

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Nineteenth Legislature

Friday, March 2, 1979

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

On the Orders of the Day

QUESTIONS

Saskatchewan Athletics

MR. B. PICKERING (Bengough-Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Culture and Youth, I would like to direct a question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, you indicated yesterday something should be done regarding Saskatchewan athletics. Would the Premier now consider setting up a task force to study the position of Saskatchewan athletics and determine what further support can be given to the development of sports in Saskatchewan?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I am not really aware that the situation requires a task force study. It may well be that members opposite feel that the state of Saskatchewan athletic endeavors is in such a perilous state that we need to take some extraordinary measures. I don't think that. I think that while obviously we would like to do better, we are doing well. Our athletes are doing well and we can expect further progress in future. I have been impressed with the work done by the voluntary organizations in Saskatchewan. Therefore, while accepting the suggestion of the hon. member as one for consideration, I am not now prepared to give him an undertaking that a task force will be set up.

School Project at Turnor Lake

MR. G. McLEOD (Meadow Lake): — My question is to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. Mr. Minister, it's been brought to my attention that you've received — or at least you've been sent — a letter by the Saskatchewan Construction Association complaining about the unethical tendering practices of a school project at Turnor Lake. The question is, have you rejected the late tender submitted after closing of tenders by Ile-a-la-Crosse Industries?

HON. N.E. BYERS (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — Mr. Speaker, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan has a fairly sizeable capital program and I would want to take notice of this particular question.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Are you saying by way of supplementary that you have not got . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. New question.

Adjusting of Hail by the Crop Insurance Program

MR. J. GARNER (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. Will the minister tell the farmers of Saskatchewan if he is going to improve the time that it takes hail adjusters to get into an area to do the adjusting under the Crop Insurance Program?

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HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, the adjusting of hail by the Crop Insurance Program is done by Municipal Hail Insurance adjusters. We have a contract with Municipal Hail to do the adjusting for crop insurance and, as far as I'm aware, we have not got a problem with the time element. Sometimes you will be aware that after a hail storm it is appropriate to wait a couple of days so one can assess more accurately the damage that's done. I have not had complaints to the effect that there is too long a time lag.

MR. GARNER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I know of many farmers' claims that went in on July 17 of 1978. They did not see an inspector until August 8. By this time there was a terrific re-growth. Then the crop froze. Is this justice to the farmers of Saskatchewan?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the adjustments that were done at that time would have taken into account the damage that was done by the hailstorm; I am sure than an accurate assessment would have been made at that time as to what damage was done by the said storm. Unless you can indicate to me that there wasn't accurate and adequate compensation given, I don't know whether you have an argument.

MR. GARNER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister trying to tell me that three weeks or longer after a claim has been sent into the office is a sufficient time limit for the adjusters to show up to do the adjusting on these claims?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I would say that three weeks is a fairly long time and I would hope that we would be able to cut that down. But I would like to know from him if he can identify for me some of the extenuating circumstances which may have been present in those cases. There may have been reasons why the adjustment wasn't done. If he would give me the cases I would be prepared to look at them and I would advise him as to why they were held up.

MR. GARNER: — Yes, I will present that information to the minister.

MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. Mr. Minister, I have a copy of a letter that was addressed to you. Are you saying to this House that you did not receive a letter from the Saskatchewan Construction Association concerning unethical tendering practices?

MR. BYERS: — Mr. Speaker, yes I have received a letter from the Saskatchewan Construction Association concerning the matter the hon. member for Meadow Lake has referred to.

MR. McLEOD: — A supplementary question, Mr. Minister. There were some serious concerns raised by this association. Will your government not admit that a dangerous precedent has been accepted by the government and that this practice is not in the public interest as stated by the Saskatchewan Construction Association?

MR. BYERS: — Mr. Speaker, he did not ask me in the first question . . . I did not think that he had asked me whether I had received the letter; he did not refer to the letter . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — He's just trying to slither away from it.

MR. BYERS: — No, I have received the letter and I have read it and am investigating the

case and I took notice of the question because I wanted to give the hon. member a fair and proper and satisfactory answer after I've investigated the matter that he has raised in this House.

Albertan as Deputy Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — I'd like to direct a question to the Premier. There'll be a couple of questions on some of the more recent appointments that you have made.

First of all, I have the press release appointing a Mr. Leeson as the new Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. The press release is somewhat extensive on Mr. Leeson's background and qualifications for the position. Firstly, were there any other salient features of Mr. Leeson's background that made him eligible for the job and secondly, is there any reason why you had to go to the province of Alberta to get someone to become the new Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs dealing with Saskatchewan problems?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — I think we're all aware of the perils of getting senior staff from Alberta and what can befall any organization which reposes . . .

AN. HON. MEMBER: — Ottawa has the same problem with people from Saskatchewan.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes, but just because some people who have come from Alberta may have proved to be unsatisfactory in the roles which they occupy, I don't think that necessarily applies to all persons from Alberta.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — It is my judgment that Mr. Leeson is highly qualified. He has an academic background, he has some of his education in the United States and I don't hold that against him. I mention that for the benefit of the hon. member for Thunder Creek. He taught at the University of Alberta, he prepared and was a co-author of a book on intergovernmental relations. Just so the hon. member may save himself a follow up question, he was also for a period on the staff of Mr. Grant Notley, the Leader of the New Democratic Party in Alberta.

MR. LANE: — I know the Premier wouldn't want an incomplete press statement and I noticed that there is some indication — I didn't see it in the Leader Post — that this same Mr. Leeson was not only perhaps on Mr. Notley's staff, but also former president of the New Democratic Party in Alberta.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — Will the Premier not admit that the appointment of the former president of the New Democratic Party of Alberta to such a sensitive position in the province of Saskatchewan is a highly dangerous practice given our position of trying to argue Saskatchewan's position before constitutional conferences, and in fact you have decided that in future constitutional conferences the position of Saskatchewan is going to be the partisan political position of the NDP, no longer representing the position of the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I simply do not share the views of the hon. member. It is accurate that Mr. Leeson occupied an executive position in the New Democratic Party of Alberta. It does not happen to be accurate that he was the president but perhaps the thrust of the question is the same. I do not believe that service in a party necessarily disentitles one to service in an appointed office with a government.

With respect to the point one raises, he served on the same faculty at the University of Alberta with Dr. Peter Meekison who was the Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs in Alberta. They get along very well indeed — I would think it quite surprising that any area of friction would grow up in that regard. He is, I think, fully competent. The call for always selecting one's people from Saskatchewan, I think comes, shall I say, ill from the member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) — and I think . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

I am not making it! I came here to this province and I made my life here as a public servant, and I believe I have made a contribution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I'm not suggesting that others may not do the same. I think among the people who will make a contribution to this province is Mr. Leeson.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Further Political Appointments

MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, you have made two other appointments of defeated cabinet ministers, and an MLA, Mr. Faris and Mr. McNeill. I preface my question because there are serious concerns raised in the community dealing with alcoholism and its problems over your appointment of Mr. Faris. Mr. Faris himself has said in this House on previous occasions, that those less able to deal with the alcoholism position — I have indicated that I was prefacing my comments with Mr. Faris' comments — were those who had suffered from alcoholism and the Alcoholics Anonymous and those involved in that organization. Does this indicate a change in policy that those who are 'teetotallers' for want of a better word, are now the ones who are going to dominate the treatment of alcoholism in the province and is this a significant change in policy from that stated by Mr. Faris? And, have you as yet had representation from those involved with the treatment of alcoholism objecting to your appointment of Mr. Faris?

MR. BLAKENEY: — The answer is no on almost every count. So far as I'm aware, we have not had any representation objecting to Dr. Faris' appointment as chairman of the Board of the St. Louis Alcohol Treatment Centre. Nor do I think it represents any change in policy. We do not agree that alcoholism policy is the province of any group, is the exclusive area for any group, be they teetotallers or be they social drinkers, or be they alcoholics anonymous. It is, Mr. Speaker . . . the hon. member is asking the question of me. I am answering it. Whatever somebody else may have said at some other time, I am not here to argue. I am stating the policy of the government of Saskatchewan, and I am saying that it is our belief that there is a role in the treatment of alcoholism, not only for people who may have been alcoholics and are now members of AA, and not only for teetotallers, but also for everybody. It depends upon their particular skills. Dr. Faris is, I think, acknowledged to be something of an expert in this area. He has given a great deal of time and study to it. He is very familiar with the literature. He does have a point of view where he believes that total abstinence is the best way to approach the alcohol problem. It may not be a view shared by everybody but it is a view which it is worthy of

some respect. It is not suggested that he is going to totally control the operation. He is chairman of the board. That is his role and I think he is well qualified to fill the role.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — My final questions to the minister deal with the practice of the government in appointing people like Mr. McNeill, to a probably an OC position within the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, and this follows a series of such appointments of defeated candidates, and I refer to, I believe, the member for Kinistino, of the similarity between that and the attack made by your party a couple of elections ago about corporate welfare bums of corporations living off the public trough, and living on grants and the tax benefits.

Would you not say that by maintaining these defeated candidates who cannot find work in the private sector outside, and supporting them at the public expense, is not your variation of the corporate welfare bums? We really have the political welfare bums and a welfare . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — . . . in fact a welfare elite in this province of a bunch of people that can't find work elsewhere when they were defeated, and you have to hire them in the government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear. hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I don't think I need to reply to the particular thrust of the hon. member since I know these people. I know well, that, speaking let us say of the member for Meadow Lake that the member for Qu'Appelle would not have called the member for Meadow Lake a bum if he'd been in this corridor last year, or he wouldn't have tried it because the consequences may have been rather difficult for the member for Qu'Appelle . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . but may I say that the former member for Meadow Lake is a thoroughly competent person who knows northern Saskatchewan. He has had for many years a particular rapport with the native community. It is my judgment that he will serve very well in the post to which he is appointed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Beef Producers Overpaid

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — A question to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding). The headlines of newspapers all over Canada are indicating that the beef producers are being overpaid and are the reason for the high rate of increase in food prices. Why is the Minister of Agriculture in Saskatchewan who realizes that beef producers are still at the third lowest rate of disposable income in Canada, not defending the producers?

HON. E.E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I don't think that anyone needs to protect the beef producers at the present time. I think they are quite happy with the prices of beef as they are and I don't see any flogging of the price of beef by the consumers in this province. Just very recently I was listening to a show where they were talking to people in the SouthMall here and they were asking the people there what did they think of the high price of beef. Most of them were saying they recognized that the beef producer over a period of time had had a bad time and it was time that he was able to recuperate some of his losses. They were not blaming the producer for the high price

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of beef. They were concerned about the fact that there was a rip-off between the producer and the consumer. This is one of the things that they were pointing out and so there wasn't any, as I was able to determine, blame being laid on the producer for the high price of beef. I don't know why I should be out there pounding the table when there is no criticism being levied.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture pounds the table about everything else but when it comes to the concern of the beef producer who today gets 2.11 per cent of the disposable income of the average citizen for beef where the 30 year average is 2.5 — this is the third lowest level in the Canadian history of the last 30 years — why aren't you defending them the same as you defend on PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) and everything else? Why don't you get up and defend them because they need it on this case?

MR. KAEDING: — Again, Mr. Speaker, I fail to have heard any serious criticism on the price of beef in Saskatchewan. If I were to hear that and if I were to hear anybody being very critical on the price of beef in this province I would certainly be up there defending the beef producer.

Answer to Question on Land Bank Purchase

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday I had a question from the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew) with regard to the land bank and some transactions in his area. I want to reply to those questions. In the first place he asked the question, did we purchase or make offer to purchase for a half section of 17-26-18 and I can indicate that we have made offer to purchase and, in fact, have purchased that half section.

His second question was, was an offer made to a previous owner, two months previous to this for that same piece of land at a higher price? I can tell him that the previous owner had requested an assessment by the Land Bank Commission and was offered the same price as the new owner. He turned that down. He refused that offer. Consequently he offered it for sale for public tender. The price paid was higher than what we paid and that, of course, is adequate. We don't argue with him if he got more money for it. The offer we made to the new owner was a price which we felt was fair, basing it on comparables in the area. That is the policy of the Land Bank Commission.

The new lessee is a son of the person who bought the land. He is totally qualified as a land bank lessee.

