

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

Fifth Session — Sixteenth Legislature

3rd Day

Thursday, February 18, 1971.

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

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. SPEAKER: — I wish to introduce to all of the Members of the Assembly the following groups of students seated in the galleries: from the constituency of Kelvington, represented by Mr. Byers, 50 students from the Invermay High School under the direction of Mr. Bahrey, their teacher; from the constituency of Touchwood, represented by Mr. Meakes, 22 school children from the Dysart High School under the direction of Mr. T.S. Parmar; from the constituency of Moose Jaw South, represented by Mr. Davies, 77 pupils from the Empire School of Moose Jaw under the direction of Mrs. Garden; from the constituency of Regina Centre, represented by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Blakeney, 52 students from the Herchmer School under the direction of their teacher, Mr. A. Smith; from the constituency of Shellbrook, represented by Mr. Bowerman, 57 students from the Big River School, Big River, Saskatchewan, under the direction of their teacher, Mr. S. Dunbar.

I am sure all Members would wish to extend to each and everyone of these students and to their teachers the warmest of all possible welcomes to the Legislature and to express the very sincere hope that they will find their stay here enjoyable and to wish each and everyone of them a safe trip home.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

QUESTION OMITTED DUE TO PRINTER'S ERROR

MR. SPEAKER: — Before the Orders of the Day I should like to inform the Assembly — if you will take your White Paper — that due to a printer's error Question No. 6 on Page 15 of today's Notices of Questions standing in the name of the Member for Cutknife (Mr. Kwasnica) is supposed to be Question No. 77 and it will be entered in tomorrow's Orders of the Day as such. The original Question No. 76, also standing in the name of the Member for Cutknife, was omitted by printer's error but will appear in tonight's notice paper.

I table herewith a photostatic copy of a manuscript that the Legislative Assembly office sent to the printer which shows how the error arose.

I wish to apologize to the Member concerned and to the Assembly for any inconvenience which might have occurred.

PROVINCIAL SCHOOL BOYS' CURLING CHAMPIONSHIP

MR. G.T. SNYDER (Moose Jaw North): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I want to draw

your attention and to the attention of the House the fact that the Greg Montgomery Rink of Moose Jaw from Vanier Collegiate won the Provincial School Boys' Curling Championship in Prince Albert this past weekend and I know that all Members of the House will want to join with me in extending sincere congratulations to this fine group of young curlers.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. A. Mitchell (Bengough) for an Address-in-Reply:

MR. A.E. BLAKENEY (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, since yesterday I have had a further opportunity to consider the Speech from the Throne and after having considered it, I am even more depressed than I was before.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Members opposite reacted in precisely the way that I should expect them to react because they feel that all Members in this House read such a document solely to see what party advantage might be scored from it. We should like to have seen something in the Speech from the Throne for the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And I say I was depressed because the Speech identified the problems facing Saskatchewan. It talked about the farm crisis. It talked about high and rising unemployment. It talked about slumping retail sales or talked about the conditions which lead to that. It talked about the conditions which are causing people to leave Saskatchewan in the tens of thousands. It talked about high and rising taxes. Indeed the Speech might have said the problems of Saskatchewan were oppressive taxation, industrial stagnation, and major depopulation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — But having identified these problems, in deathless prose, it offered no solutions. It certainly is deathless prose because those problems won't die under the present Government opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Premier in his comments outside the House hinted that there would be announcements of industry and today we've had some announcements of industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — But I want to remind Members of this House that we've had lots of announcements of industries before.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I don't have the newspaper on that great day when one headline said, "Heavy Water Plant for Estevan" and the other headline said, "Small Hospitals Will Not Close, says Steuart".

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — All in one day. How about the ammonia plants at Estevan or the iron pelleting plants at Regina or the asbestos pipe plants or the Volkswagen plants or how about Primrose Forest Products.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I don't want to say that there have been no industries announced.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Of course in any seven-year period there are industries announced, as indeed there were in the seven years prior to 1964. But in those seven years prior to 1964 we had far, far fewer accompanying announcements of shut downs and cutbacks.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — In Regina alone in the last two years there have been 100 businesses closed or shut down. 100 businesses. Now some of them are small but many of them are large employers.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Even Thatcher's Hardware!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And some of the new industries which have been announced by Members opposite have destroyed as many jobs as they have created.

At any rate, what with all their announcements the facts speak for themselves. We've had seven years of announcements. We've had seven years of almost incessant ballyhoo and yet we have failed to provide jobs for our people. A promise of 80,000 new jobs is as hollow in 1971 as it was in 1964.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And I want to say that another announcement of another industry is not going to redeem that promise. We in Saskatchewan have slid farther behind than any province in Canada. Our people have left in record numbers.

HON. D.G. STEUART (Provincial Treasurer): — Except Manitoba!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Not even the Dirty Thirties drove out of this Province as many people as have been driven out in the years since this Liberal Government was elected.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And I want to remind this House that all of these people who have left in their tens of thousands in 1970 and 1969 left under a veritable hail of press announcements of new industries.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I tell you that there has been a real booming industry in this Province and that's been the moving van industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — New Democrats believe that many Liberal policies have been ill-conceived. We believe that our program of progress offers more for Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And we believe that the people of Saskatchewan are looking forward to seeing that program in action.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Don't hold your breath!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We have heard some announcements today about resource development. And I want to turn to the subject of resource development. New Democrats believe that Saskatchewan resources belong to Saskatchewan people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We believe that when these resources are developed the principal beneficiaries must be the people of Saskatchewan, and that this. . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — . . . has been lost sight of by Members opposite. We believe too that the citizens of today have an obligation to the citizens of tomorrow and here I commend the Members opposite for remarks made from their side of the House yesterday, by the Member for Bengough (Mr. Mitchell) and the Member for Watrous (Mr. Schmeiser). We believe with them that it is our responsibility to pass on our environment, our forests, our rivers and our countryside in as clean and productive a condition as when we received them from our forebears.

We Canadians and yes, we in Saskatchewan as well, have sometimes failed in our obligation to those who come after us. We have sometimes regarded our natural resources as ours to pillage and plunder rather than ours as a trust to pass on to our children and to our children's children.

