

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Fifteenth Legislature
19th Day

Friday, March 4, 1966.

The Assembly met at 2:30 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. E. Whelan (Regina North): — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to the assembly 13 special interest students in the west gallery. Each Friday they take instructions at Regent Park School from their teacher, Mr. McNeil, who is with them today; they are from five or six other schools in the city. I am sure all members welcome this special group and join with me in expressing the wish that their stay with us is both pleasant and informative.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. J.A. Pepper (Weyburn): — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my pleasure to introduce to the legislature a group of grade 8 students sitting in the gallery to your right. These students are from the Elgin Public School in Weyburn, they are accompanied by their principal, Mr. Albert Jaymen, and their bus driver, Mr. Vern Martin. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that I am expressing the sentiments of all of you when I say that we welcome them, and we hope their visit to this assembly is both pleasant and practicable and we wish them a very safe journey home.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. F. Larochelle (Shaunavon): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw to your attention a fine group of young students from the Climax High School; accompanying them this afternoon is their principal, Mr. J. Peeling. The students are sitting in the Speaker's Gallery. This young group of people, Mr. Speaker, have travelled over 250 miles this morning to attend the proceedings of the legislature. I hope their stay will be pleasant and they will enjoy the deliberations in the house this afternoon, and I wish them a safe journey home.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. G.G. Leith (Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw to your attention and the attention of the house a group of students who are in the west gallery today. They are from the Brock School district, which is in the Elrose constituency. The town of Brock is situated in the Rosetown School Unit and the member from Rosetown (Mr. Loken) I am sure joins me in wishing them a very profitable and pleasant stay in Regina. They, too, come from a long way away. I think they reckon it is 236 miles from Brock to Regina. They came today, they intend to be here tonight, and are going to tour the city tomorrow.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

March 4, 1966

ANNOUNCEMENT RE TENDERS FOR PUMPS — SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER DAM

Hon. D. McFarlane (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, before Orders of the Day are proceeded with I am sure the members of the legislature would be interested to know that tenders for the supply of the first two of four large irrigation pumps and electric motors for the east side pump plant at the South Saskatchewan River Dam have been ordered through the Robert Morris Corporation Limited of Regina. The bid was \$129,186; a feature of the selection was comparing the efficiency of the pumps being supplied. The Robert Morris bid was chosen as the lowest bid giving due consideration to the greater efficiency of the units that they were offering. The combined output of these two pumps will be 6,180,000 gallons per hours, about 12 times the water consumption of the city of Regina. They will provide the water supply for the initial irrigation development in the Broderick area, and the Saskatchewan east multi-purpose scheme.

Other tenders to follow will include contracts for an electrical sub-station and switch gear, overhead electrical crane, and completion of the pump house including discharge pipe lines and water gauge from the pump plant. The two pumps which are about 60 feet in height, including shaft length, are scheduled for testing July 1st, 1967, when it is expected that the South Saskatchewan Reservoir will have reached an elevation that will permit pumping.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

BUDGET DEBATE

The assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Thatcher (Provincial Treasurer) that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair, and the proposed amendment thereto by Mr. A.E. Blakeney.

Mr. M.P. Pederson (Arm River): — When I begged leave to adjourn the debate last evening, I was dealing with some of the tax measures outlined in the Budget Speech presented in this house by the Provincial Treasurer on Friday last. I pointed out some areas where I felt the government had failed to place sufficient emphasis insofar as tax reductions were concerned. I must say on reflection, Mr. Speaker, that some of the comments I had to make at the latter part of my speech were certainly better received than some of them in the initial stages.

I note that my hon. friend from Athabasca (Mr. Guy) is not in his seat this afternoon, so perhaps with the volume cut down one half between him and the member from Melville (Mr. Gardiner), we will be able to get by much easier than we did last night. I always feel sorry for the member from Melville (Mr. Gardiner). You know, I feel that he was neglected in his youth, he should have had his parents pat him more often on the back than they did; they didn't do it hard enough, often enough and low enough.

I want to turn this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, to some thoughts dealing with the crown corporations. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is fair to say that as a broad principle all three political parties represented in this legislature support the concept in general terms of crown corporations. I know that, personally, I am amazed from time to time at how many people who are supporters

of my party fail to understand just how many of the national crown corporations were, in fact, set up by Conservative governments. This doesn't mean, however, Mr. Speaker, that we as a party embrace crown corporations as the ultimate answer to each and every problem involving big business, because we feel there are many areas of public business where the best interests of the men and women of this nation are not served by the establishment of a crown corporation.

As I say there are many instances, where the incentive of competition and consequently the lowering of prices of commodities to the consumer can better be effected by leaving developments in certain areas to the private sector of our economy. Keeping this in mind, I am a little concerned by the Premier's attitude rather than the actual words that he spoke when he dealt with crown corporations the other day. I would infer from his comments both in this house and during the Budget Debate, and on numerous other occasions, that except for a very few public service crown corporations — I am talking about the utility type — that he is very much opposed to the concept of government being in business. Time and again we have heard him set as a criterion the measuring stick of profit on the basis of the decision of whether a crown corporation should exist or not.

Now, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this yard stick is a false one. These utilities, and I am sure hon. members opposite will agree with this, public utilities as a rule should be run on a non-profit basis, setting prices of commodities as close to costs as possible, in order to benefit the consumer to the maximum extent possible. This I believe is almost a standard pattern in most utility type crown corporations across the nation. I am not going to deal specifically with the two or three business type corporations that the Premier dealt with the other day, nor am I going to comment on the arguments raised by my hon. friend the member for Regina West (Mr. Blakeney) in his defense of these corporations. But I would like to say, and I am sure the Minister of Health (Mr. Steuart) will be amazed to hear this, I would like to say a few words about the Saskatchewan Power Corporation.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I believe that we as a nation, and more particularly, we in Saskatchewan have arrived at a period in our development where we must start altering our thinking insofar as capital investment is concerned. I am speaking now in very broad terms about this deal. This is true whether we are thinking of buying a farm, a home or a business. I have noticed in other countries of the world that it is no longer considered feasible or desirable to continue thinking of expenditures on capital expansion as items geared to repayment during the lifetime of one man or one generation. This is becoming increasingly true insofar as the farm operations in this country are concerned. The price of land has reached an all-time high and if the indicators that appear everywhere prove to be true, there is every reason to believe that land will continue on an upward price spiral to an extent that will call for a drastic revision in the thinking of governments and lending agencies insofar as repayment for land purchased is concerned.

It has become unreasonable in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, to assume that any one person can buy land at prices ranging up to \$150 an acre and expect that this land will be able to produce sufficient revenue in the lifetime of the original purchaser to give that purchaser a reasonable return and at the same time pay for the capital investment. Based on a wheat economy, I suggest

March 4, 1966

we have long since passed the possibility of this being a realistic approach.

The same can be said to a lesser degree of housing. Increasing costs of building a home has put the price of even a modest house at a level where average individuals when purchasing, even as young people, will spend almost their entire lifetime paying for this house. Yet in both of these instances, Mr. Speaker, there is ample evidence that these capital assets will be in existence long after the original purchaser has ceased to need them. They will in fact be in existence in some cases for many, many generations after the original owner has passed on. For this reason, Mr. Speaker, there must be a reassessment of our principles of borrowing so that we may be in a position to start providing the necessary legislation for capital borrowing for the purpose of purchasing land and homes on an extremely long-term basis.

I note in some countries they provide mortgage funds on a 99 year basis on the premise that three generations, not one, will contribute toward the payment of the home and rightly so, because in most cases a minimum of three generations have the advantage of that home. This is also true in the purchase of land in other nations of the world. Unless steps are taken in this direction in the very near future, I feel, Mr. Speaker, that we will merely hasten the destruction of the family farm and the encouragement of corporate farms. We must, as I say, provide borrowings at extremely low interest rates so that land can be purchased by people generally interested in farming and interested in passing the land on from generation to generation, on repayment terms that could extend, as I feel, from 100 to 150 years. I think that this is what we have to look at. Only in this way can we allow for the individual to obtain from his labor a sufficient amount to provide him with a decent standard of living and yet at the same time contribute something toward the total capital investment involved in its purchase.

Now bearing this concept in mind, Mr. Speaker, I turn back to the question of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. It seems to me at any rate that when I listened to the statements being made by the Premier as well as the minister in charge of the Power Corporation (Mr. Steuart), that their thinking is still geared to the old-fashioned concept of letting this generation, or at least this and part of the next generation pay for the capital expenditures. Bearing in mind the general lifetime of the assets that are involved in the Power Corporation, I believe that it is reasonable to suggest that a substantial change in policy should be brought about to accomplish a more consistent and long term borrowing program, so that future generations who will also be benefiting from the power plants that we are now erecting, will be called upon to pay for these costs of these very expensive programs.

Now, I am pleased to hear, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier and the Minister of Health are doing everything they can to increase the profit picture of the corporation. But I am only pleased to hear this if their efforts are directed in the field of normal economies where wastes exist. I do not believe that they should be pressing as hard merely for a profit picture as they have been, because in doing so they stand in real danger of losing the original purpose for which a utility such as this was established, that is, of providing the cheapest power possible to the consumer. The cheapest power consistent with setting aside sufficient sums from the profits through the sinking funds

to retire the gross debt. I am afraid if they keep pressing as hard as they are that they will lose sight of the initial reason for establishing a power corporation.

I am still not satisfied, Mr. Speaker, with the information that was given in this house the other day by the Minister of Health (Mr. Steuart), in response to the suggestion that I made that the people of this province have invested in the Power Corporation a considerably larger amount than that indicated by the press releases that came from the Premier. I understand from, and I checked the transcript of his speech very carefully, that his suggestion that the differences of opinion between us may lie in the method of accounting. But nevertheless our people in this province had directly and indirectly already contributed tens of millions of dollars to the total capital expense of producing this Power Corporation. Whether it is shown as a book entry, according to the minister or not, it makes no difference. I believe that what is happening here, why there has been given such widespread publicity to this statement of the Premier and the Minister of Health (Mr. Steuart) in the last few months, about the people only owning 7 1/2 per cent, is that they have been laying the groundwork for the next election campaign when they can strike sparks off my friends over on this side of the house by saying that under the Socialists all we owned was 7 1/2 per cent, but now under the glorious days of the Liberals we own 20 per cent, when in fact the people of this province have owned 20 per cent all along.

I believe that people are getting sick and tired . . .

Hon. W. Ross Thatcher (Premier): — Socialist arithmetic.

Mr. Pederson: — . . . I think people are sick and tired of the Premier going around waving his arms and bragging, bragging, bragging from morning till night about all the wonders under the new Liberal regime. You would think a new heaven and a new earth had descended to hear him tell it. Well, I'm not going to get involved in any hog-calling contest with my friends opposite because they would win hands down . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Pederson: — . . . but the fact remains, Mr. Speaker, that they have chosen to ignore two basic things. The farmers of this province have invested \$49,000,000, according to the Minister of Health, in the Power Corporation. This is not shown in the figures when they arrive at their 7 1/2 per cent as admitted again by the Minister of Health. Secondly, if this is not so and they still choose to ignore it, I challenge them to implement their election promise of two years ago, refund the \$500 to \$600 to every farmer and get it off the books completely. I suggest that it's time that they started to make provision for returning that money. Otherwise put it on the books and show that our people in this province have, in fact, invested something beyond what they suggest in the Power Corporation. I believe that the present generation, Mr. Speaker, should be able to reasonably expect some reduction in the sums that they are called upon to pay by way of capital expansion. This can only be done if hon. members opposite who are responsible for the operation, the overall operation of the Power Corporation, are prepared to change their concept insofar as financing of items such as this is concerned.

March 4, 1966

Something of the same principle, I believe, should be applied in the field of education. I notice a substantial difference, Mr. Speaker, as I sit over here, a difference of opinion between the government and the NDP insofar as the financing of new construction of the University of Saskatchewan campus is concerned. In very broad terms, it seems to me that the NDP tend to believe, and I'm very broad in my terms now, that the building program of our university should be financed to a large extent from tax revenues, whereas the government, it seems to me, tends to lean towards the concept of financing new plant construction from borrowings. I must say that for various reasons I hold to the attitude of the government in this regard. The lifetime of usefulness of new facilities demand that the costs should be amortized over a long period so as to spread the payment of these services on those using the facilities — this generation, and the next, and the next. There is no valid reason why one generation should bear the whole cost. The pressing need for greater educational facilities also demands some drastic measure of financing if we are to keep pace with the growing demands for education now being made. I believe that in this regard, with some exceptions, they have followed a program that I support. Turning now to the amendment that is before the house, Mr. Speaker, I notice the wording says, and I am taking a part out of context:

. . . the government's decision to finance the Medical Care Program by retaining and increasing taxes . . .

