

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session — Thirteenth Legislature
7th Day

Friday, February 19, 1960.

The House met at 2:30 o'clock p.m.

On the Orders of the Day:

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Hon. Mr. Nollet (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day are proceeded with, I would like to draw to the attention of the members of the House the very fine looking group of farm boys who are seated in the Speaker's Gallery and who are second year students in the School of Agriculture. These young men will be going back to the farm upon completion of their second year course. I should like to extend to them the welcome of the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, and also to the instructors, Mr. Fred Fulton and Mr. Bob Dodd. In my books, and I am sure the majority of the House, will agree with me that this is the finest looking group of farm school boys that we probably have had visit the Legislature this Session.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. Kim Thorson (Souris-Estevan): — Before the orders of the day are proceeded with, I should like to call the attention of the Legislature to the Grade XI and XII students who are visiting here today from the Macoun High School. They are accompanied by their Vice-Principal, Mr. Newstader. Macoun is the community in Saskatchewan in which I was borne and grew up, and of course these people who come from families who are my neighbours mean a great deal to me. I am sure I express the feeling of all of the members of the Assembly in extending to them a very hearty welcome and wishing them well for their visit here today.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. L.P. Coderre (Gravelbourg): — Before the orders of the day are proceeded with, I should also like to draw your attention to the wonderful group of students and their teachers — fifty some in number, from scattered points throughout the province, from Rosetown, Shaunavon, Val Marie, from all over the place — Sedley, Lake Pelletier; they are from the Convent in Gravelbourg and they are accompanied by four sisters, Sister St. Roderique, Sister Marcelle, Sister Sacred Heart and Sister Angel. I should like to take the opportunity on behalf of the Assembly of welcoming them today.

MOTION OF CONGRATULATION

Premier Douglas: — Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all members of the Legislature, and indeed all citizens of the province, have heard with a great deal of pleasure the news this morning that a son has been borne to Her Majesty. There has been widespread interest on the part of citizens all over the British Commonwealth in this approaching event, and I am sure that the Members of the Legislature would like to express publicly to Her Majesty our joy at this happy event in her life and in the life of the Commonwealth nations. I would therefore like to move, seconded by the Honourable, the Leader of the Opposition, that an humble address of congratulation be presented to Her Majesty the Queen in the following terms:

“We, Your Majesty’s dutiful and loyal servants, Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan in Legislature assembled, extend to Your Majesty and to His Royal Highness the Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, our most sincere and heartfelt congratulations on the birth today, of your second Son. We assure Your Majesty that, in expressing our thanksgivings, we reflect the sentiments and affection of the people we represent, who rejoice with all Members of the Royal Family in this happy event. We earnestly pray that health and happiness may continue to bless Your Majesty and Your Newborn Son.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN”

Mr. Speaker: — I am sure that all of us rejoice with the rest of the Commonwealth in this happy event. Carried.

DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Thorson, seconded by Mr. Thibault:

Mr. L.P. Coderre (Gravelbourg): — Mr. Speaker, under the strain of the debate yesterday I adjourned a little sooner than I should have. I was under the impression that the House usually adjourned at 5:00 o’clock, somehow or other, and I probably could have taken a little more time. However, it ended up that at five o’clock I adjourned the debate and all the notes that I had prepared I was unable to finish off.

I have, however, made up a summary of the situation to take into consideration all the Crown Corporations except the two utilities. We can sum it up this way: the expenses of the Finance Office to administer — to lend the money or to administer the affairs of these various Crown Corporations have amounted, according to the Public Accounts up to the date I have here, to \$908,000. Now prior to the housing corporation going defunct there were the grants from the National Housing to the tune of \$133,000. Then, when we also take into account the grants to the Fish Marketing which have been used under different headings (however they were grants to that corporation at the time) these grants amount to \$295,780. Then, if we also take into consideration the amounts of money that were lent or given to these various corporations on which the Treasury is paying the interest charge at a nominal sum of 3½ per cent, which is not too great, we find that the total amount, including accumulated interest which has not been paid into or charged to these various corporations, is roughly \$3,981,000. This total, sir, amounts to roughly \$5,317,000.

Now it has been said time and again that the profits of the corporation which have been established have been in excess of \$9 million — \$9,300,000, but if we subtract this amount, \$5,317,000 which has not been actually taken into consideration insofar as the interest on the advance is concerned, we find the amount of about \$4,040,000 which is considered as the profits of their corporations. But on top of that we seem to forget to take into consideration on this amount an additional two and one-half million dollars of premiums which have been paid into the Saskatchewan Government Insurance on fireproof buildings (as a good many of them are fireproof buildings) as I mentioned yesterday. We find that the picture of the Crown Corporation as presented quite often on television and on the hustings is an altogether different picture. All I can say is, that after you have taken these amounts off and the unnecessary insurance premiums paid on fireproof buildings, we find that we have a different story. All I can say that has been accomplished is that it looks good and it is something for the socialists to talk about.

However, in the short time allotted, Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal very, very briefly with the Power Corporation. The Power Corporation has been building public utilities and generating plants throughout the province and they're building them all, in my opinion, with the same time zone. I think, Mr. Speaker, that is extravagance on the part of the Corporation to build power plants within the same time zone. They had established last year a line between Estevan and Brandon so that they could purchase power from Manitoba and sell power to Manitoba when they were on peak period and we could purchase when we are on peak period. It is established among utilities that we need at least thirty to forty per cent reserve to handle the power at peak power-consumption period. So, therefore, the plans of the Corporation at present have been to build all their utilities within the same time zone and we have to build extra plants to handle the peak period of power consumption in the province, and I believe that amount is probably \$50 million, or \$40 million of capital tied up, which could probably be used elsewhere.

Another point on which I would like to criticize the Corporation, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that most of you have probably seen in the newspapers, and I quote 'The Leader-Post', 1958, to the effect that the S.P.C. is planning to negotiate to buy an Alberta gas field. Now, that is water under the bridge, but regardless, sir, they have purchased the gas field, but we're not any too sure whether the gas is existent there or not. Oh, we hear rumblings and laughing from the Government side, but geologists know that earthquakes could take place in various areas, and you could lose a lot of your gas reserve.

Why buy the gas field at a time when you had contracts to purchase the gas for periods of 20 years? What do they do? They go ahead and buy one-half of an existing, supposedly existing, gas field from what is known as Britalta Petroleums Limited. They paid \$10 million for a half share of that, and for the other half they promised the pay \$750,000 a year for a period of 20 years. They have committed the province to buying this gas field. It is not a question of committing themselves to buy or contract for gas for a period of years; that's not too bad, Mr. Speaker, but what actually burns me up is the fact, according to this clipping from 'The Leader-Post', that they have made this bargain with Britalta Petroleums, when we find that Britalta Petroleums in the year 1958 had a loss in operations of \$162,000.

Mr. Speaker, in my personal opinion I do object to the money of the people of Saskatchewan being invested outside of the boundaries of this province. I believe that if we are going to establish a Crown Corporation to serve the interests of our province, to give service at cost, that is the basic principle to be followed by a government in business. That is the basic principle that the Liberal government followed back in '28 when they established the Power Commission to provide services at cost to the people of Saskatchewan, not to invest outside of the boundaries moneys that belong to the people of Saskatchewan. We are then at the mercies of the interest outside of our boundaries, and it is beyond our jurisdiction.

The Saskatchewan Power Corporation, Mr. Speaker, has become a giant monopoly, but they cannot and are unable to develop their aim until they have complete control within their boundaries of power, communications, and, if they could, railroads. It has been said time and time again from the inception of the party in 1933 to the present that all the Socialists, or the C.C.F. party need to do is to take control of the public utility of power, communications, and transportation, and they have control of the economy. They're certainly trying to do that; they have put pressure upon pressure upon what we probably would term yardsticks — insofar as power is concerned. I said yesterday that what we require is a bill of rights to protect these smaller municipalities or governments from the Government. What we need also is another bill of rights to protect the people from the giant monopolists that the Government is trying to establish.

I should like, Mr. Speaker, at this point, to bring out a few ills that have developed within the Corporation that I believe should be brought out, ills that have taken place within my constituency and probably elsewhere. In this particular case, rather than deal with an individual, I'll deal with the question of a school.

The Minister of Education's concern is reducing the cost of education. (He probably should take heed of this statement and probably make it up or try to have some deals made with the Corporation). We have a case, Mr. Speaker, where through the movement of the population within the school districts of a particular area, one school district had a power transformer within its yard where the power line is going through that same school-yard. The school unit feels that they would like to move this school to another place where the students would not have to go so far to travel to school. They have asked the Corporation to have the transformer changed, and the Saskatchewan Power Corporation established a charge of \$500 which is the usual charge for schools. Now, can you imagine, Sir, there is a transformer in one school-yard and to move that transformer which would take about six or seven hours at the most to another school-yard four miles down the road, they want to charge \$500. Well, why do they want to charge that \$500, when \$70 or \$80 would do it? It is an unfair monopolistic approach to dealing with various local governments.

There are other situations like this that often take place, and there are many throughout this province. Mr. Speaker, there was a woman who through some misfortune, lost her husband and is on the farm with children 12 or 13. She feels that it would be more convenient for the short while to move into town. So she moves into town but she finds that due to economic pressure it is too great to keep this \$60 per year payment to the Corporation for energy not used. What does the S.P.C. do? After a year or six months, if the lady cannot meet the payment, they will take the transformer out of the yard. There are many cases like that, particularly in my constituency. What do they do?

The lady stays six months, a year, two years, until the eldest one in the family grows up and he would like to go back to the farm. He goes back to the farm and would like to have the transformer put back into that yard. The charge is \$560. That party has already paid \$560, sir. This woman lost her husband and these children had to go to town to go to school, and still the Corporation takes the transformer pole away and now they charge another \$560. Humanity first!

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, you find many farmers across the province have in their yard these five horsepower transformers to provide electrical service. Well, anybody who has any knowledge at all about circuit breakers will realize that atmospheric conditions and temperature will affect the actual breaking capacity of a circuit breaker on a power pole. But what happens? You find a farmer that has a five horsepower in his yard that he puts on his stove and his frig. cuts in and the circuit breaker breaks out, and that happens throughout the summer months. They report the matter to

the district operator and the district operator says, "You need a new transformer" and the farmer says, "Okay, that's quite all right with me." But little does the farmer realize at the moment that he has to put a larger transformer to increase his consumption, and he's got to pay twice the block of rates.

The initial block of power for a farmer on the farmer's yard is the first 45 kilowatts at .08 cents, but if you put a 10 h.p. transformer in it, you pay 90 kilowatts at .08 cents and the block is doubled. In other words, because he's a farmer, he needs greater consumption; what to they do? They penalize the farmer and make him pay twice the amount, because he needs more power. We wonder, Sir, why we have a cost-price squeeze.

