

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**First Session — Eighteenth Legislature**  
**4th Day**

Tuesday, November 18, 1975

The Assembly met at 2:30 o'clock p.m.

On the Orders of the Day.

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. J. WIEBE (Morse):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and through you to the Members of the Assembly 21 students from the public school at Pennant. They are accompanied today by their teachers, I understand, Gordon and Elaine Johnson, Doris Dahl, Wayne and Karen Lynnes and their librarian, Mrs. Nora Bell.

The students in the gallery today are in Grades Eight and Nine from Pennant. I had the privilege of being at the Pennant School about a month ago to speak to the students and I was very impressed by the information and the knowledge of the parliamentary system which they already know. I understand I shall be meeting again with them briefly from 3 to 3:15 this afternoon and look forward to that time.

I want to take this opportunity not only to welcome them to this legislature but also to welcome them to the new constituency of Morse as the Pennant School is part of the area that was added to my constituency after redistribution.

**STATEMENT**

**CANTUAR GAS FIELD**

**HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Industry & Commerce):** — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I would like to respond to a question that was asked by the Member for Regina Wascana (Mr. Merchant) yesterday in regard to the Cantuar Gas Field. It was unfortunate that the Member left a somewhat misleading interpretation of the situation.

There has been, Mr. Speaker, no breakout in the sense that the gas has been escaping in an uncontrollable manner at the Cantuar field. The situation is that Ashland started drilling a well and encountered gas which began to flow back at the 270 foot level. Since this gas occurrence was not expected in that area the well was not equipped for the situation and was therefore abandoned in accordance with the Department of Mineral Resources' direction. A sister well at another location which was equipped to control the gas from the shallow sand was started and encountered gas again at the 270 foot level and again at the 520 foot level. Although the equipment installed controlled the gas flow it was not possible to continue drilling until the gas pressures in the formations were reduced. Consequently a vent well was drilled approximately 100 feet from this well to enable the pressure to be drawn down faster. The gas from the second well and the vent well was initially vented to the atmosphere. An SPC owned compressor was placed in service to deliver the gas otherwise being vented into the atmosphere into the SPC system. Ashland subsequently replaced

the SPC compressor with two compressors of its own and has reduced or in fact eliminated the amount of gas vented into the atmosphere.

At the present time there is no conclusive evidence to indicate that the gas in the shallower sands came from or is coming from the east Cantuar reservoir. In particular a gas analysis indicates to us that the heat content of the shallow gas is higher than the gas being injected from Alberta by 1,000 BTU per cubic foot compared to 960 BTU per cubic foot. Ashland has no information that the shallower sands extend for four miles; on the contrary the geological evidence suggest to them that the shallower sands are limited to sections 17 and 18. Ashland has been working closely with DNR and is subject to their rules and regulations and directions. It is understood that the representatives of Ashland and DNR have checked with the farmers in the immediate area concerning contamination of water in the wells in those farm holdings and there has been no evidence to indicate that we should be concerned. The matter of losses or litigation has not been discussed by Ashland or anyone else since there is no proof of any loss of the gas from the storage reservoir.

The Member for Regina Wascana (Mr. Merchant) in my interpretation has grossly exaggerated the volumes of gas and the costs associated with those problems. The Canadian Press releases that he referred to indicates that trillions of cubic feet at a cost estimated at several million dollars has been lost. Up to the present time only 20 million cubic feet has been vented. Using the Regina Wascana Member's inflated value of \$1 per 1,000 cubic feet this would only amount to \$20,000.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that this clarifies the situation for the Member for Regina Wascana.

**MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana):** — The Minister, Mr. Speaker, well knows that Gustason's have already drilled a relief well on which the cost estimates are \$600,000. The Minister well knows that Bata Petroleum are now drilling . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MALONE:** — I think the Member has a right to reply to the Minister.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I wasn't sure whether the Member was replying or posing a question.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Bata Petroleums are also drilling a second relief well at a cost which is anticipated to be in a similar range with the cost of the Gustafson relief well. The Minister well knows that it could be extremely dangerous if the natural gas moves above the 270 foot level and moves into the level of the wells in the area of the farmers. I have had inquiries from people in the area who are concerned, have every reason to be concerned about odorless, tasteless gas that could be in their wells and could be coming into their homes. The Minister well knows that it is a dangerous situation and that they re having difficulty stopping the breakout wish is now at two levels.

November 18, 1975

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is the height of ridiculousness to suggest that it is a coincidence that there is a breakout so close to your gas reservoir.

**MR. MESSER:** — In answer to the Hon. Member's supplementary question . . .

**MR. MALONE:** — Mr. Speaker, there is no question. He was just . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Point of Order.

**MR. MacDONALD:** — Mr. Speaker, it has been the tradition of the House . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! The Premier is the first one I had say Point of Order.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier):** — Mr. Speaker, I think that the Hon. Member for Wascana has made a statement. The only way in which he could make a statement was by way of a supplementary question. I think that there is absolutely no way in which a Member can reply to a statement by a Minister which is in answer to a question. That was not a ministerial statement, that was an answer to a question and there are no rebuttals permitted. The Hon. Member for Wascana was clearly asking a supplementary question. This being the case, the Hon. Member for Kelsey-Tisdale has the right to answer the question.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley):** — On a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. I would agree that the Minister responded to the question. Then he took the liberty of editorializing and making his own comment. It has always been the tradition in this House, Mr. Speaker, as you will recall that when a Minister stands on his feet and makes a statement that a Member of the Opposition has that privilege and that right to stand up and reply in return. The Minister likes to speak as long as he so desires but then he tries to restrict the Member for Wascana. Mr. Speaker, it is firmly within the traditions of this House as everybody in this House knows.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MESSER:** — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the supplementary question put before us . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Sit down, Jack.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — If, as the Member for Kelsey-Tisdale maintains, that his statement was the answer to a question yesterday, then I don't believe that he should proceed at this time.

## QUESTIONS

### RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT OF POTASH - Question of Privilege

**MR. E.C. MALONE (Regina-Lakeview):** — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I rise on a Question of Privilege. The Privilege relates to a question that I asked yesterday of the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and unfortunately that Member is not in his seat this afternoon.

The question that I asked and I intend to be a little detailed by reading it, Mr. Speaker, so that there is no mistake, is as follows:

Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I have a question I should like to direct to the Minister responsible for the Potash Company of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, is it true the first president of the Corporation, Mr. William Schultz, has resigned or is in the process of terminating his employment with the Corporation? And if this is the case, what is the reason for his leaving?

The answer I received, Mr. Speaker, is as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the president of the Potash Corporation has not resigned. If there were to be any changes in responsibilities of any individual in respect to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan or any other government agency or department it would be announced in due course.

I asked a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, by way of a supplementary question have you had notice of the intention of this gentleman to resign or has any other member of the Potash Corporation resigned or indicated their intention of doing so?

**MR. COWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, no members of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan have resigned.

Mr. Speaker, I took the time yesterday to check my sources of information which the question was based on. I have no reason to doubt those sources of information, Mr. Speaker, and I have found that I believe them to be correct and what they indicate to me is that Mr. Schultz is resigning or is in the process of negotiating the termination of his employment with the Potash Corporation. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I understand that this gentleman has retained counsel to represent him in this regard. Furthermore, I find that he is not at his office today and was not there yesterday. So I have every reason to believe, Mr. Speaker, that in this case this gentleman has resigned or is in the process of resigning and that this was something that was known yesterday.

Now, I want to make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that I have the highest personal regard for the Minister involved, Mr. Cowley, both personally and for his abilities. It is certainly possible, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister did not

November 18, 1975

understand the question that I asked or that perhaps I worded it incorrectly or that he did not have the information before him yesterday when I did ask the question. However, Mr. Speaker, if this is not the case, the Minister could be guilty of a very serious breach of the privileges of this Legislature.

I raise the question at this time, Mr. Speaker, I notice that the Minister is not in his seat. In view of that I would ask the Premier to respond at this time or to undertake to make sure that eh Minister is in his seat tomorrow to deal with this question. I may say, Mr. Speaker, that if there should be a breach of the privileges of this legislature we intend on pursuing it vigorously.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I will respond, Mr. Speaker, to . . .

## STATEMENT

### QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

**MR. SPEAKER:** — A Question of Privilege was raised and I want to make a statement with regard to that Question of Privilege. I listened very carefully and I want to refer all Members to Rule 6 of “Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan 1970,” which states?

A Member must give two hours notice on a Question of Privilege.

The Speaker is given the power to waive notice and in this case I am prepared to waive such notice.

I refer all Members to Beauchesne’s “Parliamentary Rules and Form,” Fourth Edition, page 102, Citation 113, which states, and it say in part:

Members often raise so-called Questions of Privilege on matters which should be dealt with as personal explanations or corrections either in the debate or the proceedings of the House.