I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I have not found in the budget this concept because there is no relationship between increase of taxes and the Medical Care Program

In a large measure, with the reservations that I have placed before this house, I support most of the objectives of the budget. Therefore, I will not support the amendment but I will support the main motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. C.G. Willis (Melfort-Tisdale): — Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak in this Budget Debate, first I want to say something about a matter which is not mentioned in the budget, namely the lost car found over a year ago on these legislative grounds. Last session the Minister of Labour (Mr. Coderre) informed this house that he had indeed found a government car which supposedly was lost in 1962. Mr. Speaker, it was lost again during the last session when the minister tabled an answer to the Order for Return stating that neither he nor his department had knowledge of the car. In answer to a question last Wednesday the minister again confirmed finding the car. At the same time he ventured the information that the present government was setting up a Central Vehicle Agency which would ensure that in the future no government car would be lost. First I want to express my congratulations to the government on taking this step. I would also say that I cannot think of anyone that should be more pleased than such an agency is being set up than the Minister of Labour (Mr. Coderre) or indeed, Mr. Speaker, of anyone who is more in need of the help of such an agency than he.

Mr. Speaker, I would talk briefly about the progress which has been made in Saskatchewan under a CCF government. In 1944,

the CCF took over a virtually bankrupt province. Saskatchewan was at that time lacking in decent roads, lacking an integrated power system, lacking a satisfactory education system, lacking secondary industry, lacking adequate knowledge of our resources, lacking knowledge of resources development, lacking a prosperous agriculture.

Between 1945 and 1964, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan under the CCF was moving ahead. Farm production in our province increased about 50 per cent. Mining increased 325 per cent. Manufacturing expanded 200 per cent. Our province has indeed moved ahead, Mr. Speaker, in the short period of 20 years. Under the CCF the annual budget increased from \$34,000,000 in 1945 to \$214,000,000 in 1964. And as our economy expanded, Mr. Speaker, we built up our highway system, provincial and municipal grid. A publicly owned power and gas system came into being and soon expanded throughout the province. In education, centralized larger units took the place of smaller, scattered, one-room schools. All of our children today thereby having equal opportunity to receive a good high school education. Our university expanded and became two universities. Loans and scholarships became available so that no one was denied access to university or other educational facilities because of lack of money. Technical schools were built in three of our cities. Hospitals were improved and expanded; and hospitalization, free mental care, free cancer treatment, medicare, all played a part in making Saskatchewan one of the most progressive provinces in Canada.

I take special pride, Mr. Speaker, in the fact that our provincial highway system was entirely built or rebuilt in our term of office, and that by 1963, 50 per cent of our highway system was dust free and that 75 per cent of all provincial highway traffic was travelling on dust free highways. I take pride, too, Mr. Speaker, in the fact that the 12,000 mile grid of municipal roads was almost completed by 1964 and plans were laid to expand to greater mileage.

By the beginning of 1964, 4,000 miles of dust-free provincial highways connected our cities, linked the major areas of the province and provided connections to our two neighboring provinces and to the country to the south. The north was beginning to respond to roads being built to Uranium City, to Buffalo Narrows, to Creighton and Flin Flon and from Hudson Bay north and east to The Pas. Other major roads were started to Cumberland House and to Pelican Narrows. All of this had been done but it goes without saying that more has to be done in the highways' field. Always, Mr. Speaker, always there will be more to be done as far as highways are concerned.

I want to congratulate the present government that they too realize the importance of good highways and have set as one of their top priorities the further improvement of the provincial highway system. They have budgeted large sums for highways and this is good, Mr. Speaker, as long as the improvements are justified and money is not wasted.

I cannot help but feel however that the present government is moving too fast with some improvements. I have in mind the four-laning of no. 1 Moose Jaw to Regina. In my opinion, money here is being wasted that could have been put to better use in other ways. It seems, Mr. Speaker, that the government wanted to provide a show-case — a show-case highway for the glorification of the Premier of this province. Now, I have not access to highway planning statistics but from questions I have asked in

March 4, 1966

the house and in committee I have learned in respect to no. 1, Regina to Moose Jaw that no survey for right-of-way was done in 1964-65. And no right of way was purchased and no grade designed over a year ago for this important highway.

This project, the four-laning of no. 1 highway, is a major construction job and should have been carefully planned and preliminary work underway at least two years before construction started. This was not so, Mr. Speaker. Indeed the work underway now has every appearance of a crash program decided upon at the last minute. It seems surveyors were put on the job and almost immediately followed by road construction crews. Crash programs without adequate advance planning will only result in wasteful effort and extra costs. The project will cost \$3,000,000, more or less, and, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't needed at the present time. I doubt that the planning branch of the Department of Highways recommended that construction commence in 1964. It appears that orders originated from outside the department to start construction.

The present no. 1 Moose Jaw-Regina would adequately carry the traffic on the highway for four or five years. In the meantime while necessary preliminary work was carried on, the money saved last year and this coming year could have been spent on undertaking projects of a more urgent need.

There are places where the government should be spending money, Mr. Speaker, and are not. The member for Regina West (Mr. Blakeney) gave the pitiful treatment of mental health cases. Take Mrs. A. for example, Mr. Speaker, and I want to again read into the records one or two of these instances which were cited by the member for Regina West last week. Here is one instance in which the government is not taking its full responsibility.

The case of Mrs. A: At the age of 91, Mrs. A. was placed in the provincial hospital at Weyburn. She was only in hospital a few weeks when she was put in a half-way house at Weyburn for a few weeks. Soon after she was moved to another nursing home at Regina Beach where there is no resident doctor. Before long Mrs. A. was quite ill and was moved to another home in Regina. By this time she was really ill and had to spend a few weeks in Munroe Wing. From there she was moved to still another nursing home in Regina where she now is. As might be anticipated these frequent moves have greatly upset Mrs. A. and her family who were not consulted as their mother was shunted from place to place.

And Mr. Speaker, this is not the only case. The member for Regina West (Mr. Blakeney) cited the case of Mrs. B.

Mrs. B. was confined to Weyburn. She has two adult children in Saskatchewan. Without their knowledge, let alone the consent of either of these children, and after being in Weyburn only a few weeks she was moved to Estevan. She is there, along with seven other persons in a house defined as a bungalow and wholly inadequate for the care of patients besides the regular occupants. Four bed patients are in a room approximately 10 by 22. The persons who operate the home, and I don't criticize their good will, have no training in the care of mental patients. The Administrator of Estates who took over Mrs. B.'s estate during the few weeks she was in Weyburn is paying for the care in this nursing home

although the arrangement with the nursing home was made by the Department of Public Health without the consent of Mrs. B. or any of her family.

Mr. Speaker, the government of this province should be spending money taking care of cases like this rather than building a show-case road on a crash basis at the present time.

Indeed the four lane could have been delayed and money spent on other things such as needed technical or vocational schools in the province. Spendings here could very well take care of pressing needs in education or there are more urgent needs in highways themselves, Mr. Speaker, besides a four lane job from here to Moose Jaw at the present time. Delaying no 1 would even enable the Department of Highways to continue the dust-freeing of highways into our north. We must have dust free roads into the north or our tourist industry will undoubtedly suffer. Dust free highways are now to Gronlid on no. 6 north. This should be extended right up the Hanson Lake Road to Creighton and Flin Flon.

Dust free highways are at Waskesiu. This should be extended to LaRonge at least. From Meadow Lake, north to Meadow Lake provincial park, dust-freeing is urgently needed. These are pressing needs and without dust free roads in the north, Mr. Speaker, we are not going to get tourists to travel in that part of the country in large numbers. Such pressing needs should be given priority over a crash program of four-laning no. 1, Moose Jaw to Regina.

There are other examples of highway wastes, Mr. Speaker. The government has announced the coming expansion of a highway system over its first four years in office by including 450 miles of grid roads in the highway system. Most of this mileage handles low volumes of traffic, practically all of this mileage is in government members' constituencies. This is a shameful disbursement of funds which are sorely needed in other parts of our provincial highway system. We should stop taking into the provincial highway system such roads whose only priority is a political one and allocate the money saved to projects of greater priority in highways, in health, or in education. Surely something is lacking in the establishing of priorities.

May I turn now to another aspect of the budget, Mr. Speaker. The government boasts of many supposed accomplishments in its first two years of office. After the introduction of the budget a year ago it is apparent there is one achievement that they can lay claim to and that, Mr. Speaker, is of being the spendingest government in Saskatchewan's history.

Last year's budget was for a record of \$220,900,000. There was to be a modest surplus of \$235,000. But the province experienced an above-average crop, one of the largest in our history. The Canadian Wheat Board continued to find markets for our huge wheat production, largely in mainland China and Russia. The national economy achieved unexpected growth and the payment under the federal-provincial tax agreement achieved a record high to the province. As a result, Mr. Speaker, the Premier was able to announce that revenues are expected to exceed estimated income not by \$235,000 but by some \$26,000,000. What was the result of this unexpected windfall, Mr. Speaker? The government of this province, Mr. Speaker, increased still further their spending. They went on a spending spree. They have been spending money

March 4, 1966

over the last few weeks like the proverbial drunken sailor. By the year's end it is expected spending will be not \$221,000,000, as budgeted, but \$241,000,000. This government has proven its ability to spend every cent it can get its "cotton-picking" fingers on.

The printed supplementary estimates do not list the \$900,000 for the municipal road assistance authority. But the Premier announced it in his speech, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure that this will be made up before the estimates are finally passed. Without a doubt there will be other expenditures to further lower the surplus before the end of this month.

The Provincial Treasurer, Mr. Speaker, informed the legislature that in preparing the budget introduced a year ago he kept several factors in mind. One of them was, and I quote,

The belief of the government that taxes in Saskatchewan are still dangerously high as compared to other parts of Canada.

He didn't say this year, Mr. Speaker, whether it was still his belief but surely conditions haven't changed to that degree. Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is taxes in Saskatchewan are still dangerously high and this budget increases them even farther. What does the Premier propose in the new budget in regard to taxes? He certainly isn't lowering them, Mr. Speaker, not on an overall basis.

First, he increased expenditures for the coming year to \$260,500,000 and this was based on a forecast, a revenue forecast of \$267,600,000. Here was a chance for the Premier to take action in regard to dangerously high taxes. Here was an indicated surplus of \$7,000,000 for the coming year but, Mr. Speaker, taxes were not reduced from the dangerously high position of last year. The Premier stated, however, that he proposed to use this surplus for tax relief and reduction. That sounded good, Mr. Speaker, until we examine the proposed relief and reduction. Just what steps is the Premier taking to achieve this tax relief and reduction? He announced four tax changes, as the Leader Post had it in a headline last week, "Four tax changes. Two up and two down". The first down was additional sales tax exemption. The first up was sales tax inclusion. The result so far, as the Premier and Provincial Treasurer stated was to improve the budgetary revenues by \$100,000. In other words, Mr. Speaker, an increase of taxes of \$100,000. Some tax relief, Mr. Speaker.

The second down was in regard to the provincial income tax surcharge. The Premier stated:

We have long maintained that the income tax surcharge of 6 per cent which was levied by the Socialists is out of line.

So it is reduced from 6 to 5 per cent. The result,

This reduction will provide Saskatchewan's income tax payers with an addition 1.1 million of disposable income,

the Provincial Treasurer stated. So here is indeed tax relief to the tune of more than \$1,000,000 but we don't want you to applaud the Provincial Treasurer too early, Mr. Speaker, for the second

up was a major one. The Premier announced and I quote again,

The government has decided to raise the gasoline tax by one cent per gallon effective March 15th. The proceeds are expected to reach \$2,200,000 in additional taxes.