We could go on indefinitely, Mr. Speaker, but there is only one little point that always needs to be brought up. As I said, the Power Corporation is developing into a giant monopoly, and it is so. We have a yardstick in the province; we have a yardstick in Moose Jaw at the National Light and Power. As an example, 342 kilowatts of consumption of electrical energy from National Light and Power costs around \$7.08. Oh, they have alibis in saying that the Corporation is an old established utility, but for the same amount of energy, you're paying \$10.60 to the S.P.C. I say, Sir, that as long as we have this amount and we're making these profits, there's one thing that can be done. We have advocated within the Liberal Party that in the event that we cannot give a reduction of rates, surely we can refund the amount of money that the farmers have paid into the Corporation as a loan. The farmers of this province have had to pay an average of \$500 apiece to have the power on their yard, and I feel, Mr. Speaker, that if we're going to have this difference, and if we're going to eliminate this yardstick that we have, then, it is only fair that these farmers should be refunded as other corporations are refunding in the province.

I have taken a little more time than I had anticipated due to the radio which is rather difficult, but under the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, seeing all the ills that we have, I feel that I cannot support the motion.

Mr. Douglas T. McFarlane (Qu'Appelle-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I have been asked to support a motion in this House — a program of the government that has failed miserably to alleviate the economic situation of the agricultural industry in this province. Again the farmers of Saskatchewan are offered no constructive measures that will get them out of the economic difficulties of the cost-price squeeze foisted on them to a large degree by the lack of policies and rank discrimination by this Government as a result of 16 years of socialistic administration. Today the farmers of this province are in a state of frustration and bewilderment. They are continually hearing a barrage of propaganda from both the Federal and the Provincial Governments of the supposedly tremendous rise in income, and the supposedly industrial boom going on all around us, when

at the same time, the lack of cash in the farmers' pockets today has reached a critical and a serious situation.

Instead of the Government instituting measures in the Speech from the Throne to alleviate this cash shortage, or measures to increase the income of the farmers, every measure introduced will only result in extracting more money from the farmers of this province. Not one measure introduced in a practical or constructive way will effectively halt the rapid movement of farm people off the farms into the cities and towns of this province, and what is more serious still, out of the province entirely. Why has the economic plight of the farmers developed? It has developed due to the callous disregard and apathy of responsible cabinet ministers of this Government.

A year ago the Minister of Agriculture stated it was a silly criticism to suggest this Government could do anything about the cost-price squeeze. This past fall when disaster struck the farmers of this province, leaving an estimated one hundred million bushels of unthreshed grain under the snow, and the serious shortage of feed and fodder, for livestock, what leadership did he give? How did he rise to meet the emergency? What immediate action did he take? Mr. Speaker, his efforts were appalling. He made the colossal statement that he was never so depressed in his life. Yes, he sees himself as a dejected and depressed Minister, while thousands of farmers are clamouring for immediate help to at least bring in some measure so that their families could have food and clothes and for help to save some of their livestock. One would get the impression that this was the first time the C.C.F. Government had ever to face up to a disaster situation. In handling this emergency, their record has since been characterized by delay, indecision, bungling and incompetence.

It does not surprise anyone, Mr. Speaker, that they were not qualified to deal with these emergencies as they have never inaugurated practical programs to deal with such situations. Instead, for 16 years they have been content to sit on their haunches and continually howl at successive Governments at Ottawa. In between times they would spend their time turning out reams of propaganda comparing conditions in this province before and after 1944.

At this point it is well to point out a statement by the Premier in this debate in his attempt to divert the attention of the people from his Government's dismal record. I want to quote what he said: He asks the Legislature to compare the period before the C.C.F. took office to the present time, when there is a rapidly expanding economy and possibilities of unprecedented development. This, Mr. Speaker, I intend to do. I intend to show the conditions that existed in part of that period, to present to the young people in this province and some of the older people, and to refresh the minds of some of the members in this House, on conditions in our economy and especially to the farm economy in that period — a period of years of severe disaster beyond the control of man. I want to show how capably and conscientious the Government members at that time dealt with those problems.

The Premier in his remarks glibly referred to what he called the 'Patterson Report'. He tried to leave the impression with the people of this province that it was a confession of conditions in the province as the result of the Patterson and other Administrations. What was this report? I have it here in my hand, Mr. Speaker. It is a submission by the Province of Saskatchewan presented to the Special Committee of the House of Commons on Reconstruction and Re-establishment, dated Wednesday, April 19, 1944. The Premier of that date did not have a staff of some 11,000 people as the Premier in this House has today. Premier Patterson did not spend half a million dollars for a Royal Commission report to point out conditions at that time. Premier Patterson did not spend another \$50,000 some few years later, as our Premier has done, to bring in another report, namely, the Stanford Research Institute report. Instead he gave an honest, factual appraisal to the Federal Government when he was seeking aid for the future development of Saskatchewan, by pointing out conditions in the province that had its growth and economy interrupted by 10 years of war; two world wars and a period of the worst conditions of drought disaster in its history, which prompted the Sirois Report in 1940 to state: "The people of Saskatchewan have suffered a reduction in income during the last decade which has probably been unparalleled in any other civilized country."

What caused this reduction in income? I am going to show the members of this House the disasters the Government had to deal with during the 1930's, the period of the great drought. I am going to read a crop report of some districts taken from the Winnipeg 'Free Press' of 1937, and reproduced by the 'Kipling Citizen' and the 'Fort Qu'Appelle Times'. As I have pointed out, this report was made up by the Winnipeg 'Free Press' in 1937, and it states the number of bushels of wheat, oats, barley and rye and the yield of those different types of grain when it was threshed, the grade, and comments on the outcome of the crop. I am just going to mention a few districts for the people of Saskatchewan, and especially for the members here.

I am going to mention the district of Alameda: "No wheat, barley, rye or flax or oats. Comment, the worst in history"; "Arcola, drought and grasshoppers; Carlyle, almost a total failure, one-quarter of a bushel per acre of wheat", the total crop in that district in 1937. How many farms could have been electrified at \$550 each in those times?

Then we go on to Kennedy: "Worst ever experienced; Oxbow, poorest the district has ever had; Avonlea, no crops". How many grid roads could have been built in that district in those years?

Then we go on to Kennedy: "Worst ever experienced; Oxbow, poorest the district has ever had; Avonlea, no crops". How many grid roads could have been built in that district in those years?

"Forward, not sufficient feed or seed or coarse grains; Halbrite, no crops". How many taxes, which are three times as much as they were then, under the C.C.F. Government, could have been collected in those days in those districts.

Then we go on to Regina; “Worst crop on record; Sintaluta, poorest in 50 years; Stoughton, a total crop failure”. How many schools could have been built under the conditions in those districts in those times. And these are the conditions that the Premier sneeringly and glibly referred to when he was referring to the Patterson report.

Then there are the districts of Amulet, Assiniboia, Bengough, Bromhead and all that crop district; “No crop, complete crop failure”, and the report of the bushels threshed, “nil, nil, nil, nil” on all kinds of grain. Then the Premier would have us compare conditions today with conditions in that period.

The most important thing worrying the farmer today, Mr. Speaker, is this: What would happen if we had a period of similar conditions under our present C.C.F. Government? What would the present Premier had done under those conditions? I think we can best answer that by his attitude and the position he took last fall regarding crop aid as reported in ‘The Leader-Post’, December 3, when he is reported as saying:

“I am sure you appreciate the fact that every million dollars that the province spends on this program is a million dollars which will not be available for education, health, welfare or provincial and municipal roads; there would be very little value in giving the farmers an acreage payment on one hand if we had to use our grants for education and municipal roads on the other.”

That is the attitude of the Premier. This is the Premier who, along with this Government, has for 16 years condemned past governments in the province for not providing these facilities. This is the record he asks us to compare in his speech on this Motion. He is now crying about having to pay a million dollars to the farmers of this province.

Premier Douglas: — A million?

Mr. McFarlane: — Yes, he was crying at that time because he had to pay a million.

Again, let us look at the picture he has asked us to compare. In 1937 the Liberal Government paid \$17 1/4 million in aid. In 1938 the Liberal Government paid \$37 million in aid, 1939 the Liberal Government paid \$26 3/4 million in aid, or a total in three years’ time of \$81 million. Total budget, net revenues the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. I.C. Nollet) said was never paid back, the total budget and net revenues for the same year was \$50 million. How could you pay it back?

But what happened in 1947? A Liberal Federal Government cancelled much of this amount, about \$37 million.

I want to point out here that it will be a lasting tribute to Mr. Patterson that in presenting this report, and as a result of further negotiations, he was instrumental in setting up the Dominion-Provincial Tax Rental Agreement. It is significant to point out that the most his government ever received under this agreement was \$6 million. As a result of this agreement, what has the C.C.F. Government received? This year they are receiving \$37 million; next year we will receive an estimated \$42 million. I would remind the Premier that the total revenues of the province in the ten-year period he asks us to compare from 1935 to 1944 was \$193 million, an average of \$19 1/3 million per year, and in some years as low as \$13 million. In the past ten years that he was referring to, 1951 to 1960, it amounted not to \$193 million, but \$976 million, \$9 1/2 million per year or an average of five and one-half times as much. To compare these conditions as he would have the people do is absolutely ridiculous. To compare his Government's record with that of other provinces during the same period as his term of office shows the true picture.

What is his Government's record to the farmers? That is best answered by his Minister of Agriculture, who after 16 years stated at the recent Livestock Convention in Regina, and I quote: "The agricultural industry was badly forsaken". Mr. Speaker, the farmers were badly forsaken by him and his Government when they requested Federal action in the early fall for financial aid for feed and supplies for livestock.

We remember the reams of propaganda sent out by him during the past years, about the Government's program and feed bank reserve. What is the true picture? A question was asked in this House the other day as to how much fodder had been put in the fodder reserve or feed bank reserve in each of the past three years, 1957, 1958 and 1959, and what was the answer? Nil for 1957, nil for 1958, and nil for 1959. That is the C.C.F. version of a fodder reserve and this is the fodder reserve program that the member for Souris-Estevan (Mr. Thorson) in the Throne Speech a year ago congratulated the Minister of Agriculture for.

Now I want to deal with the crop aid payments. The attitude of this Government, with five and one-half times the revenue of any Government in the province, is an absolute disgrace. The early snowstorms in October buried an estimated 100 million bushels of unthreshed grain on some 33,000 farms. The Minister of Agriculture is asking Ottawa for aid, was hoping the Federal Government would pay the entire cost in this regard. After a long delay, the Diefenbaker Government announced its willingness to pay the aid on a 50-50 basis with the Province. This Government would not accept the offer. Much more time was wasted before the C.C.F. decided to change their mind and finally accept.

Even then statements of acceptance and denials were made by the Minister of Agriculture and the Premier, while they were both vying for the political advantage of making the announcement. In order to try and cut their share to the bone, to their everlasting shame, the C.C.F. Government wasted more time in devising and partly introducing a means test for the farmer who applied. Naturally, this policy aroused a storm of protest and had to be abandoned. Delay, indecision and continuous changing of regulations added further hardships to the farmers. Even at this time applications of some bona fide farmers who didn't even thresh a bushel of grain, applications approved by the local municipal council and by the Ag. Rep. were returned by this Government. During these months of bungling and muddling by this Government, many farm families have experienced great hardship in obtaining the cash for food and clothes for their families and for fodder and feed for their livestock; many had to sacrifice many of their livestock last fall at depressed market prices. This is another of the records the Premier would have us remember.