MR. R. ANDREW (Kindersley): — Is it true, Mr. Minister, that the person who outbid the land bank in the first instance was, in fact, the person who later sold it back to the land bank — in other words, Mr. Turner? Is it not true that he, in fact, paid some \$4,000 more for the land and he turned around and sold it back to the land bank?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, he did not outbid the land bank, the land bank made an offer. The land bank does not bid on land. We make an offer. We make an offer on land and if somebody offers a higher bid, we do not go back and give him another bid. We make an offer on the basis of what we think is a fair price for that land.

In this particular case if the new owner paid more for it than we were prepared to pay, that is his business. If he wanted to take a loss, it is not for us to say why he wanted to

take a loss. We offered the previous owner what we thought was a fair price. If he was prepared to take that that is his business.

MR. ANDREW: — A supplementary. If a farm manager or a farmer is going to take a \$4,000 loss to get a lease, then I question whether or not that person would be a very adequate manager of a farm and, therefore, qualify to be sitting on land bank land.

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I suggest that you talk to some of the people in the local area where this is taking place and I think you will find that the person whom we are dealing with here is a very competent person and quite capable of taking care of the operation.

It is rather interesting that this member should be bringing forward this kind of a criticism, because I see there are some advertisements here — Andrew, Ritter and Chin and Andrew, Ritter advertising land for sale in that area. They are saying that they will take bids and then they will ask those people who have bid to come in and, again, orally submit additional bids if they wish — driving up the price, which is obviously what will be done. Is that the way you are going to get young family farmers on the farm? I know that the people who will finally win the competition will not be the young farmers in that area who need to get on the land.

Boiler Failure — No. 3 Unit, Estevan

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister in charge of SPC. Could the minister tell this House, on a recent boiler failure in Estevan, No. 3 unit, just how serious it is, if it going to be knocked out for any length of time, or what has happened?

HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, I cannot give precise information with regard to the question of the member for Estevan. There is a problem. The SPC is investigating and correcting that problem now. We will not really know in full the consequences of that until sometime later. Perhaps today or early next week I could respond more definitely.

MR. LARTER: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Sometime ago we had a failure in the No. 4 unit on the generator and I understand from SPC personnel that this breakdown is going to shorten the life of this unit. Does this indicate that there are either many failures coming up or human failures that are causing these breakdowns in this very important generating station?

MR. MESSER: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether it is accurate to assume that the breakdown which the member for Estevan refers to is going to shorten the life of that turbine, that generator. It happened after it was serviced by a private company and there was a foreign object that somehow got into the operating machinery and damage occurred. It was repaired. It is not considered by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation to be extraordinary. It is unfortunate, but these occurrences, these problems do on occasion happen. We have no evidence to show us that these situations are on the increase. They have happened in the past and we are, I think, tightening up our measures of security in regard to clean-up after such repair work is done in an attempt to avoid such unfortunate occurrences again in the future.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

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ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

MR. N. LUSNEY (Pelly): — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to add my support to the throne speech and to the motion proposed by my colleagues and I am proud to call them my colleagues. The member for Wascana (Mr. White) and the member for Shaunavon (Mr. Lingenfelter) demonstrated that we have added to our numbers two extremely bright and capable members.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Anyone who has listened closely would realize that, Mr. Speaker, the talent these members have demonstrated in this debate, the hard work I have seen both members doing on behalf of individuals and their constituencies, since their election. You combine these factors with the record of Premier Allan Blakeney and this government and you will know why these members come to this Assembly, to this side of the House . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — . . . from constituencies which were represented by the opposition prior to October 18.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I was shocked by the almost personal and nasty attack to which both of these members was subjected from the Leader of the Opposition immediately after they sat down. Quite apart from that fact, it was in many ways a repeat performance of the abuse displayed on previous occasions and, Mr. Speaker, completely unwarranted.

I want to tell you what I heard the member for Shaunavon say, Mr. Speaker, I think the record of this House will bear me out. First he said that the member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver), not the former premier nor anyone else who isn't able to defend himself, but the member for Nipawin and his desk mate and the Conservative Party of this province, in the last election went about the province either deliberately or in complete inexcusable ignorance and twisted and misrepresented the resource policies of this government. Those were the policies on which this government was elected in 1971 and re-elected again in 1975 and, Mr. Speaker, on the record of its leader and its resource policies, was re-elected again in 1978.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Second, Mr. Speaker, he read chapter and verse from our policies as he understood them, written not by a speech writer, as the Leader of the Opposition suggests but written by the member for Shaunavon himself.

Third, he quoted the interpretations placed on those policies by the former premier, including the list of all the evils that would befall us if we followed the socialist policy, as was common for the former premier to do and is becoming quite common for the Leader of the Opposition to do. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the member for Shaunavon quoted an interpretation which fits precisely the blue-hued vision of the member for

Nipawin.

Fourth, the member for Shaunavon concluded and I think the public concluded the same thing, that the Conservative Party opposite had every opportunity to acquaint themselves with the facts. If they haven't acquainted themselves with the facts then it's high time they did. That too, Mr. Speaker, is becoming more and more common. The public expects better and they are entitled to expect better from the Leader of the Opposition. He ought to be able to organize, research and document his case and present it in a coherent fashion. The Leader of the Opposition (as the rest of us) has research staff which can provide accurate information to the member, but maybe in this case it may mean that he would have to take some of his homework along to his ranch in Arizona, or maybe a cabin in the Alps.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, in listening to the well-thought out researched and documented remarks presented by the member for Wascana (Mr. White) and the member for Shaunavon (Mr. Lingenfelter) and in hearing the unprepared remarks of the Leader of the Opposition in this House, there might be less shame than he thinks in having a prepared text for his remarks.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome all the new members to this legislature and a special welcome to the member for Duck Lake (Mr. Hammersmith) and the member for Saskatoon Sutherland (Mr. Prebble) who have joined us on this side of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — You know, Mr. Speaker, there were by-elections in those two seats in 1977 and after those elections the Conservatives started introducing their member for Nipawin as the next premier. I take the presence of these two members as a clear indication of what Prince Albert-Duck Lake and Saskatoon voters thought of that prospect.

I feel especially good about these members being here because I too entered this Assembly in a by-election a few months later than the early retired Conservative members. I am happy too, to be back, and I thank the people of Pelly for that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Well do I remember, and my constituents remember, the prediction by members opposite about my short stay here in the House. In spite of that the fact that over 200 more people supported the NDP in a by-election than they did in the 1975 general election, the people of Pelly remembered, Mr. Speaker. They considered the issues and the arrogance of the people opposite and on October 18 they went to the polls again. The Conservative campaign received nearly 200 votes fewer, Mr. Speaker, and the NDP support in Pelly increased from 48 per cent in 1977 to 56 per cent on October 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the people who helped make this result

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possible. I hope that over the next few years I can represent all the people of Pelly in a passion which is deserving of the confidence placed in me.

Mr. Speaker, the last time I took part in the throne speech debate I indicated to you my sentiments and the sentiments of the people I represent in respect to many of our health care and social service programs. In these areas the facts show that we continue to lead the country. This throne speech indicates, once again, that we will continue to lead in that field. I commend the initiatives outlined and I commend both ministers. I want to encourage them, when they are establishing the new health research fund, the new cancer foundation, and the new community health units, to keep in mind two points which I think should be of concern in this Legislature:

1. I think there is a growing public concern, or a suspicion at least, that health research and cancer research is getting to be a big business. There is suspicion, therefore, that the research establishment involved tends to develop self-preservation as too important an objective. If this happens, in fact, it will be at the expense of finding new treatment methods. Perhaps, more importantly, it will be at the expense of finding and promoting preventative measures. It is important, therefore, to consider the concern. It is important to satisfy ourselves that the public interest is adequately reflected and projected. The long-term and the day-to-day management of health care and cancer research and treatment should be considered.

2. It is obvious that this government is not going to waltz on its commitment to put up money to do that job. The funds, I am confident, will be put up, to a large extent, from this government and this Legislature. I'm also confident that we will be voting in the funds. But I say it is not good enough just to pour out the money. And if I may depart for a bit, pour out the money seems to be the suggestion made by the Leader of the Opposition from time to time and with increasing frequency, about an increasing amount of programs funded by this government. Mind you, I may misunderstand what he is saying. For instance, he insinuated the other day, that the highways budget should be run not by a government held responsible for highways, not by the government that has to raise the taxes to pay for it, but by some local government bodies. I am sure that the councillors of both the R.M.s (Rural Municipalities) and the towns in my constituency would be absolutely delighted by this latest brain wave of their assuming that responsibility.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I remember the opposition leader when he was talking about local government last Tuesday. I remember him accusing the Premier of having jiggered the rules, jiggered the laws, jiggered the administration. I recall thinking at that time, Mr. Speaker, that somehow it seemed that somewhere that member must have had one too many jiggers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — I say it is not good enough for us to just pour out the money — that would not be responsible government. Nor is it good enough for us to sit back and say let the local groups initiate the highway construction programs in their areas or the medicare, or social services programs. That is not responsible government.

Mr. Speaker, new initiatives in health care and social services were a commitment we made to Saskatchewan people. The throne speech is once again evidence that this is a government, this is a political party, that keeps its commitments. I am confident as well, that the next four years, will see even further advancements.

Mr. Speaker, during the last throne speech debate, I also had an opportunity to comment about our agricultural programs and transportation issues as they affected my constituency and this province. There have been a number of developments since then, Mr. Speaker. Farmers in my area welcomed a proposal to increase research funding for agriculture. They welcomed a commitment to improve the land bank program. Pelly constituency probably has had more activity in this program than any other area in the province. And I think it is significant that 56 per cent of the voters in Pelly said yes to the NDP policies.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Farmers in my area also welcomed the gram is a special benefit in my area since many of the farmers operate on a smaller scale and figures will show that many have lower incomes than average. This program redistributes income a bit in their favor, instead of having an across the board open-ended reduction in farm fuels, which would provide more help to those who really are in less need of the help. The program reflects the philosophy of this party and this government, Mr. Speaker, and it has my full support.

I will be interested if members opposite — especially the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher), for example — get up in this House and condemn the Minister of Finance for the extra expenditures incurred in this fiscal year and if they point to farm fuel cost reductions as one of the programs where they will swing the old Thatcher meat axe Act and the proposed government cutbacks. Mr. Speaker, rural people in my constituency at Calder and MacNutt, and people all across the province will welcome the commitment that this government has made to fight Otto Lang's prairie rail wrecking crews.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — From what I understand, Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the member for Morse (Mr. Gross), and a friend of ours who serves the people of Saskatchewan in Ottawa, can give us vivid descriptions of the first CTC (Canadian Transport Commission) hearings since the PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) recommendations came down. I hope the member for Morse tells this House about those hearings, and I hope he tells this House about the lack of representation at those hearings by the opposition, federal or provincial. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I encourage him to tell this House particularly in view of the pompous performance given this subject by the member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) in this debate the other day.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to comment on the economic developments, particularly in small towns in Saskatchewan. I am pleased that the throne speech indicates this government's continuing commitment to Saskatchewan small business and industry. I believe the people in small business and industry are pleased as well.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — They will welcome the indication we will continue to provide market research and assistance through the Department of Industry and Commerce. They will welcome the announcement in the throne speech that we will continue the Small Industry Development Program and the Main Street Development Program. And, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan small business and industry people will welcome the

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continuing assistance provided by SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation) despite the criticisms from the opposite side of the House

These programs are welcome and the evidence is there to prove it. I want to give you an example from my constituency, Mr. Speaker. Two and a half years ago industry and commerce jointly funded a study to examine development opportunities for the town of Kamsack. This was undertaken with the full cooperation of the people. That study resulted in a new industry being developed in Kamsack. We have in the town of Kamsack today, a small manufacturing plant that cost more than \$400,000 and which will create 23 new jobs in that town.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, that kind of story is being repeated time and time again all over the province.

It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, to note the people putting their energy and investments in this company. I congratulate the two members, Cas Broda, Mr. Peter Reiben, both long-time respected residents of Kamsack who are two of the principals. I also would like to congratulate the third principal in the company, Mr. William Plowman, and I welcome him to Kamsack as an ex-resident of Alberta.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — It is also interesting. Mr. Speaker, to know that SEDCO has helped finance this venture. This venture is a fine example of government working together with people.

