

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
December 3, 1979

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

On the Orders of the Day

The Assistant Clerk advised the Assembly that Mr. Speaker would not be present to open the sitting. Thereupon the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.

QUESTIONS

Oil Price Increase

MR. R.L. ANDREW (Kindersley): — My question this afternoon is to the Premier. Is the Premier at this point in time in a position to inform the Assembly as to any concrete news from negotiations with the federal government as to the pricing of oil, the amount of the increase to be expected, and when that increase can be expected to be implemented?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, essentially the answer to the hon. member's question is no. I have had a conversation last week with the Right Honourable Mr. Clark in which he outlined the tentative proposals of the Government of Canada, involving price increases for oil and natural gas and for the disposition of certain of the proceeds of that increase. He indicated to me, as I understood it, that the proposals were not yet firm. He had not yet spoken with one of the other premiers involved and we agreed that I would not discuss publicly the figures which we had discussed on the phone. I believe it is his intention to make an announcement once some aspects which are not now complete, particularly the taxing mechanisms have been determined and when the entire package can be announced to the people of Canada.

MR. ANDREW: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. On three previous occasions prior to today, Mr. Broadbent, the national Leader of the NDP, has received information by way of brown envelope and has of course, made quite a press to-do about this particular oil increase. I note on Friday last the national press is indicating that the information to Mr. Broadbent in the brown envelopes is in fact coming from the Government of Saskatchewan. I would like the Premier to assure this House that any information will be delivered to this House and to this Assembly prior to being delivered to Mr. Broadbent.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I will certainly give him the assurance that I will give the information to the House as rapidly as possible. I will secondly give him the assurance that I, and so far as I am aware and I've made some inquiries about this, no one in the Government of Saskatchewan has provided any information to Mr. Broadbent in respect of matters discussed between me and Mr. Clark. Any suggestion to the contrary I repudiate and ask anyone who makes those suggestions to give some support for what I consider to be an inappropriate statement.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — Supplementary to the Premier. The discussion of oil price increases indicates that certainly there will be at least some increase to the producing provinces. I think that is accepted in the discussion. Would the minister give the same assurance to the people of Saskatchewan that his federal counterpart is asking from the Government of Canada that the people of Saskatchewan be sheltered

from any significant gasoline or oil price increases and that in fact the increases in revenues which your government will obtain will be used for the benefit of the people to maintain lower prices than in the rest of Canada, except perhaps Alberta?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I cannot give the hon. member the assurance he wishes. I think it is not proposed, at least at this time that we would attempt to shelter the costs of gasoline at the pump to motorists below the prices prevailing elsewhere in Canada, except to the extent that those lower prices may be reflected by lower transportation costs or lower costs at the refinery, or lower gasoline taxes. In effect, no special subsidies for motorists purchasing their gasoline at the pump are proposed.

Flood Control in the Souris Valley

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman):

Mr. Minister, in light of the concern expressed by people from Saskatchewan, Manitoba and North Dakota, at a group meeting in Estevan which was attended by your department, would you indicate to this House whether or not your department has approached the federal government with a view to putting the whole flood control and the environmental matters of the Souris Valley in the hands of the IJC (International Joint Commission)?

HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, I couldn't answer with any definiteness as to whether or not the department has had an exchange of letters or correspondence or telephone conversations with respect to the particular issue which the member raises. I will take it as notice, however, and get the answer for you as to whether or not there has been a communication and provide the member with that information.

MR. LARTER: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would you also take notice of this, then? Would you not agree because there has been no consolidation of base information between the governments of Canada, the United States and North Dakota on the Burlington Dam which is proposed and it could have serious repercussion on both the United States and Canada, that the lack of action by this government on this matter would be totally unacceptable? Once this dam is in place we will be in a terrible strait in Estevan.

MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Speaker, that is not my information with respect to the point raised. I was not convinced Estevan or parts of Saskatchewan would be seriously affected by the dam which he discusses. However, the matter is one of continuing interest. The Souris River Valley is a project which has both federal and province agreement, and Manitoba agreement. The issue which he raises is certainly one which is under discussion and under consideration by all three governments.

MR. LARTER: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Since the federal governments of Canada and the United States, North Dakota and Manitoba have indicated their willingness to put the whole matter before IJC, will you not agree this really is just another expression of socialist co-operation and your government shows no concern for the people of Saskatchewan? Would you not agree with that?

MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the matter as I have indicated is one which has been considered by the Canadian government, the Manitoba government and

Saskatchewan. There is an agreement with respect to the Souris Valley and the interest which the member expresses is in that valley program. I would indicate again that the issue is there; it is being looked after and in my estimation it is being properly considered.

Rocanville Potash Mine Employees' Association

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would direct a question to the Premier in the absence of the minister responsible for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, would the Premier, in light of two relevant factors, those being a current breakdown in negotiations between the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and the Rocanville employees' association which has resulted in a present slowdown in operations at that mine and a possible strike. Secondly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and Mr. Premier, the government's unwillingness to pay Rocanville employees' association salaries equal to Cory and Lanigan notwithstanding, Mr. Premier, the employees at Rocanville are producing some 700 per cent more potash than Lanigan and 35 per cent more than Cory. Would the Premier not agree that a 6.2 per cent wage increase settlement requested by the Rocanville employees' association, given the fact that you have offered SGEA (Saskatchewan Government Employee's Association) 7 per cent, be not fair and should be brought into effect immediately?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I doubt whether this Chamber is the appropriate place to carry on collective bargaining. I will, however, ask the Minister of Mineral Resources, the minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan (Mr. Messer) to take note of the question.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, given the Premier's reply to my question, would the Premier not agree that with the hands-off policy taken by this government with regard to SGEA, that it is this government's intention to force the Rocanville employees' association to affiliate with a multinational union?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think we have any such intention. I believe that we have demonstrated in the past that the association or the union which represents the employees is the one which should be chosen by them and not by us, and they, I believe, have exercised their rights so to do, and have selected an association to represent them to bargain collectively. I have no doubt that the association they have selected will bargain ably and aggressively and I suspect, just as ably and aggressively without the assistance of the hon. member for Moosomin as with it.

MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — A supplementary to the Premier. Would the very fact that the multinational union has made contributions to the NDP, be affecting these negotiations at Rocanville with the employees' association?

MR. BLAKENEY: — No.

Nuclear Reactors in Saskatchewan

MR. LANE: — I direct my question to the Premier. The Premier I think will well understand that the impression is being generated and being left by his government that nuclear development in Saskatchewan is not an option open to the government. However that is contradicted by statements in today's newspaper by the head of the

December 3, 1979

Saskatchewan Power Corporation that in fact preliminary discussion with Alberta and Manitoba have been undertaken with regard to development of nuclear generating capability. Will the Premier now give to the public of Saskatchewan the assurance that nuclear generation is not in fact an option open to the people of Saskatchewan, the Government of Saskatchewan.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will give an assurance for the life of our government. Certainly we do not expect that nuclear fuel will be used to generate electric power in this province for many, many years to come. I am not able to state that it will not happen in the year 2050 or some time in the future. Nor could anybody else. Nor would any assurance that I give mean anything.

So far as the planning of our government, there are no plans to erect any nuclear reactors in Saskatchewan and there are not proposals even of a general nature to erect nuclear reactors in Saskatchewan.

MR. LANE: — By way of a supplementary. The Premier's statement seems to contradict statements, again made by the head of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Given the lead time, and I think the Premier or the minister will accept in the range of 12 to 15 years in development, would the Premier now give the assurance that these so-called preliminary discussion being held by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation will in fact be terminated for the life of your government so that, you know, plans are not being made. There is, certainly in Saskatchewan, a feeling that too many discussions are going on behind closed doors with the Department of the Environment and others. Would you give the assurance that there will be no further preliminary discussions on the development of a nuclear generating facility in the province of Saskatchewan, during the lifetime of your government?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is suggesting that somehow between Alberta and Manitoba there are going to be nuclear reactors in Winnipeg and Edmonton and Saskatoon. I think this is simply not the case. I believe there is no basis for the innuendo that somehow there are imminent prospects of the establishment of nuclear reactors here on the Prairies. I think that is, in the highest degree, unlikely that here on the Prairies where we have ample coal supplies and ample hydro supplies that nuclear power will be — even within the range of economic possibility, never mind the other possibilities — in the foreseeable future. I don't in any way suggest that people may not talk about it as a remote possibility since their obligation is to plan for 50, 75 or 100 years. But to suggest and to lead the people of Saskatchewan to suggest that something is going to happen in the next short period of time is simply not too accurate and I think the hon. member knows it is not accurate.

MR. LANE: — Supplementary question to the Premier (Mr. Blakeney). In light of your refusal to give the assurance that no further discussions will go on by SPC or involving SPC during the lifetime of your government, will you then table before this Assembly the tenor or the details of those preliminary discussions already admitted by the head of SPC which in fact gave credence to my remark and call into doubt your assurances?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is suggesting that there are discussions — he has said more; he has stated that there are discussions — between officials in Manitoba and officials in Alberta. He will know then, presumably, from his many contacts in Manitoba and Alberta what their proposals are with respect to nuclear stations in those provinces and he will, therefore, have available to him all of the information which he alleges is available.

I do not think that we're going to fall, in this House, into the practice of having hon. members opposite raise spectres that have no substance in fact and then call for the tabling of documents which record discussions between utility officials in various provinces. That is simply not the way to carry on business, nor do we propose to carry on business in that way.

Medical Laboratories Services

MRS. J.H. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — A question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Rolfes), Mr. Deputy Speaker. As you are probably aware, Mr. Minister, specialized laboratory techniques have become vital tools used by the medical profession in the diagnosis and treatment of disease and at present no laboratory services are available from the provincial lab. What alternate arrangements has your department initiated to assure the physicians and their patients that these services will be available uninterrupted?

MR. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Health): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can't give the member assurance that they will not be uninterrupted, but I can assure the member that lab tests right now are considered as an essential service by the Department of Health. We are using all of our out-of-scope personnel that we have at our disposal to carry them out as quickly as we can. There certainly will be some inconveniences, but I think up until now, we have been able to deal with the situation quite well.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Where are these out-of-scope personnel doing the tests requested by physicians?