It may well be that Members opposite, particularly if they adopt some of the views expressed by some Members opposite, won't

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be worrying about their children or their children's children. But I for my part do wonder what will happen to my children and what happens to their children.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — New Democrats are determined to do our part to see that we keep this trust. We believe that in resource development the Government opposite has failed not only this generation but the generation which is yet to come.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — A prime example is their approach to pulp mill development and I want to come right to their piece de resistance — their pulp mill. Take the Prince Albert pulp mill deal. We don't oppose the development of a pulp mill or any other industrial venture provided that certain criteria are met and here are some of the chief criteria. I want Members opposite to pay some attention.

The deal must be financially prudent. It must be one where the promotional group can't make a profit unless the venture makes a profit.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And if the Government takes a major share of the risk, the Government must have a major opportunity to share in the profits.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The deal should not allow, and indeed should prevent, hidden profits from construction contracts and consulting fees and management fees and all the backdoor methods known to the promotional trade.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The deal must be open. When deals are made which involve tens of millions, and now I understand hundreds of millions of dollars of public credit and the disposition of forest areas two-thirds the size of New Brunswick, there is no place for secret, under the table deals, or for concessions. . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — . . . and no place for concessions, the cost of which is not disclosed. The deal must give reasonable protection to sub-contractors and to workmen working on the project.

MR. STEUART: — You gave them the steel mill, eh? The cement plant. They are still trying to get their money.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, doubtless the Member for Prince Albert (Mr. Steuart) will have an opportunity to put his incisive comments on the record when he has the courage to stand up — although it is sometimes difficult to know when he is standing up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — But I will say this. I shall come to the matter of just how well they have met these criteria in a very short time.

The deal must provide for full and complete protection for our forests and our rivers and our countryside. And if it is a forestry operation it must provide for reforestation. It must be on terms which are fair and adequate. If it involves the use of water, the pollution controls must be tight and tightly enforced.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Most people will agree with these criteria, at least when they are stated objectively. And I am very happy to note that Members opposite are agreeing with me completely.

AN HON. MEMBER: — They're all agreeing but what do they do!

MR. BLAKENEY: — These criteria are all pretty reasonable and pretty straightforward when listed. Now let's see how the Prince Albert deal stacks up against these criteria.

First, was the deal financially prudent? Mr. Speaker, I propose to refer to the deal as I understand it to be, not the deal which was provided in the documents filed in this House up to yesterday. I haven't had an opportunity to examine the voluminous documents filed yesterday in this House by the Provincial Treasurer. For a government which protested time and time again that all the facts were on the record it is a pretty remarkable performance to be tabling at the 1971 Session of this Legislature, documents dated in 1969 and 1968 and 1967.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — This is full disclosure in the minds of the Liberal party. In their view the people are entitled to know how \$60 million of their money is gambled, not when it's gambled, but four years later, then they'll be told the facts.

The pulp mill involved an investment of approximately \$70 million Canadian funds — and I am using here the Company's own figures. This was provided approximately as follows: \$50 million guaranteed by the Government opposite, \$1.5 million paid in by the Government opposite, approximately \$6.5 million in working capital guaranteed by the Government opposite, \$58 million. \$5 million direct grant by the Government of Canada and \$7 million invested by Parsons and Whittemore, the New York promotional group. \$70 million. \$63 million provided either directly or by guarantee by the Government of Saskatchewan or

the Government of Canada. Yet despite the fact that the people put up the lion's share of the money, we the taxpayers only own 30 per cent of the shares.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Shame! Oh!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Now this is not good enough. This is not financially prudent. This is so even if we concede that some of the Government's risk is legitimate first mortgage money and would not ordinarily carry with it an equity consideration. The promoters put up 10 per cent of the money and they have 70 per cent of the equity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Those are the facts. And in a pulp mill deal that is a very sweet deal for a promoter.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Those are the clear facts which cannot be denied. If they can be denied doubtless Members opposite will present the further facts before this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — But that's not the end of it, Mr. Speaker. There were more, many more fringe benefits for the promoters. There was a rich opportunity for the promoters to profit by construction contracts, by consulting fees, by sales contracts; unrelated as to whether the mill operates successfully, and some of them unrelated as to whether or not the mill ever operated at all.

For example, without calling for tenders or even soliciting bids, the new pulp mill company, Prince Albert Pulp Company Limited, controlled by the promoters as to 70 per cent, gave the construction contract for the entire mill to themselves. Actually it was given to Parsons and Whittemore Incorporated who in turn subcontracted it to Parsons and Whittemore Industries Incorporated who in turn subcontracted it to Parsons and Whittemore Pulp Mills Limited. If after all these manoeuvres the promoters could make \$7 million profit, out of the \$54 million contracts, then they would have their share of the mill for nothing.

MR. STEUART: — If they made it!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes. We don't know what the profit on that contract was.

MR. STEUART: — Was the mill a fair price?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Indeed the promoters say they made a loss. I know they say they made a loss, but they haven't, and I don't suppose they are under any obligation to do so, but they certainly haven't shown us any financial statement to show their loss.

MR. R. ROMANOW (Saskatoon-Riversdale): — Why not some financial statements?

MR. STEUART: — Was the pulp mill a fair price, Allan?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter whether or not the promoters made a loss, the facts are that when that deal was signed they could have made a profit and they could have made a profit without the pulp mill turning a wheel.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Member for Prince Albert asks why they shouldn't make a profit. I'll tell him why they shouldn't make a profit. The Government of Saskatchewan should not finance in a major way any industrial development projects whereby the promoters can make a profit even if the project does not turn a wheel.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — This is what is entirely wrong with Churchill Forest Industries brought to Manitoba by the Roblin Government. The private enterprise friends of the Government opposite have allowed people in Manitoba to make a profit before the pulp mill makes a profit.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Shame!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And that, Mr. Speaker, ought not to be permitted. We ought to take the position that there is nothing wrong with a promoter making a profit but his profit should depend upon whether the venture makes a profit.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — In the Prince Albert deal the promoters could have made large profits whether or not the mill ever showed a profit. For all we know, the promoters made those large profits before the people of Saskatchewan earned a dollar on their investments.

There has been a controversy about this issue, it has been in the courts, I have read what is in the Financial Times, and what is in the Financial Post. We have affidavits from one chartered accountant and we have contrary affidavits from other chartered accountants. But the fact that the promoters could have made a profit before the mill turned a wheel — and nothing in the deal stopped them from doing this — is not the matter of controversy. That is a plain hard fact.