I also welcome the announcement of the revenue sharing program. This program introduced last year was meant to strengthen local government. It does just that by giving funds and allowing the local governments to carry out their duties without having their hands tied.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other issues which I would like to bring up, but with time not permitting, the throne speech that we have heard looks forward to Saskatchewan small business and industry. It looks at many other areas of this province and the throne speech keeps our commitment to the people of Saskatchewan and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion and opposing the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. H. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to rise in this first session of the 19th legislature to say thank you to all of the people who have worked so hard for me during the election campaign. For those people I am pleased to be here today, to represent them for the next four years. I would like to offer my services to the people in my constituency regardless of their political affiliation. There are many areas, in government work, where people need assistance. I will not let partisan politics interfere with my service to my constituents and I would encourage them to be in contact at any time.

The constituency that I represent is a large agricultural constituency dealing in grain and livestock mainly. This has been a high producing district for many years. The people there have been free enterprise people. They are proud to be owners of land,

proud to be owners of their own business and for that reason have done well. I would encourage them to continue on this base.

The small businesses that are in the area are there to service the agricultural industry. These small businesses do well when agriculture does well. When agriculture suffers they also suffer. I would encourage the government of Saskatchewan to put in place legislation that will assist the agricultural industry to be strengthened and to continue to flourish.

Over the past four years the livestock industry has had a very difficult time of it in Saskatchewan. They have experienced high costs and low prices. For this reason many of them have found it very difficult to remain in the agricultural sphere and particularly in the livestock area. I believe that it is a sad occurrence for our province when people in the livestock industry must withdraw from that industry because they cannot make a go of it. I would encourage the government of Saskatchewan to provide some assistance to cattlemen in times of stress — and I am not encouraging them to speak of marketing boards as the cattlemen have made their wishes abundantly clear in that area — but I am encouraging them to support the livestock industry to the extent that they do not go below the cost of production.

I feel that we can, as a province, look to industrialization of agriculture to be one of the areas where we can improve the industry. When I speak of industrialization I mean in many areas of industrialization. We have needed this for a long time. One of the areas that we need to look at is the need for freight rate adjustments that will allow manufactured products to move out of this province competitive with raw products. This is an area that has caused concern for many years and will continue to cause concern because it distinguishes greatly against the person who is manufacturing.

I would like to see this government offer assistance to people within our province who are interested in setting up manufacturing industries. I think a little encouragement to our own people first and to others who would wish to come in could be beneficial to all of us and could provide employment for many more people than the numbers I have been hearing so far.

I would like to raise a constituency item or two. The first one I wanted to mention is Highway 15 from its junction with Highway 42 to its junction with Highway 4. If any of you have travelled that area in the last number of years I am sure that you will find that Highway 15 is in a deplorable condition. It has been patched and patched and patched until today it's a very difficult highway to drive even with a car and when you come to heavy traffic vehicles it is even more difficult. The trucks in that area (and there are many of them) are finding that during the spring season they cannot use Highway 15 and during prolonged wet periods in the summertime they cannot use Highway 15. It is a major concern to their industry and it is a major concern to the farmers and the businessmen in that area. So I would ask the government of Saskatchewan to place this highway on their priority list and to look at improving it in this construction year.

I would like to do now something that seems to be a little unusual in this legislature and that is that I would like to thank the government for a program that they have implemented in our constituency. I would like to say thank you to you for the subsidized bus service that has been provided from Beechy to Outlook. For many years that area has been without bus service. The lack of bus service doesn't affect me personally because I drive and have no problem getting where I want to go. But for the older people and for those who do not drive it has been a real asset. However, there is a problem

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which I think needs to be addressed. Otherwise this service will not continue very long into the future. From the small town of Demaine through to Lucky Lake there is no oiled road and there is no way that a bus is going to continue to operate very long without an all-weather road. I would like to see the government add as a connecting link, an oil-surfaced road from the town of Demaine to Lucky Lake. This road could service the town of Demaine and residents south and east of the town of Demaine.

Now I raised before in question period and I raise again today the question of the capital funding for municipal government in this province. There has been a concern for a long time that the government is not putting forward a new program now that will provide capital funding for municipalities. The answer that I got the other day was that there is money in the Culture and Youth Fund and that there is some carry-over money in the Municipal Capital Fund. Now that may be a good answer in one way but that money is there money for the people who have sat back and really not used their allotment over the past five years. What happens to those aggressive municipalities who have been using their funding yearly and now there is no fund for them to turn to? Are they expected then to sit back for the next summer season with no capital money to work with and let the capital programs of their areas suffer? I would encourage this government to provide, in this session of the legislature, a new program for capital funding and in the future to try and have their capital funding programs in place in advance so that people can do their planning and get on with the job of servicing the area that they represent.

Mr. Speaker, I am also very concerned about the expansion of government control of our society. It seems that each year we experience a new government department taking control of another sector of our life. I am concerned about this and I think it's time that we looked at providing incentives for individuals to get on with the job on their own and not have the government continually interfering in the lives of people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — The local governments in our country are strong. They are capable government people. I am speaking of municipal people and school boards. They can govern their own areas. I think it is time that the government withdrew from these areas and let them get on with the job. To say that because we provide money that we must control them, I don't think is fair. This statement was made by the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. MacMurchy). He said that he who pays the piper calls the tune and I don't agree with that because really the taxpayer is paying the piper — so give him a chance then.

I am concerned about the potash takeover and the effect that that takeover has had on the investment climate in this province. People are afraid to come into our province and invest dollars because they fear government takeover. People who are living within our province are sending their surplus money out of this province to invest and I can give you a number of references if it is needed. These people find that they are not willing to put their money in this province but rather they are sending where they feel government takeover will not occur.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — Because of the lack of incentive developed by this government for people to establish industries within our province and to stay here, we are becoming

more and more exporters of educated young people. If you don't agree with this, try Highway No. 7 on some Sunday night and watch the number of young people going back to Alberta for jobs. When I say we are exporting educated young people, I mean highly-educated young people that could be very beneficial to this province. I would like to see programs developed that will encourage these people to stay and provide jobs that they will be proud to work in . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Another area that I'd like to mention is the land bank area and the concern that it has in the agricultural areas. As I meet farm people, and in the campaign period I met farm people almost continually day by day, one of the big concerns that was raised at almost every door that I knocked on was the government interference in the purchase of land. Young people are finding that they're being outbid by the government land bank. Many of them have put in substantial bids for land only to find that the land bank, using the taxpayers own dollars, is outbidding them. I don't think this is encouraging young people; I think it will drive them out of our province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — As I mentioned earlier the free enterprise system has been the backbone of agriculture and the backbone of Saskatchewan for many, many years, and I think it should continue to be just that. If you were to look at other countries in the world who have taken over the land and have administered the land as a government and let the people in their country be only tenants, I don't think you'll find the record has been very good. These countries have had to turn to free enterprise countries like Canada to buy even enough food to support their own population. I don't think we need to move that way. I would encourage this government to sell the land to the young people who are now leasing and to get out of the land bank purchases.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — Now I would like to touch on the Farm Fuel Rebate Policy. This government put in a Farm Fuel Rebate Policy before, but it didn't last all the way from one election campaign to the next; it disappeared halfway through. This year they introduced a new one, but it doesn't cover the whole year of 1978, but rather picks up at August 1 when a good portion of the fuel has already been burnt and in supply on the farms. Now they tell us in the throne speech that it's going to go for 1978 and 1979. What guarantees can our people have in this province that the fuel rebate program will continue, or is it out again until the next election and then comes in as another grand promise?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — If there is a need for a fuel rebate, why not at the dealership level rather than have all of the government interference and the political innuendo that goes on? Could you not allow the rebate to happen right at the dealership level? The farmers then would not have to pay their money out and wait for a year, or most of a year, to get it back.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal briefly with the report from the Law Reform Commission dealing with the consent to minors. Since that report was issued, I have had a number of proposals from people in my constituency, from different church

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groups, from the right for life group, from private individuals, and others. Every letter that I have had has expressed great concern with the idea of lowering the age of consent. As you well know, a person at the age of 16 is still very immature to make decisions that could affect them for the rest of their life. At this tender age I believe that it is expecting too much of a young person to make that kind of decision.

I feel that the family is still the base of our society. I believe, that as a group of elected people here, it is our responsibility to ensure that the family continues to be a very strong and viable unit in our society. Any country in the world that has turned away from the family as its base, has found that it was soon in very deep trouble as a society. I would encourage all in this legislature to strongly oppose the reducing of the age of consent. If they need emergency medical treatment, this is available to them at this point in time, under the present legislation. If they are in the school system, the teacher in that system is given the responsibility to sign the medical forms necessary for emergency treatment. Therefore, I feel that the need to reduce the age of consent is not there, and I would encourage this legislature to maintain the age of consent where it is today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with the new act that was proposed in the throne speech entitled the Agriculture Research Funding Act.

I appreciate very much that this type of agricultural research is being thought of. It is long overdue that this province which still receives a very large proportion of its income from its agricultural industry, should be funding agricultural research at a reasonable level. I believe that agricultural research is vitally necessary. The extent of the funding that is being proposed here is not clear. It is my hope that the funding will be significant and that because of its significance meaningful agricultural research can and will take place, and that better agricultural products will be the end result.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch very briefly on the health care in the province. I feel that we have a good health plan in this province, the Conservatives have been saying that we have a good health plan, but yet, in his speech in reply the Premier was saying the Conservatives are saying they are going to take it away. This is a very difficult thing for me to understand, that our Premier is not able to read and understand what is written, and what is said. In the last election, and written in our Conservative handbook giving our policies, it states quite clearly, we feel the health care plan in this province should be provincially funded, that there should be no deterrent fees of any kind. The one change that we recommended was that there be no charge for appliances needed for handicapped people. Where then does the Premier come up with the idea that we're going to destroy the health plan? I believe that the Premier is dealing with a blatant untruth and he must be challenged with this.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — I was interested when the Premier continually referred to other Conservative provinces with Conservative governments. I'm pleased that he can refer to other provinces with Conservative governments. I am sure that he would find some difficulty in referring to provinces in Canada with NDP governments. I would just like to say in closing that the PCs are going to continue to support a provincially funded health care plan and in any further comments that the Premier makes with regard to health care I hope he will contain himself to the facts and to the truth.

Mr. Speaker, I will be voting in favor of the amendment that is before this House. Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. R.G. LONG (Cut Knife-Lloydminster): — Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise in this throne speech debate. Might I say that as someone who is newly elected, I consider it a privilege to be a member of the most progressive government in North America!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Regina Wascana, Clint White, and the member for Shaunavon, Dwain Lingenfelter, the mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne. I feel honoured to serve with two such capable members and I believe the people in their respective constituencies are fortunate to have such able representation.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate the member for Kinistino, the Honourable Don Cody, on his appointment to the cabinet. He adds very considerable energy, drive and experience to a provincial cabinet that is already the strongest in Canada.

I want to congratulate the members on the opposite side of the Assembly, on becoming the official opposition. Mr. Speaker, in seconding the motion, my colleague from Shaunavon mentioned the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan in connection with the sun disappearing from the sky last Monday. His good-natured remarks caused me to take a few minutes to look into the history of eclipses such as the one southern Saskatchewan experienced on the morning of Monday, February 26. Mr. Speaker, I found out something, it seems to me, relates well to this throne speech debate. In the year 585 B.C., the armies of the Meeds and the Ionians were preparing for a great battle when an eclipse took place. The generals of the two armies took the eclipse as a bad sign in advance of doing battle so the armies made peace, returned to their homes and never fought again.

Mr. Speaker, it has occurred to me that the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan has been ignoring all the signs, many of them more obvious than last Monday's eclipse. They have been as determined as possible to fight with the government despite the fact that the gathering weight of evidence is that to do so is not the wisest course of action.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of extremely good announcements in the throne speech, announcements that will be widely applauded by the people of Saskatchewan; but instead of co-operating with the government to see that many good measures are implemented quickly and properly, the Conservatives have chosen to do battle.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if it comes to that, I think it's safe for me to say that our political troops are as good as the rank and file party members anywhere and our generals can out-think the Tory generals any day of the week.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words about my constituency and the people whom I have the honour to represent. The Cut Knife-Lloydminster riding has

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a very colourful and interesting history. The great explorers, Antony Henday and David Thompson passed through the area 200 years ago — Henday along the Battle River Valley in 1754 and Thompson overland to the North Saskatchewan River just upstream from present-day North Battleford.

The first white settlers in any large numbers came into the area in the latter half of the 1800s. They joined the native and Metis people who had been working in the area and making a good living since the days of the fur trade.