MR. ROLFES: — The hon. member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew) says it's in the basement. I don't know which basement he's referring to.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not sure where they are being carried on. I will have to check with my officials, but I would expect that they are carried on in lab services and facilities that are at our disposal, but I will take that under advisement and I'll give the answer to the member as soon as I get it.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Well, considering the fact that approximately 600,000 tests were done by the provincial lab last year, have you made any arrangements with out-of-province labs to provide the people of Saskatchewan with this service? Lots of these tests take highly computerized, highly technical equipment that you will not find all over the province in basements or whatever.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say to the member that I do believe, and I don't want to say it categorically, the present tests are being done in the provincial lab. I did indicate to her that there are going to be some time lags but we will carry out the tests as quickly as we can with the limited staff that we have at our disposal. It is my understanding at the present time that no real emergencies have developed and we will hope to carry on as quickly as we can. Up until now we've not found it necessary to make use of out-of-the-province labs.

MRS. DUNCAN: — You just indicated that you thought they were being done at the provincial lab. When I phoned the provincial lab and doctors phone the provincial lab they were informed that all they have is the telephone answering service. The strike is 17 days old right now. Physicians around the province are concerned and by your answers, are you not admitting to this Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan

that you as Minister of Health are actually prepared to do nothing?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I indicated to the member . . . I maybe should provide her with a hearing aid. I will attempt to assure the member that we have found no . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . just bump up the guy in front of you on the head a little bit. It would be better if he sat on his brain . . . Mr. Deputy Speaker, I assured the member for Maple Creek (Mrs. Duncan) that everything is being done, under very difficult circumstances, admittedly, but I am assured by my officials that no emergencies have arisen at this particular time. We are dealing with it with our out-of-scope people. If I find in the future that it is necessary that we seek services outside the province, we will take that under consideration. Up until now that has not been necessary.

AN HON. MEMBER: — . . .(inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. Order please. The member for Rosetown-Elrose.

SGEA STRIKE

MR. H.J. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to pose a question to the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Koskie). As you are aware, Mr. Minister, the SGEA (Saskatchewan Government Employees Association) members of your department are on strike. Who is providing services to the people who find themselves in unfortunate circumstances and require assistance from your department?

HON. M.J. KOSKIE (Minister of Social Services): — At the present time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are making contingency arrangements. We can indicate to the member that the cheques did go out at the end of the month to the recipients, that the regional offices are being manned by out-of-scope personnel and although the demand is very heavy, everything conceivable is being done to meet that demand.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Minister, are you telling me that the out-of-scope personnel can do all the work that is necessary in your department? Are you, indeed, saying that you are overstaffed?

MR. KOSKIE: — No indeed. Of course I'm not saying that. I'm saying that the ultimate effort is being made to provide the services by my department to the people in need. We are doing that with the available staff that we have. I think that every effort is being made — and a tremendous effort is being put forth — by the out-of-scope people to facilitate that.

MR. SWAN: — Supplementary to the minister. Mr. Minister, winter is here — maybe some of you didn't realize this. Mr. Minister, I am concerned about the new cases in the province who are requiring assistance from your department. Now, I can see that you may be able to provide some assistance in the larger centres but with only the out-of-scope personnel there is no way that you can reach out around the province to meet the needs of these people. What are you going to do and how long are you going to wait before you place some other plan in place to meet the needs of people who are demanding service at this time?

MR. KOSKIE: — Well, it's very clear to me that really what you are asking has in fact been put in place. We have dispatched staff in order that each regional office will be able to provide maximum service within the range of staff we have available. That is being done

and I have been in contact with the various regional offices and although the demand is very heavy they are working at capacity, indeed overtime, to meet the particular needs as they arise.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Minister, a final supplementary. In the geriatric centres in the province you require a high degree of professional people. What are you doing to provide that type of service to the residents of the geriatric centres?

MR. KOSKIE: — That's actually in the Department of Health.

MR. TAYLOR: — This is in the Department of Social Services. I am dealing with the Lakeside Home in Wolseley, in which there have been for some time, and I have been closely monitoring this, a volunteer service and out-of-scope personnel who have been manning the home. This is breaking down. Will you, Mr. Minister, designate Lakeside Home as an essential service so that the skeleton staff can man this home?

MR. KOSKIE: — Well, your information is slightly different from what mine is. My information is that in fact with out-of-scope personnel and by volunteers the situation is being managed and the care of the people who are there is being afforded to them and it is not in fact breaking down.

MR. TAYLOR: — There are two versions.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

MR. J.L. SOLOMON (Regina North-West) moved, seconded by Mr. R.G. Long (Cut Knife-Lloydminster):

That a humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of the province as follows:

TO HIS HONOUR THE HONOURABLE CAMERON IRWIN McINTOSH

Lieutenant-Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled humbly thank your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

He said . . . Mr. Speaker, to begin my address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, I would like to express my appreciation to Premier Blakeney and the Government of Saskatchewan for the confidence they have placed in me today.

It is an honor and a privilege to be here in this Assembly to make this address in reply, an honor for me and more importantly for the fine people I represent, the people of Regina North-West.

Mr. Speaker, during the nominating period in the by-election, I made a pledge to the people of my constituency. That pledge was to listen to them and to speak on their

December 3, 1979

behalf. Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the concerns of the people of Regina North-West for some weeks. Today marks my first opportunity to bring those concerns to the Chamber and to speak on behalf of the people I represent.

People in my urban riding are a cross-section of the entire population of Saskatchewan, a rich mosaic of people from different occupations, religions, cultural backgrounds, age groups and interests.

When I visit these people and speak with them, I sense in a very real way the bustling freshness and newness sweeping through our province. A sense of hope and quiet confidence, Mr. Speaker, a confidence that finds its strength in the determination of the pioneers who came to Saskatchewan, the relatives and families of the people present who came here to build a vision, a vision of how things could be for them and their children, a vision nurtured and developed in the cradle of caring, compassion and co-operation — a made in Saskatchewan vision. That vision, Mr. Speaker, today is unfolding for them and their children through their own dedication, hard work and deep commitment to building a society that puts people first.

I am proud to represent these people, Mr. Speaker; the women, men and children of Regina North-West, railway workers, housewives, public employees, steelworkers, the elderly, business people and professional people, and yes, Mr. Speaker, my riding even has some farmers in it.

Mr. Speaker, I will make every effort to insure I live up to the trust they have placed in me as their representative. One of the reasons I am in this Chamber today is because many people worked very hard to insure the New Democratic Party victory in the Regina North-West by-election. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to those people who freely gave their time, effort and money to re-elect a New Democratic Party member to this Assembly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you will permit me, I would also like to say a few words about the member for Weyburn, whose service to this Assembly stretches back more than a decade and a half. Members will know that Auburn Pepper, as the Deputy Speaker, spends hundreds of hours every session chairing the committee of the whole and as chairman of the government caucus arranges all business of our caucus. He carries his sizeable workload with a good natured competence we would all do well to try and emulate.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate those new members of the Executive Council. During a part of the time in which I worked as an assistant to the Minister of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, Doug McArthur was the Deputy Minister of DNS (Department of Northern Saskatchewan). He was also the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, when much of the new and progressive agricultural programs were started. Mr. McArthur will be a strong addition to the cabinet as Minister of Education and Continuing Education as a result of his previous experiences.

Mr. Speaker, my own involvement with our province's North also brought me into contact with Jerry Hammersmith. Mr. Hammersmith has a long and productive career with organizations like the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians and in areas like northern education. He is a capable and logical choice to carry on the excellent work done by Ted Bowerman and Neil Byers.

Mr. Gross is well-known as a tough and able political campaigner. During the time I

spent in acting provincial secretary of the New Democratic Party, I became well aware of the extent to which the NDP relies on Reg Gross in the southwestern part of our province. As the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources, I wish him well in his new post.

Murray Koskie, the member for Quill Lake is providing an exciting approach to the Department of Social Services. His task is quite a challenge and I know he is working hard to meet that challenge.

At this time, I would also like to pay tribute to the former member for Regina North-West, the Hon. Ed Whelan, who resigned on July 1 of this year. Mr. Whelan ably represented the people of my constituency and the people of Regina as a whole for 19 years. He is respected and admired by scores of those he represented, and especially those he aided throughout his long career. I offer my best personal wishes to Ed and his wife Pemrose in their future endeavors, and on behalf of the people of Regina North-West, thanks for giving a major part of your life to the public service of Saskatchewan, and thanks for a job well done.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my congratulations to the new Leader of the Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative Party on his recent victory. Being the leader of the hon. members opposite is no easy task as the record shows, but I do wish him a long career as a leader of the opposition. We on this side of the House recognize the Conservative Party as one wedded to tradition and I am happy, Mr. Speaker, to see that party continue in at least one of those traditions. I refer, Mr. Speaker, to the Saskatchewan PC Party tradition of electing leaders who have tangled with the hon. member from Saskatoon Nutana (Hon. W.A. Robbins) and lost.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — I would like now, Mr. Speaker, to make some observations about what led up to the by-election victory in Regina North-West as a prelude to some more specific matters I will raise later. The results of the by-election demonstrated in a particular way the feelings of Saskatchewan people about the kind of government and the type of representation they expect. And the results, Mr. Speaker, were clear-cut and decisive. On October 17, those people said no to prejudice and discrimination and overwhelmingly endorsed the government of Allan Blakeney.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — A government that believes all people, from whatever background, should have the individual freedom to grow to their full potential and take part as full and equal partners in the prosperity we have been blessed with in Saskatchewan; a government unlike its federal conservative counterpart, Mr. Speaker, that keeps its promises; a government of strong, sure leadership; a government prepared to work with Saskatchewan people to make their visions a reality.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — Mr. Speaker, one of the most thrilling events for me was to be a candidate in the Regina North-West NDP nomination race. It was surely thrilling to have 675 voting delegates and 200 visitors jammed into Thom Collegiate Auditorium on September 17. Another one of the really exciting aspects of the race was the quality and number of NDP candidates seeking the nomination. When good, capable people

December 3, 1979

such as Dr. Don Faris, Lindy Kasperski, Louise Simard, and Morley Koskie throw their hats into the ring, that's a clear message. And that message, Mr. Speaker, is that the New Democratic Party and government are alive and well and living in Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — There's another more important message which I recognized at that large gathering, Mr. Speaker. As I sat in the jam-packed hall waiting for the ballots to be counted, I looked around the crowd and what I saw was perhaps the most significant thing about that evening. Mr. Speaker, a major portion of the people at that nominating convention were families; young families, older families whose children were working on behalf of one candidate or another. And I realized even more clearly what I have always know to be true about our party and our government. We care about families. We include them in the important decisions about their lives. We involve them openly and freely in those things which will help to build an even better future for themselves and their children. And that, Mr. Speaker, more than any single occasion, gives me hope and confidence for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I mention that special moment which came at a very important stage in my life because I think it is essential to our province's future to recognize and build on the obvious strengths of our people, the strengths of young people and the family. And the record of this government is second to none in working towards this goal.