And there are still other fringe benefits to the mill of undisclosed value. There were concessions on natural gas rates at a cost so far undisclosed to this Legislature and the people of Saskatchewan. I want to say this, if any Member of this House outside the Treasury benches knows what concession was made in natural gas, we don't know and we should be told.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — There were concessions on power rates, similarly not disclosed. There were large expenditures on bush roads, with the cost running into millions of dollars, also not disclosed to this Legislature or the people.

The Government assumed reforestation expenses. Again at undisclosed heavy costs to the taxpayer. Stumpage dues were cut. Pulpwood was delivered to the mill by a Crown corporation, Saskatchewan Pulpwood Limited, at a huge loss figure, even that loss the Government refused to disclose year after year. Year after year the Provincial Treasurer stood in his place and said it wasn't in the public interest to know what the Crown corporation was losing.

As a result, to this day the people of Saskatchewan have no accurate idea what we have paid in cash, guarantees and in concessions for the pulp mill, nor what our partners the New York promoters have paid.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out now that I use the term promoters as a term of description. I don't use it as a term of vituperation or abuse. . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Tell us what they are!

MR. BLAKENEY: — If Members opposite prefer the word developer - fine. Or builders, to use the phrase of the Member for Last Mountain (Mr. MacLennan). But I think there is no doubt that in my books they are promoters.

Mr. Speaker, we are not even informed of the financial position of this mill except in press releases of dubious accuracy. No financial statement of the Prince Albert mill was, until yesterday, filed in the Legislature, notwithstanding our repeated requests.

AN HON. MEMBER: — They are filed upstairs!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes, I'll come to that. Indeed I looked upstairs and in the office of the Registrar of Companies. Members opposite may look there and they will find no operating statement, no statement detailing operating expenses and operating profits. A profit and loss statement as that term is ordinarily understood has never been filed with any agency of the Government of Saskatchewan unless it is in the Premier's private files.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Even though the people of Saskatchewan have nearly \$60 million at risk and even though the mill was supposedly completed two and one-half years ago, no statement detailing operating income and operating expenses is yet available for public inspection. I invite any Member to examine the statements filed yesterday by the Provincial Treasurer to see whether there is a detailed operating statement. We must be satisfied with figures about profits and losses which are published in the news stories, based upon comments by mill officials, but without any accompanying financial statement. In short, the facts on the Prince Albert deal were in important respects undisclosed and four years later they remain undisclosed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Now, Mr. Speaker, we say that these deals should give reasonable protection for subcontractors. In the Prince Albert deal this was not done. As a result dozens and dozens of subcontractors have not been paid. Just look at a partial list of liens dated November, 1968.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Search the title!

MR. BLAKENEY: — For any Member who wants to check the title, I just happen to have a photostatic copy, and he can check this list of liens that this Government has allowed to be attached: Foundation Company of Canada \$2.3 million; Tru Mix Concrete \$7,000; Fisher and Porter \$32,000; Douglas Rentals \$16,000; Hogblom Construction \$21,000; Central Concrete \$2,000; Sterling Products Ltd. \$39,000 and on and on

AN HON. MEMBER: — . . . have been settled!

MR. BLAKENEY: — It may well be that some of these have been settled. But think of the position that a small subcontractor is in having to settle his case after having gone to court under the threat of knowing that he can't borrow money cheaply. This has allowed Parsons and Whittemore and other promoters to come in and hammer small contractors, because this Government hasn't protected them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Sure they are settled but on whose terms. What should have been done was to insist that lien claims be paid or security posted before the bond proceeds were finally released.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — How about the Steel Mill and the cement deal?

MR. BLAKENEY: — It just happens, Mr. Speaker, that the Member from Prince Albert is asking whether this was done in the Steel Mill and whether this was done in the cement deal. I want to assure him that with precision it was done. I want to tell him if he wants to know. . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — . . . I want to tell him if he wants to know that with respect to the cement mill, for example, the bond proceeds were not released to the promotion group until either the liens were paid or a bond was posted for the due payment of their obligations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I, Mr. Speaker, was the solicitor acting for the government and I know with precision that this was done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — It may well be that there were delays in paying the liens but that, Mr. Speaker, was because there was a dispute with respect to the amount owing and not because there were not funds there to pay.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that in the case of the Prince Albert mill all the bond money that the Government would guarantee was paid out before the liens were cleaned up. I want to say more that it seems to me that they were paid in direct violation of the trust deed signed by the Government.

MR. STEUART: — Are you making a charge?

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Member asks — am I making a charge. I am saying that on my review of the documents that is a fact. If he wants to call that a charge, I say go ahead. But I say to the Provincial Treasurer that the trust deed did not permit the payment of the bond proceeds when you did so.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Yes, the Government allowed this to happen with the result that a dozen subcontractors were forced to go to the courts.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to the question of forest management. I said that the deal must provide for full protection of our forests. The Prince Albert deal does not. For example, in 1970 the logging operations were carried out on a clear-cut basis. Everything was cut. Tens of thousands of acres were stripped of all tree growth, mature and young, softwood and hardwood. In fact something between 35 and 75 square miles was cut over. At the same time in 1970 some areas were planted with small seedlings. Now keep my figures in mind, at least 35 and maybe up to as much as 75 square miles cut over. How many seedling were planted? Well, I shall tell you that 900 acres of seedlings were planted, less than two square miles! 50 square miles cut over and less than two square miles was planted with seedlings. And all this was acceptable to the Government.

Let me be clear again. My criticism is not of Parsons and Whittemore or the Prince Albert Pulp Mill. It is not the job of New York developers to protect Saskatchewan resources for Saskatchewan people. That is the job of the Saskatchewan Government. And that is the job which the Government has conspicuously failed to do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — As I have said, the method of harvesting was clear cutting. Perhaps 35, 40 or 50 square miles were levelled. I hope the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Barrie) will tell us with precision how many square miles were cut over.

In fact I am advised that it is intended to burn some parts of this area, burn it over and to scarify other parts. Scarifying is a sort of harrowing operation. I want Members to consider with me for a minute the state of a forest which is cut over to the extent that it can be either burned over or harrowed over. Now what good is that forest as a game habitat. What good is that forest for any sort of wild life use. Any rivers flowing through the area are in grave danger of being spoiled as fishing rivers. The area is ruined for decades to come for virtually every recreational purpose. Let me say this again, the area is ruined for 40 or 50 years to come for virtually every recreational purpose.