Mr. Speaker, one of the largest block settlements that took place on the prairies was that undertaken by the Barr colonists from Britain. Their mass immigration to the Lloydminster area at the turn of the century gave Cut Knife-Lloydminster riding the basic ethnic makeup it still retains today.

Cut Knife-Lloydminster is a large constituency. The southern boundary runs from a point on the North of the Saskatchewan River just southeast of Battleford, straight west to the Alberta border. The North Saskatchewan River is the northern-most boundary with the Alberta border being the western boundary. The total population of the constituency is 15,000 and growing every day.

My constituency is very healthy economically; in fact it generates a considerable amount of the revenue our province relies on. Grain, beef and heavy oil are commodities our part of the province is well known for. The people of Cutknife-Lloydminster justifiably take pride in the part they play directly or indirectly in the production of these important commodities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in representing such an important constituency in the province of Saskatchewan. The Cut Knife-Lloydminster seat has been represented since 1944 by members of my political party.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — From 1944 until 1967 the Hon. I.C. Nollet held the riding for the CCF-NDP. Known better to many friends as Toby, Mr. Nollet served as agriculture minister in the cabinet of Tommy Douglas for 18 years and was widely known for his great speeches on the subject of maintaining the family farm. It is very fitting, Mr. Speaker, that the new bridge north of Maidstone bears the name of Toby Nollet. From 1967 until the general election of last fall, Miro Kwasnica served the people of Cut Knife-Lloydminster in this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, I might say that no constituency had a harder working MLA than Miro Kwasnica.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — It is a real honor for me to have the opportunity to take up the work of these two fine men.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech reflects not only the social conscience of this government but a responsible attitude toward governing the province. I am proud to be a member of such a government.

In the area of agriculture, the farm cost reduction program was a welcome break for the

farmer in the cost-price squeeze. I am pleased that the land bank program has been of assistance to 2,300 new or small farmers. In the area of grain handling, this government has taken a responsible position opposing the PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) report, and supporting the Hall Commission report on grain handling and rail transportation.

Mr. Speaker, another important issue facing the family farm today is the crow rate. As the Premier said on Wednesday, a statutory freight rate is absolutely necessary for the western grain economy but, Mr. Speaker, not everyone agrees.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Not everyone agrees, Mr. Speaker, Don Majankowski, PC transportation critic, had this to say about the crow rate and I quote:

Our policy at present is to maintain the status quo as far as producers are concerned but we could be convinced that this is not the case.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that members opposite could also be convinced that this is not the case. I say that it is a tragedy for the prairie grain industry and that farmers see it as such and the Conservative Party will be made to pay for their cozy relationship with the railroads.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Conservative Party — I see as usual he's not in his seat — was asking earlier this week to be shown new activity in the oil industry in Saskatchewan. Well, I'd like him to come up our way sometime when he's not in Phoenix or Switzerland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, not very far from Maidstone in the size of a township there were recently seven oil rigs drilling, exploring for oil. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the subject on many people's minds these days is the rapid development of the heavy oil industry in the Cut Knife-Lloydminster area. In 1977 there were 244 wells drilled in the Lloydminster heavy oil field. In 1978 there were 649, an increase of 166 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — The field is expected to produce 33,000 barrels a day in 1979, for a total production of 12.1 million barrels. Mr. Speaker, the value of heavy oil production amounted in 1978 to \$107.6 million. If the Leader of the Conservative Party wants to see activity in the oil industry he should spend more time in Saskatchewan because that's where the activity really is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — In November 1978, Husky announced a program to accelerate development in the Lloydminster area, Mr. Speaker, \$450 million over five years, the bulk of it to be spent in Saskatchewan. Petro-Can, Saskoil and Gulf Oil have announced a \$99 million project over five years; the Eyehill project involving Murphy Oil and

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Canadian reserves, an investment of \$8.5 million over 1.5 years; the North Battleford project, \$1.9 million over one year. These developments, Mr. Speaker, are an indication of the acceptance of this government's resource policies. It appears that 1979 will be another banner year for the development of the heavy oil industry.

There will be, Mr. Speaker, in coming years a dramatic increase in the revenue to the people of Saskatchewan. I would remind this Assembly that if Saskatchewan had followed Alberta's lead as members opposite suggested, those revenues would have been cut in half.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, there is a great spirit of optimism in the area. The heavy oil industry has been so active in the last while; it is a labor intensive industry. People are required to pump and service wells; truck drivers are required and construction workers. A host of small entrepreneurs are needed to provide the kinds of services the oil industry requires. The influx of these people into the area has provided a challenge for our urban centres in attempting to provide services for the new residents and for their homes. The rural municipalities are experiencing a demand for more and better roads.

Mr. Speaker, we have grid roads in my constituency with traffic counts of over 400 a day, just an indication of the kind of activity we are experiencing in Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

Mr. Speaker, while this kind of development captures the imagination I would like to make a few remarks about the most important of all industries in Saskatchewan and certainly in Cut Knife-Lloydminster — agriculture. In Cut Knife-Lloydminster agriculture is big business. Total dollar value of agricultural production in the constituency in 1978 amounted to \$70 million. In the 1976-77 crop year grain deliveries were over 10 million bushels, for a total value of over \$40 million. Livestock sales for the constituency in the two major markets in the pool yards in North Battleford and Lloydminster in 1978 amounted to 55,000 head for a total value of \$24 million. Mr. Speaker, our constituency has some of the finest purebred breeders in Saskatchewan and in fact in all of Canada. Sales of breeding stock have seen animals go as far away as the United Kingdom, Japan, Argentina and the Soviet Union.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased to hear the throne speech's announcements in the areas of agriculture and transportation that will strengthen the family farm. If there is any institution that the Blakeney government has worked to maintain, in recent years, it is most certainly the family farm.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion and voting against the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. G. McLEOD (Meadow Lake): — At the outset of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate you on your election to the position of Speaker of this House. You are to be commended for the way in which you carry on your family's tradition in this legislature and I assure you that I will afford you the respect that the office deserves.

The opening ceremonies of this 19th legislature, Mr. Speaker, appealed strongly to my sense of tradition and I can tell you that both as a student and a teacher of history I recognize the importance of maintaining the parliamentary institution and through this institution maintaining basic freedom and justice.

I am proud to say that I am the first representative of the Meadow Lake constituency that was born and raised in that constituency. Also, I am very proud to say that I am the first Progressive Conservative ever to represent Meadow Lake since the constituency's inception in 1934. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank at this time the many people who worked so hard to send me here.

Over the years, the Meadow Lake constituency has been represented by dedicated and sincere people of varying political persuasions. I can only hope, Mr. Speaker, that I will be able to contribute to this Assembly and serve my constituents with the same dedication and sincerity demonstrated by my predecessors.

For many years my constituency has been perceived by successive governments as an isolated corner of the province and while this may have been somewhat justified in earlier years. I want to point out very clearly now at the beginning of my representation in this House, that the people of Meadow Lake constituency will no longer accept isolation. I will represent the people in my area, Mr. Speaker, from a provincial perspective at all times and I will expect the government opposite to come to recognize my area of northwestern Saskatchewan in the same way.

I believe very strongly, Mr. Speaker, that I have always been a fair-minded person and I think have always been one to give credit where credit is due. On that note I want to thank the Premier and, I believe almost every member of the front benches opposite, for their visits to my constituency in the last half of 1978, and most notably in late September and October, for some. I can only interpret this interest, Mr. Speaker, as a commitment to respond to the wishes of my constituents. And for that I thank them all.

I assure you my constituents and I will continue to expect the same commitment throughout the next four years from this government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . and you will hear about it if you laugh next time again, too.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier in his speech during this debate the other day accused me, along with my colleagues, of being negative when he referred to our motions and my motion in particular, which is listed in the blues, and I would like to say to him now that the people of the Meadow Lake constituency would not be pleased if I, as their representative in this House did not condemn the government opposite for its lack of understanding of their particular problems in the delivery of their agricultural products. All of us in this House, on both sides, I believe, are extremely concerned about the whole question of transportation in the West and I'm certainly one of those. Most recently, we've heard a great deal about the Prairie Rail Action Committee report and its recommendations and I want to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I oppose this latest attempt by Mr. Lang and the Trudeau government to circumvent the recommendations of the Hall Commission Report. But, Mr. Speaker, the concerns now being expressed by all of us in this House and by others in western Canada regarding rail-line abandonment and the burdens of long hauls by producers have been real concerns for over two generations in parts of the Meadow Lake constituency — grain farmers, hog producers and cattlemen in places like Dorintosh, Makwa, Loon Lake, Goodsoil and Pierceland districts where there is no rail line and has never been. To the North and West of Meadow Lake, they have been and are forced to haul 25 to 60 miles

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in some cases to deliver their produce.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest to the government that they finally come to recognize these people and for example, allow multi-axled farm trucks to be licensed as farm trucks so they can benefit from the use of purple gas in making such long trips. Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Premier, that is a positive suggestion. Let me further suggest to the Minister of Highways and Transportation who's never here but is very familiar with the area that I'm referring to, that he finally admit this problem exists and that he do much more than he's done in the past to build highways that are highways in that area and not force these people to continue to travel over mile after mile of potholes. Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, that is also a positive suggestion.

While I'm on the subject of agriculture, I want to mention something about the present land lease policies of this government. I think that for a government that professes to be concerned about the preservation of viable farm units, their present policy with regard to the transfer of leases is a total disaster. I've had many constituents come to me explaining the hardships imposed upon them by the agricultural department's policies. Let me just explain the type of problem that exists in a great many districts in my area where there is a lot of leased land and a lot of marginal land.

The farmer owns, let's say for an example, three quarters of deeded land that he owns himself and has the title to, and as a part of his total operation, a section of lease and he decides to retire and sell his operation to a younger neighbor or son of a neighbor. Under the present lease transfer policies of this government, the young potential purchaser of the deeded land can't be guaranteed that he will obtain those leases that are necessary to the operation to make the unit viable. So, Mr. Speaker, the young farmer can't realistically buy the deeded land and the retiring farmer has only one place to sell the land of his life's work — to the land bank of this government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McLEOD: — This type of situation, Mr. Speaker, is absolutely unacceptable to me because it indicates clearly that the government is more interested in controlling the land than it is in insuring that the land is under production in the most efficient manner.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MCLEOD: — So, Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding) to please reconsider his present policies with regard to the transfer of lease agreements, and also the sale of some lease land — let's get the land back into the hands of the producers and away from the inefficient control of government. That, Mr. Speaker, and, Mr. Minister, is another positive suggestion.

As all members in this House will no doubt know, the area that I have the honour to represent has within its' boundaries the most beautiful and the most interesting tourist areas in this province. Fort Pitt and Steele Narrows are historical points of interest, while the Bronson Forest Region, the Loon Lake District and the Meadow Lake Park provide excellent recreational facilities for year-round family activities. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Meadow Lake Provincial Park was awarded the distinction last year of being among the 10 best Provincial or National Parks in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McLEOD: — This was awarded by national magazine — Chatelaine, I believe. I am pleased that members opposite are hammering their desks on that, and I agree with that. I mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker, that I'll give credit where it is due in this House; and at this time I'd like to commend the planners, the field staff of the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources (DTRR), who developed and maintained the facilities in these areas. However, Mr. Speaker, it has long been a source of amazement to residents in the northwest that a government through one department can promote tourism as a major industry for our area and, through the Department of Highways and Transportation, fail to provide the quality roads that would encourage, rather than discourage tourist traffic. And more recently, Mr. Speaker, residents of the northwest are equally amazed (after all the excellent planning by the DTRR that I mentioned for family camping facilities, and hiking trails, and canoe routes and the like, in the provincial park) that this government through the Department of Social Services would see fit to locate a prisoners work camp inside the boundaries of the provincial park . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Shame, shame!

MR. McLEOD: — . . . and I see the Minister of Social Services is not here either.

Mr. Speaker, I am not opposed to the concept of these work camps as a positive alternative to jail for so-called minor offenders, and I am aware of the recommendations of Judge Moore. But as one who knows the area well, and as a representative of many, many people who know the area very well and feel as I do about this I would respectfully ask that the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Rolfes) consider moving the correctional campsite just a few miles north, out of the provincial park and further away from areas frequented by family campers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McLEOD: — And, Mr. Speaker, although I request this move with all due respect to the minister, I think it is a very reasonable request in light of the fact that a false impression was left with the people of northwestern Saskatchewan during the election campaign.