Then it goes on to state:

But a dispute arising between two Members as to the allegations of facts does not fulfil the condition of parliamentary privilege.

I refer all Hon. Members to Beauchesne’s “Parliamentary Rules and Forms,” Fourth Edition, page 126, Citation 145, which states:

It has been formally ruled by Speakers in the Canadian Commons that a statement by an Hon. Member respecting himself and which is peculiarly within his own knowledge must be accepted but it is not unparliamentary to temperately criticize statements by a Member as being contrary to the facts, but no imputation of intentional falsehood is permissible. A statement made by a Member in his place is considered as being made upon honor and cannot be question in the House or out of it.

In short, a debate in the Assembly over the question of whether something is a fact or not cannot be entertained by Mr. Speaker, and does not constitute a Question of Privilege.

On the other hand, if the Hon. Member can prove that a reply he received yesterday was a deliberate deception of the Assembly it could then possibly be a Point of Privilege. Unless a Member can produce this evidence that there was knowing and deliberate deception of the Assembly there is no Question of Privilege.

I would say that I listened very carefully to what the Member said to find out if he produced any new evidence further than which he did yesterday when the matter was first raised. I am not able to state at this time that there is prima facie evidence of breach of privilege and, therefore, rule that there is no prima facie case for breach of privilege.

**MR. MALONE:** — Mr. Speaker, of course, we accept your ruling and I would ask that we leave the other matter until after 2:30 or 4 o'clock, and move on to the business of the House.

### **ADJOURNED DEBATES**

#### **ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. N.J. Koskie (Quill Lakes) for an Address-in-Reply.

**MR. D.G. STEUART (Leader of the Opposition):** — Mr. Speaker, I thank the House for waiving the other business to allow myself and Mr. Penner to have our full radio time.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech that we are not considering is an unbelievable mixture of half-truths, outright misrepresentation, and hypocrisy. It attempts to gloss over the abject failure of the Blakeney government properly to develop Saskatchewan resources and when this failure is too apparent to cover up, they blame the resource industry. I am sure most Saskatchewan citizens were disappointed with Mr. Blakeney's refusal to face his responsibility and launch a positive provincial program to right inflation.

Under the pretext that the federal anti-inflation program is not perfect, the NDP are not prepared at this time to join with almost all other provinces, as well as the federal government, to do something practical about the most serious problem facing Canadians, that of run-away inflation. Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party is prepared to give the government its full co-operation in whatever steps they take to fight ever increasing prices, but the initiative must come from the government and the longer Mr. Blakeney stalls, the more difficult this problem becomes.

The Throne Speech pays lip service to the need for a provincial anti-inflation program, but outside of promising rent controls and some vague talk about government restraints on spending, offers us nothing concrete. I would point out that Saskatchewan stands almost alone of all the provinces in its

November 18, 1975

failure to come to grips with a problem that weighs most heavily on people in the low wage bracket, people on fixed pensions, especially our senior citizens.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — In his televised talk to the province, the Premier made it sound as if his government were co-operating with the federal government in an all out fight against inflation. But a careful examination of his words reveals that he is committed to nothing outside of some rent controls. The Blakeney government is, so far, guilty of perpetrating a cruel hoax on the very people who are depending on them for help in their fight against inflation. I urge the government to set their own wage and income price guidelines in co-operation with the federal government. I assure them if they take this action they will have the full support of the vast majority of the people of this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, we recognize that there are some employees in Saskatchewan who have fallen behind and need extra consideration, but I am confident with the support of the provincial government, the federal Anti-inflation Board has the flexibility to allow the necessary adjustments to bring the wage of these groups into line with the national average.

Speaking of groups who have fallen behind in regard to pay, I should like to mention MLAs and Cabinet Ministers. Now whether we are paid too much or not depends on whom you talk to; some people think that whatever Members of this Legislative Assembly get is too much, a few others — probably close relatives — think we deserve an increase. The Liberal Caucus is prepared to support the suggestion in the Throne Speech that an independent committee be established to consider and recommend on remuneration paid to Members, provision with respect to a third party and related matters, on the condition that there be no pay increase to any of the Members for the year 1975-76. Further that the terms of reference instruct this committee if they recommend a pay increase for 1977 that it be clearly within federal wage guidelines and that some method be put forward so that future increases be set by some group or in some way that is independent of the Legislative Assembly. Every legislature goes through this embarrassing exercise about once in four years. It causes concern among the public and gives some Members the opportunity to gain some cheap political advantage by opposing any raise whatsoever.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — While we feel strongly that we should set an example and take no increase for the next 14 months, we also recognize that the amount paid to MLAs and Cabinet Minister must be increased from time to time. If this does not happen, it would soon be only those people with independent means who can afford to stand for election to this Assembly and this would be a retrograde step. I refer mostly to Member of the Liberal Party in that regard.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I would remind the House that if pay for Members is kept too low as it was in the early days of Parliament, only the rich can afford to become Members and it opens the temptation to use our position for improper gain. I don't believe we want either of these two results to happen.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Liberal Party also recognize that prices must be as firmly controlled as wages and if the present machinery for forcing companies to justify price increases proves too slow and too cumbersome, than we would join with the provincial government in demanding a change at the federal level. But surely, Mr. Speaker, the problem is far too serious to condemn the federal plan without giving it a fair chance; to use what might be a weakness as an excuse to stand on the sidelines in this time of national crisis.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — If too many people take Mr. Blakeney's attitude the program may well fall and those people in our society who lack the power to protect themselves against vicious and unwarranted price increases will be the tragic losers. When I say there is hypocrisy in the Throne Speech, I am referring to the fact that the government talks of their great concern about the problem of inflation, but has so far failed to take the necessary action to prove that this concern is genuine. I hope we see a change and a change soon.

When I charge them with half-truths and outright misrepresentation, I am referring to the outline of their so-called resource policy in the Throne Speech.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — The Blakeney administration put forward four principles that they claim are the basic criteria for their resource development policies and those are: 1. Benefits in public revenues; 2. Benefits in jobs from the harvesting and processing of resources; 3. Benefits and conservation of scarce resources for future generations; and 4. Benefits in achieving a greater control over their own destinies.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to measure what has actually happened to the development of our resources under the NDP against these so-called basic principles. In this regard, I will deal with timber, hard rock minerals, oil and potash.

First, our timber resources. By cancelling the Meadow Lake Pulp Mill the NDP lost millions and million of dollars in public revenue and thousand of jobs both in the harvesting and the processing of this renewable resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — In their development of a plywood plant and sawmills, they are not in fact conserving a scarce resource for future generations but are seriously over cutting our forest resources on the east side of this province and threatening the very future of this great resources.



November 18, 1975

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — By handing over to Norman Springate and Associates of Vancouver, first a study of the potential of forest resources then the planning of the mills and finally giving them operating contracts, they have performed a sell-out unparalleled in this province's history.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Their talk of better utilization of our timber is outright misrepresentation when compared to the facts. For example, the Prince Albert Pulp Mill is still carrying out exactly the same cutting practices as they were five or six years ago.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Our east side timber is being seriously over cut and the west side appears to be in a state of absolute confusion at this time.

Let's look at hard rock minerals. I will only touch briefly on the possibility of an iron mine in the Choiceland area which again was cancelled by the NDP and they have not succeeded as yet in replacing it with any similar developments. Under the NDP we lost the only copper mine that we had in this province . . . He snorts, well let him snort. But the people who lost their jobs up there weren't snorting when they were forced out.

The two uranium mines, at Wollaston and Cluff Lakes were developed under a Liberal administration and now stand threatened by the short-sighted and greedy attitude of the Blakeney government. In spite of the brave talk about new uranium prospects, in over four years there has not been one announcement of any new uranium deposits and the blame lies squarely at the door of the present government.

In regard to other hard rock minerals in northern Saskatchewan, even the search for these resources has been brought to a literal standstill by the policies of the present administration. I will remind this House that in 1971 when the NDP took over the government there was a tremendous amount of activity and great optimism in the hard rock mineral industry in northern Saskatchewan. Almost overnight, the NDPs with their narrow and self-defeating policies brought the activity to a halt and wiped out the optimism. The steps they propose in this Throne Speech will just add more nails to the coffin of hard rock mining in our great North land.

Again, Mr. Speaker, measured against their own criteria, their efforts to develop our mineral resources in northern Saskatchewan have been a complete failure.

