

Thursday, March 18, 1976

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

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. B.M. DYCK (Saskatoon Mayfair): — Mr. Speaker, I am very delighted to introduce to you and through you to the House 29 students from St. Edwards School who are here in the west gallery this afternoon. I believe they are accompanied by their teachers Mr. Mike Drabyck and Mr. Bob Isinger. I hope that they have a good afternoon in the House, an interesting one and an educational one. I look forward to meeting them in the rotunda at 3:15 this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MISS L.B. CLIFFORD (Wilkie): — It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the House a group of 18 students from Major High School and their principal, Mr. Wirgis. They are sitting in the east gallery. I also would like to welcome them on behalf of the Member for Kindersley. The town of Major itself is in his constituency, but fortunately we share both the rural area. It is my pleasure to welcome you here, I hope you have a good visit and a safe trip home.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. B. ALLEN (Regina Rosemont): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce a group this afternoon on behalf of the Premier, who asked me to convey to the group his apologies for not being able to introduce them himself, as he is out of the country today. He asked me to introduce a group of 27 students who are in the Speaker's Gallery. The 27 students are from the Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences at Scott Collegiate, they are a group of new Canadians, Mr. Speaker, they are accompanied by their teachers Mrs. Beaglehome and Mrs. Zikman. I am sure that all Members of the House would like to welcome these new Canadians to our country, to our province and particularly this afternoon to our Legislature. I look forward to meeting with you after you leave the House this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. L.E. JOHNSON (Turtleford): — I should like to introduce to you and through you four members from the Parkland rural municipality. They are sitting in the Speaker's Gallery. From left to right is Herb Dunser, Clem Wildeman, Frank McNick and Lawrence Ferguson. The boundaries of the rural municipalities, the north boundary, before the new municipality of Meadow Lake was formed was bordered by an LID (Local Improvement District). They are down here to attend the SARM convention.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. D.M. HAM (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you and through you to the Legislature 60 students from St. Patrick and St. Joseph's Schools in Swift Current. It is unfortunate we couldn't have the St. Patrick's group here yesterday. They are seated in the east gallery and they are accompanied by their teachers Mr. William Shumay and Frank Hegel. I will be meeting with them later and I wish them a pleasant trip home and an educational afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. R.H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I too should like to welcome the students from Swift Current, even though they are not part of my particular area. I should like to go a step further and welcome the students and in particular one student, we happen to be neighbors, and as she looks over my farm in my absence, a special welcome to Leanne Cote.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. A. THIBAUT (Kinistino): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce three members from the RM of Humboldt, the members of the council, Mr. Bolster who is the reeve, please stand up, they'll know who you are, Mr. Baum and Mr. Limerick. I am sure that their trip to the Legislature this afternoon will be educational. I wish them a safe journey home.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Tabling of Certain Documents Re Broken Agreements

MR. D.G. STEUART (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Attorney General. Does the Attorney General recall that on the opening day in his speech, the Premier in discussing the agreement that was made between the Government as represented by the Attorney General, the Liberal caucus as represented by myself and Mr. Malone, and the Conservative caucus as represented by the Member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) and the Member for Rosetown (Mr. Bailey), came to an understanding about the procedure that would be followed when we reconvened or when the House was called in regard to advancing the Budget and other procedures. The Premier said then that there were letters signed, which there were, and they would table those I understand. I have listened to the Leader of the Conservative Party ask that those letters be tabled. Now I am asking the Attorney General on behalf of our caucus to table those letters, those letters of understanding, because there seems to be some doubt being cast that they do in fact exist. I am asking the Attorney General if he is now prepared to table the letters of agreement?

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to table the documents as requested by the Leader of the Opposition. This is not strictly speaking to the question but I will simply identify the documents. One is a document, a carbon copy of a document, dated January 28, 1976 to Mr. D. G. Steuart, Leader of the

Opposition. The next document, a photocopy of that letter and the original sent and returned to me. The next document is a letter dated January 28, 1976, to Mr. R. A. Larter, MLA. The next document is a photocopy of a piece of paper which was returned signed by Bob Larter.

I will ask for a copy to go to the Leader of the Conservatives, to Mr. Larter and to Mr. Steuart and the balance be tabled in the House.

MR. E.C. MALONE (Regina Lakeview): — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General. In his remarks the other day, the Leader of the Conservative Party, the Member for Nipawin, indicated as well that there were other agreements of an informal nature that were made in the corridors, or not here. As you are aware, the Liberal Party is not aware of any of these agreements. Firstly I should like to ask you whether there were such agreements, and if so, would you please tell us what they were?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, there were no such agreements. The substance of the speech of the Leader of the Conservatives as I gather a few days ago, was to the effect that there were suggestions at all times by me, in particular, although I think it was I and the Premier that he said that there would be third party funding. I think that those conversations can be fairly summarized to say, to choose the words of Mr. Larter yesterday, my position has been that I think there needs to be more research funds for the Conservative Party and I am sure that there will be more research funds for the Conservative Party. I as one Member of the Government will do all that I can to assist them to get more of the research funds, but that we would have to await the recommendation of, as it turns out now, the Mr. Justice Hughes Committee.

Tabling of SARM Brief Re Load Limits

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — I have a question directed in the absence of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, to the Deputy Premier. Certain statements were made by the Minister of Municipal Affairs yesterday that he had received representations from the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities with regard to load limits which he referred to in his speech to that particular convention.

The Minister had agreed to table in the House, yesterday, a copy of a brief to which he referred that it was in this brief that the SARM referred to these stated load limits of 32,000, single axle and 50,000 tandem. Has the Attorney General had conversations with the Minister so that we may have that information today? Is the Attorney General prepared to give us or refer us to, or show us the alleged brief that was referred to by the Minister of Municipal Affairs?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, as I am sure all Members will know what the Hon. Minister in charge of the transport for the Government said was that in at least one brief there was the request for the reduced weight load limits by the SARM and that he would be prepared to table that brief. I have not personally spoken to the Minister since he gave that answer. I believe that answer

obviously is on the record and the Minister will have to fulfil it. Unfortunately, he is out right now, I assume at the SARM meeting itself. So I would suggest that the Hon. Member wait until tomorrow or the earliest opportunity that the Minister returns so that the brief can be tabled.

MR. LANE: — By way of a supplementary. Has the Government opposite overnight or in the last day received representations from the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities with regard to the statements made by the Minister and was the effect of those representations to deny the statements made by the Minister of Municipal Affairs?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I can simply answer for myself and just get some informal reading from some of the Ministers here. I know of no such representation overnight. It may have been made to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I simply don't know that because I haven't seen the Minister all day. There is no Cabinet date today and accordingly I have no knowledge to deny or to accept that suggestion.

Having said that, I am left in the position of saying that the position is as was stated yesterday by the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

American Association of State Highway Officials

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington): — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the Minister of Highways, maybe to his seatmate, is this Government aware of the damage factor of surveys done by the American Association of State Highway Officials and this apparently is the factor used by the Department of Highways in Saskatchewan as well as Manitoba?

HON. N.E. BYERS (Minister of the Environment): — If the question is, am I aware of this Association, the answer is that I have heard of them, yes.

MR. BERNTSON: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister aware that by this survey a tandem axle semi-trailer truck has a damage factor of 47.2; a tandem truck 45,000 pounds has a damage factor of 41.3 and a single axle truck has a damage factor of 82.7?

Opening of Neuro-Science Ward

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, a question directed to the Minister of Health. Could you tell this House when the neuro-science ward of the Plains Health Centre will be opened?

HON. W.A. ROBBINS (Minister of Health): — I didn't get the complete question. Would you repeat it please.

MR. BIRKBECK: — When will the neuro-science ward be opened at the Plains Health Centre? The date had been announced April 1st.

MR. ROBBINS: — I will take that as notice and find out and get you the answer.

Saskatchewan Government Borrows Money From Bond Market

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance.

Could the Minister tell me if it is a fact as to whether or not the Saskatchewan Government went to the bond market to borrow money recently? And if it is a fact, how much was borrowed and what was the effective interest rate?

HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance): — The answer is, yes, the amount borrowed was \$75 million and the rate was 10.25 per cent. It was borrowed on the Canadian market.

MR. MacDONALD: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister aware that the city of Winnipeg recently also went to the United States market and borrowed money at 9.25 per cent, I am told? And could the Minister please tell me why? Is it a reflection on the credit of the Province of Saskatchewan, because of their tampering in the resource industry?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! The Member is placing argument, I think, rather than getting strictly to the question.

MR. MacDONALD: — Mr. Speaker, I will get to the question. If this is a fact of a difference of one per cent what would it cost the taxpayers' of Saskatchewan? And can the Minister explain why this higher rate was paid by the Province of Saskatchewan than an individual city?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, the bond market varies. There is also the question of the exchange rates that have to be considered when you go outside the Canadian market. We have decided to go to the Canadian market, where we have traditionally borrowed and we thought, in fact we know, that the interest rate is a good rate. Our rating in Saskatchewan is better than eight of the other provinces and this is an excellent rate we received.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Saskoil's Purchase of Atlantic Richfield

HON. E. WHELAN (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister in charge of Saskoil, may I reply to a question that was asked Tuesday last and for which I took notice on behalf of the Minister.

The Hon. Member for Lakeview (Mr. Malone) asked two questions regarding Saskoil's purchase of Atlantic Richfield.

First, where did Saskoil obtain the money? Was it from the Energy Fund?

No, it wasn't obtained from the Energy Fund and the funds were obtained by Saskoil from the Department of Finance out of the Department's current cash position. The money is a temporary loan to Saskoil until permanent financing is arranged.

What was the interest rate? This was the other question that was asked.

Saskoil is paying interest on this loan, the yield to the Department of Finance would be 9 3/8 per cent.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister tell me whether any independent studies were taken by Saskoil or by your department in connection with the purchase of Atlantic Richfield to arrive at the figure of \$23 million? That is, was anybody retained to investigate the company and to see that their assets were indeed worth that amount of money?

MR. WHELAN: — It is my understanding that from the discussions that I have held with the Minister that there was no consulting firm retained, but the very adequate and capable staff at Saskoil made comparisons and did a great deal of investigating before the purchase was made.

MR. MacDONALD: — Would the Minister then be prepared, surely to heavens he doesn't expect this House . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order!

MR. MacDONALD: — . . . to accept it. Is it a policy of this Government that they as purchaser will do their own evaluation and will the Minister be willing to table, to the Members of the House, for the public of Saskatchewan, the evaluation that the Department of Mineral Resources or Saskoil did in evaluating Atlantic Richfield?

MR. WHELAN: — It is the policy of the board and the management of Saskoil to make its own adjudication and where it is considered necessary to have consultation or consultants hired, that will be done. But each case will be considered on its own merits.

MR. MALONE: — A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The Member asked you whether you would table what was done by the Saskoil officials in connection with this purchase. Are you prepared to do that?

MR. WHELAN: — I take it as notice and I certainly hope that the Members will raise it in the Crown Corporations Committee.

MR. MALONE: — Another supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The report that was done by the officials of Saskoil, does it show that the

price of \$23 million was a proper price to pay or did it recommend a higher or lower price?

MR. WHELAN: — My suggestion is that the price that was paid would indicate that the recommendation was received and it suggested that was the price that should be paid.

MR. MALONE: — Another supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Why was the money not taken from the Energy Fund for this purchase? It is my understanding, of course, that this was the purpose of the Energy Fund, to acquire assets of this nature.

MR. WHELAN: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Hon. Member's question I indicated that the financing was of a temporary nature and perhaps after the board of directors has carefully considered permanent financing that will be the case, but at this stage in the negotiations or in the purchase that hasn't been done. It might be eventually.

Provincial Office Building in Swift Current

HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour): — Mr. Speaker, the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) and the Member for Swift Current (Mr. Ham) raised a number of questions with respect to the failure of pilings associated with the construction of the provincial office building in Swift Current and they raised the question further as to whether the piling failures represent some additional cost to the Government of Saskatchewan.

I think I can assure the House that an adequate level of control of expenditures of provincial funds has been and will continue to be exercised with respect to the building of the provincial office building in Swift Current. And, in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, meetings are scheduled for discussion with the consultants Building Design 2, with the general contractor, Poole Construction, and with the sub-contractor who is responsible for the placing of the pilings, Western Caissons, and an attempt to resolve the difficulties will be, I think, accomplished by that meeting.