In a published news item released by the NDP campaign headquarters in Meadow Lake during the campaign the minister and the NDP candidate were quoted, and it stated that due to public concern the correctional work camp would be moved to a new location outside the Meadow Lake Provincial Park.

I have corresponded with the minister regarding this issue and I cannot accept his answers to date. Therefore, I wanted to make my request in this House as a matter of public record.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn to another area of deep concern to me. At the present time, the third generation from my area of Saskatchewan is working in the mills of B.C. and the oil rigs of Alberta and more and more of them are moving west to stay. I'm sure that every member will agree that our most valuable resource is our human resource and it's an extremely unhealthy situation for any society when its young people are gone.

Those of us who live near the Alberta border are often heard discussing the philosophies of the two provincial governments, Alberta and Saskatchewan and the debate goes on and on. We all draw our own conclusions but what concerns me very much, Mr. Speaker, is that so many of our young people are forced to go to Alberta for

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obvious economic reasons very early in their life and then they're not here to carry on the debate within this province when they become parents and breadwinners for their own families. Just a point of interest, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting to note the percentage of votes for the Progressive Conservative Party and the number of seats we won in constituencies that border on Alberta where people have occasion to drive across the border from time to time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. McLEOD: — There are some exceptions — check the percentage of votes there too if you would Mr. Minister of the Environment.

On another point, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that this government is finally going ahead with resource development in Northern Saskatchewan. I can assure members on both sides of this House that the very progressive town of Meadow Lake is preparing to play a part in the mining development on the West side of Northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I brought to the attention of this House in these few minutes some of the concerns of my constituents and before I resume my seat, I want to say that I'm proud to represent solid rural salt-of-the-earth people who have always retained that special sense of frontier hospitality and fair play and since I'm disappointed in the throne speech on their behalf, I must support the amendment and oppose the original motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. D.W. CODY (Minister of Telephones): — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to have the opportunity after a short period away from this House to once again be back and participate in this debate. I'm pleased not only out of personal pride but also to be back with my colleagues on this side of the House in such great numbers. I want to congratulate, at this time, the mover and seconder whom I think did a tremendous job, and I am convinced these two members, the member for Wascana (Mr. White) and the I member for Shaunavon (Mr. Lingenfelter) will be in this Assembly for a long time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Before beginning my main remarks, Mr. Speaker, I want to publicly thank the people of the Kinistino constituency for electing me as their representative for the next four years. As a new member of the legislature I am replacing a man who served this province and his constituency very well for some 19 years and I am sure this Assembly will join with me in wishing him a very well-deserved retirement.

Mr. Speaker, as I look across the way I see that not too much has changed since my previous term prior to 1975. True, the colors have changed but the speeches have not. Their speeches are the same old speeches that I heard when I was here before. I recognize, Mr. Speaker, for an example the member for Qu'Appelle, a once ardent supporter of Pierre Trudeau and Otto Lang beaming proudly, sporting the blue and white scars of political frustration, a Liberal one day and a Tory the next.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, it sort of reminds me of the days gone by when my mother, as I was a small child, used to tell me bedtime stories about magicians. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the Horners, and the Lanes, the Thatchers and the Wagners, could get together and form some kind of a magic act, and who knows — maybe even they could be successful.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Who knows?

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, as I said a moment ago I am indeed very proud to be representing the people of Kinistino constituency — not only because I was born and raised in that area but because of the uniqueness of the communities that form that constituency. Towns such as Wakaw, Alvena and Cudworth are very prominent Ukrainian communities, with Ukrainian playing a large role in many people's everyday lives. Ukrainian language and heritage give these communities their own very distinct identity.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear. hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, that is an identity which I feel the program Fifth Estate made a mockery of, as much of a mockery as did the Leader of the Opposition about a year ago in this House, when he said to the people of Kamsack not being able to learn a second language because they could barely even master the first . . . Mr. Speaker, there is a French language and culture found in the communities of Domremy, Bellvue, and St. Louis, and Prud'homme. The language is spoken by many of the earlier residents and adds much to the character of my constituency. There are designated schools for French language in this constituency and we are very proud of them.

Scandinavians form a good large portion of the communities of Birch Hills, Weldon and Kinistino. As you can see, Mr. Speaker, all of the towns are unique in their own sense, and the people in these communities take great pride in preserving their heritage not only for themselves and their communities, but for the province as well.

One community, Mr. Speaker, I have not mentioned probably has more historical significance than any other in the province of Saskatchewan — Batoche. Batoche, Mr. Speaker, as everyone well knows was the site of the Louis Riel battle when Indian and Metis fought alongside each other for their very rights and civil liberties, because those people believed in enough to engage in battle with the government in Ottawa. A lot has changed since 1885, Mr. Speaker, but more must still be done. We in the New Democratic Party have always been committed, committed to people who believe in their heritage and culture, and we will continue to do so in the future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — As I said before, Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be from the Kinistino constituency, and honored that the people elected me.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You did a good job.

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, I want to turn for a few moments to transportation.

I want to turn briefly to the Saskatchewan Transportation Company and the topic of transportation generally. The Saskatchewan Transportation Company set a number of records in 1978 which we on the government side of the House are extremely pleased

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about. The company's buses logged over 4.8 million miles and carried 730 thousand passengers, both figures being records for this company.

Mr. Speaker, using an economic multiplier of four, this tiny Crown corporation is alone responsible for \$36 million worth of productivity to this province's economy and perhaps much, much more when you take into account the wide variety of services it offers and the areas in which it operates.

Let us, for an example, and for a moment, Mr. Speaker, have a look at what the Tories would've done to this corporation as they suggested that it should be abolished.

The first result would be a loss to some 360 provincial communities, 85 per cent of our population, many of which solely rely on STC for service.

The second result would be a loss of some 280 jobs directly, and more indirectly, to our economy.

The third result, Mr. Speaker, would be a loss of revenue to some 260 small businessmen and women who act as our agents.

These three results and many, many more show how important this small company is to this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, in an era when the federal government is cutting madly (or at best increasing costs on a user-pay basis), in an era when the CPR and CNR are abandoning outright services to rural Saskatchewan, this small company is continuing along, bringing in new services and generally maintaining its own.

Of course STC cannot do this alone. It cannot provide the total service package required by our rural residents but it can try, and it does, to maximize its service for every dollar spent. Directly, STC operates as a business, but unlike its fellow competitors, people come before profits.

In no other province in this country, Mr. Speaker, is there such a service. In no other I province is there a provincially-owned public transportation company serving its rural and urban residents alike; even in Tory Alberta with all its wealth they don't have such a service.

STC is a example of this government's commitment to serving and meeting the needs of residents of Saskatchewan, in direct contrast to the philosophy of the old-line parties and their transportation policies of user-pay, cutbacks and abandonment.

This fact, Mr. Speaker, leads me further in the area of transportation. In fact, it leads me to ask the question, what is the real effect going to be to the Saskatchewan and Canadian economies of rail-line abandonment and cutbacks in vital services?

One small example is the fate of Yellow Creek, a small community in my own constituency, which was abandoned by its railway, the CNR. As everyone knows, this town will be doomed in regard to future growth. Much has been said about so-called paranoia over rail-line abandonment. People have claimed that the loss of a rail-line will not mean instant death for the community; therefore such discussions are

irrelevant. To those people, Mr. Speaker, I would strongly recommend that they open their eyes and clean out their ears and that they listen and observe. Any person with any background and experience in rural Saskatchewan can readily see what such a move will do to the small business sector, the backbone for many of these communities.

I ask you, why aren't those who profess to be experts talking about the lost investments of our small communities and businessmen? Why aren't they talking about the loss of hundreds or thousands of dollars of public investment in water and sewer projects, schools, churches, recreational facilities? Why are they not considering and analyzing these figures when they talk to the railways? Why is it that only costs considered acceptable to the railways are being looked at? Mr. Speaker, as a resident of this province and a man — and I say to the Leader of the Opposition, a man — raised in rural Saskatchewan, I think we should demand an answer. As recently as last Saturday, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Lang who publicly endorsed the PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) report, and who so eloquently has carried out the master plan of destruction for rural Saskatchewan, stood up at a public meeting in Lewvan, Saskatchewan and announced that the line would be retained. I say, Mr. Speaker, that if he can do it for Lewvan, why can't he do it for Yellow Creek, St. Louis, Kelvington, Hodgeville or any of the other communities facing abandonment.

And it's very interesting, Mr. Speaker, to see the former member for Regina Wascana sitting behind the rail today, the man who's going to try to represent that area for Otto Lang. I can assure the member that he'll be behind the rail then, just like he's behind the rail now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, I think it's sadly ironic, that after much public expenditure, the railways are still in a mess and our farmers are still in the cold. In a recent Maclean's article of February 12, a Mr. Gordon Halloran points out that the federal government is going to wipe out \$655 million in debts owed by the airports. Yet, Mr. Speaker, it cannot come up with sufficient funds to help our farmers and upgrade the railways. Mr. Speaker, Nero played his fiddle while Rome burned and Otto Lang and Joe Clark play politics while rural Saskatchewan dies.

Mr. Speaker, I am not questioning the decision of retaining the Lewvan line. In fact, I congratulate Mr. Lang. But as I said earlier, why not Yellow Creek and St. Louis? How did this era of abandonment get started in the first place? Who were the original authors? Mr. Speaker, it was the Tories. It was the so-called defenders of farmers and small businessmen who in the late '50s and early '60s paved the way for rail-line abandonment through their actions of allowing the railways to siphon off the profits at the expense of our farmers. These very same persons, Mr. Speaker, are running all over the country pretending to deny their own political wrongdoings by saying, but without meaning, that the railways must not be abandoned. Don't you believe that for one minute, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if one stops and looks at how easily interchangeable the Liberals and Conservatives are, and have been both federally and within this very House, I question their sincerity in defending rail lines. Is their call for rail-line retention a sincere effort or is it just a political expedient thing to do. I feel quite confident in saying that past history gives you the answer.

In concluding this portion of my talk, Mr. Speaker, I want to mention briefly the recent revelation that a group has now been set up to do away with the crow rate . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Palliser Wheat Growers are part of it. But it is particularly interesting that

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such revelations are being made at the same time we on this side of the House are proposing expansions of the crow rate to cover other agricultural products and are prepared to commit some of our resource revenue to that as well.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Tories, the Manitoba Tories, the Otto Lang Palliser's, I say make strange bedfellows, but I want to make it perfectly clear that the Saskatchewan New Democrats have no intention whatsoever of allowing changes to the crow rate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, cutbacks, abandonments, user pay. These words may all be in the Tory dictionary, but, Mr. Speaker, they certainly aren't in ours.

I strongly oppose, as strongly as I can, those who would make changes to the crow rate, and I am quite confident that the majority of farmers in this province will strongly be heard on this subject during the next federal election.

Mr. Speaker, I want to, for a very brief few moments, turn to housing. Shortly after the New Democratic Party took office in 1971, we realized this province was on the verge of a major increase in housing activity. The baby boom generation of the late '40s and early '50s was beginning to form its own households and enter the housing market. We knew this alone would cause a significant increase in the demand for both rental and home ownership housing.

But in addition, the federal government had introduced capital gains taxes which exempted the family home from tax. This would naturally lead many people to begin to regard housing as an investment, as well as a shelter.

And, finally, our economic policies, together with an improvement in the world price of wheat, began to show a significant improvement in the economy of this province.

Mr. Speaker, we realized that while upper income families would be able, as they always have been, to take care of themselves in the housing market, low and moderate families and senior citizens would face increasing problems in getting suitable housing unless government action was taken.

Therefore, a decision was made to establish the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation in 1973. Its mandate, Mr. Speaker, was to provide a broad range of housing programs to assist families and senior citizens in getting suitable housing accommodation. Therefore, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation developed and introduced programs designed to help ensure that significant good quality housing was available for needy families and to help, as well, moderate the increase in housing price.

A major expansion of the public housing program was undertaken to provide low rental accommodations to low income senior citizens in particular.

Since 1971, Mr. Speaker, over 5,000 low rental units for senior citizens have been started in this province. For the first time these low rental units have been provided, not only in major urban centres, but also in smaller towns and villages in Saskatchewan where many of our older residents wish to stay.