I now turn to the oil industry. About two years ago when the Arabs more than doubled the price of oil, Saskatchewan was presented with an excellent opportunity for new expansion of our oil resources. We needed higher prices because most of our oil is either too sour or too heavy to obtain top dollars in

the marketplace. The sharp increase in price gave us the chance to take more taxes for our people and, as well, to leave enough revenue to the industry to make Saskatchewan's lower grade oils an attraction and viable investment. The NDP government in fact did just the opposite. Again motivated by short-sighted greed and an unbelievable lack of any practical understanding of business principles involved in the oil industry, they moved in with Bill 42 and they set Saskatchewan's oil industry back 20 to 30 years. Their heavy-handed taxation policy made us non-competitive with other areas in Canada, especially Alberta, and the oil people left in droves.

Now exploration dropped, production dropped, we lost thousands of skilled technicians and millions of dollars in potential investment. Now, Mr. Speaker, we watched a sorry spectacle of the Blakeney administration attempting to entice the oil industry back with some tax cuts, which I am afraid will prove too little too late.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — So an honest look at the NDP effort in regard to oil shows that:

1. Benefits in public revenue are down, to what they could be, if the industry was active and growing.
2. Benefits in jobs are down drastically.
3. Benefits in conservation, again a failure. We have actually lost potential reserves through the forces shutdowns in many of our proven oil fields.
4. The desperate scrambling of this government to lure private industry back to our province indicates clearly we have less control over the destiny of our oil industry than we had four or five years ago.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Thus, Mr. Speaker, measured by their own standards the NDP policy on oil has been a disaster. The pitiful efforts of SaskOil only serve to highlight the ineptitude of the Premier and his Ministers in dealing with an industry about which they have little or no knowledge.

We will be very interested to find out how much SaskOil has paid for the nine million barrels of oil or natural gas equivalent they now claim to have acquired. My information is that little of this is new oil and that they paid an outrageously high price to buy up already proven reserves. The very fact that Mr. Blakeney now goes hat-in-hand to the private oil industry is the most positive proof of a failure he can no longer hide.

Mr. Speaker, I now turn to potash. Potash was actually discovered in Saskatchewan well over 30 years ago. The first actual attempt to bring in a potash mine was by many local investors, the mine was in the Unity area and this was in 1946. These investors sunk a shaft, spent about \$14 million and they failed, they failed to bring up any potash. That \$14 million

November 18, 1975

was a huge sum in 1946 and it indicates the tremendous problems that had to be solved before potash could be mined successfully.

The next move was in 1952 by the Potash Company of America near Saskatoon. The CCF were in power and the then Premier, Mr. Douglas, gave this company an extremely low royalty rate and he guaranteed it until 1980. He also gave them his word that the government would not nationalize the industry. A little over 20 years later Mr. Blakeney broke both these promises. It was in 1954 that the Potash Company of America began to sink a shaft and in 1958 they opened their mine. In the process they encountered extreme difficulties, tremendous problem and lost millions of dollar, so much money that it almost bankrupted the company.

Mr. Speaker, it was not until 1965, 13 years after they came to Saskatchewan, invited by the CCF, that the company actually showed a profit.

The next potash mine to come to Saskatchewan was International Minerals and Chemical at Esterhazy. They were guaranteed the same low royalty, again until 1981. Seen more mines followed these pioneers and in fairness were all offered the same rates of taxation. Now some time after the Liberal government was elected in 1964, a production tax was levied against the potash industry. In 1968 the potash industry moved into a surplus situation due to a slowdown in the rate of demand and serious overproduction brought on by too many mines coming onstream at roughly the same time.

During the same period the world price of potash dropped drastically. This combination of events brought some of the newer potash mines to the brink of closure. To save the industry the Thatcher administration imposed a floor price and prorationing. This was denounced at the time by Mr. Blakeney and the NDP as a capitalist cartel and they promised, if elected in 1971 to do away with these measures. What they did in fact, was just the opposite; they kept on a floor price and made the terms of prorationing even stricter after they came to power in 1971.

Now as the world market for potash recovered, I said then and I say now there became less and less need for prorationing. A return to healthy competition as early as 1973 would have had a stimulating effect on the Saskatchewan industry, and I think would have encouraged expansion.

However, in 1972 the NDP had already begun to increase taxation on the industry and harassed them with an ever growing and complex set of regulations.

Mr. Speaker, this was done in the name of conservation. But the truth is it was the beginning of a series of moves by the NDP government to get them into the potash industry. It was in the spring of the session of 1974 that the Blakeney administration passed legislation enabling them to enter into the production and sale of potash. They continued to increase the level of provincial taxation until the potash industry became the highest taxed industry in all of Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, I think every responsible person would have accepted a substantial increase in the level of taxation as the price of potash rose. But the NDP have actually raised the level of taxes on this industry by fifty times. A fifty times increase! The government also gave themselves a right to collect these enormous taxes in potash at list price less two per cent. In other words, they were now going to be in competition with the potash industry and they had taken by law the right to their potash and to their markets.

To further add to the harassment of the potash people, the NDP demanded that they open up their books and their records to the scrutiny of the provincial government. Mr. Speaker, this placed the industry in an impossible position. The Saskatchewan government was to be their competition, the companies had to hand over to them, their rival, their private records, most of the revenue and whatever share of their own hard-won markets this government felt that they wanted. Convinced that the provincial government had exceeded its powers, the industry took the only action open to them by appealing to the courts.

Mr. Speaker, this surely is the right of any citizen . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — . . . private or corporate. This surely is the right of any citizen in a free society. Yet Mr. Blakeney vilifies them for exercising this free right in our democracy.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — In connection with the taxes the industry said they would be prepared to pay them if the government promised to give back whatever portion the courts might find that they had taken illegally. In the face of this unfair, unjust and discriminatory action of the NDP government the industry naturally refused to invest any more money in our province in spite of the growing world demand for potash. Mr. Blakeney and his Ministers then began a campaign of publicity, damning the potash industry for daring to question the dictatorial actions being taken against them by the provincial government and for exercising the right of every citizen to seek the protection of our courts.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — The war of attrition launched against the industry, whose only sin was to come to Saskatchewan to help us develop our potash resources, has culminated in the threat by the NDP to take them over by force of law. It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, it was the same CCF government that enticed the potash industry into Saskatchewan, that also imported Mr. Blakeney. You might call it the good news and the bad news.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — The first concern of the people of this province, who value their freedom and independence, must be against the continuing power grab of the Blakeney administration. Their

November 18, 1975

resource policy when looked at clearly is not to guarantee the right to the people to receive their fair share of benefits from the development of the resources, as they claim in the Throne Speech. It is the total government ownership and control of all Saskatchewan resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Look at the record. In just over four years the NDP have grabbed up the timber industry. They seized private oil rights under Bill 42; they have now moved into the potash industry and they are already threatening the uranium mines.

But, Mr. Speaker, these are not the only resources they are moving in on. This government has also purchased millions of dollars of prime farm land and have given themselves absolute control over this basic resources through the Land Bank.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Now they are promising some amendments and I hope that our efforts on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan will bear fruit and that they will in fact amend the Land Bank Act to make it possible for people to buy that farm land if they so wish. But is it any wonder that thoughtful people in Saskatchewan are saying today, “Who’s next?” The answer is obvious. Any industry that looks profitable, or anyone who dares to question this government’s march towards total socialism. That’s who’s next as long as these people are in office.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, the other side to this unpleasant coin is the viability of the government going into the potash business. I say this is a bad risk and an unnecessary risk, and one that will cost us millions of dollars in lost revenue and thousands of potential jobs.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — To begin with, Mr. Blakeney is going to buy into the potash industry at the height of inflation. The total investment of the potash industry at cost was from \$700 to \$900 million. At today’s replacement value we are talking about well over \$2 billion, maybe even \$3 billion.

The Throne Speech talks about the government acquiring the assets of some, or all, of the producing potash mines in the province. Later in the same speech it states that the government will achieve effective control through the ownership of a major part of the industry. In his television address the Premier talked about buying one or two mines. He’s backing off a little. Backing off considerably.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out that even this rather modest entry into the potash industry could cost for one or two mines anywhere from \$325 to over \$500 million. But the Premier assures the people that this will be what he called a “self-liquidating debt.” he glibly tells the people he will pay this huge sum

money off out of the profits he will make from the industry.

I think we should note here that most of the industry has been in Saskatchewan about ten years and for most of that time they have actually lost money. I think it is also worth recalling that the NDP government will be buying into these mines at their highest historical price and he is moving into a market that has actually dropped more than five percent, closer probably to ten per cent in the last year or year and a half.

On top of this, what guarantee does the Premier have that he can maintain any, or all, of the markets now controlled by each of the individual mines? As a matter of fact, about 70 per cent of Saskatchewan's potash is sold into the American market. Over half of this amount is a captive market owned or controlled by the individual potash companies.