Saskatchewan people should know that the Government of Saskatchewan is levelling our forest in Northern Saskatchewan, destroying their recreational potential and is doing this at the rate of 50 square miles a year, perhaps more. Some people estimate as much as 100 square miles a year being levelled this way. If, Mr. Speaker, any of these figures are inaccurate, I know Members opposite, such well-informed Members as the Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy), will put us all straight.

In many places in North America, Mr. Speaker, this sort of clear cutting is not allowed. Harvesting is permitted only of trees suitable for pulp. Saw timber is used for lumber and small growth is left to speed regeneration. In other areas clear cutting is permitted only in blocks, only in relatively small blocks. Some knowledgeable people whom I have talked to question the whole idea of clear cutting jack pine stands in Northern Saskatchewan, particularly in the sandy and hilly country. They tell me, and they may be wrong, but they tell me that in the sandy hilly country if you clear cut that jack pine no softwood of any kind is likely to grow back again.

Now these are serious questions which have not been answered because they can't be answered.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — This Government doesn't know what it is doing to our northern forest. The Government is gambling. It is playing roulette with our forests and with the whole tourist industry of Northern Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Member for Bengough (Mr. Mitchell) very properly said that the tourist industry is of great importance to our future. I predict that the tourist industry in 25 years will make a much greater contribution to our economy and our way of life than any pulp mill however successful.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Nor does the pulp mill deal protect our river. Stories that the Prince Albert mill has pollution-control equipment as good as most mills in Canada may be true but they are totally meaningless. Most mills in Canada are either on tidewater or on the Great Lakes. Now we know that the capacity of the Atlantic Ocean or the Pacific Ocean or the Great Lakes to absorb pollution is far, far greater than the Saskatchewan River. Few mills in

Canada are on a river with as low a flow at low water as the Saskatchewan. The need for controls is far greater in Saskatchewan. Nor should we put much stock in these newspaper stories I have been reading, these full-page advertisements telling us that the water is put back into the river in a cleaner condition than when it came out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I would rather rely on the scientific studies that have been done by independent scientists. In a study the results of which were published in the September 1970 Journal of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society, a scientist at the University of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon gives the results of measuring coliform bacteria in the water of the North Saskatchewan River above the mill and below the mill. A coliform bacteria count is a recognized way of assessing pollution and those that will be hesitant about accepting my word should refer to the Saskatchewan Water Resources Commission which has established standards in this regard.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Now the Saskatchewan Water Resources Commission sets out criteria for coliform bacteria count as follows: 1,000 CB per 100 millimetres of water is clean; 5,000 fairly clean; 10,000 doubtful; 20,000 bad. The maximum recommended for waters in the "recreation fish and wildlife category" is 5,000 CB. Tests were done on the North Saskatchewan in 1968 and June of 1969 when the mill was in production. The count for the pre-production period went up to highs of 5,500. Let's call it 5,000 — fairly clean. But the count after the mill went into production at the place where the effluent enters the river, right at the spout, was it 5,000. It was not.

MR. STEUART: — It was 100,000.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I wish it was 100,000. It was 85 million. At Cecil Ferry several miles down the river the count was still 4 million. And remember that the Water Resources Commission says that water with a count of over 20,000 is bad.

Now I want to quote just a conclusion of the article:

It is obvious from the high coliform counts that the North Saskatchewan River below the Prince Albert Pulp Company mill is unsafe for any use.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — "Unsafe for any use." So much for the story spread at great expense about the water being cleaner below the mill than above. So much for our Government protecting our water resources against pollution and destruction.

Mr. Speaker, so far as the Prince Albert pulp mill is concerned much of this may be water under the bridge — and dirty water at that. But so far as further pulp mill developments

are concerned the New Democratic party believes that certain principles should be followed. We believe that any deals (1) must be financially prudent; (2) must not permit huge promoters' profits out of construction contracts, management fees and the like; (3) must be open and fully disclosed with all the fringe benefits to the promoters, developers, disclosed and costed with reasonable accuracy; (4) must have reasonable protection for subcontractors; (5) we must fully protect our forests, our water and our air against pollution. And I want to remind this House that the proposed site for the Athabasca mill at Dore Lake is on the Churchill River system a tourist paradise and perhaps the last major river system in North America which is relatively unpolluted.

HON. W.R. THATCHER (Premier): — . . . vote against the Bill when he has the opportunity.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I will of course indicate how I am going to vote in the traditional way.

But, (6) I think we must preserve our forests and our lakes as wildlife habitat and as a basis for the valuable tourist industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — (7) we must offer reasonable compensation to small operators who have lost their livelihood because the forests have been given exclusively to the mill.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that these criteria are reasonable. We ask the Government if it signs any deals for a second mill — and maybe it has — before the next election, to make the deal subject to specific approval by this Legislature. We ask the Government to lay the agreements and all the facts before this Legislature. We ask for a referral of these agreements and these facts to a committee so that members of the public may make representations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We ask this so that all the people of Saskatchewan may know and may question before our wealth and our resources are committed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mention has been made of Churchill Forest Industries. Well, I believe if the dealings between the Roblin Government in Manitoba and Churchill Forest Industries prove anything, it is that we should investigate before we invest.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — They are having a public inquiry in Manitoba now. Let's have a public inquiry first, it's a lot cheaper that way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say this. If deals are made which depart from the criteria which I have already outlined in any substantial way and which are not fully disclosed to this House in advance, we of the New Democratic party, whether in opposition or in government, will reserve our full freedom of action.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — New Democrats believe that we need new and fresh ways to develop our resources. We believe that more, many more of our resources can be developed by Saskatchewan people for Saskatchewan people. This could be done in many ways and Members have mentioned Crown corporations and I am proud to say that we can develop resources by Crown corporations.

MR. THATCHER: — Like the woolen mill!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Like the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, whose wonderful progress we've heard so much about, or Sask Tel which is similarly so successful or so we are daily told, or like the Big River Mill, a successful venture since 1951 and wisely being rebuilt as a Crown corporation by the Government opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Or like Saskatchewan Sodium Sulphate which was established by our government and which is being continued, and wisely continued, by your Government.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You see we give you credit where credit is due, Ross!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Saskatchewan Sodium Sulphate made continuous profits under the previous government and is not making profits under the Government opposite. I commend them for accepting the idea of resource development by Crown corporations. We should not only accept it, we should extend it, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We should also see co-operatives as having a role. We believe that our co-operatives could be encouraged and assisted to enter resource development fields.