Mr. Speaker, we also introduced another program, a Senior Citizens' Home Repair Program — the first of its kind in Canada — and now being followed again by other

provinces.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — This program was put in place so that low income senior citizens could remain in their own homes and live comfortably at the same time. Mr. Speaker, the program was an overwhelming success. Over 20,000 homes were repaired under the original program.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP was quick to see the success of this program and in 1978 we revised and expanded the Senior Citizens' Home Repair Program by raising the maximum grant to \$650 and extending the eligibility. The eligibility was extended for single people — \$7,000; for married people — \$11,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — We also made the grant renewable every five years. Those senior citizens who had already received a grant were able to reapply for further assistance.

I am happy today to report that the housing corporation has processed, this year since September 1, 1978, over 10,000 new applications.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, the housing corporation has a number of other programs such as land assembly, residential rehabilitation and rural housing, but I will not dwell on them here today.

Instead, I want to turn to an incident which occurred in this very House a little over a year ago. That incident, of course, Mr. Speaker, was the very vicious attack made on the corporation, its programs, its employees by the Tories opposite. Their assault on the SHC (Saskatchewan Housing Corporation) last spring was not just a mere slap in the face of a few public employees and the government; no, Mr. Speaker, it went even further. They literally struck the faces of every community in this province where SHC had assisted in housing. The members opposite like to talk about the housing corporation and I could stand here and talk about the housing corporation for hours. You certainly couldn't do it in Manitoba today and you certainly couldn't do it in Alberta today because they don't have any programs like we have in Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, hundreds upon hundreds of civic representatives and volunteer members of local housing authorities were attacked and they were attacked about autonomy. You people talk about local autonomy and you were attacking the very people that you were talking about.

Mind you, Mr. Speaker, this is not a surprise to me. This is not a surprise to me at all. This type of politicking is a tradition within the Tory Party, whether it be in the Lyon's den in Manitoba or the Baron land of the West and this is further exemplified by their federal counterparts in Ottawa — make a change, any change, but never, never back it up with the facts.

Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that at this session, as this session began, the opposition had

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learned its lesson — at least learned its lesson from the last election and graduated from the bubble gum days of the past. But, I guess, given the speech that their leader made the other day, I think I can say I have my doubts that they have learned their lesson finally. They probably never will.

Mr. Speaker, last November the province of Saskatchewan signed a new global funding agreement with Ottawa which was to reduce the involvement of bureaucrats from Ottawa and was also to speed up the implementation of the budget process with CMHC (Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation). I regret to inform the House today that this program to date is not working well . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Why it's not working well? I can tell the hon. gentleman if he would like to know. The federal government, I think, is using CMHC's budget as a political tool for the upcoming campaign. This, Mr. Speaker, has meant projects like the senior citizens' building at Estevan — and I point that out to the member for Estevan — has been delayed. That the project at Frontier has been delayed. This will mean increased costs because of the delays from CMHC and because of the fact that construction costs will be going up. I want to publicly say today that I deplore this situation by the federal government and label such actions as callous and deliberate in its attempt.

This, Mr. Speaker, is a direct result of a government in Ottawa responding to the wishes of Tories — Tories in Ottawa and Tories in the opposition in Saskatchewan — dedicated to the idea of spending cuts, abandonment of programs and a private sector who often could easily make use of the Saskatchewan Hearing Aid Plan. This Tory fixation with budget cutting and with the size of the civil service has done nothing, has done nothing, Mr. Speaker, to help the people who actually need housing in this province. The blame for the mess in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, rests not only with the Liberals, it belongs to the Tories as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say that we on this side of the House are proud of the great success that has been achieved by the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation but we do not plan to sit on our hands, Mr. Speaker, as some would like to have us do. We will continue to expand and modify our housing programs to meet the housing needs of our senior citizens and the people who can least afford housing in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn for a few moments to the Crown corporation, Saskatchewan Telecommunications. The member opposite says, he'll ruin that one too. Well, I can tell you something, I at least will have an opportunity, you never will, that's for sure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, here is another Crown corporation which has received considerable criticism from the members opposite and unjust criticism, I might add. A corporation receiving criticism that ranks as one of the best in the country. Not only has Sask Tel survived and grown, but it has given the people of this province fine service and service that is the cheapest in the land.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Just as an example, Mr. Speaker, I have some comparisons here. I thought the Tories would be interested in some comparisons with oil-rich Alberta. They

always talk about how nice it is to be in Alberta. I would just like to tell them what is happening in Alberta. I want to tell you how expensive your telephones are in Alberta. Let's have a look at them.

In Tory Calgary for residential telephone rates, Mr. Speaker, \$6.10 per month; Tory Edmonton, \$6 per month; Tory Toronto — I thought I would throw it in for your benefit since you like to talk about eastern Canada's wealth as well — \$8.55 per month. Mr. Speaker, New Democrat Saskatchewan, Regina and Saskatoon, \$5.85 per month.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, our government has received criticism many, many times from the members opposite for our purported attitude to private business. A member says, right on. Well, let me give you another comparison. Mr. Speaker, I have another comparison here for the hon. member for Swift Current (Mr. Ham). This is the business rates that people in Edmonton, Toronto and Calgary have to pay.

Calgary businessmen pay \$15.90 a month; Edmonton businessmen pay \$17.60 a month; Toronto businessmen — Tory Toronto, Crombie country — \$27.35 a month. Mr. Speaker, what about the New Democrats in Saskatchewan? Businessmen in Saskatchewan pay \$14 per month. Half as much as Tory Ontario.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, I could go on for an hour comparing rates, outlining the efficiencies of Sask Tel in comparison with other provinces and the benefits of the people of Saskatchewan derive from Sask Tel. But I am not going to, Mr. Speaker. I am not going to do that — just out of respect for my colleagues across the way.

Mr. Speaker, some weeks ago I announced a \$95.5 million capital construction program for Sask Tel. Compare that figure with Tory Manitoba where cut backs and layoffs are commonplace. This expenditure, Mr. Speaker, is going to create jobs in our province at the same time as it greatly improves the efficiency of Sask Tel.

Mr. Speaker, when I said \$95.5 million, strangely, I see across the way, restraint from the members opposite. I ask the member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) if the people from his constituency are upset with the fact that their phone service has been improved, and will continue to improve. At the same time, jobs have been increased — made — formed. You name whatever you want. I ask the people of North Battleford, Estevan — anywhere else for that matter — if they're upset with the expenditures of Sask Tel. Mr. Speaker, Sask Tel is actively involved with rural Saskatchewan as well. In 1978, Sask Tel, under its assimilation program, assumed the responsibilities of 69 world telephone companies — leaving 175 such companies still operating.

The Rural Assimilation Program, Mr. Speaker, is strictly a volunteer program which is being well received judging from the feedback we have received in rural Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible noise) . . . well the member opposite said we shouldn't take all the credit for that. Mr. Speaker, I think we should take all of the credit for that because there has never been a government who actively did the job we did in rural assimilation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — In just two short years, Mr. Speaker, 544 rural telephone companies have

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applied for and have received help under this program. This volunteer program will see a continued upgrading of telephone services available in rural Saskatchewan. Just another example, Mr. Speaker, of the New Democratic Party and its Crown corporations, commitments to the residents of rural Saskatchewan and the rural way of life and its preservation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — It would be very easy, Mr. Speaker, for Sask Tel, Sask Power or Sask Housing to implement cutbacks in services or abandon areas of service altogether as the federal or provincial Tories advocate but, Mr. Speaker, these companies were formed to provide service, not necessarily profits. That's what they are doing and will continue to do as long as the New Democrats form the government of this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, Sask Tel has had a very long and successful record of providing both quality service and corporate responsibility, corporate responsibility and service to the residents of Saskatchewan and to the province. The future of Sask Tel looks bright and promising.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, there are many, many things a person could talk about. You could talk about health care programs and I know the Tories don't like our health care programs. You could talk about free children's dental care programs. They don't like to talk about dental care programs. They don't want to talk about deterrent fees. I don't see the two members in their seats here now who were partial to putting deterrent fees in this province but that's the members you have with you. You have to live with them, we don't. Mr. Speaker, I could go on talking about medical care fees. I could go on talking about aids to independent living and I could also go on to talk about the tremendous amount of money the Department of Health is putting in for expansion of our hospitals This, Mr. Speaker, I'll say is in sharp contrast with the Tories in Alberta. Once again, the place these people across the way say is a better place to live. They never talk about the medicare premiums in Alberta — \$180. They don't talk about their children — no dental care program. We have no medicare premiums in this province, my friend.

Mr. Speaker, there is no drug program in Alberta, there is no hearing aid plan in Alberta. And how much money do they give to the hospitals in Alberta? Let's have a look at the hospitals in Alberta. How many dollars do they give to hospitals in Edmonton and Calgary? I really don't know how many dollars they give, but it can't be very much; they have 6,000 people on the waiting list to get into hospitals in both Edmonton and Calgary. Imagine! You can be assured that they are not giving them very much money, Mr. Speaker. If they were giving them very much money we'd be hearing the Tories across the way saying why are you not doing the same in Saskatchewan? We are giving tremendous amounts of money to our hospitals. We have one of the best health care programs in Canada, the Tories know it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on. I could go on talking about the automobile insurance program. I could talk about auto insurance for two-and-one-half hours. On the other hand I could talk about it for two minutes — and these people would not know the difference between two hours of SGIO (Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office) talk or two minutes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, I think it is fairly obvious what I am going to be doing come the evening of the vote. I don't think there is any question that I didn't see very much in the amendment, and as a result of that, I will be voting against the amendment and I will be voting for the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Deputy Speaker: — I first want to take this opportunity to thank my constituents who supported me in the last election. I'm very pleased and proud to represent the people of Regina South and sincerely hope that I can serve them well.

As the first Progressive Conservative to be elected in the city of Regina in many years, I am confident that many more will follow in the years to come.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — And I am particularly proud that my constituents were successful in foiling the Premier's call for a clean sweep of Regina. I also want to commend Mr. Speaker on his re-election to the office of Speaker. As a new member of the legislature, I will look with appreciation on his impartial guidance in carrying on the proceedings of the Assembly.

My first remarks in this legislature are in reference to the events of the last general election. The smoke screen used by this government in the campaign was used to cover the issues that they desperately wanted to avoid. They campaigned on medicare and Premier Blakeney's leadership. Medicare was perhaps the biggest of the two farces, or at least, was the more visible of the two.

The NDP told the voter that we would destroy medicare, that we would bring in deterrent fees, and that we would tax the sick, when actually they were announcing their own policies. Now the sick are being taxed, deterrent fees are being charged, by their government not the PC's.

The government has now had six months to settle the fee schedule with the medical profession and to no avail.

They can afford a \$30 million health building and it's probably closer to \$40 million, a building that has at least 10,000 square feet of prime first floor luxuriously finished office space and for what — for storage and files. May I ask, where are your priorities? Millions of dollars are spent on socialist castles, edifices to house an expanding bureaucracy, to administer grandiose schemes, and to experiment with our tax dollar. Has the government forgotten that the business of government is to govern and just to govern?

Our hospitals cannot provide beds for the sick. Senior citizens cannot obtain adequate care, and the medical plan has been unworkable. What, Mr. Speaker, of the NDP campaign promise guaranteeing the citizens of Saskatchewan continued high levels of health care? We can afford gold in the new SGIO (Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office) building windows at three times the cost of ordinary windows, but

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can't afford to move patients who should be moved from Level 3 to Level 4 care, or at least provide a higher share of Level 3 nursing care costs. I could go on forever about their spending spree, but I think I make the point.

My constituents are concerned, Mr. Speaker, as I am sure most Saskatchewan residents are, at the lack of effort on the part of this government to arrive at a reasonable settlement with the medical profession. I quote, for example, from a letter received from one of my constituents, a patient:

Medical fees in particular are now a flagrant issue. Don't let them take it away from us. This very promise or slogan has lost its meaning in lieu of the threatened medical doctors billing recommendation. I believe the government should be challenged on this issue and forced to make recommendations which are both practical and acceptable to the patient and his doctor. The submission by Premier Blakeney is not acceptable that a patient, who for years has had a fine rapport and enjoyed excellent medical assistance, should turn from that doctor to find someone, anyone, who will not bill him directly. Services rendered by a doctor are not monetary in value, but successful from a medical and professional viewpoint. Medicare not only set out to create this publicly needed assistance, but to ensure both doctor and patient this security would be long-lasting and highly satisfactory. To suggest that type of assurance and medical satisfaction be disrupted for a fee dispute is irrational and irresponsible. Let the government face its issues and create a climate of satisfaction rather than spending millions of dollars, apparently without proper planning and forethought.

