

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Nineteenth Legislature

Thursday, March 1, 1979.

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

On the Orders of the Day.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. C. WHITE (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw your attention and the attention of the hon. members to the presence in your gallery of eight individuals and their teacher, Debra Thomas. They are from the Regina Plains Community College in the Independent Living for the Handicapped program.

We certainly welcome them here and hope they enjoy their afternoon in the Chamber and their time in the Legislative Building this afternoon. After the question period I will be joining them for coffee downstairs.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Increase the Percentage of Natural Gas

MR. R.L. COLVER (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, during the last three years in this legislature we have requested that the Government of Saskatchewan increase the percentage of Saskatchewan natural gas that Sask Power distributes and uses for the consumers of the province of Saskatchewan. As the Premier will no doubt be aware 60 per cent at the moment of the consumption of natural gas in Saskatchewan is natural gas from the province of Alberta and only 34 per cent is Saskatchewan natural gas. In the light of the National Energy Board's ruling today and report today that Canadians have 2 trillion cubic feet additional natural gas reserves for export, is it your government's intention to change its policy and uncap the capped gas wells in the province of Saskatchewan?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, the circumstances which gave rise to the National Energy Board's report are not new. It is now a couple or three years since there have been substantial discoveries of natural gas particularly in the foothill's area of Alberta. The circumstances which the hon. member reports were capable of being anticipated. Because of the likelihood of that and because of the likelihood that we would wish to move in Saskatchewan to use some of our gas in the more or less certain knowledge that there were backup supplies in Alberta, we have taken steps some time ago to move along the lines that the hon. member suggests. He will be familiar with the fact that a board was set up more than a year ago headed by Mr. Jack Wotherspoon, the former deputy minister of Mineral Resources, to look at this particularly with a view to directing the government to which fields in Saskatchewan ought to be opened up, which fields ought to be opened up for additional drilling, which fields ought to be the source of additional gas for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation's gas distribution system as soon as additional gas was required.

MR. COLVER: — The Premier's answer then to my question was no, there is no change in policy?

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MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would say there is no change in policy over the last year. It was about a year or a year and one-half ago that we announced the change in policy and that change in policy which we announced about then is still in effect.

MR. COLLVER: — There has been relatively little increase in the utilization of Saskatchewan gas, which as the Premier is no doubt aware, is far less expensive than that in Alberta. The Premier will recall and will know that the province of Saskatchewan is paying to the province of Alberta \$1.80 per thousand cubic feet of natural gas, whereas in Saskatchewan, the producers have for some time said they would continue to produce and explore for more natural gas if they got 40 to 50 cents per thousand cubic feet. Because of this no change in position and because the National Energy Board said that we have trillions of cubic feet to export to the United States, is the Premier saying by this decision or by this lack of change in direction and change in policy in Saskatchewan, that he is going directly opposite to the specific policies of the NDP federal policy which say the consumers in Canada should be given a break, that the prices should be rolled back and the consumers should be given every break that they possibly can?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, we do not necessarily believe that it is in the best interests of consumers always to have the lowest price today. That is the theory which suggests that we should always have the lowest price of beef today until all the beef producers are out of business and then wonder why the price of beef goes up. I think that that is not wisdom. Wisdom suggests that we should at least shepherd our resources in Saskatchewan and shepherd our supplies of natural gas until it becomes sufficiently clear that there are back-up supplies of natural gas for Saskatchewan people. That we did. That we propose to continue to do. We, however, agree with the hon. member for Nipawin when he suggests that the time has now come when we can with some assurance use additional supplies of Saskatchewan natural gas. The appropriate steps to make that possible have been under way for some time.

MR. COLLVER: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Premier of Saskatchewan has today stated once again and re-stated what he has been saying for the last three years, that he is preserving the reserves of natural gas for future generations and therefore the people of Saskatchewan should not take the benefit of the less expensive Saskatchewan natural gas. In the light of the National Energy Board's ruling to export two trillion cubic feet of natural gas to the United States of America and since Saskatchewan has two trillion three hundred and seventeen billion cubic feet of natural gas in reserves now and since we are only using 105 billion a year and it is projected that we will use 127 billion by 1990, would the Premier not agree that he is asking the consumers of the province of Saskatchewan to subsidize the energy shortage in the United States?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Very clearly I would not agree with that, I invite anyone who wishes to read that particular question to see whether or not the conclusion follows from the recital of premises. Anyone who can draw that conclusion from that particular recital of premises has a different standard of logic than I do. Even if the facts cited by the hon. member were accurate they wouldn't lead to that conclusion. In fact, we do not agree that the reserves stated by the hon. member are necessarily accurate — the two plus trillion of reserves for Saskatchewan. We do not necessarily agree that they are accurate.

In any case, the hon. member is apparently calling on us to stop importing from Alberta and to start using Saskatchewan gas. Our short answer to that is yes; as contracts expire and as we need additional supplies of natural gas we are using increasing proportions of Saskatchewan gas. I anticipate that over the next short number of years the proportion of Saskatchewan gas which is used by Saskatchewan people will significantly rise and the proportion of Alberta gas which is used by Saskatchewan people will significantly fall.

Natural Gas Supplied to Medicine Hat

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier. Would the Premier not agree that with the proposed policy of one year ago they were going to increase to the Saskatchewan producers a little larger portion of the rate? You did say, Mr. Premier, that we were going to start using a little more of Saskatchewan gas in our own system, but the producers have had no assurance. Mr. Speaker, other than this thing that happened a year ago, that when they do produce new wells they can get this gas on stream. You still have the pipes full of Alberta gas. You still are not letting the Saskatchewan people take advantage of the lower price on gas, 256 per thousand cubic feet of gas; yet SPC (Saskatchewan Power Corporation) subsidizes the city of Medicine Hat to the tune of 16 cents per thousand . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Question?

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I would say to the Premier of Saskatchewan in the absence of the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation — is it not true, as has come before this legislature before, that the government of the province of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Power, is supplying natural gas to the city of Medicine Hat, Alberta, for 16 cents per thousand cubic feet, said contract in perpetuity?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have no personal knowledge of that contract and accordingly will take notice. The minister in charge of the power corporation will doubtless respond.

MR. COLLVER: — Since that is already public knowledge, Mr. Speaker, and since that already came before this Legislative Chamber last year, let me get this absolutely correct in my mind. Will the Premier please explain to this Assembly if this set of facts is correct? Today the National Energy Board suggests that we are going to export two trillion additional cubic feet over the next eight years to the United States of America.

The Premier has said that there is no change in policy to substantially increase the proportion of cheaper Saskatchewan gas to give the consumers of the province of Saskatchewan a break. And at the same time . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, this is a question and I hope the members will listen. And at the same time that the Premier is refusing to give the consumers of Saskatchewan a break, we are supplying the citizens of Medicine Hat, Alberta . . . My question, Mr. Speaker, is . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — New question. I'll take the member for Moosomin.

Relief to Saskatchewan Consumers of Natural Gas

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, I'll direct a question then to the minister responsible for consumer affairs (Mr. Whelan). In light of the fact that the

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Premier, today, has made it very clear to this Assembly that he is prepared to favor the Americans, and to favor the Albertans, in terms of gas supplies, at the expense of Saskatchewan producers, what then is the minister responsible for consumer affairs going to do to alleviate this problem, and bring relief to Saskatchewan consumers in terms of their natural gas requirements?

HON. E.C. WHELAN (Minister of Consumer Affairs): — The Department of Consumer Affairs will make sure that we make the best possible use of the resources that belong to the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Time for Further Change in Natural Gas Policy

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Premier. You've indicated that you had a slight change in policy in the appointment of Mr. Wotherspoon approximately a year ago, and that in fact, over that period of time natural gas prices to the consumers of Saskatchewan have increased, and I suggest increased dramatically. Will you not now admit that it's time for a further change in policy by your government to start making available cheaper natural gas from Saskatchewan to the consumers of Saskatchewan, and admit once and for all that your previous policies, in fact, were gouging the people of this province . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — . . . and subsidizing exports to the United States?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, there are a number of assumptions built into these questions which I do not know are facts. I did not read the National Energy Board Report to say that they approved the export of two trillion cubic feet of gasoline. You can hold up that newspaper, but I invite anyone to read the National Energy Board report and they will say that there are two trillion feet in excess of our current requirements but there's no suggestion that that will necessarily go to the United States. It may well go to eastern Canada and to the far east, meaning the maritime provinces, and there is I think no justification whatever for believing that that gas will necessarily go to the United States; that's point number one. Point number two: I did not say that our change in policy was a year ago. I said more than a year ago. I don't know how long ago it was but it was certainly more than a year ago. Thirdly, it is true that natural gas prices have gone up as they have gone up in Alberta very significantly, and I hope all hon. members do not suggest that natural gas prices have not gone up everywhere in Canada. They clearly have, and we have suffered the same increase in price as other places, but we have had the advantage of cheap natural gas in Saskatchewan. It is mixed with the relatively expensive natural gas from Alberta, and we still enjoy rates which, with the exception of some centres in Alberta are the lowest in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We certainly intend to follow the course of action which we announced some considerable time ago — and which hon. members are now endorsing — that we ought to use more Saskatchewan gas and not increase our imports from Alberta. That policy is not one on which there is any difference of view. We agree and more will be added as more supplies of gas are needed. That has been

happening and will be happening and I say to you that the average cost of natural gas to the utility has increased less in Saskatchewan than it has in Manitoba because we are mixing cheaper Saskatchewan gas with the more expensive Alberta gas — of which we are using some and Manitoba is using all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Natural Gas Accessibility — NEB Ruling

MR. LANE: — Would the Premier not admit that the failure of the government to use cheaper Saskatchewan gas and the policy of mixing has in fact meant a much higher cost to the Saskatchewan consumer? And if that is the case, and given the National Energy Board's announcement that our supplies are in excess of our needs and will be for some time, would it not be advisable for this government to stop importing the natural gas that we have in fields in Alberta, use the Saskatchewan gas now — uncap the wells that your policy has capped, keeping the reserves in the ground — and directly and immediately pass on the benefits of cheaper natural gas?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, we do not agree with the policy enunciated by the member for Qu'Appelle that we should cease to import all natural gas from Alberta and use only Saskatchewan gas. We think it is important for people in this province in future years to have an assured supply of gas. Some of it will come from Alberta, some of it will come from Saskatchewan and we do not believe that it is reasonable for the hon. members to suggest that all gas-purchase contracts with the suppliers in Alberta should summarily be terminated and all gas taken from Saskatchewan wells. We do not agree with that policy.

