

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session — Eighteenth Legislature
19th Day

Thursday, March 17, 1977.

The Assembly met at 2:00 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

WELCOME TO IRISH GUESTS

MR. E.C. WHELAN (Regina North West): — Mr. Speaker, on this most important day it is my pleasure to introduce to you representatives of the Irish seated on both sides of the Assembly who by their dress indicate they are honoring the patron saint of the Emerald Isle. The Members recognize, I'm sure, and applaud the Irish for their good nature, their sunny dispositions, their integrity, their sagacity, their sincerity, humor and charm. All Members join me, I am sure, in wishing the Irish everywhere, these most excellent citizens, the top of the morning.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO CONSERVATIVE MP

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, it is with equal pleasure that I introduce on St. Patrick's Day a Member of Parliament, a Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament and one of the more wild Irishmen from Saskatchewan, Mr. Stanley O'Torchinsky from the McKenzie constituency seated in the east gallery.

HON. MEMBERS Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. S. J. CAMERON (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to Members of the Assembly, through you, a group of students who are visiting this afternoon from my constituency. They are Grade Eight students from St. Leo School in the company of Mrs. Moski and Mr. Schechuk. I am sure Members would want to welcome them, Mr. Speaker, and I hope they have an enjoyable afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R.E. NELSON (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly a group of Grade Twelve students accompanied by their principal, Mr. Aschenbrenner, in the east gallery. I would wish them a pleasant day in Regina and a safe journey home.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

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MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, through you, I should like to introduce a group of 40 students from Rosthern High School, Grades Eleven and Twelve, with their chaperon, Mr. Booker. They are sitting in the Speaker's Gallery. I hope they have an interesting day and I will speak with them later.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. E. ANDERSON (Shaunavon): — I would like to extend my greetings to the students from Glentworth and Mr. Aschenbrenner. Glentworth happens to be in my constituency and I am glad to see you here. At 3 o'clock Mr. Nelson and I will meet with you in the rotunda for pictures and for soft drinks in room 267 afterwards.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you and through you, 22 Grade Eleven and Twelve students from the Briercrest High School. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Wayne Medwid and their bus driver, Mr. Lee Mutton. I sincerely hope that they will find their stay in this Assembly this afternoon very educational. I hope they will enjoy it and I hope they will have a safe journey home. I hope to meet with you later.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Last Mountain-Touchwood): — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and to the Members of the Assembly 18 Grade Twelve students from the Lestock High School. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Barry Kaytor, and their bus driver, Steve Gendu.

I hope their stay here is a very enjoyable one and a very educational one.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

LOAN FOR SYLVITE POTASH MINE

MR. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. The Minister, last week, in response to a question from this side, indicated that on the purchase of the Sylvite Potash Mine that approximately \$36 million was to be borrowed through a private placement. At the time I didn't have the opportunity to ask the Minister and I ask him now, where was the private placement made?

HON. W. E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, it was handled through a London bank.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister please tell us which bank?

MR. SMISHEK: — Credit Suisse White Weld.

MR. MALONE: — With that private placement I understand the Bank undertakes to arrange the money for the loan. Are you aware of where the money came from that the bank acted as your agent on?

MR. SMISHEK: — No, Mr. Speaker, in the case of private placements that information is not available to us.

MR. MALONE: — I am asking the question, do you know?

MR. SMISHEK: — No, I don't.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the best way of putting it is, do you care? Have you undertaken to find out where the money came from?

MR. SMISHEK: — Well, Mr. Speaker, in the case of private placements those are matters that are handled by the bank as to where they get the money. That is the traditional rule. They arrange for the money and they don't make it available to the borrower as to where the money came from.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If you asked the bank where the money was coming from would they be in a position of having to tell you?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, I do not know. We did not ask. We were interested in the money. We were interested in the interest rate. Now in the case of private placement, it could be from a number or variety of sources.

NEW LOAD LIMITS

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier. The Premier is aware that in the past several days there has been a great deal of uncertainty created by the Minister's announcement about the new load limits. I believe it was further complicated yesterday by the Premier's suggestion that the Minister's recommendations were recommendations only and not necessarily Government policy. Is the Premier prepared to tell the Assembly today exactly what the position of the Government is? Do you intend to implement the recommendations of the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. MacMurchy) and if so, when?

HON. E. A. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Municipal Affairs spoke to the annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and indicated to them that during the past year he had consultations with their organization and a number of

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other organizations. He said that he had developed a proposal based upon the consultations today - those are approximately the words he used and very close to the precise words he used - and that he was outlining his proposal. He outlined a proposal indicating the position of the Government but in the context in which he outlined it indicated that the position of the Government was not necessarily final. He outlined our present position, he outlined it based upon consultation to date. That is our position and is still our position. We are continuing to receive representations; we have made no final decisions and when final decisions are made they will be incorporated in the appropriate regulations or statutes as the case may be and all will be aware of them. That is the current position of the Government.

MR. THATCHER: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is well aware of the turmoil that this has caused in the country. Is the Premier prepared to give this House some indication of when the Government will make its final position known and will he tell this Assembly in what form he will make the final position of his Government known? Will it be through separate legislation, through this House or will it be Order in Council?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, very roughly the same words were said last year when the Minister indicated that he had some proposals to put forward. He put them forward and there had been lengthy consultations. Notwithstanding the urgings of the Member of the Opposition that we should take a position without consulting anybody, we reject that approach and we continue to adhere to the proposition that governments should consult even though there is some uncertainty during the period of consultation. And that is the state we are in now. I concede the point that there is some uncertainty. I make the point that this is a necessary concomitant, a necessary attribute of the process of consultation. We are still ascertaining what our final position will be. I am not able to say how it will be announced in final form. I have not consulted with the law officers to know how it ought to be expressed but it will be expressed in proper form in a way that everybody will know the position of the Government.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier, in view of his vagueness, on the date as to when the final decision of his Government will become known, would the Premier agree that it is fair to say that you are attempting to hold this as a club over the Weyburn Inland Terminal. When will you tell us exactly what your position is, so that people can react accordingly?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I do not agree that that is a fair characterization. Anything the Member is now saying could presumably have been said a year ago and I don't think anyone has felt particularly oppressed by his Sword of Damocles or the club from Thunder Creek, or whatever we are calling it. And I think the Weyburn Inland Terminal has carried on and will continue to carry on. Government policy will be announced in due course and I don't think anyone is suffering unduly because the period of consultation is prolonged.

MR. S. J. CAMERON (Regina South): — Final supplementary, to the Premier with respect to the same subject. The Premier will remember last year when you brought this matter before the House, you indicated, the Minister indicated that you were proposing this policy at the request of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, following merely, you indicated, their suggestion and request. Now in view of the unanimous resolution by SARM against this policy, are you still adhering to that which you indicated to us last year, that you were doing this at their request?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member has me at a disadvantage. I don't know the text of the resolution which the SARM passed and accordingly I am not in a position to comment on it.

DRIVER LICENCE POLICY

MR. J. C. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct the question to the Minister responsible for the implementation of the new driver licence policy. The new policy, I am informed, takes away the right to make application for new vehicle registration by mail, and it is placing some hardship on the new car dealers in at least Regina and I understand Saskatoon. They were, in effect, shut down for the weekend, because the applicant or the new car purchaser would have to make personal application on the Monday. Would you reconsider your policy and allow new car applications by mail to do away with the hardship that has been caused to date?

HON. E. C. WHELAN (Minister of Consumer Affairs): — I think the Hon. Member will, Mr. Speaker, realize that what we are working on is a drastic change from what we have had before. A five year licence plate, birth date for drivers' licence is a great deal of change and we are very carefully monitoring every problem we have. We expect problems; we know that even though the SGIO people and the Department of Finance people that we have inherited are excellent staff people; it was obvious that when this change was made, judging by the experience in other provinces and other states, there would be difficulties. The sort of thing that you have suggested might be applied later in the year. That is a possibility, and we will, as you suggest, take a look at it even now, but I can tell you that we have difficulty implementing the five year plate. It is not an easy thing to do. The public has been understanding and very patient. I think that they realize that you can't do this sort of thing over night, but we will take a look at your suggestion.

MR. LANE: — By way of further supplementary. In addition to the hardship that is being caused to some of the dealers, it is also causing problems to out of town new vehicle purchasers, who if they want to purchase a vehicle on a Saturday are required to drive, or rather stay overnight or drive back into town on Monday, in order to be able to make a personal application. So there are at least two areas that I think are unfair and I don't think were the intention of the Government when it set up its administrative procedures. Now would the Minister undertake

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to do something? I don't think it is good enough when people are being prejudice to just say you will take a look at it. I would hope that the Minister would reconsider the policy and announce today that he will definitely change that policy and allow new car vehicle registration by mail.

MR. WHELAN: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Hon. Member, there is an old saying that when you start a policy the first year you have a great deal of difficulties, the second year you iron most of them out and the third year you finally get around to where it runs properly. You can quote any Government program and show that this sort of thing happens. I am prepared to have a look at it and see what we can do, but I can tell you that you have to retrain and reorganize and there are a great many things that have to be done. I recall the first day this House sat. The people were wondering why it took us so long to make an announcement of a certain kind. I can tell you that that announcement was made on the first day that we could make it.

MR. LANE: — By way of further supplementary - the Minister said you know that there are certain rules but, I think there is also a rule that the Government should be responsible to the people. And if there is a particular problem it should be resolved immediately, if possible, and I don't see any reason why it shouldn't. There is some concern among the motor vehicle dealers that, in fact, the delay in perhaps your reluctance to take any action verifies their position, that, in fact, what you are establishing by having this delay, is a three or four day cooling off period of new vehicles sales, car sales, as we have on door to door sales. Is that not the Government's long term policy and is that not in fact what they are proposing?

MR. WHELAN: — No, Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member from Qu'Appelle has a very, very good imagination and he is trying to read into our change something that is just not there.

LEGALIZATION OF MARIJUANA

MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina-Wascana): — I wonder if I might direct a question to the Hon. Attorney General, but before doing that I asked one of the pages, because I thought there was a group of students from the College of Education, teachers from all over the province who are here, and I am sure that in due course they will want to join the three teachers on the Liberal side of the House in this Legislature once they get out and teach around the Province and I hope that all of you would . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, is it the intention of the Member to ask the question?

MR. MERCHANT: — I wondered, Mr. Speaker, if I might direct the question to the Attorney General. The Conservative Government of Ontario has not advocated that marijuana be legalized. The Hon. Roy McMurtry said that people should be able to buy marijuana in government controlled stores. He calls them pot control stores, pot control board, and since I know what the Conservative position

is on marijuana, I wondered if the Hon. Attorney General has consulted with Mr. McMurtry about this and what the position of the NDP in this province is?

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I have not had an opportunity to consult with my colleague Mr. McMurtry. I can tell you what my position is and I am sure that it is the position of the Government. We do not support the legalization of marijuana and the selling of marijuana. I personally believe that the Conservative Party's position in this matter is not a good position, because any kind of drug dependency, whether it is harmless or otherwise, is something which we should repudiate.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I must say I tend to agree with the Attorney General that the Conservative position is not a good one and I wonder if the Attorney General might give his commitment to the House to take this up with the Conservative Government of Ontario. I suggest that a Government of long standing of that nature, taking a public position of this sort might have quite a bit of influence on the Federal Government, and the Government of Saskatchewan might do well to go on record as saying that at least the Liberals and the NDPs in this Legislature don't approve of that position.

FOREIGN LAND OWNERSHIP

MR. L. W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture regarding foreign land ownership.

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) has said that the province will tighten legislation controlling foreign ownership of Saskatchewan farm land. Will the Minister give us the assurance that this so-called tightening up will not result in Canadian residents being classified as foreigners as you tried to do in 1972?

HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention at this Session to introduce any legislation on that.

MR. BIRKBECK: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. You also said tighter controls and broader use of the Saskatchewan Land Bank are ways to combat the corporate style farming. Does this mean broader powers and/or money for the Land Bank thus getting more farm land owned by the Government?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, the Land Bank has sufficient funds now to purchase all the land that has been offered to it and we don't anticipate, at this time, to increase the amount of money available.

MARKETING VICE-PRESIDENT - POTASH CORPORATION

MR. G. H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview): — Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation.

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During the month of February the Potash Corporation ran an advertisement for a vice-president in charge of marketing. I wonder if the Minister would comment with regards to the applications the Corporation received and whether or not someone has been hired and if so who that person was.

HON. E. L. COWLEY (Provincial Secretary): — Mr. Speaker, I can't give the Member the exact number of applications that were received. There were several but no one has been hired to date.

MR. PENNER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister not agree that one of the reasons why the number of applications would be several is that while most vice-president marketing positions in other sectors would run between \$25,000 and \$30,000 annually, the reason that you had so much success in getting applications was because you were advertising the position at somewhere between \$35,000 and \$45,000 annually?

MR. COWLEY: — No, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't agree with that. I would think that if one looked at comparable positions in comparable sized companies in the fertilizer business one would find that, if anything, the reverse was true, that the remunerations would be higher for the similar job descriptions. I am sure you can play around with titles. I know that one of the Canadian mining companies the last time I checked had 28 vice-presidents and certainly they were all at different levels and there for different reasons. I think to just compare a title with a position in some other mining company is unrealistic. I can assure the Member that it is my belief and, I think, supported by the information that I have seen that our salaries are not out of line. If anything they are behind those of our competitors in some areas.

MR. PENNER: — A last supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister not agree, however, that vice-presidents in charge of marketing in most circumstances are third level management positions and third level management positions do not bring salaries in the range of \$35 to \$45,000 anyway?

MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would not agree they are third level management positions in the fertilizer industry and I think if the Member will check other fertilizer companies he will find that this isn't true. It may be true for someone in the oil industry, for example, selling crude oil, when you really aren't out calling on any customers, but I believe firmly that that is not true in the fertilizer industry.

SEPARATION OF QUEBEC FROM CANADA

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, I should direct a question to the Premier and I assume that there is nothing significant between the Member for Regina Wascana's (Mr. Merchant) question earlier on and the rather interesting plant that has been placed in front of us today?

MR. CAMERON: — You recognize the similarity?

MR. COLLVER: — Sure do, it's a nice pot. During an article of March 17th, the Premier has addressed himself to the problem of the separation of Quebec from Canada and he makes the comment that he is feeling that there is a distinct chance of failure, or he was quoted as making that comment. He also seems to make the comment that he has ruled force totally out of the picture as a potential for holding Canada together or as at least one negotiating tool. Is that a correct assumption to make?

MR. BLAKENEY: — My statements were as follows. I think the Hon. Member is quoting a portion of my remarks to the SARM Convention, On that occasion I asked a series of questions and then answered them in order to highlight my remarks.

One of the questions I asked was: is there a danger of Canada separating or breaking apart? And my answer was: Yes, not a great danger, but a distinct danger. And that is just about the precise words I used and that is my feeling.

With respect to the second question of ruling out force, I have said on a number of occasions that no government can, I think, rule out force entirely in the solving of some problem in the future since we really don't know what the circumstances will be in the future, but that it is sufficiently unlikely that Canadians would wish to use force to retain Quebec in Confederation, that it is unwise to base our policy on the likely use of force. I say we cannot rule it out; I think no one can rule something out in the indefinite future. But it is sufficiently unlikely so that it ought not be the basis of our policy formulation now and we ought to form our policies on the basis that we have to keep Quebec in Confederation by persuading the people of Quebec that such is to their best interest and, of course, persuading other Canadians that such is in their best interest. The latter is no problem. Persuading the people of Quebec, or, as I have described it, the battle for the hearts and minds of the people of Quebec, may well be a major problem and it is to that end that I think we should now be addressing our efforts.

MR. COLLVER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Premier not agree, and I concur with his remarks, but would the Premier not agree that by ruling out publicly one potential tool, albeit unacceptable at this point in time to most Canadians, but by ruling out in advance, does not one have the tendency to limit one's negotiating ability and as the Premier of the Province of Saskatchewan, is the Premier not taking a great deal upon himself in removing that possibility as he has, or has appeared to have done in this article? Now today it seems to be a little clearer but in this article it appears to have been ruled out totally as at least a negotiating position that Canadians might take.

A further supplementary, just to go on. The Premier has suggested further in the article that the separation of Quebec would have absolutely disastrous results not only on the rest of English speaking Canada, but particularly on western Canada, where he suggests that there might be a potential for separation here as well.

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Would the Premier not agree that the removal of this tool might possibly limit the negotiating ability of English speaking Canada?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I think that clearly one of the negotiating techniques might be to threaten to use the Canadian Armed Forces to retain Quebec in Confederation. That might be a wise negotiating tool. I personally do not think it would be a wise negotiating tool. I have tried to qualify what I have said about the use of force because I am conscious of the fact that circumstances five or ten years from now could be very different from now and I really don't feel that anybody should commit a future government or indicate that force or any particular action by a government is ruled out into infinity.

I do feel that it would be unwise for us to fall into the position of negotiating on the basis of using force, because I doubt whether Canadians would take that course of action and we may, therefore, fall into the trap of relying upon force when some other tactic would be more successful. Accordingly, I think I have tried to state the position with as much precision and care as I can in the interests of retaining the unity of Canada.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

BUDGET DEBATE

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Smishek (Minister of Finance) that this Assembly do now resolve itself into the Committee of Finance and the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Thatcher (Thunder Creek).

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, I along with other Members, extend greetings to the Irish, and those who wish they were Irish on this St. Patrick's Day. And that is something coming from a proud stubborn Scot. I went so far as to purchase a new green tie. I am pleased to extend those greetings.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — I should like to congratulate the Members for Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Lane) and Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf) on their election to this Assembly. The election of these two Members and the defeat of the Liberal Party means that the Conservatives have graduated into the big leagues; they are now out in the open, no longer the newcomers, and the public will have much more to demand than to expect of them.

Until recently, Mr. Speaker, many people haven't been taking the Conservative Party very seriously. I admit that it is difficult to believe that they are serious after watching their performance here in the Assembly. The news media has failed to report their performance and maybe that's because they are giving the Tories a two-year honeymoon, but more likely it is because the media like everyone who comes into this Assembly, is amazed and shocked that any party could be so clumsy at the art of politics and so incompetent at the job of representing their constituency.

As I observe what is going on, it appears to me that the Conservative Members believe that what goes on in this Assembly is not important, that the law-making process and the solemn responsibilities of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the British Parliamentary System and the Canadian Democratic Institution does not mean anything at all. While I often disagree with the Liberal Members opposite, I respect their work as Opposition Members in this Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — For many years the Liberals represented the special interest, the big businessman, the free enterprise system of our society in Saskatchewan. But our Liberals in Saskatchewan were never liberal, they were always conservative. Today the free enterprise elements are moving over to the Conservatives but nothing has changed for those of us on this side of the House except that the right-wing elements have put on a new face.

Mr. Speaker, our Budget provides an increase of 10 per cent for libraries, 10 per cent in unconditional grants for local governments, while the overall budget increases only 9.5 per cent. The largest item in the Budget, is health care at more than \$400 million, an increase that will keep Saskatchewan in the leadership of health services in North America. A 50 per cent increase in grants for police departments, shows the high priority our Government places on public protection, even in a time when Saskatchewan has one of the lowest crime rates anywhere in Canada.

Over the last five years, provincial grants to local governments have increased more than 1,600 per cent. This does not take into account the \$75 per capita in the community capital fund. When we took office in 1971, provincial operating grants to municipalities totalled only \$4.50 per person. In 1976 those same grants were worth \$37.80 per person. This massive infusion of provincial funds has meant that the percentage of expenses paid by the property tax has been cut from 65 per cent to 50 per cent and it is still falling.

In the field of education, this Government pays the grants to school boards 250 per cent, to approximately \$850 per student attending school. The school grants and the property improvement grants now pay for 72 per cent of the basic school costs across Saskatchewan, compared to only 48 per cent when we took office.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — In 1972 school boards were given relief from the pupil-teacher ratio imposed by the former government and a new system of unconditional grants was introduced. The unconditional grant system in education has been an unqualified success. We are now preparing to extend the principle of unconditional grants to municipal governments in response to a request for this system from the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities' Association. In the next 12 months this NDP Government will become the second in Canada to introduce a plan to share provincial revenue with municipal governments. The first province to bring in revenue sharing was the NDP Government in Manitoba, another first for our party in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

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MR. MacMURCHY: — Revenue sharing will guarantee municipal councils a piece of the action, a guaranteed income tied directly to the fortunes of the province and the growth of its economy. These grants will be handed over to local governments with no strings attached to be spent according to local priorities as the councils see fit. We intend to consult fully with the municipal governments before the program is put into effect. A number of unconditional grants will be replaced by the revenue sharing plan.

With respect to our rural municipalities, I am pleased to advise this House that revenue sharing will be made available. Last Tuesday at the SARM Convention I asked the rural councilors to consider their position to let me know how they see such a proposal developing for them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday in this Assembly the Conservative Leader made statements to the effect that our NDP Government doesn't know how to deal with communities and with local councils and with local government. He could not have been more wrong. The facts are, there are towns and cities which have never before received the high priority and attention that they are receiving today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — Saskatchewan has become the first province in Canada to establish a full scale division of urban affairs headed by a deputy minister to assist our urban councils. I believe the records shows the positive policies we have introduced are well received. I have here a copy of a newsletter of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association dated February 17. I will table this when I complete this speech.

In commenting on developments in revenue sharing and local finance the newsletter states and I quote, "I think this proves that SUMA has an excellent working relationship with the Provincial Government and that the provincial Government is recognizing the serious financial problems that our communities are facing."

Mr. Speaker, no other province in Canada will be able to match the broad scope of Saskatchewan's revenue sharing proposals. The wealthy provinces of Ontario and Alberta, with all their industry and with all their oil have denied a share of revenue to their local governments. In Alberta the municipal councils have been pleading with the Conservative Government to grant some small part of the huge oil revenues to help the local expenses.

Here in Saskatchewan the Conservatives, in their lust for power, are preparing to deny what their fellow Tories in other provinces have not done. The Member for Nipawin says he supports revenue sharing, but the way he says it is less than honest with the municipal people and with the public. The Saskatchewan Tories say they want to have revenue sharing so that more and more of the responsibilities can be laid at the doorstep of local councils.

What do they say in Alberta? They said No to the revenue sharing plan put forward by the Alberta Municipal Association under Mr. Leger. They said it was irresponsible for future governments. The Conservatives would shirk their duties as a

government in Alberta. They would try to shirk their duties here in Saskatchewan. They plan to turn over to a municipal level as many of the tough and difficult decisions as they can under the guise of revenue sharing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to quote from the Conservative Leader's speech to the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association. I have his speech here and I will table it for the Hon. Members of the Assembly. It says:

Locally elected bodies responsible to their communities are in the best position to know the type of physical community desired by their citizens.

The same bodies know best the type of health and social programs needed in their communities.

The Member for Nipawin has said he wants to hand over responsibility for welfare, education, hospitals and health care to local government. That's what he said.

Has he asked the municipal councils what their wishes are? Has he consulted with local governments to see if they want to have the welfare programs and their health programs fully on the backs of their doorsteps?

Mr. Speaker, has he consulted with the teachers and the trustees about the Tory plans for education? The Conservatives are very critical of provincial bargaining for teachers. They say it takes away local autonomy. What does this mean? What are they going to do about it? Do the teachers agree? How many trustees in Saskatchewan really want to be saddled with the job of bargaining every year?

Mr. Speaker, I suggest the Conservative policy on revenue sharing and local authorities is little better than a scheme to unload the tough problems of governing responsibility onto the backs of the people at the municipal level of government.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative program poses a very serious potential threat to the stability of our outstanding urban and rural governments in Saskatchewan.

I want to refer Members of this House to the experience of our American neighbors. Many local governments in the United States must carry the burden of duties that are being proposed by the Conservatives. Many of these municipalities find that the tax burden on their homeowners is enormous and growing worse every year because the local level of government does not have the resources to carry rising costs.

I remind members opposite that this situation exists despite the fact that the United States Government already had a revenue sharing plan. They have been sharing revenue for years and even with these revenues their municipalities are staggering under the load of responsibility that the Tories propose for Saskatchewan municipalities. The city of New York is a municipal government which is responsible for the same kind of programs the Leader of the Saskatchewan Tory Party thinks municipalities should shoulder.

New York runs its hospitals, its welfare system, its schools and its universities, its own day care, health services and police department. Mr. Speaker, New York is on the verge

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of bankruptcy because it has found the rising costs cannot be paid out of property taxes and federal revenue sharing. No single municipality, not even a city the size of New York, has the scope or the power to control all these programs within its own borders. If we are serious about offering the public a decent level of services, we must plan and we must pay for these services on a broad basis . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MACMURCHY: — . . . using the variety of taxes that only a provincial or a federal government can command and enforce.

What do the Conservatives mean when they seek local responsibility? What the Tory Leader proposes is to use revenue sharing to divest the Provincial Government of its duties and its obligations to provide our public services, he would hand over a share of revenue and along with it would go a long list of services each municipal council would have to undertake to provide. And at the same time the Conservatives are asking municipalities to assume these duties they would be fulfilling their promise to cut back on public spending. The Tories have promised to do away with certain resource taxes - oil and potash - and to cut taxes on corporate profits and high incomes. This can mean only one thing - less revenue to share with local government.

The Tory Leader says he wouldn't give local government power to levy a sales tax, or an income tax or the like, and in this area he is probably right. But what happens to the municipal council which has to meet the rising costs of their new welfare, school and hospital obligations? They cannot turn to the province for help, because it is cutting back.

MR. COLLVER: — On A Point of Order.

MR. SPEAKER: — What's the Point of Order.

MR. COLLVER: — At no time have the Progressive Conservatives suggested cutting the corporate tax in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: — I don't think that is a Point of Order.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Thank you, I didn't interrupt the Hon. Member when he was speaking to this House before. I would hope he would give me the same consideration.