Mr. Speaker, how likely are these companies to hand over the market to a government that has consistently harassed them and finally forced them out of business? I think it is highly unlikely. Since there are potash reserves in New Mexico, New Brunswick, Brazil, England, Germany and Russia, to mention just a few places, we have no monopoly on the sale of potash, nor are we likely to have.

Another serious factor involved in the marketing of potash is the ability of present and potential customers to find the hard currency to pay for our potash. There is no question that the need and the demand for potash to be used as fertilizer will grow very rapidly in a hungry world starved for food, but there is a serious question, especially in the face of the sharp increase in the price of oil, about the ability of the people who need the potash the worst to find the money to pay for it. Now, Saskatchewan may wish to give some of our potash away to needy countries, but we are less than a million people and face serious limitations on this kind of generosity.

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Blakeney has no guarantee that he can sell one ton of government produced potash and, if he does get such a guarantee, he will probably pay through the nose for it. Our Premier assured the people of Saskatchewan that he and his Ministers have looked at this with common sense and in a hardheaded business way. The Premier has also called his proposed takeover of all or part of the potash industry a good business deal for the people of Saskatchewan.

I would remind the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that these are the same people who paid that nice Mr. Mendel \$10.2 million for less than half of a packing plant, the total value of which was only worth \$7 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I tell you, if you give the potash people the same kind of a deal they will have to hire huge tucks to cart the money away from Saskatchewan, back to the United States, or wherever they came from.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, the deal they made with Intercontinental

November 18, 1975

Packers was the worst deal ever made in the history of this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — And old Mr. Mendel took his \$10.2 million and laughed all the way to the Bank of California.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have checked with many potash companies and have obtained, what I believe to be accurate figures as to volume of business they are doing, government taxes and net profits. I have also had figures given to me regarding the fair value of an average Saskatchewan potash mine at today's costs. I might say that most of these figures are available to the government. I think they have them. All you have to do is get back to Ottawa and if your Finance Minister hasn't done it to find out what income tax they are paying, please don't tell me you don't know. Accordingly, I worked out a balance sheet to indicate the profitability of a potash mine in 1975, the provincial government's share of these profits and using the same figures calculated the government's income after they have taken over such a mine.

The potash mine I refer to could be one of many, the Central Canada Potash Company, the Sylvite Mine, Cominco, or one or two others. I have double checked the figures and wherever there has been a doubt I have leaned in favour of the government takeover. However, as you will see, Mr. Speaker, the facts prove that this proposed takeover is a terrible business deal, fraught with many unknowns and tremendous risks to the government. I will table these figures and here they are.

#### STATEMENT 1

This potash mine (an average size potash mine in Saskatchewan) is producing 1.2 million tons of product a year. It cost about \$100 million to construct and is valued today at a minimum value of \$225 million.

For the fiscal year 1974-75 its profit and loss statement is as follows:

Volume of product	\$1.2 million tons
Revenue 1.2 million tons	
x \$42.00 per ton	

Potash is selling at \$70 a ton KTO, which works back to about \$42 a ton for out of the mine product, giving them a revenue at

	\$50.4 million
Cost of doing business	\$18.65 million
(Wages, supplies and sales costs).	

About 37 per cent of the potash mines claim it is much higher. Thirty-seven per cent is a lower figure than they would claim that they could do business for.

Gross profit before taxes or depreciation	\$31.75 million
---	-----------------

Now they have to pay out of this provincial taxes. What are they?

Royalties	\$ .98 million
Prorating charges	1.50 million
Mineral tax	.14 million
Lease rental to the government	.02 million
E&H tax they pay on purchase of supplies	.43 million
Reserve Tax	11.60 million
Provincial share of Corporate Income Tax	.56 million

Giving the Government an income from this mine, for one year, \$15,230,000.

Municipal Tax	\$ .43 million
Income tax of at least	\$ 4.14 million

directly to the Federal Government. This leaves them with a net profit before depreciation of \$11,950,000. They work out their depreciation on a 20 year basis at five per cent or \$5 million on the original investment of \$100 million, leaving them a net profit of \$6,950,000. They claim, and they may be right, that their net profits are lower than that.

## STATEMENT II

Profit and loss statement for this same mine after the government takeover, based on no loss of markets or of efficiency (and I would question both of these particular statements). I think they will lose markets and I know they will lose worth. This statement is also predicated on the fact that the government will pay fair market value of \$225 million for this mine. Again, they will do the same business:

Revenue	\$ 50.4 million
Cost of Doing Business - leaving them a profit before municipal taxes, before interest or depreciation	\$ 31.75 million

I presume they are going to continue to pay the municipalities the taxes, which will cut their profit down to \$31.32 million.

Interest on the \$22 million at 10.5 per cent. Their yearly profits then the fixture will be reduced by interest payments for the first 20 years by	\$ 11.8 million
Leaving them	\$ 19.52 million

They've got a charged depreciation and I notice in their bill setting up the Potash Corporation they intend to do that, and I am pleased they are going to follow this standard normal business practice. It will be on what they pay for the mine. If they pay fair market value it will be over \$11 million depreciation. This will leave a net profit of about \$8,270,000.

Mr. Blakeney says they intend to pay back the loan out of profits. If they pay the loan back over 20 years, this will take another \$11.25 million. Since they only had a profit of a little over \$8 million they will have a minus cash flow for the first 20 years of about \$3 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!



November 18, 1975

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, I remind the people of this province that the Government is now receiving over \$15 million a year from the average potash mine, with no risk, no investment. From these statements it is obvious that they will have a loss of cash flow of about \$18.7 million. It doesn't mean they will lose money; they'll make money, but to pay back the loan they will have that much less coming in for the first 20 years, if they purchase one average potash mine. Let me make it clear, if they keep the market, the Government will make money when they own the mines, but not nearly as much as they are making now with nothing invested. There is every chance this loss of revenue will be much larger if they lose any of the markets.

Since, again, about one-third of the markets is captive, controlled by the potash industry, it is highly likely that a great deal of this market will be diverted from Saskatchewan after the takeover.

I point out, that a loss of only ten per cent of the market would mean a reduction of \$5 million in yearly sales at today's prices, from one mine alone, reducing their profits by over \$3 million.

Obtaining top technical and managerial staff may not be as easy as it appears. The Premier talks about getting 400 or so top technical people. They have been trying for two or three months to hire a manager for the Power Corporation. The last we heard they hadn't succeeded.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I think if they tell the truth they've lost the top man for the potash company they now have. So they are one in the hole and 399 to go. Let me point out that second-rate staff will mean lack of efficiency and further losses in the Government potash operation.

Well, Mr. Speaker, these figures are not unknown, so they can be calculated by the Government. So the question is, why is the Premier taking this great and unnecessary gamble?

I believe for several reasons and I will only mention a few at this time. To begin with: 1. I am convinced the Premier is afraid his bad law will be upset in the courts, forcing him either to give back the money or sharply reduce taxes on the industry so he is trying to bluff them into submission. He is saying in effect, if you don't submit, if you try to exercise your free right, if you continue this free citizen right to oppose the Government because you think they are wrong, if you don't give in, we'll take you over and kick you out. I don't think the bluff will work, but it might.

2. The reason is he's a socialist and the idea of Government ownership of all business is surely his eventual goal.

3. His proposed mine at Bredenbury (near Yorkton) was going to cost anywhere from \$350 million to over \$500 million and even the socialists cringed at this price. Since he had promised to get in the business, he decided to take this route.

4. He hopes he can steal one or two of these mines. He thinks he may be able to buy some of these mines at below their real price. Maybe he can.

And I'm pleased to see that the potash mine, if he seizes them by law, will go to the courts if they don't think the compensation is high enough. I think he would have reached in and taken them at too low a price. I've got enough confidence in the courts to be convinced that the Government will be forced to pay a fair and reasonable price.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced the Premier can't win. He will pay top dollars for the mines and he will pay the highest interest rate in the history of this province to get the money to buy them. Unfortunately, it will not be his loss, it will be the Saskatchewan people who will be the real losers in money and in freedom.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — There is a further factor that seems to have been overlooked by this hardheaded group of socialists opposite and that is the distinct possibility that the Federal Government might cease to exempt Crown corporations from federal corporate income tax. If this happen, and I have no way of knowing if they can do it, but there has been some talk about it before. I think they have every right to protect their sources of income as has every other government, but if this happens not only will Saskatchewan potash be liable for heavy federal taxes, as well as SaskOil, if by some fluke they ever show a profit, but also the Power, the Telephones and that famous Mineral Corporation we hear so much about lately on the radio as well.

Mr. Blakeney is launching this province down a very dangerous and slippery road and I urge him to slow down and think about it before he commits all of us beyond recall.