So, Mr. Speaker, you can see why it came as a shock and a surprise to me when I witnesses on television the recent selection of the new Leader of the Conservative Party and listened to his statement about how important the family is. From his remarks it appeared that he and his party have only just discovered the completeness and co-operation which exists in a family. From his remarks it appears he and his party have just now realized how important the family is. The New Democratic Party's principles have recognized for years that great things can be accomplished when people work together as a family. This government doesn't simply pay lip service to the fact that co-operation and strength are important lessons to be learned in families. This government has acted to support Saskatchewan families.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I could be reading too much into the Conservative leader's remarks. I certainly don't claim to be divine but I did have some difficulty in accepting his remarks regarding families in Saskatchewan, difficulty in the light of one incident in particular, Mr. Speaker.

Recently our neighbor to the south had a president from California. For the sake of this anecdotes, let us refer to him as the four-fingered president. But in Saskatchewan during the Opposition leader's acceptance speech, Saskatchewan Conservatives went one better. Saskatchewan Conservatives selected a six-fingered leader. Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't object to the similarity between the two salutes but I do object to the latter part of the Conservative leader's final remarks. He said, Mr. Speaker, thumbs down on the NDP. Thumbs down on people who don't agree with him and his party's view of the world.

As a new member, Mr. Speaker, I may be forgiven for a certain degree of idealism regarding our system, if I say the government of Allan Blakeney believes in putting thumbs up when it comes to people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — This throne speech proves it. This government supports the freedom and dignity of every individual in Saskatchewan to choose his own path when it comes to those things he believes in. When you consider the new measures contained in the throne speech regarding improvement of health care, improved social services, new initiatives in education and justice and the strengthening of pension rights, not to mention funds set aside to celebrate the 75th anniversary of our glorious province, thumbs down to people can hardly be an expression of the direction of this government.

Mr. Speaker, my forefathers and the grandparents and parents of many in this Chamber left repressive, autocratic systems behind when they moved to this new land. They fled countries with leaders who put thumbs down on political and religious freedom. Many escaped with their lives and little else from leaders who made false, arbitrary distinctions in order to have power for its own sake. Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear that the message of the Regina North-West by-election was thumbs up for people in my constituency.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — The message I want to bring to this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, today is a thumbs-up message for a new direction by a compassionate government concerned about all of its citizens.

Mr. Speaker, there is not a more obvious point at which to view the difference between this government and the opposition and to make some comments regarding the economy of our province. The throne speech is modest in its suggestions regarding the future prospects for the Canadian economy. Actually what it suggests is that the prospects are not encouraging. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the economic prospects for Canadian under the leadership of the brothers and sisters of the hon. member opposite are downright depressing. While the Conservative government in Ottawa has been busy jacking up interest rates four times in three months, what was the government here in Saskatchewan doing? Mr. Speaker, in last spring's budget this government offered cost of living protection to the people of Saskatchewan with a hefty income tax cut totalling \$26 million, by extending the property improvement grants to include renters so they now are eligible for up to \$115 per year; a move which offered some relief to 85,000 Saskatchewan renters.

Senior citizens were provided a special school tax rebate of up to \$460 a year. Fifty-seven thousand homeowners who are 65 years of age and over will benefit from this move. Benefits for senior citizens under the Saskatchewan Income Plan were increased by 25 per cent and increases in utility prices for electricity, natural gas and telephones were restricted.

These are just a few of the measures taken by this government to keep the cost of living from skyrocketing out of the reach of Saskatchewan people. This government, Mr. Speaker, cares about Saskatchewan families. But of course, while the Government of Saskatchewan has been taking positive steps to help alleviate the financial burdens people are facing today, what have the brothers and sisters in Ottawa of Conservatives opposite, done about the cost of living? Mr. Speaker, let me tell you. They have been holding these people under their thumbs in the most crass and unfeeling way.

Regina North-West is a rapidly growing area. We have many young families and young people who have just bought or built homes in the past few years. Many of these people have moved to Saskatchewan from other parts of Canada because they see hope in the future of this province; in six short months, Mr. Speaker, they have seen these hopes for their new homes and their families wiped out by interest rate increases that can only be called usury, interest rates introduced by a federal Conservative government. A number of my constituents have been calling me; they are deeply troubled, Mr. Speaker. They see all they have worked for being lost, not because they aren't working hard, not because their income isn't adequate but simply because federal Conservative interest rates make it impossible for them to maintain their homes. In one instance, Mr. Speaker, a family — one of those families the Leader of the Conservative Party has just discovered — have lost their home. Mr. Speaker, in order to show just what this cruelly conceived federal solution to our economic problems means, let me demonstrate with an example.

If you purchased a home with a 30-year, \$40,000 mortgage at a 10 per cent interest rate, your payment would be \$345. Today with a 15.75 interest rate your payment would increase to \$514 — an increase of \$180.69, an increase which amounts to a startling 52 per cent. How many Saskatchewan families of ordinary means can afford to pay an extra \$180.69 or 52 per cent more each month just for their mortgage? Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell the members opposite, not many. And this increase doesn't even include the extra costs higher interest rates create for other important necessities families need to live such as food and clothing. I remember, Mr. Speaker, the divine pronouncements made by the federal Conservative leader before he was elected, one of which said and I quote:

There is nothing less sensible than the government's determination to increase interest rates to record levels.

Now that he's Prime Minister, he doesn't think it's such a bad idea to increase interest rates. In the meantime, the government of Allan Blakeney in the spring budget introduced mortgage assistance for home-owners. Effective for the current tax year, a provincial income tax credit for home-owners of up to \$250 based on first mortgage interest paid on family homes was introduced and by the end of this year it will have reduced 1979 Saskatchewan income taxes for well over 100,000 taxpayers by a total of \$18 million.

Mr. Speaker, that's positive action for people, that's positive action for families. That's the kind of action that is lacking from all Conservatives. Saskatchewan people aren't happy with the Conservative record, Mr. Speaker. They expected more and they received less. They didn't expect the new Prime Minister to perform miracles. I grant you, Mr. Speaker, he isn't divine. They simply expected him to keep the promises he made before he was elected and he didn't. He didn't keep his promises and the people of Prince Albert told him so just recently . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — . . . and they sent Stan Hovdebo, a New Democrat, to Ottawa to tell him so. On November 19 past they elected him in a riding that for 26 years has been a Conservative stronghold. They elected Stan Hovdebo because federal Conservatives wouldn't keep their promises.

Of course, Saskatchewan conservatives suggest they are somehow different from their brothers and sisters in the federal government in Ottawa, but Mr. Speaker, I question whether there really is a difference because Saskatchewan Conservatives are led by the same leader who in the 1977 winter issue of *Business Review* suggested that 80 per cent of the Saskatchewan farmers are unproductive. He went on to suggest they shouldn't be allowed to farm. He ventured the opinion there must be some other way of maintaining these people than allowing them to farm.

So you see, Mr. Speaker, we have the Conservative economic policy for Saskatchewan farmers in a nutshell clearly outlined by the new leader of that old party, move 80 per cent of the farmers off the land and forget them and give their land to the other 20 per cent to farm. I don't call that policy one which was meant for too many families, do you? On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, the government of Allan Blakeney has continued to support and build up rural life in a variety of ways while ensuring diversification in the rest of the economy so our province is not subject to the grave effects of the boom and bust that used to plague us.

One of the strongest indicators of this change brought about in our economy since 1971 is high employment. Mr. Speaker, employment opportunities continue to grow in large numbers, massive resource development, construction projects such as the IPSCO expansion, several downtown redevelopments, hospital regeneration and expansion and construction of various education facilities such as the W.H. Ford School on Rink Avenue, whose official opening I attended on this government's behalf on November 28.

In addition, the diversification of our economy has opened up new employment opportunities in our service industries. Increased investment by our Crown corporations in the province has also taken place over this last year.

Together, Mr. Speaker, these measures have kept unemployment in Saskatchewan at the lowest or next to lowest rate in Canada. At the end of last month the Saskatchewan unemployment rate stood at 2.9 per cent, the lowest rate in Canada. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, as the throne speech points out, the average employed labor force in Saskatchewan was 14,000 higher for the first nine months than for the corresponding period of 1978.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — Since 1975, Saskatchewan has had the lowest unemployment rate for more months than any other province, including Alberta.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — Mr. Speaker, as the throne speech so aptly puts it, Saskatchewan's economic prospects are bright. If I might paraphrase a popular jingle, the actions by this government to improve the Saskatchewan economy since 1971 could be described as 'Everything you expect from your government and a whole lot more.' I will give you just a few indications:

1. Our gross domestic product in 1978 reached almost \$10 billion. In real terms it has grown by more than 6 per cent in 4 of the past 5 years;
2. Total public and private investment last year exceeded \$3 billion;

December 3, 1979

3. The value of our mineral shipments doubled between 1974 and 1978. In 1978 it stood at \$1.5 billion, Mr. Speaker, and is expected to reach \$1.75 billion in 1979.

4. Our resource revenues in 1971 totalled approximately \$34 million. In 1979, revenues from resources are expected to total in the vicinity of \$515 million. That is 15 times more than in 1971 and more revenue from resources than this government now receives in personal income taxes.

5. During the same period our economy produced 50,000 new jobs.

What this action means, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a whole lot more for Saskatchewan people, a whole lot more for Saskatchewan families.

This action by the government of Allan Blakeney is no more obvious anywhere than in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. The unprecedented growth of Saskatchewan over the past eight years has made Regina a city offering many new opportunities and facilities for families who choose to live in or near our capital.

In 1970-71 Regina was referred to as the boarded-up capital of Canada. The main streets of Regina contained more places of business which were boarded up than most other cities of a larger size in our country. In just eight short years, Regina has come a long way. We have a new city hall, a new police station, new sewage facilities, new downtown redevelopment such as the Cornwall Centre, which will ensure the continued viability of commercial enterprises in downtown Regina for many years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — In the suburban areas, especially in Regina North-West, the Normanview Shopping Centre is expanding and the Sherwood Co-op is involved in a large new shopping centre being built there.