Mr. Speaker, they can't turn back to the province for help under this proposal, because the province would be cutting back. They can't abandon services because the public demand them. They would only have one choice and that is to raise the property tax and keep it rising every year. This is exactly the trap that many American towns and cities face today. Many of these communities are too small to hire the staff they need for the services demanded of them. I suspect many of our Saskatchewan urban centres would find themselves in the same position. This could produce, for centralized regional government to share the cost, exactly what the Conservatives say they will implement. I refer to the Tory Leader's speech to SUMA one month ago, I quote, "Smaller centres should be able to work together on a regional basis."

Mr. Speaker, they talk about regional planning, or those horizontal administrative communication areas; I say they mean regional government and I say the imposition of regional government would be a necessity under the policies the Conservatives are promising.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I believe the policies being proposed by the PC Party are hasty and ill-considered. I believe they would lead to a weakening of our local government and a poorer quality of services.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Leader of the Conservative Party is a dangerous man, a man given to wild statements about things he has no knowledge or understanding. I believe the voting public must be made aware the Conservatives are not only hollow and false in their promises, but are also negative and a harmful influence on sound public administration and they can no longer be forgiven on the grounds that they know not what they do. They must be rejected in no uncertain terms, and I am confident this will be done, over the next two years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, all of us have reacted with growing concern to the seriousness of the traffic accident level in Saskatchewan. A 10 year total of 82,000 injuries, more than 2,500 deaths, insurance claims mounting to three quarters of a billion dollar mark leave little doubt as to the need for action. As things stand now, there is a 50-50 chance of each one of us being involved in a serious accident at some time in our lives. At this level it will affect every family in Saskatchewan at some time or other; it has already affected mine.

Members of this House will remember the appointment in 1973 of the Special Committee on Traffic Safety, chaired by the Hon. Member for Kinistino (Mr. Thibault). Their report has served both as the impetus and the basis of the programs included in Safety '77. As part of Safety '77 this year's Budget includes \$200,000 to help local governments improve traffic safety facilities within their jurisdictions - safety provisions which are so often neglected because of the expense involved and then acted on only after a serious accident occurs.

This money will be cost-shared on a 50-50 basis with cities, towns, villages and rural municipalities, to assist in constructing better signs, left turning bays, special traffic signals and pedestrian crosswalks. The Minister of Highways will have more to say about the urban part of this program later on; each village and town will be eligible for \$450 under the program; rural municipalities will be eligible for a maximum of \$1,000 over the life of the program.

Because public participation will play a major role in the success of Safety '77 we have set aside an additional \$50,000 to assist local organizations to operate special safety programs in their communities, programs such as defensive driving courses, safety lanes, perhaps a safety rodeo will be eligible for cost-sharing when operated by the local community group.

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Safety '77 will also mean tighter regulations on vehicle inspections. We have already taken measures to ensure the road-worthiness of school buses, under measures which will be announced in the coming year. Second-hand vehicles, vehicles of a certain age, and vehicles that have been involved in accidents, will be required to undergo safety inspections. These inspections should assist in preventing accidents caused by vehicle defects, which amount to about \$6 million worth of auto insurance claims every year.

Following amendments to the Criminal Code by the Government of Canada, you will be aware that new roadside testing devices are now in use by police which allow officers to test for alcohol content on the spot. The province is giving consideration to proclaiming a 1969 amendment to The Vehicles Act which allows for a 24-hour suspension of operators' licences while under the influence of alcohol.

The problem of the drinking driver is a big one, one that accounts for 50 per cent of all fatal accidents. Measures recommended in the Legislative Safety report will be implemented and these measures will be expanded on by the Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Highways and the Member for Kinistino (Mr. Thibault) in the course of this debate.

Safety '77 represents a sizeable commitment of funds in any one budget year - \$3.3 million, \$2 million of new dollars, but we expect to receive much more in return, in saved lives and reduced injuries caused by traffic accidents. We have already received tremendous support for the program from individuals and organizations across this province who are as anxious as we are to get our accident situation under control.

Mr. Speaker, this Budget provides millions of dollars for housing programs. Last year over 13,000 new homes were built in Saskatchewan, by far the largest record in the history of the province, and that compares with 2,000 in 1970 before we took office. The 13,000 new starts in 1976 includes over 1,500 units of public housing, an all-time record. It is the policy of our Government to give senior citizens top priority for that public housing program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — And, Mr. Speaker, it is also the policy of our Government to decentralize senior citizens' housing. In 1971 nearly 100 per cent of the senior citizen units were started in the large cities. In 1976, over 50 per cent of the units were started in the smaller centres, so that our retired people can enjoy decent housing close to the communities where they raised their families and made their homes. Because of the great strength of the housing industry in 1976, many towns and cities are rapidly using up their supplies of serviced lots.

A \$35 million program for land assembly and servicing has been introduced, allowing the province to offer 95 per cent financing to cities, towns, villages, wishing to service more lots.

The number of homes under our innovative Co-op Home Building program is to be doubled from 350 to 700. This is the program that helps families to build their own first homes through a co-operative.

Now, Mr. Speaker, freight services and trucking are vital issues to many Saskatchewan people. When the CPR abandoned its truck routes, many towns, their businessmen and customers were left without proper service. We believe Canadian Pacific has a clear obligation, both legally and morally to provide service to the people whose governments over the years have given the CPR millions, even billions, in grants and concessions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — It is a fact that the CPR was allowed to drop its train service only on condition that it offer service by truck. This company has taken the law into its own hands; it has broken its commitments and ignored the needs of the taxpayers who supported it.

The Canadian Transport Commission conducted an investigation of this situation last summer at the request of our Government. A report is expected very shortly. Whatever the decision of the Commission, Saskatchewan people can be assured that we will take action to protect the interests of our businesses and their customers soon after the announcement.

Mr. Speaker, any major shift from rail to truck poses a serious threat to the organization of our economy, particularly our farm economy and to the financial capacity of the taxpayer to build and to repair roads. With the load limits as they presently stand, it is possible for a heavy truck that wouldn't be allowed even on the Trans-Canada Highway to travel down a grid or a main farm access road with no questions asked. And this is why the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities asked the Government to institute uniform load limits on municipal roads. Over the last year we have discussed this with many different organizations which have an interest in what the limits should be such as farm organizations, organizations such as the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, the Saskatchewan Trucking Association, Federated Co-ops, oil rig operators, businessmen and individuals which wanted to express an opinion. Out of this discussion we have worked out a system of weights which we believe will accomplish the desired objectives. As I said in Saskatoon on Tuesday, I say again, I will set out what we propose, based on these consultations to date. The load limits will apply to municipal roads and to Class 5 highways, which include grid roads taken into our highway system. For two-axle farm trucks the limit is 28,000 pounds, a top limit of 42,000 pounds is to apply on a tandem truck and for semi-trailers, a limit of 58,000 pounds on this system.

In short, the limits are the same as present on secondary roads, except for the five-axle semi-trailer trucks which must not be loaded heavier than 58,000 pounds gross. The reason for this top limit is that repeated passage of semi-trailers or combination units heavier than 58,000 pounds gross vehicle weight tends to set up stresses on the road bed, eventually causing the road bed to break down. It is a limit that reflects the ability of municipal roads to carry traffic in relation to secondary and primary highways, which are built to a heavier standard.

Some Members opposite call the load limits a political law. I ask, Mr. Speaker, what law is not political? People elect governments to make decisions and to make them in terms

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of philosophy and principle. The principle in this law is the prevention of unnecessary tax increases due to road costs.

The position of our Government is that bulk commodities should move by rail and not by road.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — We say the western taxpayers have paid billions for a railway system and they deserve service. We are not prepared to pay twice because the railways in Ottawa want to centralize for their own convenience.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — This proposal would allow existing shipments of grain feed, cattle, gravel and so on to continue to move, so long as the volume remains reasonable. What would not be permitted is a wholesale transfer of grain shipments off the railways and onto our rural and our classified highways. It is the repeated movement of heavy trucks that cause the damage, not the odd truck. I expect the proposed load limit would only have modest impact in the immediate future, but a decisive influence in ensuring that the shift from rail to truck does not proceed at the expense of the farmer.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, there is a good deal of criticism of this Government in our support of the country elevator system. Our support of the country elevator system is really the support for the small communities, for without the grain handling function the small communities and the rural way of life that they represent simply cannot survive. For this we are being viciously attacked.

What are the reasons for this attack? Why is it so vigorous? Mr. Speaker, I believe that the answer is simple. The huge inland terminals are in trouble and they are in trouble because:

1. Otto Lang's brain trusts overshot their target.
2. They underestimated the wisdom of our Saskatchewan farmers.
3. Because the plan was to have the Crow's Nest rates abolished by this time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, many of the Liberals and Conservatives who promoted huge terminals have egg on their faces and they are grasping at straws for someone or something to blame. They are blaming the Pool, and the NFU, and the Federation of Agriculture, and our load policy limits. I say in this House, Mr. Speaker, and to the people of Saskatchewan that we are not influenced by all this ill-motivated criticism. We staked out our policy in 1971 when we said we would shore up and strengthen rural Saskatchewan, a policy in support of our country elevator

system, our small communities, our farmers. And I say we stand ready to fight the free enterprisers in this House and in this province who seek to destroy the orderly marketing system . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — . . . who seek to destroy the Crow's Nest Pass rates which are cornerstones to Saskatchewan agriculture. Those cornerstones are the foundation of the sound society that has been built up around our agricultural system.

I congratulate the Hon. Minister of Finance, the Member for Regina North East (Mr. Smishek) for his excellent presentation, of another outstanding Budget. There is no question that this NDP Government, this Blakeney Government is giving good leadership, is giving good government and there is no realistic alternative.

Mr. Speaker, I shall oppose the amendment, and I shall support the Budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. D. L. FARIS (Minister of Continuing Education): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin my contribution by commending the provincial Treasurer on an excellent Budget. This Budget provides for responsible growth at a time of great uncertainty concerning the international grain market. As a rural Member, I am well aware that the prosperity of all our citizens depends on our agricultural sector.

I would also like to thank the Member for Last Mountain, my friend Gordon MacMurchy, for his commendations of that great race, the Irish. As perhaps the first speaker of Irish ancestry this afternoon, I agree with the Member that there are two groups in the world, those who are Irish and those who wish they were Irish, and to hear this remark from MacMurchy who is a proud Scot it does good to my heart. I must say there is only one real difference between the Irish and the Scots and that is the bagpipes. The bagpipes, of course, were invented by the Irish; the Scots made the mistake, however, of mistaking them for a musical instrument.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to agree with my colleague for Last Mountain on the excellent features in this Budget. I agree with the tougher enforcement and rehabilitation that's proposed for drinking drivers; I agree with the one million dollar increase in the work of the Alcoholism Commission. I feel this is a very positive step and will help put us in the forefront in Canada.

I was very disturbed to hear the point which was raised by the Member for Wascana (Mr. Merchant) concerning the proposal of the Attorney General in Ontario for the legalization of marijuana. This is a proposal which I thought would come forward at some time, and I am very proud of our Attorney General when he rejected that, and I hope that all Members of this Legislature

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will take a position against the legalization of marijuana.

I should also like to welcome the two new Members to the Legislature. Even though their stay may be short, I wish them the very best personally, and I hope that they make a positive contribution.

Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' ability to take these two constituencies from the Liberals indicates they are in fact a serious threat to become the official Opposition in the next election. The question I am forced to ask is: So what! Most people are aware that there is no difference between the Liberals and the Conservatives. Both parties represent the giant corporations; both parties believe that society should be based on the principle of maximization of profits. I must say, however, that I was personally appalled to hear the Conservative Leader, the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) greet these by-election victories with the statement that the PCs offered and I quote:

A return to good old fashioned Christian morality.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — He is quoted in the Star-Phoenix as saying that what he meant was:

For example, the voters are concerned when hardened criminals are allowed to roam the streets because of inadequate levels of punishment.

Mr. Speaker, it was reported to me during the Saskatoon by-election that the Conservatives were playing on this issue on the doorstep, that they were raising this issue in the Sutherland area. My inclination was not to believe this. I found it difficult to believe that they could raise this kind of issue and pretend that they had some sort of magic solution. They knew very well that people in Saskatoon were very upset by the cruel murder of four Saskatoon children. Mr. Speaker, yesterday to my amazement the new Member for Sutherland (Mr. Lane) repeated those charges. Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives played on this issue and it is quite clear, and they implied that somehow the Saskatchewan Government was responsible. The Conservatives very cruelly played on these feelings, but they did not tell the people that the murderer was not released from prison in Saskatchewan. Mr. Threinen, the murderer, was roaming the streets, to use the expression of the Member for Nipawin, because he was released in Alberta by Conservatives. David Threinen had a criminal record in Alberta going back to 1965. These included indecent assault, robbery, theft, possession of a weapon. In 1973 in Lethbridge, Alberta he was charged and tried on a charge of non-capital murder in connection with the death of a young girl, Angela Huemer. The Alberta court, the equivalent of a District Court acquitted David Threinen. At that point the Alberta Conservatives' Attorney General could have done two things. He could have appealed the case to a higher court. The Alberta Conservatives chose not to. The Alberta Conservatives, who knew of this man's mental record, could have detained Threinen under mental health legislation. The Alberta Conservatives chose not to. Instead, David Threinen was recommitted by the Federal Parole Board on a parole violation. Threinen was released on mandatory supervision on May 26, 1974. He was freed to roam the streets of Conservative

Alberta because of the inaction of the Alberta Conservatives. Mr. Speaker, sometime in 1975 Threinen moved to Saskatoon. There was no follow-up by the Federal Parole Board; there was no follow-up by the Alberta Conservative Government. No one notified the Saskatchewan police; no one notified the Saskatchewan Government. Now, David Threinen was free to roam the streets of Saskatchewan, thanks to the inaction of the Alberta Conservative Government.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say this, that I can understand a human error, I can see how errors, yes even terrible errors with terrible tragic consequences, can occur in any province, with any government. But when those errors are made by a Conservative Government in Conservative Alberta and the Saskatchewan Conservative Leader, who came from Alberta, has the dishonesty and bigotry to lay the blame on the Saskatchewan Government, when he has the gall to boast of this and describe it as a return to good, old fashioned Christian morality, Mr. Speaker, I am appalled.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — The Member for Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Lane) should be ashamed; the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) should be ashamed; the people of Saskatchewan know a great deal about Christianity. They know the difference between Christianity and dishonesty. They know the difference between Christianity and bigotry. They will not be instructed in Christianity by the Member for Nipawin nor from Saskatoon Sutherland. They will be instructed by the One who said, “Why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the log in your own eye? You imposter! Take the log out of your own eye first!”

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — Mr. Speaker, old timers in the Arm River area have told me many times about the famous 1928 Arm River by-election. That was the time when the Provincial Conservatives used the organizational talent of the Ku Klux Klan to fight the Liberals. They were so successful in that by-election that in 1929 they used the same alliance to gain the Government in Saskatchewan. Not since the Ku Klux Klan Conservative alliance of 1929 have the Saskatchewan people seen such a combination of bigotry and religion for political purposes.

The old timers in Arm River remember the fiery crosses on the main streets of Holdfast, Craik, Loreburn and Kenaston with shame and with regret. Not since the Ku Klux Klan Conservatives, not until the Collver Conservatives, has Saskatchewan witnessed such a combination of dishonesty and bigotry masquerading under the holy name of religion.

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to discuss the details of the Budget, rather I intend to turn now to discuss some of the deep underlying reasons for many of the increasing social and human problems that exist across North America. It is my belief that one of the deep basic problems which prevents many social problems from being adequately dealt with is an unbalanced, individualistic, philosophical liberalism. By liberalism, I do not mean generous or progressive as the term is sometimes used. I am not talking about big “L” liberalism of the Liberal Party.

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I refer to the historic liberal philosophy which was the dominant philosophy of the rising of the merchant class in industrial society. Its battle cry was, "Equality of opportunity." The Horatio Alger myth of the young man who goes out into the world and diligently works his way upward in society is its dominant myth. It was an aggressive philosophy, well suited to motivate and justify the exploitation of the opportunities of a frontier society.

The only problem with this philosophy is that it doesn't work. As inequalities grow in society, as the distribution of wealth becomes more and more unequal, so, too do opportunities become more and more unequal.

It is downright foolish to believe that the son of a lawyer or a doctor making \$50,000 or \$60,000 a year has no more opportunities or privileges than the son of a \$5,000 or \$6,000 a year farmer. Studies around the world have shown that even such good things as improved health care and improved educational aid have not succeeded in removing basic social and economic inequalities because they are deeply rooted in inequalities of wealth.

Instead what has happened in our society is an increasing concentration of power and wealth in multinational corporations. There are literally dozens of multinational corporations larger and more powerful than the Government of Canada. There are hundreds more powerful than the Government of Saskatchewan. It is ironic that the Liberal and Conservative Parties, who both claim to represent the individual, the little man, against big government - in fact represent these multinational corporations against the government and the little man who elects that government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — Mr. Speaker, I would remind all the Members of this Assembly that they are elected by the average citizen of this province. And because we have political democracy, the richest and the poorest man has only one vote each. But, Mr. Speaker, who controls the giant corporations? Who controls the multinational corporations? Most of our citizens don't even hold shares in them. Most of the potash and oil companies are not even owned or controlled in Canada. And yet just ask yourself where the Liberal and Conservative Parties receive their political contributions.

Mr. Cowley, the Member for Biggar, has revealed the Conservative sources. They are the oil companies; they are the banks; they are Algoma Steel of the CPR; they are the private insurance companies.

Mr. Speaker, these are the same sources as the Liberal Party. No one need be surprised. This is the case now and this has always been the case. It is no wonder that these parties represent their corporate shareholders in this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I invite anyone to study the speeches delivered in this Assembly. The Liberal and Conservative speeches are identical. The Member for Lumsden (Mr. Lane) delivers identical speeches from one end of the Opposition benches today as he did one year ago from the other end of the Opposition benches.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — No one need be surprised. Both parties speak for inland terminals; both parties speak for Cargill; both parties speak for the Winnipeg Grain Exchange; both parties speak for the oil companies; both parties speak for the potash companies.

Mr. Speaker, if you will then examine the speeches of New Democrats you will, again, find certain themes. New Democrats speak for the co-operative farmer-owned companies. New Democrats speak for orderly marketing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — New Democrats speak for people helping themselves and their neighbours through co-operatives and credit unions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — New Democrats say the people of this province can develop their own resources through co-operatives and public corporations . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — . . . public corporations in which we hold an equal share.

Mr. Speaker, again, no one need be surprised. The New Democratic Party, the Party of Woodsworth and Douglas and Lloyd and Blakeney, is based on the Christian principles of mutual aid and self-help. We do not believe that selfish individualism leads to a better society. Indeed, in our modern society the selfish individualism of the multinational corporations, their only principle, their guiding principle, the maximization of profits, is leading us to destruction.

These corporate giants have demonstrated that they will pollute the earth, the water, the very air we breathe to make the almighty dollar, the god of private enterprise.

Mr. Speaker, I have described how selfish individualism is, the basic principle of both the Liberal and Conservative Parties. The basic principle of the New Democratic Party is mutual aid and self-help. We do not believe that you bring out the best in man by appealing to the worst in man.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — I ask any fair-minded person to look around him. I say the problems you see around you are caused by selfishness, problems we cause for ourselves, problems we cause for others.

I am not so naive to believe that selfishness will suddenly disappear. But I do know that you cannot base an economic system on selfish individualism and reap anything but envy, hatred, violence and injustice. No, the answer lies in basing our economic system on mutual aid and self-help. The answer lies in the prayer as stated by J. S. Woodsworth, "That which we

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desire for ourselves, we wish for all.”

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — Mr. Speaker, if this seems like the dream of an idealist, so be it. Recently the distinguished scientist Paul Ehrlich has written:

Perhaps the major necessary ingredient that has been missing from a solution to the problems of both the United States and the rest of the world is a goal, a vision of the kind of spaceship earth that ought to be and the kind of crew that should man her. Society has always had its visionaries who talked of love, beauty, peace and plenty. But somehow the practical men have always been there to praise the smog as a sign of progress, to preach just wars and to restrict love while giving hate free reign. It must be one of the greatest ironies of the history of mankind that the only salvation for the practical men now lies in what they think of as the dreams of idealists. The question now is: can the realists be persuaded to face reality in time?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — Mr. Speaker, I apologize to no one for believing that this spaceship earth will only be made better by a crew that believes in the brotherhood of man. This world will only be made better when selfish individualism is replaced by unselfish co-operation and brotherhood.

Those are, indeed, the ideals of the New Democratic Party. We do not believe in the Golden Rule of the Liberal and Conservative Parties which says, “Those who have the gold make the rules.” We believe in the Golden Rule which says that we treat others as we wish to be treated ourselves, as brothers, as equals, or as Woodsworth phrased it, “That which we desire for ourselves, we wish for all.”

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. FARIS: — Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support the political movement led by men of the honesty and integrity of J. S. Woodsworth, Tommy Douglas, Woodrow Lloyd and Allan Blakeney.

I will proudly support this Budget Speech.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. E. C. MALONE (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I think at the outset that I should say that in joining this Budget Debate I do not plan on taking part in the rather disgusting debate that’s been going on between the Members of the Government and the Members of the Conservative Party as to whose fault it is that David Threinen was loose in Saskatoon. I can’t recall in my short stay in this Legislature when we have sunk so low in debating a topic in the Legislature of this province. I’m sure it comes as great comfort to the families of those children involved in Saskatoon to hear the

Conservatives and the NDP trying to blame one another for the tragedy that occurred. Nor, Mr. Speaker, am I going to talk about Christian morality and Christian ethics and who has the greatest amount of it in their political parties. I think I have found in the past that politicians who dwell on how great Christians they are or how good a Christian he is are protesting too much and that if we look behind some of their records and some of the things they've been saying, they've been using this as a great defense to cover up other past sins.

No, Mr. Speaker, I think what I'll do is something different from the last two Members who took their seat. I'm going to talk about the Budget.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget Speech of last Thursday by the Minister of Finance is a clear admission by the New Democratic Party Government of failure, of failure to grasp the economic opportunity that has been presented to Saskatchewan over the past five years, of failure to develop the mineral resources we possess in such abundance, of failure to begin the process of diversifying the Saskatchewan economy so that we don't have to continue to rely on agricultural production for our economic well-being.

Never before in the history of this country has a government been presented with so great an opportunity to improve the quality of life for the people that it governs, and in addition, an opportunity to build a better and stronger province for future generations. Never before in the history of this country has a government failed so miserably to understand or appreciate the potential greatness that could have been achieved. When the NDP took power we were regarded by the rest of Canada as a 'have not' province. When we defeat the NDP Government in 1979 we will still be regarded by the rest of Canada as a 'have not' province. And this is the tragedy, because we have everything within our borders that would enable us to become a 'have' province, a leader within Confederation, a province that would be the envy of all Canadians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — But blinded by the socialist dogma that they adhere to, this Government would rather see the Province of Saskatchewan remain as a poor relative within Confederation, than allow us to develop our potential in any other way than through socialism.

They would rather see our resources remain under the ground, than be developed by anyone but themselves.

They would rather take money from the Energy Fund and use it to buy potash companies than put it to a thousand and one other better more productive uses.

They would rather use the taxpayers' money to buy farm land to be owned and controlled by the Government, than help our young farmers become established and have the pride of ownership in their property, the pride of ownership that has made our farmers the greatest producers of agricultural products in the world. We welcome the announcement that Land Bank land will be sold. But we wonder why it took this Government so long to make a clear statement of its intentions. But until we see the terms by which the land will be offered for sale, we reserve judgment as to whether or not the Government is sincere in its expressed intentions.

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Mr. Speaker, it has been the custom in a budget debate to review the record of the Government and to forecast, if at all possible, the likely results in the future of the Government's spending policy.

I should like, Mr. Speaker, to take a few moments to do this in order to bring to the attention of the people of Saskatchewan, many matters that the Minister of Finance failed to deal with in his budget presentation last Thursday.

The Government of the New Democratic Party, since 1971, has been a government based on confrontation and has distinguished itself, if that is the proper word, by incompetence. This policy of confrontation, whether designed or not, has brought about the Budget we are debating today, a deficit budget with increased taxation, a budget that should have been one that reduced taxes across the board and left the Treasury with a modest surplus in revenue and the Energy Fund with an enormous surplus.

In 1973 we saw the beginning of this policy of confrontation with the implementation of Bill 42. Rather than sit down with the oil industry and develop a royalty system that would have left the developers of our oil and natural gas resources with a fair profit for their investment and labor, the Government chose to implement the highest rate of petroleum taxation possible. Because of their grasping attitude, we saw initially, substantial revenues accrue to the Treasury of this province. But more important, and at the same time we also saw the virtual destruction of the private oil industry in Saskatchewan and a resulting drastic decline in exploration for oil and natural gas, a decline I remind you, Mr. Speaker, at a time when the demand for these products was at an all time high, at a price that was at an all time high and has since gone higher.

And as well, we have also seen a decline since 1973 of the amount of money being paid to the Energy Fund. These figures are as follows— from April 1, 1974 to March 31, 1975, the fund received approximately \$178,980,000. From April 1, 1975 to March 31, 1976, the fund received the sum of \$147,290,000, a decline of approximately \$31 million in one year. From April 1, 1976 to February of this year, the fund has received \$99,224,000. Of course, we are not at the year's end, but it is estimated that a further \$10 million will accrue during the month of March for a total of \$109,224,000, a further reduction in one year of some \$38,066,000, and a staggering reduction in two years of approximately \$70 million. We have no reason to hope that the steady decline in the amount of moneys being paid to the Energy Fund will be stopped. Indeed, it is likely the amount of money into the fund will continue to decline unless the present royalty structure is changed.

What we should have seen, of course, is dramatic increases in the amount being paid into this fund, as has been the case in Alberta, where a more reasonable position was taken by the government of that province. Furthermore, there is no indication whatsoever, that the private oil industry will be returning to this province in any substantial way while this Government retains power.