The Minister of Agriculture in our neighbouring province stated: "The farmers in Saskatchewan will end up getting less than those in Manitoba and Alberta."

Let us examine another of the Premier's records. In the years 1946 to 1956 the Province of Saskatchewan lost 20,000 farm units; Alberta lost 10,000 farm units and Manitoba, 5,000. The Saskatchewan loss was four and one-half times that of Manitoba, and two and one-half times that of Alberta. It is estimated that in the last three years Saskatchewan has lost an additional 13,000 units. It would appear that the Saskatchewan Government's policy is to get rid of the farm problem by getting rid of the farm people. These figures are not taken from the \$50,000 Stanford Report, but taken from the 'Saskatchewan Economic Review' published by the Economic Advisory and Planning Board, a Department of this Government.

Another first announced by the Premier is to be the planting of trees on the farmsteads and moving farmsteads, so they will be along highways. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would be willing to take the Premier to parts of this province, not too far away, where there are beautifully laid out trees on farmsteads with permanent buildings set up along the highways, and now a new highway has been built along a different route serving no farmers at all. I can think of one such case involving ten farmers at a distance of about eight miles. How ridiculous can he get?

What is the record of this Government to the farmer since 1944? Here is their record; they have increased the taxes by three times; they have increased truck licenses; increased the gas tax by 71 per cent; increased the retail sales tax on many of the things he needs; increased taxes on forest products; increased hay and grazing fees on Crown lands; imposed taxes on the locker plants; increased fees of the seed cleaning plants; 2,000 evictions and foreclosures; placed a mineral tax of nearly \$20 per section on his land; these are but a few. What is the record as compared to other provinces? I think that can best be answered by the people in those other provinces.

The last Federal election the C.C.F. only elected eight members in the whole of Canada. Five provincial elections were held last year; in the Province of Prince Edward Island not one C.C.F. member elected; in the Province of Newfoundland not a C.C.F. member elected; in the Province of Alberta not a C.C.F. member elected; in the Province of Ontario they only managed to hold their popular vote; in the Province of Manitoba, they saw Saskatchewan's farm policy, and of the C.C.F. members elected, only two represented the rural constituencies.

What position do they find themselves in today? The Premier said we are entering on an auspicious era, that of the 1960's. At the end of the 1950's, that is what the people think of the C.C.F. And so the C.C.F., facing dire disaster, have been trying to arrange a marriage for money, and so they have been courting for the past few years. They have made the proposal and next year they are supposed to be wed, a wedding between labour leaders and the C.C.F. Well, Mr. Speaker, all marriages are happy, but it is the living together afterwards that's rough. I am afraid that the people, and especially the farmers, have shown no desire whatsoever to become involved in this alliance.

I am sure that the civil service, that dedicated group who toil so hard in the interests of this province, would show no desire to become linked up with this alliance. I am sure that organized labour, who have realized throughout all these years, that their best gains have been made outside of the realm of politics, will not be too anxious to join the proposed group. As I said before, the farmers realize that their support has been best gained by dealing outside the realm of politics. Because, in the forthcoming election we are being asked to support C.C.F. candidates who, at the present time are going to enter into an alliance with another group, we are then in effect voting for a party that has no leader, no practical platform and no policies.

Mr. Speaker, in view of this Government's dismal record; because it offers nothing practical for the farmers of this province, I will not support the Motion.

Mr. Franklin E. Foley (Turtleford): — Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in the Motion for an Address-in-Reply to the Speech from the Throne, I first wish to offer my congratulations to the Mover and the Seconder and to all previous speakers in the debate thus far.

In the few minutes allotted to me in this debate, I wish to review some of the aspects of the Administration to your right, Mr. Speaker, as they affect primarily the welfare of the people in the north-western part of Saskatchewan. I listened with keen interest to the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Wolseley (Mr. McFarlane) review certain aspects of the farm crisis which struck Saskatchewan, and particularly the northern part of Saskatchewan, last October.

In fact, I am sure that all of us recall very vividly the morning of October 10, when we awakened to nearly a foot of snow in many parts of the province. I recall it very vividly, and at that time was prompted to send messages to Ottawa and to Regina suggesting that immediate consideration be given to helping the farmers in the west, suggesting that this was in fact a national crisis and one which required immediate and extraordinary measures.

I don't know why the hon. Minister of Agriculture retorted at that point, because it wasn't for two more days that he took any action whatsoever regarding this critical state of affairs in Saskatchewan, in spite of the fact that we had had unseasonable rainfalls, considerable precipitation and unprecedented harvest season. However, on the following Monday, October 12, the Minister of Agriculture appealed to Ottawa for assistance for this farm problem. I mention those dates because I believe they are important in determining the amount of time that this Administration required to give the farmers the assistance they so badly needed. I mention these dates, because of the procrastination that seemed to characterize many of the negotiations between this Government and Ottawa regarding a solution to this vital problem.

Without belabouring the Legislature with all the details, which are familiar to most, I might draw your attention to some of the outstanding features of the agreement reached. It was estimated that 124 million bushels of grain worth about \$140 million were lying under the snow in Saskatchewan. This, indeed, was a great tragedy, and has created untold hardship for the farmers, the small business folk and nearly all of the population of the northern part of our province; it has created inestimable problems regarding finance and all of the things on which they depend for their living.

Negotiations were begun with Ottawa, and it wasn't long before we heard it suggested that the Federal Government would share with the Province a payment of \$3 per acre for the first 200 acres of grain under the snow, provided that farmers who had harvested more than 50 per cent of their grain, of course, would not be eligible for the plan. I think we should emphasize at the outset that the regulations which eventually were enforced with regard to the acreage payments, were the sole and entire responsibility of this Administration to your right, and they must accept full responsibility for the shortcomings and the hardships which these regulations placed on the shoulders of many of our rural people.

For a good while we waited for this magic formula which the Government to your right were busy drawing up, Mr. Speaker. We heard the hon. Premier say that the payments would have to be based on need, but we were not prepared for the stringent means test with which this Government first proposed to administer this plan in Saskatchewan. It was well nigh unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, because they proposed that there would be a stringent definition of what a needy farmer actually is, while 30,000 farmers waited in the snow. They would take into consideration the farmer's cattle herd, the grain in the fields, the bonds that he had and other disposable assets. They would require the farmer to take a bond

under oath regarding his disposable assets. All this, Mr. Speaker, while our crops remained unharvested, while Christmas approached without a hope on the part of our farm people.

Then the horizon brightened slightly when the hon. Premier suggested that payments might be forthcoming by Christmas. However, Christmas came and went, eventually the formula, the means test, had to be scrapped. It was received very unfavourably by rural and urban municipalities, and by many other groups which this Government no doubt consulted. They realized the administrative complexities and, again, valuable time had been wasted. I think one of greatest and most serious drawbacks was the fact that it failed to recognize the initiative and the hard work which characterizes so many of our northern farmers. It failed to pay heed to the great number of men, yes, and women and young people, who went out into the snow, who broke machinery, and who did everything to harvest their grain, and harvested most of it damp. And of course by harvesting 50 per cent they harvested themselves, right into ineligibility as far as this Government was concerned. One of the greatest drawbacks was the fact that even today many hundreds of needy farmers in Saskatchewan, who will get a very small price for their damp grain and who were ineligible for this scheme, are still in very difficult financial straits.

I want to make it abundantly clear, Mr. Speaker, that I certainly do appreciate and I am certain the farmers of the province do appreciate, the assistance which they did receive under this scheme from Ottawa and from Regina. There is no question about that. It has provided much needed assistance in many cases, but my remarks are directed specifically on behalf of that large segment of our farming population who, for one reason or another, were not able to qualify under the terms or formulas which this Government put forth. I want to make it abundantly clear, on behalf of a great number of our rural people, that I regret that this Government saw fit to permeate this philosophy of a means test which it has used for so many years in a vicious manner with regard to the supplementary payments to our old age pensioners. The fact is that after 16 years of administration in one of the most prosperous periods of our history, they were so financially embarrassed, so financially committed, that this crisis found them completely unprepared and with the 'budget down'.

The manner in which this Government bungled, the manner in which it procrastinated in this most serious crisis in western history, will long stand as a sorry monument to the inefficiencies of a socialist state. It couldn't have happened under free enterprise. I see the hon. Minister has left his seat. I regret that the hon. Mr. Nollet is not in the House; he couldn't take it, apparently. I wonder why?

Premier Douglas: — On a point of order, the Minister has gone out in the corridor to meet the agricultural students who are visiting the Legislature.

Mr. Foley: — No wonder the hon. Minister has caused to be relieved in having such a worthwhile excuse for his absence, for he said: "If all of the assistance we have planned for the farmers under this plan are of no avail, the farmers may apply for Social Welfare." Oh, yes, the generosity of the Minister and this Government, this Government who have so often criticized the Liberal Administration and the efforts they made in that respect in the 1930's, they now suggest that the farmers of this province, one of the last groups of rugged individualists in this province, men who pioneered in this country, who have made this country what it is, that they may go on social welfare. The backbone of our country! I think it was an insult and I am sure he will have cause to regret those remarks.

In reviewing what has happened under this scheme, I want to mention one more thing: the Premier, during one of his addresses, I think it was December 3, 1959, went to great length to list some of the things this Government was going to do to assist the farmer above and beyond the acreage payment plan. One of the things he mentioned was the winter works program. He estimated \$950,000 as a forecast at that time. I have reliable reports which indicates that this winter works program did not assist some people. I have no doubt that it benefits certain segments of our population, but I have reports which indicate that men who participated in this winter works program actually participated themselves out of eligibility for assistance under the acreage scheme, robbing Peter to pay Paul, it would almost seem. I have further information which indicates that the administration of the winter works program, particularly in certain parts of northern Saskatchewan, was very ineptly handled indeed, so much so that one particular farmer I know, who wanted to get some work cutting brush on a road past his own land, wasn't able to do so because certain officials were looking elsewhere for assistance. While this may be a very minor thing, possibly, it is the principle that is important. If there is work to be given them, the men who are most closely adjoining that work should be given the first privilege of doing the work if they wish.

Summing up, Mr. Speaker, I feel that this Government has bungled in many ways in the administration of this plan. How does our plan compare with Alberta and Manitoba? One of the things I believe I should mention is the fact that Manitoba will be giving a \$2 per acre payment to farmers whose grain was damp or graded lower than No. 5, irrespective of their other financial contributions. I don't believe we have any provision made for farmers who took a serious loss on damp grain in this province. The hon. Minister and the members of this Government might have drawn up a much more satisfactory program than they did. The long delay created many hardships and certainly could have been avoided with a more realistic attitude toward it.