MR. HAM: — A supplementary. I asked the other day, Mr. Minister, whether in your opinion, or in your investigations that the pilings had failed as a result of the moving of the building site? Have you found anything in that regard?

MR. SNYDER: — I believe that there is no suggestion that has been made that the site was inappropriate. I think those are matters that will have to be determined by further studies by people who are more closely associated with it than departmental people. Consultants, in addition to Poole Construction and Western Caissons, are going to be in a position to deliver to the department further information that will, I believe, resolve the problem and give us a firm understanding as to why the pilings failed in this particular case.

MR. HAM: — A second supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I am wondering, Mr. Minister, if you could assure me that the building in fact had not been moved, the building site? My information leads me to believe the building site had been originally suggested at the south end of that particular full block, and a result of the location over the tracks, the Government insisted it be moved to the north end of the block, and I was told this area of the site did not have soil samples taken and this, in fact, is why the piles failed.

MR. SNYDER: — I am not sure there is any evidence to indicate that to be the case, and as I said earlier, on two separate occasions, only moments ago, I think the meeting with the people who are responsible for the construction, the general contractor, Poole - Western Caissons, the department and our consultants, Building Design 2, will attempt to establish what the cause of the failure was and we will be in a position to evaluate at that time.

MR. J. WIEBE (Morse): — There was a rumor regarding this entire question in Swift Current. Could the Minister, at a later date, bring a further report to this Legislature regarding the answering of some of the rumors, in effect one of them, that the wrong set of blueprints was sent out by the department to the contractor, Poole Construction, in Swift Current. The second rumor being there is now a court case pending in regard to this.

MR. SNYDER: — Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of replying to hearsay evidence and I think it would be most inappropriate for me to comment with respect to the rumors that may or may not have any validity. I think the Member has been in the House long enough to know that we should not be required to reply to that kind of hypothetical question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Flooding — Souris Valley

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, to the Hon. Mr. Byers. Is the Minister aware of the possible grave flooding danger in the Souris Valley this year, and is the Government taking any emergency steps in meeting the potential of a very bad flood in Souris Valley, and especially in the Estevan-Roche Percee area?

MR. BYERS: — Mr. Speaker, the Government is certainly aware of the grim prospects of severe flooding, particularly in the Souris River Basin this spring. The Souris River Basin had about twice the average normal rainfall last year, much of it coming in the latter part of the fall so the water table is very high. The snowfall throughout most of the Souris Basin this winter is about three times the normal snowfall. And if the Member asks if the Government has taken any action to prepare for the possibility of flooding, I remind him that he was at a meeting in September that I spoke at in Estevan, and at that time I urged the local government officials to begin preparations at that time. He was at that meeting and he sat by my side when I made that statement.

But more seriously, Mr. Speaker, the organization in the Provincial Government, that is responsible for working with local people and local governments is the emergency Measures Organization which comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The Department of the Environment, through its hydrology branch, operates a forecasting unit which is working closely with EMO. For the benefit of the Member, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell him that I met with two councils from his constituency this morning and we discussed a great number of the details with respect to flood preparations for Estevan. The hydrology branch is going to set up a flood forecasting branch in Estevan almost immediately. We have taken steps to . . .

MR. MALONE: — Order, order!

MR. BYERS: — Well he asked for preparations that we are taking and this may not interest the Member for Lakeview - whose constituency fronts on a river, but I am sure it interests other Members. We are setting up an office in Estevan to facilitate flood forecasting. The provincial Emergency Measures Organization is having a meeting tomorrow with local governments in the Souris Basin to ensure that all possible steps and precautions are taken. One area that he may be concerned about is Roche Percee, where dikes were built last fall. We are sending Department of Agriculture forces to Roche Percee to inspect those dikes and to ensure the local people that proper steps will be taken to ensure that those dikes hold, or try to. These are some of the things that we are doing. We have made provisions to cut the coal-haul road to the SPC power plant, which is always a major issue down there, a step that should be taken. Mr. Speaker, I didn't want to take the time of the House, but I want to assure the Hon. Member that this Government is doing everything possible to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I think it is obvious without the Minister stating it that the Government is doing everything possible.

Supplementary.

MR. LARTER: — The flood has passed, I won't ask any more.

Cypress Hills Provincial Park

MR. W.H. STODALKA (Maple Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources, a question about Cypress Hills Provincial Park. Is it true that a program to build a store and a program to build a cafeteria at the park has been postponed or cancelled?

HON. A. MATSALLA (Minister of Tourism & Renewable Resources): — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Hon. Member's question, I would prefer that this be delayed until the Budget is presented.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STODALKA: — Mr. Speaker, I believe this was in last year's budget, was it not? The plans were already made for constructing in this present year and the tenders were supposed to be let early in December or in January.

MR. MATSALLA: — Mr. Speaker, nevertheless we still say that perhaps we should delay with this until the Budget is presented.

MR. STODALKA: — Mr. Speaker, does this mean then . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I think the Minister has given his answer. The Member for Moosomin.

Deer Population

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources, the Hon. Member for Canora. I feel this is a very urgent problem, not maybe right now, but in the very near future. We are going to have a mass death rate in the southeast part of this province of our deer population. We have had heavy snowfall and I want to know what is the Government going to be prepared to do about it if that be the case?

MR. MATSALLA: — Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Hon. Member's question, I am not aware of the conditions existing in that part of the province. Nevertheless, I will take note of the question.

SARM Resolution on Potash

MR. R.H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation and the Premier to whom I addressed this same question last December, I direct this question to the Attorney General. Is the Attorney General aware that Resolution, I believe it is number 77, that is now currently before the SARM Convention, dealing with the potash, is the deputy leader aware that the Government will take the same stand in the answer that the Premier gave me in December, should this Resolution pass in the affirmative, a simple majority?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, the question last session as I recall was, what would the Government do if the SARM unanimously passed the motion? I think that was the source of some response as the Member will recall, the Premier's answer was that if it was unanimous then we would have to reconsider the policy. And I think I can stand by that policy.

MR. BAILEY: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. This particular resolution requires a simple majority. Is the House Leader prepared to state what the Government would do in the event that this resolution did pass the convention by a simple majority?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I believe that is a hypothetical question. You are asking me to comment on something that may or

may not happen. We will just wait and see if it happens. All I can tell the Hon. Member is that the Premier gave an excellent address to a packed SARM group with a standing ovation and I am very optimistic.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — May I rise on a Point of Order before we proceed to the Orders of the Day?

MR. SPEAKER: — May I just make one point before I give you the floor. On Orders of the Day, yesterday the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) requested a ruling from me on a question which he had asked. He has agreed that he will discuss the matter with me privately rather than expect a ruling in the House.

Tabling of Certain Documents Re Certain Agreements

MR. MALONE: — Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to rise on Points of Order while we are still breaking in this Question Period but I think the ruling you made earlier today concerns me somewhat on your ruling out of order on the third supplementary in the questions to the Attorney General about the agreements between the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party and the Government. You have indicated this was not of public urgency. May I, with respect, suggest to you, Sir, that in my view it is. During the last few days we have allegations from the Members who sit to my left, we had certain allegations by the Premier as to certain agreements that were made or not made as the case may be. Now I realize, of course, we have an opportunity to debate this on the Throne Speech Debate, however, the Attorney General to date has not risen to take part in that debate. I am not sure whether he is going to, it is perfectly within his mind as to whether he is going to speak or not. But we have been here now for several days, these allegations are still hanging in the air and we felt that it was time to clear up the situation once and for all, because the Attorney General, as I said, has not spoken in the debate and he is the one with the knowledge of what took place on that side of the House. I feel that these types of allegations hanging over the head of the Legislature are of public concern and of urgent public concern, because we must ensure that we govern ourselves in this House in the appropriate manner and there are allegations of broken agreements and so on back and forth and I think that impedes the entire business of this House and that these matters should be cleared up both for the purpose of the House and for the purpose of the public. That's why the questions were asked today and that's why I take exception to your ruling my third supplementary out of order because I felt that it wasn't.

MR. SPEAKER: — Any further comments?

MR. COLLVER: — If I might speak to that Point of Order. I should like to agree for once with the Member for Regina Lakeview.

Again, Mr. Speaker, may I ask that this microphone be tuned up a bit.

MR. SPEAKER: — I report to the Member that I had it personally checked today. It's working fine.

MR. COLLVER: — Is there any way to have it lifted up, Mr. Speaker. It's difficult for me to lean over.

For a change I should like to agree with the Member for Regina Lakeview. I also should like these allegations cleared up. I should like the matter brought before this House and I am very sorry that you did rule the question out of order. We would have had some supplementary questions to that very question ourselves. We think it is a matter of urgent concern as well.

MR. SPEAKER: — Any comments? A reply of 'no' was heard.

As I recall, if my memory serves me correctly, the question was put to the Attorney General, is the Attorney General about to table the documents that the Premier referred to? The Attorney General tabled the documents. Then followed questions on the matter. I stated at the time, after a question, a supplementary and the two answers, that I was not impressed with the urgency of the matter. I was, earlier on in the Session, impressed with the urgency of the matter. As a matter of fact its urgency began to decline once the Session was in session, at that point, the urgency of it declined and I feel that any further discussion on the matter in this Question Period is academic discussion and is really of no urgency to this House.

Concern Regarding Question Period

MR. LANE: — On a Point of Privilege, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official Opposition we would like to express some concern about the Question Period. The Question Period will not function with an absence of a large number of Cabinet Ministers. Now I realize the difficulties that the House Leader may be in and certain procedures were developed in the Parliament in Canada in Ottawa to deal with Cabinet Minister being required to be there on certain days. We found our hands tied today on several areas of questioning which we wanted to proceed upon, but due to the absence of Cabinet Ministers we were unable to do so. I should like to bring that particular concern of the official Opposition to Mr. Speaker's and the House Leader's attention.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I don't really know how proper it is to make a comment on this, but I assume you will allow me a brief response in the light of the fact that the Hon. Member . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — You are talking on what would appear to be the Point of Order.

MR. ROMANOW: — I just simply want to say, Mr. Speaker, that all Members would appreciate, I am sure the Member for Qu'Appelle does, because he prefaced his remarks, that it is sometimes very difficult for Ministers to be here not only for Question Period but for other functions of the House, unfortunately. I

know that, for example, the Premier and the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation (Mr. Cowley) are both away together on a mutual matter of business which will take them away from the House for two or three days. The Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. MacMurchy) as the Minister of Highways (Mr. Kramer) is, is involved with the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and so it goes. Another Minister is involved in an opening in Saskatoon and that is going to happen. It happens in Ottawa and it happens in every other Legislative House. All that I can tell the Members of this Legislature is that we will have every Minister here who can be here. I think they want to be here as many of them as they can, but I would ask Members to understand on very many occasions it will not be possible to have total attendance or perhaps even as good attendance as the Members would like. Somebody from the front Benches will be here and we will take notice and we are obligated to answer on the following day or as soon as we can. I don't think any Member will be prejudiced by that procedure.

MR. SPEAKER: — With regard to the matter I think it is borderline whether it is in fact a Point of Order. It may be an observation that the Interim Committee Report didn't deal with this. In fact I don't believe the committee discussed the matter at all about the attendance of Ministers. If it was discussed it was only in a passing fashion and nothing was put in the report about it. It is not within my power to obligate the Minister to be here and the Attorney General has expressed the view that he would like them to be here as much as possible and I think that is all we can do about the situation. I am sure that the Members of your caucus on the Interim Committee will raise the matter when the subject is considered again by the Special Committee.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

Address-In-Reply

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. D. G. Banda (Redberry) for an Address-in-Reply.

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, when I say this, this is a normal preoccupation with all Members when they stand in the House and say, I had not intended to participate in this debate. However, something happened yesterday that disturbed me and I think it is about time that somebody in this House brought the issue out in the daylight and started to call a spade a spade. There is a headline in the Leader-Post that the Liberal high jinks disturbed the Conservatives. Well, I'm going to tell you, Mr. Collver, the Conservative high jinks of the past week has disturbed the Liberals.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I will ask the Member to direct his remarks through the Speaker and if he wishes to refer to a Member he may refer to the Member by his constituency.