MR. COLLVER: — Supplementary question. The Premier is suggesting again that the reserves in Saskatchewan are the only reserves that are going to be available to Saskatchewan residents. Is he by that statement presuming that somehow we will not be able to get our fair share of Arctic gas, our fair share of Alberta gas, and our fair share of other Canadian gas over the next number of years? And is the Premier trying to suggest by his statement, that a 20 year proven reserve in the ground in the province of Saskatchewan — which is proven by his own figures today, by his own government statistics — would he suggest that the 20 year supply for Saskatchewan is insufficient, and that therefore the people of Saskatchewan should look forward like the people of Manitoba, or Ontario, or Quebec, or the other places in Canada that do not have an assured supply of natural gas, and forget those tremendous reserves that the National Energy Board is suggesting that we have today?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated that I do not acknowledge that we have proven reserves for 20 years consumption. If the hon. member feels that the figures say that for the anticipated consumption of natural gas in this province for the next 20 years we have proven reserves, I do not acknowledge that.

Well, if they are not proven reserves, but are some sort of probables, then I think that it is understandable that the government would wish to hedge its bets a bit and take some gas from Alberta. And, if in fact, we do not have proven reserves for 20 years then it seems to me prudent that we should be using part of our gas and part of somebody else's gas. Because I want to assure the hon. member that I want to be able to say to the people of Saskatchewan — if you install natural gas in your home, we can with a high degree of assurance say to you there will be a natural gas supply for at least 20 years.

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SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear. hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — May I say that in other parts of Canada this has not always been the case. Look, talk to some people in Moncton, New Brunswick, who installed gas in their homes and then found that the gas ran out and then they had to find alternative sources of supply. We believe that it is prudent to have an assured supply. We do not believe that we have proven reserves for 20 years, and we think that until we do we should follow the mixing pattern. We agree that the substantial increase in reserves in the last year or two in Alberta permit us to be more adventuresome and to use more Saskatchewan gas than Alberta gas and for this reason, we have in fact, been increasing the proportion of Saskatchewan gas as a percentage of the whole. That was the purpose of the Wotherspoon Board, announced at the time — I'm surprised hon. members bring this up now instead of two years ago, when this policy was announced — and it was the policy, we are pursuing it. I take it hon. members wish us to adopt some new policy which says terminate all supplies from Alberta, use only Saskatchewan; that is not in our judgment in the best interest of the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — I'll take a new question.

Canadian Surplus as reported by National Energy Board

MR. COLLVER: — A question to the Premier. Since he is concerned about the supplies of natural gas for the future here in the province of Saskatchewan, and since the province of Saskatchewan — we are all Canadians, and since the Canadian National Energy Board is suggesting that we have a tremendous surplus in Canada — is the Premier, therefore, telling the people of Saskatchewan and the people of Canada that he is going to recommend to the National Energy Board that we not export gas to the United States, or anywhere else, as a result of this tremendous surplus?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I am not going to make any recommendations to the National Energy Board on this issue unless I am called upon to do so since I do not see that it is my province to recommend a course of action to the National Energy Board with respect to this issue. The point that the hon. member makes, the broad point, is one to which I would respond. I would ask the National Energy Board to ensure that we have sufficient reserves of natural gas in Canada for the reasonable needs of all Canadians all Canadians, into again the reasonably foreseeable future, perhaps 25 years or more before we export. If the answer is that we have supplied ourselves and assured ourselves of supplies for that reasonable period, then fine. If we have not, then I would suggest we should not export.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Supplementary to the Premier. Your statements today indicate that you're ignoring the very contracts that you espoused in this House, the long-term contracts that you signed with Alberta, to give us a guaranteed supply. Would you not admit that you have ample supply in Alberta, based on your previous statements long-term supply and that your refusal to uncap wells and tap Saskatchewan in fact gives us . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. The member is rising to ask a supplementary to the question. I haven't seen the connection with the supplementary.

MR. LANE: — My question to you is, given your policy, your previously stated policy

about long-term contracts with Alberta that you had announced, will you not admit that your refusal today to uncap wells in Saskatchewan and use a higher percentage of Saskatchewan natural gas in fact only gives the consumers of Saskatchewan some reasonable degree of security, that for the next long term they will have artificially high natural gas prices and will in fact be subsidizing . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, I'll take the next question.

Saskatchewan Athletes — Winter Games

MR. R. PICKERING (Bengough-Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier. I am sure that the Premier and indeed all members opposite will join with the members on this side of the House in congratulating our young athletes for their recent performance at the Canada Winter Games.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PICKERING: — However, in light of the fact that, with our athletes giving of their best, Saskatchewan ranked sixth over all behind such provinces as Nova Scotia, would the Premier advise this House if his department or the Department of Culture and Youth is prepared to review its policies of support to athletes in Saskatchewan so that our athletes can achieve their full potential in the future?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member who suggests that we are behind the Yukon has not perhaps fully examined the figures. There may well be someone who could outline the figures for the member.

May I just say that I think there have been great improvements in the last few years with respect to organized athletic endeavors in Saskatchewan. A large number of organizations have been participating. By and large we have not had professional coaching anywhere except in the larger centres. This is being improved, significantly improved. SaskSport and a number of other bodies, umbrella bodies for amateur organizations, are acting as catalysts for improving essentially the coaching and the opportunities to compete, which are the two keys in building excellence in athletics. I think we are making significant progress. I share with the hon. member the belief that we should be offering to Saskatchewan young people the full opportunity to have professional coaching and further opportunities to compete against first class competition. We are pleased with the progress to date but wish it to continue so that we will do even better.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PICKERING: — Mr. Premier, in 1975 we also came sixth. Has there not been any thought or anything put in regarding the program to increase the quality of our athletes within the province between 1975 and 1978?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Oh yes, I think so. But I think that that idea is not unique to Saskatchewan. If Quebec can put \$12 million into a program of intensive promotion of athletics, you can expect results and they most assuredly had results. We maintained our position and you have to run fast to maintain your position in Canada. We hope that we will improve that position and we expect to do so in the next Canada Games.

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ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. White (Regina Wascana), seconded by Mr. Lingenfelter (Shaunavon) for an address in reply and the proposed amendment thereto by Mr. Collver (Leader of the Opposition).

MR. G. MUIRHEAD (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, I will repeat a few sentences from yesterday for the benefit of my constituents from Arm River who may be listening on the radio.

I am proud to be chosen the representative of the great constituency of Arm River and wish at this time to express my sincere thanks to the constituents for their support on October 18 last, particularly those who worked so diligently for the two years prior to election day. Now that the election is behind us, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the constituents of Arm River and this Assembly that it is my sincere desire to attend to the needs of all people in my constituency in respect to government regardless of their political philosophy.

Mr. Speaker, before I proceed with the main part of my speech, I wish to tell this Assembly a story, a true story, of the reason I entered into the political field. Mr. Speaker, this story goes back six or seven years when I had a hog enterprise, and the Hon. Minister for Kelsey-Tisdale, Mr. Messer, closed the doors of my hog barn.

I attended a meeting in the Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon, where 600 hog producers met with the minister to petition, to put a halt to the Hog Marketing Board. It was a great day. The minister was in great form. He listened to everyone well. Mr. Speaker, I thought to myself, maybe this meeting will bring results. But did I get fooled! At 4 o'clock the minister retired to a side room with his colleagues. When he came out he lowered the bomb on the whole room.

He said, I am the Minister of Agriculture and I have made my decision. There will be a Hog Marketing Board. It will go into effect immediately and if you don't like my decision you can take care of me at the polls.

Mr. Speaker, I assure you that this is why I am here, in this House, today and Mr. Faris isn't. Mr. Speaker, I challenge the present Minister of Agriculture that he dare not bring to this Assembly, a Cattle Marketing Board while I am sitting in this House for the next four years.

Mr. Speaker, if he does I will bring every cattle man in Saskatchewan to the steps of this Legislative Building.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the department I have direct caucus . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . I really don't mind if you heckle and stop me because it won't be my air time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the departments I have direct caucus responsibilities are for the Department of the Environment and Saskatchewan Telecommunications. There are numerous matters to be brought to the attention of the ministers in charge. This will be done in due course as the session proceeds. The people of Saskatchewan are entitled to some answers to incidents which have come to light in these past months. Also, Mr. Speaker, I must have some answers for the irrigation farmers in my constituency as to

what the government intentions are to improve the saline soils caused from not having canals lined properly when they were built in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, I must say a few words about municipal affairs. My remarks are from the standpoint of counsellor and member of super grid roads. I am sorry the minister is not here, but I am sure he will hear about it.

An incident took place at my local council meeting at Craik, where a department representative was sent out to speak to representatives from five municipalities. A wonderful speech! You don't have to form super grid roads, you have your own choice, but if you don't we won't give you any money.

Mr. Speaker, I say to this government — is this democracy? Then try to have some say as to where you build these roads. My people, in Arm River, want some answers from the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Mr. Speaker, my conclusion is that this is only the beginning of the county system.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words concerning a hospital situation in my constituency. I have a copy of a letter written to the Minister of Health from the Outlook Union Hospital which takes the average daily census to October 31, 1978 was 19.4. The average over the last six years was 19.7. In 1978, they were paid on a census average of 16.5 and in 1979 they will be asked to co-operate on a basis of an average daily census not exceeding 15.4. This hospital operated at a loss of \$4,000 in 1978 and now they'll be asked to operate at a \$6,000 loss in '79. Hospitals particularly in smaller communities in Saskatchewan have a very difficult time operating within their budgets. There is a waiting list in hospitals all over the province. To have to reduce the number of patients in order to meet the budget is a serious threat to the health of the citizens of this province.