This government, from the outset of medicare, has never attempted to bring harmony between patients and their individual rights to medical expertise and the professional who must supply it. If they can be illusioned into vast spending programs, a simple harmonic rapport should be easily implemented in this issue promptly.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Table it.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I have been asked to table it. Mr. Speaker, I will stand behind this statement and the letter. I am surprised that I would be questioned on my integrity as to whether or not I have this letter, but I stand behind the letter.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that there is very little harmony between this government and the medical profession. In fact, it was very clearly stated by the member for Saskatoon Centre when he said there were clearly two camps in this dispute: the government on one side and the doctors on the other. I ask, Mr. Speaker, who is on the side of the patient? This whole matter could've been cleaned up months ago if this government would have negotiated in good faith; but this government has demonstrated, time and time again, that it is either unwilling or unable to negotiate.

This government has vilified almost every professional group and industry in Saskatchewan for cheap, political purposes. This government is playing politics with the help of Saskatchewan citizens — power at any cost for the sake of power.

Today we face a serious threat of losing many of our doctors. A recently-published national survey showed that one-third of our doctors, not only in Saskatchewan but all of Canada, have either decided or are thinking of leaving. Of that number, over two-

thirds cite government interference for their reason.

Leadership was their other campaign issue. I would suggest to the Premier that if he is to provide leadership to the people of this province he should ask them what their concerns are. His advisors should perhaps tell him that our main concern today is inflation and the economy. Perhaps the least important concern of the people is the constitution or its reform.

The Premier is seen as an expert on constitutional issues, and I am sure he is; but would it not be more timely to exercise some expertise on inflation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — To criticize without offering solutions would be irresponsible of me, so I suggest to this government that they could offer real leadership to all Canadians by curbing, or better still, reducing their spending. The only way we can return some sanity to the economy of this country is by cutting back government spending. There is never a day goes by without the news of worse inflation occurring. The throne speech tells us that inflation is a national problem. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this is a cop out.

The Speech from the Throne says the Minister of Finance is to outline proposals in his budget address to assist those who are the most hard pressed. This is no doubt another measure to force our citizens to be still more dependent on this government. I suggest that since the NDP promised the voters strong leadership that they now give us strong leadership and not excuses. I challenge the government, Mr. Speaker, to provide us with leadership by being a government that will reduce spending.

If I may quote from an article which appeared in the *Albertan* last August 1. This article refers to a group of concerned citizens who have formed 'The Help End Inflation Association,' and have come up with what they call 'Proposition Six,' a plan to cut taxes and inflation. They propose a reduction of all taxes by 6 per cent per year for a period of 6 years, a cut in federal, provincial and municipal spending by 6 per cent per year for a period of 6 years and finally, a reduction of government personnel by 6 per cent per year for 6 years through attrition — absolutely no firing but also no hiring. The result of this proposal would be a reduction in all taxes by 31 per cent. Other benefits would be full employment, a stronger dollar, an end to inflation and less need for strikes and so on.

Why, if government advocates leadership are they not introducing measures to reduce inflation? Why are they not coming up with some viable alternatives? Government advocates restraint by business, labor and the individual but where are the governments showing restraint? Not in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker!

If this inflation continues at 8 per cent or 9 per cent per year, what chaotic conditions can be predicted? In twelve and one-half years prices will triple; huge taxes could cause massive home selling; an increase in unemployment and crime; soaring welfare costs, and today's dollar worth only 37 cents in 12 years.

In quoting again from the *Albertan* of August 1, 'If you are not scared by such projections, you fall into one of two categories, either uncaring or stupid.' I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the people in this province are neither uncaring nor stupid. It is possible that this government is both. Are we to expect the fixed income pensioner to survive

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under these conditions? If the government does, I'm sure our senior citizens would appreciate knowing how it may be the government has a formula for them or perhaps the government is planning more compulsory legislation to resolve yet another problem. Webster's dictionary defines a leader as one who acts as a guiding force and who goes ahead or in advance. Inflation starts by government overspending. This government could show leadership by reducing government spending. You promised leadership. Since 1975, government spending in Saskatchewan has increased by 300 per cent and as was announced by the finance minister, we're looking at our fourth consecutive deficit budget in what has been considered buoyant times for the economy of Saskatchewan. You were elected on that promise so now, you should fulfil that promise and sort out your spending priorities.

The throne speech refers to the Farm Fuel Cost Reduction Program to provide grants — another so-called handout. Why not reduce the fuel costs at source? No, this would be too simple for this government. The throne speech says that prospects for grain sales appear bright but are clouded by the railway companies' continuing inability to deliver grain. Has no one told this government, Mr. Speaker, that one of the main problems is at the Vancouver port terminal? The Alberta government recognizes this and has advanced \$100 million to develop facilities at Prince Rupert. Saskatchewan, whose main industry is agriculture, producing over 50 per cent of the prairie provinces' grain, offered no assistance. They have all our money in potash mines. The throne speech states that Saskatchewan resources will provide many opportunities for Saskatchewan businesses. Seizing these opportunities will be a challenge for Saskatchewan businessmen and their entrepreneurial skills. I suggest to this government, that Saskatchewan businessmen will make every effort to seize on these opportunities if allowed to do so, if the usual government roadblocks are removed.

Mr. Speaker, I have scanned the latest annual report of the Saskatchewan industry and commerce department. It contains approximately six pages in total of events and accomplishments of this department. One particularly interesting summary is on non-renewable resources accomplishments. It reports on some \$40 million worth of capital expenditures in Saskatchewan, providing a grand total of 17 to 21 jobs. You could provide three times that many jobs in Regina alone if you got out of the body shop business and allowed the private sector to do auto body work without your interference. Except for the economic development programs for disadvantaged persons and a special agricultural and rural development program which provided an additional 495 jobs in Saskatchewan, the 17 to 21 jobs referred to are the only new jobs listed in the annual report. If the department had encouraged firms that have moved to the Dakotas and Montana such as Morris Rodweeder in Yorkton, to remain in Saskatchewan, they could have created hundreds of new jobs — or at least the private sector would have, not the Department of Industry and Commerce. As I've said, remove the roadblocks and stop interfering with business.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned by the continued erosion by the present government of the basic rights and fundamental freedoms of each citizen and individual in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Does any one individual have the right to deny another his fundamental freedoms? Yet this government has continued to do so. Ask the youth who have had to leave this province to seek employment elsewhere, or in trying to establish themselves as individuals have had student loans turned down because of the income

of their parents two years ago. Is this not discrimination? Ask the senior citizens who have their life savings taken away in return for care in a senior citizens' home, or are completely wiped out by inflation and high taxes. Ask the sick who are waiting for hospital beds, or are caught in the dispute between big government and the medical profession. Ask the farmers who have had marketing boards imposed upon them against their wishes. The stated purpose of The Natural Products Marketing Act passed by this government is to control, regulate and/or prohibit the marketing of natural products within this province. Is it not a basic right for people to produce and market what they produce so as to provide a livelihood for themselves and their families? Ask the businessmen who have been faced with unfair and discriminatory labor laws and a politically biased labor relations board. Ask the employees who have been pawns between big government and big business in this province, or have had their job security threatened because of political or union affiliation, or lack of it. What individual rights or freedoms do they have? Ask the medical profession, the nurses. Ask almost any individual in our province.

Mr. Speaker, this government has asked for approval of The Human Rights Act. How can they advocate such legislation when they don't even understand the problem? What we need in Saskatchewan is a bill of rights to protect the fundamental freedoms of each individual. Even today, this government is preparing legislation to prevent individual businesses from carrying out their own collective bargaining. The right of the employer to speak to his own employees in matters affecting their conditions of employment is now prohibited in Saskatchewan and yet this government advocates human rights legislation. What do they mean by human rights? Is not the right of the individual a basic human right?

This same government recently amended The Education Act. This legislation discriminated against those who are neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if The Education Act, 1978 is an indication of what we can expect in this new human rights code?

The Minister of Education (Mr. Shillington) did not seem too concerned on a television interview last week about this most discriminating legislation. Although he admitted his government erred, he said the municipalities were wrong in the way they made up their questionnaire or their declaration form. The form the declaration takes is clearly spelled out in the regulations and, in fact, clearly discriminates against anyone who is not either Roman Catholic or Protestant. For the minister to suggest that the municipalities should ignore the law is appalling. He also indicated that if this section of the act, to which I refer, is a problem they would change it, if possible, in this session. May I suggest to the minister that this act be amended with the utmost haste. To have this kind of legislation in our statutes is shameful. The fact that this act contains this discrimination indicates the lack of sincerity that this government places on human rights.

Mr. Speaker, I have a few remarks to make on local issues. I will urge this government to give strong representation to the federal government on the relocation of the Regina airport, not just urge the government to make improvements as stated in the throne speech. The present location creates both severe noise and air pollution as well as a safety hazard. Need we wait for the type of air crash that occurred in San Diego last fall to take action? I am aware that the building of a new airport would not happen overnight. I, therefore, recommend a curfew for large aircraft be placed between the hours of midnight and 7 a.m.

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Air service and facilities in Regina are, to say the least, atrocious. This city, which pioneered commercial aviation in Canada, today has one of the worst airport facilities and air services in Canada. The recent fiasco of customs service is an indication of the charges I make on air service. Six people out of forty-six were compelled to go to Calgary to clear customs because of a stupid limiting policy that seems to allow the customs officials no powers of discretion, surely an indication of Otto Lang's non-caring attitude towards Saskatchewan and in particular Regina, the only capital city in Canada without direct flights to the United States and without international airport status.

Mr. Speaker, in January the Minister of Agriculture announced the formation of a committee to determine the future weather forecasting needs of the province. We are losing our weather office or hasn't he heard? More government expenses to justify your failure of dealing with the situation when you should have. Why did you not make sufficient representation with the federal government or were you afraid of Otto Lang? Gander, Newfoundland, Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory, were able to convince the federal government to reverse its decision on closing their weather offices. Mr. Speaker, for Saskatchewan to be the only province west of the Maritimes without a weather office is a disgrace. Does this government not care about losing its people? We know the needs that agriculture has for weather forecasting. The sportsmen, the contractors, the farmers, the travellers — they all need accurate weather forecasting. The committee the minister announced in January need only ask any citizen in Saskatchewan to get their answers. No one has moved yet, so I urge the Minister of Agriculture to act today — use the phone and get some action. His intervention may carry more weight than mine.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I trust this government will not delay any longer in taking appropriate action in moving permanently the 36 people working in the dungeon of the T.C. Douglas Building. If this same situation were to occur in private industry, this government would make it a political issue and would not waste time in laying charges. They really goofed but won't admit it. I have already given them the solution to resolving their problem and, I might add, at very little cost. I suppose that because they didn't think of it first, they might be afraid of losing face. I'm sure they agree with the statement made by the executive director to the Deputy Minister of Government Services, and I quote, 'We don't pay people to look out of windows'.

What I am asking, Mr. Speaker, is for the government to deal with the basic issues facing this province today — to be leaders in curbing inflation and reducing taxation, to have compassion and understanding for the needs of each individual, to put an end to the high cost of the socialistic experiment and establish spending priorities, rather than to continue to build castles in the sky as monuments to their own mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure in voting for the amendment to the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. D.M. HAM (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, I am indeed proud to rise and speak in debate in this session on the throne speech and to say how privileged I am to represent the constituents of Swift Current for a second term. I can assure this Assembly and the constituents of Swift Current that I will again do my utmost to be an excellent MLA on their behalf.

My congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker. I wish you well and I know you know at this time

you are not going to be facing as many problems as you encountered in past sessions.

Before I get into the text of my speech, Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on the recent annual report we received in the Assembly and to make a statement that last year in the Assembly, we on this side of the House were ridiculed for questioning the cost of printing annual reports with the fancy colorful covers. At this time I'd like to thank the government for finally listening to the opposition in one instance because this is a matter of dollars and cents.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER: — Keep listening, he's got some more good suggestions for you!