One of the other aspects of this which created problems throughout the province was the fact that rural municipal officials were asked to accept the responsibility for the screening of the applicants. No doubt there were advantages in this method, but I think it should be remembered that many municipal officials felt that they would be incurring criticism

from those farmers who might not be considered eligible, for assistance — criticism which should rightfully be directed toward the Government in a scheme of this nature.

Mr. Speaker, coming from a large rural constituency, as I do, in the northwestern part of the province where even today probably 75 to 80 per cent of the grain still remains under the snow, as I said before, we did appreciate the assistance that was given, but I do feel that a good deal more remains to be done. This grain is deteriorating in the stook. This grain has been ravaged by mice and ducks and last fall by wild game and I am sure that what remains next spring will be of little value to many of our farmers. They have their seed to worry about, their spring operations, their winter's living, and I would urge, Mr. Speaker, that those who have the responsibility in this regard seek further ways of assisting our rural people in this time of crisis.

I want to spend just a moment, Mr. Speaker, on one other matter which I was greatly concerned about in my particular area. A land transaction was recently consummated by this Government regarding land in the area around Jackfish Lake and land in the Helene Lake area north of Glaslyn. By virtue of this land transaction, it has now been announced that a provincial park will be established on Jackfish Lake. I want to say at the outset that I welcome a new provincial park on Jackfish Lake, as I have welcomed additional provincial parks in the past. I feel a good many more are required to meet the needs in Saskatchewan. I am confident that this is a long felt need, and it will be widely patronized.

However, Mr. Speaker, I view with alarm some of the things which took place regarding this transaction of Crown land and other transactions concerning Crown lands throughout the province, and the extremes to which this Government seems prepared to go at times to gain their own ends in these matters. I view with alarm the policy of this Government which seems to allow the disposition of Crown lands, occupied either by permit or in some cases by lease, without the prior consultation of those who depend on this land for their very livelihood. I view with alarm, Mr. Speaker, the action of Government officials who put into action policies which affect the welfare of our constituents without the knowledge of, or consultation with, the duly elected members of the areas in which these transactions take place and without even consultation with the Ministers of the Crown involved. I think this is a dangerous precedent, and one about which I am greatly concerned, and I am sure many of my colleagues share my concern in this respect.

I am greatly concerned, Mr. Speaker, and view with alarm the policy of this Government which seems to call for secrecy in some of these matters. If the Government is satisfied that its policy regarding the disposal of Crown lands is for the welfare of the people, why then is it necessary that such transactions be kept secret, that the people who are using those lands and who hold the use of those lands by permit or lease are not consulted. I think there is something insidious in secrecy of this type by a Government and by officials of the Government. I recall well the

honourable member for Souris-Estevan making his announcements regarding freedom and liberty as supposedly practised by the Administration to your right. And here again we have the same interpretation: freedom and liberty as long as the individual serves the state blindly and without recourse. That is freedom by compulsion, Mr. Speaker. This Government to your right doesn't know what freedom means and never did know. I suggest one of the reasons why the people of this province will demand a change in this Administration next year is because freedom by compulsion is a philosophy which went out with the Roman Empire.

The Crown lands of this province, Mr. Speaker, just as the name implies are the property of the people of Saskatchewan. They are not the property of those 36 individuals sitting on your right, but the property of all the people of this province. Even though a small minority group of people may be affected, is it any reason why a Government should walk rough-shod over those people? Is it any reason why a Government should disregard their method of making a livelihood and their needs? Is there any excuse for a Government to act in an arrogant, unthinking manner? I don't believe so. While their intentions may be the very best, it seems to me that any Government must act, whether it be with one individual, 10 individuals or 100, in good faith, openly and justly. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that as a result of some of the issues which developed over this particular transaction, I would hope that members of this Government and other Government officials will act in the future with a little more consideration, with a little more concern for the people over which they rule and often times rule so harshly. In . . .

Mr. McDonald: — In the short time left to them.

Mr. Foley: — . . . and that we will not have any more of this type of arrogance on the part of this Government.

In summing up, Mr. Speaker, for the procrastination which this Government has shown in solving the problems of our farmers, for the manner in which they "passed the buck" on the time question, the liquor plebiscite and then the farm crisis, for these reasons I think it is obvious I will not support the Motion.

Mr. Karl F. Klein (Notukeu-Willowbunch): — Mr. Speaker, as this is the last Session of this Legislature, I would like, in view of the pending either good fortunes or disaster that may befall you and I, extend to you at this time my congratulations on the way you have filled your position as Speaker of this House. You have filled that highly honoured position with dignity and charm which is a very rare combination indeed found in few individuals.

I would also like to congratulate those who previously participated in this debate, and particularly the Leader of the Opposition. I wish also

to pay tribute to the Premier for the speech he made. It was, as was expected, done very well with the exception of what it lacked in logic was covered up in emotionalism. I enjoyed observing the reactions to the speeches both by the Leader of the Opposition and to the Premier, by the members of the Government. When our leader spoke we noticed on the faces of the members of the Government a sort of smug, snickering, satisfaction at some of the things the Premier was saying. It reminded me of a bunch of cats licking their chops after they have finished their bowl of cream. Now, why are they so smug in some of the statements the Premier made? One of the things that always attracts the snickers of the members of the Government is when the Premier makes the statement: "Why, in 1944 when we took over, there were only 300 farms electrified", and somebody over there will always say: "And what do you think of that?" I'll tell you quite frankly what I think. The more often I hear it, the more silly I think it is.

The fact that when they took office 300 farms were electrified, or whatever figure they wish to quote, may be true, but I wonder how much credit I could get for an argument if I went through all my statistics and said: "Why, in 1944 when the C.C.F. took office, only one family owned and operated a car out of 50 and today one out of every two owns a car and operates it." Does this represent tremendous progress under the C.C.F. Government? Would that be a logical argument to state? As pointed out by the member for Qu'Appelle-Wolseley (Mr. McFarlane) even if the policy of bringing power to the farmers had been in effect during the 1930's, how many farms could have been electrified? I believe you, Mr. Speaker, were farming at that time and if somebody had come around to you and canvassed you to hook up power at \$500 and then pay the cost afterwards, could you, or would you, have signed up? If you could have, you would have been a rare farmer indeed, at that time. I remember in 1938, for example, my parents moved to a town where a house had been moved in and was wired up and the town was being supplied with power, and until about 1944 they used a gas lamp in that home, in spite of the fact that power was already there. It would have been absolute nonsense to take power all through the country and say: "Well, boys, I hope you will use it some day."

Hon. Mr. Walker (Attorney General): — The Liberals charged 15 cents a kilowatt.

Mr. Klein: — A person wonders why the Premier must prove to the people, or attempt to prove, that the Administration previous to his had done nothing. Of course the reason is very obvious. He cannot show satisfactorily what he has done with the increased budget and so, therefore, if the previous people have done nothing he has done twice as much with double the money.

The Premier, of course, was highly elated about the Stanford Report. Personally, when I read the report I was a little alarmed at some of the things stated in it. One reason for this was, of course, we today in Saskatchewan find ourselves in the unfortunate position of trying to break into already established industries and trying to break into already

established markets. When and by whom do we experience complications in this province today? Well, some of the people, they claim in the report, whom we experience complications from, are our neighbouring provinces, together with complications from products sent in to this country by the European countries. We all know, for example, the conditions in Western Germany after the war: totally destroyed, wanting to rebuild, tremendous finances were required and they are, perhaps, some of the people who are providing this competition to the industry that could have been here in Saskatchewan.

When they try to find excuses why they couldn't provide this province with the industries so much in demand in the post-war boom era, they stated that, we are too far removed from the big markets of the world. I suggest to the Government that it is no further from here to Europe than it is from there to here. How then can we experience the complications from producers who are just as far removed from our markets as we are from the big markets of the world?

At the time of the post-war boom era you could sell pretty near anything and there is a reason, Mr. Speaker, why this industry failed to develop here in Saskatchewan. The report claims that there is room even today for industries here such as tanning, leather goods and small wood products. I submit, Mr. Speaker, if these industries had located here at the time the C.C.F. Government were, as the Leader of the Opposition said, diddling with socialism, those industries under private enterprise would have established in tanning, leather good, and small wood products. They could have grown on a small scale and kept growing as the markets and demand increased. However, instead of that, these socialists who were diddling and fiddling with socialism said we're going into that field and no one else will go into that field until we have tried our experiments. Then the report claims that since 1950 no more have they tried to go into the area of Government owned and operated industries. But the C.C.F. Government must realize that they are just like a hailstorm; it does the most damage where it first hits and that is exactly what happened to this province. The most damage was done to this province when they first hit.

We must not overlook the fact that with the increased budgets and revenues that this Province has had available since 1944, as indicated by the member for Qu'Appelle-Wolseley, some five and one-half times what the previous budgets were, that a boom has taken place in this province, but this boom has taken place in few areas that no Government member has ever mentioned. I would like to take the opportunity of telling them where that great boom took place. That boom took place in none other (I don't know to what extent) than in the extension of Government bureaucracy. That's where the big boom took place.

I have with me here on the desk a return where I asked: "How many buildings were purchased and built since this Government has taken office?" You can see that it is a very cumbersome thing and in order to get all my statistics I would have required, as the Leader of the Opposition has suggested, a secretariat to come up with all the statistics, but in scanning through this cumbersome return, we find that over \$51 million has been spent to house the expanded Government bureaucracy by trying to supply the province with buildings alone to house that expansion in Government bureaucracy. Not only . . .

Premier Douglas: — May I ask a question of the hon. member? Does that include the university buildings and the mental hospitals?

Mr. Klein: — No, as they say, you will have to come up with an economist to get all your statistics and find out how much was spent.

Hon. Mr. Walker: — Just tell the truth.

Mr. Klein: — The second portion of this is mostly on administrative buildings . . .

Premier Douglas: — The \$51 million includes university buildings and hospital.

Mr. Klein: — We'll discuss that after my air time. To show that expansion in Government bureaucracy, if you don't want to accept the standard of the number of buildings purchased and bought by this Government, let's gauge it by another standard to show that this boom in Government took place in this province and that accounts for the expenditure of a big portion of the big budget they have had.

When we check through, the Government found it necessary in 1957 to employ approximately 11,000 or more people to carry on the business of the Government. Eleven thousand! How many were employed in industry, private industry, at that time? When you check the Stanford Report, union membership in manufacturing, you had a total union membership in 1957 of 6,114. In construction we had a union membership of 3,561 and in mining 1,546 which makes a total of 12,900 people registered in union membership as compared to 11,000 people required to carry on the business of government in this province.