Mr. Speaker, this brings up the subject of grants. Grants are a wonderful thing. We need them, but they also can be carried too far. The taxpayer needs some money left in his pocket. As I told a group in Davidson during the election campaign, the government really hasn't got any money. They only have what they tax from the people to run the affairs of the government and the overflow is used for the giveaway programs to control the vote in this province.

Mr. Speaker, having been a farmer and a citizen of Saskatchewan all my life, I'm very concerned about our land bank policy. Why wouldn't I be?

AN HON. MEMBER: — Most farmers are.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — When land bank came into being several years ago, only the opposition to this government was opposed or concerned, but Mr. Speaker, I assure you it's different now. The people are concerned and they have a reason to be. We were told at first oh, we're just going to buy a few parcels of abandoned land or the odd parcel that no one else will buy, but it is different now. People of all political affiliations are worried about where our land bank policy is taking us. I'll tell you where it is taking us, Mr. Speaker. It is selling good old pioneer Saskatchewan down the drain. As a former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture has stated the government buying some land doesn't amount to too much, but give it 25 years and you people in Saskatchewan will have sold your land to the state. Mr. Speaker, I might add, socialism after 25 years is not socialism any more.

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Mr. Speaker, I say to the people of Saskatchewan who support this type of thinking, who say we are just helping our young farmers stay on the farm, you are right, it does help. Farmers from this present cost of production squeeze are hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt and you tempt them by saying we will buy your farm, relieve you of debt and rent your land back to you for five, ten years or even maybe life. It is tempting, isn't it? The only thing that is wrong is, who holds the title to this land? If the government wants to prove to the people of Saskatchewan that they want to help the young farmer or any farmer stay on the land, lend that farm the same amount as you are now but leave the title where it belongs, in the hand of the producer to at least own some day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Speaker, I might add, all this government is doing now is proving to people like myself that they want the title in their hands. I urge the government to change the land bank policy before we are at that point of no return.

Another point concerning agriculture policy is don't meddle in the size of farms in Saskatchewan. If you do you will turn our farms into state farms for sure. You wouldn't dare try to control the size of the oil companies or the big corporations although you may like to. Can you not see where other countries that have meddled in controls all these last years are now? They are communist countries now. Maybe this is what you want but, Mr. Speaker, I assure you this isn't what I want or what a large number of my constituents want. I want to protect our senior citizens, our laborers and our farmers who produce the food for the entire world that they will not lose any more freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I am surmising that a bill will be brought forward in this session pertaining to human rights. I say to the members opposite, please keep these bills separated. You have a brief that has been submitted to the Saskatchewan legislature protecting the rights of the gay coalition — a minority without rights as they call themselves. If this brief is to be brought forward as a bill, please present it as one bill, do not hide it along with others as you have previously done in the past. Mr. Speaker, the people in Arm River that know me well know where I stand on this issue. I presume the government has discussed this matter for some time. We hear through the grapevine that the NDP may pass this or they may not, or what I should say, Mr. Speaker, is that they may bring this bill forward or they may not. It really doesn't make much difference where the Progressive Conservatives stand; the members opposite will pass what they see fit anyway. However, in this particular case, I have faith that our Government of Saskatchewan will make the proper decision.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of the people of Saskatchewan followed our Premier to his victory in last fall's election for his honesty and high integrity, so in my opinion, he, as the leader of his party, should make the first decision on this serious matter and then the remainder of the members can follow with their opinions.

Mr. Speaker, I now wish to thank the Premier for his remarks about the 16 MLAs who condemned this government. I am proud to stand beside 16 people who condemn your government. I don't know what happened to Gary Lane. He wasn't here that day or there would have been 17. I say to the Premier, who says we haven't any policies . . . he said that we have no policies . . . but our blue book shows we have 140 good policies. But, of course. Mr. Premier, you didn't study our book. Our book is a policy of democracy and yours is a policy of dictatorship.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Premier, on the news broadcast last evening you also charged the Progressive Conservative Party, through our leader's statement, for saying there was a homosexual on your side of the House. But I challenge you, Mr. Premier, and the media to get your statements straight. Our leader only repeated the accusations of Mr. Currie, representing the gay community. Mr. Speaker, instead of the Premier flying into a rage of temper in this House, where was your temper, Mr. Premier, when the said Mr. Currie made this statement out of this House? Mr. Speaker, my last statement on this subject today. Save your accusations for Mr. Currie.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not express my sincere congratulations on your appointment as Speaker of this Assembly. I can assure you I will respect the high office which you hold and I am confident I can expect you to correct me when I am out of order and at the same time recognize my rights to speak, no more, no less than any other member of this House, whether it be on this side or the government side opposite.

It is my sincere hope and desire that this session which we are embarking on will be a session of worthwhile accomplishment, little or no idle talk, critical but constructive for my part and that the only degree of knowledge that will prevail will be that of CS, not BA, LLB, etc., etc., just CS (common sense).

Mr. Speaker, I support the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. A. MATSALLA (Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources): — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity in taking part in the debate on the Speech from the Throne. I consider it a privilege since the debate provides opportunity for a member to voice views on government in general, as well as on a variety of subjects which may be of special interest. I congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your re-election to high office of Speaker of this Assembly. The office carries with it prestige and responsibility and to both, you have done justice in spite of some difficult situations. I want to wish you well.

For the new members of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I want to extend a warm welcome. The work of legislative members does provide for a variety of experiences in carrying out responsibilities to your constituencies and to this Assembly and I hope you find your work both interesting and challenging.

The members for Regina Wascana (Mr. White) and Shaunavon (Mr. Lingenfelter) made excellent presentations in moving and seconding in reply to the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleagues for a job well-done. Their constituents could well be proud of their performance.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this throne speech marks the beginning of a new era for the people of Saskatchewan. In 1971, when this New Democratic government took office, we were faced with a task of gigantic proportions. We were confronted with the task of rebuilding a province — a province which had just experienced seven years of unfettered free enterprise government.

Mr. Speaker, I remember the sad state of the economy, the bankruptcy and the closure of hundreds of businesses, the decline of rural communities and the disappearance of

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the family farm, the cutback in agriculture and health services, the plunge in the province's population, and the list goes on, Mr. Speaker. Most clearly of all, Mr. Speaker, I remember the reasons for the sick economy and the burdens it placed on Saskatchewan people. I remember the giveaways in potash, the giveaways in oil, the giveaways in the forest industry, and I remember the sell-out of our precious natural resources. Mr. Speaker, I remember watching the people of Saskatchewan suffer while their resources, their birthright, were being bartered away for peanuts by an irresponsible government. Yes, Mr. Speaker, in 1971 we were confronted with a task of momentous proportions.

I look back on that term of office as one that can be characterized as an era of rebuilding and repairing. First, Mr. Speaker, we had to lighten that economic burden that had been placed on the people of Saskatchewan. We removed deterrent fees, we removed health care premiums. We broadened assistance in health care with the prescription drug plan, the hearing aid plan, the dental plan, and the Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living. We established a land bank and FarmStart to help young farmers get on the land and to assist them in those first tough years. We established the publicly-owned Saskatchewan Housing Corporation to help in meeting the growing demand for low and middle income housing.

The list of economic benefits that we put in place is a long one and we are proud of it.

There was a second thrust to that first term of office, Mr. Speaker. We had to put a halt to the sell-out of our resources and to capture a fair return for the owners of those resources, the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the challenge that we faced during that first term in office was a great one, but we successfully met that challenge. We sorted out the mess created by the previous government, and we put Saskatchewan back on the road to prosperity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MATSALLA: — Mr. Speaker, I look back on the beginning of our second term of office as marking the beginning of the second era — an era of stabilization, of diversification. In that term we recognized the necessity of taking steps to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan would receive a fair return from the development of resources which they own. We recognized that resource development should be systematic and orderly and we recognized that this could not be achieved through simple taxation of the private companies.

We also came to discover that the resource companies were not our only enemies in the battle to maintain a fair return for the people of the province. That battle was not confined to dealing with opposition Liberal and Conservative Parties and resources companies but it included the federal government, the other provinces, the courts and the very heart of democracy in Canada, the constitution.

Mr. Speaker, we took required steps to ensure sensible and orderly development of the resource industries. We took the steps required to ensure a fair return for the people of Saskatchewan. Through the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan we established a strong presence for the people of this province in the potash industry. We have control over development of the industry. We have the head office of the largest potash producer in the province right here in the province. Mostly importantly, we have captured the revenue, the potash resource yields, revenue that is being turned into programs for people.

Mr. Speaker, there were other milestones during the second term of office, this era of stabilization and diversification. We tackled and solved a number of problems in a number of specific areas. In agriculture, Mr. Speaker, under the Beef Industry Assistance Program, loans to producers helped to retain cow herds through periods of depressed prices. We provided grants to farmers to help defray the costs of fuel for agricultural purposes under the Farm Cost Reduction Program. We have made changes in the crop insurance program to provide higher price options for spring wheat, durum and utility wheat. Also three new insurable crops have been included in the program. We made amendments to The Farm Ownership Act which restricted the ownership of farmland by non-residents to a maximum of 160 acres, this to deter the non-resident investor/speculator. The Saskatchewan Land Bank Program was changed so that rents are based on the productive value of the land.

In education, Mr. Speaker, we introduced a new education act which respects local autonomy and provides for greater involvement in the schooling of our children by school boards, parents and teachers. We introduced unconditional school grants so that school boards would no longer have to come to the Department of Education with hat in hand every time they wished to improve the quality of education in their schools.

We introduced a community college system to maximize educational opportunities for adults in all parts of the province.

Mr. Speaker, we set ourselves to dealing with the question of grants to local governments by introducing Canada's first comprehensive revenue sharing plan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MATSALLA: — Under the plan, every community and rural municipality in the province shares proportionately in the growth of the provincial economy. The grants, of course, are paid unconditionally to be used for any purpose the elected council wishes.

Mr. Speaker, we introduced other programs aimed at preserving strong autonomous local governments. For special community projects we introduced a Community Capital Fund. We introduced a recreation and cultural facilities grant to assist in construction of recreational facilities in smaller centres, again, according to the priorities of local government.