The Speech from the Throne suggest that there were only three options facing the Government in regard to the potash industry:

1. To back down to the potash industry;
2. To stand still and do nothing;

and they rejected that. So they said, having exhausted all avenues, we have no choice but . . .

3. To nationalize the industry.

I would suggest that there is a fourth option. That is to sit down with the industry to offer them a fair and reasonable taxation arrangement. The level of taxation would, of course, be much higher than it was a few years ago because the ability of the industry to pay is much better than it was then and the resource does belong to the people.

Having done this, the Government should then clear off the books, the jungle of red tape and regulations that now strangle this industry. They then also should get out of the business. In return they should get a firm commitment from the industry to immediately launch an expansion program. I am convinced that if the Government,

November 18, 1975

even at this late date showed a willingness to treat these people in a fair and equitable manner and give them reasonable assurance that this kind of treatment would continue into the future, if industry would respond in a positive way and we would see new expansion, new provincial revenue and far more jobs.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STUART:** — Mr. Speaker, I have no confidence that the Premier will listen to reason. For the past four years he has consistently turned his back on the greatest opportunity ever presented to the people of this province. We have been a have-not province because our great resources have not been as rich nor as available as those in other parts of Canada.

Our hard rock minerals, for example, are located in northern Saskatchewan in most difficult terrain and a tremendous distance from the markets. Our timber is neither as large nor as plentiful as that of our neighbouring provinces.

Saskatchewan potash could not be developed and was not developed until the technology and the money came in from outside our borders. Our oil is neither as good nor is there as much of it as they have in Alberta, for example. Our coal is easily accessible, but it is of extremely low grade. These are the basic reasons why, for the first half of this century we were, by and large, by-passed by developers.

However, Mr. Speaker, increasing world demand and record high prices changed all this starting just a few years ago. For the first time investors were knocking on Saskatchewan's door ready to bring in their money and their know-how to help us develop our great potential. We could have been for all time or a hundred years to come a have province, not dependent upon the back of the farmers. Any other government in the history of this province would have taken full advantage of this opportunity by inviting these people to come in, at the same time claiming a good share of the profits for our own people, but Mr. Blakeney and his Government reacted differently.

Mr. Speaker, they could neither stifle their short-term greed nor turn their back on their deep-rooted hatred of private enterprise that motivates them politically.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — The result has been no new discoveries of uranium and the rest of the hard rock mining industry is in the doldrums.

Our forest industry is in a potential mess. The oil industry is at a virtual standstill and the great potash industry is in a state of shock while we lose tremendous potential markets.

We are only a few months away from the last provincial election and if the Premier would take an honest look at the results, he would see that his resource policy was one of the major reasons why his party received, although they won, the smallest or one of the smallest percentages of the popular vote that party has received since 1944.

If he takes a look at most of the constituencies located in the oil fields, such as Estevan, Swift Current, Morse and Kindersley, his candidates all suffered defeat and two of them were cabinet ministers.

Mr. Speaker, no Premier in our history has done so much to harm Saskatchewan's reputation as Allan Blakeney.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — He has broken contracts, torn up leases and misled investors, in fact, he has dragged our good name through the mud.

The Premier can get all the thundering ovations he wants from 500 ND Party members, but I will remind him they do not represent the majority of Saskatchewan people.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I tell you for the most part they are bitter, they are narrow and they are people who would like to see all private ownership including our farm land taken over by their government. They would really get a standing ovation then.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, because this Throne Speech does not come to grips with inflation, because it proposes this disastrous nationalization of one of our major industries, I cannot support the motion. I offer the following amendment and urge all clear thinking Members to support it.

I move, second by Mr. Malone that the following words be added to the motion:

But this Assembly regrets that the Throne Speech fails to come to grips in a practical way with the problem of inflation and that further, its threat to nationalize all or part of the Potash Industry will: (1) seriously damage the investment climate in the province; (2) expose Saskatchewan people to enormous risk; (3) greatly increase the civil service; and (4) in the long run slow down expansion of Industry.

The debate continued on the motion and the amendment.

**MR. G.H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview):** — Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to be able to rise and speak in this Throne Speech debate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — And to have the honor of representing a new constituency, Saskatoon Eastview in this First Session of the Eighteenth Legislature. I expect that my election to this House will have begun a long line of Liberal representation which will become a tradition as years pass.

November 18, 1975

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Saskatoon is a great city and Members of the House — particularly the Member for Regina Victoria (Mr. Baker) — will forgive me and understand when I say it is the greatest city in the province.

Over the years, Saskatoon has been blessed with outstanding leaders who have had great vision. This ‘jewel of the prairies’ is characterized by sound planning, by enthusiastic citizen response to the collective well-being of the city and despite attempts to make it otherwise, a city whose governmental decisions have favored the city as a whole.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — I say, Mr. Speaker, attempts to make it otherwise, because it was the NDP who forced Saskatoon into a ward system of municipal government. That legislation was poor legislation because it showed a clear lack of understanding of what municipal government is all about. More important it showed a lack of understanding of the character and fibre of the people of Saskatoon.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — The issue, Mr. Speaker, was not that Saskatoon might become departmentalized and that focus might be placed on the welfare of wards rather than on the welfare of the city as a whole. The issue was not the fact that a great many Saskatoonians were effectively disenfranchised from being able to elect a balanced council. The issue was not the fact that by city standards, Saskatoon is still a relatively small place that it is easy to get around and talk to people from all parts of the city. The issue is not the fact that for the first time in the history of the city, one had aldermen elected unopposed and that — contrary to views expressed by members opposite — greater interest in civic elections would result; when, indeed that was not the case. No, Mr. Speaker, none of these, although they are related issues, was the real issue. The real issue was that the Government did not have enough faith in the people of Saskatoon and for that matter, in the people of Regina, to make a decision for themselves.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Somehow, for some strange reason that still mystifies me, the NDP in the Legislature were capable of a decision respecting our two largest cities that the people of those cities could not decide for themselves. A poor attitude for a government, Mr. Speaker. A poor attitude indeed for a government that sets itself up as one that cares about people and listens to people.

My experience in governmental decision making has been exclusively at the municipal level. I have found municipal service to be a very challenging, satisfying experience. One great strength, Mr. Speaker, of municipal government as I have known it is that debate centres on issues — I trust the same is

true of debate in this House and suggest if it is, the discordant notes of which you spoke last Wednesday night, Mr. Speaker, that they will be few and far between.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — I was interested in the remarks put forward yesterday by the Hon. Member for Quill Lakes (Mr. Koskie). I thought we might have saved quite a bit of time had he cut out some of the preamble and just begun with that last part where he read the formal motion. However, I noted at the beginning that he was quite a poet — or at least a quoter of poets. As he spoke on and on and on — I was reminded of a line from King Henry VI, Part 1, Act 1, Scene 1, where Shakespeare said: “Fight till the last gasp” and I hoped the last gasp would come soon.

I don't know to what extent the Members on my left felt that the analogy with regard to Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs was appropriate, but I will say that the purity of Snow White was obvious.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — I later heard the Member for Saskatoon Riversdale (Mr. Romanow) make a comment and I was reminded of another line from Shakespeare — also from Henry VI but this time in the first act of Part II when he said: “The first thing we do (and I trust that my colleagues will forgive me) let's kill all the lawyers.” If nothing else, Mr. Speaker, maybe the attempt at Shakespeare will at least nullify what we heard yesterday and maybe all Hon. Member will be spared further quotations.

Before I turn to comments regarding the Throne Speech, I should like to thank the Premier for something he did during the election campaign.

One of the interesting components of Saskatoon Eastview, is that there are a number of special care homes — some of which are for senior citizens. It became obvious early in the campaign that a proposal that had been around for some time to place an addition at Eamer Court for Level III care was reasonable and necessary. I, therefore, Mr. Speaker, pledged my support for the project and established it as a plank in my platform. You will therefore understand, Mr. Speaker, how I felt as a result when the Premier announced with about one week left in the campaign that the much needed addition would be built.

I was gratified that the Premier was so sensitive to my concerns at that time. Now that I have been elected, I am certain that he will continue to be as responsive to comments and suggestions that I make.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — May I turn, Mr. Speaker, to issues arising from the Speech from the Throne.

As I read through the Throne Speech I noted a number of items related to anti-inflation, housing, resources, transportation, and environment. But I also noted that one major topic was missing and I refer to education.

November 18, 1975

While I realize that this portfolio has recently changed hands, I would have thought that some legislation in this important area would have come forward. After all, education is a multimillion dollar business with emphasis on our greatest natural resource, children and young people.