I tried to find out just how much was paid out to the workers that were required by the Government to carry on this expanded bureaucracy and I agreed that perhaps it may be too difficult to get the amount paid out in wages in one year. I personally thought it would have been an easy thing for the government to be able to tell in a moment how much they pay out in wages to the people they employ, but apparently it isn't. If we took that 11,000, and I am convinced that today it would possibly be 12,000 workers, and if we took a conservative estimate of \$3,000 per person and you multiply that out, \$36 million is required in wages to carry on the business of this

Government. If you want to make comparisons, Mr. Speaker, that is \$3 million more than was available to the Administration in 1944 to carry on all the work in this province; health, highways, everything that the Government at that time was looking after. If they had had to pay the workers what these fellows are paid, they would have been \$3 million in the hole.

Hon. Member: — Some record! Some record!

Mr. Klein: — We had better cut out these nonsensical comparisons between depressed economies and post war boom economy. Surely the people of this province are getting sick and tired of hearing that sort of thing from the Government, and we hear it every day.

Mr. McFarlane: — They're getting sick and tired of the Government!

Mr. Klein: — I don't know if it is customary to give out advance information on legislation that this Government intends to bring in, and speak of it in terms as though it had already been passed. To me that indicates a contempt of the Legislature, in that they take for granted that the Acts are going to come in and will be passed. How do they know that the members in this Legislature will agree with them and the bills which they intend to bring in. Not only does it indicate that, but when they brought in some report to the newspaper that there was going to be assistance to farmers to provide sewer and water to the homes, I wonder if they took into consideration the harm and consternation it caused to some of our people who are now engaged in the business of putting in sewer and water into their homes.

In my own home town, there is a man who made a considerable investment of some \$35,000 in purchasing equipment, back-hoes, tractors and trucks, etc., because he is in the business now of putting sewer and water into farm homes, and as every good business man should do, he has lined up a number of farmers in that area who told him, "You come at such and such a time, and put in sewer and water." He had foreseen that, with the contracts that were available to him for putting in sewer and water, and from the sale of all the equipment, he estimated what his profits should be, and he estimated that he was in a position to make that \$35,000 investment. So when the announcement was made that water and sewer would be put in by the Government, the farmers told him, "Don't bother coming back; the Government is going to give us these things." There was a man stuck, and out of work because the Government said, "Next Session we are going to bring in a Bill." I can't blame the farmers who told him not to come back, until they could see what was in that Bill, and what they would get in benefits from it.

This man was engaged in the industry of putting in sewer and water into homes, and I might say at a very reasonable price — I assisted him one summer in putting sewer and water into homes, and the total cost of bringing in the water and putting in the sewer system and bath facilities was somewhere in the vicinity of \$1100. Now I have read that this Government plan is going to cost somewhere near \$2200.

Premier Douglas: — May I ask my hon. friend where he got this estimate?

Mr. Klein: — It was printed in one of the press papers, and was estimated that it would be in the vicinity of \$2200.

Premier Douglas: — What paper?

Mr. Klein: — I don't have the clipping, but it could be found, Mr. Speaker.

I thought perhaps I could find some consolation in the fact that this Government was going to give some aid to recreational development. Two or three years ago the P.F.R.A. built a dam on the Wood River, located just north of the town of La Fleche. This dam is one of the largest bodies of water in the entire south central area, and on Sundays you will find tremendous numbers of people who come there to enjoy some of the things that are being enjoyed in the northern part of the province. The community, which is very progressive, and is used to organize such things, organized a beach club, in order to improve the beach site, to have trees planted, etc., and to make it a real resort. They believed they should get some assistance from the Government, and I believe assistance was granted to them. I remember the picture of the Minister of travel and information handing over a cheque for the sum of \$1500 or \$2,000 to this group, in order to help them improve their beach facilities. Everybody was grateful for that cheque, and even though the Minister may have got close to \$2,000 worth of publicity, we still appreciated getting that cheque.

I, too, felt that perhaps I should be appreciative of the efforts of the Government in helping out the people in the whole south central Saskatchewan. But when I realized that the expenditures they make on behalf of Sunday picnickers in Regina, I wasn't too sure whether I was happy with the assistance they gave us. All the people in south central Saskatchewan are not. It is common knowledge that, for the convenience of the Sunday picnickers in Regina, who wander around on the Legislative grounds, they found they could spend, without question, \$14,000 on an outdoor toilet, but when they give a grant to the whole south central portion of Saskatchewan to develop an area, which is a tremendous tourist attraction, and one of great importance, they found a measly \$2,000.

Premier Douglas: — That was in indoor toile; not an outdoor one.

Mr. Klein: — It's an indoor and outdoor both! I question why they can find \$14,000 to spend on picnickers in Regina, when . . .

Hon. Mr. Fines: — You object to that expense, do you?

Mr. Klein: — No, I don't. But I do object to the treatment you give to the people of Regina, and the treatment you give the people of the whole of the south central portion of Saskatchewan. We are just as important individuals as you are here in the city.

Hon. Mr. Walker: — Your needs are greater!

Mr. McCarthy: — How can you tell?

Mr. Klein: — I am wondering, too, if this might apply when they start setting up recreational areas, if they will select their pet areas and bypass the areas that we think should be developed.

It is necessary for me now, Mr. Speaker, to deal with a matter and I do so not on my own initiative, but at the request of a vast number of citizens of my own area who have asked me to tell this Legislature the story of what took place last summer. They felt at that time that a great wrong had been done, and today they still have not received any satisfaction. I wish to present this case to the Legislature in as unbiased manner as possible, and tell the events, as I see them, in an unbiased way, and then leave it to the Legislature to decide whether this Government has given the treatment that those people deserve. This has to do with the Metis Co-op Farm in the Willowbunch area, known as the Lacerte Co-operative Farm.

In order to understand what took place we must understand the history of this farm. It has been told in this House very often, and particularly by the former Minister of Social Welfare, but I believe it is necessary to review briefly the events which have taken place in that area, because it is considered to be a pilot project, which could be studied and worked on, so that it would serve to solve the problem of all the Metis in this province.

In 1949 Father Blanchard went into the area and found 35 families of Metis who were living in deplorable conditions. They lived in mud huts with sod floors, and they were undernourished. He felt this was an area where he could do some good for humanity by applying the co-op principles that he was so well versed in, because he had been a student of Father Cody. In order to do so, he went into that area; he arrived with a wonderful understanding of these people and because of his kind and patient treatment of them, he was able to convince them that they must pool all the finances they had, and administered those finances in a co-operative way. When he made his first appeal he received a total of \$2.75, but by encouraging

these people to do their best, and set forth their best efforts possible, it was possible by 1950 to convince these people to work co-operatively together on a ten-acre garden plot, which is owned and operated by the Metis people.

Last year they had a good crop of vegetables, and fortunately they saw immediately the advantages of pooling their efforts and working together co-operatively, because it brought some of the basic amenities and foodstuffs to them which they did not have before. Many people in that area took a great interest in that movement. In 1951 the municipality decided to come to their assistance, and granted them 24 acres of land at \$1,000 and they could pay that back whenever they had the money at a very low interest rate. That same year the P.F.R.A. constructed a dam and offered assistance to this project, and so the work of the co-op farm began and continued.

So from 1949 to 1951 or 1952, this project was owned and operated by the people, under the directorship of Father Blanchard, who was its founder, and recognized as such. In 1952, the Department of Social Welfare felt he was doing valuable work, and felt highly elated when they were able to attain his services, to work for the Department to set up projects such as this throughout the whole province, and this he consented to do, with the permission of his superiors under the condition that he was to be responsible to no one but the Minister.

During that period, he worked pretty well all over the province, and it was, I feel, a tremendous job which he did in spite of the stumbling blocks that were put in his way, for some unknown reason. I believe the member for Touchwood (Mr. Meakes) is aware of some of the difficulties he encountered. Because of the difficulties and confusion he was encountering, it was necessary for him to make a co-ordinating book so that he could have on recorded everything the Government officials said, when he went into an area to begin to organize. He would go in and organize it one time, and go back the next time and find a state of confusion because someone else had told the people something directly different from what he had told them.

Because of the interest that was taken by the people of that community, in 1953 a widow offered to the Metis Co-op Farm (and I would like the members to pay attention to what was offered) the following: 11 quarters of land; 700 acres of this was under cultivation; 100 head of cattle; over 200 tons of hay, and one-third of the crop for that year; a full line of machinery together with the 11 quarters of land for a total of \$35,000. This was indeed a good offer, but Father Blanchard felt that he couldn't finance this. The terms by the way, were \$5,000 down and the balance to be paid off with no interest. Because he couldn't finance this, he requested the Department of Social Welfare to see if they couldn't find it possible to purchase this land on behalf of the Co-operative Farm, and give the Co-op Farm the right to lease it, and use it under the

auspices of the Lacerte Co-op Farm. This arrangement couldn't be made because the Government decided they would establish on their purchase of this 11 quarters of land, a state farm. I have forgotten the name they gave it, but it was, in effect, a state farm, and they put a man in charge, hired the Metis as ordinary workers, and put them on a work basis wage.

To begin with, this destroyed every advance that had been made in the education of these people. They had been taught that, in order to progress co-operatively, they must be prepared to assume responsibility and learn how to manage and conduct their own affairs, as they had been taught to do under the Lacerte Co-op Farm.

As for the business of work and wages, the Metis had no direct concern over their work. They would go to work every day, quit every night and that was it. We know good and well that that is not realistic, when you are a farmer. You just don't work that way. So the state farm and the Lacerte Co-op Farm were proceeding side by side, and by 1955 it was very obvious that the state farm would gradually, with unlimited capital at their disposal, absorb the Lacerte Co-op Farm, which was really and truly a co-operative farm. Here is where a lot of confusion exists in the minds of even the well-thinking C.C.F. They don't see the difference between a state farm and a co-operative farm. I remember a C.C.F.'er one time asking me: "What is the difference between a Crown Corporation and a Co-op? There is no difference. The Government owns the Crown Corporation, the Government represents the people; therefore the people own Crown Corporations. Now, that to me is not clear thinking. That to me does not indicate what co-operation means. The first principle, as I understand co-operatives, is that the co-op must own in their own name whatever they are building. Ownership is one of the basic principles of co-operation.

Because this small farm was being absorbed into the larger state farm, Father Blanchard objected to this and asked if he could go back to his original project, and he got from the Department a lease agreement on their holding and on the land. This lease agreement was drawn up, and by this agreement with this Government, he was appointed as project leader of the Lacerte Co-op Farm. As can be expected, during that period certain difficulties arose. I don't know how these difficulties were handled, or how they were relayed to the Department, but instead of being investigated and done away with as they arose, they grew and grew, until this Government found it necessary to write a letter of dismissal on July 2nd to the person in charge, and I have here a copy of it, from the Department of Social Welfare addressed to Rev. Father Blanchard:

"Please accept this as our official notice of our intention to relieve you of your duties as project leader of the Willowbunch Lacerte Co-operative Farm. You may leave your duties

February 19, 1960

at any time which is convenient to you, but you will be paid up to, and including August 2nd, 1959, 30 days from the date of this letter.”