We are all, of course, aware that the Government's so called solution to the development of the oil industry in Saskatchewan has been the establishment of the Crown Corporation known as

Saskoil. But what has Saskoil done since its formation in 1973? This company has not discovered any new reserves of oil or natural gas in Saskatchewan. This company has not drilled anywhere near the number of wells that had been drilled prior to 1973. This company has not produced any meaningful profit to the people of Saskatchewan, through its own activities or through the royalties that it pays to the Treasury.

Indeed, about the only thing that Saskoil has done is to purchase existing oil reserves from the private sector, and by so doing has not added one extra penny to the Treasury of this province, has not created one new job or opportunity, and has not even been able to attract to Saskatchewan, the people who were involved in the oil service industry in 1973 and who left after the imposition of Bill 42.

Indeed up until March 31, 1976, the net profit from the operations of Saskoil amounted to only \$95,500 for two years. The taxpayers of Saskatchewan, in that same period of time, have paid to Saskoil from the Energy Fund, the sum of \$25 million, resulting in a net grand profit on investment of 0.382 per cent.

It is interesting as well, to note the decline in activity in the number of wells drilled in this province since the passage of Bill 42. In 1973, 661 wells were drilled; in 1974, 286 wells; and in 1975, 277 wells. In 1976 the decline continued and only 262 wells were drilled. Contrast this with the province of Alberta which is subject to the same federal tax laws that this province is subject to and you will find that in every year since 1973 more wells were drilled than the year before.

The policy of confrontation continued after 1973, and again in the resource sector, this time with the potash industry.

Once again we see a similar situation, only worse than that which developed with the oil industry. The Government imposed a crushing tax load on the potash developers, a tax load that halted any future expansion of the industry in Saskatchewan, but has encouraged expansion of the industry in places outside of this province, and this has resulted in the Government taking steps to either purchase or expropriate half to all of the industry. This policy of confrontation, rather than fair dealing, will result not only in a decline in tax revenues accruing to the province, but the investment of enormous sums of the taxpayers' money to buy an industry we already manage and control. To date the sum is \$272 million.

But the policy of confrontation has not been confined only to the resource sector. It has been much wider than that. In fact, almost all of us living in Saskatchewan today have been forced to deal with it. Urban municipalities, Regina and Saskatoon have had a ward system thrust upon them by this Government which they neither desired nor requested.

Rural municipalities are being told that they will have weight restrictions imposed on municipal roads whether they want it or not.

Farmers in the Weyburn area, who have risked their own money to build an inland grain terminal, are told by their Government that every stumbling block possible will be put in their way, that their Government does not want their daring experiment to be successful because their Government does not

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agree with its concept.

Hog producers have a marketing board imposed upon them without their consent. It appears only to be a matter of time before those in the cattle industry will have a beef marketing board imposed as well, without their consent.

The people of Saskatchewan are denied the benefit and enjoyment that would accrue from cable TV because of this Government's attitude to the Government of Canada and the CRTC.

The people of Coronach who are directly affected by the new SPC development are unable to settle their justified claims for compensation because of the Government's intransigent position.

The list could go on and on, Mr. Speaker, but suffice it to say at this time, that this Government is not governing on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, but is governing only for themselves and for the purpose of implementing what they in their wisdom feel to be the best for the people of Saskatchewan, whether the people agree or not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — I referred earlier to a government of incompetency. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that any government that admits that it cannot pass adequate laws to control and regulate resource developers, whether they be multinational corporations or not, is incompetent.

I suggest that any government that allows the oil and gas industry to deteriorate to the extent that it has at a time when the demand for petroleum is at an all time high is incompetent.

I suggest that any government that finds itself in the position of perhaps having to repay the sum of \$500 million in taxes that it collected illegally, is incompetent.

I suggest that any government that cannot balance a budget in a year when total personal income is at an all-time high, is incompetent.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, the list could go on and on to demonstrate how inept this Government has been in handling the affairs of the people it governs.

And what of the future? All signs point to an economy that will be less buoyant than the past. We have been told that we cannot expect to receive the same price for our wheat and our other agricultural products that we have enjoyed over the past few years. Indeed there is a possibility that we will be facing severe drought conditions in the year immediately ahead. This Government should be planning now to deal with these problems of the future if the unhappy predictions that we have been hearing should come true. This Government should not be planning on spending hundreds of millions of dollars to buy further potash mines at a time when our economic prospects are uncertain. This Government should not be pledging the credit of this province to get further involved in the resource sector, when our farmers may well need temporary financial assistance to help them through a difficult period. This Government should not be

making huge expenditures to build government office buildings in Regina and Saskatoon and elsewhere, when these moneys could be used to implement policies that would provide better health care, or better roads, or better educational facilities.

Mr. Speaker, a Liberal Government would not have brought a budget of this nature to the Legislature for approval. A Liberal Government would have encouraged the development of our resources by the private sector, in such a manner that the people of Saskatchewan, who are the owners of those resources, would receive their fair share of the profits that accrue therefrom. The development of those resources would have added more jobs, more productivity, and more money to the Treasury of this province. That money would not have been used to fight law suits that are unnecessary and potentially disastrous for our taxpayers. That money would not have been used to hire thousands of additional civil servants to implement programs that people do not want.

That money would have been used to further develop what we have in energy resources. Our policy would have been to encourage the expansion of the potash industry, rather than to buy it. Our policy would have been to, wherever possible create jobs in the private sector in the resource industry and elsewhere, that would increase the productivity of this province. Our policy would have been to help senior citizens who are still the innocent victims of inflation by guaranteeing them an income that would allow them to live in dignity and in their own homes. Our policy would have been to improve the quality of medical care in our hospitals by making funds available to keep hospital beds open, not to close them, to hire nurses and support personnel for our physicians.

Our policy would have been to not impose Succession Duty Taxes or Gift Taxes at all, so that the people of Saskatchewan could have remained in this province and invested their earnings of the past in the future of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, a Liberal Government would have started the process of diversifying our economy, so that if the gloomy predictions of the future for agriculture are correct, we would have had a tax base to fall back on in the resource sector. A Liberal Government would have taken advantage of the demands for our resources by developing them and establishing the secondary industries that naturally flow from such development.

A Liberal Government would have passed laws that would have guided and stimulated our non-agricultural economy, and not laws that have brought it to a standstill.

A Liberal Government would have been responsive to the needs of the people of Saskatchewan and responsible to the people who elected it.

In 1979, Mr. Speaker, a Liberal Government will act in accordance with the wishes of the people of Saskatchewan and not in defiance of them.

In 1979 a Liberal Government will not govern by confrontation with those it represents, but with a spirit of fair dealing, and fair play and justice.

In 1979, a Liberal Government will grasp the opportunity that has been presented to Saskatchewan and get on with the job

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of making Saskatchewan a better place for those who live here now and for those who will follow us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — Mr. Speaker, we in the Liberal Party have a passionate belief in Saskatchewan - in its people - in its future. We believe that we are not second best or second rate - but that we have all the resources of people and raw materials that will enable us to become the leading province of the West and the envy of all who live in this great country. We believe that Saskatchewan can be a leader in a united Canada and that our expectations of greatness can be realized in our lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I see nothing in this Budget that would allow me to think that the Government which sits opposite believes in our expectations, nor does it strive to attain them, and accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I am unable to support the Budget, but will be supporting the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. A. S. MATSALLA (Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources): — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to participate in this Budget Debate. I should like to begin by congratulating my colleague, the Minister of Finance, for the very able manner in which he delivered the Budget on Thursday last. I would also like to congratulate the Hon. Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf) and the Hon. Member for Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Lane) on their election to this Assembly. I believe that their stay here, although brief, will certainly be one of a memorable experience.

Mr. Speaker, since 1971 the people of Saskatchewan have come to expect responsibility and good management in their provincial budgets. The Budget before this House, Mr. Speaker, reflects these characteristics and meets the expectations of Saskatchewan citizens. The Budget takes note of the fact that since 1972 we have seen unprecedented growth and diversification of our economy. At the same time we have seen a host of improvements in programs for people.

Other speakers during this debate have done an excellent job in reviewing these accomplishments, therefore, my only comment in this regard would be that our record speaks for itself. I have every confidence in the judgment of Saskatchewan people when it comes to making that important choice as to which government can be trusted with the important job of directing the affairs of this great province of ours.

Mr. Speaker, the position of the two Opposition parties with respect to this Budget was predictable. The Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe), in particular, should be singled out for the remarks he put forward as the Liberal financial critic. I have listened to many speeches in this Legislature, but never have I listened to such vindictiveness as the offering made by this Member. Little can be gained by attempting to correct the many distortions, biases and mistruths which accentuated his lengthy speech. However, there was one interesting aspect which merits some comment. He said that after four or five years of depressed conditions, it might be a good idea for deficit budgets, but certainly not at a time when Saskatchewan is just

coming off a year of unprecedented expansion and growth.

It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Morse has not grasped the long-term fiscal planning policy of this Government. Since 1972 when this Government introduced a new accounting system to more responsibly deal with long-term economic cycles, we have been able to carry forward in excess of \$111 billion, an investment for the future, putting money away so that we have something to fall back on when the economy slows down as it is doing at the present time.

The Member for Morse criticized us for finding ourselves in a position where expenditures will outstrip revenues for the next 12 month period. He says that we shouldn't have let it happen. He says a Liberal Government would not have let it happen. Mr. Speaker, what he is saying is that a Liberal Government would not have sacrificed a balanced budget to provide \$31.5 million for the beef industry assistance program. What he is saying is that he would not have allowed increased hospital staff salaries. And he would not have allowed a Liberal Government to pay out millions of dollars in disaster assistance to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, Liberals would have done it differently all right. We know what approach they use when increased revenues are needed. They would like the people of Saskatchewan to think that Black Friday Budgets of former Liberal Governments are the answer. But, Mr. Speaker, this Government rejects that philosophy and the people of Saskatchewan reject such an approach.

He goes on to say we should abolish the sales tax, and says that Saskatchewan people are being penalized because the people of Alberta, under a free enterprise government, don't have to pay a sales tax.

I would ask the Member for Morse to ask his Alberta friends how much they are paying for hospital and automobile premiums these days.

MR. ANDERSON: — I think credit should be given where credit is due. The critic was the Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher).

MR. SPEAKER: — I think the point is well taken. I think the Member is referring to the Member for Thunder Creek as the financial critic.

MR. MATSALLA: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Member. Very definitely that is the Member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Thunder Creek certainly disappointed many when he spoke during this debate. His inability to separate fact from fiction prevented him from making any kind of positive contribution during this debate.

As for the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) my observations will be brief. With the walls of the Liberal Party crumbling away, the Conservatives had what appeared to be a reasonable opportunity to assert themselves as the alternative opposition in the Legislature, and as the voice of the free enterprise and big business in the Province of Saskatchewan. Leadership is obviously a problem. And I am sure the born-again Member for

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Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane) will cherish the opportunity to brawl his way to the leader's chair. However, in the interim, I would like to remind him that it appears that the Member for Nipawin must shoulder that responsibility.

When John Diefenbaker says that Federal Conservatives under Joe Clark should unite under the slogan, "Me too", the same line of thought can be applied to Conservatives in Saskatchewan. No policies, no programs, no alternatives and nothing positive. But if it is good policy which the Government brings forward and one which has widespread public support, the Conservatives say they agree, but they will do better - no policy of their own, and no ideas for new policies. That is the Conservative position.

I can only describe the Conservative Leader's contribution in this debate as one of either lack of understanding the complexities of government or a conscious commitment to promise and propose nothing and hope that somehow people will trust him. Mr. Speaker, either way the situation is not a healthy one and surely this Legislature and the people of this province deserve more.

Mr. Speaker, this Government has adopted a most reasonable and most positive approach in terms of the economic development of this province. For years we have experienced a whiplash, the boom and bust cycles which have hit the agricultural industry in Saskatchewan. Our great dependence on agriculture carries with it a price instability. Agriculture continues to play a most important role within the provincial economic framework and our policies during the past five years have reflected the confidence and commitment we have in our farming community.

The relative prosperity of the past two years brought on by the increased demand for our agricultural and mineral production placed Saskatchewan in a privileged situation.

Unlike other provinces in Canada our economy marked rapid gains, gains which in some instances outperformed past performances. Our ability to benefit from this buoyancy is shown in many ways.

Health care is one practical example. Look what is happening in free enterprise British Columbia and Conservative Alberta and Tory Ontario. Hospital closures and reduced services are the hallmarks of their health programs.

In Saskatchewan we have not only been able to stabilize our services but improve on the quality and availability of our total health services. The examples do not end here, however.

Members of this Government are confident that Saskatchewan today compares favorably with any province or jurisdiction in North America. We invite comparisons. This is true in health, education, housing, services for older people, agriculture, automobile insurance, recreation and many other areas.

The new initiatives of this Budget affirm the confidence we have in the ability of this province and its people to continue this progress.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance used the term "cautious optimism" to describe the projection for 1977. In concurring with this description it is interesting to know the doom and

gloom expressed by the Members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, what are the realities of today's Saskatchewan economy? Farm cash receipts in 1977 should be close to that of last year's level but higher operating costs will cause realized net farm income to decline marginally.

The development of our mineral resources will be a major factor in maintaining economic stability. And during the next 12 months we expect the value of mineral production to increase by nearly 23 per cent. Oil production will be up and the value of uranium production could very easily double in the present year.

Gains in manufacturing and construction should continue. An expanded program by the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation will help to sustain residential construction in 1977 and bring a measure of relief from Saskatchewan's low vacancy rate.

Employment will again advance in the next year and our unemployment rate will continue to be one of the lowest in Canada. Saskatchewan's population will experience further growth during the next fiscal year.

In brief, Mr. Speaker, these are the realities of the Saskatchewan economy. They reflect confidence for the future and despite what Members opposite might say these are positive reactions to the policies and programs of this New Democratic Government.

Mr. Speaker, our optimism for the future is, however, subject to outside influences over which we have little or no control. Problems such as inflation, unemployment and slow economic growth are national problems. When these national problems become part of our provincial economy it is necessary to be cautious and this is well reflected in the Budget before us.

Mr. Speaker, the challenge of this Government is to continue to provide public services at costs we can afford. There are no simple solutions.

If we listen to Members opposite we could accomplish some of our fiscal problems by slashing the public service, imposing arbitrary cutbacks on essential services, forget about new programs, or impose increased personal taxation. Mr. Speaker, there are only two things wrong with this position; (1) such an approach would not be in the best interests of Saskatchewan people; (2) Such an approach would not provide long-term solutions to the problems confronting the economy.

The reasonable and responsible position of this Government has made it possible for the people of Saskatchewan to continue receiving a high level of service from the Provincial Government at a cost which is reasonable and just.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to provide this Legislature with some comments respecting the Ministerial responsibility I have respecting the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources.

During the past 12 months my department has broadened its initiative in a number of areas. This Budget will allow us to maintain the pace we have set while at the same time ensuring that our department contributes to the responsible financial

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policy of this Government.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to inform this Legislature about two important programs recently announced by my department. The first program is in response to our ongoing commitment with respect to our renewable resource base, wildlife. Recently I announced regulation changes affecting our moose management program. I feel it is important to stress the fact that while these changes apply to moose only, the revisions are an indication of our mandate to ensure that policies relating to the entire wildlife resource base in Saskatchewan are positive and reflect good management practices. The changes are twofold and will have practical application beginning with next fall's hunting season. As you are aware, in recent years the allocation of moose licences was determined by the big game draw. The draw system was instituted in an attempt to reduce moose harvest, allowing the population to recover, thereby permitting a return to a more freely accessible hunting licence system.

That was four years ago. While moose populations have recovered in certain areas, there are several regions within Saskatchewan where these populations remain low thereby limiting licence quotas. In addition many letters, resolutions and complaints have indicated that Saskatchewan hunters value the opportunity to hunt moose very highly and are not satisfied with a system which only allows hunting once every three years.

Based on the findings of a research project to determine the reasons for a decrease in moose numbers, coupled with a comprehensive review of management programs in Sweden and Norway, where the moose situation is quite similar, our new moose management program was developed.

I should also point out that considerable consultation has already taken place with respect to these changes prior to their finalization. It should be noted that the Saskatchewan Game and Advisory Committee fully supports these program revisions and I feel their support can be interpreted as a good cross-section of public opinion in relationship to matters affecting this aspect of game management.

The committee consists of representatives from the Saskatchewan Federation of Indians, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, the Saskatchewan Stock Grower's Association and the Saskatchewan Northern Trapper's Association. At this point in time a word of commendation is in order to members of my department who have been involved with this program. It is their initiative and their determination coupled with their game management expertise which resulted in a new management program, a program which is the first of its kind in North America.

The basis then of the new moose management program is the introduction of a two-licence system. The first licence will be known as a special moose licence. This licence will permit any moose to be taken. These licences, to be allocated by zone, would be available through a non-priority draw. A limited number of these licences will be allotted by zone to assure a minimum harvest of cow moose thereby protecting the prime breeding segment of the moose herd. All hunters not successful in the draw for special moose licences can purchase a regular moose licence. Only bull moose or young of the year animals can be taken under this licence. These licences are valid in all zones.

Two weeks of hunting in September or October and a similar period in November or December will be permitted for each type of licence.

It is my hope that these changes will not only provide an avenue for better management of the resource, but also provide a better opportunity for hunters to participate in the moose hunting seasons. Hunter co-operation is essential if this program is to succeed and based on past performance I am confident that problems will be minimal and I look forward to next fall when these regulations will have practical application when the moose season opens.

Mr. Speaker, there have been changes in fisheries and wildlife programs. Increasing demands to develop lands for various purposes have resulted in emphasis towards fisheries and wildlife habitat protection.

In fisheries a stream protection program has been implemented. This is designed to provide developing agencies and other government departments with technical expertise to reduce damage to the aquatic environment.

In wildlife a habitat group has been established to provide wildlife input into land and drainage development proposals. This group currently works closely with the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture and the Saskatchewan Department of the Environment.

This Government has placed increasing emphasis on environmental impact assessment prior to any major development being initiated. Fisheries and wildlife are basic indicators of environmental quality, thus the demands on the technical expertise of these programs will be heavy in the forthcoming year.

Studies are also proposed to investigate specific fisheries and wildlife problems. It is essential that resource management decisions are solidly based on fact and this research will form the basis for all fisheries and wildlife management planning in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a few comments on the subject of firearm safety training. Over the years the safe handling of firearms has been a primary concern of all Saskatchewan people. When firearm accidents in Saskatchewan rose alarmingly high back in the 1950's, the Department of Natural Resources in conjunction with the Saskatchewan Fish and Game League worked closely in developing a program of organized hunter safety courses in our province.

The Fish and Game League took an active role in administering the program and over 8,000 firearm safety instructors worked to make this program a success.

The reductions in the rate of firearm accidents since then is one measure of the success of the program. There has been a reduction from 54 firearm accidents per 100,000 hunting licences sold in 1961 to 19 accidents per 100,000 hunting licences sold in 1975. In addition, of the 55,000 graduates of the program since its inception in 1960, less than one per cent has been involved in any kind of firearm accident. The reduction in human suffering and misery which these accidents can cause made all the time and the effort all of us have put into the program very worthwhile. However, Mr. Speaker, we are not prepared to

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rest on our laurels. Our objective is to work for complete elimination of firearm accidents.

Past programs had a positive influence. However, we are still having accidents with firearms, a total of 63 in 1975 of which 8 proved to be fatal. Over the past few years the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation recommended expansion of the Firearm Safety Program. They recommended that it be made mandatory for the first time hunters to possess a firearm safety certificate before being eligible to purchase a hunting licence. Then they further recommended that eventually this mandatory provision should apply to all hunters. In considering this proposal, this Government found itself face to face with very heavy responsibility. The number of people who like to hunt in Saskatchewan is large in proportion to our total population, And if a mandatory program was introduced, the department would have to ensure that courses in firearm safety would be readily available to all who required them. Considering all factors, I announced recently the commencement of a program of mandatory firearm safety training in Saskatchewan. Because of the large number of hunters in the province it will be necessary to phase in the program until eventually all hunters are covered.

The first phase will include all hunters 18 years of age and under to be eligible to purchase a hunting licence for the 1978 hunting season. All persons in this age group must hold a firearm safety course certificate. The mandatory requirement will gradually be expanded year by year to other age classes until the objective is reached that all persons wishing to hunt in our province must have first passed a firearm safety course.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that we all appreciate that with so many hunters to cover with our available resources we had to make a start with one age group. Since hunters 18 years of age and under are annually involved in approximately 25 per cent of the firearm accidents, it has been decided to commence the program with this group. The new requirement should impose no undue hardship on them. Those falling within this age group will have one year and a half to obtain their firearm safety certificate to be eligible to hunt in the 1978 season.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that introduction of this mandatory firearm safety training program will restore our province to its leadership in firearm safety education in Canada. The three provinces to the east of us have some form of mandatory training as does British Columbia.

To carry out our program in Saskatchewan, we will need the full support and co-operation of everyone. It is a program that all of us who believe in education in the safety handling of firearms sincerely want.

Mr. Speaker, I now would like to make a few comments respecting the forest activity of this department. New forest inventories are to be initiated for about 2,000 square miles northwest of Cumberland House and for about 5,000 square miles in the Wollaston Lake area. An update of the existing standing inventory for about 3,500 square miles in the Cumberland House area will be done.

More detailed guidelines will be produced for timber harvesting operations. These will deal with not only the possible detrimental effect of harvesting operations or other environmental aspects, but also the best ways to lessen them. Details and

background information will be provided so that the departmental officers and harvesters may more readily understand the reasoning behind the guidelines and may define them as necessary.

With respect to forest management, the current chief program is aimed at preparing forest management plans for the forest and provincial parks as well as for other provincial forest areas not under harvest agreement. The schedule for field work in the new fiscal year are the Cypress Hills and Moose Mountain Provincial Park. Other lesser programs include involvement in grazing inspections and the preparation and presentation of scaling courses.

The former program is designed to establish carry capacities for grazing areas in provincial forests, while the latter is carried out to ensure an adequate supply of qualified timber scalers for industrial and governmental needs. Currently a scaling course is scheduled for April 18 to 29 in Prince Albert. The two provincial forest nurseries at Prince Albert and Big River will produce approximately 6.5 million trees for reforestation projects. A new greenhouse complex at Prince Albert nursery will be completed allowing for an annual production of up to two million container-grown seedlings. Development work will continue on the satellite nursery at Chitek Lake and the one between Duck Lake and MacDowell. The first crops are expected to be seeded in 1978.

The department will plant approximately 2.4 million trees on denuded forest lands. The balance of the trees available will be planted by industry and the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. Scarification of some 4,200 acres will be done in preparation for planting in 1978. Regeneration surveys will be conducted on an estimated 8,000 acres on denuded forest land to determine the degree to which regeneration of coniferous trees is occurring. Assessment work will be conducted to determine the success of the reforestation programs.

Mr. Speaker, this Government will continue to act to see that Saskatchewan people get the greatest possible benefit from our resources in the decade ahead. We will continue to build the timber industry in Saskatchewan but priority on job opportunities for local people and economic benefits will be for the people of the province. Priority will be given to the most effective use of human and timber resources, and the need to harvest and renew our forests so that each year's cut is replaced by new growth.

Mr. Speaker, recognizing and supporting the commitment of this New Democratic Party Government to proceed cautiously and responsibly I am satisfied and confident that our programs will receive wide-spread public support. By an economic yardstick Saskatchewan is on the move. Slowly and steadily we are stabilizing and strengthening the economic and social fabric. The people of Saskatchewan are not interested in, and in fact, oppose any principle or policy which will detract from the progress we have recorded in the past five years. It is a good record, Mr. Speaker. This Budget, again, will add to the positive aspects of our developments.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the amendment but I will give my enthusiastic support for the main Motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

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MR. G. H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview): — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this debate. I am somewhat disappointed by the fact that the Minister that just spoke didn't have enough Members of his own Party in the House to constitute a quorum if those of us on this side of the House decided to leave. I think it is some indication, Mr. Speaker, of the degree of credibility which even Members of the NDP have in the statements that are made by their own Ministers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. PENNER: — I want to have the opportunity to express my welcome, publicly, although I have done it privately to the Members for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf) and Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Lane). I wasn't aware that it had been 65 years since the riding of Prince Albert-Duck Lake last had a Progressive Conservative Member. I think we can all assure the present Member that it is likely to be another 65 years before they have another one, I hope.

I want to point out, too, to the Member for Saskatoon Sutherland, even though he is not here I am sure his colleagues will pass the word along, that it is unfortunate that that campaign in Saskatoon Sutherland didn't last another 10 days, because I think had it lasted another 10 days, despite the fact that he got a two-month head start, that Mr. Frazer would have, in fact, turned it around and would have been sitting here today.

I know that the Member for Saskatoon Sutherland is not likely to accept my point of view on that. As a matter of fact there may be some others who are sitting to my left who wouldn't accept my point of view and that will have to be just as it is. I have to say, however, that I have been a bit surprised, Mr. Speaker, by the arrogance that has been shown by the two new Members, particularly. I suppose I ought not to be too amazed when one examines the arrogance of the Leader of that Party, however. I should say, Mr. Speaker, that it is unfortunate in my view that the Minister of Continuing Education (Mr. Faris) did not remain in the pulpit. The message he brought to the House today about brotherly love is something that I think every Member of the House would agree with and I expect that he does not, for one minute, assume that the NDP has any kind of corner on the understanding of other people and the desire to serve other people.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs commented on his frustration on the way that the press has been reporting the proceedings of the House; the fact that the PCs don't seem to put any kind of importance on what is happening in the House. I think that he might have been a bit liberal in his accusations of the press. I think that instead of talking about the press generally maybe what he ought to do is talk about the Leader-Post. Certainly the marriage between the Leader-Post and the PCs is obvious. It is unfortunate that the Leader-Post reporters don't have to take some kind of aptitude test before they come to report what goes on in this House. It is obvious that creditable reporting is not a part of that particular document.