Mr. Speaker, I am not suggesting the provincial government did these things. I am suggesting, however, that the provincial government supported local government making decisions at the local level and the local authorities made these decisions. They achieved a great deal.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — Those decisions were made a little easier for the people of Regina over the past few years because of the support of the Saskatchewan government.

Grants made by the province to the city of Regina in 1971 were a paltry \$900,000. Grants made by this government to the city in 1978 were not \$900,000, Mr. Speaker, but \$18.8 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — Twenty times as much — a 2,000 per cent increase.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that gave real muscle to the council. The great bulk of that money was in effect, money without strings attached. The council made decisions at the local

level and the results of those decisions are all over Regina to be seen.

In Regina alone, Mr. Speaker, building permits for commercial and residential purposes totalled \$26 million in 1971, but since 1971, the average has been nearly \$98 million each year. This year alone up to October 31, the total value is over \$109 million. When you consider building permits in Saskatoon during that period, the same good performance holds true. City officials in Saskatoon expect building permits to reach an all-time record of \$160 million this year. Mr. Speaker, that means people are moving to Saskatoon. They want to live there. The 1979 official Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan data for the city of Saskatoon lists a total population of 144,269. That's an increase over the official figures for 1973 by 18,000. As the throne speech points out, Mr. Speaker, that population increase is reflected right across our province.

Now I mentioned the Saskatoon population increase for a particular reason. I'm puzzled. I listened to the Leader of the Conservative Party at his selection saying people are leaving Saskatchewan in droves; masses of them clamouring to get out of Saskatchewan as fast as they can. So, Mr. Speaker, I checked very carefully and I checked the figures for Saskatoon in particular, since the Conservative leader has lived in that city for some time. Since he has had some measure of contact with our young people through the profession of teaching, I made doubly sure of my figures. Mr. Speaker, my figures outlining a population increase in Saskatoon are correct; his aren't. May I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the PCP, use his thumbs to count, use them to count the new people coming to this province, instead of putting them down on people; use his thumbs and those of his cohorts in the Conservative Part, the PCP, to get his facts straight. People are moving to Saskatchewan. They are here. Hon. members opposite might not know they are here but they are. They are here because of the action of a government which truly believes in people. One of the surest ways of demonstrating that belief is to know how many are here and what they are doing and what you can do to help them realize their dreams for the future. The government of Allan Blakeney, Mr. Speaker, is a thumbs-up government when it comes to people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — Mr. Speaker, at a time when resource development in Saskatchewan and in Canada is the focus of much public attention, the Government of Saskatchewan is acting on the realization that society's greatest resource is young people. Indeed our greatest resource is young people! After years of slow growth, no growth and even reverse growth in the seven years prior to 1971, Saskatchewan's economy has recently come alive. And that's good news for young people, Mr. Speaker. Young people now, for the first time in many years, have many more opportunities to develop skills in the province and to put those skills to work right here in Saskatchewan. The future of our province and our country rests upon the strong shoulders of our young people. Therefore careful attention and assistance must be given to aid the development of youth. This attention and assistance in the development of youth must come from various segments of society: individuals, the family, churches, volunteer organizations and governments. We all have an important role to play.

Since 1971, this government has made sure the mechanisms for learning in Saskatchewan have been put in place to serve the total population. As your economy has grown, so has our need to create new ways for an expanding population of young people to take an active part in building for the future. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, this government has recognized the need for increasing learning opportunities for

adults, to assist them in coping with these changes in our province. This year saw record enrolments in our institutes, vocational programs, trade schools, and community colleges. One of the most astounding examples of the opportunities for learning provided for Saskatchewan people by this government, is in community colleges. Last year, 15 regionally based community colleges provide almost 7,000 learning events to almost 100,000 people at 663 different locations in Saskatchewan. These learning events included the widest possible variety of content: university credit classes, basic education and agricultural programs to mention just a few. Forty-three per cent of the people who took part in these programs were under 30 years of age, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, local people govern these colleges and they make the decisions about what they want to learn. That kind of opportunity didn't exist under Liberals prior to 1971 and a program of this breadth, imagination and scope doesn't exist under any one of the Conservative governments across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few specific comments regarding universities. These are troubled times for Canadian universities. When I was in Toronto two weeks ago, I listened to a radio commercial for the University of Guelph in Ontario. It was a commercial designed to improve declining enrolments at that university. To some degree, our Saskatchewan universities are faced with similar problems, but for different reasons.

In Conservative Ontario, there's a pretty bleak outlook for any young person without a particularly marketable skill. Unemployment in that province continues at a high level. Here in Saskatchewan, where we face one of the highest economic growth rates in Canada, our immediate need is for people who possess technical skills and trades. There's work here and our young people recognize it and they're anxious to acquire the sort of training that will enable them to enjoy the benefits of an expanding economy. But the commitment of our government to assist our universities in maintaining their high standards of excellence remains.

In 1971-72, our universities received funding totalling \$28 million. This fiscal year under an NDP government, our universities were funded to a record \$84 million. Mr. Speaker, that's three times as much as in 1971 and the inflation rate is only 75 per cent. Our government's attitude toward learning in general, and universities in particular, is a positive one — an approach that considers the full range of learning needs experienced by our young people. I am pleased to note in the throne speech our government's intent to promote student tours and youth seminars to educate young people on the role of co-operatives in our society.

For a few moments, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make some remarks in relation to Saskatchewan workers. The throne speech outlines the October increase in the Saskatchewan minimum wage to \$3.50 an hour and a further increase to \$3.65 an hour on May 1, 1980. I have already spoken about the prevailing economic conditions in our province which enable people to have the opportunity to engage in gainful employment. It's the best record in Canada. In keeping with this observations, all of us are aware of the present situation in relation to government employees. They're on strike. And they don't like to be on strike. We would rather they weren't on strike. In short, Mr. Speaker, I don't think anyone enjoys the results of strike action on either side. As a new member, with many of those workers in my constituency, I know there is a deep concern on both sides that we be able to work together to achieve a reasonable solution. But, Mr. Speaker, it's not that easy. It's not that easy because both sides have to come to some mutual agreement on the issues.

But Saskatchewan workers know this government has a good record where they are concerned. This government believes in the collective bargaining process. It believes in working with workers to achieve the best possible outcome. The record, Mr. Speaker, is very clear. Since 1971, the government of Allan Blakeney has introduced the most comprehensive package of labor legislation on behalf of workers of any government in this country and Saskatchewan workers know it. Anyone who suggests otherwise or forgets that record is not playing fair with Saskatchewan people or Saskatchewan workers.

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the saying 'those who forget the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them.' That saying holds very true in at least some of the rhetoric I have heard during this difficult period. But the record is there and the record is a good one:

1. The most comprehensive occupational health and safety legislation in North America, introduced by this government;
2. The most comprehensive workers' compensation benefits package anywhere in Canada;
3. The highest minimum wage in the country;
4. Establishment of a women's division in the Department of Labour to assist them in their struggle for more equitable treatment as co-workers.

And the list goes on. Unlike with governments in Conservative Ontario and Conservative Alberta, Saskatchewan public employees are allowed to exercise their individual freedom to take part in political activity. And unlike the Lyon Conservative government in Manitoba, this government isn't laying off thousands of public employees in the name of acute, protracted restraint.

The record is clear, Mr. Speaker, and that record is a good one. All of us realize collective bargaining is not a perfect instrument. But, in the opinion of this government it is the most perfect instrument we have, if it allows workers to negotiate in a free and confident manner. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it reflects our democratic system itself; it is very fragile. It is very difficult to achieve solutions and those solutions are not always possible without some degree of give and take on both sides. In short, it involves hard, sometimes bitter bargaining. But it's worth it to preserve this freedom for workers. This government believes it's worth it, Mr. Speaker. I support the SGEA workers and the government in their commitment to achieving a collective solution during these negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words now about health care. Health has become an issue again when difficulties developed in the negotiations for a new fee schedule for doctors, and some doctors began direct billing. It is a problem which is currently being worked on by the Department of Health and the medical care insurance commission.

As you know, the medical care insurance commission negotiates a set of fees with the Saskatchewan Medical Association (SMA) once a year. The commission or MCIC as it is more commonly known felt at the end of 1978 that it could not accept the demands of the Saskatchewan Medical Association for a 24 per cent increase in doctors' incomes in one year. The Saskatchewan Medical Association which functions as the bargaining agency for the doctors, then asked that a mediator be named and the government agreed.

December 3, 1979

The medical association asked that Judge Allister Muir of Moose Jaw be appointed to mediate, and again the government agreed. When Judge Muir made his recommendations public, the medical association rejected them. His call for an 8.4 per cent increase in payments to the doctors was agreed to by the government, and rejected by the SMA. That, I think, is important to remember. The SMA rejected the proposals of their own choice for mediator.

There is also the fact that doctors in Alberta and Manitoba had just settled for an 8 per cent and 8.1 per cent increase respectively, well below the 8.4 per cent Judge Muir was recommending.

Another point to remember is this: that 8.4 per cent increase is not applied to any income like yours or mine. It is applied to a doctor's income and in 1978 the average Saskatchewan doctor received \$72,000 from the MCIC. In addition to that, they received another average of \$8,000 from other sources, such as the worker's compensation board, the cancer commission, insurance companies and other agencies. That means, Mr. Speaker, that an average Saskatchewan doctor last year made approximately \$80,000. If you add 8.4 per cent to that in 1979, I think we will all agree it amounts to a nice steady income.

I believe — and I think the Saskatchewan public agrees — that we have been more than fair with the SMA and its members. They are the highest paid group in our society, and their increases in income have been as regular under the Blakeney government as anywhere in Canada. In fact, Saskatchewan has led the prairie provinces since 1971 in percentage increases in payments for physician services. Annual payment negotiations have resulted in a raise of 9.4 per cent in doctors' incomes each year since 1975. That has certainly kept the doctors up with inflation.

Another way to look at the situation is this. In 1970 the average doctor received \$40,000. Last year it was \$72,000. This is an increase of \$32,000 in 8 years. The point that I've been trying to make with all these figures is that the Blakeney government has not been starving doctors. As I said earlier, I think we have been most generous and most fair in our dealings with the SMA, and I think you might agree, Mr. Speaker.