Here we have the Department of Social Welfare taking it into their hands to dismiss the founder of the project. This would be comparable to some person in Nova Scotia dismissing Father Cody. What was the reaction to this dismissal on the part of the Metis? This is from Willowbunch Lacerte Co-op Farm to the Department of Social Welfare:

“On July 7, a general meeting of the Lacerte Co-op farm was held when the Rev. Father Blanchard told us he was fired. Father Blanchard left the meeting, and the members decided they wanted to keep him as supervisor. The following motion was passed:

‘It was moved and seconded we are in favour of keeping Father Blanchard as supervisor of the Lacerte Co-op Farm.’ We think that, according to Clause 14 of the contract, that Father Blanchard was hired until March 31. We think that, before firing him we should at least have asked the members what they thought about it. We don’t know why he has done this; we would like to know the reason. We feel that Father has done a good job and we want to keep him.”

Clause 14 simply stated that “the lessee agreed that Father Blanchard, or in his absence, such persons as may be designated by the lessor, shall be the supervisor of the project, and advisor to the lessee or the members, and that the said supervisor shall be permitted to reside on the said land.” This contract is in effect until March 31, 1960. And because this contract was in effect until then, it was quite logical, for the members to assume that he was hired until March 31, 1960, as properly stated.

An abundance of correspondence took place between the Department of Social Welfare and the Co-op Farm, and the Department stated, for example:

“I can appreciate the concern of the members of the Co-op Farm, but I can assure you that we will do everything we can to try to keep the group together. We will keep you advised through our field representative of future plans in connection with the farm, but the decision that we have made to release Father Blanchard still stands, and we are not prepared at this time to change the decision.”

There was tremendous concern among the citizens of that community as well as the members of the Co-op Farm. In fact, the concern became so great they found it necessary to organize a group of citizens from that town and district of Willowbunch, and call together all the leading citizens, the President of their Co-op there, and everybody whom they thought was acquainted with the project, to get together and discuss this matter, because the citizens were very proud of what had been done on the Co-op farm, and they did not want to see any changes taking place. So they met and discussed the whole situation, and tried everything to see whether there was any valid reason for this action on the part of the Department of Social Welfare. In the correspondence which took place, there were no satisfactory reasons given, in the minds of either the citizens or members of the Co-op for the dismissal of the project leader.

The Co-op farm members after the correspondence took place, decided they were just getting nowhere by writing back and forth, so on July 31, 1959, a member indicated to the Department that “we are hereby giving you official notice that we will not accept any project leader other than Father Blanchard. Due to the fact that we are unable to obtain satisfactory answers to our letters, we wish to advise that we will no longer discuss this matter by correspondence. We urge you to come here and discuss the matter with our Board and advisors.” I imagine they felt they couldn’t accomplish too much by writing, and that it would have been a better situation if the Department had met with them and tried to settle this, but instead of that they got this letter from the Department, in reply:

“How many members of the Co-op were present at the meeting when you decided you would not accept any other project leader other than Father Blanchard, and what are their names? How many members of the Co-op were absent? Secondly, since you have decided that you would not accept any other project leader, am I to understand that the Lacerte Co-op Farm wishes to cancel their lease on the land. Section 14 of the Covenant of the lessee provides that the Co-op agrees to accept the project leader named by this Department, in the absence of Father Blanchard. If the Co-op refuses (note this) to accept the project leader we appoint, it would seem to me that the action and the lease, by that action, is subject to cancellation under the provision of Section 4 of the general provisions of the lease. Is that what you want?”

That was the reply they got when they refused to accept the decision to appoint another leader, and asked the Department to come out and discuss it with them. They felt — and this is when they became extremely perturbed, they were being intimidated by being threatened with cancellation of the lease agreement.

Premier Douglas: — Mr. Speaker, could I ask the hon. member a question? I am trying to follow him very closely, but in the interests of this matter, as it involves my Department, is it not correct that the Lacerte Co-op, prior to this, had passed a resolution to disband the co-operative? This is the information which my Department is interested in.

Mr. Klein: — Yes. I will deal with that. At the time they passed that resolution, this is what took place. There was some confusion amongst the members, and at one meeting which they held, an argument began at the meeting, and there were only seven or eight people present at that meeting. During the course of the argument, one fellow jumped up and said, “Well, let’s disband. I make a motion that we disband.” Without any previous or premeditated thought at this meeting, they passed this motion, and there were three against and four for it. This motion was permitted to stand in order to teach a lesson. We must take into consideration that the Government is dealing here with a group of Metis who, unfortunately are not as well versed and educated in our democratic ways as they might be, and they found out at that time that they just could not make a snap decision especially when they were told that this decision stood. The first thing they thought of was, can we do anything about seeing to it that we rectify our mistake. This is really what happened. At the next meeting, when they said to the Department the fact that they wanted to keep Father Blanchard as their project leader, 17 members were present and they were all in favour of accepting and keeping him as their leader, and continuing the Co-op.

But surely we can permit these people an opportunity to change a decision that they made on snap judgment. I believe in the process of their education that they benefitted by the process of democracy and a process of co-operative ways of doing things.

As a result of that citizen’s meeting that was held in Willowbunch, and because we tried to find every possible reason that we could think of, and there were some 15 leading citizens there, they framed the following resolution.

“As a result of these discussions, it was moved and seconded that this meeting go on record as having full confidence in Father Blanchard’s integrity and ability to carry out his duties as the project leader of the Lacerte Co-op Farm and we most emphatically protest his dismissal and hereby call on the Minister of Social Welfare, to publicly reinstate Father Blanchard immediately as project leader of the said Co-op Farm.”

They formed this resolution as strongly as they possibly could, I suppose, because they felt that, after everything else was discussed, they couldn't see any valid reason for dismissal, and furthermore, the people in that area realize that if he withdrew his advice and guidance from this group, that it would disintegrate and the Metis would find themselves in the same predicament they found themselves in 1949. That is why the citizens are so very concerned. They didn't want to revert back to that, and to show that their concern was great, it was moved and seconded:

“That if no favourable results were obtained from the Minister, that we as a group go on record as being prepared to sponsor a series of public meetings and petitions in support of our request, and all that we are requesting is that Father Blanchard be reinstated as the project leader of the Co-op Farm.”

Many things began to happen after this meeting. Some people in that area came in and arranged for the Government department to receive a delegation from the Lacerte Co-op. In order to convey the sentiment of what the group felt about the delegation, letters were written to the Premier, and in one letter from the Co-op farm the Secretary indicated to the Premier that:

“We presume you have been informed that Father Blanchard has been dismissed as project leader. We are fully aware that if he leaves at this time, our co-op venture on the farm will fade. We also have been assured that the Minister of Social Welfare is prepared to receive a delegation. Therefore, since we have been incorporated as a Co-op under the Department, and since we know that if Father Blanchard leaves, this Co-op will fail, we sincerely appeal to you to be present at the hearing, and to intercede on our behalf, not only to protect the interest of the members of this Co-op Farm, but to assure its continued success. We have hoped that in the interests of our Co-op you would have by now intervened in this matter, and not permitted this Act to take place. However, things have now reached a point where we have no hope of reaching a satisfactory settlement from the Department of Social Welfare. As expressed in your letter to us, we decided not to

February 19, 1960

answer your last letter because we felt that we were being intimidated upon, and the Department is attempting to frighten us into accepting their decision.”

Then they included a paragraph to show that they had an understanding of what the co-op movement meant.

Similarly, the citizens also wrote the Premier on behalf of the Lacerte Co-op farm, and this is what the citizens of the community, together with the members of the co-op farm, wrote to the Premier:

“The members of the Co-op Farm have asked us to write to you on their behalf. We do so willingly and fully aware of the problems they now face. We, a group of Willowbunch citizens, have had two meetings to openly and fully discuss this dismissal and have concluded that this project must remain as it is for two reasons: “One, financially the project has been a tremendous success, and has alleviated the tax burden of the people of this district by several thousands of dollars since its inception. Two, because of the immeasurable human value, the project has made an asset of the Metis of this community, rather than a liability as they once were. They are almost at the point now where they can be independent citizens. We hope that the next generation will be able to find their place in our society and enjoy the amenities of life, as every other citizen of this province. This is perhaps the best reason of all why the Farm should remain and help guide them towards their goal. To see him go now would be to destroy all the constructive work on the Co-op Farm, and inflict a terrible stigma into the Co-operative movement.

If this Co-op venture continues to be the success it is and has been, it will greatly help people more readily recognize the values inherent to the co-operative movement.”

That was, in my mind, a very sound letter written by the citizens of that community who were aware of everything that had taken place from its inception. They were aware of the squabbles these members had; they were aware of the facts of this development; they were aware of the fact that

members had to be expelled from the co-op movement; the citizens are aware of all that. But, in spite of this factional difference, and in spite of the quibbling and quarreling that went on on the farm (they realized that could be expected, because the task of rehabilitating Metis is not, admittedly, an easy one; they are only growing to maturity through the . . .)

Mr. A.L.S. Brown (Bengough): — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I was wondering if I could have the source of that letter. I need the name of the man who wrote that letter, from which he quoted.

Mr. Klein: — It was the Secretary of the Citizens' Group, E. Compagné. They were aware of the fact that these factional differences were taking place on the farm. They realized these squabbles were taking place. They realized also that these rumours were being circulated in the community by members who were expelled from the Co-op Farm, but in spite of all this, they found no justification for the dismissal of the founder of that movement.

Then the delegation came and met with the Department of Social Welfare, and with the Premier, and a brief was presented to the Government by the manager of that Co-op Farm, and again the same thing was stated in the brief, they wanted Father Blanchard, and they wound up by requesting three things:

“(1) Therefore, because it seems to us that your Department has violated this basic principles of the co-op movement;

(2) because it seems to us that the methods used to dismiss Father Blanchard were unfair and improper;

(3) and because your Department has not advanced, to our minds, a single reason for Father Blanchard's dismissal, that we will conclude this Brief that Rev. Father Blanchard be the supervisor of the project, and the advisor to the lessee or its members, and that the said supervisor be permitted to reside on the said land. This is stated in our original and actual agreement dated April 22, 1959.”

I would at this time like to pay tribute to the Government for the way they received this delegation. Two hours of very fruitful discussion took place, and everybody spoke frankly and everybody placed what they had to say at the scrutiny of those present. I felt it was one of the most beneficial delegations I had ever attended. We decided that perhaps in the interests of this Co-op, it would be best to set up an Advisory

committee of local citizens who are acquainted with the problem of that project, and to have it administer the affairs, and we were going to spell out the duties of that advisory committee and all the other moves that would be necessary.

The only regret I had afterwards was that such a meeting could not have taken place at the very outset when the trouble began. When this trouble first started, why in the world didn't someone make the effort? I think the initiative should have come from Social Welfare, to clear up these difficulties by calling the exact meeting which we had in Regina. That would have, I believe, prevented all the unfortunate things that took place since.