Mr. Speaker, four tax changes, two up and two down. The first two \$100,000 increase in taxation. The third one, the income tax one, \$1,100,000 down in taxes. The fourth change, the gasoline tax was \$2,200,000 up. The overall result, Mr. Speaker, an astonishing increase of \$1,200,000. No decrease at all, Mr. Speaker. No tax reduction. No tax relief. Only the Premier, Mr. Speaker, could give tax reduction and relief and come up with a \$1,200,000 increase in revenue. This is a trick worthy of the great Houdini himself! These tax changes are comparatively minor ones, Mr. Speaker, and may the heaven's preserve Saskatchewan if the present Provincial Treasurer ever decides to embark on a major tax reduction and relief program. In such a case we could have taxes increased by millions of dollars.

But the Premier's song has changed in the last year. In 1965, he said,

It is a belief of the government that taxes in Saskatchewan are still dangerously high.

Today his song is that "property taxes are dangerously high". So the Premier has come up with a dilly. Increase provincial taxes and help relieve property taxes by a Home-owner grant. He is not concerned now about provincial taxes, Mr. Speaker. They can be and are raised if he wishes, and as long as the taxpayers of the province do not complain they are not too high. Estimated provincial expenditures go up some \$47,000,000 to \$268,000,000 in one short year and there is no tax relief in sight for either provincial or municipal taxpayers except for a favored few, Mr. Speaker. If you buy soap, detergent and other cleansing agents your taxes go up. If you drive a car, your taxes go up. Your taxes come down if you buy turkey saddles, cow trainers, farrowing crates, etc. You get tax relief if you pay income tax, but I must point out, Mr. Speaker, that the more income tax you pay the more relief you get.

Using the latest available income tax statistics for 1963, I find that in Saskatchewan 901 taxpayers had a taxable income of up to \$1,1000. These 901 paying the same income tax this year will average a tax saving of \$9.33 a year or less than three cents a day. Still this is a major tax relief, Mr. Speaker, and something that should not be sneezed at, the Provincial Treasurer said. However, at the other end of the income tax scale there were in 1963, 632 taxpayers who had taxable incomes in excess of \$25,000. These 632 taxpayers with taxable incomes over \$25,000 would average tax reductions, not three cents a day, Mr. Speaker, not \$9.33 a year, but tax reductions of \$1,130 each.

Mr. I.C. Nollet (Cutknife): — More for the rich.

Mr. Willis: — This income tax reduction gives relief but not to the lower income tax groups. No indeed, Mr. Speaker, it appears that the member for Regina West (Mr. Blakeney) was absolutely right when he claimed that the income tax cut was relief for the rich friends of the people who sit to your right, Mr. Speaker. So appropriate is the biblical quotation, "To him who hath shall

March 4, 1966

be given and from him who hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath". This decrease in income tax helps those who are least in need of relief from taxes, Mr. Speaker. To the great majority of the people of Saskatchewan, the tax rates are still dangerously high.

On the other hand almost everyone is affected by the increase in gasoline taxes. Surely there must be more equitable ways of adjusting taxing than what the Provincial Treasurer has proposed. The Home-owner grant, designed to give relief to property taxes, does so only to approximately three-quarters of the population. One-quarter of the taxpayers, it is estimated, rent homes and will receive no benefit because of this grant. Approximately one out of every four residents will not receive a red cent from the abortive efforts of the government to keep property taxes down. How much better it would have been if outright grants had been paid to our local governments or if a tax like medicare which affects everyone was reduced for the benefit of all.

The two years in which this government has been in office, Mr. Speaker, or almost two years in which this government has been in office, has seen an increase in taxes. Now we get tax relief on a hit-and-miss basis; great tax relief to the rich, increase in taxes to the poor. Mr. Speaker, the present Provincial Treasurer has nothing to be proud of in his attempts to set up an equitable tax factor. It should be apparent by now, Mr. Speaker, that I will not support the motion but will vote for the amendment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. D.G. Steuart (Minister of Public Health): — Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak in this debate I would first like to congratulate Premier Thatcher on his second budget for progress and prosperity. These last two years Saskatchewan has caught the imagination of the rest of Canada with its tremendous development and declining tax rate. Last year the sales tax was cut. Tax free purple gas was allowed to farmers. The mineral tax was abolished. This year tax cuts are continuing. Every homeowner will receive a check for up to \$50 as soon as he pays his local taxes. Our income tax has been reduced to bring it closer into line with other provinces. Free text books will be available to all grade 9 students. And in spite of these tax cuts we will spend more money on major programs than ever before in this province's history.

For example, we will spend millions of dollars more on education than the Socialists ever did during any one of their 20 years in office. In the important field of health we gave top priority. Expenditures will reach \$112,000,000. Again exceeding the top CCF year by some \$24,000,000. A massive highway program will bring dust free, oiled and paved roads to farm, town and city residents alike.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government will spend at least \$47,500,000 this year, another record, in an all-out drive to give Saskatchewan a highway system second to none in Canada. For the first time in 20 years, the municipalities, towns and cities were asked to tell the provincial government their financial priority. Premier Thatcher in his budget earmarked an extra \$3,700,000 in an effort to help local governments meet their financial obligations without raising property taxes. Mr. Speaker,

the people of Saskatchewan are receiving their first dividend from our exciting growth and business-like approach to government.

The new metal mines in the north, the sawmills in Hudson Bay and Meadow Lake area, the Prince Albert pulp mill, the potash mines, the new oil wells and the new manufacturing plants, all guarantee a growing prosperity for Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, Premier Thatcher and others in his cabinet have worked day and night for two years to bring new industry to Saskatchewan for one reason only, so that our people can have greater opportunity and more prosperity right here at home. The socialists locked up most of our resources for 20 years. We found the key in free, private and responsible enterprise and every man, woman, and child in this province is already better off. Our future never looked brighter.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, before I turn my attention to my own department I would like to deal with two issues raised by the opposition in this legislature.

The first is more of a nuisance than anything else but the Socialists are trying to make a big issue of it. I refer to the matter of questions by the opposition. Mr. Speaker, we realize that questioning the government is a normal and healthy part of the legislative process. Last year the Socialists asked some 313 questions and this year with the session less than half over they have already asked over 290 questions. So it looks like we could be faced with over 600 questions in this session, about four times more than we asked in our last year of opposition. And again, Mr. Speaker, we don't mind this although we have had to take on extra staff and it has slowed the normal routine of government. However, we do object when the Socialists led by their leader whine and complain every day about how long it takes us to produce the answers. We could even excuse this, Mr. Speaker, if the questions were sensible, if they had a purpose behind them, but most of the Socialists' questions are pointless. The answers could be found in the newspaper or if they took the trouble to read the annual reports presented to them by all departments.

Mr. Speaker, I will just give you one example of what I mean by a stupid, pointless question. The Leader of the Opposition on February 28th took up the time and the expense of this legislature to ask in printed form for a 1966 Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office calendar. Well, we always knew he didn't know what time it was. Now we know he doesn't know what day it is. I'm sorry to say, Mr. Speaker, that the CCF-NDP efforts to appear as an alert, effective opposition are not all as harmless or as childish as their endless questions.

The member from Regina West, the former Minister of Health (Mr. Blakeney) hit a new low in a desperate effort to discredit this administration. Let me quote from a transcript of his speech last Monday. Mr. Blakeney:

The instance I want to comment on more fully this afternoon is the disgraceful story of mental health. However much the Minister may want to deny it people are being discharged from mental hospitals in a way which I believe is callous and unforgiveable.

March 4, 1966

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — So they applaud over there. These are the words of the last CCF Minister of Public Health (Mr. Blakeney) and he has been joined by every one of his Socialist colleagues on the other side of the house. He then went on to give what he called a few examples, four in number, and he referred to them, Mr. Speaker, as a case of Mrs. A, Mrs. B, Mr. C, and Mrs. D. He refused to give this house the names or table any proof, but he finally blurted out one name and address which I will refer to later. But he used these four examples to try to prove that our mental institutions are; one, discharging patients before they are ready and with little or no regard for their well being, as he said, "in a callous and unforgiveable manner"; two, placing patients in homes that are totally inadequate and in the charge of people incapable of looking after them; and three, he charged we were moving patients from the mental hospitals to nursing homes without the knowledge or consent of their relatives.

He went on to say then that; four, we are paying for this nursing care with the patient's own money. "I believe this is quite wrong" he said. He said, "I believe this is quite wrong for him, the Administrator of Estates, to pay out the funds of the patient. It is grossly improper to finance our mental health service by dipping into the estates of people who cannot protect themselves".

Well, Mr. Speaker, these are serious charges by a man who until recently headed the very department he now so violently criticizes. He makes it all sound like something new, something that never happened before. He cried out in his little sanctimonious voice, "This is shocking and it's going on right now, in the month of February, 1966". Well, Mr. Speaker, let's look at one case in which he did mention the name. The only case we have had the chance to prove or disprove his charges.

An Hon. Member: — Here he comes.

Mr. Steuart: — Well he finally came in . . . The name that he finally gave is Mrs. Bennett. He blurted this out and he said her son lives at 1340 Cameron Street in Regina in his riding.

I have here a report on a Mrs. Elizabeth Bennett who is a patient at the Saskatchewan Hospital, Weyburn, and who has a son who lives on Cameron Street in Regina. This then is the one and only case the ex-minister used that we could check on. Let's see how accurate his facts were in this case. First, he said, she was moved without the knowledge or consent of the children. I will now quote from the official document on this case from Dr. Lafave, superintendent of the Saskatchewan Hospital Weyburn:

Her, Mrs. Bennett's, entire family were interviewed while she was in the hospital and they stated they would like our department to make plans for Mrs. Bennett's future.

The entire family was consulted prior to the patient's discharge from this hospital and they stated they would agree to whatever plans the Social Service Department made for Mrs. Bennett.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Not only were her family aware but they had given their consent. Thus the first two statements made by the ex-Minister of Health in this case were false. Next the ex-Minister of Health told this house that Mrs. Bennett was moved to Estevan to a bungalow and her room was 10 by 22. Well, the report states that the house has five bedrooms, a two-storey house, and her room happens to be 14 by 26. The third false statement. Next he said that the house is inadequate and that the people who run it are incapable of looking after people like Mrs. Bennett. The report goes on to state, however, that this is one of the best homes used in our program and a Mrs. Fred Cote, the woman in charge, does an excellent job of looking after and handling geriatric patients. The report further states that Mrs. cote has received letters from Mrs. Bennett's children congratulating her on the good care that she has given Mrs. Bennett and other patients. Thus, Mr. Speaker, we have false statement number four.

Not satisfied with that the member from Melfort rose in his place and added to these falsehoods that have been presented to this house. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member from Regina West (Mr. Blakeney), made five statements about this case, four of them have been proven false and the fifth one is true. Mrs. Bennett's money is being used to pay for her stay in the Cote nursing home. This is nothing new. I will show it was the practice under the CCF both before and during the time the member from Regina was the Minister of Health. Either he was unaware of it in which case he was certainly derelict in his duty or he knows the facts but was again attempting to mislead the house.

Mr. Speaker, let's consider the other three cases, Mrs. A, Mr. C, and Mrs. D, as he called them. He refused to give us the names. Why? Why the refusal? Well, I suggest his refusal . . .

Mr. A.E. Blakeney (Regina West): — Does the minister want them now?

Mr. Steuart: — I suggest he had reasons for his refusal and I'll give them to you. Either no such people exist or if they are real and we had their names, his case would prove as false as in the case of Mrs. Bennett. Either way it was a contemptuous performance. Maybe the ex-Minister of Health refuses to give their names because he wants to protect them from bad publicity. Well, if this were true, it would lessen my contempt of his conduct. but I remind this house that I asked him to give me the names privately so I could look into these cases, and if these people were being mistreated I promised I would correct the situation and give them help. The member for Regina West spoke five days ago and he almost cried for the plight of these poor people, but he has never given me those names so that I could see that they received the help and the comfort that he says they so badly need. Mr. Speaker, if these people really exist he has shown a contemptuous disregard for their welfare and his only use for them was as political pawns. His attempt to use these poor people, was to throw dirt, doubt and discredit on our whole mental health program.

He holds up four cases, four cases, Mr. Speaker, out of 3,000 discharged in a year and tries to make a case against the mental health program You know at first, Mr. Speaker, this shocked and surprised me. Then I went to the records of the mental health program under the CCF, with special attention to the time our friend from Regina West (Mr. Blakeney) was Minister

March 4, 1966

of Health. Now he accused us of discharging patients and placing them on trial leave in private nursing homes without consulting their relatives. Let's look at the CCF for a minute.