MR. MacDONALD: — Agreed, Mr. Speaker. I should like to suggest to

you, Mr. Speaker, and to Members of the House that for the past week the Liberal caucus has sat here silently and watched the most childish, picayune fight between the Conservatives and the NDPs that I have ever witnessed in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Leader stands on his feet and talks about the decorum and the dignity of this House. I suggest you have destroyed more decorum and more dignity yesterday in your childish behavior in the last ten days than in anything I have ever seen.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — The Saskatchewan Legislature has a reputation across Canada, a reputation that I think is enviable. Every press in the Dominion of Canada aspires when he is a rookie to come in Saskatchewan because of the vigor and the enthusiasm and the volatile debate that occurs. Everyone does. The Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly has drawn the respect and admiration of everybody across Canada for its behavior.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — No one, Mr. Speaker, enjoys this place more than I do. Nobody enjoys the heckling, in fact if I stand on my feet and the people remain silent, I think I might as well stay home.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Agreed.

MR. MacDONALD: — That's right. And after listening to the rubbish from the Member for Moose Jaw South (Mr. Snyder) yesterday, I wish I had. But to stand here and come in here and we watched an agreement, and that's the reason, Mr. Speaker, we asked these letters to be tabled. I am going to read the letter because one of the things that disturbed me most that neither the Member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) nor the Member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Bailey) stood up and mentioned this letter when they spoke in this debate. It says:

Roy, re your letter and the three clauses agreed on, this is in a line with our unanimous consent.
Bob Larter.

Unanimous consent, whereby this House was to prepare for the Budget. I wouldn't even have minded and I am not sure that anybody in this House would have minded if you gentlemen had come in here and participated in the Throne Speech. I had never seen the debate degenerate, never seen it degenerate to the childish things that we have listened to in the past four or five days at the cost of the Saskatchewan taxpayers. You wanted us to sit here for seven days and debate the Throne Speech and three-quarters of you haven't even spoken. And when you do get an opportunity you run out of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — I suggest to you, Mr. Leader of the Conservative Party, that you go back over the annals of the Debates and Proceedings for the last three and one-half months and then find one reasonable contribution that your party has made to the Legislative debate in this Assembly about one major issue including the potash issue or anything else.

We have stood up and listened to debate on the Throne Speech and I am not proud of the NDP either. Never did I see any greater . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — . . . never in the history of any parliament in Saskatchewan or in Canada that I know of, did the Premier stand on his feet on opening day with the judges and the audience, and then go into a vicious, personal, political attack on an individual Member. Never. And that is exactly what it was. We have attempted in this House, the Liberal Party, to encourage responsible debate on the Throne Speech to get it over and to get on with the business of the House. In fact we have only had one Member speak until yesterday for five minutes other than the Leader of the Opposition to establish our position. Then, to say that the Liberals disturbed you, I am going to tell you I think the people of Saskatchewan should be disturbed with you and disturbed with your behavior. I am going to tell you something, Mr. Leader of the Conservative Party, if you don't like the way the House runs, then move a resolution and debate it in the House. Please don't tell me about it in the corridors. Because when I leave this place I think it is time that the debate is finished and I don't like a childish pout here or in the corridors either.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — Mr. Speaker, let's review this. What is the supposed excuse? That the Conservative Party wants more research funds? I am going to tell you, you have now double the research staff that the Liberal caucus has, right today, right now. We have one research person for 15 people, you have one research person for seven. That is more than 100 per cent.

I am not going to talk to you about the resolution that is now before the House. I am not going to talk to you about the Judge Hughes Commission. I intend to make a presentation, it has been a long and difficult struggle for this Assembly to get research funds for the Opposition. It is not very many years ago when the Liberal Opposition didn't even have an office in this building. The office was downtown in the McCallum Hill building. And that was, I suppose, in the early days of the NDP or the CCF. All I am going to say, Mr. Speaker, that it is time we stopped the childish behavior in this House and wasting the taxpayers' money that we have for the last five days. I urge the Members of the Conservative caucus to stand on their feet when I sit down and express themselves to the importance of the Throne Speech Debate and why they wanted to carry this on for seven days. And the next time they want to attack the Liberal caucus I should like to have the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, of having the Leader of the Conservative Party or any Member of their caucus discuss publicly the behavior of the

Liberal caucus in this Assembly and the behavior of the Conservative caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say again that I respect this House. I am going to tell you another thing, Mr. Leader of the Conservative Party. There has never been a man, there has never been a Premier of the province, there has never been a man who has been the Prime Minister of a country, that didn't have a respect for Parliament. But you, I say, Sir, don't have any respect for Parliament. The rules and the regulations and the operation of this Parliament, this Assembly and all parliaments have been built up through trial and error over hundreds of years. They are there to generate the same kind of respect for individual Members and for the protection of all Members of the House. You know, when you start talking about the heckling, yes, I like vigorous debate, and when I feel strongly about something I want to get up and express it in a vigorous manner. I suggest to you that any time you have got something you want to oppose to my socialist friends opposite, because I abhor everything they stand for, and then turn around and indicate something worthwhile and you'll get the wholehearted support of this Liberal caucus in every way that you want it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — I don't want to continue this, I just think it was like a child picking up his popsicle and running home yesterday and I hope I will never witness that again. Any time you want to heckle me I just urge you to go ahead.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Right.

MR. MacDONALD: — I'd appreciate it. In fact I think my best speech is under some heckling. And certainly when we have some one with as divergent views as those people over there and we over here, believe me when the Attorney General says something I don't agree with, I will heckle him. But I also say this, that there is built up in this place respect for individuals, an individual who has to have a personal opportunity to defend himself that respect comes from the defence that he makes in this Assembly and not out in the corridors nor not in the caucus rooms behind his back. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the kind of behavior we witness now, I am going to urge before Members of the Conservative caucus who haven't spoken to stand up and speak this afternoon. I am going to urge anybody over on the other side of the House who hasn't spoken to speak on something worthwhile and, as I say, not the rubbish we listened to yesterday. Let's get this voted on, let's dispense with this Throne Speech and then get on with the business. We have got a lot of Bills that we can at least proceed with until the Budget Speech comes down next week. And don't let anybody suggest to you that the Attorney General and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) could not have presented the Budget. They wanted to carry on the childish fight and embarrass the Conservative Party as much as the Conservative Party tried to embarrass them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — The only sufferers, Mr. Speaker, were the people of Saskatchewan and I suggest it is time we put a stop

to this childish behavior. I suggest to the Conservative Leader and the Conservative caucus that they grow up and remember that this is a parliament and if they want to speak, speak in here, express their views, I'll accept their criticism and I will be glad to defend myself when the time comes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. D.M. HAM (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, I rise on my own accord and I wish to rise and speak in the Throne Debate. Perhaps for the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley I should read from the Rules and Procedures under Section 18, Decorum No. 3:

When a Member is speaking no Member shall interrupt him except to raise a Point of Order nor pass between him and the Chair.

He states he has been here longer than all of us and I agree he has been. He has been a very good parliamentarian in his own right but perhaps he should read that book again.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should begin at the beginning by obtaining the right to represent my constituency of Swift Current. I, as an MLA, believe all MLAs are sincere and dedicated and wish to represent their constituencies well. I came to this Assembly expecting to find Opposition Members criticizing in a constructive manner and, of course, the Government willing to accept at least some criticism in good faith. Instead, to my dismay, I have discovered an arrogant government when one must count the fingers of a Cabinet Minister at his suggestion after this gentleman's handshake. I have discovered a government that makes a mockery of reasonable suggestions and refuses except on one occasion and may I remind the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley again that it was his caucus that made agreements that suggested the amendments to The Residential Tenancies Act and that was all that was passed insofar as amendments were concerned on the three major bills. Some observers say that this was the most arrogant Government they can remember in all their years involved in this Legislature. I can't judge, I can only repeat what I hear. It seems most unfortunate that both the Government and the Members to my right appear to be caught up in a political gamesmanship and we just heard some. Criticism has reached a point where most speeches are composed entirely of personal attacks with little or no productivity. I am convinced we are elected to debate, I agree, Mr. Member, discuss and attempt to arrive at reasonable conclusions and answers, not to delay, obstruct or ridicule or not to listen. It appears both Government and the official Opposition have been caught up so long in this game that they cannot even accept that it exists. This caucus is not afraid to admit that we are wrong and as the Member for Estevan indicated the other day, God help us when we can't admit we are wrong in a democracy.

Perhaps I am naive and disillusioned but it seems that every time I spend time away from this Legislature, and I have respect for this Legislature, I realize there must be a better way. This much is a guarantee, when the Progressive Conservative Government is elected in 1979 there will be a change.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAM: — Probably the most common concerns expressed to me by my constituents is the lack of facilities at Swift Current. The citizens at large desire far more dentists, a second TV service and indoor pools and many other advantages so common to larger centres in Saskatchewan. You may ask how does the provincial Government effect these changes, quite simply to allow reasonable growth, a consistent growth in Saskatchewan through an atmosphere of confidence. I know that in the last four years our Saskatchewan population has increased somewhat but it has never exceeded the national average for the last 40 years. It is the only province in Canada to have a percentage decrease.

The Government enjoys comparing our situation to Alberta and, believe me, so do I. My city and Lethbridge were approximately the same size in 1939. Lethbridge has a poorer quality of farm land in the district, hit as badly in the 30s as Swift Current but under successive governments which allow people to succeed with confidence Lethbridge has grown to approximately 50,000 people. They now boast of all the advantages that Swift Current desires plus they obtained our western Canada hockey league team mainly due to its arena and its crowds. Everyone and everything must grow, yet our Government insists they know best.

Bill 42 was successful in forcing many families out of Swift Current. Today production is so unpredictable that no one in the oil production business has any confidence for the future. This problem was not only caused by an NDP Government but also a Liberal regime in Ottawa. Both of these Governments, in which I see very little difference, have convinced me that they know better how to control the public lives in the future than the public do themselves. Without a directional change regarding provincial diversification in the industry and the climate of confidence, this province can be in very great difficulty. It concerns me very deeply. This Government boasts of a bright economic picture in Saskatchewan and that is very good. But this Government did not assist the growth of wealth in Saskatchewan. It was simply a world demand for grain and I am very concerned when prices fall and they will some day, the economic climate in Saskatchewan will be terrible.

History has shown us that our economy rises and falls too greatly and without some stability, now the potash industry reflects this aggravated situation. Our Government's answer is to frighten off any potential investors, not to encourage them. Generally this business goes to Alberta, and yes, I will make those comparisons with Alberta that the Saskatchewan NDP doesn't like to hear.

Alberta provincial tax 26 per cent, Saskatchewan provincial tax 40 per cent and announced it's going up. Alberta sales tax nil, Saskatchewan five per cent. Alberta crime rate per 100,000, 1.9, Saskatchewan's crime rate per 100,000, 2.6. Alberta average annual income \$7,137, Saskatchewan average annual income \$6,606. Alberta percentage of total Canadian earning over \$25,000, 7.39, in Saskatchewan percentage of total Canadians earning over \$25,000, 3.57. Alberta average weekly salary or wage \$200, Saskatchewan average weekly wages or salary \$181. Alberta education expense per pupil — and we boast so much on how much we spend on our students — Alberta spends \$1,109, Saskatchewan spends \$958. We boast so much in Saskatchewan and we should,

how we protect our pensioners. Alberta guaranteed monthly income to pensioners, including federal aid, singles \$255, couples \$495. In Saskatchewan, single \$233 and couples \$480. Alberta, let's use medicare, let's use the example of doctors and people, free or otherwise. Alberta, number of persons per doctor 667, Saskatchewan 729. Mr. Speaker, this comparison was only brought out as a result of the continual references by Members opposite.

However, I can not leave these comparisons until I complete the civil service comparison made by the Minister of Highways the other day. I question whether he used Crown corporation employees.

Mr. Speaker, before closing I commend the Government choosing Swift Current for the 1976 Summer Games. It is commendable that this event can be located throughout Saskatchewan and all centres. Mr. Speaker, as much as I feel we have too much government today the Throne Speech and its limitations are good.