I had thought, Mr. Speaker, that the Speech from the Throne talked about the priorities of the Government. That it is silent on such a vital topic, in our view, is shocking.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — There has been a growing concern expressed, Mr. Speaker, that this Government has been setting educational policy by regulation rather than by legislation. A poor policy, Mr. Speaker, for so vital a topic. Many issues are of concern to parents, to trustees, and to educators and yet the announced program of the Government faces up to none of them.

There has been no streamlining and updating of budgeting procedures so that school boards can develop meaningful budgets. Boards are expected to submit preliminary budgets in October but receive no indication of revenues until March. I would have thought, Mr. Speaker, that by now one of the Hon. Members opposite might have stumbled upon the more effective methods used in neighboring provinces and suggested a change. After all, if local autonomy is really so important, surely elected representatives at the local level should have this information earlier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — There has been much talk, Mr. Speaker, about reorganization of the Department of Education. Indeed the talk has been superseded only by the need, yet nothing appears to be happening. Morale within the department is at an all time low. Staff within the Department is genuinely searching for direction, yet none has been forthcoming.

Parents are voicing concerns about the quality of the educational program and the quality of the product. Educators are voicing concern about the preponderance of courses, new ones constantly being added and yet the hours of the school day haven't changed. At the rate new courses are being introduced, Mr. Speaker, we will soon need a new agency to teach each kid how to read and write.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — We need a moratorium on new curriculum, we need time to assimilate what we have.

I would have thought that new legislation to consolidate the myriad of Acts respecting education would have been before us. I raise these latter points, Mr. Speaker, to give but some examples of a need for some leadership in an extremely important field and leadership which is not here.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — The so-called peaceful approach to bargaining, the bi-level system, has been anything but peaceful. Not only did provincial bargaining of a legislated two year contract, when other employee groups were bargaining the length of theirs, cause teachers salaries to fall significantly behind their counterparts in other western provinces, but at the local level serious problems arose because those matters to be bargained locally left trustees in this province with little to trade. As a result the management prerogative of school boards was placed in jeopardy and difficulties have persisted between school boards and teachers at the local level.

I am amazed that the Throne Speech is silent with regard to teacher training. Are we to wait another year before there is a change in teacher training and certification? I cannot understand how or why it is that virtually everyone in the province connected with education supports a change and yet, Mr. Speaker, this Government is oblivious to this fact.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Now, if I may turn to the Speech itself, and react to some of the items that are in it.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I set with bated breath to hear some firm, positive statements regarding the nation's fight to curb inflation and the kind of leadership our government would show to supplement what has been done in Ottawa. I heard nothing that was new.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Yes, rent controls are being suggested, but then the Premier had made that known prior to the Throne Speech. I hope this legislation will be available at an early date and that it will be effective. More effective than one case of which I am familiar where the Government now has some control. In one of the nursing homes in my constituency the rent increased from \$300 in May, 1972 to \$795 in October, 1975. Rates were allowed to increase \$120 per month in October after having been raised \$85 per month last spring. Mr. Speaker, that's an increase of \$205 in six months in an area where the Government already has some control.

Again I wonder about the leadership role of the government. It has had the opportunity to show restraint and hasn't done so. We need legislation as much to control government policy as to control the private sector.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — A word about transportation, Mr. Speaker. I note that the Throne Speech will provide a high priority for transportation problems and I can only say it's about time. I note that a transportation agency is to be established. The reasons for setting up this agency are not clear. I hope it will do more than add people to the government payroll. In any case there are a number of obvious changes required and an agency is not necessary to tell us that. Let me illustrate.



November 18, 1975

The first is upgrading of the Saskatchewan grid system. An agency is not required in this case, all you need to do is drive the roads.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Secondly, completing highway 2, and I notice that the Member for Arm River (Mr. Faris) has left the Chamber and I'm sorry because I want to tell him I support anything he can do to get that road finished. I think it's only been under construction now for the last five or six years.

A northern river crossing in Saskatoon will provide a major improvement and I would hope the Minister and his department will give high priority to construction of this bridge so that an early start may be made. Certainly an agency is not required to tell us this.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — As I watched the Members opposite, Mr. Speaker, during the Throne Speech, they reminded me of my earlier days in the classroom — you know — the smug smile when the cat is about to be let out of the bag. In this case, of course, the cat that was about to be let out of the bag was nationalization of the potash industry.

The speech, Mr. Speaker, outlines three alternative for this government, but it clearly left out a fourth, more reasonable alternative, to allow the expertise of the potash industry and the competition it generates to remain in the province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Mr. Speaker, in its second alternative, that of standing still, three risks are outlined. A risk of loss of position, a risk of high losses in tax revenues, a risk of repayment in the future. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the risks inherent in the Government's proposal to nationalize the industry are greater than any of those they have stated.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — The Government proposal to nationalize the potash industry risks the ability to obtain expertise in the industry; it risks the position of this province as a credible voice with other industry and it risks a tremendous amount of money for the people of this province as was so clearly demonstrated earlier in Mr. Steuart's address. Put in simple terms, the necessary capital of \$1 to \$2 billion means an average per capita outlay by the people of this province of between \$1,000 and \$2,000 and interest isn't included in that. If, Mr. Speaker, during a time of high inflation and when the Government is calling for restraint, if at the same time it can justify this kind of expenditure, then I must challenge the priorities.

We have a housing problem, for example, and just a fraction of this investment could make a substantial change in that situation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — We require more people in our work force, to accept the challenge that continued growth can provide. Our construction industry, in particular, requires more skilled people to handle the work that there is to be done. What a difference a fraction of this expenditure could have made.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — We have a large and growing percentage of our population who are senior citizens and who need help. As I read the Throne Speech I noted only one reference, to increase the grant payable in the Senior Citizens Home Repair Act, 1973.

Is that all? Why not increased pensions for our senior citizens.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Why isn't that mentioned? Isn't that a higher priority than the takeover of the potash industry and the risk of millions of dollars of money from the taxpayers of Saskatchewan?

We would have been so much better off, Mr. Speaker, to have programs announced that would encourage growth and development, rather than to announce nationalization of the potash industry, create a horrendous expenditure, get into an area where the Government has no business being, where it has no expertise and at the same time make every other industry in the province shudder.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — And shudder they might, Mr. Speaker, if any of their representatives heard the Member for Regina North West (Mr. Whelan) being interviewed on radio in Saskatoon this past weekend.

The handwriting is clearly on the wall for other industries, Mr. Speaker. When asked by a reporter if, now that the announcement regarding nationalization of potash had been made, it would be safe to assume other industries — hard rock mining industries — would be left alone, the Minister replies — and I'm paraphrasing — it isn't safe to assume anything in the long term.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Is that a threat, Mr. Speaker? Well, while the Members opposite may say no, I say it is. I say it is clearly a threat, that nationalization of the potash industry is another step in the systematic attempt by the NDP to squash initiative and competition and drive in this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Competition, initiative and drive are the integral parts of human nature we cannot afford to lose.

November 18, 1975

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — I say, Mr. Speaker, that the handwriting is clearly on the wall, and I am certain that other industries in this province see it as well. Such a scheme will not attract growth, Mr. Speaker; it will frighten it away.

I don't for one minute, believe that Mr. Blakeney and his colleagues dreamed up this scheme overnight. A plan as blatant as this one would need some thought.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — My apologies. I wonder why the Hon. Members opposite did not campaign last June on this issue, Mr. Speaker. Could it be because they knew the people of this province would not support such a scheme? Could it be that the nationalization of this province, while an avowed goal of the NDP, is something they would rather keep quiet at a time when the people are voicing their views? Could it be that what this Government sees as no risk, Mr. Speaker, after all we're only taking \$1 or \$2 billion, is in fact something that they know the people of the province would see as a risk?

On June 11, the NDP were not given a mandate of this magnitude, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — And I submit to you, that they didn't have the courage to ask for one either.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Mr. Blakeney, and his colleagues have called this incredible scheme, the rallying cry of the '70s, Mr. Speaker, and well they should for without it, it is unlikely they would have escaped last weekend from their own convention in Saskatoon.

I suggest that unification of a political party after the worst showing at the polls they have had in years, is not sufficient reason for this proposal to go forward.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — I trust, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite will soon come to their senses and see this horrendous suggestion dropped. Failing that, I trust, because of the magnitude of the proposed legislation, likely the most far reaching in the history of the province, that considerable time will be allowed once the Bill has been tabled and it was this afternoon, for reaction from the people of this province.

Any attempt to ram this down the throats of the people of Saskatchewan by forcing early passage can only suggest that this Government is afraid of the reaction it would receive from the people.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Mr. Speaker, at the very least this matter should be referred to a special committee of the legislature for further study.

It will be evident, Mr. Speaker, for the several reasons I have given that I cannot support the motion of the Member for Quill Lakes and that I will, instead, be supporting the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I neglected to inform the House that the debate would be proceeding on the amendment and the main motion concurrently.