I want to compliment the Minister of Education (Mr. Tchorzewski) before I get into my remarks about the Budget, for having tabled today the White Paper on school law. I think that most of us who have been involved with education have waited anxiously for this document. We all are aware that there has been a tremendous amount of work done around the province by thousands of people who are interested in school law. I hope the Minister will soon give us an indication of what his timetable is for hearing concerns and obtaining observations from those who are interested in education. I think it behooves all us who are involved as legislators, to listen very carefully to the kinds of comments that will come in from those who are directly involved.

I want to say, again, to the Minister despite the fact that he is not here, that I am glad we were able to get a copy of the White Paper today.

Mr. Speaker, I said at the outset that I am pleased to be able to participate in the Budget Debate, very briefly. It is unfortunate that the subject of my remarks is on the irresponsible position taken by the Government of Saskatchewan.

I want to make it clear that there are some things in that Budget that I support. I support, for example, the removal of the estate taxes. I am only surprised that it took the Government so long to listen to the Liberal Caucus and their point of view on that point. I want to say, too, that I am pleased to see the Safety '77 Program in the Budget and the funding that that provides. I expect that the Member for Kinistino (Mr. Thibault) is pleased as chairman of the Committee that brought in the recommendations to see the funding there. By the way, I am glad to see Mr. Thibault back in the House and I hope that his health will soon return to normal.

Mr. Speaker, this Budget, calling for a second deficit and predicting a \$45 million deficit when it is more likely to be \$100 million, leaving aside the fact that it makes no mention of something in the order of \$250 million in outstanding pension contributions that are unfunded and make the position of the Government that much worse financially, has shown how ineffective and irresponsible the fiscal management of this Government has been.

Saskatchewan has enjoyed buoyant times recently. We have had a good deal of urban growth and excellent grain crops. Buoyant times have been enjoyed in spite of the Members opposite because of the hard work of our agricultural community and weather that has allowed good crops. Indeed, the last crop is the biggest in the history of the province. And yet, Mr. Speaker, this province is in a deficit position. This Government has obviously developed a philosophy of deficit financing purposely. While they may not have known the exact amount of the deficit, I believe that the Members opposite knew that they would have a deficit in 1976. I think they know that the deficit that they are going to have in 1977 is greater than the one they have said they are going to have.

Mr. Speaker, one can argue that there are circumstances where a deficit Budget is warranted. For example, it might be argued that if the Provincial Government made a determined effort to relieve local governments of having to levy property tax increases during a period of high inflation, then a deficit Provincial Budget might be justifiable.

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Did this happen in 1976? The answer is clearly, No. In 1976 the Provincial Government made the local governments the tax goat. Municipal governments and school boards had to raise local tax rates significantly in order to retain a level of service similar to what it had been in 1975.

Mr. Speaker, the same story is now unfolding for 1977. Let us first of all, take a look at municipal governments.

Stories carried in the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix immediately after the Budget Speech of March 10th indicated concerns from the Mayors of Prince Albert, North Battleford and Saskatoon. I want to, very briefly, quote some of these. Mr. Wright, the Mayor of Saskatoon said the following:

I am not satisfied, I expected more particularly in light of the fact that there was no increase last year.

Mr. Wright said that he did not believe his expectations were too high in counting on a \$4 or \$5 per capita grant increase.

A \$5 increase would represent about two mills in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, the Mayors of Prince Albert and North Battleford, quoted in the same edition of the Star-Phoenix, March 12th, expressed shock and disappointment at the amount of the grant provided by this Budget:

To say the Budget announcement came as an unpleasant surprise would be the understatement of the year, said the Mayor of North Battleford, Jack Clements.

The greatest disappointments of both Mayors was the \$2 boost in unconditional grants to municipalities for a total \$22 per capita. "It is a pittance. I am terribly disappointed," said the Mayor of North Battleford.

The concerns expressed, Mr. Speaker, were specific. An increase of \$2 per capita will make it very difficult for municipal politicians when they are setting their mill rates. If they take the same position as the Minister of Finance did, there will be no alternative but to substantially increase local property taxes. The Minister of Finance brought forward a \$1.5 billion Budget saying they were not prepared to cut services and at the same time the percentage of provincial income tax has been raised from 40 per cent to 59.59 per cent of the federal tax.

Oh, I know, Mr. Speaker, that the Members opposite take the position that the amount of money paid in income tax in 1977 is less than it was for 1976. But, Mr. Speaker, that is no thanks to the Provincial Government, no thanks to the degree of financial bungling perpetrated on the people of Saskatchewan by this Government; no thanks to the fact that the Government does not have the intestinal fortitude to admit that it is time to put the lid on Government spending; no thanks to a government that is not prepared to review programs, make some cuts where necessary and admit some errors in judgment, no thanks to a government that forces cuts in hospital staffs and hospital beds and yet squanders \$273 million on two potash mines; no thanks to a government that does not have the intestinal fortitude to make some priority decisions, some tough decisions, Mr. Speaker, to hold down the level of Government spending.

Instead the Minister of Finance took the position that if services were to be cut back, it would have to be done by local governments. Again, the province has taken the position that local governments are to be the tax goats.

Those municipal governments, Mr. Speaker, which were issued a \$2 per capita grant increase, are concerned about the implications of the small amount of the increase. They also welcome the concept of revenue-sharing formulas with the province, a concept we have supported for some time.

At the same time, however, Mr. Speaker, those local governments have been hit with a 4 cent per gallon increase in gasoline. For many of those local governments, that 4 cent per gallon increase will eat substantially into the \$2 per capita increase. I suggest, as a result, that the Minister of Finance review the implications of the additional 4 cent per gallon increase on municipal governments with a view to exempting them from the increase. If that suggestion is not acceptable, then I ask the Minister of Finance and his officials to meet with representatives of the municipal governments to look at other possible alternatives before the Budget is finalized.

There is little point, Mr. Speaker, in giving \$2 per capita to a city like Saskatoon, resulting in about \$260,000, less than one mill when at the same time the 4 cent per gallon increase in gasoline is going to eat \$30,000 to \$50,000 out of that amount of money.

In debate yesterday the Member for Weyburn (Mr. Pepper) implored all Members of this Assembly to focus on what is best for the people of Saskatchewan and to put forward positive solutions.

Well, there is the solution. I put it to the Government and I ask the Minister of Finance to sit down with his officials and see if they can't do something to relieve what is obviously going to be a severe tax burden that is going to have to be put by local governments.

I have another suggestion, Mr. Speaker, this one directed at the Minister of Education (Mr. Tchorzewski) and also related to the transfer of the tax problem to local government, in this case school boards.

Mr. Speaker, the increase in operating grants to school boards totals 10 per cent. Most Members will appreciate that that figure is an average, some systems may receive a little more and others may receive a little less. I venture to say that based on the preliminary budgets submitted by school boards to the department last fall, that this level of grants would allow balanced budgets for 1977 with a two, three, or four mill rate increase. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the picture is not that bright. The largest percentage increase in the budget of every school board in Saskatchewan has not yet been determined. I am speaking, of course, of teachers' salaries. Boards do not know how much the teachers' salaries will increase because negotiations have not yet been completed and because control over what the increase is to be rests entirely with the Government.

Mr. Speaker, we can make some guesses about what the increase will be. They could average 8 per cent or 10 per cent or whatever. The point is that school boards must make some

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provision for these increases. To expect the grant increase to come close to picking up the impact of these increases, pay for increased costs of all other aspects of their operation, including the 4 cent per gallon on gasoline, on their busing of their students, and maintain the same level of services in 1976, is sheer folly. It can't be done unless local school boards substantially increase their tax rates.

My second positive suggestion, Mr. Speaker, then is to do what one of my superintendent colleagues suggested to me on the weekend. When he realized that the notice he received detailing his grant for 1977 was to cover the cost of anticipated salary increases in addition to the figures in his preliminary budget, he remarked, "Well, surely there will be a further adjustment once the salaries are announced." I pointed out that I did not believe the Government intended to do that. It is my view that the Government ought to seriously consider doing that. For the benefit of the Members opposite, particularly the Member for Weyburn, I am not suggesting that you increase the Provincial Budget in order to do it. What I am suggesting is a rethinking of priorities. I believe that the means is at your disposal to realize those two objectives, to provide significant relief to the local property tax burden of the people of the province. What it requires is a re-thinking of priorities.

For example, Mr. Speaker, it is alarming to me when I realize that in this province there are approximately 281,000 households, according to Statistics Canada and according to the Minister of Finance, and also approximately 14,000 civil servants. That figure, by the way, does not take into account the employees of our Crown corporations. If we were to include them the figure would be much higher. At any rate, Mr. Speaker, let's assume the 14,000 figure is correct. That works out to one civil servant for every 19 households in this province.

In my view, and I think in the view of many people in Saskatchewan, that is a bit rich. Let there be no misunderstanding, Mr. Speaker, about the issue I raise. It has nothing whatsoever to do with the quality of their service. The issue, instead, is clearly out of numbers. We are being smothered by the civil service. Even if we were to make a ratio of 25 to one instead of 19 to one, the amount of money saved in salaries alone would likely be in the range of \$30 million. If you take a look at all of the cars and all of the other luxuries that are available, the total amount of money saved that could be re-directed would be considerably more than that. I suggest, as a positive step for Members opposite, that when they reexamine their priorities, that they examine this topic and the related costs of cars, office space and all the rest of it.

When we look at priorities, Mr. Speaker, Government Members might keep in mind the following figures:

If you take a look at the budget from the Government opposite from 1972 through to 1977 and you take a look at the amount of education as a percentage of the total budget, you will find that it has continually dropped every year, from 31.45 per cent of the budget in 1972 to 23.13 per cent of the Budget in 1977. Those are all NDP budgets, Mr. Speaker, and there can be no question about gross budget or net budget or any other kind of budget.

The kind of priority given to education by the Government opposite has gone down every year since 1972.

Mr. Speaker, let us take a look at what this Government has done with regard to municipal affairs. They talk about the amount of money they make available to municipal affairs. In 1972 - 7.08 per cent of total provincial budget went into municipal affairs. And in 1977 it is down under 6 per cent to 5.9 per cent of the total budget. Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder that local governments in this province are finding it so difficult to make ends meet and why property taxpayers, every year, are having their tax rates increased substantially because this Government isn't providing money to local government as they ought to do.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come for some hard-nosed decisions and I invite Members opposite to make some. Mr. Speaker, my position on health care is clear. Stated in simple terms, I believe the Government needs to re-examine priorities. They need immediately to change the Drug Plan, pattern it after the Manitoba Plan and provide protection for those who need it, but don't squander millions of dollars providing a universal drug plan because somehow there is this concept that things are free. Re-open negotiations with Saskatchewan's dentists regarding the Dental Plan. Continue to develop the concept of rationalization of health care instead of dismantling committees that have been structured to carry that out. Make certain that there are sufficient Level IV beds so that Level VI beds don't need to be used up with people who require Level IV treatment but can't get a bed.

Mr. Speaker, I think that is must be obvious to you, as it will be to Members of the House, that I think there is a great deal of merit in the amendment that has been put to this House and I intend to support it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R. N. NELSON (Yorkton): — Mr. Speaker, first of all I, too, should like to congratulate the Members for Prince Albert-Duck Lake and Saskatoon Sutherland for their election to this House. I look forward to constructive criticism from them in the years ahead.

I was rather disappointed yesterday with the Member for Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Lane) at some of the criticisms that he made about education. He seemed to have failed to look at the Estimates that had been arranged for the new grant systems that have increased in value each year. They call them cuts. I should like to call his attention to a few of the cuts that I have rather liked when we compared them to the days of the old free enterprise government of a few years back.

During the days of the old free enterprise government I had up to 45 students in my French class. One of my colleagues had up to 52 students in his class. No more! The largest class that I teach is 27 and the average is well under 20. Mr. Speaker, I like those cuts.

I could continue to discuss some of the other statements that he made but I do not consider them really worthy of consideration. I hoped for more constructive criticisms, but I am afraid that like the rest of his colleagues he has stepped out to say anything with the truth not being the criterion at all. Cut kindergarten, cut teachers, he says indeed, say anything, because those Members seem to believe that the people of Saskatchewan are stupid; say anything just as long as it gets

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them elected.

I was rather amused, too, Mr. Speaker, to hear the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Saskatoon Eastview (Mr. Penner) moaning and groaning about the gloom and doom in Saskatchewan, about the mismanagement that they seem to find here, when their friends who write in the New York Times, and the Financial Times, said that Saskatchewan is the best managed region, the best managed government in North America. Mr. Speaker, they don't even listen to their own friends.

I am very pleased to speak in this Budget Debate, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased because the Budget shows the continued high sense of responsibility shown by the Blakeney Government.

I say that this Budget is good news for Saskatchewan. It truly shows the confidence that our Government has in Saskatchewan and its people. Once again, I heartily congratulate Mr. Smishek for the fine job that he and his officials have done in preparing this Budget. It is a plan, a blueprint that will guide Saskatchewan through this period of high inflation, It is part of the long range planning that made it necessary to increase taxes on only two major items, gasoline and tobacco.

This increase in gasoline brings it back to 19 cents, the level we had in 1971 under a so-called free enterprise government. Our gas tax is almost as low as any in the country and much lower than in Conservative Ontario.

Yet we have cut our income tax by \$12 million. One hundred and twenty dollars has been taken from every taxpayer's income tax bill. More than one additional point has been removed from income taxes.

I am pleased to see our Blakeney Government's continued strong concern for agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to discuss further, some of the programs that are there in the Budget but time does not allow me.

I am proud of our Government's record in agriculture, just as I am proud of the many other programs that this Government has carried out, and I am looking forward to more improvements in the years ahead.

I notice, Mr. Speaker, that the Hon. Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) a few days ago thundered on about the wonders of the free enterprise Government in Alberta. I couldn't help but wonder why he didn't compare it with Liberal governments. Could it be that the record of Liberal governments in this country have been even more dismal than those in Conservative provinces, if that could be possible? Or could it be that the Hon. Member is thinking of turning his coat?

We on this side of the House had the idea that the Hon. Member for Thunder Creek was a cattleman, a real cowboy. By the sound of his speech it looks like he's a little chicken. He found nothing to support the traditional Liberal principles he has so long believed in. It looks like he may be too chicken to remain true to his own beliefs. It looks like he too may be taking lessons in towing and scraping and sitting straight in his desk.

But if the Member for Thunder Creek goes to join his friend from Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane) he will only prove what we in the NDP have been saying for years. The Liberals and the Tories are one and the same brand of politician. They just have a different label. Mind you, the new Members from Prince Albert-Duck Lake and Saskatoon Sutherland haven't found it necessary to be in the House all that much by any means. It appears that the necessity for attending sessions has completely disappeared. It appears that Conservative Members have now fallen upon easy times, because even the Leader of the Conservative Party seldom is in his seat as it is at the present time.

Mr. Speaker, I sometimes see as few as two out of ten Conservative Members sitting in their place, and this is the party whose leader so sternly lectured us on attendance and Parliamentary decorum, as he did this last year. In fact, it happens so often that there are only two PC Members in their seat in the House, that it looks like they have almost got it planned. It is a good thing for them that they can plan something.

But in criticizing the Budget, the Liberal financial critic waxed eloquent on what he felt were the wonders of the so-called free enterprise governments.

Let's take a look at a few comparisons with his much vaunted, so-called free enterprise governments.

Let's look at the last year of free enterprise government in Saskatchewan, in 1971. In that year the free enterprise Liberal Government took only \$32.5 million in royalties and taxes from resource companies.

Last year the Blakeney Government took \$337 million from those same resource companies.

The Blakeney Government took over \$300 million more from the resource companies than did the so-called free enterprise government in 1971, ten times as much, Mr. Speaker, ten times as much, and we took it for the people of this province, took it from the resources of the people of this province for the people of this province.

Three hundred million dollars, Mr. Speaker, that the taxpayers didn't have to dig into their pockets to pay out so that we could maintain the services we have in this province. That is \$300 million that the taxpayers of this province had to spend on other things.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, it is the equivalent of 600 million extra dollars that floated around this province and helped to create the buoyant economy that the Member for Thunder Creek so aptly described, record housing, record retail sales, lowest unemployment, etc., etc.

I would like to deal with grants to the city of Yorkton to compare how the Blakeney Government spends those resource tax moneys with the way the so-called free enterprise governments spent our tax moneys.

I have read to this House before, the grants to the city of Yorkton in 1971, the last year of the free enterprise Liberal rule.

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Now the Member for Saskatoon Eastview said the Liberals have long supported the principle of cost-sharing. I would say that the last time they supported it was when they were in Opposition before they were the Liberal Government, and now that they are in Opposition again, they are supporting it again. They do one thing in government and the opposite thing when they are in opposition. In 1971 Mr. Speaker, under the free enterprise Liberals, Yorkton received a total of \$23,000 in grants for police services and snow removal. Fantastic, fantastic, cost-sharing, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Saskatoon Eastview spoke about, the cost-sharing that he believes in so strongly, \$23,000.

Last year the city of Yorkton received \$20 per person, no strings attached, a grant that totalled more than \$300,000. Next year it will be \$22 per person.

Some difference, \$23,000 from the free enterpriser, \$300,000 from the Blakeney Government and the free enterprisers provincially and locally were silent in their objections to the lack of concern for municipalities shown by the free enterprise governments. They loudly clamour for more from a people's government.

But that is not all. Yorkton is now receiving more than \$1,007,000 as a capital grant over a five year period.

This year there is a five year grant of \$25 per person for recreation and cultural facilities; thirty dollars per person if surrounding municipalities participate.

At \$30 per person that is another \$450,000 for Yorkton in the next five years. Compare the Blakeney Government's grant program to the paltry \$23,000 of great cost-sharing that the Member for Saskatoon Eastview boasted about, because that was what our city received from the so-called free enterprise government.

These grants have been given because the Blakeney Government has recognized the need to assist the municipalities which cannot operate on property taxes alone.

The Department of Highways also provides considerable assistance to cities for roadways, transit shelter and bus transit systems.

Again, I would like to use Yorkton as an example for comparing grants of the great free enterprise government in power from 1965 to 1971 with those of the Blakeney Government from 1971 to 1976.

From 1965 to 1971, under the Liberal Government, Yorkton received grants from the Department of Highways of less than \$240,000. Between 1971 and 1976 another 6 year period, under the Blakeney Government the Department of Highways grants to Yorkton totalled \$1,141,200. We've increased the Department of Highways grants over five times, compared to the old free enterprise boys. And more highway work will be done for Yorkton this year.

And here is another challenge to the council in the city of Yorkton, which I extend to them so they may receive even another grant of money.

I am now pressing the Department of Highways to provide a grant that will pay for 75 per cent of the cost of a bus that will help to transport the handicapped in our city. I am further pressing the department to give assistance to our council to provide a grant to help operate that bus.

The bus could operate under the plan that has been developed in the city of Regina under our able Mayor, Mr. Baker. I urge the Yorkton City Council to co-operate with me in obtaining this fine service for the handicapped in our city.

And yet the free enterprise Liberals and Conservatives condemn the Blakeney Government for grants to municipalities. It is never enough. Always we hear how the free enterprisers would do more.

Liberals and Conservatives would do more all right; they would do more for their friends, the large resource companies. And I repeat my figures again, Mr. Speaker. The free enterprise (government of 1970-71 took \$32.5 million from those resource companies. Our Blakeney Government took \$337 millions.

Under the Liberal and Conservative Governments in Canada foreign companies have been allowed to take over our country so much that \$18 million in profits is taken from Canada every day. That, Mr. Speaker, tells the story of the give-away of our country to the giant multinationals. That is the fate of our province and this is the fate of our nation when the free enterprisers are in command.

Put free enterprisers in the government and they will let the resource companies off practically free of taxes. That's what they mean. The big free enterprisers, go free. The ordinary taxpayer would have to take up the load that is now rightfully paid by the resource companies.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard the Conservatives and Liberals talk about secret government in Saskatchewan. But that is another story.

And I would like to give them an account of secret government in other parts of Canada. Under the Liberal and Conservative governments of the last forty years in Canada, that is with the Federal Government, Federal Crown corporations go almost uncontrolled by Parliament. Crown corporations have been allowed to create other Crown corporations. Parliament has had no say at all.

In Saskatchewan where they complain about this secret government, Crown corporations are put into place by the Legislature or by Order in Council. A Crown Corporation Committee examines each Crown corporation's operation in detail. Under Liberal and Conservative so-called free enterprise Federal Governments, the odd question can be asked about Crown corporations in Parliament and even then most information is denied. There is no time to examine them in detail. And there were no Conservatives in Crown Corporations Committee this morning.

Conservatives and Liberals are the ones that operate secret governments. They point fingers at other governments in the hope that people will not look at what they do.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to read a quotation from the Western Producer of February 3, 1977. Oddly a lot of the words are

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spoken by Ged Baldwin, a Conservative; somehow or other he is concerned about secret government too, like the Members opposite. And he said and I quote:

Canada has one of the most secretive governments in the free world. As a result, not only is the public denied information that it should rightfully have but Parliament is unable to exercise proper control of the Cabinet and the bureaucracy.

Mr. Speaker, that is the same thing that happened under the Conservative Government when he was in office, in that Government. Now he appears to have reformed. Out of government they say one thing, once they are in government they do exactly the opposite.

I should like to continue with the quotation from the Western Producer.

You don't have to go far away to find a government which is vastly more free with information. The United States Government in Washington, has traditionally been much more open than is its Canadian counterpart.

And then the article talks about Paul Hellyer. Now all of us know about Paul Hellyer. He was another free enterpriser who couldn't decide whether he was a Liberal or a Tory, and it didn't matter really just as long as he got the power, which he didn't get in the end. I will continue with my quote, Mr. Speaker.

Paul Hellyer, the former Cabinet Minister and MP who now writes a syndicated newspaper column from Ottawa, recalled recently that while he was Liberal defense critic, it was virtually impossible to get hard facts from the Diefenbaker Government. US Senate and Congressional Committees were given far more information about Canadian defence than was available here.

Mr. Hellyer wrote:

So I had to arrange to have much of it forwarded to my office from the United States.

Mr. Speaker, it was probably Mr. Diefenbaker who objected to such secretiveness and his colleagues unmercifully drove him in shame from their leader's chair.

The Member for Thunder Creek and the Member for Nipawin like to talk about Alberta.

Let us just look at Alberta when we talk about secret government.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Energy Company is owned by private individuals and the Alberta Government. But the Alberta Government owns over 50 per cent of its shares. At present, the Government has \$75 million invested in the Alberta Energy Company and plans to invest a total of \$250 million, yet the Conservative Government of Alberta refuses to answer a single question that would account for the actions of the Alberta Energy Company. Moreover, no AEC official has ever appeared before the public accounts committee of that province and no special committee exists to check on their Crown corporations

at all.

Secret government, Mr. Speaker, secret governments from those who talk of freedom and secret government. They talk of freedom in opposition. They deny freedom when they are in government.

Just to show you what that Conservative Government is like in Alberta, the opposition in Alberta recently asked eight simple questions asking for simple information. All eight items were refused. That is secret government that denies freedom and information, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, free enterprisers, so-called, will make the finest promises. They will tell you anything just to get elected. I give, as example, the words from the Member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Bailey) yesterday when he dealt with the Parkland Regional Library with headquarters in the city of Yorkton. He told a direct falsehood hoping to catch what he was hoping would be an unwary news media. That Member gave the following figures as being grants for the library. In 1975 -\$697,000 approximately; in 1976 - \$40,768; in 1977 - \$30,000 and projected for 1978 - \$20,000. Outright falsehood.

If they will try to say such things in this house, what will they say when we aren't around to correct them.

I read again the figures as they are. I am willing to stake any wager the Member for Rosetown-Elrose wishes to make as to correctness of my figures.

For the capital grants to the Parkland Regional Library, 1974-75 - \$8,943; 1975-76 - \$10,000, and since the library has been operational for some time in 1976-77 - \$9,500, decreased slightly for a total of \$28,443.

Operating grants 1971-72 is \$119,706, increasing by 1974-75 so that you have \$243,468; 1976-77 - \$390,690; estimated 1977-78 \$429,760.

Mr. Speaker, such actions are beneath the honor and the decorum of this House. It shows that the Member for Rosetown-Elrose has set himself on the same level of business and moral conduct that has been exhibited so clearly by his leader.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of our leader. I am proud of the Ministers of this Government and the Members which sit with me. I am also proud of this Government's record. I am proud of the plan for the future that the Minister of Finance has brought forward in this Budget. As I said before, it is a blueprint which will lead us through this difficult time of inflation, inflation brought on by the greed of the giant corporations who have increased their profits by as much as 200 per cent in years when we were suppose to be under price controls. I am proud to be associated with a Government that sets up a budget that takes just taxation from the barons of the industrial fields and the people as a whole. I am proud to be associated with a Government that shows real concern for people, not just words.

Mr. Speaker, I shall oppose the amendment and I shall proudly be supporting the main Motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

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MR. L.W. BIRKBECK: — (Moosomin) It is with pleasure and a great deal of pride that I rise to join in reply to the Budget speech of Thursday last.

I should first like to welcome to the House our two new Members, the Member for Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Lane) and the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf). They are two young men that are most highly respected in their constituencies and I know that they will be a tremendous asset to this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, you know that this Assembly needs all the help it can get, as you observe the behavior of the mish-mash of mismanaged minds opposite and those dwindling numbers to my right. It has always been difficult for me to understand why supposedly intelligent men and women stand in this Legislature and degrade themselves by way of personal attacks on the other Members. Remarks made by the Member for Saskatoon Buena Vista (Mr. Rolfes) and I am sorry to see he is not in his seat today, as he began his reply to the Budget are typical of undesirable qualities in this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the Government Members, I feel, need to be reminded of what they are supposed to be and in fact what they are. A democrat is supposed to be an advocate of democracy, and democracy is government by the people. Mr. Speaker, you should know, and the Members opposite should know, this is not what they are today. With rare exception the Members of the Government collectively go merrily on with their policies regardless of public opinion. These policies are stripping Saskatchewan residents of their individual rights and individual freedoms.