However, I cannot support the Government and cannot support the Throne Speech.

MR. N.E. BYERS (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part in this debate this afternoon I want to join with other Members in congratulating both the mover and the seconder for their noble contribution to this Throne Speech Debate. The Member for Athabasca (Mr. Thompson) one of the newly elected Members from northern Saskatchewan has certainly proven to be in the short time he has been in this Assembly an able spokesman for the people of his constituency and I know that he is going to speak for them and act for them just as ably as he does in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BYERS: — I want to also congratulate the Member for Redberry (Mr. Banda) who has certainly proven in the time that he has been here to be a very able spokesman for the farm people and for the people who live in our small communities. He is able to articulate well on their behalf.

I want to join with all Members in offering our sincere wishes to Dr. Stephen Worobetz as he steps down as Lieutenant-Governor of this Province. He has certainly given loyal service to this province in that capacity in the six years that he served in that capacity. We wish him well in his new endeavors and his retirement. I want to join in extending congratulations to His Honour Mr. George Porteous on his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor of this province and I'm certain that he will exercise his responsibilities in this position in a statesmanlike and diligent manner.

To the other Members who have participated in this debate, I want to offer my congratulations for their contribution large or small.

I know there has been some debate going on in this House as to the length of time that should be devoted to this particular Throne Speech debate. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of this Assembly, who like the Member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Bailey)

and other Members of this Assembly had the privilege to be school teachers for a number of years and who endeavored in our small way to cultivate an interest among our young people in the parliamentary process, the Legislature, Parliament and its function.

I am somewhat appalled and stricken by the attitude that has been displayed by some of the Opposition Members with respect to participation to this Throne Speech Debate. They lament that the Throne Speech document itself may not have been as extensive as it might be. I think it is a sad commentary on our parliamentary system when Members arrived in the Legislature, having been endorsed by their constituents, some with sizeable pluralities or majorities, that they don't recognize that the Throne Speech Debate is a forum and a proper forum to debate any and every issue that affects the welfare of each and every single citizen and community within this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BYERS: — It is an opportunity for them to stand up and to criticize or to applaud the operation of any government program. These people sought election to this Chamber far less than one year ago and I am certain that they must have made some commitments to their constituents that if they would simply put their trust in them for three or four years that they would give it their best and that they would deliver for their constituents to ensure that government programs, whether they sat in opposition or on the government side, that their constituents were receiving a fair deal and a fair share of the government programs that are here.

I wonder what they were saying about such programs as the Land Bank ten months ago. We heard some criticisms of that program last year and yet scarcely a Member has risen in this House where he can be challenged to substantiate his charges of what he thinks of the Land Bank program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BYERS: — One of the greatest programs since The Homestead Act which I know in my own constituency has been responsible for about 40 or 45 young farmers getting established on the land and several receiving assistance under the Farmstart program. I wonder what they said as they went about the small towns. Did they concur with the government programs of the community capital fund, winter works programs, and the dental programs and all of these? And yet we have scarcely heard a word from one of them to offer their comments or analysis of those particular programs.

There is still time, Mr. Speaker. We hope that we will hear a more penetrating analysis than we have been afforded the opportunity in the last few days.

I want to direct a remark or two to the previous speaker, the Hon. Member for Swift Current (Mr. Ham). I know that he is a new Member, and I know the difficulties of speaking in the Legislature for the first term or two. But I was somewhat shocked at his comment that this is an arrogant government. Well, I want to say to the Hon. Member for Swift Current that

we, since we came to power in 1971, have taken some very major steps to open up the doors of government so that the individual and organizations have access to the Government on a daily basis. They now have access to the Government as to how we can improve the laws and the programs of the province. I don't know, throughout the course of the year, how many delegations this Cabinet meets. They are very, very numerous. This Government has instituted a system of regional cabinet meetings, where individuals and organizations and councils can come to the Cabinet and say these are the needs of our community and our region. And the Cabinet Ministers travel throughout the area they are visiting. They have been very beneficial in developing and improving programs.

We have set up many advisory councils. I doubt if there are any Ministers in this House who do not have an advisory council. A group of citizens who give their time and they're rewarded with little more than their expenses to advise the Government on a great number of issues. I have one in my Environment Advisory Council.

Our Government does not believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Cabinet Chamber and the confines where the public service work are the sole source of all wisdom. We are fortunate to have hundreds of people in this province who are skilled and talented and are willing to offer their advice and suggestions to the Government for programs that will benefit all of society. And I think he should have explained in a little more detail whether he regards these steps as marks of arrogance.

The establishment of the Provincial Inquiry Centre means that each department of the Government, virtually each Minister's office, is as close to the citizen as his own living room. These I think, Mr. Speaker, are the marks of a responsive and concerned government interested in people and not an arrogant government as the Hon. Member for Swift Current suggests.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BYERS: — He spoke of lack of facilities in his community, of the need for dentists and the need for swimming pools. What a more golden opportunity was there for the Hon. Member for Swift Current, and this could apply to all his colleagues, to rise and comment on where he feels the deficiencies are in the conditional grants that we have instituted for urban government right down to the smallest organized hamlet in this province amount to \$20 for every man, woman and child.

In addition there is the Community Capital Fund. And then he started to compare some of our programs to Alberta. But he missed one. He was talking about taxation and this and that and what he neglected to point out to the House is that in Saskatchewan medical care premiums are only known now in the history books of this province. Whereas in the province of Alberta they are still \$12.40 per month per family.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that the Members, many of the Members are new to this Assembly. Therefore, I should like to devote some of my remarks to the . . .

MR. MALONE: — . . . on decorum . . .

MR. BYERS: — No, I am not an authority on decorum and therefore, I will not transgress on areas where I am only slightly conversant.

On some of the programs within the agencies and departments have come under my jurisdiction, the Department of the Environment, the Department of Telephones.

First of all I want to turn to a few issues relating to the Department of the Environment. When our New Democratic Government was first elected in 1971, Mr. Speaker, we were charged with the ten point program of environmental protection and improvement, based upon resolutions that originated in previous constituency conventions of our party. In our first term of office we delivered on each and every one of those. When we sought re-election this past June, four additional and more specific objectives were added to the list. Once again they were based upon resolutions approved at our party convention. I want to go over just some of the major programs that we initiated in the first four years and will continue to expand in the coming term of office and terms beyond that.

We were one of the first, but not the first, to establish a full scale Department of the Environment in 1972 and gave it the job of managing our province's land, air and water resources. And in approaching environmental protection we put our money where our mouth was. In 1972-73 the initial budget of the department was \$2.1 million. The current year 1975-76 it is \$5.6 million allocated for the job.

What are some of the problems that we have tended to address ourselves to? We know that potential pollution from new livestock operations is now under control by means of a system of permits. While granted by the Department of Agriculture these must first be investigated and approved by a number of environmental protection specialists. In some cases assistance for relocation of those intensive livestock operations is available as part of the Qu'Appelle Implementation Project. The Department of Agriculture specialists here have conducted a detailed survey of all the existing intensive livestock operations in the Qu'Appelle Basin and this survey shows that all of them contribute to water pollution and corrective measures will be required.

Thirdly, all major new industrial developments are now evaluated for their effects on the ecology before the introduction. Many major new development proposals in Saskatchewan during recent years, have been put forward by public agencies. And it is government policy that environmental impact studies must be made in advance and that the cost of environmental protection or restoration must be included in the total cost of any such projects. These public agencies have co-operated with us in finding out just what is needed in such studies.

The time has now come to set standards which other public agencies in the private sector can clearly understand and can be reasonably expected to follow. So we are currently establishing a new branch in the Environment Department and its sole job will be to set guidelines for necessary environmental impact studies for any new public or private project that could have environmental effects. And its second job will be to review and make judgments upon such assessment studies.

We feel that developers, both public and private, are entitled to know exactly what is required by way of environment assessment when they are making their own calculations. Our department must have its own experts acting as stern watchdogs of the public interests.

Fourthly, Mr. Speaker, we have greatly expanded our monitoring systems to measure and to report changes in environmental conditions and to provide early warnings of potential problems in air, water and soil pollution.

Air pollution inventories have been completed for all Saskatchewan cities. Working in co-operation with the federal authority monitors for measuring suspended particulate matter are now in operation in all cities except Lloydminster. Monitors for detecting carbon monoxide and other potentially dangerous gases are being installed as well.

Now securing proper background levels against which we can measure changes in water pollution is, of course, a far different matter. Before we can measure change or pollution in the way which will permit legally enforceable corrective action we must know all we can about the present quality of our water. During 1973-74 we took about 47,000 analyses and these were conducted by provincial agencies on some 2,450 samples of water. This is a 56 per cent increase in the number of samples measured and because they were measured for more information it is really an 88 per cent increase in the scope and the depth of our information.

In the area of water pollution we know that the main source of the nutrient material that causes algae growth is inadequately treated effluent sewage that is delivered into our water systems mainly from our larger urban centres.

Other potential pollutant sources include industrial operations, poorly located feeding operations. We can claim, Mr. Speaker, with some satisfaction that wherever there is a community water system we now have facilities for at least the primary treatment of sewage. But that is not enough. In addition to the expense of additional treatment facility to remove about 95 per cent of the nutrient material in Regina sewage we are developing, in co-operation with communities, plans for the use of effluent for direct irrigation. One of these projects is at Swift Current. In our plans for the use of effluent for direct irrigation and we are experimenting with devices such as the injection of liquid alum into sewage lagoons of smaller communities.

One of the major changes, and we made this in the fall of 1975, was in the area of air pollution. We have established a discharge permit system that will apply to all new operations and which can be extended, if necessary, to existing operations. We believe that this will enable us to safeguard our air in advance and provide a more effective procedure for policing existing problem areas.

We have developed a model noise bylaw to deal with the problem of what is an acceptable community noise level. This bylaw is now prepared and officials from my department are discussing this bylaw with municipal officials. Cities like Saskatoon and Regina have already expressed an interest in adopting and using such a bylaw.

Sixth, we have banned the non-returnable bottles and cans for soft drinks and despite all the concerns expressed in advance, we think that this has been a clear-cut success. Surveys show a major decline in pop and beer bottles in our roadside litter.

One of our seventh commitments was for a pledge that calls for an educational campaign dealing with pollution. We have made a major effort to educate people about pollution and what can be done about it. We certainly met little difficulty in honoring this pledge. Our only problem is meeting the demand.

Starting a few months after we set up a public education information branch we got a trickle of letters requesting information about the environment and environment problems and that trickle has mounted so we are now averaging well over 300 requests a month. I may say, Mr. Speaker, that we get requests from school students and others, not only in this province, but we got a good number of requests from people in other jurisdictions, a good number from Alberta.

In the summer of 1974 we sponsored some 16 meetings in various Saskatchewan communities to encourage citizen participation in environmental resource conservation policy as a follow-up to the resources program. Working in co-operation with the Department of Education our department has been responding to a growing demand for special teaching material, particularly for increased use of outdoor education concepts and for direct requests from students.

Another program well underway is the continuing monitoring program at the sites of all our major industries. Potash is one example. The results of such monitoring to date showed two things.

1. That the industry is generally keeping within the bounds of present provincial standards.
2. That we are detecting evidence that indicates that our standards may not be strict enough.

I referred earlier to the establishment of the Independent Environment Advisory Council. It is one of these independent advisory councils established by this Government to assist and advise the Minister on an independent basis. Our council now has its own funds and its own staff. It is composed of interested and capable citizens representatives of all walks of life in Saskatchewan. I am very pleased that Dr. Evelyn Jonescu is prepared to accept the chairmanship in the past year to succeed Dr. Stan Rowe, who served very ably since the inception of the Council, because Dr. Rowe was accepting other responsibilities and found that he could not continue the workload this year.

This council deals directly with me as Minister, has its own funds, has its own research capabilities and it has shown some resolve to set its own priorities, to question without fear and to prod when it feels prodding is necessary.

In addition to that we built up a new central planning agency of government which will, as a continuing function, assess the long-term environmental effects of all government programs. This overall government policy decision results in an increased awareness of environmental safeguards in all government

departments and agencies and Crown corporations.

Let me just bring to the attention of the House, Mr. Speaker, four additional points that we stressed in the 1975 election and to which we will be turning our attention in this term of office.