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier):** — Mr. Speaker, in entering this debate I want first to extend my congratulations to you on assuming the office of Speaker of this Legislature. I want to tender my congratulations also to the mover of the motion, the Hon. Member for Quill Lakes (Mr. Koskie) and the seconder of the motion, the Hon. Member for Melfort (Mr. Vickar).

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — May I also tender my congratulations to the Hon. Member for Saskatoon Eastview (Mr. Penner) who has just taken his seat and who has made a creditable maiden speech in this House.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I for my part am proud of the speeches made by the mover and the seconder and I'm proud of the fact that our party can attract new members of the calibre of the Member for Quill Lakes and the Member for Melfort.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — They've given notice that their constituents in this province will be well served in the future by them inside and outside this House.

I want first to comment on some of the remarks made by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition. If one were being harsh I think one would take his opening words indicating that in his judgment the Throne Speech consists of half-truths and outright misrepresentation and suggest to him that we on this side of the House ought to pay careful note to his comments.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I imagine few Members in this House are greater authorities on half-truths and misrepresentation than the Leader of the Opposition.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

November 18, 1975

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — He started out by calling the Throne Speech a cruel hoax.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — He started out by criticizing the increases in the minimum wage to \$2.80; that man who, when he called the election in 1971, went to the people with a minimum wage of \$1.25. If there ever was a cruel hoax on the working people of this province it was that perpetrated by the Leader of the Opposition when he was calling the shots in this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — He went on to spin a web of fantasy, of financial fantasy, in calculating how much a potash mine, a mythical potash mine, would lose if it were purchased at \$225 million and had a production capacity of 1.2 million tons KCL. I believe with him, that anybody who paid \$200 or close to \$200 a ton of productive capacity for a potash mine would indeed lose money, but does anyone honestly suggest that even a brand new spotless potash mine would cost \$200 a ton of productive capacity. Never was a potash mine built anywhere in the world at that cost. That is pure fantasy. He knows it's pure fantasy.

Many a reputable consulting firm, and I invite Hon. Members opposite to consult them, will tell you new potash mines can be built for less than that, let alone second hand potash mines and therefore, I think the whole fantastic house of cards, which he constructed has no basis in fact whatever.

Let me turn to one or two other aspects of his remarks. He talked about timber. He talked about cancelling the Meadow Lake pulp mill. He is still defending that deal. He fought one election on it. He had it repudiated by the people of Saskatchewan in a way that no issue or no party has ever been repudiated.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — And he would still have us believe that the people of Saskatchewan wish to see one third of the timber resources in this province alienated to a foreign corporation in virtual perpetuity.

He wants to have us believe that the people of Saskatchewan want to see that resource alienated for a relatively low value purpose, pulp, when it could be held and used, and is being used, for higher quality purposes and which in the future will provide much greater employment and much greater economic activity for the people of the North than any pulp mill would do.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — He wants us to believe, contrary to all the facts, that the Prince Albert pulp mill is following the same cutting practices as it did before. A simple look at the forest area or a simple search for the facts will show that substantially different cutting practices are being followed.

He wants us to believe that, for example, the environmental arrangements of the Prince Albert pulp mill are the same as when he was with the government. They are most assuredly not. That was one of the first things we had to do when we took office, to clean up the mess in Prince Albert.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — He wants us to believe, for example, that somehow Bill 42 was what caused oil rigs to leave this province. He wants us to believe that somehow they all went to Alberta. He should kindly explain why the Alberta papers were carrying full page photographs of drilling rigs going down to the United States. He apparently believes, once again, that we in this country and in this province should so order our resource taxation and resource development practices that we match every concession extracted out of the U.S. Congress by the oil lobby. That may be his view of how we should manage our resources; but I, for my part, say that we in this country have no obligation to meet, and no obligation to pay, the outrageous incentives given to the oil industry by the Government of the United States.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — And while we are the Government of this province, if in fact outrageous incentives temporarily attract drilling rigs to the United States, that is one of the facts we will have to face. The people of the United States have come to their senses. They have withdrawn many of those incentives and I am happy to say that oil rigs are pouring back into the prairie basin, including Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I turn now to potash. I will have a good deal more to say about potash tomorrow, about our resource policy tomorrow. I just want to talk for a moment about the prorationing regulations which the Hon. Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake was at one and the same time supporting and criticizing. He believes, as Hon. Members who know his thought patterns will understand, that while the Liberal Government is in office, they are good; but when the Government changes and the same regulations are imposed by a New Democratic Government, they are bad.

He alleged that our activities in the 1971-72-73 era were done for conservation reasons. He added in his own inimitable way — I will put it this way, Mr. Speaker. He suggested that there was something wrong with conservation regulations in 1973 but that in 1970 they were fine. It is all too typical of the Leader of the Opposition, that that which was done by his government was fine but that which is done by our government in the same way is somehow reprehensible.

I think perhaps most of my comments with respect to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition are best made tomorrow.

**MR. STEUART:** — Go ahead . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Since by popular demand . . .

November 18, 1975

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — . . . it is suggested that I ought to continue the criticisms, I will point out to the Hon. Member who apparently believes that the potash policy has injured our abilities to attract uranium enterprises to this province, I will point out to him that we are enjoying a very cordial relationship with the uranium industry, that the industry is co-operating on new royalty structures, active discussions are being carried on on both sides, and I think good faith is being shown on both sides.

We have in fact continued discussions about joint ventures in the uranium field and I have to advise the House that new overtures from the industry for joint ventures have been received since November 12.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — It is true our delegates at Saskatoon at a large well attended convention which would be a credit to any political party in this province, indicated their approval of our potash policies. I can only have sympathy for the Hon. Leader of the Opposition when he characterizes the delegates to that convention who are by and large as fine a group of people as you will find in Saskatchewan, as people who are bitter and narrow. Isn't it too bad that a responsible leader of a political party in this province has to characterize some hundreds, almost 1,000 delegates of an opposition party as being bitter and narrow because they do not happen to hold the views that he does.

It is, I think, too bad that politics has reached that state of affairs in this province.

I will, Mr. Speaker, be outlining for you a good number of proposals we have for dealing with inflation tomorrow. But I do want to mention one of them now and that is — some government expenditures will have to be curtailed. I am going to ask all Hon. Members on both sides of the House to assist in this endeavor. Therefore, I think it is not particularly appropriate for Hon. Members to stand in their place and call this capital expenditure, or that capital expenditure, or still further, a seven or eight million dollar bridge and be critical of the Government because it is not taking anti-inflationary measures.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — . . . bridge!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Well, I don't know what construction of a bridge in Saskatoon would consist of but it would cost a goodly number of millions of dollars and either is or is not a contribution to inflation. If it is a contribution to inflation, do the Hon. Members opposite want it, and if it is not a contribution to inflation, perhaps it will be explained how this major capital expenditure isn't.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about the constituency which I represent. This is the sixteenth regular session at which I have had the honour to represent Regina in this Legislature.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Those voters I have represented have varied, as the constituency boundaries have changed. On one occasion I was called upon by the evil architects of the “Daveymander”, to represent more than four times as many voters as a Liberal Member in this House from Regina, a Liberal Member who has since gone to his reward on the bench. My constituents were victims of the perverted sense of democracy of a Cabinet which had in it the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. MacDonald) and the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Steuart), who has not yet gone to his reward in the Senate. But all that is behind us, or I trust it is. The Independent Boundaries Commission recommended fair boundaries. We acted on those recommendations and I represent the new constituency of Regina-Elphinstone, and I represent it with pride.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Regina has never been more buoyant or more prosperous. There is a new spirit of confidence and well-being. The population is growing rapidly, perhaps too rapidly. Housing starts I think, tell their own tale. I know this will be of particular interest to the Hon. Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake who was the architect of the great Liberal housing policy, but in 1970 under his government there were in Regina, just under 400 housing starts. By 1974 the number was not 400 but 2,170 and by 1975 the figure will be 2,700. From 400 to 2,700 in five short years. Nearly 1,200 senior citizens’ grants have been given to people in Regina.

There has been a new resurgence of cultural and sporting life in this province. I know we are all disappointed, as the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake suggested, that we didn’t make it into the Grey Cup, but the Roughriders have given us an exciting year of football, they have been a good team . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — . . . at home and on the road. They have been fine ambassadors for our province.

We in Regina are not totally disappointed when it comes to football. The Regina Rams have once again won the Canadian Junior Football Championship.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — They have the most remarkable record of any team in junior football today. We congratulate the players and particularly our coach, Gord Currie, whose record of success . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — . . . stands unchallenged in Canadian football, senior or junior.

I turn now to the Western Canada Summer Games.



