any kind of time, providing we get what the majority of the people want. The only way you can find that out is to consult the people themselves.

It is true, we have had a Committee sit for a long time. They heard a lot of briefs, and they showed great patience. They brought back what I think was a very good report in which they pointed out that there were a great many conflicting points of view and that it was difficult to reconcile those conflicting points of view. There was no difficulty about the eastern part of the province; there was no difficulty about the western part of the province, but around the centre of the province there was a great deal of conflict. They, therefore, suggested that probably the only way would be to have regions in which we would have different times and that we would have to have some way of finding out what the people in those regions wanted. If I remember correctly – I looked at a copy of the Report to the Legislature – and as I recollect it, they suggested that we take a plebiscite on this matter. They also made reference to the Committee on Municipal Law. The plebiscite has been taken. The plebiscite tried to find out first of all, if we could get enough people to agree to have a uniform time over the whole province. They have in Alberta; they have in Manitoba. Could we get uniform time over the whole province, was the first part of the question. The second part of the question had to do with ascertaining preferences. It asked to what, if we can't get uniform time over the whole province and we have to put it in regions, would you like it to be, in your region, Mountain Time, Central Time, or Daylight Saving Time?

That material is all available. Whether the plebiscite was in the best possible wording or not is a matter of opinion. But if you try to word a better one you will find that it is not so easy. It is much easier to criticize the one that was used. I think that now that this material is available, a Committee ought to look at it. We have tried to make the Committee as representative of the different areas of the province as possible. I agree with the member for Nipawin (Mr. Nicholson), there isn't any reason why they can't have something back here to the House before we prorogue.

However, if the members of the House don't want the Committee, and don't want to look at this information, then don't complain if we simply bring down legislation incorporating our interpretation of the data. You will have to accept the responsibility for going back to your own constituents and saying: "Your Committee was put into a certain time zone because some people on the Government side interpreted that as being your point of view, and because I, as your member, refused to sit on the Committee to help formulate it." I don't think you want to do that. It's all right to help formulate it." I don't think you want to do that. It's all right for the member for Maple Creek (Mr. Cameron) to say leave Swift Current to the Alberta border on Mountain Time; he doesn't care what we do with the rest of the province. But the fact is that there are other members who do have to care what happens to the rest of the province, and who do have to go back and explain to their people what steps are taken.

I recognize, and I think every member recognizes that no matter what you do, there will be some districts dissatisfied. There will be differences of opinion as between village and town on the one hand, and the rural areas on the other. What we have got to find out is what do the majority of the people want and how can we inconvenience people the least. Certainly we can't inconvenience them in anything we do

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half as much as they are inconvenienced by the patchwork quilt now in affect. I think we have got to tackle this problem, and the Government is prepared to tackle it. But we prefer to tackle it by having everybody look at the information. Maybe our interpretation of the information is wrong. I think that everybody's interpretation of the data that has been collected will be valuable. If the members don't want to look at that, and vote this motion down, we are certainly not going to press them.

Mr. J. W. Gardiner (Melville): — Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. Premier had a few words to say with regard to some remarks I made, the other day on this question of time in relationship to the question that we were discussing at that particular time.

I contend, Mr. Speaker, that there is no relationship between the two at all. He states that on the one hand, some experts have been sitting some place and trying to evolve a method of carrying out the purpose of the Act which they are trying to place into effect. But on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, no one in this House has had access to the material (not that I know of, anyway), or to the findings of the different individuals. That was the reason for my suggesting at that time that the members of this Legislature should have that information before them before they make a decision on that particular item that has been brought down by the Government of this province.

Now, with regard to the question of time, I think it is very ridiculous for the Premier of this province to suggest there is any relationship whatsoever. As has been stated on this side of the House, a Committee sat for some period of time, I believe it was about two years – three years they say, and discussed this matter of time. When the Committee was a little wary about making a decision, so they said, we'll leave it up to the people. And so they put on a plebiscite, and I think if they had stopped at question "A" on that plebiscite and left it there, they would have had a decision, as they actually haven't today. I believe somewhere in the neighbourhood of 65 per cent of the people in Saskatchewan stated that they were prepared to adopt a single time for the entire province.