We should also see a Saskatchewan development corporation as having a role. We have advocated this for many years — a government-operated mutual fund in which Saskatchewan people could invest their savings in developing Saskatchewan.

We should like to see some joint ventures between the Government and co-operative or private groups. There are many possibilities of these. We have them in Scandinavia, we have them in Japan, there is no reason why we can't have them in Saskatchewan.

MR. THATCHER: — That's what Meadow Lake is!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We could also have development of resources by private companies and individuals, with the help of organizations like SEDCO — which I want to point out to Hon. Members was established when I was on the Treasury benches — and which made many, many loans to industrial ventures to develop our resources by private individuals. We believe that if we could do this, if the Government of Saskatchewan would take a positive role, we could develop many Saskatchewan resources by Saskatchewan people for Saskatchewan people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We don't believe that Saskatchewan people lack initiative. We don't believe that Saskatchewan people lack faith in their own province. We believe that given the same sort of breaks that this Government consistently gives to promotional groups from New York and Seattle, Saskatchewan people would turn to — and in a major way — develop our resources by Saskatchewan people for Saskatchewan people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, this is our firm belief and our policy is based on that firm belief.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. A.G. GUY (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — You'll never be the government again, Allan!

MR. R. ROMANOW (Saskatoon-Riversdale): — Sooner than you think, Allan!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, we have had seven years of Liberal resource development and what has it brought us? Look at the Government's own figures in its Government white paper. That white paper — and I won't take time to detail it now — was bad news, bad news, bad news.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And nowhere was the news worse than in agriculture. Anyone who was in the province in 1964 might wonder how this was possible because in those days agriculture had some troubles but the Liberals ascribed all of these troubles to the government. The present Premier wept copious tears about the terrible state of agriculture. He wrung his hands about the decline in the number of farms, about the fact that the Province's farm loan program wasn't good enough, about everything under the sun, indeed even about the decline in the number of sheep.

Now all this would be remedied and I want to refer Hon. Members to the speech of the Member for Morse in this House in 1964.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — You should read it:

Farmers would no longer be forced to leave the land. A provincial loan program would provide credit at low rates of interest. And yes, even the number of sheep would go up.

Well now, seven years later, Saskatchewan farmers are worse off than they have ever been since the last time we had the misfortune of having a Liberal government in Regina.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Net farm incomes are at a near record low. Wheat prices are so low that the \$1.55 of the 1940s looks good and as for barley, the price of feed barley after this magnificent final payment of 2.6 cents is still less than 70 cents a bushel. And egg prices are down at 1930 levels, some of them as low as 10 cents a dozen. Hog prices have dropped \$15 a hundredweight in the last year, down around \$21, \$22. These prices spell disaster for Saskatchewan farmers. In all the years of the 1940s, the 1950s, the 1960s there have never been tougher years for farmers than these last couple of Liberal years.

Now what happened to those promises of 1964. In 1964 the present Premier bemoaned the fact that in 20 years of CCF government the number of farmers had gone down. He was horrified. Here's what he says:

Think of it — 28-1/2 per cent of all our farmers in Saskatchewan have left their farms since my hon. friends took office. Is this what the Premier calls 20 years of progress.

28-1/2 per cent in 20 years — a decline of something 1-1/2 per cent a year. And he outlined his program to, as he said, "stop the exodus".

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The word "exodus", we'll come to that again. Now how have the farmers fared under seven years of the tender loving care of Liberal Governments at Regina and Ottawa? Has the exodus stopped or has it continued? Well, as we all know it has continued and what's more the trickle of 1-1/2 per cent has grown into a flood double that rate. Never before since the 1930s have farmers been fleeing the farm at such a rate. The exodus far from being stopped has burgeoned and swelled. So much for stopping the exodus.

And what about the Liberal promises of loans at low rates of interest for young farmers? Promises such as these were made time after time in 1964. Here's the present Premier in April of 1964. I am quoting from the Leader Post.

The small family farm is in jeopardy. The Liberal party has some of the answers to correct the situation. One of these is a long-term farm credit act with a low down payment and a low interest period.

No act was introduced. Young farmers were left to the

mercies of private lenders and the Farm Credit Corporation and as a result interest rates for young farmers, far from going down have soared to the highest rates in 30 years. These interest rates have been a major factor in stopping young men from entering farming. And so it goes, Mr. Speaker. Even the number of sheep which concerned the Member for Morse (Mr. Thatcher) so much in 1964, even the number of sheep has gone down 25 per cent in those seven years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The present Premier was concerned about the family farms, or so he said. Now if he was concerned then he should be doubly concerned now. He should be concerned not only about what is happening but because it appears that Liberals want it to happen. That's the only possible conclusion that can be drawn from the report of the Task Force on Agriculture and the response of Liberals, both federal and provincial, to that report. That report calls for a wholesale depopulation of rural Saskatchewan. It calls for super-farms owned by investors, financed through the stock exchange, managed by professional managers and worked by hired farm labor. Our farmers will never accept that future for Saskatchewan. Nor will the New Democratic party every willingly accept that future for Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I don't wish to comment in detail on the Task Force report, my colleague, the Member for Kelsey (Mr. Messer) and others will do that. I do, however, want to deal with some of the serious long-term problems which face farmers and which face the villages and towns which depend upon farmers. I've said the number of farms is going down rapidly, our villages are withering. The latest Department of Municipal Affairs Report shows that out of every three of our villages, two are declining in population. The same is true of many of our towns.

I don't lay all the blame for that at the door of the Government opposite. Certainly they have done little to deal with the decay, to deal with the decline, to deal with the rot of our villages and towns. I know that this isn't a new problem. People left the farms in Saskatchewan in huge numbers during the war. And then after the war when mechanization came, still others left the farms. This presented a challenge to the government of the day and during the 40s and 50s many things were done to meet that challenge. The larger school unit brought quality education to farm children. A system of rural hospitals and health regions brought health services. North America's greatest rural electrification program brought reliable low-cost power. The grid road system provided all-weather roads throughout much of the Province. The farm sewer and water program brought these benefits to thousands of farm homes.