MR. HAM: — Mr. Speaker, the New Democratic Party in this province won re-election not as a result of good government, not as the result of a well-managed economy, not as the result of their philosophical belief or the citizens' belief in that philosophy; Mr. Speaker, they won government in this province mainly due to economic conditions at the time of the election. We're living during a good economic period in Saskatchewan and there's no way . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAM: — There is no way that I will give credit to the NDP government — there is no way the NDP government deserves credit for our good economic conditions. Mr. Speaker, in the past we've alluded on this side of the House to the NDP taking credit for sunshine and rain and they continue to take credit for what the good Lord gives us. I am sure that every member of this House is pleased that our communities are wealthy and they're wealthy as a result of our farmers being able to grow and sell wheat and put money in most citizens' pockets.

But there's been a trend developing in society and it continues to develop and that is a trend that results from a top-heavy, arrogant and government blinded by its own philosophy. Mr. Speaker, I am terrified about the size and continual growth of government and government control of our daily lives. Unfortunately, for the most of our citizens this erosion of personal freedoms and government control takes such a slow process that any citizens, or very few citizens if any, recognize its cancerous growth. As an example, seat belts I'll refer to. I'm certain that if any of us in this House, some 15 or 20 years ago, commented or made a suggestion to our constituents or a citizen of Saskatchewan that in the year 1977, he would by law be required to wear a seat belt before driving his car, he would've laughed at us — suggested that maybe we needed a mental examination. And yet, today, we're like well trained animals, we accept the seat belt law without question or hesitation. This kind of continuous deliberate government control and interference we fail to recognize and it's taking over our lives.

Consider the average Canadian citizen as he gropes his way to consciousness on one of our chilly winter mornings. He makes contact with the government as soon as he turns on his lights, sending the government power monopoly through his house currents. He washes in government water. His breakfast egg comes from a government egg monopoly. His cereal and toast from the government grain monopoly. The butter, at twice the world price, from the governments dairy monopoly. He drives to work — the car and its operator must both have written permission from the government before venturing on government streets or roads. His car must be insured with government

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insurance. He is strapped into place by government orders. He starts and stops according to government instructions, conveyed by government operated red and green lights. He's permitted to smoke in his car but he's paid a heavy tax on those cigarettes which carry a government warning that it's endangering his health. Once he arrives in the lobby of his building the government orders him to put out his cigarette.

Governments determine how much we will be paid and how long we will work. Government takes a cut of his salary before he sees it and everything he can buy, and he is left both taxed and supervised by the government. Born in a government hospital, educated in a government school, he will eventually retire on a government pension. And the government will pay his last medical bill and he will find his last resting place in a government cemetery.

The point of most friction in the story of a citizen and his government is our money. The orders of government have become accepted in time but no one can forget that if government was not taking so much of his money he could spend more on himself

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAM: — Not only that, he could become more responsible and a better citizen. I am certain that all members in this Assembly have encountered the increasing lack of responsibility on the part of many of our citizens to become involved in service club organizational groups, supervising sports and local affairs and that's just to name a few. They'd normally have better things to do. It even affects our moral standards. Let big brother do it for us. I'm convinced, Mr. Speaker, that for the most part government interference and government manipulation of our day to day lives has created a cop-out situation. As citizens, medical bills are paid by government, for example. Then a case can be made forbidding him what would normally be purely private risks such as riding in a car, without a seat belt, smoking, and why stop there? Why not see that he eats proper food instead of just telling him what he should be eating and leaving it at that. Set aside a mandatory exercise plan to ensure his physical well-being. Eventually our government becomes less a security blanket and more of a straitjacket.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAM: — The balance between a citizen and his government have been upset by so many interventions in recent years, and this government is the master of them all. Citizens rights need to be reasserted including the most precious right of all, the right to be left alone. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, under the NDP I doubt this right will ever exist.

I'd like to spend a moment or two on two problems that face my constituents and I. Initially I commend the government for taking steps to see that Swift Current is the home of a new five storey government building, specifically the E.I. Wood Building, and have recently begun construction on SGIO Claims Centre. Further, since 1975 or since Swift Current elected a Progressive Conservative member to the legislature, we have seen the erection of a multi-storey senior citizens high-rise, namely, Heritage Tower.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HAM: — As well, a very small portion of our freeway had been lit by new overhead lighting.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear. hear!

MR. HAM: — However, Mr. Speaker, all of these things are, and I alluded earlier to these statements — government spending and more government control. We have witnessed little or no development in the private sector in my constituency, therefore, little or absolutely no growth in population.

In the past, I have made reference to a lack of population growth in Swift Current and in those statements compared the city of Swift Current to a similar situation in Alberta — Lethbridge.

In 1939, Mr. Speaker, the city of Lethbridge and the city of Swift Current were relatively the same size as far as population was concerned. Lethbridge, Alberta is surrounded by a very poor quality soil and as many members are aware finds it necessary to irrigate to grow sufficient produce to make it economically viable. Swift Current, on the other hand, serves a very large trading area, which has, for the most part excellent soil and generally grows pretty excellent crops. Aside from many large cattle operations, we have had, overall, very successful farming and ranching years in the Swift Current district. Both Swift Current and Lethbridge faced the wrath of the 1930 depression and drought. Rainfall is relatively much the same in both areas. However, Mr. Speaker, since 1939 we have witnessed the city of Lethbridge go to some 50,000 people or more and the city of Swift Current stagnate at about 16,000. Even though Swift Current is on the main Trans-Canada Highway, on the main CPR line, I think it is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that Swift Current unlike Lethbridge, has substantial oil deposits which should contribute to a more stable inviting climate for investors and business community.

The point I would like to make is this. The citizens of my constituency, over the past several years. have complained of a lack of a number of services such as extra television channels. It was not until some three or four years ago that we finally received a second television service. I understand that Lethbridge has had several television channels for a number of years. Several years ago our Western Canada Hockey League Junior Club was relocated from Swift Current to Lethbridge, mainly because of the population drawing area to support an increased expansion to the club.

More recently, and this is a contentious issue of late in my constituency, the city is pursuing an indoor swimming pool. I might mention that as a result of recent government statements in the possibility that community capital grants may be removed, there is an exceedingly good possibility we may never see our pool in the next several years. Lethbridge, incidentally, has had many indoor pools for some years. All this tremendous growth throughout Alberta, results in my mind from a positive economic climate, nurtured by successive non-restrictive governments.

However, Mr. Speaker, the most serious problem that my constituency and I think this province has faced, is we have lost what I consider to be our most precious resource, our young people.

The member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Swan) referred to a highway from his constituency to Alberta and I have witnessed this on a regular basis between Regina and Swift Current, on a long weekend the Alberta plates heading home. They seek jobs in Alberta, simple basic jobs and a basic standard of living. Our province has not offered a standard of living to these people and find it necessary to leave home. I am certain members on that side of the House have had relations and relatives who have

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had to move to Alberta to find employment.

Mr. Speaker, it is of great concern to me and to my constituents to see the government of Saskatchewan grant money to the Taylor Field expansion and yet a city such as Swift Current not be eligible for assistance when completing the pool I referred to earlier. It also may be worthwhile to mention that the government of Alberta initiated a community capital grant fund which saw cities being granted the \$500 per head capita grant and I think that per capita grant in Saskatchewan is \$25 a head and it may no longer exist. This \$500 per capita head grant is available to the people of Alberta because of the reasonable fashion which the Alberta government dealt with the oil companies. The Leader of the Opposition alluded to the loss of oil industry in Saskatchewan and asked for statistics from the government of Saskatchewan respecting oil increases in production in our province. During the course of his remarks, we heard cat-calls and comments about the usual multinational corporations and their friends.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is, under Bill No. 42, the government of Saskatchewan literally chased not only their enemy — we're not friends with the multinationals either — out of this province. By this legislation, the government directly caused the bankruptcy or movement of literally thousands of jobs from Saskatchewan of the service personnel and the small businessmen that did business with the oil companies. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, these arch enemies of the NDP, the multinationals, have returned to Saskatchewan or are going to return; but no, not the little guy — not the little man the NDP supposedly represents, in fact who were hoodwinked from last elections. They simply can't afford to come back. They simply don't trust you people. I am hopeful this government has learned to deal in a more reasonable fashion with the oil companies in light of recent world events in the Middle East. It will be necessary for Saskatchewan to develop its own oil resources I'm sure.

Mr. Speaker, two other areas of concern that I have, and that my constituents have expressed to me, are the lack of lighting along a good portion of Trans-Canada freeway through Swift Current. Unfortunately, we have witnessed a deficit and a drop in tourism in Saskatchewan and I am certain that if any member of this Assembly travelled to the Swift Current area in the dark and was not acquainted with our freeway system, they could not find their way off the freeway to locate a motel or a service station without a great deal of difficulty. I am hopeful the Minister of Highways — unfortunately he is not here — and his department will see fit this year to light our freeway not only for the convenience of the motoring public and our tourists but before we witness any more serious accidents or deaths.

Further, Mr. Speaker, the city of Swift Current has expanded North of the Trans-Canada Highway freeway section with its building development. Children of that new addition are faced with either walking out the way to school or attempting to cross the dangerous freeway. As the Minister of Highways is aware, it is imperative that we either install an overpass or indeed build an underpass for these children to safely cross the highway to school.

Mr. Speaker, the government has failed to deal effectively with many of the problems that face the citizens of our province and the constituency of Swift Current. I will therefore be supporting the amendment and not the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE (Quill Lakes): — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise and join in this debate but I hesitate to make any major speeches this afternoon for two reasons. We have just finished listening to two successive Tory members and I think that's about all we can take this afternoon. The second reason is that I had intended to say a few words about the Leader of the Opposition but, Mr. Speaker, I am advised that unless you can say something good about a person it is better not to say anything. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day I will raise a matter which was alluded to by the previous speaker and that is, if you haven't got anything nice to say, don't say anything at all.

Earlier in the question period today the Minister of Agriculture brought forward a position with reference to one of the Progressive Conservative members, the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew), where he suggested that an advertisement placed in a newspaper by the member's law firm was somehow politically oriented. The member for Saltcoats (Mr. Kaeding) is therefore alluding to the personal actions of a member outside this Chamber which I believe is strictly prohibited by the rules of this Assembly. In light of the Minister of Agriculture's comments and in light of the presumably higher decorum that the members opposite seem to want to have in this Assembly, I ask, Mr. Speaker, to request that the Minister of Agriculture withdraw those comments and apologize to the member for Kindersley.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — The Leader of the Opposition raises a rather serious issue when one member is asked to apologize and withdraw remarks. I believe I will have to check the record to establish clearly in my mind what has happened. I will do that and report back to the Chamber at a later time whether an apology is in order and a withdrawal is necessary.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Speaker, while you are doing that, may I ask you to please advise this Assembly — I believe I asked about this a couple of sessions ago — also on the policy of your Chair and the policy of this Assembly with reference to raising matters in general terms of this kind in reference to the members' personal business outside this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: — If the member is referring to how the question period will be conducted, I think that is clearly laid out for the members. It won't hurt members from time to time to review that. However, I believe that what the member is asking me to do is essentially what he has asked me to do with regard to the Minister of Agriculture. When I am making a report back to the legislature on that, I will cite the necessary precedents which will outline clearly what the situation is and how the Chair is governed.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Speaker, the reason that I ask this is, we have asked our research staff today to check in Beauchesne's and Erskine May to see if there was or seemed to be a precedent on this. We could not locate one. I hope Mr. Speaker will be more successful in doing so. What I am really asking, for the advice of all members, is whether it is acceptable for a member of this legislative Chamber to rise in his place at

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whatever time, whether it be question period or any other time, and refer specifically to the private business of another member. If that is acceptable — that is the question I would like to have answered for this Chamber.

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — A point of order, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if while you are considering this particular matter you might also enlighten me and the House — at least certainly enlighten me, I won't presume to speak for the other members of the House — what the basis of the complaint is that is being raised by the Leader of the Opposition. My understanding in parliamentary practice, in very general terms, has been up to now that there is either a point of order raised related to the procedure or/and a point of personal privilege raised by a member. I must confess that I suppose the category of the comments falls somewhere in the latter aspect; privilege as a general point was not the members references referred to him. I think that it would be beneficial for me, Sir, if you would outline under what basis and what the ground rules are of raising these kinds of matters to you before the orders of the day are. Because I think, frankly, that if there is a widening and a widening — I'm not now referring about this specific matter — but a widening by all of us to get up on orders of the day and say, Mr. Speaker, I want to raise something for your clarification about whatever the issues are. I would ask that you also, for my elaboration, indicate what the ground rules for points of order are.

MR. SPEAKER: — We can do that.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:56 p.m.