First of all we pledged to publicize acceptable standards of noise and pollution levels, water, soil and air, to require that all current and future developments adhere to these standards. Now we have published air improved purity standards and as reported earlier we have machinery for enforcement in operation. We have set and published water quality criteria which are now being used as guidelines in our continuing supervision of waterworks and sewage works and in our monitoring of industrial effluent. Setting soil criteria is a bit more complex. We now have approval power over the location of intensive agricultural processes and the location of garbage disposal areas. We are keeping in close touch with researchers in other departments, who have the authority to licence the use of biocides and pesticides and who are charged with the duty of measuring the effective fallout from things such as potash, salt, etc.

Secondly, when it comes to recycling, here again, we are involved in shared responsibility. Operation Recycle, under the Department of Industry and Commerce is well known. Highways is working on the use of shredded tire rubber. To date experiments in recycling paper have not been too successful due to the quantities available and the cost of separation and the cost of transport. We think that our bottle return program has made a major contribution in the recycling of glass. We are keeping a very careful eye on current experiments in the use of organic matter for fertilizer and power.

In the area of cleanup for litter we have sponsored the establishment in Saskatchewan of Outdoors on Litter. This was a non-profit organization that has already made an impact on cleanup in British Columbia and Alberta. And we feel that this program was very worthwhile and are considering it again.

With respect to protected areas, we know that we have in this province a number of areas that, I believe, the International Biological Program has identified as areas that could be set aside as protected areas or ecological reserves. We made a commitment in 1975 to enter this field. We are now looking at this program and will be giving it serious consideration in this term of office.

Well, those are some of the programs that we have underway, Mr. Speaker. There are many others. With respect to environment I want to turn to some of the other areas of environment that may interest, I am sure, our Members of this Assembly.

The past few years were characterized by very serious flooding of agricultural lands in the province and the associated problem as a result of the demand for drainage works and as a result of organized and unauthorized ditching, the Government has held meetings with concerned farm organizations and local governments on the matter. Government departments have been working on activities aimed at trying to make more clear the role or the position of each department of the Government and to prepare an overall government approach to resolving the problem, is now being developed for consideration by the various

organizations concerned. This is how we plan to approach this problem.

First, the approach will involve the setting up of a Ministers' Committee involving the Minister of the Environment, Municipal Affairs, Agriculture and Tourism and Renewable Resources, who will oversee a study of the total water control program in the province, but focussing on drainage and flooding problems. Under the Ministers' Committee there will be an interdepartmental working committee of officials from these four departments. This working committee will be chaired by a co-ordinator to be hired by the Department of the Environment. This committee will review the problems, the policies, the ongoing problems and legislation, after consulting with groups such as the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, the Saskatchewan Urban Municipal Association, Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, the C and D Association and other affected parties to report and make recommendations on the total provincial program. The schedule for this task will call for the review to be completed in October of 1976, for recommendations and an outline of legislative requirements hopefully for the session a year from now. We're considering holding public meetings this summer and with a view to getting a new program implemented at the earliest possible date.

I want to say a word about the Souris River study, Mr. Speaker. All Members of this House I am sure are aware of the Qu'Appelle Valley study which was one of the first major water studies in this province that developed and proposed a development plan for the citizens and the communities in the Qu'Appelle Valley. We are now in our third year of implementing the recommendations of the Qu'Appelle Report.

A year ago we authorized a start on the Souris River study. To Members I draw attention, particularly to the Hon. Member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) that in the 1974 budget, the Province of Saskatchewan had funds earmarked for a start on the Souris River study, before we had reached an agreement with Ottawa and Manitoba to participate in that study. In October of 1974 we finally concluded an agreement with the Federal Government, with Manitoba, joint federal-provincial study, which is really similar to the Qu'Appelle study to prepare a development plan for the Souris River. That study will look at a number of areas. It is going to look at such questions as where can channel improvements be undertaken to avert the kind of flooding that can occur with unexpected and heavy rainfalls. It will deal with the question of how to improve the water supply for municipal water systems and industry and commercial purposes. It will hopefully identify areas where recreation facilities can be improved and expanded. It will look at the possibilities for irrigation. In all there are eight or nine segments to this study.

This study will cost in the order of \$1 million. It was take until 1977 to complete. I know there have been criticisms of this study, some of them valid, some of them not so valid. I want to say that the people who are doing the study for the most part are public servants in the Federal Government, many of them in the PFRA organization. Others are government employees from Manitoba. Many others are our own public servants in various departments of government. They have for the most part full time jobs and they are doing the Souris Study Development Plan as part, as one of their many tasks as public servants. It is, therefore,

not possible to complete the study earlier than by the end of 1977 and for financial reasons because we are in a three party agreement. Another reason is that many of the areas that are being examined, which are the effects on fish spawning grounds and things of that nature simply cannot be examined in a one or two year period.

I want to say that the detailed study program has been formulated in accordance with the objectives of the study agreement and the majority of tasks within the program have been assigned. I would be quite glad to provide to the Member of Souris-Cannington (Mr. Berntson) because the Souris River basin takes in the three constituencies that are served by Conservative Members in this Chamber, Souris-Cannington, Estevan and Moosomin. The majority of the tasks have been assigned and I would be more than happy to provide you with information as to how this study is being organized. The responsibilities that PFRA are going to undertake and that Manitoba will undertake and our people will undertake have been laid out.

As I pointed out the majority of tasks within the program then have been assigned. Secondly, the actual tasks will be undertaken by government agencies and only in a few cases by private consultants so the people who are doing this study are also the people who are doing the flood forecasting and they are working at many, many tasks.

The studies are pretty well on schedule. They are within the budget allowed and we feel that satisfactory progress is being made. The study board has held three public meetings in the basin, one at Estevan, one at Weyburn and one at Melita, Manitoba. A fourth public meeting is planned for next week in Souris, Manitoba.

At these meetings the program has been outlined and briefs and public concerns have been heard and discussed by the board regarding water related problems in the Souris River basin. Information brochures about the study program are being prepared and they will be distributed soon. As the studies get further along and solutions to the problem are being developed and are being assessed, there will be further regular meetings and involvement of the public to ensure that the overall development plan arising from the study will be acceptable to the people living in the basin.

Water studies are not easy and I'm sure that the Hon. Members for Lumsden and Lakeview will testify to this. That when you ask a group of consultants or a group of engineers to tackle a very large water management problem over a large area and recommendations are formulated, we then prefer to go through the process of taking the proposals one by one and referring them to local groups and local governments to see if there is agreement. This is not an easy process. It is very time consuming and it takes a long time and urban governments and provincial governments have to fit the developments, the programs that are being undertaken into their spending plans for any given year. I think the word that I would want to pass on is that they do take time, but if we are dealing with a problem that has been here for 60 or 70 years, I know that if we are faced with floods that sometimes people may become impatient and cry for immediate action. But is important, I think, that the overall development plan be worked out, that it be discussed thoroughly with the citizens who are going to have to live with it,

in order that we can come up with a plan that is going to be satisfactory in the long run.

Mr. Speaker, there are a good many issues that could be discussed in this Throne Speech Debate. I want to assure you that I would like to discuss other things, but I understand there are other Members who want to speak and deal with telephones and other matters at a later time. I will be supporting the Motion on the Speech from the Throne.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. R.N. NELSON (Yorkton): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise and speak in this Throne Speech debate on behalf of the people of the Yorkton constituency. I too, should like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Banda and Mr. Thompson for the very fine job they did. Their constituents can be justly proud of their work here.

I should also like to congratulate the Blakeney Government for the fine job that they have done in directing the recovery of this province, the economic recovery of this province since 1971. True there has been an influx of money due to the upturn of the agricultural economy, but I believe our Premier and his Government have been and are responsible for the great deal of prosperity of our province.

I look at SEDCO under the able leadership of the Hon. Member for Tisdale (Mr. Messer). The Hon. Members opposite of both stripes and the stripes look all pretty much the same from here, wish to cast aspersions on the SEDCO officials and the people who work there. They try hard to sow seeds of suspicion to blacken the names of the officials and the Government. But let's just look at a few of the statistics for the year 1974. In that year 2,410 jobs were directly created by SEDCO activities. Then after that approximately another 7,000 people who were needed to serve the people in those jobs directly created and you can see that SEDCO is having a great beneficial effect on the lives of the people of this province.

The Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation set aside \$740,189 for losses in 1974, but only \$43,670 was written off in losses in that year. \$43,670 when the total assets of SEDCO are \$94 million. That represents a loss of .003 per cent on the assets. There may be greater or lesser losses in different years, but it remains for us to decide, it remains for the people of this province to decide whether we want to continue to see that 8,000 to 9,000 jobs are created in one year. We on this side see that we believe that the operations of SEDCO should be continued to assist in the maintenance and the growth of small businesses in this province.

Let us compare the NDP policy such as illustrated in SEDCO with the former Saskatchewan Liberal Government and its industrial policies. First, I would like to have you consider the Athabasca pulp mill. The present Leader of the Opposition signed a binding agreement that would establish that pulp mill in the dying weeks of the 1971 election campaign. Even when the present Member stated that his party was unalterably opposed to it. Let us look at some parts of that agreement.

The province was to put up 70 per cent of the cost of that

mill and yet was to receive in return only 30 per cent of the mill ownership. That's what I call a good business deal, especially for the private company that was to build the mill. There was a road grant of \$3 million to the company to build roads. The province was to put up, to build a natural gas line for the proposed pulp mill. The company that was to operate the mill was to receive the contract to construct the mill and thus they could use the construction profits to pay for their equity in that mill. The company was to be allowed to cut down trees and would be charged only half the regular stumpage charge that was to be levied at the time. Fantastic cutting rights were given to that company. They received the sole cutting rights in an area the size of the Province of New Brunswick. Cutting rights were given to that company for 30 years and moreover they had the option of keeping those rights for another 20 years. Talk about a waste and the squandering of public funds. Talk about a monopoly. Fifty years of virtual complete control over an area of this province the size of New Brunswick.

What rights were given to the small businessman, the small logging operators? They had none. All rights were turned over to a large, foreign, multinational corporation. With such a squandering of the tax dollars of Saskatchewan, with such giveaways of the effective control of the Saskatchewan land to a foreign based company, it is small wonder that Saskatchewan voters turned out en masse to oust the perpetrators of such infamous acts in 1971.

There have been difficulties and failures, but the failures are the fault of the economic system in which we work. In this economic system we are taught to act in a dog eat dog and a devil take the hindmost way, and many companies fail. Companies that have no connection with SEDCO by the way. Every time a private company fails or goes bankrupt, you and I, the citizens of this province pay. We pay because the banks involved with the bankruptcy, after all they have quite often loaned money to the operations, pass the losses on to the next customer and business operators and hence on to you and me. So the loss is passed on to virtually everyone in the province. We pay unemployment insurance benefits for the people thrown out of work. Often in many cases, we'll pay social welfare. We pay plenty for all those failures, Mr. Speaker.

Let us turn for a moment to education. Once again as a teacher I should like to congratulate the Blakeney Government and the past and present Minister of Education in this Government for the excellent work they have done and are doing in improving the education system of this province.

I listened with some amazement to the points raised by the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Bailey) and I'm very sorry to see that he's not in his seat, and some of the points he raised yesterday. Let me present a few points for his benefit and maybe, Mr. Speaker, some of his colleagues can convey them to him.

Let me repeat for the benefit of that Hon. Member what I had to say in the Throne Speech debate last fall, since he quoted me.

Our Government (I said at that time) is willing to make change, but only after consultation with teachers and trustees.

And this, of course, gives the lie to the arrogance charge of the other Hon. Member.

Let us look at just a few of the changes that have been made from the inflexible days of the previous government.

Gone is the pupil-teacher ratio as a means of determining school grants. (I did not say that there was no pupil-teacher ratio.) Gone is the pupil-teacher ratio as a means of determining school grants, (I continued). By the noises made in the benches opposite one would think that Liberals would be willing to put teachers in the classroom with no students at all and still pay them increased salaries. Teachers are willing to teach students, that is their job. No matter how low the number in class, there would always be a pupil-teacher ratio. I don't say that everything in education is rosy, I just say that there have been impressive improvements.