Mr. Speaker, when we say we believe in strong local government, we mean it. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan approve of our policies in resource development, in health care, in local government and in agriculture. The people of Saskatchewan demonstrated their overwhelming support for our policies last October 18 when they returned this New Democratic Party government for the third term of office, with an increased majority.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MATSALLA: — Mr. Speaker, that brings me to today, to this throne speech, to another term of office and to another era. I foresee this term of office as being an era which will be characterized by expansion and development on the one hand, and on the other, I believe it will be an era that will produce unprecedented stress to the very fabric of Saskatchewan society. I foresee this term of office as an era where we will frequently be called upon to protect the interests of the people of Saskatchewan and probably to

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fight for them as well.

Let me explain. I said, firstly, that this term of office would be characterized by expansion and development. Mr. Speaker, I think all of the signs point to a bright future for Saskatchewan. Thanks to the record of success of two terms in office this new New Democratic government has led Saskatchewan from being a have-not province to a role of leadership in the Canadian economy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MATSALLA:— We enjoy one of the lowest inflation rates of any province in the country. Our rate of unemployment is consistently among the lowest in Canada. The province's population is growing steadily. The value of manufacturing production is up. The value of retrade is up. Private and public investment are up.

Saskatchewan is in an excellent position and the future holds even brighter prospects for expansion and development. During our next term of office I believe we will see even greater prosperity. Mr. Speaker, with this New Democratic government in office the people of Saskatchewan are assured that the benefits of prosperity will accrue to everyone rather than just a few. Mr. Speaker, I also predict that this term of office will see our government taking moves to protect and to fight for the interests of the people of Saskatchewan, particularly in the area of natural resources. Perhaps this will be the greatest and most challenging task this government has ever faced. As in the past, the threats will come from the resource corporations and from the federal government. But I'm confident, Mr. Speaker, that with a renewed mandate and our strong leadership, we will continue to overcome the obstacles that are placed before us, and we will continue to honor our commitment to public participation in, and benefit from, the province's resources.

Mr. Speaker, another area I believe we have to protect and fight for the interests of Saskatchewan people is agriculture. Not only is agriculture the mainstay of the Saskatchewan economy, it is the historic and cultural material which makes up the Saskatchewan way of life. Yet, it seems that it is almost daily now that some new attack is mounted against Saskatchewan farmers, either collectively or individually, by the federal government, the railroads, or agri-business.

I want to deal particularly with one situation, Mr. Speaker, one problem that faces farmers in Saskatchewan today. That problem comes in two parts, the federal government and the railroads. Mr. Speaker, the record of the federal government in dealing with the problems of rail transportation and grain handling in the West has been an absolute failure. It has demonstrated that Ottawa has absolutely no understanding of farming in Saskatchewan, of grain handling and transportation, or of the importance of a good rail transportation network to this, the mainstay of the Saskatchewan economy.

Let me turn for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to the Prairie Rail Action Committee's Report because one of the sections of rail line which it considered for abandonment is a line owned by the CNR which runs for some 41.5 miles between Preeceville and Kelvington. This line serves the communities of Nut Mountain, Lintlaw, Okla, Hazel Dell and Ketchen as well as Preeceville and Kelvington.

Mr. Speaker, this would result in the closure of at least two important delivery points and a diversion of nearly a million bushels of grain annually, meaning further hauling

distances for the affected farmers, and greater congestions at elevators. In fact, over 200 permit holders in the area would be forced to haul their grain to neighboring communities, up to 25 miles further than they do now.

Mr. Speaker, in making this recommendation the Prairie Rail Action Committee paid little attention to the fact that the area is one of growing agricultural significance and produces increasing amounts of grain annually. It did not consider the impact the abandonment would have upon those communities I mentioned earlier and the residents and businesses in those communities whose future depends upon the existence of the rail line.

This New Democratic government is committed to defending Saskatchewan farmers and the citizens of our small communities. I am committed to fight the recommendation to abandon the Preeceville-Kelvington railway line. We know that we are not alone in this fight. We will join with the local Save Our Railway Committee to press the federal government in every way possible not to follow the Prairie Rail Action Committee recommendations but to add the line to the permanent rail system.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MATSALLA: — Mr. Speaker, I believe this throne speech demonstrates our commitment to a healthy diversified provincial economy. I believe it demonstrates our commitment to maintaining the family farm and to developing our resources for our benefit and to preserving a life-style which is uniquely rural Saskatchewan.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. J. HAMMERSMITH (Prince Albert-Duck Lake): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise and speak in this throne speech debate and it is a particular pleasure to have the privilege of representing the constituency of Prince Albert-Duck Lake. I thank my constituents for this opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the member for Regina Wascana, my seatmate, (Mr. White) on his excellent presentation in moving the motion now before us and I wish also to congratulate the member for Shaunavon (Mr. Lingenfelter) for his speech in seconding the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — I wish also to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on assuming once more the office of Speaker of this Legislature.

The constituency of Prince Albert-Duck Lake, Mr. Speaker, is made up of a fairly representative cross-section of Saskatchewan's society. It takes in about one-third of the city of Prince Albert, contains two rural municipalities, the RM of Prince Albert and the RM of Duck Lake and it contains two Indian Reserves, Beardy's Okemasis and Muskoday. It also contains the town of Duck Lake, the hamlet of Macdowall and a large number of mixed farms.

The constituency has within it a substantial Francophone population, and a very substantial Indian and Metis population and most other ethnic groups present in

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Saskatchewan are also located within the riding. On behalf of all those residents, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the proposals contained in the throne speech now before us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — In the recent provincial election, in contrast with the negative and shallow campaign of the Progressive Conservative Party, indeed, Mr. Speaker, in contrast with the petty and childish performances put on in this House by the current (if temporary) Leader of the Opposition . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — . . . in contrast with that, Mr. Speaker, the New Democratic Party outlined a new decade of progress to the people of Saskatchewan. And the people responded with an overwhelming mandate for the Blakeney New Democrats. I am sorry to see that the member for Arm River (Mr. Muirhead) who is so proud to have been elected to that seat is not in it, but I would remind him when he speaks of the blue book with the 140 policies, that on October 18 the people of Saskatchewan passed judgment on that book. Better that he should throw it in the wastebasket.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, set against what passed for an initial response from the Leader of the Opposition, is early evidence that the people of Saskatchewan displayed great wisdom on October 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — In contrast with the disunity and confusion emanating from members opposite, Mr. Speaker, we have before us a throne speech reflecting the optimism and the vision of the future which has always characterized the Blakeney government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake are encouraged by the vision of Canada outlined in the Speech from the Throne, the same vision of the future articulated so clearly at constitutional conferences and yesterday in this debate by the Premier of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — A view of Canada, Mr. Speaker, and a view of Saskatchewan's place in Confederation that stands in sharp contrast with the absence of any evidence of a national perspective coming from across this House. There are some, Mr. Speaker, who are so perceptive as to suggest an absence of even a provincial perspective on the part of members opposite. It is not surprising, Mr. Speaker, that the Conservatives have difficulty in finding some national perspective. Their national leader has distinguished himself in international affairs by alternating between collisions with bayonets and searches for his suitcase.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — On one occasion he had to be told, Mr. Speaker, by his hosts that the cereal crop he was looking at was wheat. This is the prairie populist behind whom the Conservatives propose to unite western Canada.

However, let us not be too critical of the would-be prime minister. After all, we are told that his strong suit is domestic policy and national affairs and he has advanced some interesting proposals in that area, Mr. Speaker. He is going to deal with inflation and the economy by a temporary expansion of the national deficit. Now, he hasn't quite decided whether that deficit will be for two or three years, or two or three months, or two or three days, but he has advanced this as the precise Tory policy for dealing with economic matters. And now they have a name for it, Mr. Speaker, now they call it a restraint program. Inspired national leadership, Mr. Speaker, a leader and a party in search of a policy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — The Tories have another interesting national policy, Mr. Speaker. They propose, and their national leader proposes, to negotiate sovereignty association with the Separatists, to negotiate, Mr. Speaker, the dismantling of the Canadian confederation. They are so desperate to govern Canada that they are prepared to negotiate the break-up of Canada, if that's what it takes to be elected. That is the national vision of the Tory party, Mr. Speaker, and it is overshadowed, in this province, only by that party's lack of a provincial vision.

Mr. Speaker, just as the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake appreciate the vision of Canada outlined in the Speech from the Throne, we also appreciate the vision of the future of Saskatchewan outlined in that speech.

New initiatives in agriculture, in transportation, in health and social services, in workers' compensation, in human rights and legal aid, in continued progress and development in northern Saskatchewan, and in a number of other areas are all welcome announcements.

I want to spend a few minutes concentrating on four areas, in particular, which will be welcomed by the people in Prince Albert-Duck Lake and by the people in the North. We are especially encouraged, Mr. Speaker, to hear of the continued vigor with which resource development in the North will be pursued.

Record expenditures in uranium exploration mean an increasingly healthy economic future for the city of Prince Albert and for the people of northern Saskatchewan. Along with this announcement we welcome the news that this government intends to continue and expand its policy of assisting local businesses and communities to take full advantage of the new challenges and opportunities which resource development, particularly uranium development, present.

Those provisions in the Amok agreement, which provide for northern preference in hiring and those which provide for northern and Saskatchewan businesses to have preference in supplying goods and services, stand as milestones in the history of economic development in Canada.

Those provisions will ensure, Mr. Speaker, that northern citizens particularly and Saskatchewan citizens generally, will have first a call on the benefits which accrue from uranium and resource development.

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SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — How different, Mr. Speaker, from the resource policies of members opposite, policies written in the board rooms of foreign corporations. And they said during the election campaign. Mr. Speaker, there are no need for any special guarantees; we will just throw it open and let the corporations look after it. They would let the Indian and Metis people of the North stand by the wayside while workers were imported from outside the country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — They would consign the people of the North to perpetual welfare and then condemn them for not working.

The Tory approach, Mr. Speaker, is the same colonial approach that has been used in underdeveloped areas throughout the world. And this government has a different approach. This government believes that the people of the North should be the first beneficiaries of Northern development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — New Democrats believe, Mr. Speaker, in the ability of Saskatchewan people to do the job that needs to be done — in the ability and the willingness of Saskatchewan people to meet the challenges ahead. This government not only believes in the abilities of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, it has had the courage to act on its beliefs.