The Conservatives have been saying that we have been doing a number of things wrong in our negotiations with the doctors, that our course is not one they would have followed if they were the government. They have been lavishing their criticism both in the legislature and outside, but when it comes time for them to say what they would do they come tongue-tied and cannot answer. Would they pay the doctors whatever the SMA asked for? Well no, that would make the taxpayers mad. Would they give the doctors less than what Judge Muir recommended? Well no, that would make the doctors mad. It is becoming more and more clear to the people of Saskatchewan that the Conservative Party is only interested in mounting these ill-conceived criticisms of government policy in an effort to conceal their own lack of policy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — When you present them with the request to know what their course of action would be on any one of a number of issues — well, they don't know. They haven't a clue. The Conservatives opposite keep saying that they are going to be or want to be the government. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how can you be a government when in opposition (and I use that term loosely) you have no programs or policies? It is sort of like being married but not wanting to have any responsibilities or not wanting to give

any commitment.

Before I leave the subject of negotiations with the medical association, I want to answer a couple of the charges made recently by the opposition. It has been said that our doctors are leaving in droves for the United States to escape the overregulation and red tape of socialized medicine. What are the real facts? Well, in 1963, the first full year of operation under medicare, there were 551 doctors in Saskatchewan. By 1970, that figure had gone up to 693, and in 1978, 1,335 doctors were practising in this province. The opposition knows these figures to be available and yet they continue to talk about doctors fleeing our medicare plan.

Another story the opposition has been spreading is that direct billing by doctors has become very widespread. The truth is that over the last five or ten years, about 2 per cent of all bills for medical treatment involved a direct payment by the patient. The other 98 per cent was paid totally by MCIC (medical care insurance commission) at no cost to the patient.

Recently, a few more doctors have been direct billing their patients at a level higher than MCIC will cover. When the legislature adjourned for this summer, the figure was up to about 6 per cent of all the bills Saskatchewan people generate but was declining. Direct patient billing is happening. There is no doubt about that. But for the Conservatives to attempt to make the situation look very much worse than it is, is a great disservice to the ill, the elderly, and all of us who from time to time need medical treatment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Conservative Party has other things to answer for in the area of health care, and I want to ask those representatives of the Progressive Conservative Party who sit here in this House, why they think we should regard them as any different than their Conservative brothers and sisters in other provinces, who are busy destroying medicare?

I want to draw the members' attention to a story in the Toronto Star of January 20, 1979. It begins this way, and I quote:

Hospital administrators across Ontario are poring over their budgets trying to figure out whether they can cut back without closing beds or laying off staff. Health Minister Dennis Timbrell confirmed that active treatment hospitals will get no more than a 4.5 per cent increase in '79-'80.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a 4.5 per cent increase in funding for hospitals in Conservative Ontario, at a time when inflation is running at double that amount.

There were other interesting stories in the Toronto papers at the same time. In the Globe and Mail of January 23, on page five, is a story of the closing of Lakeshore Hospital in Toronto, a large psychiatric hospital. The story is interesting because it gives us a look at the compassion and the efficiency of the Conservative government.

Metropolitan Toronto is short of psychiatric hospital beds. By international standards, Toronto has fewer beds than most United States cities, and less than one-quarter of the average number considered necessary in 10 European countries. That information came to light in a study done by an independent consultant commissioned by the Davis government. One of the major recommendations of the consultant was to keep the

December 3, 1979

Lakeshore Hospital open. The cost of the study, Mr. Deputy Speaker — \$116,000. Its major recommendations were ignored. Now that is Tory efficiency for you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the story goes on to paint an even darker picture of the state of health care in Ontario. By the year 1981, the Davis government will reduce the ratio of beds to referral population to four beds per thousand in Northern Ontario, and 3.5 per thousand in the South. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is about one-half of the number of beds available on a per capita basis that are available through most of Saskatchewan.

This cutback in hospital space by the Davis government has been carried out by the most drastic means. In the calendar year 1979, 900 beds will be closed across Ontario. In Toronto alone, 1,172 hospital beds will be closed by 1981. The Toronto Star story goes on to predict longer waiting list for surgery and a reduction in the level of care given patients.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that same issue of the Globe and Mail had a very frightening story on page one. The headline said, and I quote: 'Some hospitals turn away sick in ambulances.'

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make this clear to the Progressive Conservative members sitting here in this Assembly. That front page story in the Globe and Mail is not talking about Bangladesh or India or other parts of the world where the economic resources available simply will not permit adequate medical treatment. That story is talking about Metropolitan Toronto where hospitals are so starved for funding they cannot keep enough hospital beds open to be able to accept sick people arriving in ambulances.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think even the best health delivery system will on occasion have a period when one hospital or another will have a full emergency ward and the rest of the hospital will be full as well. But in parts of Ontario where the health budgets have been slashed in recent years, the situation is becoming more and more common. The people of Ontario might be forgiven for asking their Conservative government why it is when a single person must pay \$240 and a family \$480 a year for hospital premiums, that they cannot get better medical treatment or care than they are getting. I think we should ask the Conservatives here in Saskatchewan to tell us why. Tell the people of Saskatchewan why there is a \$6 charge for emergency and out-patient services in Conservative New Brunswick. Why does that province also have a \$10 fee for hospital admissions and a tax which is levied on senior citizens in the amount of \$4 for hospital admissions? Why if Conservatives believe in universal medical care and hospitalization, does the province of Alberta require its citizens to pay \$91.80 per single person and \$183.60 per family in annual hospital premiums? Why does that oil rich Conservative province charge \$5 to adults and children for the first day they spend in a hospital bed?

Why does the Conservative government of Newfoundland level a \$3 daily charge on patients while in hospital? And why is the Tory government of Manitoba dismantling the children's dental plan and the prescription drug plan which was started by the previous Schreyer government?

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on but I think I have made my point. If you were to put hospitalization insurance and medicare under attack, if you want to see them destroyed, the Conservative Party is the party for you. If your desire is to see free universal medical care and hospitalization maintained and protected as they are here in Saskatchewan, look to the New Democratic Party.

During the 1978 provincial general election when we were saying medicare was under attack in Saskatchewan, few people listened. Well, Mr. Speaker, if you have been to a doctor lately, you will know better than I can tell you that medicare is indeed under attack. Reports in the media as I have just described indicate that medicare in Canada is under attack and the system as we know it today is in jeopardy.

We in Saskatchewan have the best medicare system in North American but we still have a few problems. The system is not perfect. But the promising point about these problems is that this government knows what the problems are and is attempting to resolve them.

During the by-election, the problem of extra direct billing of patients by doctors was brought to my attention by some 20 families. Now it was not a problem for these families in the sense of paying the entire bill but the irritating part of the problem which my constituents and I are most concerned about, is the fact people are being indiscriminately charged more than what the MCIC fee schedule allows for reimbursement. I'm sure most of those families aren't too concerned if they are direct billed as long as MCIC covers the cost in full and I am of the same opinion. But when people and/or families are extra billed anywhere from \$15 to \$250 over and above the MCIC fee schedule too often, they will not stand for it very long and they shouldn't either. As far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, once is too often.

Medicare's foundation in Saskatchewan is built on the four basic principles of accessibility, comprehensiveness, portability and non-profit public administration. In the case of my constituents and others across this province, the cornerstone principle of accessibility is being threatened by extra billing. Because these four cornerstone principles are interrelated, Mr. Speaker, a threat to one is a threat to all. If the destruction of one of these principles is threatened by something as distasteful as extra billing, then the course of action is very clear for this government. The course of action should be to bring about the death of extra billing.

Mr. Speaker, I don't wish to be misunderstood on this issue and I don't believe I am. A resolution dealing with the elimination of extra billing of patients by doctors, emanating from my own constituency's annual convention, was passed almost unanimously at our recent provincial convention. The emotional concern at that convention was dynamite. The delegates of our party at that convention recognized the threat extra billing poses to our beloved medicare and their direction to the provincial government is crystal clear — stop extra billing.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the people of Saskatchewan that our government will assist in solving the problem of extra billing in co-operation with the SMA, because we believe — unequivocally — that the elimination of extra billing will serve the best interest of all the people of Saskatchewan and their families and will maintain the basic high quality of our medicare plan.

To conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I want to say I am proud to represent the people of Regina North-West and I will make every effort to ensure they feel the same about me. I am also proud to sit in this Chamber with people such as Allan Blakeney, the most respected and capable Premier in Canada . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SOLOMON: — . . . with people like Roy Romanow, the most exciting orator in this

Chamber, and with people with the wisdom and experience of Eiling Kramer, the drive and determination of Gordon MacMurchy, the political skill of Elwood Cowley, the patience and strength of Ted Bowerman and the courage and loyalty of Bill Allen.

Mr. Speaker, I have learned much from these people over the years and from my other government colleagues as well, with whom I share the privilege of representing the people of Saskatchewan. This is a government, Mr. Speaker, which through its actions has made the vision of a better, more humane and decent society seem more attainable for many people across our province. Mr. Speaker, 1980 marks the 75th anniversary of Saskatchewan. For 35 years of its young age, Saskatchewan people have been served and served well by successive CCF-NDP governments, governments with a vision, governments who truly care about Saskatchewan people and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I believe our government has the vision and courage which can best be described in a few paraphrased words from another visionary in this century:

Some men see things as they are and say why; we dream of things that never were, and say why not.

Mr. Speaker, I move that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R.G. LONG (Cut Knife-Lloydminster): — Mr. Speaker, it's an honor for me to second the motion of the member for Regina North-West, John Solomon. As you know, Mr. Solomon was just elected to this Assembly in a by-election on October 17 of this year. As I sat and watched the very capable way in which he moved the address in reply, I could not help but think the people of Regina North-West made a very wise decision on October 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Premier for asking me to second the address in reply to the throne speech. It has traditionally been thought of as an honor for the constituents of a riding to have their member named in this capacity and the people of Cut Knife-Lloydminster constituency recognize and appreciate this kind gesture on the part of Premier Blakeney.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — I wish to say as well to the Deputy Speaker that it is reassuring to those of us who are relatively new members to know that someone with the experience and the wise counsel of Auburn Pepper is in the Speaker's Chair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate the new members of the Executive Council — the member for Morse (Mr. Gross), Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Hammersmith), Quill Lakes (Mr. Koskie), and Regina Lakeview (Mr. McArthur). All will make a very worthwhile contribution to the cabinet discussions in what has become known as the strongest provincial government in Canada.