The present Government has added some programs. Snow clearance. It has also decided to close rural hospitals — we don't agree with that one. But after looking at the present Government's programs for seven years — which I think are pretty unimpressive — we all have to agree that in the battle to save the family farm we are not winning. The New Democrats believe that it is time to make some new and bold moves.

MR. THATCHER: — Tell us about them!

MR. BLAKENEY: — All right. I'll do just that. We don't have all the answers but we think we have some of them. A New Democratic Government will do a number of things. We will curb corporate farming. By corporate farming I don't mean the incorporated family farm or the co-op or communal farm. I mean the farm which is owned by investors as an investment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will curb foreign ownership of farm land. We will study and tackle the problem of farm size. We will seek ways to get our young people into farming.

MR. THATCHER: — How?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I'll come to this in a moment. We will provide a loan program for young farmers — tell us about your loan program for young farmers. . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We want to see whether we can find a way to acquire the land of farmers who are retiring from farming and see that it gets to farmers who need land and not to farmers who don't.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — As one approach to these problems we propose a provincial land bank. A commission would buy land from retiring farmers and others wishing to sell at going prices, and leases the land to young farmers or to farmers who need more land to make an economic unit. These would be long-term leases offering security of tenure with an option to buy in the hands of the farmers. So we are prepared to sell it to them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We see the commission doing for smaller farmers what grazing leases do for some ranchers with the added security of longer terms of lease and with options to buy.

We will enact a farmers' bill of rights to protect farmers who, through no fault of their own, are in an economic squeeze. And I want to say that under a New Democratic government such farmers won't have their power cut off by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation as was done by the Government opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will restore the agricultural machinery testing service. We will work with the governments of other prairie provinces to encourage the manufacture of farm implements here on the prairies. We will tackle the problem of providing farmers

with more reliable market information on which to base future plans. Up to now our farmers have been the victims of market advice of the worst kind provided by Liberal politicians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We remember one Liberal saying, "you grow the wheat, and we'll sell it". And last June, and I heard this, I heard Otto Lang advising farmers not to seed barley. Indeed he prohibited its use as a cover crop for his LIFT program because as he explained at the Hotel Saskatchewan, some farmers might let the crop mature and add to the barley surplus. Now that was in June. By late July this same Mr. Lang was predicting we'd be short of barley.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — In September Otto Lang was still talking about this huge and burdensome wheat carryover and Senator Harry Hayes at that same time was predicting a shortage of wheat.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Some farmers have followed the practice of finding out what Liberal Cabinet Ministers were advising and doing exactly the opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Now this worked pretty well until you got two or three Ministers suddenly giving conflicting advice and then the poor farmer didn't know whose advice he should ignore.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Now, Mr. Speaker, this simply isn't good enough. Farmers are entitled to reasonable marketing advice. It's the job of the Federal Government and it should do its job. But if the Federal Government will not do that job then a Saskatchewan New Democratic government will.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will establish a market research agency to provide facts to farmers for use in planning future production. Mr. Speaker, these and other steps which my colleague will outline will be taken by a New Democratic government to help farmers stay on the family farms.

MR. THATCHER: — Devastating, devastating. . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — So was yours. You look sick, Ross!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, anyone who wishes to read the speech of the Premier in 1964 will find that his views on how to save

the family farm were not only trivial at that time but the few ideas that he put forward were not introduced when he became the Premier.

AN HON. MEMBER: — So trivial. They're all small status!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, New Democrats believe too that many of our villages and towns can be renewed and revitalized. The first thing necessary is to give strength and support to the surrounding family farms.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — But there are other important steps that can be taken and will be taken by a New Democratic government. Let me name a few. First, we will call a halt to the indiscriminate closing of small rural hospitals.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will encourage the building of senior citizens' housing and nursing homes in smaller centres.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will work with towns and villages to provide rental housing units where they are needed. We will provide more money for street paving, sidewalks, recreational centres, and parks. We will do away with arbitrary pupil-teacher ratio formulas which in some cases have led to the closing of small schools without either saving money or improving schooling.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will continue to work with machinery companies to see whether in towns where they have two or three machinery dealers and all of them are going to the wall, it would not be possible to keep one good active machinery dealer in that town who will provide a repair service and hopefully a spare parts service for more than one line of machinery.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And there is much more that can be done. I know Members opposite are saying it can't be done, it can't be done. The people of this province have heard so many times from Liberals that it can't be done. But they know that in previous days Liberals have said you couldn't do it, it can't be done. And in those days, a previous government (CCF government) introduced programs that set the pace for Canada and North America while Liberals were saying it can't be done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And there is much more to be said. Much more to be said

about what should be done for smaller centres because for nobody in Saskatchewan have the Liberal years been leaner years than for the people in smaller centres. The story of our villages and small towns under the Liberals is a dreary litany of decline and decay. . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — . . . of businesses going broke, of people moving away, and finally of hope being abandoned. For residents and business people in small centres it can be said with fervour and total conviction that Liberal times are hard times.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Liberal times are hard times and it's time they were ended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — It's time for a change. It's time these people in small centres got a break. Mr. Speaker, for our small centres it's time for a new deal for people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, may I turn now to education. Time does not permit a full review of the performance of this Government in the field of education. In any case I've asked Mr. Lloyd, the Member for Biggar, to present some thoughts to the House on this and other aspects of the field of education and I'm sure that many Members will agree with me when I say that there is no man in Canada who has more experience and more wisdom to contribute to any legislative discussion on education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I do want to make, however, a few observations. The university enrolment is down. Can there be a more ominous sign for the long-term future of Saskatchewan than that. We still have no general bursary program for our students — the only province in Canada that does not. Newfoundland can afford one. New Brunswick can afford one. But not Saskatchewan. In Saskatchewan you go to university if you or your parents have money. Ability and initiative alone are not enough. Could there be a more telling commentary on the Government's priorities! It brings down a Speech from the Throne which says that we are going to spend record sums on highways, and we are going to still be the only province in Canada which does not have a general bursary program.

In Saskatchewan this is the sense of priorities. The mover of the motion rightly stressed the value of technical institutes. I'm sorry the Government does not share his views. We had two institutes of technology in 1964, one at Moose Jaw and one at Saskatoon. We still have two. Aside from nurses in training who used to be trained at hospitals, and now are trained at the Institute of Technology, and aside from people under Manpower training programs paid for by the Federal Government, there are

few if any more places for students in these institutes in 1971 than there were in 1964.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Nor has there been any movement in the direction of community colleges.