The old pupil-teacher ratio didn't harm the teachers. They simply adapted to the load and were able to do less for the student. It was the student who suffered. There are still Hon. Members on the benches opposite who were a part of the Government that so rigidly applied the old 25 to 1 ratio. As a result I had classes that ran as high as 45. Today, I teach classes with enrolments as low as 16.

Let me continue now with a few more points for the edification of the Hon. Member for Eston-Elrose and any other teacher Members opposite too, if they choose.

Perhaps the Hon. Member for Nipawin was right when he said his colleague didn't know of the March 31 deadline for the school boards to submit mill rates. He doesn't seem to remember what was going on in the education field in the late 1960s. In the fall of 1969 it was announced that the pupil-teacher ratio would be increased to 25 to 1. It would be in effect in the fall of 1970 for the 1970-71 school year.

Dave Steuart claimed the 25 to 1 ratio meant placing two more pupils in each classroom. He said an increase of two would mean a saving of \$68 million. In fact the increase was not a simple matter of two more pupils in each room. On the basis of average it would be at least three. When the method of calculation is examined it becomes obvious that in fact a ratio of closer to 35 to 1 was the result. In determining the ratio of students to teachers, the number of teachers was considered as not only in classroom academic teachers, but also those whose duties keep them from what is normally thought as teaching administrators, band teachers, physical education teachers, and others in supporting roles, guidance counsellors, psychologists. Thus there are 25 pupils for every principal whose office work kept him from the classroom. Twenty-five pupils for every band teacher, guidance counsellor, whose work was not lecturing. All of those pupils had to be shared among those teachers whose work was in class. This meant that the actual ratio was substantially higher than it appeared at first glance. Because there were more students in each class, individuals received less attention. With the teacher unable to assist those with problems as much as before which in itself was often too little, the quality of

of education declined. This decline was especially hard on those with difficulties, slow learners, the partially deaf, children with problems at home or emotional barriers. To implement the new ratio, the grants were paid on the basis of recognized teachers. Every unit or board of education which wished to retain a larger staff than that recognized by the government must pay for extra teachers from local property taxes. The old shift-the-tax-from-the-people-with-the-money-to-the-people-on-lower-incomes trick.

Most school jurisdictions were under heavy pressure to ease the burden of education costs on property tax, therefore, the alternative of raising taxes to retain teaching staff was very unattractive indeed. The result was that teachers were fired and ones not hired to replace the ones retiring. It was estimated that between 600 and 1,500 teaching positions disappeared in one year. Find the statistics to prove otherwise. Most of the newly graduated teachers from the university were not able to find teaching positions in Saskatchewan as a result. With teachers being laid off and no replacements for those retiring, duties in the school had to be shuffled around among the staff that was left. Classes with low enrolments were eliminated. Some classes were transferred between schools. Programs such as guidance, music, physical education, art courses, computer science were cut back or in some cases classes were done away with. Less time was allotted for administration which meant that work wasn't done there either. Or the teacher had to work longer hours to keep up.

One of the ironies of the pupil-teacher ratio is that it was applied at the same time the comprehensive schools were making their impact felt. Because of the cutbacks forced by their ratio, many new course offerings in the comprehensive schools disappeared. I teach in a comprehensive school, I saw them disappear.

In smaller communities the schools were closed so that classes would be combined with others in larger centres to meet the ratio. Thus, this policy added to the pressures of the small communities. Virtually every organization connected or associated with education protested the use of the pupil-teacher ratio. The then, Saskatchewan Teachers Federation president, Harry Walker stated, "The slavish implementation of the ratio would result in wholesale closing of schools, cutting school programs, and serious reduction of the teaching force." That is what Harry said.

The Saskatchewan School Trustees Association said, "In effect, there will be no saving in the total expenditures. The burden will be merely shifted from the provincial tax base to the local tax base. In larger centres this meant fewer options and only partial utilization of the multi-million dollar complexes. In rural areas we feel that there will be reversion to the single academic offering for students, a practice which is contrary to present acceptable developments in education."

All manner of other groups have voiced concern over the effects of the ratio. From students in Saskatoon who held a demonstration, to local school boards and teachers, both as individuals and as associations.

Let me remind teachers opposite of the low morale in the teaching force in those days. Not only were they faced with

the iniquitous pupil-teacher ratio they faced considerable trouble in salary negotiations. For example, in 1969-70, the average teacher's salary was \$7,764; in 1970-71 school year, the average salary was \$7,963. An increase of 2.56 per cent at a time when the cost of living was going up at a rate of five and six per cent. Teachers enjoyed those years.

The Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Bailey) the now defender of the teacher, complains about the slowness of the teacher salary negotiations. Yet he says nothing about the fact that many union groups have negotiated a contract in the private sector for over a year before it was settled. He says nothing about the fact that one union group negotiating in Toronto found that they did not have a job after a year of struggle to raise their wages above the starvation level. In fact he would probably cheer for the company which dismissed the workers.

I should like to comment now on the changes that were made under the past Minister of Education. First of all, the grant was changed so that the pupil-teacher ratio was no longer in effect for grant purposes. It was based on the number of students in the school, with no mention of teachers, it was simply the number of students. The new grant was based on the simple formula, the grant is equal to A minus B. A being the board's recognized costs, B being the board's recognized revenues. The result was a grant increase that meant that 75 per cent of the education cost was borne - and also increases in the property improvement grants that meant that 75 per cent of the education costs were borne by the province.

The province then has substantially increased its share of the local costs for education. We have long heard that the cry for property taxes were too high. Our Government has responded to that need.

I am also pleased that our Government saw fit to leave negotiations for local concerns in the hands of local people, which gives the lie to the fact that things are taken out of the hands of local people. Those negotiations did not go well at first, but they now are proceeding in a much more satisfactory manner.

May I say, Mr. Speaker, that those are just a few examples of progress and improvement. Surely the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose is willing to admit that it is an improvement to reduce the maximum class size from 45 to 27 and the largest class I now teach at the last term semester is 27.

May I further say that at the time that I had the class of 45 students in French in high school, I also taught a class in conversational French to federal civil servants and other adults. It may be of interest to know that the federal Liberal Government would not make payments to assist civil servants taking this conversational French class if the class were to have over 15 people. The provincial Liberals said it was fine to have 45 in a high school class, while the federal Liberal Government said I must not have more than 15 adults. I used the same course for both classes.

Now the Hon. Member for Regina South (Mr. Cameron) may say that it doesn't matter a pinch of potash what the federal Liberals do or for that matter what the past Liberal governments

did. Well, I may say that he either goes along with those government's major undertakings or it amounts to a public repudiation of those governments. The Member for Rosetown-Elrose indicated he is ready to re-introduce that gem of a Private Member's bill that he dug up last fall. That Bill requested and I quote:

The principals appointed to the community college that were previously (a) former NDP MLAs or MPs, (b) defeated NDP candidates, federal or provincial, (c) candidates who contested a nomination for the NDP, provincial or federal, (d) known campaign workers for the NDP, provincial or federal.

Gosh, that might have even included the Hon. Member for Thunder Creek at one time.

The Hon. Member for Moose Jaw South (Mr. Snyder) brought to the attention of this House, the fact that it was invading the human rights of those individuals to present to the public the political beliefs of people who work for any agency. I believe it was none other than the Right Hon. John G. Diefenbaker, who piloted the Canadian Bill of Rights through the Canadian Parliament. That Canadian Bill of Rights guarantees freedom of conscience. Does the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose now wish to take the first steps to destroy freedom in this land? I submit that it is the Member for Rosetown-Elrose who is out to do the very thing that he accuses others of doing, grabbing for power. Trying to control others by denying them rights to their beliefs.

But the Members opposite may talk of political patronage. I wonder if some of the Members opposite are not trying to put on a show, particularly the Conservative Members opposite are trying to put on a show of purity, a show of being above the political battles of this province.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — Order! I wonder if the Hon. Member for Yorkton would permit the Hon. Member for Regina Victoria (Mr. Baker) to make an announcement.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. H.H.P. BAKER (Regina Victoria): — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In the Speaker's Gallery we have a number of fine guests who have come a long way across Canada from Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. They are members of a senior high school band known as the Colonel Gray Band from that community. They are chaperoned by Gerrard Retin and Mrs. Galant. Mr. Herb Powell of Regina is escorting them around the city of Regina.

We are very pleased to welcome this group from the eastern part of Canada. We hope they will have a pleasant stay in our city and visit many of the sights. We are pleased that they have come here to watch the lawmakers of the Province of Saskatchewan. Again a warm welcome to you all.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, as a son of two Prince Edward Islander's my mother and father, I am wondering if there are any MacDonalds or Driscos or McIsaacs up there. I did have the pleasure of going to Prince Edward Island a couple of years ago for your Centennial celebrations and had the good fortune to be there for MacDonald Day. I certainly want to express my welcome from the Members on this side of the House. I certainly hope that you enjoy your visit to Saskatchewan.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The interrupted debate continues.

MR. NELSON: — As I was saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I feel that the Progressive Conservatives opposite are trying to present themselves as being purer than pure, whiter than white, the real nice guys, 99.44 1/100 per cent virgin pure.

I ask the Hon. seven Members of the Progressive Conservative caucus if they repudiate the Right Hon. John G. Diefenbaker? You do not? You approve of all of his appointments? Let's try a couple for size.

February 3, 1958, Frank Bastedo was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan. The appointment was made by the Right Hon. John G. Diefenbaker, then Prime Minister of Canada. It just happens that Mr. Bastedo, before his appointment was president of the Regina Federal Progressive Conservative Constituency Association. I assume that Mr. Bastedo was a Conservative, that is none of my business really.

MR. MALONE: — On a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. I believe the rule of this House is not to refer to the Queen's representative in any way, whether it is a present representative or a past representative. And particularly in a derogatory manner. I am not sure that the Member has said anything in a derogatory manner, but I suspect he is leading up to something along those lines and I take exception to it.

MR. SPEAKER: — I might remind the Member who raised the Point of Order that there is a rule about anticipation as well. I am not sure of the context in which the Member raised the name of the former Lieutenant-Governor and I feel I couldn't comment at this time. I will examine the record later and if there is any comment to be made I will make it at that time.

MR. NELSON: — It is only with the greatest of respect for the Queen's representative that I am raising this point. I am raising it simply to show that political appointments were made. If I may leave that particular point then, Mr. Speaker. The same Mr. Diefenbaker made 37 appointments to the Senate, the Canadian Senate where we see political patronage at the extreme being practised. The Senate of Canada, that very green pasture where old party hacks of both Liberal and Conservative stripes are given more than \$29,000 per year. "How green is my pasture!" they sigh as they relax in their comfortable chairs,

never again to be forced to do a day's work, rewarded for their political toils by the party they served. But that is a debate in itself. Suffice it to say, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Diefenbaker's first appointment to the Senate was George White a former Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament. Mr. Diefenbaker's last Senate appointment, as were all his other Senate appointments, was a Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament, Orval Phillips, who was sent directly to the Senate from the House of Commons.

MR. LANE: — Be careful, they'll be campaigning for your seat!

MR. NELSON: — Good. Let me continue. Ontario. Now there are some stories there. John Robarts, former Progressive Conservative Premier appointed the head of the Royal Commission to study Metro Toronto. I have more, many more from Toronto. If the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose wishes to bring this resolution in again I shall be glad to continue. But if the Hon. member brings that resolution in on community college principals, this action by the implications he makes in presenting that Bill will be repudiation of all Conservative governments, from the one of that famous Sir John A. MacDonald who was involved in the Pacific Railway scandal to the present governments in Ontario and Alberta.

But, Mr. Speaker, mud slinging is not the purpose of this House. The purpose of this House is to debate with honor and courage the real issues of this province. To honorably and courageously debate those issues without resorting to childish acts of running out of the House every time those conditions aren't exactly to their liking. But if the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose would pry into the private lives of the people in this province, if he wants to sling mud at the Government and at civil servants, there is plenty of mud to be slung back.

Now we have heard cries of foul from the Conservative benches opposite. Let us be honest, they got into the kitchen, they began to play around with the stove before they knew how it worked, before they realized the implications of their actions they touched the wrong part of the stove and they got burned. They blew a fuse.