I have here two files, one from the Mental Hospital in Weyburn, the other from North Battleford. What do they show? Fifteen cases, Mr. Speaker, where the patients were discharged or placed on trial leave without the consent or knowledge of their relatives. When did this take place? From 1962 until 1964. During that time who was the Minister of Health? Allan Blakeney. These cases are not A.B.C., they are real names and they are all here and I will table them.

The ex-minister next accused us of taking money from these incompetent people to pay for their stay in nursing homes. He became very excited about this charge and again I quote from his speech. He said how the Department of Public Health can discharge a patient, put him in a home, negotiate the deal with a private home without the consent of his family and still hang on to his estate through the Administrator of Estates, and then pay off on the contract, I don't know. Then the ex-minister went really low, when he continues his tirade by saying,

And from where I sit it's the next thing to theft by the crown. It's inexcusable, it should stop and it should stop right now.

I'll show a little later that this boy should know all about the next thing to theft. I have here, Mr. Speaker, a report from Mr. D.M. Spicer, the Administrator of Estates, dated March 2nd, 1966. It lists ten cases where payment was made for case of mental patients discharged on trial leave, the payment was made with their own money by the Administrator of Estates. These cases all took place under the CCF government, mostly while Mr. Blakeney was the Minister of Health and without the consent of the patients or their relatives.

One of these cases is most interesting. It involves a patient from the training school who is being boarded out in a nursing home. As soon as she began to receive the old age pension they wrote and asked for the cheque to pay for part of the cost of keeping her in the nursing home. Upon being advised that the boarding out patients were still the responsibility of the Department of Health, they wrote back and informed the Administrator of Estates that they were transferring her to the status of a parolee, then issued an order that her old age pension cheque should be sent to them to pay for part of her keep in the nursing home. The humanity first Socialist, Mr. Speaker, changed the rules just to grab the poor old lady's pension cheque, and then they had the nerve to stand up here and point the finger at us. Ten cases, everyone of them ordering money to be paid out of the savings of mental patients. You know, Mr. Speaker, I find that one of these orders is signed by the Hon. R.A. Walker, I found another was signed by W.S. Lloyd, who was Acting Minister in Charge of Administrator of Estates. They all played a part in what the member for Regina West calls the "next thing to theft". I'll table this report, Mr. Speaker, so that the hon. members may have proof that if this is theft, it began with our Socialist friends across the way.

The final charge he made against the mental health program was that of placing patients in homes that were inadequate and unfit to house these people. Well I have here, Mr. Speaker, a copy of a departmental memo from J.S. White, Deputy Minister of

Social Welfare to Dr. F.B. Roth, Deputy Minister of Public Health, dated April 11th, 1961, again during the Socialist years. The memo concerns homes being used by the Psychiatric Services Branch of the Department of Public Health to house patients who are boarded or paroled out from Mental Hospitals, and it is from the Department of Welfare. I quote from the report which states:

I should point out that the reports I have had on some of the homes used by our Psychiatric Services indicate that they are the type that we have in the past been required to close out on the recommendation of your own Health Officers, Sanitary Officers or your Public Health Nurses.

Mr. Speaker, these self-appointed champions of the poor and defenseless were allowing patients to be placed in hovels that they themselves had condemned. Again I'll table this document to prove beyond a doubt the kind of people that are over there on the Socialist side of the house, people who cry "Thief" when their own hands are dripping with loot.

Mr. Speaker, before I leave the A.B.C. and D. cases brought into this house by the ex-Minister of Health, I would like to go back and refer to case D. You know our friend from Regina West (Mr. Blakeney), gave us just enough about this case so that we could locate her file. He really put on a show on this one. He said we were pillaging her savings and those of her family, and not satisfied with the Minister of Health's performance, the Leader of the Opposition put on an act on television the other night. He cried about us hounding this woman's husband, whom he referred to as a pioneer who had helped build up this province and who was now reduced to living on the old age pension. Mr. Speaker, I felt real bad about this poor man, this old man they were crying about. We had broken up his home, his poor wife in a mental hospital and then pushed out into a nursing home. Not only were we separating this couple but we were forcing him to pay out of his cheque for her keep. Then I looked up the facts. The lady is Mrs. Anne Scott, she was admitted the Saskatchewan Hospital in 1924. You know the last time Mr. Scott bothered to write the hospital about his wife was in 1925, 41 years ago. Do you know the last time he had visited her, four years ago and he only lives 50 miles away.

In October, 1964, hospital authorities wrote Mr. Scott to tell him his wife had been moved to the Psycho-geriatric Centre, which is part of the hospital. He never even replied. When the hospital authorities had the opportunity to move Mrs. Scott to Belhaven Lodge they considered it an ideal setting for this woman. Where was Mr. Scott? This poor man the Premier cries about, he was vacationing in British Columbia. We checked up. He owns three-quarter sections of land and he is not by any means destitute or solely dependent on his old age pension. Well, Mr. Speaker, I didn't bring in the details of this case to embarrass this family, but when the opposition uses cheap tactics, half truths and outright falsehoods in an effort to gain political advantage at the expense of the mentally ill, I think that they must be exposed.

You know, Mr. Speaker, nothing has impressed me more since I became Minister of Public Health than Saskatchewan's mental health program. I pay public tribute to the men and women, the men and women in the former CCF government, in the psychiatric branch, and in the Canadian Mental Health Association, who are responsible for this province's enlightened approach to mental

March 4, 1966

illness. The psychiatric Centre at Yorkton and indeed the whole Saskatchewan plan have received justifiable acclaim across the nation and even outside our borders. I am aware that the new Mental Health Act was passed in 1961 by those people opposite and it made possible this new orientation towards the community care of the mentally ill rather than their segregation in overcrowded jail-like institutions. I also realize that mental illness is a problem of considerable magnitude. We have not found the final answers and a certain degree of experimentation is necessary. All Psychiatrists in the department agree with this. It is quite possible that we are going too fast, that the pendulum is swinging too much the other way, that some placements of mental patients in nursing homes and foster homes in the community are questionable. I know we need more and better nursing homes. That's why I recently appointed a mixed committee of professionals and interested lay citizens to look into this matter objectively and to report to me. And I did this long before the Socialists raised the question in this house. I am prepared with the staff in the department to take any necessary, corrective measures in the light of the findings of this committee. If things are wrong we will correct them, but I am not prepared to condemn and abandon this new philosophy of care of the mentally ill on the basis of a few poorly substantiated incidents brought forward by the former Minister of Health in this house. I am not prepared to go back to the old medieval practice of locking people up for the rest of their lives implicitly advocated by the opposition these last few days.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that most people in Saskatchewan don't want this type of so-called free help. I am also sure that most people have shown that they are sick and tired of the hypocrisy of the Socialists who talk one way and act another. Sure we know mistakes have been made in 1965 and 1966. They were made in this program just as they were made in previous years. I ask all members, as I always have, and most of them comply with this request, to give me the names of people who may be wrongly placed and people who need help. I promise to do anything I can to rectify any mistake and to bring help to these unfortunate people. But I will not sit quietly by, Mr. Speaker, and watch a man, who should know better, try and tear down our mental health program just to build up his own image.

Mr. Speaker, after listening to the member for Regina West (Mr. Blakeney) last Monday, I decided to do a little research into his history and try to find out what kind of man would deliberately smear this fine health program that he, himself, professes to admire. You know I was told that he was very clever but that he needed watching, he needed watching all the time. I commend this advise to the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, there is no question that he is clever, in fact he's a Rhodes Scholar. He was imported by the Socialists in 1950 from Eastern Canada as a secretary and legal advisor to the Government Finance Office in Crown Corporations. Then in 1955 he became chairman of the Saskatchewan Security Commission during the years in which the member from Regina West (Mr. Blakeney) served as chairman, that is March, 1955 to April, 1958. Mr. Speaker, this is the period in the 60 years life of this province when the people of Saskatchewan lost more money through phony stock promotions than during any other similar period in our history. And I would like to remind the members of some of these promotions.

There was the Columbia Metal affair. From this promotion

alone, people of Saskatchewan lost up to \$2,274,000; many families lost their life savings. The records of the Saskatchewan Security Commission showed that during Mr. Blakeney's term of office this company had a prospectus approved qualifying its shares for sale to the public of this province. We all know what happened to Columbia Metal. Today the company is broke, defunct and the public's money has gone down the drain. There are a few more promotions like Prairie Fiber Board and National Industrial Minerals Ltd. All of these companies raised their capital mainly from people of Saskatchewan. Today they are defunct. Did these companies really have any chance to succeed when the promoters were allowed large blocks of these stocks and the salesmen great big commissions. I suggest that it was apparent from the beginning that these companies could not possibly succeed, that the only people that would make any money were the promoters and the stock salesmen. These and other promotions took place between March 15th, 1955 and April 30th, 1958, and the people of Saskatchewan were dependent on the Saskatchewan Security Commission for protection which was under the chairmanship of Allan Blakeney.

This is the man, Mr. Speaker, that accused us of the next thing to theft by the crown. In those years Saskatchewan was infamous as a stock promoters' paradise and the Socialists let it happen.

Mr. Speaker, let's look at our record in the Health field. Regina will soon open a new 80 bed wing as well as improved outpatient facilities, and I might say, Mr. Speaker, that's more beds than the CCF produced in Regina in the last ten years. And who was responsible for this? Well the Regina General Hospital Board and the Hon. Minister of Highways, the member from Regina South (Mr. Grant) deserve the major credit. I might say that the hon. member (Mr. Baker), who is also the mayor, really was more hindrance than he was help and he keeps on taking the money, Mr. Speaker, that we pay to the Regina Hospital Board into city revenue. I wish he would quit doing this and we might get a little farther.

You know I have a surprise for the Socialists, especially the Socialist members for Regina when I tell them we have earmarked about \$400,000 for the base hospital this year. And just as soon as we have the recommendations from the Planning Council we are ready to take the next step forward with this hospital complex. Now the ex-Minister of Health charges us with no action in building the Psychiatric Centre in Prince Albert. Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell him that it's already started; in fact they have the hole dug and I invite him to drop in anytime and see for himself.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, what kind of legacy did the former minister leave me in the field of health? I found that the medical profession was split, the hospitals were in a state of confusion fighting over hospital privileges, both the medical care and hospital costs were climbing at an alarming rate. Many of our small rural hospitals were actually fire traps and were being allowed to die on the vine. We haven't healed all the wounds in the medical profession but at least we have got all the doctors in the hospitals, including the doctors of the people opposite. The hospitals have settled down, we have encouraged more local independence, more autonomy. The rising costs of medical

March 4, 1966

care and hospitalization still concern us but we slowed down the rate of cost increase. We have developed an adaptable function hospital that has been accepted by many of our rural communities and given them new hope for the future.

Mr. Speaker, one year ago in this chamber I said how impressed I was by the many dedicated men and women who worked to safeguard and improve the health of the people of this province. I am continually encouraged by the dedication of these fine people who work in the Department of Health and I can best pay tribute to the dedication of these health workers by mentioning their marvellous response to the demands placed upon them by the serious outbreak of encephalitis last August and September. This epidemic imposed a very heavy burden, particularly on our laboratory staff. I am proud of the way they responded. Mr. Speaker, this government has moved ahead to meet the existing and emerging needs for trained personnel in the health area. In September, the School of Physiotherapy was opened at the Saskatoon Campus of the University. We have announced plans for a College of Dentistry, long overdue. We have had increases in the number of both doctors and dentists practising in this province. And I am pleased to say that about one-third of the new physicians are practising in small urban centres which traditionally suffer from a shortage of doctors. Our government has acted to consider the problems of the shortage and training of qualified nurses in this province. Last July I assembled a committee, chaired by Justice W.A. Tucker, in Saskatoon. And I am pleased to be able to tell you that Mr. Justice Tucker two months ago submitted an interim report to me based on the recommendations therein. After a study by the Cabinet we have introduced legislation to the house that will substantially affect nursing education in the province when passed and put into effect.