The citizens were very determined that they wanted to see to it that, first of all, Father Blanchard be reinstated, because they felt there was no just reason for dismissing him. Some correspondence took place between the Chairman of this temporary advisory board and the Minister, and the chairman indicated that the Minister had told the chairman that provision had been made to make a grant to the Co-op Farm in lieu of wages that the project leader was receiving direct from the Department, and that such a grant would be made available as of September 1, 1959, and the former project leader had only received a salary until August 2nd. The chairman of the Citizens' Group said, "If I accept those proposals it would be an admission on the part of the citizens' advisory board that there is some measure of reason for your dismissal of Father Blanchard for denying that month's salary." So he respectfully requested the Minister to consider giving the salary as of August 2nd, and thereby absolving Father Blanchard of the blame of doing some wrong, and deserving dismissal. He asked the Minister to consider that very greatly. The Minister replied, in part:

"The decision to dismiss Father Blanchard was based on the history of the events involving the farm, leading me to believe that Father Blanchard could not give the proper kind of leadership that was needed. His inability to rise above personal involvement in day to day struggles continued; his manner in which his opinion about the kind of management that is necessary; his attempt to legislate certain kinds of behaviour, his attempt to manipulate membership in the organization in his role and participation interfactual differences, had led me to this conclusion.

If I were to comply with your demand that the proposed grant be effective from August 2nd to enable Father Blanchard to be paid by the Co-op from that date, it would be tantamount to reinstating him, and this the Department was determined not to do, under any circumstances."

This was the same man of whom the former Minister of Social Welfare had this to say, in a speech made in this House on Tuesday, February 22, 1955;

“With respect to Father Blanchard, he certainly has an understanding of the Metis problems. He understands and believes in co-operation as a way of life, and is a great student of the co-operative organization. It is he who teaches the Metis people their first lesson in thrift, by establishing a savings union. He organizes co-operative gardens and co-operative projects of all kinds. He is at one and the same time an idealist, and a very practical man. No one realizes better than he does the immensity of this problem which confronts him, but he is undaunted in the face of disappointment and discouraging failures. He is patient to a degree which I have seldom seen in any man. He is understanding, sympathetic and kind. He is an indefatigable worker, and I only hope that his health holds out so that he can carry on this work to which he has dedicated his life.”

That would indicate to me that he was held in very high esteem by the former Minister of Social Welfare, as well as by many members on the opposite side of the House. In 1954, dated second Session of the 12th Legislature, the former Minister said practically the same thing:

“We have been very fortunate in having Father Blanchard assist us in the project of rehabilitation of the Metis people in the prairie region of the province. He has a great love and understanding of the Metis people. He was born at Duck Lake; he also has a philosophy of co-operation deeply imbedded in his heart and mind. His first program which was carried out in Willowbunch, where there are some 35 Metis families, was to teach them and give the Metis people an understanding of the philosophy of the co-operation. They agreed that they had assets which, if used co-operatively, could do a great deal to improve their own conditions.”

Again a quote from the former Minister of Social Welfare, Mr. Speaker. Now, what suddenly happened to this great man? The present Minister said he vacillated and manipulated membership, and did everything that was horrible under the sun. The former Minister said he was a tremendous man,

with all these things imbedded in his heart and his mind. So something must have seriously happened to this great man. This is the present Minister's opinion, in spite of the opinion that the Co-op movement holds of the same man, whose opinions vastly differ — that he vacillates and manipulates memberships, and all these horrible things that a co-op leader should not do.

But this is how the 'Co-op Consumer' assesses this man as recently as 1959. Here is an article which appeared in that paper in May, 1959:

The Co-op farm at Willowbunch is an outstanding achievement in co-op enterprise. Father Blanchard has accomplished a miracle in a few short years. The organization of this Metis farm was a major undertaking, and required patience and understanding of human relations. This is a true example of Christianity applied to social economics. When the philosophy of brotherly love guides human affairs, the result is the elevation of mankind. We call this co-operation, the noblest ambition of all."

That is the opinion the 'Co-op Consumer' held in May, 1959. In September of that same year, the Minister held the opinion that this man was manipulating members, and that he was doing all these things, breaking up the co-operative, wasn't running it on a true co-operative basis. What information does the co-op movement not have that the Minister has?

Because of this difference as to the paying of the salary as until August 2nd, the man who was appointed Chairman, wouldn't offer his services. He did a tremendous amount of work on this Committee, together with some assistance from the Department of Co-operative Affairs. They sat down, and for two days spent long hours in deciding what should become of this project, and they came up with what I thought was a sound proposal, as sound a one as could possibly be submitted. It contains functions of each portion of the co-op movement, comments and suggestions, and there are about six pages of proposals made by responsible men, both from the Department and from the community — what they believe should be done in order to carry on this project to its ultimate success, so that it could serve as an inspiring example to future co-op movements. It was agreed that these proposals were sound. Now, then, the present Minister refused to pay that one month's salary because the project leader of the farm was going to be Father Blanchard. He refused to pay that one month's salary due to the fact that that would be tantamount to admitting that his Department didn't have a reason for letting him go. He wouldn't do that, but he wanted the Citizens' Committee to admit that there was some reason. Finally, the fellow who acted as chairman of this group had this to say:

"I am in receipt of your letter dated November 16th with reference to the dismissal of the Rev. Father Blanchard, and also the proposals submitted to you. Having in mind all the correspondence that has taken place as between the Lacerte Co-op Farm and the Department of Social Welfare, the Department of Co-operation and the Citizens' Committee, and having in mind the briefs that were presented by a delegation to your Department in the presence of the Premier, I am surprised that you do not take the matter . . . of Rev. Father Blanchard's dismissal.

I have reported in detail to the Citizens' Committee that a special meeting of the members of the Lacerte Co-op farm, the Rev. informed us that "I do not wish to continue to work with your Department. I wish to be relieved of the responsibility of appointing an Advisory Committee, and of working on any further proposals with regard to rehabilitation programs for the Metis people, sponsored by your Department. I will continue to have keen interest in the Metis people, and will endeavour to help them with their problems."

There you see, Mr. Speaker, the attitude taken by . . .

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, the hon. members should name the signer of each of the letters that he quoted.

Mr. Klein: — All right. I will do that. This was signed by Mr. L. Bourdages. Now, because of this attitude taken, this Department has lost the confidence of some of the best citizens of that community who are interested in this project, so much so that they said even though we are interested, if the Department takes the attitude it does, we just can't do anything. Our hands are tied. So the matter stands and rests today. No one has been appointed, as yet, as project leader to my knowledge.

All the Government properties that were used by Father Blanchard haven't been cleared. He's got them on loan, but they sit out there yet to this day. No move has been made either to make or reject the tremendous proposals made by both the groups and by responsible members of the Government. I only hope that something will be done because spring is coming. Farming operations have to take place, preparations have to be made, advice has to be given daily. Those people have not yet reached the stage of maturity, where they can manage and operate on their own. They need a guiding

hand. They need advice, and I only hope that the Minister can find it in his power to do everything possible to see that justice is carried out, not only to the founder of the movement, but also the Co-op Farm. He founded this movement for the first three years; worked without remuneration. He spent ten years of his life seeing, watching and trying to promote the growth of this movement.

Secondly, I hope that the Department and this Government can see to it that the Co-op Farm will flourish and become what it should have been, a pilot project. Every effort should have been made to see that it should not become a terrible example to other projects amongst the Metis people throughout this province. Perhaps I can understand why the member for Cumberland (Mr. Berezowsky) feels as he does, because certainly he must have that problem in his district. I only hope, Mr. Speaker, that everything will be done before spring operations, so that those people will not be reverted to where they were in 1949 when they were first found in those deplorable conditions.

In view of what I have said and stated, it is quite obvious, Mr. Speaker, that I will not support the Speech from the Throne.

Hon. T.J. Bentley (Minister of Social Welfare): — Mr. Speaker, I don't want anyone to misunderstand what I am going to say, but I do regret that the speaker who just took his seat saw fit to introduce the latter question. There is no shame attached to it, Mr. Speaker. I dislike very much having to deal in the Legislature with a personality who is a paid member of the staff Department. It would appear that to some extent I will have to, but I will to the best of my ability, leave personalities out of the discussion and deal only with competence, insofar as the discharge of responsibilities is concerned.

The hon. member for Notukeu-Willowbunch (Mr. Klein) went into the early history of the Lacerte Co-operative Farm. He could have spent quite a bit longer than he did, if he had wanted to go into every detail. I am grateful that he didn't because, not having all the documents, and not knowing he was going to do so, I was completely unprepared with any documentary evidence to follow what he did. So if he had dealt with any more, it would have been that much more difficult. But, in the main, the early part of the history he recited was reasonably accurate up until the time he said that Government had attempted to make this Co-op Farm into a state farm. This was not the intention of the Government.

Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I did not say that the Co-op Farm was to be put in, but the Government holdings, that 11 quarters of land that you purchased, not the half-section, but the 11 quarters that you purchased was to be made into a state co-op farm.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — Again there was no intention on the part of the Government to turn the ranch part of it, the 11 quarters, into a state farm. Just the opposite was the intention, and that is the reason it was leased later on to the Lacerte Co-op Farm, and made all one piece, joining up with the half-section of land they already owned, with the 22 acres of municipality, or 26, (I have forgotten the exact figure, but anyway a small acreage) but all included in the Lacerte Co-op farm with a lease on the part that my friend describes as the 11 quarters which were to be a state farm.

Mr. Klein: — Would the hon. Minister permit a question? How long did you operate your holdings as that rehabilitation project before you gave the lease?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — A very, very short time. There was a manager put on there.

Mr. Klein: — It was between 1952 to 1955?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — Possibly, as I say, you have brought this matter up and I haven't got all the material on it here. There is a big file on this, and I cannot be expected to remember every detail of everything that happened. But I remember it in the main, very well, and the whole hope of this project was that it would develop and eventually become a completely, if possible, self-supporting co-operative institution for as many individuals as could find a good living on it.

Now we come to the matter of Father Blanchard's engagement, and again the things that were said about him in this Legislature by my colleague, the former Minister of Social Welfare, were spoken in earnest and in truth, because they were believed, and at the moment I have no reason to believe otherwise. I want the House to be clear of that one point. The other things that have been said about him, his interest, his keen interest in the welfare of Metis people was well recognized by every member on this side of the House who took an active interest in the welfare of our Metis people. However, Mr. Speaker, there is a vast difference between having a tremendously big heart and a tremendous interest, and a high zeal of missionary spirit, and of being a good organizer and a good co-ordinator. When he was first put on the Government payroll, somebody in the Government has to be responsible for administration, and make decisions as to whether a person in a management area is doing the kind of job that is expected, or not. He may have a heart as big as a house; he may have all the best desire in the world, and undoubtedly this gentleman did have all those qualities, but the lack of harmony, the great disharmony, that has been evident in the Lacerte farms for two years prior to last March, up until the events leading up to it convinced me that we were in error in expecting the good Father to be able to provide the administration necessary and to create the harmony

that is necessary, as well as do the other things which his great nature prompted him to do.