Mr. Speaker, the Members of the Government in this Legislature attack the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan for their approach as the opposition to the New Democratic Government. They say, Mr. Speaker, on the one hand that we do nothing, then turn around and say on the other hand that we only criticize, but never offer real alternatives as to the direction the Government is going.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Weyburn (Mr. Pepper) made these observations in his reply to the Budget two nights ago. Since I entered this Legislature I have always had a lot of respect for the Member for Weyburn. He made mention in his reply that this Assembly should respect all Member's views and unite to make proper decisions for the people of Saskatchewan. He holds these views as a result of his faith and trust in his fellowman. Mr. Speaker, the Member knows very well that the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan has tried, in every way, to be a responsible and effective Opposition. We have succeeded in spite of his Government's arrogance and narrow-mindedness. I feel sorry for the Member for Weyburn because I don't believe he meant all those accusations he cast down on the Progressive Conservative Party of this province, but I guess when the NDP Caucus said, "attack the Opposition", the Hon. Member for Weyburn had no choice. In fact you boys over there likely have a hate campaign on anything that's blue and it pleases me to no end that every time you go out of this Assembly on a clear day and you look up you are reminded of the Conservative Party and I would far sooner have a blue sky any day than the red sunset.

Of course, talking about narrow-mindedness, the Member opposite being the Party Whip (Mr. Mostoway) is really quite so narrow-minded he can see through a keyhole with both eyes.

You liked that one, did you Government Whip, did you for sure?

Mr. Speaker, with the existing conditions in this Legislature, there is little wonder a deficit Budget has been brought down in a time of economic prosperity in this province, which is due mainly to good crops the farmers have been blessed with in recent years. Because of investments in potash mines, land purchases and Crown corporations this Government has mortgaged the future of each and every citizen of Saskatchewan.

The Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan has the New Democratic Party to thank for their help in bringing two more Progressive Conservatives to this Legislature.

The people of Saskatchewan have only two choices - government from the top down like Liberals in Ottawa and the New Democratic Party in Saskatchewan, or government from the bottom up, which the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan will provide to people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, we know the Members opposite are tired and need a rest, and we would like to assure this House that we will, with the support of the people of this province, give them a rest in 1979 if not sooner.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is pregnant with socialist sprouts and the Budget is the result. They tell you where they are giving but not where they are taking to provide for the people of this province. And I will again, as a Member of the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan, as we have before, make it very clear that the working people of Saskatchewan are paying the bill.

I rise in this House to speak in this debate hopefully to enlighten the Members opposite as to the doubts they are creating throughout the province for our citizens, and also portray to them the concerns of the residents of my constituency. I am not satisfied and the public is sick and tired of hearing Members opposite and others rising in this House quoting boring statistics and trying to justify their position. In particular the Minister of Health (Mr. Robbins), who has the opinion at this point in time, that all the people of this province really need is another shot of statistics. The facts that concern me are, for example, based on a population of one million persons . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I am interested in hearing what the Member has to say and I am having difficulty because of a constant crossfire from both sides of the House and I wonder if we could just acknowledge . . . Order! I hate being interrupted when I am interrupting. If we could just pay some heed to the normal rules of decorum then I could hear the Member. I know some Members aren't interested . . .

MR. BIRKBECK: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Based on a population of one million persons our health costs have now risen to \$400 per year for every man, woman and child in this province. Don't get me wrong, Mr. Speaker, I'm not saying Medicare is not necessary, but I am questioning the management of the Medicare system by this administration, especially in light of the fact that farmers who, because of their seasonal occupation, wish to have elective surgery during the winter months, now find that spring is here and only those who have been brought to emergency in

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critical condition have been able to obtain release. Why? Mr. Speaker, because our hon. friends opposite are more interested in purchasing potash mines with reserves of our money which I question are where they report them to be. Now don't let the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) tell me I am wrong, especially after the tabling of the Provincial Auditor's Report which indicates, in a general manner, or what you might say, just presents the highlights of the apparent mismanagement of public funds.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me much concern and I am sure the citizens of this province must be equally concerned when the Provincial Auditor advises this Assembly that the reason he couldn't do his job is because our friends opposite would not allot him a budget which would allow him to attract the necessary expertise to work in his department.

It has been suggested to me that it may be that our Government does not want full disclosure of the fantastic juggling of funds which is taking place. In other words, just in how many different places is the same dollar we are supposed to have being used. A friend of mine tells me that one young chartered accountant quit his position in the Department of Finance because the accounting practices he was being asked to use were so contrary to the accepted practices in accounting firms that he was afraid that he might lose his CA accreditation, and that when this Government is defeated in 1979 or sooner, he would be considered a party to a mess which would cast doubts on him as a chartered accountant, who is ethically bound to adhere to sound accounting practices and principles.

Mr. Speaker, the question I am discussing today is not how much money has been allocated for this department or that program compared with this year or last year, but I do hope I am giving the Members of the Government some food for thought and also telling them the concerns in respect to public funds and also the concern of the majority of the public.

I should like now to refer to one specific item of tax income which I can assure you is not met with favour from the public, not even the Members opposite supporters in previous elections. I refer to the 4 cents per gallon increase in gasoline tax. You know, Mr. Speaker, we can't all live in the cities, nor do we want to. So in recent years there has been a definite trend for young couples and families to move out to the villages, and hamlets adjacent to the larger towns and cities and commute to work in the urban centres. Many of these people moved to these areas to cope with the cost of living and locate in an environment which affords a suitable place to raise a young family. Now, Mr. Speaker, does the Government of Saskatchewan really and truly believe that continuously increasing the tax on gas is going to promote conservation? I suggest to you, Sir, that the concept of conservation is the farthest thing from their minds. Their only concern is to obtain revenue to offset an even larger deficit than that which they have proposed. Of course, in the meantime, they add a burden of extra transportation cost to those persons who have on their own initiative moved to the rural areas to better their lot in life.

Mr. Speaker, in short, I am saying to the Members opposite just call it the way it is. Tell us and the public out there what do we wholly own that is not mortgaged for their far-out schemes and ill-concerned ventures? Where and from whom are we borrowing

our money? What is the actual loss of this borrowing to us, we the people? In two words, Mr. Speaker, I humbly request the Government of this province to tell the whole truth, full disclosure.

In my constituency of Moosomin there are many hardworking individuals who derive their income, or a portion of it, through the production of beef. Lately this has not been a highly profitable business and they have expressed their concerns to me in this regard. Many of them are deeply concerned with the Minister of Agriculture's determination to force a marketing board or commission upon them without their consent, or approval. Many of these individuals have asked me to explain some of the technical terms relating to their industry to the Minister in the hope that it would further his understanding of this vital industry. For this I have used an independent source of information in order to remove any doubt as to the point of view of these explanations.

AN. HON. MEMBER: — Disclose your source.

MR. BIRKBECK: — I will right now, Mr. critic for the Opposition Party and I hope that the Minister of Agriculture is listening carefully. Mr. Webster describes as follows: Definitions - Cow, being the mature female of cattle or any animal, the male of which is called bull; or a domestic bovine animal regardless of sex or age. Beef - is an ox, cow or bull in the full grown or nearly full grown state, especially a steer or cow fattened for food or the flesh or such an animal. Steer - is a male bovine animal castrated before sexual maturity. Heifer - is a young cow, especially one that has not had a calf. And finally, Bull - is an adult, male, bovine animal.

Now, then, Mr. Speaker, if the Members could just . . . Mr. Speaker, I am sure you have control of the House.

All of these terms can be grouped into what is commonly known as cattle; they are easily recognizable as one drives through the rural areas of Saskatchewan as large lumbering quadrupeds grazing in the pastures. When irritated, hungry or frightened these animals emit loud unpleasant, guttural noises, very similar to those often heard from the Member for Saskatoon Eastview or the Government Whip. Mr. Speaker, a simple definition of this animal would be to say that it is one of the few natural agricultural products which to his dismay is not quite yet under the absolute control of the Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I have expressed two major concerns in this Legislature regarding agriculture. The first is the discretionary powers now held by the Minister of Agriculture under The Natural Products Marketing Act, which permits him to licence all farms in Saskatchewan and to regulate what each farmer can grow, transport and sell. Mr. Speaker, a Progressive Conservative Government would remove all those discretionary powers.

Mr. Speaker, the second is this Government's move toward land holdership from land ownership. Surely, Mr. Speaker, all men are born equally free and independent and have certain inherent rights among which some are enjoying and defending life, and liberty and of acquiring and protecting property. Mr. Speaker, the funds this Government has provided in this Budget for agriculture have, in more ways than not, pulled this industry under more rules and regulations and controls than it has to maintain

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farmer's rights as individuals.

To meet the problems of today those who believe in freehold property with all its time-honored limitations must take the initiative for creative action.

Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the motion and will be supporting the amendment.

MR. MESSER: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Member for Moosomin would allow a question before he takes his seat?

MR. BIRKBECK: — No.

MR. MESSER: — Mr. Speaker, I didn't get what the Member's answer was.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Speaker, when we are the government he can ask all the questions he wants; that's just in a couple of years.

MR. H.H.P. BAKER (Regina Victoria): — Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to embark upon a hate campaign as the Member who just sat down did. I don't know what sort of a tag I would put on his remarks, he spoke of bull and a few other things. I am afraid if I did put a tag on it, it might be a bit unparliamentary but we did appreciate the remarks and the way he gave them.

I want first of all today to congratulate the two new MLAs who have recently taken their seats as the result of two by-elections. The role, of course, of an MLA is not an easy one. In public life we are servants of the people. We look forward to their contributions here, to help keep this province in its fine current economic position, done so by the New Democratic Party and a New Democratic Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER: — I prefer to give facts in my addresses rather than hate campaigns that you sometimes find in other jurisdictions. We have that happening in local government but being a dollar a year man I am going to earn my money by giving a speech. I noticed one Member across the way wanted my salary reduced here as well. Well, I will leave a few remarks for him at a later date.

Tonight, I want to turn my words to the Budget. As we notice the Opposition over the past week has been pointing out that we have been deficit financing the past two years. Previous to that we built up a \$111.6 million surplus. The cash flow that follows through from year to year shows that with deducting this year's need of \$39 million and \$45 million last year, leaves us with a surplus of \$27 million.

Mr. Speaker, that shows that over the period of our new budgeting plan, we are in a surplus position, not a deficit position.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER: — I would suggest to the Finance Minister that he take into revenue \$39.7 million from the surplus fund as this would give us a balanced budget, still leaving us with \$27 million in the kitty. If the potash companies would pay us their \$40 million surtaxes this would give us a \$67 million surplus. Yes, this is money that has been received as revenue. I don't care whether it was three years ago or this year, it is still a tax revenue the people of Saskatchewan have paid. We have a right to put it into whatever current year we wish. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are in a current surplus position, not a deficit position.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER: — It is the new plan of our budgeting that creates surpluses some years and a downturn perhaps in other years.

The following highlights in the Budget to me are:

- (1)The provision of \$3.3 million for highway safety.
- (2)Continued increased police grants of 50 per cent to cope with the growing cost of police enforcement.
- (3)A 19.5 per cent increase in health spending.
- (4)A major expansion in home care, cost doubled to \$6.3 million.
- (5)The elimination of succession duties and the gift tax.
- (6)An increase in the across the board income tax cut from \$100 to \$120 and with thousands of people taken off the income tax roll.
- (7)Also continued emphasis on high levels of service in the essential and most important programs.
- (8)Unconditional grants up by 10 per cent to municipalities. I had hoped this would be higher but under a cost-sharing plan for the next year, I am sure this will change.
- (9)The new \$25 per capita recreation and cultural grant, will give Regina over the years close to \$4 million.
- (10)Also moneys for many, many capital projects, too numerous to mention.

While this is not a heavy spending Budget, it is in the area of being a solid budget to meet more of the need of our citizens.

Some of the Opposition Members as I listened are again preaching restraint and austerity. Those are the same words that were expressed time and time again by that destructive government from 1964 to 1971. Because of the preaching of restraints and austerity we lost 103,000 people from Saskatchewan who went elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, the preaching of restraint and austerity is the cause of: (a) increased unemployment; (b) tight money and high cost money; (c) higher interest rates, and (d) it creates deficits.

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Why do I say this? Look at the situation in Ottawa. Five to six billion or more in deficits with 932,000 unemployed, perhaps well over a million. We in Saskatchewan fell short by only \$45 million last year. Had we had more spending much of that would have been redeemed in our current revenues.

Mr. Speaker, last year in my Budget address, I said this, and I repeat, it is not the spending that causes inflation, it is the gouging by inconsiderate enterprises plus the devastating interest rates that raised our cost of living out of all reason these past two or three years. And it will do the same if we don't curtail it in 1977-78.

I said too, this talk of restraint and cutbacks in government spending is not the answer - it is only a way of copping out of meeting our real responsibilities. I said too, I do not buy the idea of cutbacks, restraints on public spending. We need planned spending in our public sector to keep a balanced economy and fill the gaps for employment. The private sector cannot and will not be able to carry the amount of investment to meet all employment needs.

I also said, let us not fall prey to the advocates in political parties calling for massive cutbacks, if we are to stop recessions, depressions and control unemployment. Those who preach austerity will meet the same fate the government did in 1971 in Saskatchewan. We need spending in the right places. We must have a measure of anti-inflation controls on the cost of living to assist us.

This year's Budget to a degree, has heeded my advice from last year. The increased spending in the right areas will enhance the growth and economy of our province. It will keep the wheels of our construction industry turning. The construction industry with its related industries, is our biggest employer. It is our urban centre city governments that have to initiate most public projects, housing for senior citizens, servicing areas for housing, special care homes and land assembly programs.

Many of these programs could not have been initiated without the help of the generous grants received from the present Government these past years.

What are they? The \$22 unconditional per capita grant; the \$200 homeowner grant or property improvement grant; the \$75 per capita grant, giving Regina \$11 million to \$12 million over the next five years; equalization grants; the generous police grants; the library grants; the assessment grants; the transit grants to buy buses and the 3 cents per passenger riding the buses; the huge grants to share with us in providing buses and transportation for the handicapped. I could list many more - all we got from 1964 to 1971 was something like \$3.40 per person.

Yes, but what else has been provided for the city of Regina that is a real boon to us now and in the future?

Some in the Opposition have been critical. They criticized the fine building going up on 23rd Avenue and Albert Street.

MR. BAILEY: — Not I, Henry.

MR. BAKER: — Thank you Mr. Bailey. Look at the jobs it has created and we are providing good working conditions for the civil

servants which they deserve. Look at the \$100 million project for downtown Regina and they criticize it, together with providing much needed parking.

This is our capital city - the people of Regina thank the Government of Saskatchewan for this unique and outstanding plan which does several things.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER: — It creates jobs; it rejuvenates downtown Regina; it will provide 1,200 to 1,400 stalls for much needed downtown parking.

I am awed at some on the other side who are criticizing this wonderful plan. Particularly the Regina Members in Opposition.

We thank the Government for these things and being an MLA on this side, I assure you I did my part in helping to promote it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER: — We also thank the Provincial Government for the help we received to build the Agridome, \$7.5 million. The City Hall, “Henry’s Palace”, \$10.1 million. The Summer Games facilities; the Lawson Aquatic Centre; Douglas Park Change facilities; the Marina; the enclosed skating rinks and also the \$5.4 million police station to be underway shortly; the \$8 million road and transportation plan for No. 1 Highway at Victoria Avenue and Arcola Avenue, recently announced. Yes, and I could list other assistance for programs that are of great benefit to us.

Yes, we need all this to keep our people working with decent wages so they can build, buy and own homes. Because of city and government plans, we can boast the lowest unemployment rating in Canada and that means something.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER: — The soundness of our policies these last six years will keep our people here and will continue to bring back people we lost during 1964 to 1971.

Yes, we will continue to build a solid economy, and one that will give all of our Saskatchewan people a measure of continued prosperity and security so that we are free from want, free from deterrent fees; free from poor wages, free from paying hospital and doctor bills, free from paying chiropractic fees, free from paying the high cost of drugs, free from dental bills for our children, free from high costs of car insurance and personal liability costs, free from being penalized with high costs for hearing aids.

The New Democratic Government in Saskatchewan has been one of compassion. This Government has given us security with a “cradle to the grave” plan in the field of health and other social programs, with built-in guarantees so that we are not cast aside or forgotten.

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Yes, the fine health programs that we initiated over the past 33 years are continually opposed by the Opposition in this House. They have no right to criticize any segment of this fine NDP plan which they so vehemently opposed and tried to destroy. I know the people of Regina and Saskatchewan will want to keep this Government in power because it would mean their demise if they didn't.

I call upon the Saskatchewan people to again rally around our MLAs and future candidates to hold and increase our numbers in this House. We must look to the future to continue to assist our pioneers, our senior citizens and pensioners in a monetary way because of increased costs in living. Some ways in which this can be done is to increase the homeowner grant or property improvement grant to them or take off the school tax on their property - this would cut their taxes in half.

Also there is a need to help all renters - they, too, should share in the homeowner grant plans, the plan that I must tell this House again, I advocated in my first speech in this Legislature in 1965. The present Opposition, then the Government, picked this proposal up and I give them credit for that.

Turning to agriculture, yes, we all agree agriculture is our primary industry, not only for the West but for all of Canada. We must keep it strong. This can be done only by orderly marketing, marketing boards with teeth in them. We need more stabilization programs with full Federal Government participation in the livestock industry and for research.

The Government has again recognized the need to help cover the rising costs in the field of education. This Government has given large and generous grants over the years to our schools for operation and capital expenditures. However, we have reached the stage in this country that there be federal input for education costs through unconditional grants to provinces for operation and capital school construction.

I will enumerate in a general way, the future progress and needs for our province and people.

(1) We should work toward a full dental care plan.

(2) All levels of nursing care should be put under the medicare plan and we should build more special care nursing homes.

(3) Education costs from here should be borne by the province with unconditional grants coming from Ottawa to help defray expenditures. Property cannot carry the costs of education if increases are needed annually. School taxes on property for pensioners should be removed to assist them in their costs and keep them in their own homes.

(4) I say homeowner grants in the future should also be made available to renters.

(5) The Canada Pension Plan should be revised to reduce the pension age to 60 for men and 55 for women. We, as a province should continually press Ottawa for this. I hope to see the inauguration of a universal provincial pension plan. Also an income continuance pay-plan for those who become ill, with a compulsory insurance

in case of death. It will only be brought in by a New Democratic Government, I know that.

(6) I look forward to regional park agreements with our city in the future.

(7) We need to construct a super highway south to the American border and to the extreme North using Highway No. 6. We also need more all weather roads through the North to meet the needs of those communities.

I suggest we build a refinery to refine some of our crude oil, either alone or in conjunction with our Co-op refinery in Regina or in co-operation with some private jurisdiction.

I have always been pleased with the Home Repair plan of \$500 per home for senior citizens.

The \$200 Homeowner Grant will again be well received.

The \$75 per capita for municipalities should be increased a bit each year because this does create projects for continuous employment in each municipality.

We must continue construction of low-cost housing, senior citizens housing as well as more nursing homes. We have been very successful in this with the Government these past three or four years.

I call for university plans in the future for expanded and new courses, coupled with the construction of necessary buildings. The construction of apartments for our university students at the Regina University will be needed in the future.

We must do what we can in pressing Ottawa to see that interest rates are kept at a reasonable level. High interest rates are the key to causing inflation and the high cost of living.

We must press to enlarge on our guaranteed income plan for all Canadians. We are one of the wealthiest nations in the world and we can afford this.

I am pleased to see more housing for our native people.

We need assistance from senior governments for comprehensive urban renewal programs for commercial areas and for renovating older homes, such as the NIP program we have here.

Our rail line program in Regina in diverting the present CPR and CNR lines is a plan of necessity for safety and will create a proper transportation plan within the boundaries of our city; now and in the future.

Yes, we believe in people; we want to share our provincial prosperity with them through public ownership, through private ownership, co-operative ownership and through a social and humane way of life.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe as my colleagues do, in people. People who live in Regina, in Saskatchewan, in Canada and we also think of people throughout the world, particularly those in the underdeveloped countries and in people who are undernourished. Again I say social democracy as we practise it in

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Saskatchewan, will have to become the world's by-word if nations are to work together to keep it in existence.

People are hungry out there and Saskatchewan stands out as a beacon of salvation of those in need of food. Let us keep producing abundantly to keep up our good life and help make it better for others. I always like to remind this Assembly of the fine record of this Government. I should just like to go back to the 20 years from 1944 to 1964 when the groundwork was laid which stood out so great with its slogan "Humanity First". Under that banner, we got:

- (a) Farmers' protection with The Homestead Act.
- (b) A complete health care plan for all.
- (c) A government car insurance plan.
- (d) An air ambulance service.
- (e) Decent minimum wages which raised the standard of living.
- (f) Solidified the farm economy.
- (g) Shared the wealth with those less fortunate.
- (h) Developed the oil deposits, potash, lumber, fishing and mining.
- (i) Pressed to develop good economic agricultural policies for this province.
- (j) We developed a good school system, giving teachers back their rightful place in society.

I could go on and on, Mr. Speaker, but I want to say in this Budget we are continuing on with the great social programs we started and are building on them within the framework of long laid plans. These are given not for political aggrandizement but as a right.

How fortunate we are to have a people's government in Saskatchewan. I am sure Regina and the rest of Saskatchewan will still keep it so. Mr. Speaker, I will oppose the amendment and support the Budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MISS L.B. CLIFFORD: — (Wilkie) Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to enter into this Budget Debate. I began to wonder tonight when I came into this House whether I was in the right place and here to speak on the right subject, the positive high road speeches and ethics that we often are lectured on from the left of us seem to exhibit as usual, their sanctimonious, arrogant, opportunistic, hypocritical attitude that we have seen since the beginning of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MISS CLIFFORD: — It not only shows that they don't respect the people's intelligence but they don't expect them to see through their petty political games and gains. People of Saskatchewan will

not elect such a shallow group such as that, speaking in that manner.

I notice that the Member for Moosomin (Mr. Birkbeck) is not here any longer. He is either out gloating about the speech he made that was so fine and he doesn't know the difference or else he is so ashamed of the remarks that he made that he doesn't want to bother to come back in. Attitudes like that are simply unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of things in this Budget Debate that the people of Saskatchewan can be pleased about. I commend the Government first for stating their commitment that in a time of uneasiness throughout Canada that in Confederation we must be Canadians first. I heartily agree that we must reorder our priorities and demonstrate that Confederation works. I hope that we will do this not only in our speeches but in our actions and reactions to other areas and the Federal Government.

The second glimmer of hope, Mr. Speaker, for the Government opposite, was the elimination of the Succession Duties and the Gift Tax. The Liberal Party has long been telling the Government that such a move must be made and they finally listened. I hope that they will listen to more of our suggestions, Mr. Speaker.

I would also like to commend the Government on their continued ability to juggle facts and cover up issues. As usual, as was shown by the Member for Regina Victoria who just got finished blaming their problems on the Federal Government. They continually discredit the Federal Government by saying they are not upholding their financial obligations, when in fact, Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) pointed out, they are getting more through the new equalization payments. Where is this spirit of co-operation and common purpose and demonstration that Confederation works attitude now.

MR. MOSTOWAY: — You must be a Home Economics teacher, Linda.

MISS CLIFFORD: — No, as a matter of fact I am not. It amused me the other day, Mr. Speaker, to hear that a Federal Minister and a Provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs announced that there would be some work done in Swift Current for their water system but, as a matter of fact, all the grants were given by the Federal Government. The Members opposite are eager to accept credit for everything but they never give credit to anyone else. When most of our programs are funded, to a great degree, by federal assistance I find this hypocritical.

We were challenged a couple of days ago, Mr. Speaker, to stand up and state what we thought 'frill programs' were. Well, as usual the Members opposite have very selective hearing. I ask them to pay particular attention. Such programs as denticare, the drug program and SAIL have been listed as 'frill programs'. We agree that these programs could be beneficial but only if the basic health care program was looked after first. I'll repeat that, only if the basic health care program was looked after first.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

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MISS CLIFFORD: — We are not convinced that the basic health care program is being looked after and neither are the people of Saskatchewan. It was interesting to note also that the Medical Association does not agree. It must be getting pretty lonely for the Members opposite as they are the only ones who think they are doing a good job. I have found though, very few problems in emergency surgery or getting into the hospital for emergency surgery in my area. But many people who are very close to that category have problems and have to wait for a number of months. Exploratory surgery is not a top priority. Elective surgery for such things as internal medicine and ailments are neglected for dangerous lengths of time because there are no beds available.

Mr. Speaker, when these problems no longer occur then is the time to add additional programs. Let me put it in another way - it is nice to have a delicious meal to eat and a dessert afterwards but if there is no nourishing meal to begin with then the dessert does little good for the person's health.

Mr. Speaker, the Members opposite get very defensive about criticisms and suggestions for health care. They feel if they keep telling people everything is all right, people will believe them. As is often said "Thou protesteth too much", I respectfully ask the Government to open its eyes to the deterioration of our health system and lack of availability of services and simply get back to basics.

Mr. Speaker, the home care proposal is a combined effort by the Department of Health and Social Services. I commend these departments for seeing the need of home care. I also suggest there is a great need for those who need nursing home care. Why not try to have a combined effort in this area to cover the cost perhaps by a hospitalization payment.

The Minister of Social Services bragged about the cost of nursing home care in Saskatchewan. Let me list some of the figures here in the province and elsewhere. The Minister will be glad to know that we are still ahead and top all costs of nursing home care from Ontario and west.