The member for Athabasca (Mr. Thompson) and the member for Cumberland (Mr. MacAuley) will bear me out when I say, Mr. Speaker, that for the first time in the history of northern Saskatchewan, the people of the North feel that they have a government that listens to them and responds to their needs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Those two members worked long and hard both before and since entering this House to guarantee that government response — to guarantee those northern benefits. On October 18 their constituents compared the Tory mythology and archaic theories with the solid record of the Blakeney government and the solid record of those two northern members and, Mr. Speaker, those two members were returned with record pluralities for those ridings.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Which brings me to a third topic I want to mention, Mr. Speaker, and that is the commitment to continue the efforts of this government to resolve Treaty Indian land entitlements. That is a commitment, Mr. Speaker, not yet made by any other provincial government that has treaty areas within its jurisdiction . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — . . . a commitment not only to fulfil long standing obligations,

but also to assist Indian communities in establishing a land and economic base from which to develop their communities and reverse the negative social and economic trends to which they have been subjected by a 112 year succession of federal Liberal and Tory governments.

I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, just why these northern preference clauses and the commitment to resolve land entitlements are so important. Studies show that the fastest growing portion of the Saskatchewan population is that portion made up of persons of Indian ancestry. Approximately 55 per cent of that population is under 16 years of age. It is projected that by the year 2001 that fully one-quarter of the Saskatchewan population will be made up of people of Indian ancestry. And approximately 45 to 50 per cent of all the children in school by the year 2001 will be children of Indian ancestry. Some of the implications of these figures have also been calculated. In the labor force, for example, if unemployment among people of Indian ancestry is to be reduced to a level of 12 per cent by the year 2001 over 30 per cent of the new jobs created in this province between 1976 and 1986 will have to go to people of Indian ancestry. Between 1986 and 2001, over 60 per cent of all the new jobs created will have to go to people of Indian ancestry. Even if we achieve those levels, Mr. Speaker, the unemployment rate among that group will still be at 12 per cent and that's not an acceptable level. That's the magnitude of the problem, Mr. Speaker, and this government has done more and continues to do more to respond to this situation than is the case with any other jurisdiction in this country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — There are those who will maintain — even with all that has been done — that it's still not enough and they may be right. But I'm confident Mr. Speaker, that if new initiatives are forthcoming anywhere in Canada, they will come from the Blakeney government and the Indian and Metis people recognized that four-and-a-half months ago when, almost without exception, they voted overwhelmingly for the Blakeney New Democrats.

One final item, Mr. Speaker, that has been noted with particular enthusiasm by the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake is the announcement that phase two of the revenue sharing program will be introduced at this session. Revenue sharing has meant greater autonomy for local government. Members opposite, Mr. Speaker, are fond of talking about local autonomy, but New Democrats have done more than talk about it. They acted last year by introducing a program unique in this nation, a program that increased unconditional grants to local governments by 45 per cent. Currently, Mr. Speaker, in spite of the problems that the Leader of the Opposition has with elementary mathematics, over 45 cents of each dollar spent by the provincial government is spent under the jurisdiction of local authority — real power in the hands of local people, Mr. Speaker. For these and many other reasons, the throne speech now before us, is clear evidence that the confidence of the people of Saskatchewan was well placed on October 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAMMERSMITH: — Mr. Speaker, I will be proud to support the motion and oppose the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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MR. D.F. McARTHUR (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to stand in this place and to participate in the debate arising out of the speech by His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor. Before proceeding with my remarks, I would like to express my compliments to the members for Regina Wascana and Shaunavon, each for their excellent remarks in moving and seconding the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — I would also like to express my appreciation to the voters of Regina Lakeview for electing me as their representative in this legislature.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — For many of them, it is the first time that they will have been represented by an NDP member in this Assembly.

I intend to ensure that the confidence that they have expressed in me, my party and this government is fully justified.

Mr. Speaker, if I were to try to provide you with a profile of Regina Lakeview, I would have to say that if anything distinguishes Regina Lakeview from many, not all but many of our constituencies, it is the fact that it is almost exclusively a residential area having in its midst no major factories or warehouses, no significant office buildings and no major shopping centres. But this is not something about which we complain, for as a residential area, Lakeview is an extremely pleasant place to live being well-served amongst other things by a number of spacious parks and open areas including the beautiful Wascana Centre which lies adjacent to the constituency in which stands as a tribute to the foresight of previous NDP and CCF administrations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — One feature of particular interest is the presence in the midst of the constituency of the largest bilingual French language school in the province with 314 children receiving bilingual education from kindergarten to Grade 8 at St. Pius X School. This is a tribute not only to the interest of so many young people in the unique linguistic and cultural experiences of the bilingual Canada but also to the policies of this government in support of bilingual education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — In the course of assembling a statistical profile of Regina Lakeview constituency, one set of figures in particular caught my attention. In Lakeview — and this isn't greatly different from a lot of urban constituencies — in excess of 50 per cent of women 15 years of age and over are now in the labor force. This figure is almost as high for married women as for unmarried women and is increasing at a relatively rapid rate. It clearly indicates, Mr. Speaker, that for women today there is a growing economic necessity as well as a growing preference for participation in the workforce. In our deliberations, Mr. Speaker, and in directing our efforts towards the concerns of working people and their families, we would do well to reflect periodically on these figures in terms of the special needs of working women and of families with working parents.

Mr. Speaker, during the last election campaign, our party spoke of the new decade of

change and progress that is upon us and of the need for all of us to come up with adequate responses to the new and changing conditions. Of course change and development of the kind and magnitude that we expect and anticipate will cut across all aspects of provincial life. I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that with this Assembly maintaining the tradition of the last seven and one-half years of enacting wise and progressive legislation and with the people of Saskatchewan maintaining their tradition of hard and creative work, which I know they will, the next decade will truly be one of progress and prosperity for all citizens of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — But we, Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly must do our part to come to grips with the problems that come with change as well as to recognize the new possibilities for social improvement and social progress made possible by new wealth and new development. His Honour's speech sets out the first steps that we on this side intend to take during this term of office. More will come in subsequent sessions of this legislature. The object of these measures shall be to maintain the great tradition of democratic socialism and to continue the struggle to build a just and egalitarian society in which there is work for all, discrimination against none and a fair sharing of the fruits of growth and prosperity among all working people according to their needs.

Nowhere, Mr. Speaker, do I expect the challenges and the opportunities over the next decade to be greater than in our urban centres. Up until the 1960s urban residents made up less than one-half of the total provincial population. However, as we entered the 1970s our urban population actually surpassed our rural population in numbers and by the end of the 1980s we can expect that up to two-thirds of our population will live in urban centres. The main reason for this shift in the balance of our population and with it the greater importance of our urban centres, is the current rapid rate of growth of our cities as a result of rapid industrial and business growth under the wise and thoughtful policies of this government over the past seven and one-half years. This tremendous rate of growth of our cities has many implications. It opens up many exciting opportunities but it also brings with it some difficult problems for our city governments in providing a wide range of required services at reasonable cost. Our city governments have made great strides in dealing with these problems. However, some have found it difficult to cope completely on their own with such matters as downtown decay, suburban sprawl, traffic congestion and the high cost of needed services and facilities.

We on this side, Mr. Speaker, are both excited about the great possibilities for our cities and deeply concerned about the problems. In meeting the challenge of the new decade. Mr. Speaker, this government has and will place the needs and concerns of our urban centres high on our agenda in order to enhance the quality and richness of city life and the record shows that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, I wish now to turn from matters of particular concern for our urban centres to talk about the new decade of progress in other aspects of our provincial life. It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that we in Saskatchewan stand on the threshold of a decade or more of major new economic development. If people are to be well served by this development we must take care that such development is carefully planned and carefully controlled. We must insure, as this government has in the past, that social and environmental disruption is minimized and that the fruits of

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development accrue fully and fairly to Saskatchewan people. In this respect, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the renewed commitment in His Honour's speech to the full and active participation of our Crown corporations in resource development and to strong new environmental protection measures such as the establishment of a new Mines Pollution Control Branch in the Department of the Environment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — This is firm evidence that, unlike Tory and Liberal governments all across Canada, our government will not be stampeded by the multinational corporations into rapid, uncontrolled development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — Rather, development will take place at a planned and measured pace on our terms. Mr. Speaker, in discussing our economic future these days, much is made (and rightfully so) of our prospects in the minerals area. However, Mr. Speaker, I believe it somewhat unfortunate that with the current excitement about oil, uranium and other resources there is, on occasion, an understandable but regrettable tendency to overlook our biggest industry and our biggest growth industry. We in the urban centres and we on this side are aware of this . . . namely the agricultural industry.

It is my view and the view of this government that agriculture, our first and most important industry, will continue well into the future to generate the greatest opportunities for growth and development.

It is interesting to note in this respect (and the Premier noted this yesterday) that economists from the Canadian Wheat Board and elsewhere are now firmly convinced that world requirements for Canadian grain will increase by about 50 per cent between now and 1985.

For Saskatchewan, the increase in gross value of provincial production, if this is to come about, will easily exceed the most optimistic expectations for oil, uranium and potash combined. The conclusion is clear. Agriculture, and grain in particular, is not only our largest and most significant industry, but it also provides the greatest prospects of any of our provincially produced commodities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to dwell at any length on matters of agricultural policy. I know that many of my colleagues from rural constituencies will have many relevant and important things to say in this respect. However, I do want to refer to one matter that is of crucial importance if our grain farmers are to benefit, as they should, from the tremendous opportunities opening up in this coming decade of progress. Mr. Speaker, I refer to the current situation in our grain marketing system. The farmers of Saskatchewan have worked long and hard, Mr. Speaker, in years past, to put together a fair and efficient marketing system for grain, suited to the special and peculiar needs of this region. The result of this effort has been the Canadian Wheat Board, the envy of grain producers throughout the world.