November 18, 1975

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Members opposite are laughing, but there is a certain tinge of envy in the humour because they wished they had had the imagination and the drive to launch a project as outstanding as Western Canada Summer Games.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — By any standard it was a huge success. Competition was keen. Fellowship was warm. The encouragement given to the athletes was quite remarkable. New opportunities for competition were provided and Canadian records in many sports were shattered. The large number of volunteers made it possible, headed by Mr. Dick Rendek and I extend to him our warm thanks.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The games were remarkable for a number of reasons. About 2,000 athletes and coaches participated. Competition was offered in more sports than the Montreal Olympics. The games operated — and I offer this comment to the Liberal Government in Quebec — within the budget both for capital and operating costs — and we have inflation here too.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The mayor of this city was not called upon to deal with the question of bearing babies and there was no government takeover of the games proposed.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Of the total government participation of \$1 million, over \$500,000 remains in the form of permanent facilities for sports activities for the university and the public.

Grants for the provincial games came not only from the Department of Culture and Youth, but also through the city of Regina through the Community Capital Fund. We in Regina have benefited immeasurably from that particular government program, the Community Capital Fund. We have seen that fund finance in part the Lawson Pool on Elphinstone Street, the Senior Citizens Day Centre on 11th Avenue, the new City Hall, the Massey Community Arena, the new Agridome, the downtown Scarth Street Mall, more than \$8 million in grants committed.

I may say that other places such as Saskatoon, have major commitments for their Communiplex, which I believe is the name given to their proposed new sports facility.

Wascana Centre continues to attract acclaim Recently the Centre Authority received the Vincent Massey award for excellence in urban environment, another tribute to the Centre and the City.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Industrial expansion has proceeded apace. The Leader of the Opposition complains that the Minister of Industry and Commerce is not standing in his place and announcing new industries. Perhaps he is too busy attending official openings, because I have been to a good number of official openings of new industries which are here operating and employing people.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I want to advise Members opposite that the people of Regina prefer the industries which are operating to the flood of press releases issued by the previous government which were good for little else but as a basis for recycling paper.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I invite any Hon. Member to drive around north Regina and east Regina and see the new plants and new distribution centres and evidence of industrial vitality.

Truly these are exciting days for Regina. I am sure that the activity referred to in the Throne Speech will mean that even more exciting times are here to come.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Canadian Western Agribition continues to be one of the exciting success stories of the last five years. I have on other occasions in this House paid tribute to the people who had the exciting idea of Agribition and I have given full credit to Mr. Sutter and to the late Hon. Ross Thatcher for his encouragement. Since we assumed office in 1971, it has been our policy to give every bit of help we could to Agribition because of the major international implications to this show; to make it an agricultural exhibition of international stature. That has happened.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Agribition is now one of the top livestock shows in the world. That's good. It is good for our livestock industry. The cattle industry is having a rough time right now. Beef markets, as we all know, are international and, so far as the producer is concerned, virtually unregulated. He is totally exposed to the worst effects of the so-called law of supply and demand. But I am sure that those difficulties are temporary and I am sure too that this province needs a strong livestock industry.

We are a great grain growing province, but that grain too is sold on international markets, at totally unregulated prices so far as the producer is concerned. Prices will not always be high and sales won't always be strong, and when grain prices are down or sales poor, it is an enormous help not only to our farmers but to the economy of the whole province to have a ready flow of cash from the livestock industry. It is a matter of simple prudence for us here in Saskatchewan to diversify our agriculture, to not put all our eggs in one basket. And so livestock is important.

November 18, 1975

If livestock is important, it is important to have top livestock commanding top prices. Agribition does a great job in helping and encouraging livestock producers. Agribition too makes a real contribution to our economy. Thousands of people come to Saskatchewan from all over the world. Anyone who has tried to get a hotel room during Agribition week in Regina or even in Moose Jaw knows what a contribution in these terms it makes to our economy.

This year in order to promote the sale of Saskatchewan cattle, the Provincial Government co-operated in showing cattle at the Royal Agricultural Show of England in July. The response was most encouraging. We sold some of the cattle for breeding purposes and we have reason to believe we can develop a market in Britain and France for some Saskatchewan cattle. A number of chief officers of Agribition attended the Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth Conference in the United Kingdom. I attended and extended an invitation to hold the 1977 Biennial Conference of the Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth here in Regina in 1977 in conjunction with Agribition. I am pleased to say that the invitation was accepted. I think this is a further indication of the international status which Agribition has attained.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Throne Speech outlines the concern of the Government for traffic safety. We have had during the last Legislature a Legislative Committee headed by the Hon. Member for Kinistino (Mr. Thibault) outlining what, in the opinion of the Committee needs to be done in order to make our highways safer and to cut down on the slaughter and carnage which weekly occurs on our highways.

Some of the proposals are far-reaching in effect extending as they do from regulation of speed of speed limits and regulation of seat belt wearing, to restructuring our court system as it deals with traffic offences. Many of these will not be easy to introduce but all Hon. Members will wish to examine these proposals. I do not believe this is a matter which ought to divide us along party lines. I believe there are no right and wrong answers to traffic safety but I believe that we have an obligation to make some moves to see whether or not we can make our highways safer and we, on this side of the House, and I am sure Members on both sides of the House, will be interested in the measures which in our collective judgment are acceptable and workable here in the Saskatchewan context.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — In no area am I more proud of the record of our Government than in the opening up of government to the people and providing the many more ways for the people to reach their government. We have held Cabinet meetings throughout the province; individual Ministers have made tours of the province, sitting down with interest groups in their home area and I think of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) as he then was and the Minister of Labour going about, talking about new proposed labor legislation. In each non-election year I have made a bus tour of the province, visiting particularly the

smaller centres and talking with people about their concerns and what they wanted their government to do for them. I have been warmly received particularly in the smaller centres. They say no Premier has ever been here before. And that I think is good. It is good to have people feel that their government is not something distant and remote, but something which is approachable. And whether it be of one political persuasion or another and whether the Premier be competent in all respects or have as many warts and imperfections as the current Premier, I think it is useful that people are able to approach their government and feel that it is their government and not something remote and distant.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Individual departments have opened regional offices in many centres throughout the province to bring government closer to the people served. We opened an Executive Council office at Saskatoon to give people in and around that city a quick reference point and an office where answers can be had or at least where the staff in the office and through their telephone connections can get quick answers from Regina.

The Provincial Inquiry Centre has handled a steadily growing number of calls seeking facts about government programs and I may say it has been of particular use during the recent postal strike.

The Human Rights Commission while not concerned wholly or primarily with government, does offer citizens another avenue for redress of grievances real or imagined.

We have instituted a Worker's Advocate for the Workers' Compensation claimants, who now have someone to whom they can go, someone who will fight their case with the Workers' Compensation Board without their incurring the expense of going to a lawyer. And while I do not share the views of Shakespeare that all lawyers ought to be killed . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER::** — Some lawyers.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — . . . some lawyers ought to be killed, I do share the view that for many Workers' Compensation claimants the private practice of law offers them a very difficult, cumbersome and sometimes expensive way to make their points known.

The office of the Ombudsman was established in 1972 and has done an outstanding job of dealing with a very wide range of inquiries and complaints. The Ombudsman has suggested that the jurisdiction of the office be widened and legislation to accomplish this will be introduced.

Mr. Speaker, I say to you that this is an outstanding record of opening up government to the people, unmatched by any provincial government in Canada in any four year period.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — But keeping government responsive to people's needs is a job that is never done. And our Government will continue to do our best to make the Government of Saskatchewan a people's government in every sense of the word.

November 18, 1975

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — In another area, we passed an Election Expense Act to try to see that our elections were not unduly influenced by the interests with the fattest wallets. I note that the Leader of the Opposition is unhappy with that Act. He is being critical of the Elections Expenses Act. We, too, think that the Act has problems but we believe there should be a limitation on election expenses, unlike some Members opposite, and I certainly do not include all of them. We believe this House should represent not the Ad men of the province but the voters of the province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I acknowledge that on the basis of one election, that Act has shown some weaknesses and we are perfectly prepared to propose improvements in this House well before the next election. We go further. We invite each of the Opposition parties to present to this House a Bill containing their ideas of how election expenses should be limited. Or perhaps they will still believe that wealth makes right and they will still want no controls. We shall see whether they present to this House a Bill outlining just what they believe is the appropriate way to control election expenses. I invite all Hon. Members to do that and I particularly invite Members of the party represented by the Official Opposition not to wait until they are the government because it may be a long wait.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne outlines two main issues dealing with inflation, wages and income control and our resource policies. Each of those requires in my judgment a fairly lengthy statement by me on behalf of our party. I propose to do that tomorrow and accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:33 o'clock p.m.