I would like to state at this time that most of the provinces that I have gotten in touch with - I missed a couple of Maritime provinces simply because I could not reach them in the last week or so, lean towards the type of hospitalization care that I have mentioned to try to alleviate part of the problem. British Columbia has only one type of nursing home care and it runs from \$4 to \$10 a day which is about \$120 to \$300 per month. Alberta, Level II is \$5 a day and Level III is \$5 a day after 120 days and that is for hospital type care. The Government absorbs between \$80 and \$100 per day for the cost of nursing home care. Manitoba's residential charges are \$5.75 per day or \$172.50 per month. Charges are not based on income and they are applied to all residents in nursing home care. Ontario is \$13.40 per day, government assistance and residents pay the difference. This is the only province that comes near to our costs for nursing home care. In a public ward the cost is \$21, therefore the resident pays \$210 per month; in a semi-private the cost is \$25.70 per day and the resident pays \$369 per month which is far below what we have to pay here for all levels; but the private, I must admit, is more. It costs \$30.40 per day and the highest there is \$510 per month. Now these are figures that I have given you and figures don't often speak as well as they

should, but the fact is that all levels of care with the exception of private rooms, all the levels of care in every province in Ontario and the west cost less than they do in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan ranges in Level I from \$393, these are the types of homes that I have contacted and I have done quite a bit of research on it, to \$478. That is the most that I have found so far. Maybe there is more in Level I. Level II ranges from \$480 a month to \$609 with a government subsidy of \$121. Level III ranges from \$700 to \$860 and the government subsidy is \$363, which still ranges well over \$450 for this level of care. Yes, it is a criticism, but I hope it will be a constructive criticism to try to look at this area and try to improve it for senior citizens. We have 56 per cent of the senior citizens under nursing home care, Mr. Speaker, who are not in the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan. In other words, although they do get their pension from the Federal Government, they still have at least \$200 or more to pay for their care and it is something that is very foreboding in their minds and they worry about their future. They deserve better and I urge that the Government consider additional assistance for private paying residents.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MISS CLIFFORD: — Mr. Speaker, let us look at another new program, the four year Capital Grant Program to assist communities to meet their need for cultural and recreational facilities. We indicated that we would support the program and although the Minister isn't here I hope you will pass it on. I hope he will be more receptive to suggestions that we make than he was the other day. A number of people in the community are concerned because they think that their recreational needs are at times being duplicated. These are people at the community level as well as people in his department who are concerned about this. He quickly came back with the saying that, "Oh, the Liberals are out to try to dictate what municipalities do." That is simply not true; that is not what we are trying to suggest. We are trying to suggest that perhaps we can advise and assist them in constructive ways to help alleviate problems where recreational facilities might be duplicated - simply suggestions for better planning.

I am also concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the Family Income Plan. I put a motion on the Order Paper to ask for the number of recipients that have had overpayments charged to them. The program, Mr. Speaker, needs to be carefully re-examined. For one thing the application form has to be simplified and there must be closer contact with the recipients as well as at least a quarterly review of payments. What is happening to date is that because there is only a review once a year many of the recipients could build up an overpayment of anywhere between \$1800 to \$3000 simply because there is not a check. Now much of this problem arises because they underestimate their income for the year but if closer contact advisement were kept it would be better for the recipient and for the department and the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services went into great detail about the new corrections proposals. I have offered a number of suggestions previously and I would like to reiterate

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them again. I found, at the time when he introduced these, that I had little to criticize about them. The concepts of new buildings for correctional use are good and have been looked at more realistically this time than in their original proposal. I continue to stress that remand centres must not be in a correctional centre but separate facilities. This is a crucial step for rehabilitation and I think that you are on the way in this direction.

Emphasis on community corrections and reduced reliance on incarceration as initial response to criminal behavior is good, though the Government will have to do more than pay lip service. I again commend the department for starting FLEX (Farm Life Experience) and coordination of volunteers to help work in this area.

Probation continues to be a problem and unfortunately a joke, because it is grossly understaffed. It lacks structure. It's a cumbersome, ineffective means of reacting to misbehavior and violation of the probation order. The judges, in fact, if they use it at all, use it more as an expression of their faith in the criminal rehabilitating himself than in its efficiency.

The size of caseloads depends on whether you take the Minister of Social Services' figures given the other day as 48 per probation officer; or whether you take the figures from the annual report we just saw, which is 58 per probation officer which adds additional responsibility in preparing pre-sentence reports for the courts. It is totally unrealistic. I realize also, and I will say that before someone else says it on the opposite side of the House, that you cannot just go ahead and hire an unlimited number of staff but again I am giving constructive suggestions to help the probation system.

If probation is an alternative, we should be providing a level of service that offers some hope of deterring the offenders from the all-too natural progression of minor criminal behavior, probation, more involvement, then jail. Preparation of pre-sentence reports are very important to assist judges in determining the most appropriate disposition. It would be used much more extensively if there were adequate staff to quickly respond to requests and this is not so unfortunately at present.

Reporting by clients now on probation is typically monthly or whenever he can make it due to the lack of staff. Effective community supervision requiring frequent contact, would be helped by additional community staff, which would provide an opportunity to build rapport between client and probation officer, to provide surveillance and monitoring of behavior, to allow opportunity for regular counselling. This is the type of atmosphere that you must strive to uphold.

Given present responsibility in the area of reporting no probation officer should have more than a caseload of 25. To allow the current case work to exist government is foisting a hoax on the people of Saskatchewan, telling them that they have probation services that all is well, that they offer protection, whereas there is no significant protection and no adequate supervision.

Probation orders need teeth. A percentage of probation officers violate their orders. Probationers who violate their orders face minimal consequences. The procedure to take action is cumbersome and even when pursued has little effect.

Regardless of the length of the probation order, the longest possible sentence for a breach of probation is six months. To charge someone with a breach of probation, the probation officer has to take the case back before the judge. This is usually not done because the probation officer is too overworked to know that the case has deteriorated and requires action. However, assuming a probation officer knows action is required, he must initiate court proceedings which is a time-consuming, cumbersome procedure providing no protection to the community.

Therefore, this is no deterrent to an offender because he knows a probation officer usually won't have time or be bothered to initiate breach proceedings. Even when the offender commits a new offence, thereby violating his suspended sentence, he is rarely charged with breach.

Mr. Speaker, if probation is to be truly effective in helping clients develop a responsible attitude and in protecting the public, it must hold the client accountable for his actions and allow for quick action to remove the client from the community if he is an undue risk. I again suggest that Saskatchewan look at Canada's national parole system and allow for accountability and protection.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour enthusiastically spoke of a newly created women's division. It is a start, Mr. Speaker, but there is a long way to go. Co-operation and consultation must be given in all departments and by that I mean an expansion of the number of people assigned to the task of promoting women in each department. I don't necessarily mean hiring new staff, but possibly re-assigning people and reviewing their priorities so that they will also be looking at alternatives to promote women in their own area.

Mr. Speaker, much has been said about the income tax rate. The lowering of the federal tax rate has been quietly mentioned and quickly covered up. No credit to the feds. Equally quietly the Government mentions our income tax rate has increased to 59 per cent. Instead the Members opposite are criticizing the availability and suggested rip-off of retirement savings plans. How absurd! Is it now a crime to put savings into a retirement plan? Are you trying to control that too? I daresay, most of you likely have a retirement savings plan or a homeownership plan. You are really fishing for material to gripe about when you start talking about that.

I was encouraged to hear about an inquiry into the uranium development, Mr. Speaker. This inquiry should have been done earlier, but better late than never, and I commend you for it. It is too bad though that people's opinions aren't asked for before the potash extravaganza was decided upon.

Mr. Speaker, the Members opposite speak of unkept promises. I have given them some suggestions and reminded them of their promises for better government, promises of better health care. They are neglecting their duty. They have asked us to stand up for Saskatchewan; they have spoken of honest leadership. Mr. Speaker, we have honest and strong leadership and we are the party that will stand up for Saskatchewan and its people.

Mr. Speaker, I will not support the motion, but I will support the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

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HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways and Transportation): — Mr. Speaker, for the next short while I hope, I will try to give you the highlights of . . . sorry, Your Worship, I hope the chair did not hurt you. This reminds me of what happened when we opened the new garage and centre for the handicapped transportation up in north east Regina. His Worship the Mayor was there, Mr. Speaker. The promoters decided they were going to take Henry over there in a wheelchair. He would ride this new bus (sort of an Ironside bus) and appear at the transportation centre along with me. Now they wanted me to ride in one of those things too but, I prefer horses. Anyway, Henry loaded aboard at the City Hall, that beautiful new edifice which graces our capital, was loaded on with this lift and came aboard, sat there, buckled in and we drove over to the new centre - incidentally we spent nearly a half million in the last three years helping that get established with nine buses. We unloaded Henry, the lift came down and I greeted him. I wheeled him in, and I heard somebody say distinctly, "My God they finally got Baker!" . . . I apologize, for kicking over my chair on you, Your Worship. I didn't really want to take that extra time. I had better proceed now with the debate.

There are two things I want to do tonight. I want to give you a resume of what the Department of Highways and Transportation has done and what we intend to do this year. I have a project array which covers most of the capital construction that we hope to do this year. I will table it when I complete my speech.

I also want to talk about Safety '77, I am the chairman of the Cabinet Committee in charge of that project. We are, this year, going to spend \$142,694,000 in our highway budget, in administration, maintenance and capital; \$13.9 for administration, \$43,233 for maintenance, and \$85,525,000 in capital.

There are a number of things which influence the total Budget, and of course, it is an increase from last year from \$129 million to \$142.5 million, approximately 10 per cent. We are happy about that. Inflation has been the robber; if you wish to look back over the last four or five years since I have had the portfolio of Highways and Transportation, my first budget was \$69.4 million, today we are double that, a little better than double. We are not accomplishing a tremendous amount more; it is a case of kind of holding your own with inflation. We are convinced we have brought in new procedures that have provided more miles in many cases with less money and generally satisfy the needs of Saskatchewan.

Factors that are bothering us and troubling us in Saskatchewan are: inflation, rail line abandonment, and certainly a lack of a firm federal transportation policy (certainly a lack of a federal cost-shared programs); demands for increased load limits and certainly changing travel patterns. These are all part of the mix. It is a sad commentary in a way that Canadians paid dearly over the last 80 years for two transportation systems, mainly CNR and CPR, paid through the nose, subsidized, spoon fed, paid for, watered (in the case of stock) and CNR to bail the friends of erstwhile governments years ago when they went bankrupt. They continue to bail their heirs and successors. This is all part of the warp and woof of transportation of Canada. I say it is a sad commentary. Now that these people have milked Canada for all these years, (I'm talking about

CPR) they want to walk off with all their ill-gotten gains and once again leave the Canadian public to pick up the tab. They want to relegate the rail line system to a user-pay arrangement and forget that they have received billions of dollars. As my colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs said earlier today, they want to leave us with the transportation problems and walk off with the profit.

Unfortunately, successive Liberal and Tory Governments for the last 80 years or more have allowed them to do just that. Apparently Liberals and Tories today are prepared to allow them to do the same thing. They are quite happy, Mr. Speaker, quite happy to see them once again leave the taxpayers of Saskatchewan and the rest of Canada holding the bag. They are asking once again, after we have paid for two expensive rail lines, to pay for yet another transportation network of new highways, more expensive highways, to take care of those loads that were formerly carried on the rails. I say, Mr. Speaker, to this House and to the people of Saskatchewan, "We shall resist that with all the power that we can muster." I am sure that the progressive people, the intelligent people of Saskatchewan, will back us in that fight.

MR. PENNER: — When are you going to get that highway done to Chamberlain?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, we'll get around to it. We are a lot further along the road than we were five years ago.

AN HON. MEMBER: — A decade is over!

MR. KRAMER: — I'll tell you people in the Liberal Opposition, I really don't want to draw a line between them and the Tories, because there is no difference, never has been. I look across there, you sound alike, you look alike and you think alike. If you want a piece of road anywhere, I'll give you one. If you can get Paul Bunyan's blue ox to go up into the North, end up on the Primrose Path, No. 104. You could have 46 miles up there that's not working. You can have it free of charge. You could have it anywhere in Saskatchewan. That's what the Liberals built, and if you want some more take No. 165 that the Liberals built for Anglo-Rouyn. It's not doing anything either. Oh, yes, it is carrying five vehicles a day. They spent \$6 million on that to subsidize Anglo-Rouyn to take the wealth out of Saskatchewan to Flin Flon. If you want a piece of road, you are welcome to those.

I want to congratulate the Member for Wilkie (Miss Clifford) on the speech she has just made. I think that it has been one of the most constructive we have listened to from that side of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KRAMER: — I am not saying that just because she happens to be a parsoncraft relative of mine. The Member for Wilkie deserves that bouquet and I am happy to give it to her.

MR. CAMERON: — How about the rest of us.

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MR. KRAMER: — You behave yourselves and I might be nice to you.

We are going to spend \$85.5 million on capital budget, \$75 million will be for highway construction. That is the major portion of it of course, out of last year's budget the industry - we should talk a little about the industry, the road building industry. We have a small portion of the road building capability in the Department of Highways, but the major portions are private contractors. I want to congratulate them and thank them for the tremendous job they have done in building roads in Saskatchewan. Private contractors in Saskatchewan have done one of the best jobs of building highways for less money, good quality than anywhere in western Canada. I have determined that through checking and investigating through other Departments of Highways when we meet at our Western Ministers Conferences.

MR. CAMERON: — Are you going to lower the speed limit?

MR. KRAMER: — We'll get around to that. The private contractors received \$41.5 million last year for their share of the work and their share of last year's budget. That was an increase of 14 per cent over 1975 and 55 per cent over 1974. I think that indicates that we have a healthy construction industry in Saskatchewan and that they will continue to enjoy their service, and they will have the ability to continue to provide this service to us.

We plan to carry out this year approximately 110 projects of grading, paving and oiling, that will embrace about 900 miles, just a little less than 1,000 miles of road; 270 miles of grading, 650 miles of paving and oiling.

In the last six years, we spent \$7 million in this province on bridges at Nipawin, Maymont, Maidstone, and several hundred other smaller bridges across the smaller streams that are under our jurisdiction and responsibility. We expect to complete the new 1,400 foot bridge at Maidstone in 1977. This has long been needed in order to take care of that north-south link that we call the Wild Goose route, going from Willow Creek in the South on the American border, to Lac-des-Iles in the North. Incidentally for those people that come from the eastern side of the province, it will complete the second north-south highway, going up and down the length of the west half of the province compared to about six on the eastern half. I am quite happy that we have two north-south highways now west of center. There is a lot of improvement needed on No. 21 in places, but at least it is a good enough highway to travel on. It rates all the way from fair to tremendously good.

We will spend about \$10 million on urban assistance in 1977-78 in major cities; \$1.8 million on regular transit; we'll be spending \$800,000 in assisting the cities. Saskatoon will get eight new buses; Prince Albert will get four new buses; Moose Jaw two; Regina will get 13 buses. They won't be big mind you, but they are in the main smaller telebuses. There will be two large ones, I believe, and seven telebuses. There's 50 per cent sharing on all of those.

Seven hundred thousand dollars will be paid on the 3 cents per passenger that we pay to subsidize and encourage people

to ride on the buses in the urban areas.

Two hundred thousand dollars will be spent in construction of passenger shelters in order to accommodate the public and we share those 75 per cent. There will be about \$83,000 in transit studies and demonstration projects.

I spoke a little earlier about handicapped transit assistance. Six hundred thousand dollars in this year's Budget again will be spent to assist those people who are unfortunate enough not to be able to use their own automobiles or the regular bus service. This is a fairly expensive project, but I think it's a very necessary one to assist those people who have been less fortunate than ourselves to make a contribution. We have three that come every day to the Administration Building to various jobs. There are nine buses of the type I mentioned in Regina, moving out every day from that garage dispatch centre, do their own dispatching, pick people up, take them to their place of work, pick them up in the evening and take them home. I'm very proud of that program as the Mayor is. We share 75 per cent in that program, with the city's 25 per cent. I believe that all of us in this House and all the taxpayers of Saskatchewan can be proud of the fact they are making a contribution, a humanitarian contribution, to that kind of a service.

Regina has the first fully operational tax supported service for the handicapped. Incidentally, that bus, that type of bus made by Fleury in Saskatoon; Saskatchewan made is a Saskatchewan idea and the first on the North American continent that we know of.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KRAMER: — Swift Current is in the process of acquiring a bus in that city for the handicapped. Speaking to Mr. Beardsworth who is one of the promoters and one of the workers on that project, a week ago, I think they'll have their project in place very shortly. I know that Saskatoon is working toward this service very, very aggressively. This service is available to any city in Saskatchewan that wants to put it all together and provide that kind of a service for people who are less fortunate than others.

We also share the operating deficits for these buses. In the last three years, we spent \$17.2 million for the urban assistance plan, urban assistance plans that covered every city in Saskatchewan according to their needs. The larger cities, of course, get the largest share. Last year Prince Albert, for instance, got \$1.3 million to improve their main street and their collectors. I'm happy to say that the city of Estevan got a little more than half a million in urban assistance to improve their internal streets, their arterials and collectors. That is somewhat less than Prince Albert, but I say is according to needs. I think Regina, unfortunately being the capital city and somewhat larger and somewhat more needy, got the lions share of that urban assistance, but we try to be as fair as we can. Program money is dispensed according to a sharing formula based on need.

We also have a responsibility for air transportation in my department and we spent \$1.5 million on that responsibility last year. Hudson Bay, Prince Albert - Hudson Bay will be completed in 1977, we'll establish a bomber base at Prince Albert.

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The investment there will be about \$300,000. I understand that the Minister of Transport, Mr. Lang was going to spend about \$6 million there. There was an announcement there just before the by-elections and I hope he gets it. I think he's arguing with the Federal Treasury Board at the moment. But I wish him luck because we sure need it in that area. We made improvements and paid for maintenance at more than 30 community airports in Saskatchewan, smaller airports. About \$250,000 was spent on these since 1974-75. My department has spent more than \$4 million on airports. A large portion of that was \$2 million at Meadow Lake and \$1 million at La Ronge. Fortunately, La Ronge was shared to a great extent by the federal people. Federal sharing did not occur in the other airports such as Meadow Lake, which is now completed and Hudson Bay which will be completed and also at Prince Albert.

Our maintenance budget this year will be \$43,233,000. This is an increase of \$13 million over last year. It embraces 13,000 miles of highway in the province and I'm pleased to say that in our maintenance more than a million was saved this year because of the drought this winter. There is no reason in the world in this province to be happy about drought, but fortunately this drought is occurring in the winter and if anybody is worrying about the dust blowing and crop failure, as some people are, I just remind you that we've never had a crop failure in April yet, or even in May. So hopefully we'll get the rain again when we need it.

We established in our department, three years ago, a traffic safety division. It was the first in Canada. At last count I think there are six other provinces now which have a traffic safety division and we have been concentrating on trying to build in safety wherever possible. We have asked communities, municipal councils and individuals to try to identify dangerous areas, hazardous areas. Al Popoff is in charge of that traffic safety division which has eight staff members.

AN. HON. MEMBER: — . . . bridge . . .

MR. KRAMER: — Oh, you want to know about the bridge, 42nd Street I believe. I'll tell you when it's going to go ahead, Mr. Speaker, and Member for Saskatoon. It will go ahead as soon as we get the design study done which was only asked for last fall by the city and which we certainly couldn't move on then because we hadn't gotten around to budgeting. You will also remember, Mr. Member for Saskatoon, that we are sharing in a transportation study of that city. We are spending \$150,000 on your behalf, the city is spending \$50,000; it's a \$200,000 study. I don't think we should be spending \$200,000 on a transportation study and start proceeding before we have the results of the study. I think that would not be wise.

MR. PENNER: — . . . results of the study . . .

MR. KRAMER: — Well, the Member is wiser apparently than those people that his city has engaged to do the study. I think we would be criticized, and it's your city's decision, not mine. It's your Mayor's decision, not mine. They did not make a request until last fall and let's not have any of this nonsense about getting the bridge built. I know politicians like to mess around with these things, but we're moving exactly as fast as the city

wants us to move and has permitted us to move and we're going to be harking to what this transportation study says we should do. It might surprise some Hon. Members, Mr. Speaker, and the Member for Saskatoon, to know that there are several requests coming in from outside Saskatoon from the elected councils outside that city suggesting that 42nd Street site is not the place to build that bridge. I don't agree with them, but the point is that that's what that transportation study is for. It is to settle once and for all where it should be built. There's another thing they're saying. They say it will be needed in 1985 and I'll assure the Member we'll have it done before then, if the city moves.

MR. PENNER: — Will you give us that as a guarantee?

MR. KRAMER: — Well, I am only saying, Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the Saskatoon Members that that is what the transportation study people are saying; they are saying it will be needed by 1985. There are a number, including myself, who think it will be needed earlier than that. It will be needed earlier than that; I think it could very well be useful now.

Mr. Speaker, after being so rudely interrupted, I think I'll get back.

We have made a tremendous number of improvements to reduce hazards in order to try to cut down on the ever-increasing accident rate, especially in the cities. Improvements are being made to reduce those hazards.

New projects have built-in safety features. There is not one single structure made under our jurisdiction that isn't carefully studied to make sure that every possible thing is done with a view towards traffic safety; remove and relocate road approaches; flatten side approaches; improve sight distances at intersections; relocate power and telephone poles; install guard rails; improve road alignment; rumble strips; turning bays; construct deceleration lanes; reduce shoulder cross slopes; install sidewalks at bridges; install delineation at intersections. We're going to be building more information plazas so that when people come to a larger centre, they can drive off the side of the road and find out where things are. These are very useful and they certainly will assist people to move about knowing where they are going and that will prevent accidents. There is nothing worse than people driving around, trying to study street signs and looking for places. They ought to be directed before they enter a busy city and we're going to do that.

Information directories have been erected at key northern areas as well and probably those of you who have gone north have seen these information turnouts indicating what's available up the road and where it is.

Since January 1976, the Department of Highways and Transportation has been involved in an intensive grass roots campaign to try to get information out to people, regarding safety. We are informing people about safety. This is a joint effort with the Federal Government, to try and inform people and persuade them to use seat belts.

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We have had displays throughout the province. More than 100,000 people have seen demonstrations. Six thousand people in Saskatchewan now, in a short period of time, have ridden the convincer, which simulates a crash with a seatbelt on and give them some idea what, at even 15 miles an hour, a collision will do. Ten thousand people have attended our seatbelt seminars. Two hundred thousand pieces of material have been distributed throughout Saskatchewan.

In December 1976, we started Canada's first seatbelt - survivor club. Since that time we now have 75 members and before too long, I am hoping that when we have 100 we would distribute the letters that these people send in, indicating what happened, where and how. It makes pathetic and interesting reading, Mr. Speaker. These people are scattered throughout the length and breadth of Saskatchewan. We have one honorary member from British Columbia who happens to have a very interesting story, she is the sister of a man well-known in Saskatchewan, well-known especially to people in North Battleford and to me, the former Mayor of North Battleford, James Mahr. She is his sister Eleanor, Mrs. Glenn from British Columbia. She wrote me a letter which is very interesting and I hope to table that along with a number of other letters. I have her permission to publish it. Her letter along with a number of others will make very useful and educational reading.

There are some interesting arguments developed in the province on safety. Safety '77 will permit the discussion of these arguments. We hope that there will be a tremendous amount of discussion. We have already contracted service clubs, churches and schools. Educators are coming on stream, wanting to be of assistance in Safety '77. I don't want to leave the impression, Mr. Speaker, that Safety '77 is seatbelts and speed limits. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Seatbelts and speed limits never yet prevented an accident. They only reduce the injury or save a life, save a lot of lives, after the accident occurs. So, let's disabuse ourselves of the idea, if we have that idea, that Safety '77 is seatbelts and speed limits. But in that argument, which is always current, let's take a look at what's happened, in case you want to inform yourself a bit. Volume of traffic has increased again by 4.1 per cent in 1976. In spite of that our accident rate on our highway system has been reduced from 3.22 per million miles travelled in 1961 to 1.79, half of what it was in 1961. We have fewer accidents in spite of the tremendous number of extra miles that have been travelled. That's an interesting statistic. Unfortunately that statistic does not hold true in the urban and rural. Urban streets, the accident rate was 14 per million. Instead of 1.79 it was 14.6 per million miles, in the cities compared to eight. In 1961 again nearly double the wrong way. Municipal roads rate remained about constant. Fifty five per cent of the traffic is on our provincial highway system, but only 18 per cent of the accidents occur in Saskatchewan on the highway system. Twenty five per cent of the travel occurs in the cities, Mr. Speaker, but 55 per cent of the accidents occur in the cities and the smaller urban centres. Twenty per cent of the traffic is in municipal areas and 25 per cent of the accidents occur on municipal roads.

People start arguing about reducing speed limits, and say that all you have to do, is reduce the speed limits and shoot all the drunken drivers. That's the suggested cure, but it is

not valid. I think there are many things that we can do. There are many things that are already being done. We are not experimenting and I hope that before too long the Member for Kinistino (Mr. Thibault) and others who are acquainted with the situation and have been part of that ongoing study for four or five years will be able to give you, in more detail, suggestions on what we have to do.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs said earlier today that 50 per cent of the fatal accidents, at least 40, involved drinking drivers. Certainly that is a problem, but we have the archaic idea that people can be put into jails and be cured of drinking. Doctors and many others agree that anyone who is an alcoholic is sick and if he is a continual offender and can't resist driving while inebriated he must be sick. But we are still throwing him into jail. Whoever heard of curing sick people in jail? But that is what we try to do.

Safety '77 program will establish a traffic court which is not going to be a punishing experience but an educational experience. We hope we will be able to persuade these people to rehabilitate; to take a rehabilitation course and not lose their right to earn a living; that we will be able to guide them in a different direction. It is not an experiment; it is working. It is working, Mr. Speaker. It is working in the United States in all the centres that Mr. Thibault and his Committee visited. It is working effectively with 75 per cent cures. It is working in Ontario. It is one area in which we are not first; we are away behind in Saskatchewan. Ontario is away ahead. In parts of the United States they are way ahead. I wish that we could get a safety meeting of all the Members of this Legislature. We sent Mr. Thibault and Professor Shiels to Melbourne to the International Safety Conference in January. I will arrange a meeting to have a report from these people in Room 218, for all those who wish to come and listen to the report that Mr. Thibault and Dr. Shiels have brought back, providing the most recent information on traffic safety.