My friends across the way are prepared to accept the opinion of 45 per cent of the people and govern this province, but at the same time, when about 65 per cent express their opinion on a certain subject, they have not the courage to undertake the voice of the majority of the people in this province, no matter what it might be. They say sure some people in some places might not like it. Well, Mr. Speaker, certainly in this province, I think we have always tried to conduct our Government that the majority, particularly a clear majority, of the people should have the right to a say in how the Government of the province in particular subjects should be conducted. And since our Government over here accepted the responsibility of placing the plebiscite before the people, and asking them for a decision, now they are coming back to us and saying, we still don't know what the people want. We have had a vote, but we can't figure this out. We want to spend another month or six weeks of the legislative sitting with a group of people trying to sit down and figure it out, because all the experts we have in the Provincial Government haven't been able to decide up to date what should be done.

So far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, I think a Committee to decide what the voters have decided in their plebiscite is one of the most ridiculous suggestions I have ever heard. Of course, as the Premier say, if they set up a Committee we would probably have no other recourse but to accept to sit on that Committee, once the majority of this House has decided in that manner. But I feel that it is not necessary, and that the people of this province have spoken with regard to whether they want the same time over the entire province, and it's time for the Government to accept their responsibility as a Government, even though they have only been elected by 45 per cent of the people and taken some action at the request of the people of this province as indicated in that plebiscite.

Hon. R.A. Walker (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I was hoping that I would be able to stay out of this debate and thereby keep it on a high plain. But in view of the fact that the hon. member from Melville has apparently seen fit to make some of the remarks he has, I can hardly stay out of it. The hon. member for Melville with only 40 per cent of the votes in the constituency of Melville can't afford to point sneeringly at 46 per cent of the votes in this province, as he does.

When he talks about a 65 per cent majority in favour of some particular time, it is pretty obvious that the member for Melville is just exactly the kind of person who needs the benefit of this Committee to look into the facts, because it is obvious that he doesn't know what the facts are.

Mr. McDonald: —Nor do you.

Hon. Mr. Walker: — As a matter of fact, I doubt whether the hon. member from Melville has any idea what the results of this plebiscite were, except for a few press statements that were published a little while ago. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal party has decided that they are going to try to make a political issue of this matter. The hon. member for Maple Creek says he is going to vote against this Committee, because he wants to keep on Standard Time.

Mr. Cameron: — The people are sick of hearing of time.

Hon. Mr. Walker: — And the member for Melville says that he is not willing to serve on this Committee, because he wants to have Central Standard Time for the whole province. It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, he says 65 per cent . . .

Mr. Gardiner: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, I would just like to state that I never did say that I believed the whole province should be Central Time. I said that I believed they should go on one time.

Hon. Mr. Walker: — They should go on one time, and the one time you referred to as having 65 per cent of the votes was Central Standard Time. That kind of silly peregrination isn't going to get him off the hook. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker...

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Mr. Gardiner: — I am not on the hook.

Hon. Mr. Walker: — . . . there is a lot of very interesting data to be found in the results of the Time Plebiscite, and it seems to me that it is going to require a lot of very careful thought. The people of Saskatchewan are looking to all the members of this Legislature to do something about this problem. They are looking to the Liberal party, they are looking to the CCF members of the Legislature to see if something can't be worked out. If the Liberal party wants to abnegate itself and abdicate its responsibilities by saying we are against doing anything about this problem, the people of Saskatchewan will judge accordingly. I think that, for myself, I hope that I will be on a Committee. I see I will if this Resolution passes, so that I will be able to represent the wishes of my constituents, and the wishes of other people on this side of the House who may not be on the Committee. I certainly will welcome the opportunity to sit down and discuss the result of this plebiscite and to find a practical way of solving this problem for the greater convenience of the people of Saskatchewan. But if my hon. friends opposite think they are going to get any political hay out of refusing . . .

Mr. Gardiner: — Straw is cheaper!

Hon. Mr. Walker: — . . . to discharge their full responsibilities in this matter, I am sure they won't fool the voters of Saskatchewan. This kind of petty politics from individuals who are. . .

Mr. McDonald: — 5.30.

Hon. Mr. Walker: — . . . each getting up and saying that they wish . . .

Mr. McDonald: — 5.30.

Hon. Mr. Walker: — . . . and I suggest, trying to make cheap and petty politics out of the inconvenience of the general public of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Gardiner: — Nobody mentioned politics until you got on your feet.

Mr. McDonald: — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

(Debate adjourned)

The Assembly then adjourned at 5.30 o'clock p.m.