Turning now to the school system, there has been only one major new step in seven years — the introduction of the comprehensive school. And there is real doubt whether this development provides students and taxpayers with the best value for the educational dollar.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And what of the whole climate of education? Of relations between trustees and teachers? It hardly needs to be said that a school is not a factory for turning out bolts. It's a place where trustees and teachers and students work together to allow young people to develop their intellects and their personalities, all in an environment where they have at hand to assist them the accumulated wisdom of our society.

This process of stimulating and leading young people cannot be carried on in a hostile environment. It cannot flourish long where trustees feel that they're under unrelenting pressure from taxpayers to pare expenses at all costs; where trustees and teachers feel that arbitrary rules made in Regina on such things as pupil-teacher ratios hamper action on behalf of students; where teachers feel that they have no right to bargain with their employers in good faith to determine how much they will be paid. And we say that just such conditions have been created by the Government opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — New Democrats believe that education of young people is perhaps the primary responsibility that one generation owes to the next. And we believe that at the present time in Saskatchewan, in discharging that responsibility, we're losing something. We're losing a sense of adventure, the vision of what we can build if we but offer to our young people the opportunity to develop their abilities, the genius and the compassion which young people have in abundance. We believe we're losing this. We believe it can be recaptured. Frankly I don't believe it can be recaptured by the Liberal Government because I believe their ideas on education are outmoded.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We believe the time has come for a new and fresh direction for education in Saskatchewan, one based upon co-operation between trustees and teachers and students working towards a common end; one which recaptures that sense of working together which is the distilled essence of the spirit of Saskatchewan. We New Democrats feel that we can recapture this and if we can, as I think we can, we will indeed in the field of education be offering a new deal for people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Member for Rosthern (Mr. Boldt) is in his seat because he will be able to assist me if I go astray in the next few lines. I want to refer him to the Book of Genesis.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You've got the right man!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Book of Genesis tells us of an interesting dream that the Pharaoh of Egypt had. In the words of the scripture:

And behold there came up out of the Nile seven cows sleek and fat. And behold seven other cows gaunt and thin came up out of the Nile after them.

MR. STEUART: — That's the NDP!

MR. BLAKENEY: —

And the gaunt and thin cows ate up the sleek and fat cows.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — This, Mr. Speaker, was Pharaoh's dream. And Joseph interpreted the dream. The sleek and fat cows were good years, seven good years. And the gaunt and thin cows were bad years, seven years of pestilence. And so far as the health programs of this province are concerned, the seven lean and gaunt cows emerged from the muck of the Nile on the day the Government opposite was elected.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — In seven years we have seen program after program chewed at and gnawed at by the Government opposite. Let me illustrate. In hospital construction, major hospital construction has been minimal. No hospital was built as large as St. Paul's in Saskatoon or the Yorkton Union Hospital. And I acted at both of the openings of those hospitals in my short term of a couple of years as Minister of Health. In Regina after being elected in 1964, seven years ago, on a promise of immediate construction of a new general hospital, we have, seven years later, nothing but a start on construction and progress at a snail's pace. And as for rural hospitals, we have seen another flagrant Liberal breach of faith. Before the 1967 election spokesman after spokesman for the Liberals, from the Premier down, pledged that small hospitals would not be closed. Let me give you one representative quote from the Hon. D.G. Steuart:

I don't think that the Government has the moral right to use the power of the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan to force these hospitals to close.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The moral right, yes, the moral right. But moral right

or no, immediately after the election — that election was in October, you remember — in November notices went out from that same Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan to no less than eight small hospitals, arbitrarily decreeing that they must close by December 31st.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Hear, hear! No moral right!

MR. BLAKENEY: — New Democrats reject this Liberal policy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We have said again and again that this type of arbitrary closing of small hospitals must stop. Whether or not we shall reopen them will depend upon an assessment of the facts in each case. But with respect to closing them, we say this — we cannot and do not say that no small hospital will close but we can say, and do say, that every effort will be made to keep them open.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We can say and do say that the community will be consulted as the Liberals did not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We can say and do say that real efforts will be made to keep the doctor and the dentist as the Liberals did not. We will say that we will explore ways to keep these buildings and nursing homes, as the Liberals did not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will keep faith with the people in these smaller communities as the Liberals did not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Now may I turn to medicare. The Liberals promised to keep medicare, to improve it, indeed to expand it. Remember that promise, "we are going to expand medicare to include major drug bills." Was there a candidate in 1964 who did not stand on the hustings and say, "we will introduce a drug program." Now in these lean seven years Liberals have done nothing for the Medicare plan. New benefits have been minimal, only those already planned in 1964. They have done nothing for medicare but they have done a great deal against medicare. They have raised the medicare tax and worst of all they have added the odious deterrent fees. All this is really hardly surprising. To put Liberals to guard a Medicare plan is like putting a weasel to guard the chickens.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — New Democrats believe in medicare. We always have. Not just before an election but after an election too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — A New Democratic government will expand the Medicare plan. We will improve our health plans. 1. We will abolish deterrent fees.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — 2. We will set up a drug program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — 3. We will include chiropractic care under Medicare.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — For six long years the Government opposite has ignored the unanimous request of the House that chiropractic care be added to Medicare. 4. We will provide hearing aids, glasses and orthopedic appliances at greatly reduced costs. 5. We will establish a dental care program for children.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We look forward to the day when dental care for all would be part of the insured service. 6. We will tackle the problem of older people needing extended nursing care and we will do it by insuring the nursing component of extended nursing care.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — 7. We will stop the assault on our mental health plan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will develop community services for the mentally ill for the benefit of both the patient and of the community where the patient resides. 8. We will explore new ways of financing the medical and hospital plans to ensure that we all get the best value for our health dollar. 9. As I made clear before, we will aim to keep small hospitals open, not close them in the arbitrary Liberal fashion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — These and other health programs we offer to the people of Saskatchewan.

In welfare too there have been lean and gaunt years. Yesterday we heard reference by the mover and seconder to Homecoming '71 and to programs to honor our pioneers. Well let me read the House a little story. Let me tell this House just how Members opposite honor our pioneers. It is not my story. It is a story published in the Journal of nursing homes in Saskatchewan. It is

a Journal called, "Saskatchewan Care". I quote from the January 1971 issue, the last issue, page 12. Here's a little story of a pioneer.