However, a few years back, the large multinational grain trading companies, quick to recognize the bright new future of western Canada as a supplier of food products to the world, set their sights on getting a foothold in our grains industry. And so, Mr. Speaker,

they mounted an attack on the wheat board system, an attack the likes of which we haven't seen for many, many years, in an effort to gain a position in the western grain trade. And in this attack they were joined by Conservative and Liberal politicians all across this province and all across this country . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — . . . politicians who proved once again their willingness to abandon the interests of the ordinary farmer in order to serve the interests of their multinational friends.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — The result of all of this political activity a few years back was the new feed grains policy supported by both the Conservative and Liberal Parties in the House of Commons and opposed only by the NDP members.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — Everyone now knows, or at least everyone should know, what this policy has meant to the grain marketing system. Quite simply, the whole system has been thrown into chaos. Congestion from off-board grains and associated private grain company manipulation of the system has seriously reduced the ability of this system to work efficiently and effectively. An absolutely essential requirement in terms of achieving our 1985 prospects is to return the grain marketing system to maximum efficiency and this means returning all grains, including feed grains, to the Canadian Wheat Board.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, in his remarks in this debate, asked us to look to the future and challenged us to say what we would do, what changes we would make in the existing order in preparing for the new decade of progress. Fair enough. And, Mr. Speaker, I am sure he will find, as he has found in this throne speech, and as he will find in this session and this term of office as it progresses, that there is much we will do, and I am equally sure, Mr. Speaker, that he will be found wanting when the time comes to stand up and be counted on the side of progress.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McARTHUR: — But, Mr. Speaker, if he is serious about being prepared to move from old and failed Tory positions and to look the future squarely in the eye, he can prove it to this Assembly by committing his party to support us on this side in our determination to see all grain placed under the full authority and jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board and thus to move resolutely to put the grain marketing system back into fully operational conditions.

Mr. Speaker, it is because I know that he and his party have neither the foresight nor the courage to support this, or any other progressive measures to advance the position of Saskatchewan farmers and working people that I cannot support the amendment. And it is because this government does have the required courage and foresight that I

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support the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. PREBBLE (Saskatoon Sutherland): — Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege for me to rise and speak in support of the throne speech. In opening, I want to take this opportunity to thank the people of Saskatoon Sutherland for the honor they have bestowed upon me by electing me as their provincial representative.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — The throne speech appropriately begins with reference to the efforts of our government to work towards a strong and united Canada. As we prepare to celebrate Saskatchewan's 75th anniversary as a province within confederation, I am proud of the contribution our Premier and other members of our government have made in attempting to seek constitutional reforms that will first of all benefit the diverse interest groups within our country and at the same time protect Saskatchewan interests, particularly in the field of communications policy and in our efforts to ensure a fair return to the people of Saskatchewan from the sale of our natural resources. The establishment of a Department of Intergovernmental Affairs as proposed in the throne speech will further strengthen our efforts. My colleagues have elaborated on the fine record of our New Democratic Party government over the past seven years and it's a record of which I am indeed, very proud.

Now we have before us a throne speech that contains several very positive steps towards a better future in Saskatchewan. At the same time I think we have to realize that it's only a beginning in dealing with many of the new problems that are now before us. This legislature must address itself, Mr. Speaker, to the fundamental question of what overall direction we want development in Saskatchewan to take over the next 20 years. While I am enthusiastic about many of our initiatives in agriculture and in the resource industry field, I have serious reservations about some of the tasks that we have embarked on. Therefore, despite my strong support for most of our government's policy, I want to address a number of remarks to all members of this House that are critical of government policy, in the sense, Mr. Speaker, that I think we can do even better than the good job we've already done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — Now, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has implied on earlier occasions that my critical comments may not be looked upon favorably by some members in my party. I want to tell him that he could not be more mistaken.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — It is the great strength of the New Democratic Party that it is open to new ideas, open to differences of opinion and open to controversial stands based on matters of conscience. That is the reason why our party is the source of hope for the future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — Today, I particularly want to address myself to the question of development as it pertains to the health of our people. And I use the term health in a

broad sense. Our government has led the way in Canada with medicare and with the best occupational health and safety legislation in the country. We've introduced preventative programs such as educational health advertising and the children's dental care program and now we've promised to take the age group that free dental care will benefit and increase it and in this throne speech, we are taking the positive move of establishing a health research fund.

But in emphasizing health research in this throne speech, we must not in any way think that the bulk of answers to our health problems lie in doing more research. Research is needed but we will only achieve better health for more Saskatchewan people if we are prepared to spend a lot more money on preventative measures which in the long run will reflect themselves in savings in hospital and other treatment costs. The three major causes of death in our society — heart disease, cancer and accidents on the roads — are all preventable to a very considerable extent. Our excellent hospital and treatment programs should not mislead us into thinking that the health of Saskatchewan people is necessarily always improving. In some important areas, it's declining.

I want to take cancer as an example of this. Cancer, as we know, is becoming an epidemic all across Canada, and it's hurting more and more families here in Saskatchewan. In 1967, Mr. Speaker, there were 27,880 cases of cancer in the province. In 1977 there were 38,474 cases of cancer and over 5,000 new cases in that particular year alone. Now it's my view that we will not tackle these problems by simply doing more research or by establishing a separate foundation of some kind. We will tackle them by taking strong measures to clean up our environment, that is by doing something about the quality of the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe. In the case of cancer there is now a very substantial body of evidence showing that close to 80 per cent of cancer is being caused by these environmental factors. Just as the New Democratic Party has taken on the resource companies when they exploited the people of Saskatchewan, it's now time to take on the chemical companies that, as part of their plan to produce food for profit, have contaminated our food with thousands of chemical additives and hundreds of farm chemicals.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — The average Saskatchewan consumer is now eating an average of 1,800 additives today. Yet the federal Liberal government which gives permission for all of these chemicals to come onto the market readily admits that it doesn't know what the combined effect of all these additives is on the health of our bodies. Mr. Speaker, the federal Liberals will not act to protect the health of the people in this province and, therefore, the Saskatchewan government must attempt to use all legal machinery possible to try to prevent the sale of food with chemicals which are already known to be hazardous, such as synthetic hormones and coloring agents like Red No. 2.

Beyond this, our government must work to promote the sale of pure healthy foods. We should give special support to the natural food co-operatives in Saskatoon and Regina and to other stores that are committed to selling only safe, nutritious produce. We should give support to organic farmers in Saskatchewan and promote the sale of food that is grown without chemical application. Our government should encourage the development of school lunch programs as a means of improving the nutritional diets of our young people . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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MR. PREBBLE: — . . . and should support schools in growing and preparing healthy and unrefined foods themselves.

We should look at setting nutritional standards for Saskatchewan food establishments, and discourage the sale of junk food in Saskatchewan stores, and ask the federal government to prohibit junk food advertising.

I was delighted to see the reference in the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, to our government's commitment to a more intensive search for new and environmentally safe substitutes for some weed and insect control chemicals. Saskatchewan has a real problem in this area; 7 herbicides and 15 pesticides are now showing up as chemical residues in Saskatchewan water supplies. A recent National Research Council survey of 3,300 grain elevator operators and farmers in Saskatchewan found that 20 per cent suffered ill effects during the seasonal spraying of 2-4 D. Now, if we are going to overcome these problems, we are going to have to be prepared to spend several million dollars to develop safe alternatives to chemical spraying, essentially developing biological, mechanical and cultural methods of pest control. There is already a good deal of information in this field and it is largely a matter of getting that information out to Saskatchewan farmers and to people in urban areas who enjoy growing food in their own gardens and would prefer not to be using chemicals. In general, we need to take all steps possible to reduce the use of farm chemicals in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to the matter of car accidents. I am proud of the steps our government has taken in the implementation of seat belt legislation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — Happily, injuries and deaths on provincial highways have dropped from 1,718 in 1975 to 1,175 in 1977 as a result of seatbelt legislation and other safety measures. But such an accident rate must still surely be considered as unacceptable. It seems to me that the next logical step in reducing car accidents would be vehicle safety inspections to reduce car accidents resulting from faulty vehicle operation.

Above all, I am confident that the best way to reduce car accidents is to develop a much better public transportation system and encourage people to use that instead. Such a step would have the added benefit of conserving energy. The health benefits would reflect themselves in fewer accidents and less pollution and the economic costs would be balanced by reduced hospital costs and lower municipal expenditures related to the automobile.

I come back to the point, Mr. Speaker, that as a government we must be prepared to commit a larger portion of our health budget to preventative health care. That means giving even stronger support to groups that are committed to preventative medicine with the obvious example being the community health clinics.

The hon. members of the Conservative Party have foolishly opposed the budgets these clinics have received. Precisely the opposite approaches are needed, Mr. Speaker. We should encourage these community health clinics, and their creative ideas in the field of preventative health, to be expanded throughout Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — I am anxious to see community health clinics established in the

suburbs of our cities. Mr. Speaker, in urban constituencies such as my own in Saskatoon Sutherland.

I now want to address myself to a new initiative of our government that may not, at first glance, be thought of in terms of health but which I believe will greatly benefit the well-being of the people in my constituency and in all parts of Saskatoon.

I refer to our commitment in the throne speech to preserve and enhance the Saskatoon river bank and surrounding river valley area on either side of Saskatoon through the creation of an authority similar to the Wascana Authority in Regina.

This step to preserve our history, to enhance the beauty of our city and to protect a resource for future generations, is indeed a step I am sure many of our citizens will welcome.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — In contrast to this positive initiative, Mr. Speaker, I am, as of yet, unconvinced that the new era of growth referred to in the throne speech is going to benefit the majority of people in Saskatoon or in my constituency.

Saskatoon city officials are now planning for a population of 250 thousand by 1995 based on rapid expansion associated with uranium development. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that it is particularly desirable for Saskatoon to get so much bigger and to do so, so quickly. I do not see our city getting a lot of additional services we do not already have, rather I fear the expense of municipal infrastructure that will be needed in terms of more sewers, more roads and more bridges will increase property taxes or else require massive revenue sharing by our province. Yet most of these services will be of little value to people who already live in the city. I fear that rapid growth will mean increases in traffic congestion. It will mean increases in the crime rate and it will mean increases in housing prices.