They have by their irresponsible actions obstructed the workings of this House; they have been scorched. Now that they are in the kitchen they have found the action a bit hot, too hot for their comfort. But there is an old saying, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen." I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that's what the Conservative caucus did yesterday; they couldn't stand the heat, so they got out of the kitchen. They are back today I see. Let's hope that they can get accustomed to the heat, so that they can properly represent their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I too find this Throne Speech more important for what it doesn't say than for what it does say. For example, I find 37 government bills introduced here, an impressive load of legislation to warrant my support. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support this Government for its past actions and I am proud to support it for the directions and the actions touched upon in the Throne Speech. I shall be supporting the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Mr. Speaker, I am one of the Members of this Assembly who feels that we are wasting our time this week. I agree with the Member for Morse in his remarks yesterday that those who caused this fiasco that we are going through this week deserve to be soundly criticized and should have been soundly criticized in the press.

MR. SKOBERG: — . . . did you speak . . .

MR. LANE: — I'll let you ask me a question later when I get wound up a little. I know that your caucus had a meeting on your comments in the House and how they would wish you to refrain from making any, because it makes us look twice as good as we really are.

I am a little surprised at the Conservatives I might add, Mr. Speaker, when they talk about stopping heckling why they would want the Member for Moose Jaw North to stop heckling, he makes everybody else look good when he heckles when they are speaking.

We have had several remarks from the Members opposite, including the last speaker, referring to the Throne Speech and what a great document and the 35 pieces of legislation that have been tabled in this Assembly by the Government opposite. The 35 pieces of legislation were rushed into this House yesterday or the day before, merely to give an impression that something was being done by the Government opposite. I think a perusal of the Throne Speech as read by the Lieutenant-Governor indicates and makes it quite clear that this Throne Speech was a document that was merely to place something in the record, that it was to be debated on and the Throne Speech debate to be ended on the particular day of reading the Throne Speech. Then the Legislature and this Assembly could get on with the work at hand of dealing with the Estimates and the Budget of the Government opposite.

Members opposite keep referring to the 35 pieces of legislation. I think there are only four of those bills that have more than one page to them, indicating temporary house amendments. That's all the whole package is.

AN HON. MEMBER: — . . . be adjourning them!

MR. LANE: — No, don't worry. I am going to refer to the Throne Speech to show what an absolute waste of time this is and perhaps the Hon. Member who just spoke did not read the legislation. I am sorry he is leaving, because I am going to refer to some of this legislation that he is so proud of, the 35 bills that he spoke so highly of. I am going to refer to some of them that are set out in the Throne Speech as read by the Lieutenant-Governor.

First of all we had the earth shaking new social bill, the amendments to The Fire Prevention Act, Bill No. 16. Now I suppose that if the Government opposite is pretty proud of that particular Bill, it does bring some major new social changes to the people of this province, it does allow for the training courses in fire fighting and fire prevention. I suppose that is well and good. It does allow and this again, is earth

shaking, I am a little surprised at the Member for Regina Rosemont not taking all this in because I know when he speaks he is going to give some pretty in-depth speeches about some of these bills. This one goes so far and this is a great new approach, it allows for the first time in the history of this great province, local assistant fire fighters and fire commissioners. Now that's been long overdue, and I know the Members opposite are very, very proud of this major piece of legislation, not only talked about in one of the salient 35 and also referred to in the Throne Speech.

We also had some major changes to The Dairy Products Act. This is referred to in the Throne Speech, which the Members opposite take great pride in. This gives something new to the dairy industry, something that they have long been demanding of the Government, they have rallies, and picketing, because they wanted the Minister of Agriculture to have the power to issue to owners or managers of dairy manufacturing plants licences to operate the plants. I think that's long overdue and that's the type of legislation that has been introduced by the Government. It also puts a termination date to the licences. Is that the great social legislation and the record that you are so proud of? We get the same type of amendments in The Agricultural Products Market Development Fund Act, No. 25 in the printed Bill. I could go on because the Hon. Member who spoke last was very, very proud of this particular piece of legislation. It allows the Minister to make regulations and allows the establishment of a committee for expenditures for the administration of this Act. An oversight that was left out that was vital, that was so vital to the administration of this particular Act. It allows the Minister to make regulations to allow the committee to set up to make loans, grants and supply goods or services considered necessary by and for the promotion of markets for agricultural products.

Now seemingly we had all been under the obviously mistaken assumption that this was in the original bill which was set out and do exactly what this amendment does. But that's one of the 35 bills that was introduced and it was referred to in the Throne Speech.

I can also refer to Bill No. 12. I was so happy to get Bill No. 12 because this one amended the rural telephone systems. Again it is one of the great new planks in the social platform of the Government opposite. It allows the Government to charge reconstruction costs as a surcharge in a construction levy. I am sure that the people were crying and demanding the Government that that great social change and that new social program be implemented. Similar types of amendments to The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act.

We had a biggy, and it was referred to in the Throne Speech, it is an amendment to The Forest Act. Again I think that all the talk of the Members opposite and the speeches they have given over the years about forests and raping trees or saving the trees, or whatever they were doing at any particular given time, that it is very, very nice to see tabled in this Assembly a bill to amend The Forest Act that changes the boundaries in most provincial forests in some cases by adding as much as a half a section to the area. I think the list of legal descriptions that takes approximately four pages is something again that the public have been awaiting with bated breath. I think the Government opposite knows full well that it is

fooling no one with 35 bills that were introduced in most cases in all but one, they were housekeeping amendments that were rushed through. I have no doubt that there will be many changes, house amendments coming to these bills because of the speed with which they were printed and tabled before this Assembly. They were tabled and they were done as a group of 35 only to try and mislead the public and the press that something in fact was happening in this Assembly.

As I said at the outset, this particular debate is a waste of time, we are wasting the taxpayers' money. I agree with the Member or Thunder Creek when he said that the public may be under the mistaken assumption that something constructive is being done. We are wasting our time, the Government knows it and the Conservative Party to my left knows it.

I think we have to turn to a constructive and legitimate criticism of those individuals or parties who are the cause of this waste of money and waste of time. For the first three or four days of this Session, there was a cloud hanging over the Members, as allegations were made by parties, by the Government opposite and the Conservative Party to my left, as to why we got into this waste of time and into this economic waste that we are in today.

We had allegations by the Premier and the Attorney General that there was an agreement between all parties. The agreement was, and I set it out in detail, there was unanimous consent to waive the Address-in-Reply debate. The debate we are now embarked upon. There was unanimous consent to establish a Committee of Finance, waive Private Members' business to have the Budget debate immediately. And the third part of that agreement, a special motion giving a refund and deposit for those Private Members' Bills which died in prorogation of the last session.

Letters were tabled this afternoon by the Attorney General at the request of the Leader of the Opposition, setting out the terms of that agreement. The request from the Attorney General setting out those terms dated January 28, 1976, said in the last paragraph, "I would appreciate your confirmation of the above agreement at your earliest convenience." A note went back from Mr. D. G. Steuart, Leader of the Opposition to the office of the Attorney General, "Liberal caucus agrees to these three proposals," signed D. G. Steuart.

The same letter went to the Conservative Party. A letter came back from the Whip, a note came back, a photocopy of which was tabled today, "Re your letter and the three clauses agreed upon, this is in line with our unanimous agreement."

There is no doubt that the cause of this waste of the taxpayers' money, and the waste of the time of each and every individual Member rests solely upon the shoulders of the Conservative Party.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — The same Conservative Party that when we in the Liberal Opposition attempted to stop and filibuster the potash nationalization legislation said we were wasting the taxpayers' money, and wasting the time of this House. It is interesting

to note the priorities that have been evidenced from the actions of the Conservative Party, that when it comes to demanding moneys for their own office research staff, they will stall and waste money of the people of this province but when it comes to a potash nationalization bill which could destroy the potash industry and which could cost the people of this province literally hundreds of millions of dollars, they sit in silence and say nothing. That's a party that tries to convince the people of this province that they are entitled to govern, they have shown a callous disregard for the economic situation, the economic position of the people of this province. If there is ever any indication that they have shown no ability to govern, it's their actions in the last few days and their actions in failing to fight with every resource at their command, the infamous potash nationalization legislation of the Government.

The Conservative Leader said that arrangement is not binding because it doesn't go before the full caucus. We know that that is a specious argument because every caucus Whip has, and has to have the right to make arrangements between parties, if he wants to make it subject to caucus approval he so makes those arrangements. The House couldn't operate if any other rules applied.

The disappointing thing, and I will be very interested to see what the press does about this, is the fact that the Leader of the Conservative Party attempted to destroy the reputation of his Party Whip by refuting the agreement and attempted to destroy the reputation of an honest man for his cheap political ends, and any man who would cast out another individual to wolves like the Leader of the Conservative Party has done to the Member for Estevan, certainly does not deserve any further consideration from the press and the people as to his ability to govern.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — I think too that the record of the Conservative Party to my left, we have had some actions from the Conservative Leader in the last few days which make one wonder to say the least. Rather childish and petty performance. I think though that the Leader of the Conservative Party was taking these actions because he knows full well that that type of action is the type that will get prominent press coverage in the Province of Saskatchewan.

It's interesting that a situation has developed since last October that someone would get press when someone of the opposite side accuses them of saying that, "Well I didn't really want to be in politics." To get press coverage for an allegation like that. Stronger ones have been made in this Assembly. Some allegations have been made over the years with some depth, that never got press coverage, but a stupid little comment like that allowed and gave the Leader of the Conservative Party access to the communications media of this province, something that should frankly not have been allowed to happen. Someone who could get press by saying they are not going to speak on potash and then get press by saying that they are going to speak on potash; someone who gets press by saying that they are going to hold up the Budget, after complaining earlier about the Liberal filibuster. I think that the press would be well advised to start looking at the in-depth record of the Conservative Party to my left, and so far, in spite of potash

nationalization and rent controls, the only positive proposal that has come out of the party to my left is a minor technical amendment to the rent control legislation, and that's all that they have produced since last October and that is all that they have produced. I think with all respect that a situation has developed where simple petty, childish and simple-minded efforts can attain or obtain dramatic press coverage for the Leader of the Conservative Party, indicates that someone is catering to the lowest common denominator of the intelligence of the people of this province and seemingly no effort is being made to appeal to the true intellectual capabilities of the people of this province.

I think that the people of this province would be well advised, through the press, to start to look at the true record of performance of the Conservative Party and they will find that their record consists of one complaint about decorum, one walkout, and a failure to participate as a constructive Opposition party in the activities of this Assembly. And that is all that the Conservative Party has done since the election of last June. The failure by the people to be informed of the efforts made of the Liberal Party constructively in the potash nationalization legislation and the rent control legislation, I think is also to be condemned. If it is the intention of the communications people of this province to cater to the lowest common denominator of the intelligence of these people, I will guarantee the election of the Conservative Leader in the next election, because that's what he is catering to. But if it is the duty of a responsible press gallery to treat fairly constructive opposition, then the Conservative Party will be right back where it was in the last 20 or 30 years in politics in this province.

There is no doubt that we are wasting our time, nothing is being accomplished. We hear speeches that we have all heard before, except for these 35 bills, and I think every Member will admit that they are housekeeping amendments. And that's what we are here debating. At about \$70 per day, per Member, not counting the Cabinet Ministers who are taken away from their other duties. I think it's a pretty sad and sorry state of affairs. I think that the Government opposite should quit its attempt to slap down the Conservative Party and let's get on with the business and let's introduce the Budget. If a few people don't show up and don't get their invitations, there will be another year and I am sure the Liberal Party would be prepared to give up a few spaces next year to people whom you want to invite, if that's the whole thing that you are afraid of missing somebody not getting their invitation to the Budget Speech, we are quite prepared to co-operate and make sure that they can come next year. I'm sure too, that what will be in the Budget will be amply and well covered and that they will know what is going on. For the sake of a little party, for a few party supporters, I don't think that what we are going through is beneficial to anyone.

To the Conservative Party that is responsible to some extent for the mess that we are in, the situation that we are in, you are already being condemned by the people of this province, and rest assured that you will continue to be condemned for the activities you have taken.