I would also like to congratulate Grant Devine, the new elected Leader of the Conservative Party of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I wish him a long and interesting career as Leader of the Opposition.

I would like now to say a few words about the Cut Knife-Lloydminster constituency which I have the pleasure to represent.

The Cut Knife-Lloydminster area has a rich history. In the middle of the 1700s the great explorers Anthony Henday and David Thompson passed through the region. In the latter half of that century the fur trade developed in the northwest part of the prairies; and at one time there were seven trading posts on the North Saskatchewan River and the Battle River where they flow through the Cut Knife-Lloydminster riding. During the northwest rebellion of 1885 a number of military engagements took place in our part of the province. Cut Knife Hill, Pound Maker Reserve and Thunderchild Reserve were all in the thick of the action at the time of that second Riel rebellion.

The first white homesteaders in the district were the Barr colonists, who came out from England in the spring of 1903. They responded to an appeal made by Reverend Barr, the Anglican pastor of a London church, to make the nearly 10,000 mile trek across the Atlantic Ocean and halfway across the North American continent. The Barr colonists not only made the dangerous ocean voyage and the long railway trip West, but travelled the last 200 miles from the end of the rails at Saskatoon on horseback and ox-drawn wagons. They set up their colony astride the 4th meridian and began to farm the land. The descendants of those original Barr colonists still make up a large portion of my constituents. And they have, in the years since 1903, been joined by people from other countries of Europe and indeed many other countries of the world.

The people of Cut Knife-Lloydminster are good, hard-working people — people with a tradition of helping their neighbors. They are people with a progressive outlook on life. They sent A.J. MacAuley, the farmer-labor candidate, to this Assembly in 1934. They chose I.C. Nollet to represent them in every election between 1944 and 1967.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — From 1967, Mr. Speaker, to 1978, they elected Miro Kwasnica as their MLA.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, I say that as a record of note, a record of CCF and NDP representation which I intend to do my best to extend.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take just a few moments to mention a very special constituent of mine — Kenneth Argue, the 10-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Alvy Argue of Marshall. Kenneth and his parents recently travelled to Ottawa to attend a reception at Government House where Governor General Ed Schreyer presented Kenneth with the Jack Cornwall decoration. The Jack Cornwall decoration is named in memory of a boy scout in England who was aboard the H.M.S. Chester during the Battle of Jutland and was presented posthumously with the Victoria Cross. In spite of the fact

that he was mortally wounded and with death and dying about him, he stayed at his post until the end. The award is presented to a scout who has risked his life for others or has shown great courage through pain and illness.

Kenneth, who has been a wolf cub for the past three years has been fighting a battle with cancer for the past seven years, he has undergone radiation, chemotherapy and surgery. In spite of this adversity, Kenneth has led an active life as a cub. He has earned his individual badges, three out of five stars and his first aid badge. He has played ball in the provincials and is a good student in school.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to join me in congratulating this young man and his parents.

Mr. Speaker, I now want to turn to the subject of agriculture, the most important industry in Saskatchewan. Energy resources have been grabbing most of the headlines of the economic news these days but agriculture is still the backbone of Saskatchewan's economy. The farmers of Cut Knife-Lloydminster are among the most productive in the province. Several of the delivery points in my constituency take in over a million bushels of grain a year. Some of the purebred livestock breeders in Cut Knife-Lloydminster enjoy a worldwide reputation for the quality of their livestock. I am pleased that the throne speech recognized the importance of the agricultural industry in Saskatchewan and reaffirms this government's commitment to keeping it strong.

Mr. Speaker, it's not my intention today to go through a list of many excellent programs instituted to support the farmers of Saskatchewan by the Blakeney government and its predecessors, the governments of Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd. The people of this province know that one of the first acts of the Douglas government was to save Saskatchewan farms from the clutches of eastern banks and mortgage companies. They know that a CCF government brought electricity to rural Saskatchewan when the private companies said it couldn't be done. They will not be surprised to hear that the land bank has given 2,500 young farmers an opportunity to get on the land and that FarmStart has provided upstarts of capital for 3,300 farmers wishing to start livestock production. There's no need for me to talk about the past, Mr. Speaker, because the record of this government is good in standing with the farmers and the rural communities of this province. The record speaks for itself.

Today I want to talk about the future of agriculture in Saskatchewan. It is a bright future because the world needs all the food our farmers can produce. But it is a future threatened by attacks on the structures and system that are the very foundation of our grain industry. I refer to the attacks on the crowrate, attacks on the wheat board and orderly marketing, attacks on the family farms and rural communities to call for inland terminals and branch line abandonment. Where do these attacks come from, Mr. Speaker? They come from the railways which want to forget their obligations to western Canadian farmers. They come from Conservative front organizations like the Palliser Wheat Growers Association, who want to destroy the fair and efficient grain marketing system that our fathers fought to build. And more often than not, they come from Conservative politicians both provincial and federal. An attack might come in the form of a reference to the outmoded concept of the family farm. It might be an observation that 80 per cent of our farmers are not productive and should not be on the land, or it might be a more direct attack such as advocating the end of the crowrate or appointing a grain transportation co-ordinator who says things like we should get rid of the quota system.

Mr. Speaker, there's one common thread in all of these attacks and that is that

Conservatives, as usual, want to go backwards. They want to go back to the days of dog eat dog in the grain handling and marketing system. They want to tear down all the structures and system that bring some measure of stability to the agricultural industry, structures that western Canadian farmers fought long and hard to build so they would not be at the mercy of the exploiters of the grain trade. They want to replace stability with a free-for-all in which corporate greed would ultimately be the victor.

It is just another example, Mr. Speaker, of the Conservatives' version of the golden rule. To most people the golden rule means sharing and co-operation, but to this Conservative Party that claims to stand for God and Christian principles, the golden rule means one thing, Mr. Speaker, just one thing: those who have the gold should make the rules. That's why, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan now stands alone against the Conservative federal government and the governments of Alberta and Manitoba. We stand alone in support of the Hall commission recommendations as the solution to grain handling transportation problems. Mr. Speaker, I would like to summarize those recommendations:

1. Port development at Prince Rupert and Churchill;
2. Maintenance of the branch line and country elevator system as the basic grain collection network;
3. Guarantee of the crowrate to the producers;
4. Payment of compensatory rates directly to the railways by the federal government;
5. Equipping of the system by the railways;
6. An increase in the role of the Canadian Wheat Board in co-ordinating grain movement;
7. Extension of the crowrate to processed products.

Mr. Speaker, instead of taking the opportunity as a new federal government to implement the Hall recommendation, the Conservatives have ignored them and instituted more studies headed with people like Jack Murtaugh who says we should scrap the Port of Churchill.

Mr. Speaker, we don't need any more studies. We need action. Hall said guarantee the crowrate to the producer. Now we have a federal government that talks about maintaining crow benefit. Hall said the federal government should take compensatory rates directly to the railways. No, says Don Mazankowski, we will guarantee crow benefit to the farmers. Let the farmers pay the railroads four or five times what they are now paying for transportation for their grain and then borrow money at the highest interest rates in Canadian history and wait for months for their crowrate compensation cheque from the federal government. That way the Tories can set up a whole new bureaucracy, Mr. Speaker, to mail out hundreds and thousands of cheques, and any time they get short of cash in the federal treasury they can reduce the crow benefits. Never mind that every time the railroads increase their rates, farmers will have to negotiate for an increase in the crow benefit rate.

Mr. Speaker, western farmers used to expect the federal government to negotiate with

December 3, 1979

railroads on their behalf. Mazankowski's crow benefit plan would have the federal government negotiating with the farmers on the railroads' behalf. Mr. Speaker, this stand on the crowrate is one of the many dark clouds in the blue Tory skies that Mazankowski bragged about after the federal election last May.

Our agriculture minister for the province of Saskatchewan put the case very well the other day when he said the crow benefit option is not worthy of consideration by anyone except the pawns of the private enterprise system, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, the crowrate must remain enshrined in law. No other option is acceptable to this party and this government. Mr. Justice Emmett Hall also recommended that railways be responsible for equipping the grain transportation system. This has not happened. Liberal and Conservative federal governments have not forced the railroads to live up to their legal obligations under the Railway Act to provide enough cars to move grain. In 1968, the grain fleet had 30,000 cars. Today it has only 13,500. The two major rail companies have never purchased a hopper car. Mr. Speaker, CPR hasn't bought a box car since 1950 and the CN hasn't bought one since 1946

In the 1977-78 crop year, the Canadian Wheat Board deferred sales of over 75 million bushels and turned down other sales of over 80 million bushels. Farmers had the grain to sell but the railroads could not transport it to the ports, Mr. Speaker. Farmers lost \$450 million in grain sales. The wheat board says it can sell 30 million tonnes of grain by 1985 — one and one-half times what we are now selling — if Canada can get its grain to market.

This fall, Mr. Speaker, there wasn't time left for more studies of the grain transportation mess. Grain cars were urgently needed but there was no leadership coming from the federal government and the railways flatly refused to buy hopper cars. That is why, in October, the Government of Saskatchewan responded to an urgent request for more cars made by the Canadian Wheat Board and placed an order for 1,000 cars to be used for transporting board grains. Mr. Speaker, we are using our resource revenues to help move our farmers' products. Mr. Speaker, we simply have to because of the indecision and ineptitude of the Tories in Ottawa.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has led the way and Conservative governments have dragged sadly behind. The Alberta government said a few weeks after Saskatchewan acted that Alberta would buy 1,000 hopper cars, but they would be only used for Alberta off-board grains. Alberta has since modified that stance but it makes one wonder about the depth of their commitment to the improvement of the grain transportation system as a whole. The Manitoba Conservative government has finally limped into action and has taken the bold step of leasing, for one year, 400 cars that are already considered part of the system. There is no question about the depth of their commitment, Mr. Speaker. It's about as strong as Sterling Lyon's commitment to decent social service in Manitoba or Joe Clark's commitment to low interest rates or moving the Canadian embassy to Jerusalem.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, a third major recommendation of the Hall commission was that the Canadian Wheat Board's role in co-ordinating grain should be increased.