Already many Saskatoon residents are suffering the results of land speculation. And now a whole series of new office complexes have been announced for the downtown. But are these office complexes really benefiting the residents of the city of Saskatoon when they mean the potential destruction of historic buildings such as the Capitol Theatre? Who will get the jobs in the new office buildings, Mr. Speaker? Will it be the native people of Saskatoon? Will it be the poor and the unemployed? I doubt it. I would far rather see us slow down and stage over a greater period of time our resource development, so there is time for good planning and growth is more moderate.

Our government has considered some effort at staging developments but we have not gone far enough. Even more important, we must take more concrete steps to diversify the impact of resource development so that more of the benefits go to the smaller centres of Saskatchewan. The health of rural Saskatchewan is something we all depend on in the long run in this province and balanced growth should become a clearer economic goal.

Moreover, we need to look at alternative developments to the resource industry base we are building up. Proposed industries like a uranium refinery near Saskatoon are not only threatening to the environment but they don't really employ very many people, Mr. Speaker. Only 150 jobs from an investment of over \$50 million, with a lot of those jobs

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inevitably going to professionals who will come in from outside of Saskatchewan. I think that instead we should be looking at investments and developments like solar energy, insulation, energy conservation, recycling and public transportation — which would be much more environmentally sound and would create a far larger number of jobs for the money invested — jobs that would benefit Saskatchewan people presently looking for work.

Not only is the new era of growth a concept that must be questioned critically and modified in direction but above all the foundation for that growth must be reconsidered by all members of this legislature. The decision of all political parties in Saskatchewan to support an expansion in uranium mining is in my view a very serious error in judgment. Mr. Speaker, in the International Year of the Child it is surely an appropriate time for all members of this House to rethink the dreadful legacy that uranium mining and nuclear power leaves to our children.

How will this House justify to the children of Saskatchewan the creation of waste tailings piles in northern Saskatchewan which will continue to emit radon gas and pose hazards of radium contamination for the next 80,000 years? How will we justify to our children the reality that our uranium wastes when they come out of a nuclear reactor will be so highly toxic and hazardous that they must be kept out of the environment for the next quarter of a million years? No one in the world has developed a safe method of disposing of these wastes, a problem that has caused states like California and countries like Austria to declare a halt to their nuclear construction programs.

How do we justify selling uranium to countries like France and Germany when the people of those countries turn out in demonstrations of 50,000 or 60,000 people to protest nuclear development, and when France refuses to sign the non-proliferation treaty? Above all, Mr. Speaker, how does this legislature justify to our children the sale of uranium into an international market where it is almost certain to be diverted for nuclear weapons — a market in which whole shiploads of uranium have been stolen on the high seas and taken to another country?

How do we justify selling our uranium when the international body responsible for preventing its diversion for bombs has told us that its safeguard system has broken down and that it does not have nearly enough inspectors to properly do its monitoring work?

We cannot pretend to tell our children that we thought that there were adequate safeguards in place when we know that even countries that have signed the non-proliferation treaty can legally use our uranium for bombs without breaking their agreement with us, simply by giving us 90 days notice. The safeguards agreements are a sham, Mr. Speaker, and Saskatchewan sale of uranium overseas is, in my view, an immoral act, an act over which the people of Saskatchewan may weep 20 years from now, despite the revenues that come today.

In a world community in which we are all neighbors, I ask all members of this legislature to consider that everything that we send into the lives of others will eventually come back into our own. And with that principle in mind, we must surely reject uranium mining expansion.

Notwithstanding my objection to further uranium mining in this province, I want to state, Mr. Speaker, how pleased I am with the other resource policies of our government — our investments in potash which are now clearly proving themselves —

the high return we are ensuring Saskatchewan people from our oil taxation policies, taxation policies which Conservative governments across Canada refused to even think about.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — We are leading the way in showing the rest of Canada the benefits that come with controlling our own resources. And, at a time when the Liberal government in Ottawa is allowing more and more foreign domination of our economy and is approving over 80 per cent of takeover requests by foreign firms, Saskatchewan is proving, under the New Democratic Party that we can do it ourselves.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PREBBLE: — Mr. Speaker, the commitment of our government to improving the overall welfare of Saskatchewan people is very clear — the bulk of resource revenues for the people, not for the multinational resource companies — a continued struggle against the federal Liberal government to win for Saskatchewan a rail network that serves the farmers and rural communities and not the railway companies — a medicare system that reflects the continuous commitment of this government to establish a more compassionate society. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I add my voice to those of my colleagues and move the motion, and call for the Conservative Party amendment to be defeated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to join in the throne speech debate. To start off with, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the people of Indian Head-Wolseley constituency who worked so hard to help me get my seat in this legislature. I would like to make special mention of what became the famous Taylor team in the Indian Head-Wolseley constituency, which became known throughout many of the constituencies and I think the entire province of Saskatchewan. I would like to express my gratitude to these people at this time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — I would also like to express to the members of my constituency that I will do my utmost to give them a strong voice in this legislature and represent them on the issues.

My constituency of Indian Head-Wolseley as many of you know is just east of Regina here and it is a constituency in which my family settled in 1882. The constituency is approximately 100 miles in diameter, from Sedley in the southwest to the Ochapowace Indian Reserve on the Qu'Appelle Valley at No. 9 Highway. The other extremities are Indian Head and southeast to Windthorst. Of course one of the things we are very proud of in Indian Head-Wolseley constituency is our northern border which is the beautiful Qu'Appelle Valley.

This constituency, as I am sure everyone knows, contains some of the best farm land in the province of Saskatchewan. We have 14 major towns in the area — and I should say, very proud towns — and five Indian Reserves. Through this constituency runs the Trans-Canada Highway and the mainline of the CPR. This constituency is a multi-cultural area. I should say that we are proud to be rural people. I would like to quote

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from the speech of the Premier in yesterday's *Hansard* where he says:

The day of self-conscientiousness about being rural, of uncritical admiration of the urban society in the big city, that is passing too.

Well, I would just like to inform the Premier that we in Indian Head-Wolseley have always been proud to be rural — as many of the people in rural Saskatchewan are. I realize for a person who has not been born in the West, this is a little hard to understand.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — I notice his absence but I am sure some of the boys will pass it on.

The next thing I would like to comment on is the past representation of our constituency in the legislature of this province. The other day I paid tribute to the memory of Mr. Warden Burgess who in my lifetime was the CCF member for Indian Head-Wolseley. I would mention Mr. Fred Dundas, a Liberal member; Mr. Harry Wahl who was a personal friend of mine and our family, and an NDP member; Mr. Doug McFarlane who was Minister of Agriculture in the Liberal government; Mr. Terry Hanson, another friend and farmer from Fillmore; and lastly and not least, Mr. Cy MacDonald of the Liberal Party. It gives me great pleasure to stand in this House for the first time as a Progressive Conservative member. The first one from the constituency of Indian Head-Wolseley.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — I would like now, Mr. Speaker, to pay attention to some of the concerns which have been expressed to me from our constituency and following the question period the other day when I raised with the Minister of Social Services the concerns of the senior citizens in Wolseley, I would also like to express a concern of the senior citizens in Broadview, who have been working very hard, over the last two years, to try to get funding for a level I, II and III senior citizens' nursing complex. In checking with them, as late as yesterday, I understand that they have made representation to the government. They have conducted their surveys in which they have 100 interested people, 20 of them for level III care, 50 for level II. They have been waiting for six weeks for a promised letter. Surely this government would see its way clear to help the people of Broadview to establish the much needed senior citizens nursing centre for their constituency.

Another thing that is a big concern in our constituency is the matter of highways. Highway 48, as you may well know, is a very fine road from the junction of No. 1 to the town of Montmartre. I would like to draw to the attention of this Assembly that the completion of highway No. 48 was an election promise by both the NDP candidates, in Indian Head-Wolseley and in Moosomin. I would like to draw attention, again, to a speech on page 39 of *Hansard* by the member for Wascana (Mr. White), when he was talking the other day about this government's commitment to the dental plan, and I quote:

We will be expanding the Dental Care Plan. It committed itself to doing so in the last election and it is known for keeping its promises.

With that quote, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the government will see its way clear to the completion of Highway No. 48. Now, highways are a concern deep to my heart and one

of them, of course, is the Trans-Canada Highway. This is the highway on which I live. One of the concerns that I have, Mr. Speaker, is that I feel that a double lane should be extended from the town of Qu'Appelle to the Manitoba border.

Now, I like to speak from recent statistics and I tried to get this information from the Department of Highways. I questioned them as late as about three days ago, and the information, from the minister, was to table the request in this House and I would get the information. However, as much as I like to speak from statistics, Mr. Speaker, in the case of the need for a double lane highway on No. 1, I don't have to have statistics because many of my dear friends have lost their lives on this highway. I would just like to recount a couple or three of these incidents, Mr. Speaker.

I am sure we all read the papers just before Christmas, of a very serious traffic accident, where a lady from our home town — a lady who for 25 years had been the leader in the 4H movement in Wolseley, a fine woman and a much admired wife, mother and grandmother — lost her life on a cold December morning on the way to work. Accompanying her was one of our local businessmen, a young man, with a family of three, who at the present time is lying in the hospital with multiple injuries and will be in that condition at least until May and goodness knows what his recovery will be. Surely, the income of this family has been deeply affected.

I remember the girl, my neighbor, a graduate of my high school, a promising young girl with a great career who again lost her life on this highway early one morning. An Indian student of mine — a boy who had great artistic and athletic ability — again losing his life.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think these are a few instances and I could go on and name more of them but I will not mention more at this time because I think I have made my point, Mr. Speaker, that we need to improve that highway. It is a prime necessity to have a double-laned highway right from Qu'Appelle across to the Manitoba border. The Premier, the other day, mentioned that Regina is becoming the distribution centre of western Canada and I thoroughly agree with him. I travel that road every morning, Mr. Speaker and the number of semi-trailers and the amount of traffic on there is simply phenomenal. Although, the Minister of Highways did not see his way clear to give me the statistics, I was able to dig some out, Mr. Speaker. And, I would just like to point out that in the distance from Grenfell to Indian Head, in the past five years, there have been 17 deaths. In the same distance on the double lane highway from Qu'Appelle to Balgonie with the same traffic flow, there have been no deaths. Mr. Speaker, I think this is evidence that the completion of Number One Highway should be a priority for this government.