Our government, Mr. Speaker, has helped small communities provide adequate hospital services to the people. This program is aimed to provide smaller communities with the opportunity to provide good small hospital accommodation at a reasonable cost. With the help of our staff and hospital people and the residents of these small communities a basic plan was developed for what we call an adaptable function hospital. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and proud to be able to tell this assembly that the first adaptable function hospital is now under construction in Goodsoil, north of Meadow Lake. Several other progressive small communities have approached us and we have agreed to proceed with such hospitals at Dodsland, Beechy and Vanguard. We have also found, Mr. Speaker, there was much concern in this province over the question of financing hospital construction. We discovered that this concern was shared by local governments, was shared by responsible citizens throughout the province. We sat down with representatives from the Rural and Urban Municipal Association, with representatives of those areas which previously were not contributing to hospital capital costs, and in an atmosphere of trust and goodwill, we worked together to resolve those problem. The Hospital Revenue Bill to be placed before the house at this session is a direct outcome of these meetings, a direct outcome of joint consideration of problems that affect us all. The revenue that will be provided will be a very real asset when used in hospital construction throughout Saskatchewan.

I have mentioned, Mr. Speaker, what this government is doing to provide continued and improved hospital services in rural areas. I would like now to say what plans are unfurling for our two base hospital centres. I am pleased to be able to tell this assembly that the Regina Area Hospital Planning council, which

was formed to co-ordinate the hospital facilities in Regina, is making good progress in resolving the details it needs before construction of a specialty hospital in this city. This government has been fortunate in acquiring a suitable site immediately adjacent to the university. As a result of many hours spent with the hospitals and the medical staffs in Regina we have been able to overcome much of the confusion that existed between the hospitals under the previous administration. There is a growing acceptance in the existing Regina hospitals that a Specialty Hospital is required. And I can assure the house, Mr. Speaker, that I will do all I can, and that the hon. member from Regina South (Mr. Grant) is doing all he can, to push the planning and the construction of this specialty unit. Meanwhile to ease the bed shortage in Regina the additional 80 bed wing will be opened in the next two months and will include ample accommodation for outpatients. In Saskatoon a start is being made this year on a 60 bed addition to the Saskatoon City Hospital. The University Hospital, too, plans to make a start on the expansion program aimed at meeting their immediate needs and this will be followed up by further planning to meet their long term needs. This will be in addition to the extension of the medical school and the cancer clinic which is also scheduled for the next fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, another job of foundation building is represented by the introduction of the Saskatchewan Assistance Act. My hon. colleague the Minister of Welfare (Mr. Boldt) is primarily concerned with this legislation. But it also has a very large aspect in the terms of health services. By introducing this program we will be able to provide a more uniform and more adequate level of health services for people in need. We estimate that more than 50,000 residents of this province will be eligible for assistance under this plan. The assistance will begin immediately with no waiting period. This will help relieve the municipal governments of certain administrative and financial worries, but more important, it will relieve the needy individuals of worry they now face. And there won't be any premium charged for this program, a program under which people in need will receive assistance and obtain medical, hospital and dental services, as well as drugs, eye glasses, other appliances and other services. Our staff members from the Department of Welfare and my department are working out details of the procedures so they will be smooth, simple and easy to operate.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — One immediate difficulty is that it will be hard to recruit the additional staff necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to tell this house that our polio immunization campaign got under way at the end of last month and will be continuing for several weeks. But I have been concerned that the response to our last two campaigns has not been as high in numbers as we would hope. Mr. Speaker, it is too easy to forget the distress that such a disease can bring to a family and I am sure that all members of this house will urge parents to take their children and make sure they do receive their immunization. In making Saskatchewan a better place in which to live we must continually be on our guard to prevent a recurrence of the polio epidemics of the 50's.

Mr. Speaker another type of immunization program that we are moving into is one against red measles. We have ordered large quantities of vaccine for immunization and will soon be

March 4, 1966

conducting a program for infants in this province. While this infection does not cause the same ravages as polio we know that it can give rise to permanent damage. The introduction of this program should lead to the eradication of red measles which will not only help our people but will lessen the already too heavy load on our busy physicians.

We have expanded our activities in the important dental health area. Prevention is being emphasized and the department was fortunate in securing the services of two public health dental officers. Their function is to promote dental health education among adults and children beginning in specified areas of the province.

Mr. Speaker, these achievements in the health field are the result of close co-operation of physicians, dentists and other health workers, as well as the many hours of devoted work contributed very generously by our voluntary agencies. Perhaps it's invidious to pick out any single agency, but this year I feel a special work of praise is in order for the very excellent pioneering work of the Saskatchewan division of the Canadian Association for Retarded Children.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I haven't gone into detail on the dollar amounts in the health budget. I don't think this is particularly necessary. I can assure you that each proposed expenditure has been subjected to the closest scrutiny ever brought to bear on a budget in Saskatchewan. We have confidence that every dollar expended in this budget will provide more and better service than our people have ever received before. This year we will spend \$112,000,000 on health, higher by \$24,000,000 than ever was spent any time by the Socialists. We are spending this amount on health because we believe our people are entitled to the best quality of health care than we can afford. We can afford these extra millions because of the new revenue received from our great industrial boom. We can also afford these extra millions because we are buying better value for our money . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. D.G. Steuart: — . . . because we are giving better consideration to each and every expenditure.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, let me again compliment the Provincial Treasurer, our Premier, for surpassing his magnificent efforts of last year. Let me urge the opposition to study this document, if they can't understand it then have their experts study it so that they may learn the great improvements that are evident in it, so that they may support the measures we are introducing to bring, for example, the best possible health care to the people of this province. We will continue to press, Mr. Speaker, for the earliest implementation of a national medical care plan. This will prove a tremendous help to our people in carrying the heavy cost of our medical care plan. Mr. Speaker, we have kept faith with the people in this province in the vital field of health and we will continue this great work. This budget is one that reflects the new optimism that's abroad in this province.

I will, of course, oppose the amendment, and I will support the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. I.C. Nollet (Cutknife): — Mr. Speaker, I was quite interested in some of the observations made by the hon. Minister of Public Health (Mr. Steuart), particularly his reference to what he termed the frivolous kind of question placed on the Order Paper, asking for the production of the SGIO calendar which had on it a picture of the Kalium Chemical Plant. This was not the real point of interest. The real point of interest was in the fact that under that picture was inscribed "built in mid 1964". We wanted to place on record the fact that the Liberal party will go to any extreme to indicate to the people of this province that somehow or other this plant, together with many others, was constructed during the period of their regime. The other references he made as to specific cases brought up by the MLA for Regina West (Mr. Blakeney), had nothing to do with the fact that mental patients are being turned out of the Mental Hospitals by droves and are being placed — it is self-evident by documented evidence — that they are being placed in inferior homes and, Mr. Speaker, that the cost will be carried by those previously responsible instead of the public treasury, as has been the case.

Mr. Steuart: — Where are the documents?

Mr. Nollet: — Saying that a man has three-quarter sections of land, that he is vacationing in British Columbia. I have had more land than that, Mr. Speaker, and I have never been able to vacation in British Columbia. But the fact of the matter is that in this particular case too, previously, this particular lady was in the Mental Hospital with the public treasury footing the bills. Now the husband is asked to foot the bill and this lady, from the description given by the member for Regina West (Mr. Blakeney), indicates that properly she should have been in the mental hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to direct my remarks almost entirely to this budget and related matters. In presenting his budget to the legislature the Premier proved four things, Mr. Speaker: One, that he is not only a tax shifter; but two, that he is also a tax juggler; three, he is in addition the most politically irresponsible spendthrift in Saskatchewan's history; and fourthly, he aspires to be the world's most renowned political magician. He is the personification of instant miracles and the only man who spends lavishly and claims to be reducing taxes at the same time. Quite an achievement, Mr. Speaker.

He is an exceptional man, indeed; in his attempts to achieve the impossible he is thus far fortunate in having had prosperity and record revenues handed to him on a platter by the previous administration when he assumed office on May 22nd, 1964.

What are the facts, Mr. Speaker? Firstly, as to his role as a tax shifter, he has shifted more and more taxes to local governments, he has shifted taxes from the more fair and equitable income tax field by reducing income tax by one per cent, a reduction of \$1,100,000 and increasing the gasoline tax by one cent a gallon, an increase of \$2,200,000, or an increase which doubles the reduction in income tax by \$1,100,000. On the one hand he reduces taxes in a more progressive tax field, and then doubles an increase in the less progressive field. He increased the medicare tax by \$20 per family, and the tobacco tax by five per cent, now 10 per cent. He has increased feed, provincial land rentals and upped the price of crown lands to purchasers. He fails to properly shift tax reductions by reducing the least

March 4, 1966

progressive tax of all, the per capita medicare and hospital levy. this is a most burdensome tax on lower income groups who should be the first to benefit from any increase of revenues, from any source whatever; but instead he raises this tax.

The hon. Minister of Public Health (Mr. Steuart) who just took his seat claims that so much could be accomplished because of industrial prosperity. If this is the case, Mr. Speaker, the first reduction in taxations should take place where it hurt the poor people the most. But this has not been the case. He lists for tax exemptions certain insignificant items used by farmers, this is getting to be a repetitious litany in this house, Mr. Speaker, and I think it will be in the country too, such things as turkey saddles, cow trainers, livestock tags, halters, tying chains, harnesses for horses, household or pit dilators, and all the rest of it, and then includes household goods, also used by farmers, Mr. Speaker, such as soaps, detergents, ammonia, bleaches, blueing, chloride of lime, cleansing powders, lye, laundry soap, including flakes and powders, for a four per cent tax increase.

He didn't miss a thing in his anti-sanitary increase, or clean-up campaign, Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that the search for a favourable response from farmers will be completely lost in their horse-laugh over the items exempted as against their loss of \$72,000,000 because of Liberal wheat price reductions, Mr. Speaker.

I would like at this time, Mr. Speaker, to draw to your attention some recent DBS figures regarding agricultural prices and income in Saskatchewan. These appeared in the Leader Post of February 26th. It indicates that farm prices went up throughout Canada by 12 1/2 per cent, but in Saskatchewan, and in the three prairie provinces, farm prices went down. It also indicated that farm prices went down more in Saskatchewan than any other province in Canada, and also indicated that over the past two years this drop has been consistent and that in Saskatchewan farmers were receiving lower prices for their products than in any other province in Canada. I notice the day the budget was brought in this house, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. McFarlane) rose to his feet and announced the final Wheat Board payments, Mr. Speaker. Somehow he thought this would be joyful tidings at the time when the Premier brought down his budget, but the joyful tidings turned into sorrowful news as was indicated by the President of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Mr. Charles Gibbings, that actually these prices were 10 cents on the average below the prices of the year previous and represented a loss to Saskatchewan farmers of \$72,000,000.

Mr. Speaker, has the provincial Liberal government effectively protested the 10 cent per bushel drop in wheat and other farm prices? No, it tried to weasel out of supporting an urgent CCF resolution during the last session in this regard. Under a Liberal government at Ottawa, and a Liberal government in Saskatchewan, this province now has the distinction of having the lowest farm prices in all of Canada, and the biggest drop in farm prices during 1965 as compared to 1964.

Little wonder, Mr. Speaker, that they couldn't win a seat in the last federal election and didn't win a seat in the previous election in Saskatchewan. Now, Mr. Speaker, they are reduced to a position where they have to rely on the appointment of people to the Senate, in order, as they say, to have representation in Ottawa. A bit later I will have more say about these Senate

appointments.

I stated a year ago, and I state it again, that it will take a lot of tax concessions in terms of purple gas, turkey saddles, etc., to make up this loss of farm income. I argued then as I argue now that the prime solution for the farmers' tax problem, or anyone else's tax problem, or anyone's problem regarding increased living costs is an increased and improved income position. In spite of these politically and comparatively minute tax concessions, land taxes and other farm costs continue to escalate to a new record high, while farm prices in our province drop to the lowest level of any in Canada. The prosperity of Saskatchewan and higher levels of revenue are still primarily dependent on the agricultural industry regardless of the Premier's extravagant claims of massive revenues from other sources.

Regarding tax juggling, Mr. Speaker, the best example of tax juggling is this so-called Home-owner grant. This money is taxed out of the people's pockets and then returned to a special group of property owners without restriction as to whether such homeowner is so wealthy it doesn't mean a thing to him or not. However, the poor, the aged, and the renters including the newlyweds must contribute to make it possible for the Premier to play Santa Claus with their hard-earned tax dollars. This political tax juggling will fool no one. This is not a means of effectively reducing property taxes or preventing continued increases in property taxes. This has been well demonstrated elsewhere, where people like Wacky Bennett used it as a political popularity stunt, and as is going to be done by the province of Alberta who are in a far better position to make such grants without affecting taxes whatever than in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it goes against the jurisdictional function of either a provincial or a municipal government. This prime jurisdictional function of both provincial and local government is to levy taxes as fairly as possible to provide service, not to collect such taxes and then return them to special group as a political cash bonus unfairly. It would be much better to use such revenue for worthy human purposes, such as free drugs, expanded health services, or increased old age pensions to \$100 a month, until the federal government gets around to properly taking care of our needy aged people, who have been so long neglected in an environment of ever-increasing living costs.