Instead the Conservatives have persistently undermined and attacked the wheat board. Giving Hugh Horner the wheat board's powers to allocate grain cars is the latest move in a long Conservative campaign to destroy the wheat board and revert to the open market system for all grains — a campaign which has gone on since 1961 when the Diefenbaker government removed the control of feed mills from the board. The Conservatives have kept up their attack in opposition and eventually persuaded the Liberals to implement an open market feed grains policy which has been a disaster for western farmers.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Natural Products Marketing Council has been studying the cost to farmers of losing orderly marketing of feed grain. It estimates that the farmers have lost \$50 million in 1977 and 1978 selling feed grains on the open market. The council further estimates that producers will lose another \$50 million on the open market in 1978-79. Mr. Speaker, that's a nice fat profit of \$100 million for the friends of the Conservatives who like to play games on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange but it's a terrible loss, Mr. Speaker, to the feed grain producers of this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — How about marketing of other off-board commodities such as rapeseed? Rapeseed has been a remarkable success story in western Canada and has become a cash crop of great importance in my constituency. Another study by the Saskatchewan Natural Products Marketing Council (this one on the marketing of rye, flaxseed and rapeseed in western Canada) estimates that the loss to farmers due to excessive marketing charges in rapeseed from 1973 to 1977 was over \$19 million. The study recommends that rapeseed, rye and flax should be brought under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board.

I have mentioned now two useful studies by the Saskatchewan Natural Products Marketing Council and it seems like an appropriate time to bring to the attention of the gentleman (who should be in the gallery but isn't) who now leads the members opposite up from on high, the many such useful studies in existence, Mr. Speaker. It would be better if he and his associates had devoted their studies to helping farmers rather than getting rid of them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — The Canadian Wheat Board has done a good job of selling our grain. The board has earned the respect of buyers and the envy of producers in many countries around the world. This government will not stand idly by, Mr. Speaker, while the Conservatives attempt to destroy it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close my remarks on agriculture by discussing one more recommendation of the Hall commission — one of the most critical to the survival of small Saskatchewan communities and the family farm as we know it today. That recommendation was preservation of the branch and country elevator system as the basic grain collection network.

In the heat of last spring's federal election campaign, when the Conservatives were promising all things to all people, they promised that branch lines would be retained where grain companies had undertaken to build new facilities or upgrade and maintain present services. By July, Mr. Speaker, when Moose Jaw Conservative MP Doug Neil

December 3, 1979

was appointed to study 1,800 miles of branch line that the railroads were itching to abandon, that promise had been watered down to:

guaranteeing transportation service to any delivery point where the companies make long-term commitments to provide handling service.

Mr. Speaker, by the time Neil finally reports, that promise, like so many others the Conservatives rashly made, will probably have been discarded.

Mr. Speaker, Conservative agriculture spokesmen have stepped up their demands for more inland terminals and massive trucking of grain. These demands and their vague promises about guaranteeing transportation service indicate to me that the Clark government is getting ready to sell out a lot of Saskatchewan communities by knuckling under to the pressure of railways which regard the branch lines that serve these communities as a nuisance. I hope they were listening a few weeks ago when the managers of the inland terminals at Weyburn and Lethbridge both admitted that most farmers do not want to haul grain to their facilities. They both asked the federal government for incentives such as extra quotas so they could attract enough business to become more economically valuable operations. Despite this reject of inland terminals by farmers, it appears that the Conservatives are committed to them in the name of streamlining the grain handling system. Dr. Hugh Horner says the idea that a community won't survive without an elevator is baloney. The members opposite and their Conservative brethren in Alberta and Manitoba say so what? So what if the roads are destroyed, dozens of communities are wiped off the map, and thousands of farmers are forced off the land. It's all in the cause of free enterprise, Mr. Speaker.

I hope that it has been evident from my remarks that we are now at a major crossroads in development of the agricultural industry in western Canada. The choices should be very clear, Mr. Speaker. One choice is to maintain the crowrate, orderly marketing and the country elevator system and thereby preserve the rich way of life that is the social and economic backbone of this province. The other choice is to fall for the siren song of the Conservative Party and turn rural Saskatchewan into a vast, empty preserve for anonymous corporate landlords. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan made their choice when they elected this government. In the long battle that lies ahead to preserve the rural way of life — it is Saskatchewan's strength and its precious heritage — we shall be every mindful of the trust they have placed in us.

Mr. Speaker, while agriculture will always be of great importance to Saskatchewan, in this decade energy has also come to play a critical role in our economic well-being, and it is in the field of energy that the people of Saskatchewan are again setting an example for the nation to follow, as so often it has been their role in confederation.

The value of oil production in Saskatchewan last year reached \$688 million. One thousand wells were drilled, more than in any other year in this decade. Much of the industry's activity is aimed at extracting the heavy oil reserves in west-central Saskatchewan. Last year, Mr. Speaker, the heavy oil production surpassed 12.5 million barrels.

Mr. Speaker, it is no accident that the people of this province have assumed a direct role in the development of their oil. This government believes that people have a right to a fair return for their resources. We know that the people are quite capable of doing their job themselves. and it was to that end that in 1973 a small Crown corporation with assets of just over \$200,000 was set up. Today, Mr. Speaker, SaskOil, the oil and gas

company owned by the people of Saskatchewan has assets of over \$65 million, and a yearly production of some four million barrels of oil. Today the people of Saskatchewan are playing an important role in the development of heavy oil through their own company, SaskOil. In 1977 SaskOil joined Texas Gulf in Total Petroleum (North America) Limited in a heavy oil project near North Battleford. SaskOil is also in partnership with Patrician and Gulf in an 8-year, 4100 million heavy oil project in west-central Saskatchewan. That project will eventually result in the creation of over 100 jobs and the drilling of 2,000 wells, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — Last year, Mr. Speaker, SaskOil returned \$18.8 million to the people of this province in royalties . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — . . . and still realized a net income of \$5.7 million. As well, it now has oil reserves of 30 million barrels and natural gas reserves of 21.8 million cubic feet, proof positive, Mr. Speaker, that the Tories are wrong when they say public ownership won't work.

The future of Saskatchewan is indeed a bright one and there is an air of optimism about the province as we prepare to enter the next decade. Our government's resource policy has been designed to insure that the financial benefits of the province's resources go to the people and not to the corporate head offices around the globe, Mr. Speaker.

In 1971 when the NDP came to power, resources revenues in the province totalled just over \$30 million. This year the people of Saskatchewan will receive over \$500 million in resource revenue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LONG: — The value of mineral production in Saskatchewan has quadrupled in the same period. By keeping resource dollars at home our government is assured that benefits from those dollars remain in our communities. Nowhere is this more true than in Cut Knife-Lloydminster. Mr. Speaker, for the people of west-central Saskatchewan, many of whom I have the honor to represent in this Assembly, heavy oil means experiencing the challenge of growth and development. AS the population grows and the economy quickens, opportunities presented have become projects realized.

At Cut Knife, in my constituency SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation) is involved in a new 265-acre, \$80,000 industrial park. It will house amongst other things anew co-op seed cleaning plant. A new motel is being constructed and the town is home for a new bulk oil plant. Preliminary investigations into the new industrial parks in St. Walburg and Turtleford are beginning and in Lloydminster SEDCO and the city are considering establishing a park on the Saskatchewan side.

SaskOil meanwhile is establishing a headquarters at Maidstone and the town has developed its own industrial park. In Marsden the village is preparing a land assembly project to

accommodate increased growth as drilling moves south of the Battle River. Neilburg, with provincial assistance, has undertaken an \$800,000 water project to meet anticipated needs. Neilburg has also set up a main street development program and growth there has only been slowed by shortage of lots.

Over the last three years the village of Marshall has seen its population increase by 33 per cent and it expects even more growth once the second water well and additional lagoon facilities are ready. Three years ago 84 people lived in the town of Waseca, now 130 people call it home. The city of Lloydminster has grown by nearly 40 per cent since 1976 and Battleford, with a 25 per cent population growth in that time, has recorded building permits in excess of \$3 million for three years running. This year Battleford could reach the \$4 million mark.

Some projects, Mr. Speaker, are indeed dramatic. Husky Oil has moved ahead with its plans for a \$2 billion heavy oil exploration and development program aimed at boosting its production by some 20,000 barrels a day. A heavy oil upgrading plant is expected to result from the program. Mr. Speaker, it's my hope that this upgrading will be realized with the active participation of the people of Canada and Saskatchewan through their oil companies, Petro-Can and SaskOil. I also hope, Mr. Speaker, that Joe Clark will come to his senses and realize what the people of Prince Albert, on behalf of Canadians everywhere, said about Petro-Can on November 19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Mr. Speaker, I believe it's probably too much to hope that our Prime Minister could act on his own initiative without first seeking clearance from Edmonton.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are optimistic about the future these days because they know our government believes that the people are entitled to reap the benefits of the resource boom. Resource companies cannot expect to be given our resources simply in return for creating jobs. They can expect to pay a fair and just price to the people for these resources. We are not willing, as the opposition seems to be, Mr. Speaker, to abdicate our responsibility in the resource field.

Mr. Speaker, in 1976 the Conservative leader of this province called for oil taxation policies similar to those in Alberta. From 1974 to 1977 Saskatchewan collected \$844 million in oil revenues. With an Alberta tax structure we would have collected \$402 million, less than half of our realized revenue. The Conservative plan would have given over \$100 million a year more to the oil companies than they deserved. Just who are the Tories looking out for Mr. Speaker? Certainly not the people of Saskatchewan.

Conservatives in this Assembly have consistently, Mr. Speaker, opposed our resource policies, despite the overgrowing return of resources our government has secured for the people. Last fall the Conservatives sought to form the government by unveiling a vague scheme for handing out shares on publicly owned corporations in such industries as oil and potash. The people soundly rejected the Conservatives' hastily concocted plan to give them what they already owned, Mr. Speaker. Instead the electorate opted for a government whose resource policy places their needs first. We do not intend to return to the days when resource decisions affecting Saskatchewan were made in the corporate board rooms around the world, with no thought given to our needs and our priorities, Mr. Speaker. We continue to oppose Conservative policies that we return control of our resources to the multinationals.

Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives share-giveaway plan was never spelled out but in intent its intent to have only private companies involved in development and therefore in control

of our resources was clear.