Mr. Speaker, there was nothing in the Throne Speech. I have referred to some of the legislation proposed as being merely housekeeping. These are the Bills that were referred to

in the Throne Speech itself. I think they are proof positive that it's a nothing Throne Speech, it wasn't intended to be an in-depth discussion of policy, and for that reason I simply can't support the Throne Speech as introduced last Friday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislature, the Throne Speech debate to this point has left much to be desired. It has, in my opinion, been nothing more than an opportunity for the Government and official Opposition to open old wounds and to create a few new ones. The Throne Speech, although it was short and shallow in nature, was, I am sure, the best effort that could be put forth. With that in mind I should like to make favorable comment where I can, as well as some constructive criticisms.

Under 'Economy' and 'Inflation' there is a distinct comparison between the Canadian economy and provincial economy. Hardly a fair comparison for any number of reasons. First stroke the Canadian economy has against it is the unbearable burden of Liberal administration, along with the fact it serves in excess of 20 times as many people. In contrast, the provincial economy serves less than one million people and has been blessed with abundant resource in agricultural products, harvests and sales. This has accounted for the \$6 billion gross provincial product record. I would say we are being modest to suggest a more moderate pace for 1976, if inflation is left unchecked. Yet, I commend the Government for recognizing inflation as what could be our most serious problem. I don't feel, however, that the increases in Crown corporation rates, SPC for example, is much proof of the Government's intention to check inflation. Rent controls were a step in the right direction, but problems since its effective date will have to be dealt with before its full value is realized.

I look forward to the Budget Speech in anticipation that government, as well as public expenditures, are restrained.

As far as legislation to be re-introduced is concerned, I can only say they are worthy amendments and hope that our suggestions will be taken into full account and given due consideration before the respective Bills are passed.

I thought it rather hard to believe agriculture only got two lines consisting of just over 20 words when it is the province's greatest generator of wealth and employment, linked with the fact it has many varied problems yet to be reckoned with.

I commend the Government and the Hon. Member for Last Mountain-Touchwood (Mr. MacMurchy) for reconsidering the amendment to The Snowmobile Act, 1973, and hopefully for relieving private land owners from bearing all the responsibility for the risks of owners, operators and machines under the Act.

With regard to health, it would seem the province is in a healthy state of mind and body. I feel in a department as large as Health the Government would have seen fit to elaborate on some of the many problems under the Health Department. The administrative costs of the Drug Plan and shortage of Levels III and IV beds, just to name a couple.

Housing starts are said to have set a new record in 1975 and still the demand exceeds the supply. The Government is prepared to raise the borrowing limits of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation. I should like to see a program to also assist the private sector in its attempts to decrease the accommodation shortages throughout the province.

Now unless I go on in some detail over the Olympics or Brier, I would have to conclude my remarks on the Throne Speech. There is no doubt the pressing issues of the province were brought down in the Throne Speech. I look forward to the Budget Speech. Surely it can't be anything but an improvement.

Mr. Speaker, the content of this Throne Speech leaves too much to be desired and for these reasons I cannot support it.

MR. G. McNEILL (Meadow Lake): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to again rise in this House and speak on the Throne Speech debate. I think it was a good one. I think a lot of bills have been put before this House.

Before I go any further, Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate my colleagues, both the mover and the seconder of the Throne Speech for the good job they did.

I should like to comment on a few remarks on the attitude and the position the Conservatives have taken in this House, Mr. Speaker, I only hope that some of the Conservatives, when they met with the rural municipalities, I am sure that their faces were pretty red because I am sure my RM group that I had introduced in here, that was a new one, the last one in Saskatchewan, is certainly having its time trying to make up its budget, due solely to the actions of the Conservatives and their Leader.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard comments from both the Opposition parties that our backbenchers have no say in the decisions of this House. I want to assure them that we do. And if our Leader would have done what the Leader of the Conservatives had done I am sure that he wouldn't be back in our caucus again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McNEILL: — Mr. Speaker, the Opposition have done it again, we sat here we listened to the same thing from them defending the big people and the money people, multinationals, Intercon, good deals. Mr. Speaker, not once have they commented on their records that they have in the North, - in Saskatchewan, what they have done, because they have done nothing. They have no credibility in the people of Saskatchewan any more.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McNEILL: — Mr. Speaker, the development in the North just alone shows what this Government has done for the people in Saskatchewan. Not only have they gone into the North and built roads, built some houses for the people, they have also created employment, which was never there before. Once again I say, Mr. Speaker, that this Government has the people of Saskatchewan at heart and that they are prepared to look after them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McNEILL: — Mr. Speaker, some of the great involvements of the Liberals, some of their great Crown corporations that they have set up, one of them was the Athabasca Pulp Mill. Another one was a mine in the North, great things, Mr. Speaker.

I should like to talk a little bit about the roads in my constituency. Already a contract has been let for eight miles of blacktop on No. 4 Highway for which I am glad and which we are in need of. I understand that the tender is out for another eight miles. This is more than we ever had while we had an 11 year Liberal Member in that constituency.

One thing we had, Mr. Speaker, we had the unfortunate thing of the wood industry closing. I am informed today and guaranteed that the wood workers will receive their pay by the 31st of this month, due to the fact that SEDCO took a hand in and agreed to loan the money. That's another move of this Government to help the people of Saskatchewan.

While we are dealing on roads, I wonder if the Liberals on the other side remember the great 'primrose path' starting at nowhere, ending at nowhere, and that seems to be the career of most Liberals. You know, we have an old saying in the northern part of Saskatchewan, that old Liberals never fade away, they just take off up the primrose path. And I am wondering, Mr. Speaker, if some of the Conservatives aren't going to take off after them.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Three million bucks!

MR. McNEILL: — Yep! Three million bucks is right.

Mr. Speaker, we have many things - just imagine what would have happened if we had taken that three million bucks and banked it and saved it. Maybe I could have had my bridge at the meridian, that's needed, and it's needed and the federal Liberals don't take their obligation to build it. And they have an obligation to cost share in these things. These are the things which we are lacking. These are the things that we hope we will have sooner or later.

Mr. Speaker, on telecommunications, I would just like to speak a little bit on this, on the great advancement we have had on this. Can I tell you a little story that happened in the early '60s?

Well, the Saskatchewan Government was trying to negotiate with the great Conservative Government in Ottawa to hold and use one of the finest microwave systems in the world, our microwave system in northern Saskatchewan. That could have been developed into one of the finest communication systems and everybody would have had television in the '60s in the North, but what did the Conservative Government do? They went into each one of those sites, they had to get a helicopter and fly in, cut the guide wires on the towers and pushed them over into the bush. That is the attitude of the Conservatives towards the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McNEILL: — That is what happened and I was in the North at that time.

Mr. Speaker, while we are on roads and stuff like that, some of my colleagues, the Minister and the Mayor for Regina (Mr. Baker), we made a trip up to Uranium City. We drove up in a few hours. Just before we left there I had been reading an article by some of the reporters from Saskatoon. And I don't know what road they went on because I understand there is only one in the North, and it certainly didn't even compare to what they talked about, because the road up there was perfectly good - it had a few dips - you couldn't make a lot of speed, you certainly didn't have to drive around rocks and over the top of rocks. I don't know where they got that from. Probably they started from Prince Albert and not from Meadow Lake where they should have started from.

I don't know where, and lately I read another report from the Leader-Post, I think they went up the same roads because they talked about the same people we met along there. But this type of sensational reporting isn't really the best. Because we got a road and if any of you want to go up there we are willing to take you up there, I'll guide you up there if you're scared to go. And I think the Liberals are scared to go because two of the caucus, two of the caucus were in La Loche the day we were there and when we came they took off for the South.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McNEILL: — They didn't stop at all, they just took off. I don't know if they were heading for the primrose path or not but they didn't make it.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You tell them, Gordon.

MR. McNEILL: — We certainly will. Mr. Speaker, I haven't had too much to say on this Throne Speech debate because I really wasn't prepared and I just wanted to talk a little bit about what's happening, what's going on and I am prepared to support the Throne Speech.

MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, I don't propose frankly, to comment on a Throne Speech which was prepared through an accident. And I don't propose to add to the obvious comments that have been made by various Members of the Opposition that this is a nothing Throne Speech. I took an hour to read the Bills and I'm sure that if we take three hours we can dispose of virtually all of the Bills. I don't think there is any doubt about the reason that we are here and the reason that we've come to be involved in this waste of the taxpayers' money, be involved in this Throne Speech debate.

What I do want to do, Mr. Speaker, is address myself through you to the Attorney General. Because I am alarmed at the comments that have been made by the Leader of the Conservative Party. I'm alarmed at the impressions that were left and frankly as I sat and listened to the allegations that were made by the Leader of the Conservative Party, I thought that within a day or two days we would hear from the Hon. Attorney General to

refute those allegations. Then today we asked certain questions of the Hon. Attorney General. I don't think that it was to the satisfaction of this House, I don't think that the allegations were put to rest to the satisfaction of this House.

Now, what has the Member for Nipawin suggested? Certainly he suggests from my hearing that arrangements were made that private arrangements were made and that's not denied and I am alarmed. Certainly it is being suggested that some kind of a deal was made that this House knows nothing about. I listened, indeed, to the Leader of the Conservative Party saying the same thing again in the corridors just an hour or so ago to some member of the press. Now I am not suggesting that I believe him, indeed I was predetermined not to believe him. My tendency as I listened to him was not to believe. But, I must say I'm surprised to have sat here for some days and not yet heard the Hon. Attorney General answer the allegations that were made by him.

Don't have to look very far to see that the allegations that were made, very serious allegations about a Member. Erskine May talks about that kind of arrangement suggests a falsehood, that a Member has been guilty of a falsehood. Or failing to carry out some representation that that Member has made is a very serious allegation. We'll change the rules that we more commonly follow. I say that an accusation of misrepresentation is very serious. Charges of uttering deliberate falsehood is very serious. All these books do is make obvious what any Member would know. And that has been the justification that the Conservative Leader has given to this House.

I don't take the cause of the Conservative Leader. I think if anything the Member for Nipawin has made an absolute fool of himself for the last ten days. He's made obvious what many of us have suspected for some months. He made that obvious in this House. But I have to believe that there was something behind the very curious course of conduct that he has taken in these past three or four weeks to five weeks. In what he says is that there was some arrangement. Makes that allegation. He suggests to the House that the Hon. Attorney General has failed to keep an arrangement and the Attorney General sits silent. I'm surprised first we were told that the Attorney General would be speaking, he'd be speaking within a day or so. Then perhaps on another day. Indeed, Members opposite will have noted as we have that the Attorney General is a little low these days. Now, indeed, what he has been doing is that he hasn't been his sort of jovial, fine argumentative self. And that makes us surprised somewhat. What would cause the Conservative Leader to back out on a commitment signed and written in handwriting by Bob Larter that says:

Re your letter and (such bad handwriting that it's hard to read) that this is in line with unanimous agreement.

What would cause the Conservative Leader to pull the rug out from under the six Members of caucus that he left here while he was away from the House that week? What would cause him to abandon his House Leader and to abandon his Whip?

Now, it may well be that he is inexperienced, he doesn't know how to handle people, he doesn't know how to handle this House. It may well be that he is a man without principle. And

that's the way that we've had this situation described to us. Indeed, at first blush, that's the impression that I have.

But now I am starting to ask this House to examine this matter a little more closely. It's curious that even from the Member for Nipawin that he continues to stick to his story and that story goes on undenied. Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that where I began with the assumption that the Conservatives had done a very improper thing in this House I'm suspicious now of what the Leader of the Conservatives has said to us. Really he said, "Why are you so prepared to believe them and not me?" Let me only say that my suspicions are raised and I'm very surprised that the Hon. Attorney General would sit in his place these many days and not take any part in this debate. Not a part in the 35 meaningless bills that they propose, not take part to answer some of the charges that have been made by the Member for Nipawin.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I said I have little to say about the merits of the Throne Speech debate. I thought well of the comments by the Member Mr. Birkbeck who said that the Throne Speech was so inadequate that he chose to oppose it. I'm almost to the position of saying the Throne Speech was so inadequate that it doesn't merit either opposition or support and will be voting against the Motion.

Mr. Speaker, I have further thoughts to make and further comments to make to this House and ask leave of the House to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:26 o'clock p.m.