Mr. Speaker, it is a disgrace to dedicate provincial revenues to property when there is so much crying human need about us. Action of this kind is a reflection on the integrity and function of democracy itself. I am opposed to this on all the basic principles that should constitute and guide responsible democratic government. I will never be a party to the type of political chicanery which discriminates and denies these payments to Saskatchewan citizens because of their geographic location. The Premier stated the Home-owner grant would not be paid to residents of Lloydminster and the rural area in the immediate vicinity. I ask what area. Has any geographical area been defined around Lloydminster where these Home-owner grants will not apply? I look forward with great interest to the Premier telling this house what the size of the area is going to be and defining its geographic boundary.

May I inform the Premier that this area was pioneered and developed by the very finest type of English settler, known as the Barr Colonists. These settlers, despite inexperience in the

March 4, 1966

ways of pioneer living, endured great hardship and privation to build one of the best communities in Saskatchewan. The imprint of traditional English integrity and good citizenship still remains an outstanding characteristic of this community. The fact that the boundary line between Saskatchewan and Alberta divides the city of Lloydminster is no fault of the businessmen and homeowners in this area of the province. The fact that a sales tax of four per cent and a 10 per cent tobacco tax is imposed under the existing circumstances in this area is no fault of the people residing in the area affected. The fact that the businessmen are severely handicapped in collecting the tax is no fault of theirs. It is very clear that under the existing circumstances the government itself must accept greater responsibility for collection of its taxes in this area. The method of collecting the sales tax or some alternative method of taxation must of practical necessity be applied under the special circumstances presently existing in this area.

Mr. Speaker, in support of what I am saying I would like to read to the house a copy of a letter which was sent to the Premier by the Lloydminster and district Co-operated Associations. It reads as follows:

Dear Premier Thatcher:

June 16th, 1965, your government ruled that tobacco dealers in the city would pay the Provincial Treasurer 40 per cent of the tax revenue of sales of tobacco out of their earnings. This has placed an extremely heavy burden on those dealers who handle primarily tobacco in this city. Grocery outlets are also faced with larger payments.

And, of course, this will be increased now that the tax has been applied to soaps and detergents, etc.

Our association has been absorbing in excess of \$165 per month since April 1st, 1965. In June of 1965, the Premier stated he would consider re-examining the situation in the coming year.

Apparently he did by rank discrimination by not making the Home-owner grant available to these people in that area.

The letter goes on,

The announcement mailed out to all gasoline vendors on February 18, stating an increase of tax of 1 cent per gallon means that the service station operators in the city of Lloydminster will be obliged to absorb this increase out of their earnings, if they are to remain competitive with the operators across the street.

How would you like that, Mr. Speaker, to be a business man in that situation in the city of Lloydminster? If the Premier is such a magician, why hasn't he solved this problem in the city of Lloydminster? He should apply his genius in that direction rather than discriminating by not giving these people the Home-owner grant. I will guarantee him, Mr. Speaker, that he is going to hear a lot more about this before this house adjourns.

The letter goes on,

Precedent established is that in remitting to the

government local service station operators deducted 15 per cent from their remittance for collecting the tax. May we point out this applies to service stations only. Petroleum dealers remit the full amount to the government on gas deliveries to farmers, major transport firms, etc.

The recent announcement regarding non-allotment of tax rebates to homeowners in Lloydminster and district justifies, in our opinion, the removal of the existing inequities to the businessmen of Lloydminster.

We respectfully request the Premier of this province: 1, to remove the amount of tobacco tax now paid, thus enabling Lloydminster merchants to meet competition without subsidy from their earnings; 2, we also request you to increase the amount of tax deductions for collections of our car gasoline in the city from 13 to 10 per cent which amounts to exactly three cents per gallon, which is the difference between Saskatchewan and Alberta taxes. This, in our opinion, will pay off to the province of Saskatchewan and maintain sales and continued expansion of business on the Saskatchewan side of the border. We respectfully submit the recent announcement regarding non-tax rebates in Lloydminster and district justifies the provincial government taking action to remove the inequities which the tobacco dealers now face, and the inequities the service station operators will be faced with on March 15th, 1966. All of which is respectfully submitted and signed by Mr. L.J. Ducette, General Manager of the Lloydminster Co-operative Association.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have a few comments to make in addition to this, and it is this. The Saskatchewan government cannot in justice and fairness evade its responsibility in this regard, certainly in its frustration the government has no right to aggravate the problem by blandly discriminating against the homeowners in this area by refusing to give the Home-owner grant to them. These people have contributed much to the economy of our province, and the government has no right, as it says, to deny the benefits of instant and abundant resource revenues to them as citizens of this province.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier is quite a salesman. I think he was noted as the "Salesman of the Year" in some quarters. You know, Mr. Speaker, he likes auction sales too. He is prepared to put almost anything on the auction block; whether it is Saskair, Sodium Sulphate, or any other crown corporation, he is prepared to sell it for almost any bid. In the case of Lloydminster, and this is most interesting, Mr. Speaker, he actually had his shoes auctioned off to raise some money for the Liberal-Provincial War Chest. This was a most interesting event, Mr. Speaker, for the Premier of this province to endeavor to raise funds for his party by auctioning off his campaign shoes. I can say this to him if he was to go to Lloydminster today to auction off his shoes, he wouldn't get a plug nickel for them. He very nearly got very little for them when he did auction them off in the heat of an election, had it not been for a CCF'er who up-bid the price they probably would have been sold for \$15, and that would have been too much too. At least the Premier of this province knows where some of the money is coming from that goes into the Liberal War Chest, Mr. Speaker.

After aspiring to be the world's most renowned magician, the

March 4, 1966

Premier has as yet found no magic political formula to solve the Lloydminster tax problem, and he will never find a magical formula anywhere else to reduce taxes and spend more at one and the same time.

In a recent television interview I heard the Premier remark, "Any fool can spend money", for once I am in agreement with him. Any fool can spend money, and he is doing just that as I will endeavor to demonstrate. Mr. Speaker, in order to justify spending the growing benefits of the prosperity handed to him on a platter by the previous administration, he must of necessity invent magical instant miracles to persuade the electors he is really not a political spendthrift at all, but a very careful prudent statesman of no mean wisdom.

What are the facts? To find them one has only to look at the estimates and supplementaries over the past two years. In the fiscal year 1964-65, the budget stood at \$214,000,000, based on a surplus of \$214,000. The year closed with a huge surplus. This surplus was spent in supplementary estimates amounting to \$12,700,000. In the present fiscal year, 1965-66, the budget stood at \$229,900,000, with a predicted surplus of \$249,000, and was only \$6,000,000 above the previous budget for 1964-65. The present fiscal year will wind up with a still greater surplus of some \$26,000,000 as stated by the Premier, but the supplementary spending estimates totalled \$28,200,000 including those in advances. In other words, the huge surplus of \$26,000,000 is all spent, and as indicated in the amount of \$2,000,000 in excess of the surplus itself.

The Premier's spendthrift habits apparently grow and expand in direct proportion to his extravagant claims of magical prosperity. If he was overly conservative in his first budget for 1965-66, he has now thrown all caution to the winds in an over-optimistic gambling budget for the fiscal year now under review. I say this because this budget exceeds the previous budget not by \$6,000,000 as was the case a year ago, but by a whopping \$48,000,000, or eight times the previous increase. Now, this is indeed a gambling budget. What the story will be a year hence regarding a huge deficit or surplus remains to be seen. However much we hope for a continued buoyancy in our economy we cannot help but feel apprehensive, Mr. Speaker. The Premier, no doubt, is gambling on another good crop, and on large wheat sales, or on the possibility of more federal revenue, and particularly more from the federal government's commitment to pay half of the per capita health levy by July 1st, 1967. I would say based on the federal government's past performance, Mr. Speaker, in this regard, this prospect is less certain than gambling on the weather for another good crop.

This budget has all the earmarks of a desperate gambling election budget. Regardless of the final outcome of the budget itself, we on this side of the house will, with equal optimism, welcome an election, any time our magician Premier chooses to call one. We base our optimism on the growing suspicion in the minds of responsible Saskatchewan people that the Premier is not a trustworthy magician at all, but a desperate politician more concerned with political power than with the good of Saskatchewan and its people. Anyone who ups spending by \$48,000,000 without future tax increases or heavy deadweight debt borrowing must be regarded with real apprehension. Has he, or will he reduce taxes? The answer is No. Has he already increased taxes? The answer is Yes. Has he shown by performance great interest in the social well-being of our people, especially the more needy?

The answer is No. Has he shown greater interest in creating a welfare state for big outside business interest? The answer is Yes. He justifies the latter policy on the basis that the benefits from these profit-taking business enterprises will somehow magically benefit people generally and reduce taxes. Let's examine this, Mr. Speaker, and in doing so, may I point out to him that in a recent TV interview he took doubtful pride in the fact that Ontario's taxes had recently jumped to new heights. I wish to remind him and this house that over many years Ontario was complained of as being the one province of Canada where private enterprise and its climate were carefully nurtured with public money and at the expense of the public purse, through tariff protection and outright cash subsidies to the detriment of economic development elsewhere in Canada for all too long.

I ask, why have taxes not been reduced as a consequence in Ontario? With this shining example of private enterprise which now ranks as the highest taxed province in Canada. The Premier in Saskatchewan still says, "We are justified in heavily subsidizing industry for more industry will reduce taxes". This is the complete reverse as I am going to prove of which his contention was when he assumed the government of this province. At that time he said, "I will reduce taxes by strict economy, cuts in the civil service, greater efficiency," etc. He has now completely reversed this position and says we are going to have prosperity and reduced taxes by spending more, Mr. Speaker. This point is going to have to be cleared up in the minds of the people of Saskatchewan. If it is not cleared up, and I don't think it will be, we can rest assured that when the next election rolls around the people of Saskatchewan are too intelligent to have anything further to do with a man who doesn't know where he is going, who tells them during the election, this is the policy of my party and reverses that decision completely when he is elected to power.

I wish to remind him to that the more recent subsidies to the giant automobile industry located chiefly in Ontario has not resulted in reduced automobile prices, but increases instead. This whole philosophy is based on a complete fallacy. The Premier's philosophy is wrong on every count and he will not long continue to hoodwink the people of this province who have eyes to see and intelligence to properly appraise his verbal fabrications.

Let us take another quick look at the budget and I would like to just summarize this to drive this point home. Last year's budget \$220,000,000, up \$6,300,000 over the previous year's budget of 1965-65. This year's budget now \$268,000,000, \$48,000,000 over 1965-66. A new record. but this isn't all by any means. Supplementaries for 1965-66 are also a record \$28,000,000 of which some \$26,000,000 is spent and the balance dedicated to loans, investments, etc. so in the still current year there is a total expenditure budget of \$248,000,000. This is bad enough but in the budget under review this amount increases by another \$20,000,000 to reach a whopping record again of \$268,700,000. Mr. Speaker, if this rate of increase continues through the next fiscal year 1968-69 we will have an annual expenditure budget of \$316,000,000 or an increase of \$102,000,000 over what the budget was when the Premier assumed the responsibility for government in this province. This \$102,000,000 averages over \$25,000,000 of an increase each year. This comes strangely from the man who said he was going to reduce taxes by greater economy. As evidence of that, Mr. Speaker, I have here in my hands, and it's quite difficult to lift, the Johnson Report on Administration which the Premier instituted in an

March 4, 1966

endeavor to prove to the people of this province that the Socialists were nothing but a bunch of extravagant spenders. He would look after it. He would clean up the mess. He would bring greater efficiency. He would reduce taxes by reducing expenditure and he would have greater efficiency. Where is it, Mr. Speaker? An increase in our budget of \$48,000,000 this year and at this rate, an annual increase of \$25,000,000 a year. I certainly can see very little purpose in having had the Johnson commission making an investigation into the expenditures of government or trying to save a bit here and a bit there, then go on to a spending spree of this kind and then endeavor to justify it by saying we are now going to achieve prosperity and tax reduction by spending more. Complete nonsense, Mr. Speaker.