SOME HON, MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — Now, I'd like to turn to education and as many of you know I am the principal of a small high school and Indian Head-Wolseley has many of these schools in their constituency. We're proud of these schools. We feel they're doing a very good job and we want to maintain these schools. Now, we all realize that student enrolment, the drop in enrolment, is a problem for Saskatchewan at this time. But rather than cutting back staff, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the government look at alternate patterns that we could consider in instruction. I don't think that we should just be laying off our teachers. I think we could expand our services into such areas as guidance counselling, resource personnel and so on.

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I also think in the field of teacher training that it is very important that this government look at producing generalist teachers, generalist teachers who can teach in the rural areas of Saskatchewan and handle effectively, a number of subjects.

In health care, we are very proud of our small hospitals. My family and the family of many of you from rural areas have had the service of small hospitals in Saskatchewan. I appreciate it and I want to maintain it. I would suggest that we should be looking at starting medical centres. I was interested to hear our friend from Saskatoon Sutherland mention something of the same policy and that is where we could have visiting physiotherapists, optometrists, psychologists and dentists, visit these rural areas so that rural people in Saskatchewan can be afforded the same benefits and the same health care that the rest of the province is getting.

In regard to grain handling, Mr. Speaker, certainly a paramount interest in a rural area like Indian Head-Wolseley. The Premier seems to think that we in the Conservative party are opposed to the PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) recommendations, but we are not opposed to a PRAC recommendation. Let me assure you, Mr. Speaker, that we will do everything to support the retention of our lines and to keep our small towns.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd mentioned previously the Qu'Appelle Valley and, as it borders the northern part of my constituency, I feel that it is of prime importance. We all know that the Qu'Appelle is a place of great beauty and a great amount of agricultural activity. I would urge the government in its Qu'Appelle implementation programs to go very cautiously, to take great consideration and thought about the future development of the Qu'Appelle Valley, remembering always and keeping in consideration the importance of the landowners, remembering always that the Qu'Appelle Valley has a great agricultural potentiality, and also, and probably most important, that any changes in the Qu'Appelle Valley would only be done after due consultation with the landowners in the area.

Now, the other day the Premier was rather critical of our party in saying that we were only condemning the government, and I would like to reassure the Premier and the members opposite that I will continue to condemn the government in the areas where I feel the government is wrong.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — However, lest the Premier and the members opposite think I'm a negative person, and I am sure that over the next four years, you're going to find out that I am anything but a negative person . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — . . . and seeing that our Premier seems to be searching, searching for new ideas and alternatives for his new direction for Saskatchewan, I would like to introduce a few ideas that can be taken by the members opposite as food for thought.

Now, what I would like to concern myself first with, Mr. Speaker, is the education of, let me say, gifted students and then let me refine that, in that gifted students are very hard to define. But there are many gifted students in Saskatchewan and any one who has taught school and some of the members opposite have, realize that many of these

students with superior learning capacity are at some times sitting with their motors idling in the schools of Saskatchewan. Now I think that in this International Year of the Child, and granted that we have these people and accepting the fact that maybe we're not doing the best job for them in our school systems, perhaps an idea would be that we could take these people out of their classrooms in the month of May, because many of them have all their work well in hand at that time, and take these people to our universities, because the university at this time is in intersession and it is not operating at full potential, and expose some of these bright young minds of Saskatchewan to the best teaching and best apparatus and stimulating environment. I think there is a program . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — . . . Mr. Minister of Continuing Education, I would be glad to discuss this further with you at any time. That is a germ of an idea that perhaps can develop into something that is very positive and will benefit the people and the future generations of Saskatchewan greatly.

Now another consideration that I would put forth as ideas for the government and for the people of this province is that in my constituency and in the constituency of my desk mate here, the member from Qu'Appelle, we are witnessing the establishment of what I would call satellite communities. The communities in my constituency of Sedley, of Francis and of Vibank are having many of the people who earn their living in Regina starting to locate in those areas. And, as this trend continues, these communities are going to have to offer many of the amenities of life that these people will be wanting. I think, Mr. Speaker, that it would be an idea that we look at some consideration, some way that can help the communities in providing these necessary services for the people (who are actually the working force that the Premier alluded to) in the growing city of Regina.

The other idea I would like to put forth at this time is that I'm concerned with the use of wasteland in this province; and I would point out that our change in agriculture to where many of our farms have become grain farms has caused fences to be taken down and a lot of the area is unproductive wasteland. In my own area, I would like to cite, for example, the Coulees leading into the Qu'Appelle Valley — which at one time housed herds of cattle when it was a mixed farming area — today are vacant. I've been doing a bit of research and this is a suggestion that comes from the country of New Zealand where in that area they have come upon a very profitable enterprise and that is the raising, on a domestic basis, of deer.

Now I would say that in our country the white-tailed deer and the buffalo are both native to our surroundings and that we could take some of this wasteland, some of the land that's on Indian reserves. I have five Indian reserves. Some of them are looking for some way to become economically viable. They have this land. They don't have broken land and they do not have the cereal grains to feed to fatten cattle. Now the deer and the buffalo as we all know lived on this land and they will grow and grow to market-condition without any cereal grains and this land that is being used for the production of cereal grain could be used for the production of wheat and perhaps in compounds we could raise these kinds of animals. Just interesting — note that the proceeds from one male deer in New Zealand today is in the excess of \$2,000, Mr. Speaker. Although this may sound like a very avant-garde idea, there is merit and there is economic potential in this idea.

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SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear,

MR. TAYLOR: — Lastly, Mr. Speaker, in these new ideas, I would like to put forth, go back to the PRAC that we were talking about earlier. The Premier insinuated that we were not going to stand up for retaining the railroads. I want to go one step further than retaining the railroads and I would draw your attention, any of you who may have had the time to study the PRAC commission, about the Corning-Handsworth sub-line. This is one that touches my constituency, and touches the constituency of the member for Estevan. Now they are saying that this line should be taken out. With a bit of foresight and study by a group of students in one of the schools it has been shown that by building, not taking out, but by building 85 additional miles of railroad we could have a railroad that would connect the United States border with the Hudson's Bay, with the terminal at the Hudson's Bay. This railroad, Mr. Speaker, would give us another outlet for our grain, it would join onto the mainline of the CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway), further grain could go out through the Hudson's Bay from southeastern Saskatchewan. This railway runs right through the major gravel deposits of southeastern Saskatchewan, and I'm sure my friend here, the mayor from Regina, will verify that the need of gravel in this city is a real need at this time. And here's a chance to bring it in by rail. Also, it comes right from the coal fields of southern Saskatchewan, and it would give us an access to market our coal out through the Hudson's Bay into the European markets, which, in the near future may be a real demand.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — So rather than taking out railroads, rather than taking out railroads, I would suggest that these are some ideas, these are some positive proposals that the Premier seemed to think were lacking, that we as the elected leaders of Saskatchewan could at least look at and pay some attention to, and perhaps, develop some programs.

AN HON. MEMBER: — It wouldn't be lacking in the throne speech, Graham.

MR. TAYLOR: — So therefore, Mr. Speaker, I do not feel that I'm wrong in condemning the government, and I agree with the Premier that we should be bringing forth ideas, and I hope that some of these ideas have not fallen on deaf ears. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would like to go on record that the members opposite know that I am willing to discuss ideas at any time, new ideas, new proposals, new directions for this province of Saskatchewan.

I would like to now turn, Mr. Speaker, to the throne speech, and I must agree with the press and with many of the comments that it contained nothing very startling. In fact I was disappointed, as I expressed in the House the other day, that in this International Year of the Child little or no mention was made of education.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear! Shame on you.

MR. TAYLOR: — I think there was very little in there for the International Year of the Child. And I must agree with our Leader of the Opposition that this government must show more leadership to the citizens, both young and old, of Saskatchewan. Our Premier mentioned the very growing and glowing facts of Regina, but he failed to mention, Mr. Speaker, about the growing crime rate. He did not mention about the growing suicide rate on the Indian reserves in this province. These, Mr. Speaker, are the things that I think our government should be looking at. We have all studied history, and

we have all seen that when past societies attain material satisfaction then they become beset with moral decay. I say, let us, the elected leaders of this province, show an example by our lives and by our legislation to prevent that type of thing happening in this province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. TAYLOR: — Now to the mover and seconder of the throne speech I would like to compliment them on their delivery. However, I — who am also a student of history — could perhaps recommend that they would be well to be spending a little time studying English Literature, rather than reiterating the stories of the depression in Saskatchewan. I would like to refer to the play Hamlet in which old Polonius says, 'Brevity is the soul of wit.' I hope our friends will remember that in the future.

To the member for Shaunavon (Mr. Lingenfelter), surely an upstanding young gentleman could think of a more appropriate topic than to dig up the memories and poke fun at a man who was respected in this province, the late Premier Ross Thatcher. My friend, that was a cheap shot, a very, very cheap shot.

Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed my first week in the legislature of this province. I look forward to the next four years. I have witnessed good remarks on both sides of the House. At this point, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I oppose the motion and support the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P.P. MOSTOWAY (Saskatoon Centre): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you could close the cage door. I have some choice words to say in relation to the throne speech, Mr. Speaker. I know that members opposite will be looking forward to the words that I have to say. At this time I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

MOTION

Leave of Absence

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Bowerman (Minister of the Environment):

That leave of absence be granted to the hon. member for Saskatoon Centre (Mr. Mostoway), on and from Monday, the 5th day of March, 1979, to Monday, the 26th day of March, 1979, to attend on behalf of this Assembly, the 28th Seminar on Parliamentary Procedure in London, organized by the United Kingdom Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Will the Attorney General accept a question? Mr. Attorney General, in the light of this motion, are you prepared to assure this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan that the due process of democracy can be carried on in the absence of this member?

MR. ROMANOW: — I'll have to confess that's a question that has got me stumped.

March 1, 1979

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:18 p.m.