I passed a statistic from England to the Member for Saskatoon Eastview (Mr. Penner) this afternoon, and if I remember the figures, head injuries alone were reduced by 83 per cent where seat-belts were being used compared to those where they were not used. That is only one statistic; there are many more; time will not permit me to go into all of them today. I invite all of you to approach the problem with an open mind.

One of the other areas that we must explore and must put emphasis on is in education, because as I said earlier, we can only reduce injury with seatbelts and speed limits. We must prevent accidents. We have failed miserably in that task. I say this to all the teachers and all the parents, "We have failed miserably in teaching the proper social attitudes," Mr. Speaker. We expose our children to the idiot box; most of their education comes from television; they watch the impossible things and all the violence-shows like Starsky and Hutch, which are entertaining at times but represent an unreal world. Movies like, Eat My Dust. The advertising of cars and fuel. I suggest to you to just stop and take a look at what we have been watching recently and the things being done and said. Even the names of vehicles are directed at aggressiveness and violence.

So you buy a Cougar or a Mustang or a Charger. And if that isn't enough; our 16 year old gets a new car for his birthday and he drives down and puts a 'tiger in his tank' down at the

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Esso station and RRrrr he is off and running and we wonder why the heck he goes out and kills himself.

MR. CAMERON: — . . . at 55 miles an hour.

MR. KRAMER: — I said speed limits and seatbelts are not the problem. It is us, the man and the woman in the mirror, Mr. Speaker, that is to blame for the social attitude that we have allowed and encouraged to develop - competition and aggressiveness; get ahead of the other guy - the father that will say to his youngsters in the back seat, I am doing 80; see if you can see the “Queen’s cowboys” behind. Or whether I can run the ‘red light’. That is the attitude we encourage; that is what we have been doing and I say this social attitude has to change.

I am not going to proceed any further with that argument. There is much more to be said, but I want to invite you to listen to the information that is available. I hope we are not going to be political like one of my confreres in Nova Scotia and again I don’t want to emphasize the seatbelt thing too much, but three years ago the Liberal Government of Nova Scotia introduced and passed seatbelt legislation. Well, there was a bit of public uproar. I hate to tell this House that it was led by the Leader of the New Democratic Party, Jerry Akerman and the legislation that was passed is still gathering dust because it was never proclaimed. I will be glad to table the letter I wrote to Jerry Akerman two years ago. I was a bit ashamed when I met the Hon. Howard Page; I met him at a Roads and Transportation Conference in Calgary two years ago. I said, “How is the legislation coming, Howard?” Well, he said a few unkind words . . . if it wasn’t for that so and so Akerman, it would have been passed, but he created such a public uproar, we didn’t proclaim it. I didn’t really know that the New Democrats were that influential in Nova Scotia, but I am and was thoroughly ashamed.

MR. McMILLAN: — . . . it was bad legislation.

MR. KRAMER: — I hope that this House will not try to play politics with this, because we had a Liberal Government in Quebec that brought the legislation in last fall; we have a Conservative Government in Ontario that brought it in one year ago. They have saved 200 lives. The medical centres that were doing transplants of various organs, kidneys and so on, are running short of material because they aren’t getting those fresh young kidneys from the 16, 17 and 18 year-olds anymore. I say that that is a horrible statistic. I suppose if you carry it to the ultimate, we ought to have signs out the highways, “Drive like hell”, we need your kidneys, in order that someone else that has more brains than you have, can use them.

Mr. Speaker, I will not dwell anymore on Safety ’77. I say that education and rehabilitation is the most important thing we can do. If we get on stream with this there will be fewer accidents. I repeat that the only thing that the seatbelt can do is reduce injury and save lives.

I have been asked to say something about speed limits. Speed limits will be reduced slightly, I say, sensibly for Saskatchewan in September when we go metric along with the rest of Canada. Those are our instructions, one hundred kilometers, day and night where it is now 65.

MR. MALONE: — 62.

MR. KRAMER: — All right, it is 62.3 miles per hour. At 90 kilometers where it is now 60 and 80 where it is now 50, which is dead on. That's been agreed to and I think that will be generally accepted throughout Canada. I hope that it will be consistent. I understand that Alberta, at least their Minister told me in October, was going to go 110, where they are now 70. I hear other stories that they may be dropping it below that, but that seems to be the news from Alberta. I think Manitoba will be pretty well on stream with us. I am not sure what British Columbia is doing.

There is another thing that I want to say a word or two about before I am finished and that is administration, that is the \$13,000 or nearly \$14,000 section of my budget.

Since 1971 we have introduced many new programs in my department. We have had 1,000 miles through Operation Open Roads and Main Street and additional highway extensions of about 1,000 miles more. We have our Urban Assistance Programs; we added the Traffic Safety Division which I told you about and a number of others. And we have, during that period of time, increased our Department of Highways staff by 18 and we will probably reduce it by two this year.

Airport construction is another one that has been an expanded program. I want to congratulate the staff of the Department of Highways and Transportation for the tremendous job they have done. One of the things that we hear a great deal about from Liberals and Tories, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan has hordes of civil servants. Well maybe there are large numbers but they are a great deal more numerous in other provinces and I don't have to go too far away. I picked up a federal statistic on people employed by provincial governments and The Federal Government in Canada. I read, with some interest, that Alberta has 44,000 people working for the Government. Saskatchewan in that same periodical has 13,000. I am not too sure whether they are entirely the same criteria, whether all those Crown corporations in Alberta are calculated as they are counted in Saskatchewan. I don't think they have many Crown corporations; they can't possibly have in Alberta. Peter the Red wouldn't do that, unless they counted all those people in that great socialist enterprise of Pacific Western Airlines or the northern Alberta railroad. They may be included in that. But 13,000 and 44,000 seems to be a big spread when the people on your left are talking about all these hordes of civil servants. I wish they would talk a little about their counterparts. Manitoba has 13,000 civil servants and that was the figure given to us again through the federal statistics. If you took Saskatchewan and Manitoba and added them that would make 26,000. That would put us fairly close to the same population as Alberta. I am sure that when you have more people that there is more service and though there are not as many services, Alberta does not have drug plans or a number of other things that we have in Saskatchewan run by the Government. Not over there! They only have little better than half the miles of highway, for instance.

So I wonder what those 44,000 people are doing over there? I should like those people across the way to do their homework before they talk about these hordes of civil servants. I think that rather than continually maligning these people who are not able to speak up for themselves, because they are civil and they

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are servants and they can't get into the political arena. We ought to be praising them, because whether you go to New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, the per capita in Saskatchewan, and I think Manitoba runs second, is fewer civil servants than anywhere else in Canada. And you can throw the Federal Government in with that. I am using federal statistics, Mr. Speaker, when I put those arguments forward.

The highlights of 1976-77 have been, the main thrust has been, to develop more and better services for the people of Saskatchewan as I have mentioned.

We have developed another economy in pavement marking. It is an expensive process, nearly \$2 million to mark pavement in Saskatchewan. Our people have developed a pavement marker that can proceed at 20 miles per hour to the former one mile per hour. We will be able to do a great deal more pavement marking. Pavement marking, I think everyone will agree, is something that is very necessary especially when visibility is reduced during blizzards.

We completed 692 projects last year; we had 381 communities that participated in Operation Main Street; 532 miles of access roads were oiled to serve 311 rural communities. Incidentally, about 240,000 people were taken out of the mud, the dust and the rocks through Operation Open Roads and Main Street which is completed now. We completed 16 miles of four-lane highway, the last 16 miles of the Trans-Canada.

It is interesting, again, to note that Saskatchewan, again, is ahead here. We have 50 per cent of our Trans-Canada now four-laned, more than any other province in western Canada or in Canada.

MR. McMILLAN: — Thanks to the Federal Government.

MR. KRAMER: — Thanks to the Federal Government, well, well, well! You now, Mr. Speaker, I won't tell him what that statement is, thanks to the Federal Government indeed. I won't tell him, I am too polite to say that in this House, but if he follows a horse long enough he is going to find out.

Mr. Speaker, there hasn't been one penny of federal money in the four-laning of No. 1. There has not been one penny of federal money in No. 1 since 1956 when we completed the first two lanes, not one penny for construction.

MR. WIEBE: — How about the resurfacing?

MR. KRAMER: — Ah ha! How about the resurfacing? One inch of asphalt, on top, but not one bit for four-laning I said and the Member for Morse very well knows it. The trouble with you people is that you thrive on innuendo. I am giving you the facts, Mr. Speaker, the Members over there know better. I don't know what the Tory part of the Opposition knows; it is difficult to tell. But certainly the Liberals may not be too honest in some of their statements but at least they know what they are saying, so they are more guilty than the Tories, because they know what the facts are. I am saying that the only money we have received was for surfacing on old lanes. I am saying that the four western Ministers have been fighting with Otto Lang trying to get a federal transportation policy to pay for building of Trans-Canada highways, both the Yellow Head and the Trans-Canada No. 1.

MR. CAMERON: — How about the . . .

MR. KRAMER: — Mr. Speaker, the Member is beginning to look and sound more like his Dad all the time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KRAMER: — And he had difficulty with the facts too. The Members opposite are trying their best to try to cover for the total failure of their counterparts in Ottawa. They have not contributed fairly. Last year they invaded our tax field; they took \$35 million in taxes off to Ottawa in gasoline tax. They have taken hundreds of millions in oil revenue and given not one penny, not one penny for construction of much needed transportation to accommodate Trans-Canada traffic across this province. Not one! I repeat we are not getting one penny for construction, paltry amounts for resurfacing, to carry CPR trucks across the province to allow them to travel on the old highways, a picayune amount by any measure I say. Don't try and cover up federal failures for the benefit of the press; there has not been one cent for construction from the Federal Government. We completed 50 per cent of the four-lane on No. 1 across Saskatchewan and not one penny of federal money has been injected into that. If any people opposite want to try to prove otherwise, put up a hundred bucks, put your money where your mouth is. Any takers? I will raise it, make it two hundred. Any takers?

We have completed No. 40 this year between Saskatoon and Prince Albert. It was nothing but a dog track four years ago. We have completed the airport at Meadow Lake this year. The airport at La Ronge has been completed in co-operation with the Feds. I give them credit where credit is due. A new pavement test track will be done to test and find out what our highways will stand. There are many other things that I want to say.

I want to once again congratulate the staff for the job they have done for the people of Saskatchewan. I take pleasure in tabling our 1977 project array, about 90 per cent of the projects are included for this year. Having said that I want to surprise you all by saying I am not going to support the amendment, but I will support the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R. E. NELSON (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg): — Mr. Speaker, I would first like to congratulate the Member for Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Lane) and the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf) on taking their seats in this Assembly.

After listening to the Minister of Finance bring down his second deficit Budget, one could hardly help but shudder.

I was pleased, Mr. Speaker, to see the Government follow the advice and policy of the Liberal Party in removing the succession duties and gift taxes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — However, at a time when we have record revenues, this

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Government has overspent to the tune of \$85 million over the last two years and over and above that they have spent \$272 million in the purchase of two potash mines. That \$272 million expenditure did not create one new job.

The Province of Saskatchewan and the people of our province should be enjoying the growth of industry, as well as the benefits of extra revenue to our provincial Treasury. This is not happening in most cases because of the narrow thinking of this Government and the inept lackluster record of the Cabinet Ministers.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, a glowing example of the problems of the present Saskatchewan Government was made abundantly clear when our present Minister of Mineral Resources was interviewed by a reporter for the Regina Leader-Post. I should like to quote from that article, Mr. Speaker, in the January 10th news article regarding the expected closing of the Canadian Helium Plant north of Swift Current, I quote:

John R. Messer, Saskatchewan Minister of Mineral Resources said his ministry is concerned about the loss of the Helium Production Plant, but also said there is really nothing anyone could do.

Our studies show the reserve of helium there to be depleted. At this time we don't have any evidence to show there is any other helium source in Saskatchewan which can be developed.

It would appear that our Minister was serious in what he told the press at that time. His lack of knowledge of the resources of our province is yet to be explained.

Mr. Speaker, for the Minister's interest as well as for this Assembly, I should like to give him some information. In 1960 in the Mankota area of southern Saskatchewan the Texaco Exploration Company drilled a discovery well and found a large supply of helium. International Helium Company Limited entered into formal arrangements with Texaco, whereby they took over Texaco's helium lease and bought the Texaco well from them. International Helium drilled a dry hole follow-up well and completed another high-pressure gas well in the same gas reservoir. In 1970 International Helium was reorganized and the name was changed to Mineral Resources International Limited.

The Mankota reservoir contains some 70 billion cubic feet of raw gas with 1.3 per cent helium and 94 per cent nitrogen in the two wells. The helium wells are located on two sections in township five, range eight, west of the third meridian. Both wells have well-heads on them with valves ready to be produced.

I contacted the company to verify my facts and I am told a 70 million cubic foot of gaseous helium per year and liquid nitrogen plant would have to be built on a 36-acre site immediately east of Mankota to develop the reserve. The company is most anxious to see the project go ahead. This reserve is not only one of the only reserves of helium in the world - but is probably the largest.

It is most important that Saskatchewan encourage the development of this helium supply not only to assist the province, but to ensure some competition on the world market to ensure a fair price.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — Mr. Speaker, this development in the Mankota area would be most important for the town of Mankota where the only industry is farming and ranching.

Mr. Speaker, I would be most pleased to assist the Minister in bringing this industry into southern Saskatchewan. He can count on the full co-operation of the Hon. Member for Shaunavon and myself.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask for the co-operation of this Government in taking a second look at a situation in my constituency. I was told in Crown Corporations Committee last spring that the Sodium Sulphate Plant at Bishopric would be closed in the near future because of shortage of product. I am told this week by speaking with people working on the site there has been an exceptional harvest this year, the sodium sulphate was very clean and that there is in fact no shortage of supply. While it appears there is a slump in the sales, the employees working at Bishopric must be given consideration.

If the Government shuts down this operation, the town of Mossbank will be dealt a severe blow. Some 25 employees and their families would be involved many of whom own their own homes. This town has little or no other industry besides the sodium sulphate plant and farming.

If the plant is shut down the employees would have to move or be out of work. They would face losses on their homes, which would be difficult to sell at this time. The entire community would suffer, including business places, schools and churches, if these employees and their families were forced to leave.

I would recommend to the Minister that he have his officials take a second look at the Bishopric Plant and reconsider the closing plans.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words about a Crown corporation for which I am Opposition critic and for which I have grave concern.

The Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation was established in 1963, and for good reason to provide financial assistance to industrial enterprises in the Province of Saskatchewan.

I would like to quote from one of today's brochures, Mr. Curly Whip, over there.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON:

The object of the corporation is to expand the economic base of the province by providing a wide variety of financial and other services for

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its clients.

It is the aim of SEDCO to be a lender with a difference. A lender that considers employment, experience and commitment to be as important as security.

In Saskatchewan SEDCO means business.

Mr. Speaker, I'll not go into details on the huge loans, the lack of business sense, the political connections, the out of province shareholders, the overdue capital payments, or the financial fiasco of the venture into the motel business in our city to the West. I won't mention those, Mr. Speaker, because it is already history.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — And sad history it is for the record of SEDCO and sad history it is for the taxpayers of our province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — Mr. Speaker, I want you to think about the objectives I spoke about for the corporation when we relate a recent venture where money was loaned to purchase Western Press of Moose Jaw, a printing company that was registered in Moose Jaw in 1911. That company was well known for the excellent quality of work it put out. That company was a highly efficient operation and worked to capacity at all times.

Mr. Speaker, that was before SEDCO entered the picture and a new group purchased the business and renamed the company.

Let us go back to the objectives of SEDCO and see how this venture stacks up against the criteria listed in the brochure, "a lender that considers employment." This company formerly had a staff of five. Not one new job was created by this loan. In fact the opposite is actually happening. Then the lender was to consider "experience." Let us, Mr. Speaker, see how SEDCO fared under that objective. In buying a printing company certainly experience in that business should be necessary. The new owners' experience appears to range mostly around union centre - around protest groups - around the political hacks of the socialist party.

The next objective SEDCO is to consider is "investment." Mr. Speaker, this particular item was again given little thought or commonsense approach. The purchasers were buying used printing equipment and a supply of stock that could disappear in the course of normal business in a very short time. Now, what security has SEDCO in this enterprise?

On January 12, 1977, SEDCO registered a second debenture for \$28,000 and, Mr. Speaker, the Moose Jaw Credit Union holds the first debenture. To any practical businessman, this would predict certain disaster.

The last objective in SEDCO criteria is commitment, and I presume commitment to work - commitment to do the best possible job - commitment to earn a profit - commitment to be successful.

Let us look at the scoresheet for Western Press (1976) Ltd. Their commitment appears more down at union centre - commitment to demonstrate and oppose - commitment to bring down the federal wage and price controls - commitment to party politics of the NDP. The results seem obvious without a miracle, Mr. Speaker, I predict this to be the next financial disaster for SEDCO under our very new Minister. It's a disaster too, for needed business that has served the province for 75 years, a business that has employed citizens of our province over the years, all because of stupidity and poor management. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a shame.

Mr. Speaker, SEDCO can be a useful lending institution. SEDCO can assist individuals and businesses in our province but the Minister must insist on sticking to the objectives of the corporation. More careful analysis of each situation is essential - political patronage cannot be a criterion.

Mr. Speaker, over the last few days our Attorney General has said on several occasions he plans to spend more money on policing in our province and I was pleased to hear this. I hope he will certainly consider replacing the withdrawn detachment of the RCMP in Willow Bunch.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — Willow Bunch, Mr. Speaker, has since last June grown over 25 per cent in population and in the last few weeks the town council has sold some 40 more lots and is presently dealing on 15 more. This will mean approximately 50 more families in the town. These people are commuting to the Coronach SPC project. There is an immediate need in the town for more policing, and it would appear the population could double in the very near future.

While the Attorney General of our province misled the people of the area when he removed the RCMP last June, I believe he has a responsibility to take another look at the situation which he promised when he talked to me about it and hasn't done, to put a detachment back in Willow Bunch where they have been for some 90 years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — Certainly a detachment is needed in Coronach as the population there is rapidly growing because of the Poplar River Project.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Municipal Affairs has continued his arrogant ways in his department as he did with the trustees when he was in Education. I am glad he is back in the House and he can hear this little shot. For some unknown reason, this Minister believes he has the divine right to run roughshod over the long-standing rights of all local government. The Minister for his own political purpose has continued to interfere with decision-making at the local municipal level with regard to weight restrictions on municipal roads.

The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities wants uniform weight restrictions on municipal roads. They want them the same as the secondary highway system, at present 500 pounds per square inch of width tire to a maximum of 28,000 pounds,

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42,000 pounds and 74,000 pounds. The municipalities want and must be allowed to retain the right to issue road bans as well as issue overweight load permits on rural roads. The municipalities' rights to issue road bans and overweight load permits are a necessity in order for municipalities to adequately protect their own rural road system and they do not want to delegate these rights or responsibilities to another agency of Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister has been told very clearly by SARM but he continually refuses to stop interfering where he is not wanted.

How has the Minister of Municipal Affairs reacted to the suggestions from SARM? He and the Government of this Province have told the citizens of this province that the farmers and others hauling grain in Saskatchewan are second-class citizens. He told them that they would be discriminated against and they would be ignored.

Mr. Speaker, this Minister is interfering with one segment of the population and for his own political interests. I ask the Minister to leave the rural municipalities to run their own local governments. I ask him to stop eroding the rights of local governments and to cease the rank discrimination he presently plans.

Mr. Speaker, I will not support the motion but I will support the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. D. HAM (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, it is with much apprehension that I rise to speak in this Debate. The last several days this caucus has been the centre of a fair bit of shooting and I am feeling much like a duck in a shooting gallery.

I should like to begin, Mr. Speaker, by welcoming our two newest Members to the caucus, the Member for Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Lane) and the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf) and I can assure the Members of this House they are two of many more to come.

I feel sad at this point that the Minister of Highways (Mr. Kramer) has left. I had been hoping that I could compliment him personally as his was probably one of the most entertaining speeches I have heard in the Legislature for some time and except for one or two small snide remarks, I think it was very well done.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin the text of my speech by thanking the Members opposite and surprising enough not the Members to my right, for the recent increase in the attacks on this caucus. I learned of a similar situation last year and I can only conclude it must indicate their concern, and they should be concerned, as a result of the two recent by-elections.

I noted in the NDP Commonwealth, a recent edition, that the editor now suggests it was time to attack the PCs. It appears to me that the editor of the Commonwealth has much influence in

the New Democratic Party. It is most unfortunate though, Mr. Speaker, that attacks of late have become more personal, so cheap, that it is very disgusting. It must offend the intelligent visitors to this Chamber to hear the low level of this kind of attack. It is little wonder so few citizens listen to our radio broadcasts, Mr. Speaker. Surely your speechwriters can do better.

Mr. Speaker, years ago, I was told by a wise businessman, and I think there a few left in Saskatchewan, I hope, that if you wish to lose a customer condemn your competition. That's where your customer will go. So I invite the Government opposite and the Members to my right to continue these attacks.

In the last session, Mr. Speaker, comments were made and warnings came from this caucus expressing concern about the future of our province. The purchase then of the Duval Potash Mine, for that matter the introduction of the legislation, really ripples throughout the investment world. Even today references are made to the increase in the borrowing rate to Canada from US financiers since the election of the Party Quebecois and the nationalization of potash in Saskatchewan. In a province that requires diversification, including light industry and manufacturing, this Government has literally chased investment away.

Our caucus warned of the economic balloon bursting in Saskatchewan. We also warned that good crops and co-operative weather would not last. In answer to that we hear of increased housing, increased retail sales, increase in Government revenues, all of which the Government has taken credit for. Well, I hope this Government takes the blame for the decline in wheat prices, the decrease in wheat sales and the increase in debt.

Recently this Government, Mr. Speaker, announced the purchase of the Sylvite Mine in Rocanville. I note that Sylvite built an indoor swimming pool for the citizens of this community some years ago, a community of 800 people. I wonder will the Government of Saskatchewan contribute similar recreational facilities to future purchases of mines in those locals? We know that won't happen. My constituency of 16,000 citizens in Swift Current has yet to obtain an indoor pool. Perhaps a potash mine expropriation would bring us a pool; I don't know.

Mr. Speaker, the purchase of both these mines acquired paper, only paper, a deed. No more jobs, no more production and a monstrous debt. Yet within three days of the Sylvite purchase we see a deficit budget with tax increases. As predicted, the economy in Saskatchewan by the Government's own words should be looked at with 'cautious optimism'. Even with the possibility of drought this year, depressed cattle prices, rising inflation, rising unemployment, decreasing output, we again view a government confused with its priorities. Two hundred and seventy two million Saskatchewan citizens' dollars went into two potash mines. It is little wonder we are faced with a deficit budget, a deficit that is predicted to be no less than \$40 million. Do you think the people of Saskatchewan don't understand? They do. They did in Saskatoon Sutherland and they did in Prince Albert-Duck Lake; they will not forget. They are flocking to the Progressive Conservative Party, Mr. Speaker, yes, flocking. Although any further potash purchases can only assist the PC Party into power, for the sake of present and future Saskatchewan citizens I hope this does not come to pass. There is too much at stake. We have heard about the problems of the people in our health care scheme. People are not statistics who

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are to obtain medical care without painful waiting periods. Mr. Speaker, people are at stake. The economic future of every man, woman and child in Saskatchewan is at stake.

Mr. Speaker, individual responsibility in this province is being eroded daily in the sheltered life of state control, by a big government brother pushing, pulling and leading. You wonder why we are faced with increased crime, increased family breakdown, increased moral breakdown. In community service clubs the youth groups are unable to continue projects as a result of cop-out attitudes, youth giving up in society. These are not points of argument, Mr. Speaker, they are facts, and it all relates to big brother government. Through centralized control and 'let the other guy do it, let the government do it', individual responsibility is being eroded. This is why the PC Party believes so strongly in returning control to those members of our society who can best serve the community needs to locally elected responsible boards, approachable, representative and subject to local scrutiny at the grass roots level.

Individual responsibility is the base of our society where for our children's sake it must be placed. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the image building, many of our politicians use best, explains why much of our parliament 'big brother governments' fail to promote individual responsibility. Some time ago I had the occasion to attend the official opening of a large senior citizens' highrise in Swift Current and I appreciate the invitation and hope the Government continues to extend these offers. This is not always true I understand from other Members of this caucus because I know the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) is not regularly invited to Government official openings. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, during the formal opening I heard the Minister, the retired MLA for Swift Current and the Mayor of Swift Current, take credit for the erection of this beautiful building. I don't doubt that they should have taken credit, because no doubt they had some direct influence on the decision to build this massive building in Swift Current. However, each and especially the Minister, continually told the audience how the Government granted money, how the Government was responsible, they granted money for this beautiful building. Mr. Speaker, this building was constructed by the taxpayers. Perhaps the Minister should have thanked the audience for paying their taxes. Perhaps an ad should have been placed in our local paper thanking everyone in Swift Current for paying his taxes, a classic case of ramming taxpayers with their own money.

Mr. Speaker, let's remember that in our democratic society, the government doesn't have the money, the government doesn't have the rights; the people have rights. The government doesn't dictate policy; the people determine policy. The government is not the people; it only represents the people. Little of this bears any comparison to this Government, Mr. Speaker.