I fully agree that any fool can spend money and the people of Saskatchewan are just beginning to wonder whether they have got a worthy magician here or a fool spendthrift policy. The only thing that concerns them is the fact that this province's resources are up for open bid and placed on the auction block for any kind of bid. For what purpose, Mr. Speaker? To establish a welfare state for whom in Saskatchewan? To improve conditions for whom in Saskatchewan? I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it's a policy to establish a welfare state for private profits instead of people.

The people of this province will want to know very clearly what the policy of this government is. Is it one of economy? Is it going to be one of less spending or is it going to be one of more spending and reducing taxes at the same time? I am afraid that our political magician is caught in a vice. The sands of time are running out on him. The day of reckoning is near at hand and all I can say is, Lord help him, Mr. Speaker, for whom the bell tolls.

The trend is evident, Mr. Speaker. In the by-election of Hanley, they lost this seat by a very substantial increase in the opposition's majority. They lost votes in Moosomin. They lost votes in the by-election of Bengough and they can take little political satisfaction from having elected their member there. It was a reduced vote and I can say this, Mr. Speaker, I often wonder why this by-election was being called at that particular time. But after these Senate appointments were announced, I came to the conclusion why the by-election was called when it was, because I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, and the members of this legislature, had that by-election been called after Senator Argue's appointment, the Liberal party in Bengough would have been overwhelmingly defeated. Mr. Speaker, their own members here, at Ottawa, their own supporters have criticized this appointment and I don't blame them one bit for doing so.

I'm saying to you, Mr. Speaker, if they want to call a general election, all right. If this is your decision, we will welcome a general election and let our friends opposite not forget that the Liberal party at Ottawa is still under a cloud. They had an opportunity of clearing the air, of cleaning the party out, giving it a new image for the electors of Canada. This, Mr. Speaker, they have not done. They have beclouded the whole image again by an appointment of a whole list of political heelers, many of whom have done little or nothing for their party, and in this category I include Mr. Argue. People like Mr. Hays, he needed a Senate appointment badly, didn't he? A millionaire who knew very little about the farmers' actual problems. This cloud still hangs over the government at Ottawa and still hangs over and casts a dark shadow on the Liberals in this province. Their

actions since they have been elected to office in turning somersaults, doing callisthenics, from one position saying we're going to bring about great economies and thereby reduce taxes and then turning right around, reversing themselves, and now trying to tell the people of Saskatchewan, we're going to have prosperity by spending more money and we are going to reduce taxes at the same time. I say again, Mr. Speaker, the sands of time are running out and the Premier of this province knows it.

I wouldn't be a bit amazed, Mr. Speaker, but that he runs into serious trouble before this year is out. And again, if he wants to gamble let him come and gamble with an election in the coming year.

Hon. D.V. Heald (Attorney General): — . . . wait four years.

Mr. Nollet: — Yes, we came every four years and we sometimes came a little too fast for members opposite. If you want to come with an election at any time we will welcome it. As I said, considering the trends that I have noted, and I think the Premier knows too that the winds of change are blowing against him, not for him.

Mr. Speaker, there are one or two more things I wanted to talk about for just a moment and then I will conclude my remarks. Again I want to return to agriculture. I am going to, incidentally, Mr. Speaker, keep this edition of the Leader Post issue on the day when the budget address was made, as a sort of souvenir because there was no cheer in it whatever for the Liberal party. There was no cheer in the budget itself. It says in big block headlines, "Two taxes up. Two reduced". The Premier used to talk about crown corporations in those baseball terms. Well, two up, two down. I'm afraid he is not going to hit another foul ball. I think he is going to strike out on the next one.

Mr. Speaker, in connection with the budget I want to raise one more point and it is this. The budget was made available to the news media of this province, the press, TV and radio, before the members of this legislature had an opportunity of knowing what was contained in that budget. I had a call, Mr. Speaker, from Lloydminster while the Premier was speaking, during his budget address. They asked me, "Is it right that we are not going to get the Home-owner grant? What did the Premier say?" Well, I said, "I didn't hear him say anything yet, I don't think he would do such a terrible thing", but I said, "I'll be going back into the house again and if this proves correct I will let you know." People all over the province knew of this before we knew it in the house. I say to you, Mr. Premier, please adhere to the practice previously followed and give us a copy of your address before you give it to all the people of Saskatchewan; and all of the news media. It's pretty embarrassing to have someone call you and ask, "Are we going to be denied the Home-owner grant? What do you know about it?" and everyone else knew about it. Now I finally heard the Premier make the statement himself towards the end of this budget address and I called the people of Lloydminster who called me, and told them, "Yes, it's correct." He is going to reap a whirlwind from that part of the province. There is a united front up there now, Mr. Speaker. Lloydminster is famous for one thing and that is their great loyalty to Lloydminster and community. This transcends political boundaries entirely. I rather feel, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier is going to witness a united front of Liberals, Conservatives, Social

March 4, 1966

Creditors, Board of Trade, Farm organizations, and what have you, who are going to come down here and park on his doorstep until he stops his discrimination against these people.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Nollet: — I say to him, you can't get away with that discrimination. It's going to affect your political future right across this province. The people of Saskatchewan are non-discriminatory and they know discrimination when they see it. I say to you, Mr. Premier, now that you are in your seat, you're going to have to find a solution to that problem.

An Hon. Member: — Magician . . .

Mr. Nollet: — Yes, magician is right.

Mr. Thatcher: — We have the courage to.

Mr. Nollet: — Yes, and I'll help the Premier out . . .

Mr. Thatcher: — You think they can go on without paying taxes.

Mr. Nollet: — But you had the courage to discriminate against them.

Mr. Thatcher: — Oh no, we're against discrimination.

Mr. Nollet: — Prove that you are a statesman and that you are willing to find a solution and there is a solution. If the Premier wants to know it, I'll give him some help . . .

Mr. Thatcher: — We would welcome a solution.

Mr. Nollet: — I'd be mighty glad to be of assistance.

Mr. Thatcher: — What is it?

Mr. Nollet: — I'm always glad to be of assistance any time to get some fairness to the people of my constituency.

I'll give it to you. All right, let's put it down briefly. One, the provincial government itself will have to assume greater responsibility for tax collections in that area because of the special circumstances. You cannot impose this responsibility on either businessmen or anyone else and expect them, under the circumstances, to collect it at their own peril as businessmen. This can't be done. The government will either have to assume the responsibility or, if necessary, look at an alternative method of taxing. If you are going to continue with the collection of the sales tax then I would say, define an area around Lloydminster. Within that area it would be very easy to have statements submitted by people who made purchases either in Alberta, or our side, or anywhere else, and pay their taxes. People are fundamentally honest. You may not collect it all by this device. People now make out income taxes and we could have a simple statement for these people to fill out. On top of this if you wished

you could collect it yourself on the larger items and free the businessmen from the collection of it at all in that area, or, as I say, an alternative method of taxing. This can be done and it must be done.

Mr. Thatcher: — You didn't do it. You had 20 years and you didn't do it.

Mr. Nollet: — Yes, it would have been done. We didn't have the same problems. You raised the tobacco tax to ten per cent. You raised the gas tax by another one per cent in that area. You have aggravated the whole situation.

Mr. Thatcher: — How about the sales tax? We slashed it from five to four.

Mr. Nollet: — Yes, from five to four and upped the tobacco tax to ten per cent. I would like to see you survive as a tobacco merchant on the Saskatchewan side of the Lloydminster border.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in view of this situation certainly it's the rankest kind of discrimination for the Premier to now say, "Because of this we are going to punish the homeowners by not giving them the Home-owner grant in that area".

Mr. Thatcher: — Can't have it both ways.

Mr. Nollet: — This is true that we can't have it both ways but this doesn't support the fact that you are not discriminating. You are, when there is another solution.

Mr. Thatcher: — But then we're discriminating against the rest of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Nollet: — Oh no, you are not. When you get an alternative method of taxation you are discriminating against no one, and when you assume your responsibility, as a government, to collect it, you are not discriminating against the other taxpayers of the province.

For the reasons mentioned, Mr. Speaker, as indicated I will not vote for the motion but I will support the amendment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. F. Radloff (Nipawin): — Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the member for Cutknife (Mr. Nollet), with a great deal of interest and I find that he is up to his old tricks twisting facts and figures and trying to run down the Premier of Saskatchewan. The only time the member from Cutknife was right was when he said that the Premier was an amazing man. He is an amazing man and he is doing an amazingly good job.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

March 4, 1966

Mr. Radloff: — And it is amazingly so when you consider some of the education that he has had from the members on the other side of the house. The member from Cutknife (Mr. Nollet) has said that the Premier is a tax shifter. Well, he is trying to mislead the public again. He does not want to show what we are doing and is trying to shift credit from the Liberal party to himself.

Now, I did not intend to speak in the Budget Debate, however, Premier Ross Thatcher, as Provincial Treasurer, has presented one of the most realistic and sound budgets to this legislature and to the people in this province. I know the people in the Nipawin constituency will expect me to say a few words at this time in appreciation of his efforts and the work he is doing.

The Premier has presented a budget designed to encourage continued development and progress. It is a budget designed to map government programs and government thinking with consideration for all the people. The Premier has done an amazingly good job in outlining this program. It has major tax cuts, more major tax cuts and fewer minor tax increases than any past government has found possible in Saskatchewan. The net result has been an overall saving to the people of Saskatchewan of many millions of dollars.

The member from Cutknife (Mr. Nollet) said that the Premier is the salesman of the year. Certainly a good salesman is a man who sells a losing proposition. The Premier has taken a good look at some of the enterprises that the members in the opposition had started and checked their revenues and certainly he has done something for the people of Saskatchewan when he sold these losing ventures.

The Premier has presented a budget to the people of Saskatchewan not only with savings but with increased spending for essential services and essential programs. He has taken the revenue received from the utilization of Saskatchewan's natural resources and mineral resources. This year government spending will be increased by almost \$50,000,000 to an all-time high. For essential services such as education, highways, municipal roads, local governments will all benefit from Premier Thatcher's concern for their financial position and general welfare.

Again, I want to say that the member from Cutknife (Mr. Nollet) and other members over there should take a lesson from the member from Prince Albert (Mr. Steuart) and the member from Maple Creek (Mr. Cameron), and consider the remarks that they have presented this afternoon and what they have had to say to straighten them out in their course of action.

All across Canada people are realizing how fortunate the people of Saskatchewan are to have a Liberal government with the enlightened leadership of Premier Ross Thatcher. It is amazing how quickly the Premier and his cabinet have been able to bring a prosperous progressive atmosphere to a land of people, who some 20 months ago were down-trodden, brow-beaten and persecuted.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Radloff: — Sure, the member from Cutknife (Mr. Nollet) understands that efficient management leaves more money for the needed services and capital development that the Liberal party is proposing for the people of Saskatchewan.

All the members opposite can rave and rant and quote all kinds of statistics, but the thinking people of Saskatchewan know and can see that there is a great difference and that we are receiving increased opportunities and new development, opportunities and development that were promised in the last election by the Liberal candidates.

An Hon. Member: — . . . my speech of '48.

Mr. Radloff: — And Mr. Nollet, I don't think you really want that by-election, or a general election in Saskatchewan that you were talking about. I think you would like to have the people of Saskatchewan forget some of the things that you have done in the past.

Mr. Nollet — What's happened up in Lloydminster?

Mr. Steuart: — Toby, you haven't changed your speech for thirty years.

Mr. Nollet: — It's a good one. It's endured well.

Mr. Radloff: — Mr. Speaker, agriculture being the basic and most important industry of Saskatchewan has not been overlooked by the Premier. The Premier recognizes that Saskatchewan's agriculture needs consistent assistance and consideration of the increasing problems of that industry. This year the Premier has budgeted for an increased expenditure of over \$2,000,000 for this department so that the Minister of Agriculture, the hon. D. McFarlane, can continue to meet the needs of farmers, livestock people and other producers of agricultural products.