Mr. Speaker, Tory economics are now being practised in Ontario, Albert, Manitoba, and by the federal government. Tory economics have no place in a government which cares about people. Ontario, for example, has a greater mineral production total than Saskatchewan for which they get \$30 million to \$40 million. This year Saskatchewan will receive close to \$500 million for its lesser mineral production. In Alberta, Mr. Speaker, with massive resources, medicare premiums have been increased by 30 per cent in the past three years. Manitoba faced the prospect of deterrent fees, and nursing home construction has been frozen.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that when SaskOil was established in 1973, two years later the federal government under pressure from the NDP followed suit and set up Petro-Can. Now that the Conservatives have assumed power they have announced their intention to rip Petro-Can apart, along with other profitable Crown corporations such as the Canadian Development Corporation—corporations, Mr. Speaker, which belong to all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, during last fall's provincial election campaign, it was quite evident the provincial Conservatives had similar plans for the profitable companies owned by the people of Saskatchewan. We do not intend to let them return the economic destiny of this province to private corporations and multinationals for whom Saskatchewan is simply a place to make a buck and get out. Even now the federal Conservatives are trying to stuff their giveaway approach to resources down the throats of Canadians. Mr. Speaker, that's really what the Petro-Can issue is all about.

Mr. Speaker, we are all aware of the critical importance of oil and gas both to this province and the nation as a whole. In Canada today 90 per cent of our oil and gas is controlled by giant multinational corporations, most of which are based in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, while Canadians are increasingly concerned about our energy future, in Ottawa Joe Clark and Ray Hnatyshyn blindly pursue their ill-conceived policy of dismembering the largest Canadians-owned company in the field, Petro-Can, Mr. Speaker, that policy will effectively kill what little influence Canada now can exercise in the energy field and in doing so, will return Canadians completely to the bondage of the energy giants. Exactly what the Conservative plan to do with Petro-Can is not yet detailed but it would seem their plan is based on giving Canadians a share in a company they already own, Mr. Speaker. The idea comes from the Clark-Hnatyshyn hand-picked task force which was set up to devise how Petro-Can should be killed. On the task force charged with making the most critical energy related decision of the decade sat Ralph Sykes, a vice president of the national Progressive Conservative Party. With him was Labatt Brewing Company which, incidentally, is owned by Brascan, and Brascan has expressed interest in buying part of Petro-Can. Also on the task force was Sydney Kahanoff, former president of the Independent Petroleum Association of Canada and former chief executive of Voyageur Petroleums Ltd., and Mr. Roland Giroux. Mr. Giroux is the former president of Hydro Quebec and is well connected in the energy field, Mr. Speaker. Two Tories, an oilman and an energy executive sat in judgment on Petro-Can. Now, Mr. Speaker, that's what I call a kangaroo court.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LONG: — Mr. Speaker, the gang of four did concoct a plan: a share ownership proposal that the Financial Post, in October, terms as ‘quite a remarkable giveaway.’ In subsequent issues the Financial Post went on to say, Mr. Speaker, that handling our free shares would saddle the Government of Canada with a potential liability of \$2.5 billion. This from the same government that insists it must reduce the federal deficit. The task force report was termed as woefully weak on the role the federal government would maintain in oil and gas in Canada.

Dismantling Petro-Can, Mr. Speaker, is indeed economic quackery. The corporation has shown a profit in every year of its operation. For an investment of \$900 million, Canadians now own an energy company worth \$3.5 billion, including shares in Panarctic and Syncrude, extensive oil and natural gas reserves, a refinery in British Columbia, bulk gasoline plants and retail outlets. When Canadians patronize Pacific 65, Mr. Speaker, they now patronize their own company. In short, Petro-Can is now in a position where it can greatly increase competition in the industry, generate revenue for more costly frontier and offshore exploration, and provide the federal government with a window on an industry not particularly noted for its honesty in dealing with the people of this country.

Petro-Can is involved, as I said before, in a \$100 million heavy oil project in Saskatchewan. It has begun work on a \$10 million research centre in Calgary. I am sure its 80 per cent financing of Panarctic Oils Ltd. was responsible for the largest natural gas find in Canada’s history — several trillion cubic feet. Petro-Can successfully drilled off Nova Scotia when the private sector companies had given up.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, Petro-Can is important to all Canadians and we should be proud of it. But now it is threatened, threatened by Joe Clark, the Prime Minister willing to play politics with the nations’ future. Mr. Speaker, aided and abetted by Ray Hnatyshyn, Clark could return Petro-Can’s profitable operations to the private sector while keeping the expensive exploration and research role. That’s Tory economics, Mr. Speaker, to privatize the profit and let the public pay the bill.

Mr. Speaker, there is not room for naiveté in dealing with the multinationals, who must now be falling all over themselves in the scrabble to line up for the giveaway. What remains to be seen is who will get what chunk of the carcass. Perhaps Exxon, whose third-quarter profit increases were 118 per cent, would like a piece of the action, Mr. Speaker.

Sohio, Mobil, Gulf and Amoco had third-quarter profit increases of 191 per cent, 130 per cent, 97 per cent and 49 per cent respectively. They certainly have cash to spend, Mr. Speaker.

When Joe and Ray pull down Petro-Can, who will remain in the field? The big four in Canadians are Imperial, Gulf, Shell and Texaco. Last year these four recorded profits of over \$800 million and had a tax rate of 21 per cent. Shell paid no taxes at all.

Another good corporate citizen, Dome Petroleum, has made profits of \$350 million since 1974 and has not paid a cent of taxes. Last year Dome spent \$150 million of the taxpayers’ money drilling in the Beaufort Sea, and Joe Clark, Mr. Deputy Speaker, wants to privatize Petro-Can.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the oil multinationals are generating astronomical profits. They have the money to invest in exploration and development. In most cases they do not

need further government handouts, whether by tax breaks or incentives. By giving away Petro-Can's profitable ventures, Joe Clark and Ray Hnatyshyn will only magnify the obscene energy rip-off to which our nation has been subjected. By keeping Petro-Can's costly exploration role, after stripping its revenue-generating capacity, the Tories will only sink the federal treasury deeper into debt.

Mr. Speaker, what Canada need is a federal government with the good sense to let Petro-Can carry on, the guts to end the corporate rip-off, the backbone to tax those outrageous profits. In short, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need a federal government dedicated to Canadians independence, not a government acting as a serf to the energy barons.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LONG: — What are the reactions to the Progressive Conservative's tinker toy approach to energy and Petro-Can, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

The Ottawa Citizen says that a wise businessman will cut his losses and hold on to profitable ventures, adding in the next breath, 'not so, Treasury Board President, Sinclair Stephens.' Sinclair Stephens, the man whose hit list includes the Canadians Development Corporation, and profitable public corporations like Canadair, Eldorado Nuclear and deHavilland.

In September, Mr. Deputy Speaker, MacLean's editor, Peter C. Newman, declared that making Petro-Can dependent on federal government generosity instead of its own profits, Joe Clark would deprive us of our least costly, most effective method of achieving Canada's energy goals.

Even Imperial Oil chairman, Jack Armstrong says the federal government should not proceed with its plan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are none so deaf as those who will not hear.

From Petro-Can Canadians have learned that nearly all producers of oil would rather sell us their product on a government to government basis. At home, Dan Horigan, President of the Canadian organization of small businesses, say Petro-Can is the independent gas dealers only hope of escaping the price discrimination tactics of the multinationals.

In Ontario Progressive Conservative Premier Bill Davis has urged Joe Clark to come back to his senses and reverse field on Petro-Can.

Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Conservatives indeed do have a plan. The public will pick up the cost and the companies will pick up the profit. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is typical Tory mining policy — the company gets the resource, the public gets the shaft.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my remarks this afternoon have been based mainly on two important areas of concern — agriculture and energy. Both are closely related, both are essential to our survival. Without adequate energy supplies, modern day farming in society as we know it today would cease to exist. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it will take governments at all levels with progressive and imaginative policies to ensure our future.

I am disappointed that there are still so few signs of this kind of imagination and

December 3, 1979

leadership coming from our government in Ottawa. But then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we should be used to that, we have put up with it for a long time. I am proud that we have indeed that kind of imagination and leadership being shown here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to support this government in this throne speech.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin my remarks today by congratulating the two members opposite, the member from Sask Tel — the member for Regina North-West (Mr. Solomon) — and the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster (Mr. Long), for their thoughtful remarks in reply to the Speech from the Throne. To be called upon by the Premier to do the honors of mover and seconder of the motion of adoption of the Speech from the Throne is in this particular case, a dubious honor.

If I may address myself to the new member for Regina North-West, may I first extend my congratulations on his by-election victory this past October . . .

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BERNTSON: — . . . and may I further commend him on his thoughts and comments in the speech to this motion.

The Speech from the Throne to which we were treated last Thursday was a relatively easy act to follow. I think that the Premier uses his best judgment in choosing a mover and seconder from the ranks of his new or less experienced colleagues. This current Speech from the Throne is typical of past speeches by this government — light on content, light on initiative, but heavy, very heavy, on rhetoric.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BERNTSON: — This allows the mover and the seconder almost unlimited space in which to manoeuvre when framing their remarks in response. For the member for Regina North-West, this affords an opportunity to ease into his new role, but you will say very little defence is required for the offerings of the Speech from the Throne. This is simply because very little was offered. You will say, this is a serious charge to be made and the prosecutor must be ready to defend his charge. This, Mr. Speaker, I will do and with pleasure.

The role of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, allows me a certain latitude dealing with legislation and programs proposed by this government. The traditional role of the opposition members is to criticize constructively the initiatives of the government. The current government, Mr. Speaker, has done a selfish little thing in this throne speech; they have provided us with an 11-page document which contains precious few items of substance. This therefore makes the first part of my role, that of critic, somewhat difficult, but fear not, Mr. Speaker, I take my role seriously. I have delved deeply into the airy recesses of this document and I have found a few items which bear some attention.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, the act of depriving the people of Saskatchewan, and myself, of any substantive policy initiatives makes the other facet of my role as Leader of the Opposition that much easier. This role is to present an alternative to the government, to provide offensive direction where no direction is given by government, to articulate

new policy initiatives in the absence of government initiatives. The current throne speech indicates no direction, no innovation, no sensitivity to public needs. What is presented is more of the same bankrupt policy that has existed in the past. It cannot continue. It threatens to bankrupt the people of Saskatchewan, now and in the future and furthermore our grandchildren and heaven knows how many generations beyond that will carry a second mortgage because of the incredible, irresponsible policies put forth by this government.

I sense my remarks are largely wasted on this non-thinking and sensitive group opposite. I understand that I will be afforded the opportunity to get the Progressive Conservative message to all of Saskatchewan tomorrow on air time and I would, therefore, beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:19 p.m.