These are the events that led up to the removal of Father Blanchard from office, because of the disharmony that had been allowed to develop in the Lacerte Co-op Farm. When it became evident that Father Blanchard was not able to bring about that harmony, then it was necessary to do something about it, and I did what I would have done no matter who the individual had been and which I have had to do, unfortunately, on a number of occasions. We could no longer keep an individual in any position if the individual wasn't fulfilling the responsibilities, from an administrative point of view, that we expected should be fulfilled.

Following that, and the recital, except for the emphasis that my friend from Willowbunch puts on certain aspects of it, the recital was reasonably accurate. There was some contention on the part of the members of the Co-op Farm, when we decided we would have to sever our connection with Father Blanchard. I realize that possibly they may have regretted some of the disharmony that arose and may wish to change their course. I was not unsympathetic to their point of view and we discussed the matter back and forth, but I could not be convinced that I could properly be a public servant in the position that I hold, and continue to employ him in that position, and so I was adamant on that point. When the group met with the Premier and myself as described by the member for Notukeu-Willowbunch, September 1st, we went over the matters very thoroughly and we suggested, the Premier and I, that we would be very happy if the advisory committee at Willowbunch, would be resurrected or revitalized. It had become somewhat less involved in the last few years than it had been some years before, and we suggested that this committee might be revitalized, and we would do everything that we could to help them to revitalize, and confer with them, and even to go so far as to be prepared to accept their recommendation as to how best advice and guidance might be given to the operators of the Lacerte Farm.

There was a desire expressed that Father Blanchard be reinstated. I have already pointed out that I could not do so, in the light of what I felt was my responsibility. But I offered the following: "If you people will take the responsibility of choosing yourself whom you like to be your project leader, I will ask the Government for authority to make a grant to the farm of sufficient amount to enable you to pay your project leader, whoever he might be, the same scale of pay as was given to Father Blanchard." That was an offer; my friend knows, and he knows the offer was made.

Mr. Klein: — That offer was well received.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — I got that authority from the Government and transmitted it to the folks down there, and also made it clear that, if on their responsibility, they wished to engage Father Blanchard as their project leader, I would offer no objection, but the responsibility for his

actions would then be theirs. We would provide them with the money to pay him, but they would make the decision as to whether they would engage him as project leader, or whether they would engage somebody else.

If they engaged somebody else in whom they had confidence, I would have still carried out the obligation the Government permitted me to offer. They didn't appoint Father Blanchard. I have no way of telling what reasoning they used when they failed to accept my offer. They just didn't, and because they did not accept the offer to appoint a project leader, then later I got the letter which was read by the member for Notukeu-Willowbunch from Mr. Bourdage, saying that under the circumstances, (and I should say this was preceded by other correspondence) he insisted that Father Blanchard be paid from the day of our dismissal, and I could not, in all conscience, accept that kind of responsibility and agree to that, unless I was convinced that I had been wrong in the first place, and I wasn't. I'm not yet.

The consequences were that all that had to happen, if that citizens' committee had been prepared to go ahead, was to permit the Father to go one month without any government money, because we wouldn't have paid the grant for the month that had elapsed. But we would had they appointed a project leader, Father Blanchard, or anybody else they wished, any time after they had received my letter, up until very recently, certainly until the end of the year, anyway. If they had appointed a project leader any time during that time, I would have paid the government grant as from the 2nd day of September, as I pointed out in the correspondence. You can't get any better deal, in my opinion. But I would not be put in the position of having to say that I was wrong in my first decision, because I was not convinced I was wrong. If I were at this present moment convinced I was wrong, I would honestly say so, and say, "Well, an error was made; I'll do the best I can to correct the error", and would have asked for the authority to do so. I was not, and still am not convinced that I was wrong. Consequently I could not have been put in the position that the citizens' committee wanted me put in.

With regard to the future of the farm, a delegation of responsible officials of the farm called on me within the last four or five weeks. We went into the matter very thoroughly. Officials of the Department had been down constantly, in conversation and in collaboration and working with the group. Our Department of Co-operatives have had their men trying to work out the best means of procedure. A delegation of the Co-operative Farm itself, met me in January, and expressed only one concern. They did not express any concern such as was brought up by the hon. member today. They expressed concern about what was going to happen this summer because they had been told, they said, by people around Willowbunch, that if they didn't do exactly what the Department said they must do (whatever that was going to be) we would not renew their lease for the coming year. This is leased on an annual basis, as agreed by them and us, and they will have the right to own it some day if the lease continues. I disabused their minds very readily about that, and have since confirmed it in writing, that nothing that has happened up to now, and I repeat now to this date,

February 19, 1960

would prevent us from negotiating with them for a new lease when their present lease expires. We will do our best to make the terms of that lease as good as possible for them, with some regard for the Government's investment.

With regard to the lease, I think we have been reasonably sensible in the terms of the lease. They pay a certain amount, as certain other leased land does, and we return to them immediately one-half of that revenue, plus a \$1500 cash grant, to help them along each year. If we were convinced, for any reason, that those terms were not generous enough we would consider other kinds of terms that might be proposed. We have no intention of doing anything that will prevent the people of the Lacerte Co-op Farm continuing in that operation, if they want to continue.

That is the most I can tell you about it, but if we are going to have a project leader appointed by the Government, then the Government or the Minister who is charged with the responsibility of choosing or making the appointment must have the authority to remove the appointee, if he finds that he has made an error in the appointment, and the work is not being done to his satisfaction. I retain that right for any member of my Department, and so would any member sitting in this House, if he held a responsible position as a Government Minister. I have to have that responsibility and that authority. I don't exercise it unless I have to, but all my life I have had to deal with people in various kinds of operations, and I have always had that authority. I have always expected to, or I wouldn't take the job. So whoever was appointed project leader, was to be appointed by us, through my Department. Then the project leader that I appoint will be subject to my dismissal, if I consider at sometime he is not fulfilling his duties, and I make that very clear. If, on the other hand, the people at the Co-op Farm wish to exercise the responsibility I offered them for the balance of this year, I am prepared again to ask the Government to permit me to authorize again for another year, their right to appoint a project leader of their own choice, if he does a good job of leading them or rather appears to be leading them in the right direction (and I would have hoped that this citizens' committee would have been able to have given some advice in this matter). The Government is prepared to give them some assistance for the payment of a project leader. I am not going to name the project leader for them, if they want to choose their own, they will do so and be responsible for his appointment and his dismissal, and for his discipline while he is there. But if I have to appoint the project leader, then I will have the right to choose according to my estimate of the ability of the leader.

I don't know, Mr. Speaker, whether I can say any more than I have, except again repeat that, in spite of all the wonderful qualities of the gentleman concerned (and I have the highest personal regard for him, so far as I know him personally, and have never had or said anything at all that would indicate that my feelings are any different than the former Minister of Social Welfare, when he spoke in the House here), if a job is

not done in the way it should be done, if harmony is not created among these people, there is a reason for it, and therefore you try and remove what appears to be the reason, and try to find someone who will fill in and create the harmony that is needed.

I am sorry, as I say, that I didn't have all the documents of the whole case here so that I was unable to inform the House in detail, or in as great detail as the case was presented by my friend from Notukeu-Willowbunch. But that is the situation, Mr. Speaker, that I have given to the House.

Mr. Gardiner: — Would the hon. Minister permit a question? I was wondering if the Minister felt that the actions of the Government were not the responsibility of the members of the Legislature to investigate any actions of a Minister of the Government of this Province at any time they so wish.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — I didn't hear anybody object to that.

Mr. Gardiner: — At the first of your address you objected to this matter . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order! Order!

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — No, I merely said I was sorry that happened with regard to personnel, and the same thing might happen with several other personalities whom I have had occasion to take the same kind of action with. I said I was sorry — I didn't object; just sorry when I have to deal with a personality.

Mr. Nicholson (Nipawin): — I wonder if the hon. Minister would permit a question. I was called out of the House for just a moment, and I missed the reason you gave for the dismissal of Father Blanchard, if you gave it. I would like to have that clarified just a little.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — I spoke clearly . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order! That constitutes a twenty-minute address, and we cannot allow the Minister to speak on that again just now.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — Mr. Speaker, in getting away from the Lacerte Co-op Farm, which I hope is on the road to recovery now, I would like to deal with some other aspects of the Speech from the Throne, but the time is getting along, and there have been so many things said since yesterday afternoon by different members of the House, that I am afraid I couldn't deal with them all. I would like to mention that I appreciate very much the member for Turtleford (Mr. Foley) giving us advance information as to how he proposes to deal with the budget when it comes up.

He said he would not support the budget, and that is prejudging the situation. I am glad to know it. Someone else on that side — I think it was one of our charming, but rather confused members on your extreme left, Mr. Speaker, who said that the budget sounded as though it had been made up by the Liberals — I should say the Throne Speech was prepared by the Liberals. But I would like to assure my friend that if he can prove that to me — I'd move in with the members opposite. This has no relation to a Liberal speech from the Throne.

I noticed that in the early part of his talk, the member for Notukeu-Willowbunch was dealing with the woolen and tanning industries as are mentioned in the Stanford Report. I would like to point out that there are a number of old-timers in this province, as I am, who know the history of it and know it quite as well from our point of view as anyone on that side of the House; they know it and remember it from their point of view. I distinctly remember on more than one occasion, delegations of us during the 1930's calling on government officials and trying to persuade them that, with the tremendous amount of wool that is produced down in the southwest part of the province, around Tompkins and Sidewood, and through that country in that area, there surely was a place for a woolen mill in Saskatchewan. This was under a Liberal Administration, in the days when our friend of this afternoon said he was disappointed because we didn't have those now when this Report says it would be possible to have them. We were told by the Liberal officials of that day that there was no room in this province for those kinds of industries. This was before there was a C.C.F. Government.

Mr. Klein: — That was before the war, too, wasn't it?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — Well, those kinds of industries should be here. Yes, it was before the war. I would like to point out to my friends opposite that when there is mention made, as the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Wolseley said this afternoon, that the unpleasant or disastrous crop conditions for harvesting this fall, when they came about, this Government was quite unprepared. I would like to assure him that the Government of that day were quite unprepared for the disastrous conditions prevailing then and they also had made no provision whatsoever to meet even the first year of those conditions, let alone a succession of years.

Mr. McCarthy: — We had nothing to do it with. Could we have done it on \$12 million?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — They can't have it both ways. They have Liberal governments in Ottawa then, and they had control of the currency. You can't have it both ways! You can't say that we should have been ready for these disastrous conditions, and say you would have been ready unless you can prove that you were prepared in the days when . . .

Mr. McDonald: — Prepared with \$12 million!

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Hon. Mr. Bentley: — Maybe my friends over there are so young they can't remember the days before 1939; I can, and I remember them long before that, too. My friends over here can, too. I think my friend would have agreed with me in those days and it is only because he sits over there and would love to come over here that he disagrees with me now.

Mr. Speaker, the hour is getting late and I would ask you indulgence to permit me to move adjournment.

(Debate adjourned)

The Assembly then adjourned at 5:30 o'clock p.m.