Mr. Speaker, during the past year I have had the opportunity to work with the Minister of Agriculture and I have found the minister vitally interested in all aspects of agriculture. I can say that the hon. D. McFarlane will become one of the most outstanding Ministers of Agriculture that Saskatchewan has seen and heard from. The minister is doing all possible to encourage a fully integrated agricultural program. In a few short months the hon. D. McFarlane has visited all parts of Saskatchewan and acquainted himself with the district and area agricultural problems and is giving them his deepest consideration. Mr. Speaker, the minister has formulated definite plans and programs that he is implementing for the benefit of farm people. It is his desire and his ambition to encourage grain production, livestock production and other associated production under sound management plans. The minister is acutely aware that Saskatchewan farmers must produce increasing quantities of these products. The minister realizes that our land resources are limited and that agricultural people will have to use all the modern innovations and technological advances to increase production at lower costs. Population growth and economic growth demand increased activity in all agricultural fields and related interests.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to briefly outline a few policies that the hon. Doug McFarlane has given his attention to. The minister understands the need to increase efforts to encourage diversification of the livestock industry. He understands that we need the legislation to give maximum protection against livestock and poultry and animal diseases which he has placed before this legislature. He has also established more community

March 4, 1966

pastures. He is making provision for soil testing laboratories at the University of Saskatchewan. The minister realized the need to increase appropriations to expand the fodder shelter program, assistance for seeding and irrigation sub-marginal land, assistance for clearing privately owned land and expansion of the crop insurance program. Our Minister of Agriculture has encouraged two Exhibitions, one at Regina and one at Saskatoon, where producers and manufacturers of farm equipment were able to display their products. Thousands of Saskatchewan people took advantage of this opportunity to see the latest and newest innovations and to receive instructions in their use.

Mr. Speaker, the minister also has encouraged recognition of 4H Club work and the important part young people can assume in the world of agriculture and the opportunities that are now available for industrious, trained young men and women. The minister has also encouraged studies of the livestock industry with regard to how production and marketing can be more regular and on a continuing basis under modern practices and market requirements.

The minister has also encouraged studies of rural development areas to ascertain the precise nature of existing economic and social problems. The minister recognizes the need for a comprehensive rural development plan establishing land-use priorities, rehabilitation and re-orientation of the agriculture industry.

The minister has also considered extending financial aid and incentives to encourage expansion and concentration of all agriculture developments. He has encouraged well-planned programs of research education and promotion designed to increase average production levels with associated lower costs. The minister recognizes the categorically no system of corporate, state or large monopoly farming is as efficient as the man who owns his own land and does a good job of farming.

The minister is making an all-out effort to sell lease land and give producers an opportunity to stabilize their positions. Farmers are welcoming the additional security and the opportunity to escape government control, and I might say much of this government control was imposed by the members opposite. Nearly some 3,000 leases have been sold in the past year and I hope that many more will be disposed of this year.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has a real concern for encouraging and assisting young men to stay with the land. In the past year the allocation procedure laws changed from giving maximum consideration for lease allocation to need rather than to proximity and political patronage. I must commend the minister for this action. Many young people are starting to receive land which has not been possible for many years.

Mr. Speaker, today I might for a few minutes discuss several aspects of agriculture in the Nipawin constituency as related to the province as a whole, as I have indicated the high cost of land has become the main limiting factor in encouraging young men to go into agriculture. The old family farm of the past has almost disappeared leaving many related problems. Socially and economically it is one of the greatest tragedies of our time. However, all is not lost. Mr. Speaker, it is becoming more apparent that today highly specialized and efficient farm agriculture production units using small land requirements can compete, and compete successfully, in many fields of production.

Diversification can also play an important part in assisting farmers to find local markets for their products. Diversification and specialization coupled with efficient operation are the answers to the loss of many of our family farms.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to dwell a few minutes on the Nipawin constituency. I know some members say, there goes Nipawin again. However, the Nipawin constituency is a shining example of the type of agricultural development that gives record production of seed grain, forage crop-seed, honey, livestock, vegetable oil, nursery stock, vegetables and small fruits. One of the most commendable factors regarding this production is that much of the success was achieved on land that was not considered good agriculture land.

For the information of the members of the legislature, I would like to indicate briefly a few of the agricultural type enterprises of the region, their land requirements and something of their success, indicating successful specialization on limited land use. In the Nipawin constituency we have seven or eight large cattle feeding concerns, feeding something like 1,000 cattle each year and utilizing about 30 acres for penning their animals. We have around a dozen commercial swine feeding operations using 30 or 40 acres for housing their animals but buying their feed requirements outside.

In the constituency we have some 12 large bee-keeping operations and many small operations using three or four acres for their base of operations, renting pasture accommodation from large farm operators. Few constituencies have this type of industry, so that I would like to give some information in this legislature regarding the bee-keeping operation. There is close to some 10,000 hives located in the Nipawin region. This honey has a value of something like \$200,000 to \$250,000. It varies in price from year to year but it is a real revenue-bearing enterprise. The Nipawin area has become world renowned as a bee-keeping and a honey-producing area and has one of the largest productions per colony in the world. Honey factors who purchase honey in the Nipawin area sell it throughout Canada and also export honey to Great Britain and the continent.

In the Nipawin constituency we have other specialized industries, three large potato growers using light sandy land for their production and achieving heavy production by rotation on a limited acreage. We have elite potato growers using a very small amount of land for their operation. We have a father and son who operate a tree shrubbery and nursery operation, selling shrubbery. This operation is carried on light jackpine land and is a very successful operation. I merely point out some of these operations to show what specialization in agriculture can do on a very limited acreage, as land costs have now made it prohibitive for a young man to start in regular grain growing.

However, continued success in specialized industries of the type outlined are not without their problems. For the benefit of people interested in them I will briefly state some of these problems outlined by the seed-growing industry of the Nipawin district. Mr. Speaker, it is agreed that a large proportion of the seed being used in Saskatchewan is not of a standard of purity, quality and freedom from weed-seed generally recognized as the minimum required by good farming practice. Most farmers in Saskatchewan do not have a local source of supply for suitable seed and are, therefore, faced with prohibitive freight costs in

March 4, 1966

obtaining it. It is requested that the provincial government consider a method and funds for equitable freight costs for distribution of seed supplies within the boundaries of the province.

Mr. Speaker, the area generally referred to as the Carrot River Valley, a large portion of the area being the Nipawin constituency, is presently producing a very broad range of crops of agricultural, commercial and industrial importance. This has come about because of the very broad range of soil types and the acquired skills of the agricultural community. The predictable, undeveloped potentials of the area are substantially greater than for any other area known. It is requested that the provincial government plan to develop testing and research complexes for the area and to incorporate into the single facility the following services:

- (a) A soil testing laboratory to service the vital needs of the highly varied conditions of the northeast of the province.
- (b) Incorporated, as a component, a research facility to make an intense study of the particular conditions peculiar to this area and with special emphasis on the study of peat soils.
- (c) In co-operation with the federal government the establishment of a fully accredited inspection and testing laboratory for agricultural products. It can be noted that a disproportionately large percentage of the services performed by Plant Products Division in their Saskatoon laboratory is on products originating in northeast Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, many farmers in the municipalities of the area are in the early process of becoming financially established. They are carrying a load of debt repayment, repayment based on fully normal, annual crop yields, but serious, unfavourable or disastrous conditions for yields periodically place these individuals in a position where they are unable to commit themselves to further unsecured debt for the immediate purchase of seed, fertilizer and chemicals without which farm operation and source of livelihood will be severely jeopardized. As the municipalities have the only access to the long term security of the land itself, it is requested that the provincial government take every measure to make available to these rural municipalities sufficient credit and/or funds to provide effective and timely assistance in the purchase of suitable seed, fertilizer and chemicals to provide for optimum husbandry practices.

The population of beef cattle is increasing rapidly and a similar increase in dairy cattle appears mandatory in the near future. New acreage of hay and pasture crops is not being established rapidly enough to provide seed and fodder for this increasing livestock population. It has been requested that the provincial government continue to accelerate this promotion by a conversion to the production of hay and pasture of more marginal crop land that is better adapted to this purpose.

Mr. Speaker, many improvements through the use of recommended kinds of forage crops of native range and other undeveloped acreage can be made. Close co-operation by members of the seed trade can assist the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. McFarlane) in continuing to guide the improvement of agricultural practices. The tremendous agriculture development of northeastern Saskatchewan associated with the great natural beauty of the country, the Saskatchewan River Valley, Tobin Lake and the Squaw Rapids power

development is attracting tourists by the thousands. Over some 30,000 visitors last year visited the Squaw Rapids Dam and the agricultural land adjacent. People from all over the North American continent are visiting the area to study the specialized agricultural projects. I have been advised that a delegation from the World conference of Bee-keepers to be held in the United States will be visitors to Saskatchewan and to our district this year. Mr. Speaker, the farm and cattle raising program sponsored by my government for the Indian and Metis people of the Cumberland delta will be an added attraction for progressive agricultural-minded tourists.

Mr. Speaker, the circle tour, passing through the centre of this outstanding agricultural district, including Carrot river, Nipawin, Choiceland, Snowden, north of the Hanson Lake road into Manitoba, with their fishing, hunting, swimming facilities will continue to attract many agricultural people to survey the developments that have taken place.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I must say that the people of the Nipawin constituency appreciate all the efforts of the government to improve facilities and to make plans to add new features to assist in bringing maximum results to the agricultural development of the country.

Again, I want to compliment the Minister, the hon. Doug McFarlane, for the work he is doing. I want to say again, I compliment the Premier of our province, the Provincial Treasurer, for the plans that he has laid before this legislature. He has brought forward a real program to continue the expansion of industry, of agriculture and their related needs. These are vital to the people of the Nipawin constituency, so it goes without saying that I will vote against the amendment and I will vote for the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

RESOLUTIONS

MOTION: PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Hon. D.G. Steuart (Minister of Health) moved, seconded by Mr. Lloyd (Leader of the Opposition):

That leave of absence be granted to the hon. member for Turtleford, on and from Monday, the 7th day of March, 1966, to attend on behalf of this assembly a conference organized in London by the United Kingdom Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Mr. R.H. Wooff (Turtleford): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to voice a word of appreciation to the government and to the legislature for this privilege of attending a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference in London. As I have said to our own members, I will just repeat to the group it is really unique as far as I am concerned, because it will be just 60 years to the month, since I set sail from the shores of merry England to come to Canada as one of the pioneers of northwestern Saskatchewan, and I thank you very much.

Hon. W. Ross Thatcher (Premier): — On behalf of members on this side of the house, Mr. Speaker,

March 4, 1966

I would certainly like to say we hope the hon. member for Turtleford (Mr. Wooff), will have a very enjoyable trip. I am not English but my wife is, and because of that I get over there about every second year. I know that the hon. member will enjoy seeing England again. It is a wonderful country. While he is over there perhaps he can tell our English friends that we still fly the Union Jack on our legislature building. We are still very proud of our British connection, and we are very anxious to promote trade relations between the province of Saskatchewan, the Government of Canada, and Great Britain. Again, I say I wish him a good trip. I know he will enjoy it if he has not been home for 60 years.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. W.S. Lloyd (Leader of the Opposition): — I would just like to say a word or two and join with the remarks of the Premier on this occasion. It is several weeks ago since you, Sir, were good enough to talk with me about the possibility of one of the members from our group attending the conference, which I understand is arranged by the United Kingdom Branch of the Parliamentary Association. We considered it, and had little difficulty in choosing a suitable representative in the person of the member from Turtleford (Mr. Wooff). I want to add that I am glad to see this practice of persons from the legislature having the opportunity to attend these various conferences. They are of course of particular interest and value to the individual member, but they are also of great value to all of us who are interested in parliamentary procedures, practices and principles. I am sure that in choosing the member from Turtleford we have chosen a first rate ambassador from the legislature and from Saskatchewan to represent all of us at this conference.

I have just one small fear, Mr. Speaker. The last time, as I recall it, a member who sat on this side of the house went as our representative to one of these conferences, he came back and in a couple of years he was made a Senator. I don't know whether there is any particular significance here or not. I do join with all the rest in wishing our representative a most interesting and valuable visit with our colleagues from legislatures and from parliaments in other parts of the commonwealth.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: — Mr. Speaker, I just want to ask the member from Turtleford (Mr. Wooff) if he is over in England by April 1st of this year, not to forget to drop around on Prime Minister Wilson and congratulate him on his win in the forthcoming election.

Motion agreed to.

On the motion of the Hon. Mr. Steuart, the assembly adjourned at 5.21 o'clock p.m.