Before concluding, Mr. Speaker, I must comment on the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. MacMurphy) recent proposal to SARM regarding the reduction in load limits in Saskatchewan. I quite understand flouting a political balloon once, but not only not understand but condemn the Minister for doing it twice. His remarks have caused more concern to more groups in the agricultural sector than anything else in recent years. The very people that SARM, the Minister says these limits were designed to protect, have voted unanimously contrary to his proposals. SARM understand, the Department of Highways understand, every trucker seems to understand, but the Minister and his officials

don't understand, that a three-ton single axle truck, properly loaded, places more stress on a roadbed than a properly loaded semi-trailer. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, a larger truck hauls larger loads if the load is spread over several axles and many tires. Without question more extensive damage occurs on roads when trucks are overloaded even though the number of grain hauls are reduced by overloading and the total damage to roads increases tremendously. For some reason, Mr. Speaker, a pound of grain weighs more than anything else. Allowing permits to move overweight loads from all other products except grain is discrimination of the highest degree. Unfortunately the entire population of Saskatchewan will indirectly suffer as a result of these changes. The increased cost per mile of hauling agricultural goods will filter through to our economy.

Mr. Speaker, this Government again has confused its priorities producing a Budget that should and could have been balanced. The Government has yet to realize you cannot obtain blood from a stone. I, therefore, will not be supporting the motion.

MR. W. H. STODALKA (Maple Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate all the speakers who have spoken so far in the Budget Debate and also the two MLAs who have joined the Legislative Assembly, the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf) and the Member for Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Lane). I still see the previous Member from the party to our left has the feeling that he has been persecuted and everybody else has been picking on them. I thought possibly after this many days of debate we might have gotten to something else rather than this feeling of persecution, everybody else is picking on them, and how this province is such a terrible place to live in with this terrible crime wave we have here in this Province of Saskatchewan. There is only one problem. I happen to live very close to the Province of Alberta and in fact, as I tried to tell some of you last year, our only communications come from that Province of Alberta and they seem to have the same cockeyed problems over there that we have here in Saskatchewan.

Secondly, before I begin, I would like to congratulate the Minister of Education (Mr. Tchorzewski) on the White Paper that he has presented to the Legislature today. It was certainly needed. Any of the people who have had anything to do with education over the years had to go through 14 or 15 legislative Acts to find out where they were going will appreciate a new Act that combines 15, I believe, Acts into one. Mr. Minister I would like to congratulate you on it. I realize from my reading of it, that there are going to be some areas that are going to prove slightly controversial during the discussions that are going to take place during the next year. I am happy that you chose the White Paper approach and are going to give people the chance to make their views known to you. I hope that you are going to be willing to accept some of the suggestions that possibly may come during the next year or two.

I would also like to mention our Member for Assiniboia, and his concern for the plant at Bishopric. The concern in that area is about it being phased out of operation for one year. I, too, have had representation from the people at Inglebright who are concerned about the possibility that there might be some positions lost in the Inglebright area if there are people transferred from the plant at Bishopric. The people in that area would like to see the plant at Bishopric operated in conjunction with the other two sodium sulphate mines within

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the Province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin my remarks by thanking the various departments and the officials during the past year for all the co-operation that I have received. Any correspondence that I have had with people within the departments has been highly beneficial to me and very co-operative and I appreciate it very much.

Now, while Maple Creek Constituency has not been showered with Government projects we did receive some benefits this year for which we were grateful. Even though there were limitations to the cow-calf program introduced by the Government, the recipients of the plan there were grateful but there were some who were not so grateful. These were people who had realized the difficulty they were in and had sought and found work, work that was to provide supplemental income in times of financial need. These people are both disappointed and disillusioned. They were disappointed because they did not receive the benefits from the extra work that they had sought. It raised their income above the taxable income permitted by that plan. They are disillusioned because their decision to seek extra work to help them during a time of financial crisis had the effect of them not receiving benefits from that plan. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the plan had the effect of penalizing the ambitious and energetic individual who sought to eliminate some of his financial difficulties by doing a little extra work.

Now, one of the pleasant invitations I received during the year was from the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources. The Minister had asked me to be present for the official opening of the ski lift and chalet in the Cypress Hills Provincial Park, an event that had to be postponed because of the fact that the weather was too warm. One of the reasons that I was anxious to attend that particular function was to see what the Minister was going to say about the financing of that project. As the plant was being constructed, people in the Maple Creek area had the impression it was being built and financed by the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources, but shortly before the end we received information that half of it was paid for by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. Out of a total investment of \$210,000, there had been \$105,000 paid for by the Provincial Government and \$105,000 paid for by the Federal Government. I was anxious tonight to see what the Minister of Highways was going to do about the road to Fort Walsh. Maybe sometime possibly he can tell me in greater detail what the plans are for that road if he has completed them.

I would like to thank you though, Mr. Minister, for the two sections of road that you are going to be working on in the constituency of Maple Creek. I notice there is going to be some resurfacing on the Trans-Canada Highway from Tompkins to west of the junction of No. 21 and also some paving in the area from Cabri to Shackleton, so thank you very much for that in our area.

Now moving on to the section on education that I'm more interested in as the critic for education. Now the Budget indicates that operating grants to school boards this year were to increase by 10 per cent. Now this is to be an increase of almost \$17 million and compares to an increase last year of \$27.7 million or last year an increase of 20 per cent in comparison to this year's 10 per cent.

Now, the Minister claimed in his Budget address that this

increase will keep the department's share at approximately 58 per cent of the cost of education. Now if the Provincial Government's share is to remain constant at 58 per cent, it logically follows then, that the Minister expects school boards in Saskatchewan to raise their share also by the same 10 per cent. The Minister is thus suggesting that boards raise their local mill rate by 10 per cent. In other words, a school board with a mill rate of 50, will, according to the Minister, be expected to levy a rate of approximately 55 mills. But how does this compare with the information boards received from the Department of Education? Let us use for example school units.

Last year the department used a computational mill rate of 47.5 mills. This year the figure is 51 which is a difference of 3.5 mills. In per cent this represents an increase of just over 7 per cent in the computational mill rate, some 3 per cent less than the 10 per cent suggested by the Minister in his address here yesterday. Now, Mr. Speaker, why the difference in the rate of increase? Has the computational mill rate been intentionally set too low? Why in one instance 7 per cent and in the other instance 10 per cent? Some questions which require answers are: first of all, is the suggestion that an additional 10 per cent be levied on property taxes, that 10 per cent should be levied to pay for elementary and secondary education? Is that what the Minister is suggesting, that school boards should be levying an additional 10 per cent, another 10 per cent tax on farms and ranches that are already in financial binds or on homes that are already paying \$80 to \$100 per month in taxes? Secondly, is the provincial contribution of 58 per cent of the cost of education the ideal for which you have strived? Is 58 per cent the percentage that you wish to retain in the future? This fact would seem to indicate so.

Finally number three, are you prepared to assist school boards with the financial responsibilities that declining enrolments in division three and four will bring in the next few years? The enrolment decline in division one and division two that we have experienced in rural Saskatchewan was administratively much easier to handle than the drops in enrolment in division four and division three are going to be. As enrolments drop in the next six years, school boards will be forced to cut programs. They are going to be forced to cut teachers; they are going to be forced to centralize and yes, Mr. Speaker, they are even talking about closing schools.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Government have been very vocal in expressing their desires to retain the communities of rural Saskatchewan. They have been great defenders of the need for the local grain elevator. They have been great defenders for the need of the local hospital. Mr. Speaker, they are going to have the chance to prove what defenders they are of the local school. Take the school out of a community and what have you left? You can take out the elevators; you may take out the hospital. All of these will have an effect, but if you take out the school, you've taken out the heart of the community.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if special funds are not provided to help maintain boards or to maintain schools of low enrolments, there are going to be pressures on school boards to centralize even further.

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At the present time, no elementary school in Saskatchewan can be closed without the Minister's approval. Mr. Speaker, combined with this power to keep schools open, comes the responsibility to provide funds to help keep those schools open.

Mr. Speaker, the problem I refer to is not one of the distant future. Departmental officials surely are aware now that there are already unit boards in Saskatchewan which are visiting the local schools within their jurisdiction and are telling them that in two to three years, that they are going to have to be closing the schools within their villages. I can cite two or three schools in the constituency I represent where school unit officials have met with the local trustees and with the local ratepayers of central boards and have indicated to them, that unless there are additional funds available, these schools will be closing. These are schools, not in hamlets, but in villages of two to three hundred people.

Mr. Speaker, there's going to be an additional responsibility on this Government. The present formula that the Government has for financing education is simply not adequate in this case. It is a formula based on numbers of students that makes an allowance for sparsity and an allowance for enrolment drop that is not adequate. If we are going to maintain these schools in rural Saskatchewan, if we are going to maintain these communities and keep them viable, there are going to have to be other ways or other sources of money found to help finance these schools.

Mr. Speaker, another area in education I think that has received less funds than school boards would like to have received is in the area of capital grants. I noticed, reading through this year's Budget, there was no mention made about the funds that would be made available for capital construction in Saskatchewan. Possibly the reason is that in the 1976-77 budget we had \$11,915,000 budgeted for capital expansion. In the 1977-78 Budget there is a budget of \$9,430,000 a drop of \$2,485,000 or Mr. Minister, a drop of 20 per cent in the amounts of money that are going to be available for the construction of new school facilities in the Province of Saskatchewan. The Minister I am sure, is aware that he has many boards. The Member for Morse I'm sure is aware of a school board that has been anxious to do some construction. These people are even going to prove to be more frustrated than they have in the past, frustrated because they couldn't get approval when the Budget was \$11,915,000 and now we have a reduction still of 20 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also make a few comments about the so-called \$30 Recreation and Capital Fund Grant. I noticed the Minister of Education also serving as the Minister of Culture and Recreation, in estimating his figure, arrived at a figure of \$28 million. It seemed to me there was a neat bit of arithmetic in doing this. The population of Saskatchewan, as we all know is just slightly over 900,000 people, and a maximum grant of \$30 per person multiplied by 900,000 would prove to give you a \$28 million total. Mr. Speaker, I think it would be highly unlikely, almost impossible, that every jurisdiction in the Province of Saskatchewan will be competing in this particular program or will be taking part in it and not only that, how many of them are going to have joint projects in which the total of \$30 is going to be available. I heard the Mayor from Regina speak earlier tonight and he was not talking about the \$40 figure; he was talking about the \$25 figure. The point is that \$28 million is a figure that is certainly not going to be paid out.

It's an illusionary figure.

Secondly, in regard to his Budget for this particular year, I note the Estimates indicate that \$4 million has been provided in the Budget for that fund this year. Four million dollars is a long way from one-quarter of the total Budget. I predict, Mr. Minister, that there have been many communities which are presently organizing, presently making their plans, presently out collecting the necessary funds, to get their projects under way. Mr. Minister these people are going to be waiting anxiously after your deadline for applications closes in April. They are anxious to start. I presume many of them are going to be disappointed, certainly the amount of funds that you have provided in this year's Budget is not going to enable them to start the projects this year and some of them are going to be disappointed and their projects postponed for one or two or possibly three years.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude my remarks by saying that I think it is clearly indicated that I will not be supporting the Budget but will be supporting the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, I wish I could see a little better without my glasses, because I would like to see the expressions on the Members opposite faces and the Members to the right when I give them all their compliments and I'd like to watch them, but with these darn glasses I just can't see that far.

Before replying to the Budget, I first of all would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the two new Members, Harold Lane and Garnet Wipf for all their co-operation in working with us and getting themselves elected along with the fine crews at Prince Albert and Saskatoon Sutherland. We welcome these two fine gentlemen to our caucus. I'm sure that both of these Members have found out already in this Legislature, that the attitudes of both the Government and the Members to our right, confirmed the reasons why the voters made this choice. I'm sure they both appreciate the very negative approach of these parties and we thank both the NDP and the Liberals for helping them become Members of the Legislature.

I cannot understand, Mr. Speaker, and I guess it's been said before, I was up at the municipal convention, why the Government Members are picking on us. I just can't understand that. We certainly have done nothing to cause them to have such a terrible attitude towards us and our wonderful Leader. We just can't understand that. I'm sure they will want to apologize as soon as this Budget Debate is all over. I can't understand the Members to the right, how they are ignoring us. They used to give us heck all the time and now they are calling us arrogant and they are ignoring us. The NDP are ignoring them and so do the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Mineral Resources in his speech the other day mentioned in referring to the oil industry, where would we get the money when the oil runs out. I can tell you one thing, Mr. Speaker, if the people of this province count on this Government to halt or slow down this oil and gas depletion they'd better not hold their breath. Something over 5,000 wells were drilled in Alberta in 1976, 262 in Saskatchewan, 16

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in Manitoba, 36 by Saskoil, our wonderful new Saskoil company.

MR. MESSER: — Is the oil evaporating on us or something?

MR. LARTER: — Yes, it is with only four rigs available for drilling in Saskatchewan at this time. Mr. Speaker, the two old line parties, the NDP and the Liberals, governments of Saskatchewan past and present, can bear total responsibility for extremely poor negotiations and for losing millions and millions of dollars of people's resources on these poor negotiations. They would have the people of this province believe that the big multinationals took as much as they wanted and got out.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberals and the NDP gave away any excess dollars by their lack of ability to negotiate for the people of this province. What is happening in the oil industry at the present time is not just happening over night. Just think of the millions of dollars they have given away over the past few years by poor negotiations with the oil companies.

This Government has gone through great pains through all of its Members . . . Mr. Speaker, this is a terrible interruption for a fellow that's making a speech.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LARTER: — This Government has gone through great pains through all of its Members telling the people of the province all the things that they believe are killing the small communities such as rail line abandonment, inland terminals, buying of federal grain, the Government fought so hard to keep the federal grain as a separate entity. The Provincial Government is really ignoring the main reasons entirely though, such as fast cars and with all respect to the Minister of Highways, improved roads. But the real reason that some towns started to deteriorate was caused by this Government and that is larger school units were forced and I say forced without any choice on families of small communities, many years ago. I am not saying these larger school units are all wrong, but I am saying that it's about time that this NDP Government took full responsibility for the beginning of the end of the small towns.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Government on one particular item that emerged in the Minister of Finance's Budget presentation last Thursday. This item, Mr. Speaker, is the elimination of the succession duties and gift tax. This legislation in the past few years has been responsible for countless of millions of dollars to be removed from this province to other jurisdictions.

MR. MESSER: — How many millions?

MR. LARTER: — Countless of millions. I have personal knowledge of two situations in the past month where substantial sums of money have left Saskatchewan for this reason and had the legislation not been in effect the money would still be here, and by inference would still be working for the people of this province.

We felt, of course, that is a case of too little too late,

since much money has already been lost, but we do nevertheless welcome this initiative and trust that the outward flow of capital because of the legislation would now be halted.

Mr. Speaker, this is even going to help the Minister, Mr. Speaker. You and most of the other Members of this Assembly are aware that one of my duties in the Progressive Conservative Caucus is as a resource critic, and it is in this area that I wish to place particular emphasis today.

I also intend to say a few words about the general economic climate in this province and how our Government's attitude and policies towards resource development contribute to that climate. It is time, Mr. Speaker, that someone made an honest appraisal. I'm going to give the honest appraisal of this situation and lay the resulting analysis before the taxpayer of this province for his scrutiny.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister's Budget clearly indicates that everyone has been aware for the past months that there is a downturn in the economy upon us. It is evident also, although the Minister did not mention it, that there is considerable apprehension throughout the province, that a drought cycle may also be upon us, and this down turn in the economy has, as the Minister termed it, may turn out to be a full scale recession, and I am not spelling gloom and doom.

Mr. Speaker, all of this talk throughout this province about the prospect of a drought and about depressed grain prices points out once again the historic and present fact that our province is over-dependent on the agricultural sector as an economic base.

The province, throughout its history, has ridden up and down, with the fortunes, good and bad, of the agricultural community and nothing meaningful has been done to promote an industrial tax base through the resource industries.

The Province of Alberta has been very aggressive about this type of promotion and is well on its way in establishing a flourishing petrochemical industry. There is no reason why we shouldn't have the same in Saskatchewan. We have the same potential as Alberta and we do find it strange that not one company has come forward with this kind of a proposal, in this regard. Mr. Speaker, during my last major address to this Assembly I made reference to the detrimental effect this Government's oil follies had and are continuing to have on the oil industry. I also pointed out that the contribution of the industry to the public purse was considerable and without a major thrust in exploration, the reserves would eventually dry up along with, of course, a smaller return to the public Treasury.

Well, Mr. Speaker, nothing much has changed since that time. There are a few wells scheduled in the area of my constituency but now there is a shortage of drilling rigs. Guess where they are - Tory Alberta. It seems that only four rigs capable of drilling production holes in the Estevan area still remain in Saskatchewan, and it is next to impossible to attract any more. True, these scheduled tests are all classed as incentive wells and are not numerous enough to interest drilling contractors in moving to this province from other areas. Mr. Speaker there is one other situation that has been brought to my attention that is causing some further uncertainty to the producers and that has to do with the amendment of The Royalty Regulations

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pursuant to the latest increase in the price of crude oil.

Mr. Speaker, don't you think these gentlemen are awfully rude?

MR. SPEAKER: — I think the speaker has made a good point there. The Members are. I want to say to the Members that it makes no difference to me. They are your rules and if you insist on having this heavy cross-chatter when the Members are speaking it would be to your detriment, and I just want to mention that to you at this time, and I think that you should try and raise the decorum of the House, and if that is not possible at least try and hold it at its present level.

MR. LARTER: — Thank you Mr. Speaker, I am sure that that will change them around a little.

Mr. Speaker, there is one other situation that has been brought to my attention that has caused some further uncertainty to the producers, and that has to do with the amendment to the Royalty Regulations pursuant to the latest increase in crude oil.

Last summer the producers were told there would be an increase in the price of crude oil of a dollar five a barrel. And at the same time we were informed that they would only be allowed to keep enough of that dollar five to pay the increased taxes and operating costs, and they should not expect to net back any more from a barrel of oil produced than they did prior to the price increase. At the same time it was announced there would be a further increase in price of 70 cents per barrel which increase would become effective January 1, 1977. Well, Mr. Speaker, the regulations were amended with respect to that dollar five increase and sure enough the producers, after figuring all the additional taxes and royalties, were no better off than they were before. So as far as the 70 cents a barrel increase that was effective last January is concerned, the Administration has not yet told the industry how it will be split up. But in the light of what has happened previously producers are not too optimistic that their position will be improved.

MR. MESSER: — Oh yes they are.

MR. LARTER: — They haven't found out yet today.

Mr. Speaker, there are two points here that are of concern to me and my colleagues. Firstly, why should it take some eight to ten months for the Government to reach a decision on this matter? What earthly reason could there be for the delay?

Second point, Mr. Speaker, this Government by squeezing every last dollar out of the industry unto itself has left the industry without funds for exploration and other forms of industry and investment. And as we alluded to before, Mr. Speaker, without exploration and development the industry will wither and die and we will no longer be the beneficiary of the considerable moneys poured into the public Treasury each year from this source. No, Mr. Speaker, the oil industry is definitely not healthy considering the Government oil policy and its general attitude towards business. There is little chance that there will be an improvement in the industry's health in the foreseeable future.

Mr. Speaker, I would like now to direct the attention of the House to the potash industry and incidentally, Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that government officials are on a pleasure trip to France and Germany at the present time, presumably to negotiate with Alwinal Mine. It is my intention to question the Minister about this trip tomorrow.

We in the Progressive Conservative Party have made it abundantly clear on many occasions that we are entirely opposed to the take-over manoeuvres of this administration and have warned repeatedly about the threat of these take-overs to the present financial well being of the people of Saskatchewan. Events over the past few months have only increased our apprehension, and with the solid repudiation of the Government resource policy as exemplified in the results of the two recent by-elections in Prince Albert-Duck Lake and in Saskatoon Sutherland, the Government should have backed off somewhat and re-appraised its policies to conform more with what the taxpayer in the province apparently wants. The Government has indicated, however, that it doesn't want or seem to care about the desires of the voting public and is continuing in its headlong plunge into complete ownership of a major proportion of the industry. It is our prediction that they will pay dearly for ignoring that message that was clearly delivered to them on the occasion of those two by-elections.

Mr. Speaker, I have on a previous occasion in this House made reference to the oil and gas exploration, that was occurring in jurisdictions other than Saskatchewan. I might as well have added that on those occasions, the potash companies, those very same potash companies that are now being evaluated and brought out under the threat of expropriation, have lost no time in establishing exploration initiatives in other areas.

In North Dakota for instance, three test holes were drilled last year. And although official information from either the operator or the North Dakota State Government is not available, field reports indicate that very substantial reserves were established in at least two of those holes. These reports are somewhat strengthened by the confirmed report that one operator has applied to the State of North Dakota for a licence to drill a well into the Dakota sand, the equivalent of our Blairmore formation, with the purpose of waste water disposal. That would indicate Mr. Speaker, that a solution mining operation could be a reality in North Dakota in the not too distant future.

We are aware, Mr. Speaker, and we are sure that most Members of the Government are aware that substantial deposits of potash have been established in the Province of New Brunswick. This deposit, we are informed has several features which makes development much more economically attractive than our own Saskatchewan deposits.

Firstly, the average grade of the ore is higher than that of Saskatchewan. The ore body is much thicker on average and it lies on a seaboard which surely must give it a competitive advantage of substantially more than \$10 a ton in favor of the New Brunswick product.

Mr. Speaker, we are not saying the establishment of a mining complex in New Brunswick or a couple of solution mining facilities in North Dakota will immediately spell an end to the potash industry in Saskatchewan. But we think you will agree that it indicates a trend in that direction.

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More importantly, Mr. Speaker, it indicates a certain determination on the part of the potash producers, no doubt with strong encouragement from the United States administration, to replace those reserves lost in Saskatchewan with reserves in other areas.

I believe we can safely assume that their priorities in this respect would be firstly to develop their own indigenous reserves and secondly to develop reserves outside of the country in areas that were economically and politically stable.

It is doubtful if the Province of Saskatchewan measures up to either of these qualifications in the minds of the foreign business executives. Mr. Speaker, I would ask for a few moments that you and the other Members present consider the following.

Why wouldn't the mining companies, having sold or lost by expropriation their mining facilities in Saskatchewan, seek to establish operations in other areas? Of course they will and there is every reason to believe that they will be successful in their quest. You know, Mr. Speaker, that there are literally millions of square miles in the North American continent, in fact all over the world, that have potential for the deposits of potash. Yes, Mr. Speaker, any place in the world, where marine sediments are present is a potential environment to explore for potash. In other words I was just going to give the Minister of Highways a compliment, Mr. Speaker, but now I don't know whether I am going to. In other words, any area that is a potential for the accumulation of oil and gas is also favorable for the accumulation of potash. Given this potential for exploration, why should we doubt, Mr. Speaker, that substantial reserves outside of this province will be found.

Mr. Speaker, having identified the aim of the potash producers we come logically to the question, what happens to our potash markets 70 per cent of which lies in the United States, when supplies become available 100 per cent American controlled by American interest outside of the Province of Saskatchewan. I don't believe there is a person sitting in this Legislature today who doesn't know the answer to that one.

Mr. Speaker, of course they are going to develop their own reserves, and of course these reserves are going to have first market priority in their own country and of course, Mr. Speaker, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is going to be left wanting for markets. What good then will the sales offices, so recently established by our Attorney General and company in the southern states be?

Mr. Speaker, I believe I would be remiss today if I didn't mention that these potash take-overs may have an effect on our ability to borrow money on foreign money markets or attract foreign investments of any kind to the province for that matter.

Mr. Speaker, the grandiose plans of the NDP Government are heading the province into a position it can ill afford. Of what benefit are potash mines, which have limited markets, which cannot generate the revenue which is being received prior to nationalization.

Mr. Speaker, good business actions would not allow purchasing a business unless there is a guaranteed market for products and circumstances whereby we can successfully and economically compete for that market.

It has been pointed out in this case Mr. Speaker, that our actions of attempting to hog the current markets because of misdirected ideals and short sightedness will result in either (1) retaining the potash resources for the people of Saskatchewan forever, because we will be unable to compete economically with added tax burdens being imposed on the people of Saskatchewan because of this, or (2) selling the potash resources at give-away prices so as to keep the mines functioning, but not with the revenue required to retire the debts, and again with added tax burdens being imposed on the people of Saskatchewan.

In either instance, Mr. Speaker, the prospects do not bode well for the people of Saskatchewan. The Government seems to think it can continue to create policies that will militate against the established foreign owned business in this province and still be received with open arms, so to speak, every time it shows up in New York for a loan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we may find out that this type of tolerance has a limit. You can rest assured that the potash legislation and the resulting acquisitions have not gone unnoticed and that it has caused serious doubts in the minds of some financial institutions as to the future of our economy, and our future ability to repay loans. There have been some other factors, of course, that have alarmed US investors to some degree, most undoubtedly the election of the Parti Quebecois in Quebec, and the generally unfavorable state of the Canadian economy as a whole. The present Government of this province, nevertheless, must bear measurable responsibility if capital needs become hard to fill or become overly expensive.

Mr. Speaker, this province and this country need foreign investment and foreign capital regardless of how desirable it may be to get along without it. Simply it is not possible if we are to maintain our institutions and the standard of living to which we have become accustomed. We would aspire, of course, to as much self sufficiency as possible but until the day when we no longer need foreign investment we should not be too hasty about instituting procedures that may alienate us from the source of our future capital requirements. The degrees to which all governments depend on foreign capital is clearly demonstrated by the steady procession of various government officials to New York in recent weeks starting with the Premier. He needed \$80 million then. And more recently Rene Levesque, Prime Minister Trudeau, and Donald Macdonald all of these centre men are trying desperately, I am sure, to convince the American investor that Canada was indeed a sound place to invest money. There seems to have been some suspicion that these institutions are not entirely convinced of our long term solvency.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge this Government to pay more attention to the priorities of the third largest industry in Saskatchewan, and I speak now about the tourist industry. I believe you should weigh very carefully and keep this province out in front in this wonderful tourist business and maintain its attraction for future growth. I know we will listen, our party will listen very sympathetically to the future proposals for this industry.

Mr. Speaker, I can't support the motion but I will support the amendment.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:10 o'clock p.m.