When I came to this country and signed up for a homestead I went out near Humboldt with \$2.50 in my pocket — that was in 1903. We have had a good life and many children and they are working and they just get by. I lost part of the land in 1935 and I sold the rest and came to Saskatoon in 1955 and I had \$2,400. With the pension it seemed okay.

Now I am in a nursing home. I think I must get out and earn a little and live somewhere else although I cannot stand up. I started out with \$2.50 and now I have not one cent. And my wife, she cannot walk much in the winter. She needs a cab to visit me, but she tries to walk instead. We both get \$111.41 from the Old Age Pension but she is only allowed to keep \$85 for her expenses and living. The Province says she must give the rest to the home where I live to look after me.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: —

She cannot live on that. She shouldn't have to live on that. They ought to let her have at least her Old Age Pension to live on. I must get out of here.

And that is the end of the pioneer's story.

New Democrats will attack this kind of heartlessness which reveals so clearly the. . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — . . . Priorities of Liberal Government. New Democrats believe that our health and welfare programs have suffered long enough from the gnawing and chewing of the gaunt and thin cows of the Liberal party. We think it is time to go forward once again, to give new leadership to Canada. It is time for new ideas and new approaches. We think that in health, Mr. Speaker, it is time for a new deal for the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, we have had a number of comments today about Mr. Schreyer's Government in Manitoba, about why don't they do this in Manitoba, and why don't they do that in Manitoba and I thought it might be useful to do a few little comparisons about this Government here and the Government in Manitoba. In other days the Member for Morse, the present Premier (Mr. Thatcher), was fond of comparing our progress in Saskatchewan with that of Alberta and Manitoba. But today he lacks enthusiasm for those sorts of comparisons

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — In 1964 he asked rhetorically:

How does our program compare with Alberta and Manitoba. We say this is the acid test.

And he continued. . .

Mr. Speaker, Liberals refuse to accept the proposition that our slow growth is caused by lack of resources. We say that it is caused primarily by the theories and policies of the Socialist government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Well if our so-called slow growth was due to a Socialist government and not the lack of resources, what causes our stop in growth if it isn't the Liberal Government? For our resources are still here. The only change has been in the government. The Premier is fond of saying, "there is nothing wrong with Socialism it just doesn't work."

All right, let us compare Manitoba where the NDP is in power with Saskatchewan where free enterprise Liberals are in power. The Toronto Globe and Mail Report on Business — not exactly a New Democratic journal — has published most useful comparisons of the two provinces. From the Globe and Mail figures it is crystal clear that the Saskatchewan economy is continuing its downward plunge and not only on the downhill slide but it is clear that we are on the downhill slide faster than any province in Canada. There was a time when Manitoba had a Liberal government and this province had a CCF government, when our progress was much more impressive than that of Manitoba. A few comparative figures tell the tale. This is what happened in 1970:

Population: Manitoba, stable; Saskatchewan, down 23,000 people. Employment: Manitoba, stable at 363,000 jobs; Saskatchewan, down 5,000 jobs to 334,000 — 30,000 more jobs in Manitoba than in Saskatchewan. Retail sales: Manitoba, up \$20 million to \$964 million; Saskatchewan, down \$40 million to \$830 million — \$135 million more in retail sales in Manitoba than in Saskatchewan. Capital investment: Manitoba, up \$28 million to \$920 million; Saskatchewan, down \$68 million to \$680 million — \$240 million more in capital investment in Socialist Manitoba.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We are always told that Socialist governments drive out capital. How is it then that capital investment in Manitoba is \$240 million more than in this province in 1970. We used to be told that Manitoba was a low wage area. Well, let's look at average weekly wages: Manitoba, \$119 — up \$10; Saskatchewan, \$116 — up only \$8, average wages in Manitoba \$3 higher. Motor vehicle registrations — and surely this is a strange one: in Manitoba last year their vehicle registration went up by 9,000 vehicles; Saskatchewan, down 6,000 — a spread of 15,000. New construction — here is another one the Socialists are supposed to scare away, the builders. . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Scare away the Liberals, there are none left!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

February 18, 1971

MR. BLAKENEY: — Manitoba, new construction \$725 million; Saskatchewan, \$560 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And just take housing starts. Manitoba, over 6,000; Saskatchewan, under 1,000. The housing starts are more than six times as high in Socialist Manitoba.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER: — Stagnation!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Consider that record for Saskatchewan. Consider what the Government opposite has done. It is a record of monumental mismanagement. The Government has shown itself totally unfit to govern.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — On this record of what Socialists have done in Manitoba and the free enterprisers have done in Saskatchewan I say the Premier should call an election immediately.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Give the people a chance to clean out the incompetents — to elect a government like they have in Manitoba. We'll get Saskatchewan rolling again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. I.H. MacDOUGALL: — What are you going to do. . .

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Member for Souris-Estevan has made his speech for the Session.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, over there that Government opposite is tired, ailing and failing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Government has almost given up trying. They are leaning heavily on a few American developers, shall we call them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Government has a death wish. The Premier wants out of politics. The Attorney General (Mr. Heald), particularly, wants out of politics. The Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Cameron) wants out. The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Barrie)

wants out and the Minister of Highways (Mr. Boldt) wants out. I say to the Members opposite, and to the front bench, I say go to the people. They will put you out of your misery.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Premier is fond of saying that Saskatchewan's unemployment rate is lower than that in other provinces.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, we shall just examine his figures to see how reliable they are. The Globe and Mail says that the monthly average number of unemployed in each of the two provinces last year was 15,000. So at least the Premier can say, "No worse than Manitoba." But the Premier knows that unless there had been a wholesale exodus of working people our unemployment rate would be the highest in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Globe and Mail notes these large movements of job seekers. I want to quote a little bit from the Globe and Mail. They had a little story on Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta — on each of the provinces. Here is what they said about Manitoba.

One cause of the increase in the number of unemployed in Manitoba is said to be the migration to the province of unemployed workers from Saskatchewan which is showing a significant population loss resulting from depressed economic conditions.

Well, that is what they tell us in Manitoba.

Now, when they get to Saskatchewan the article says:

The loss of 23,000 persons in 1970 following a drop of 6,000 in 1969 together with a number equal to the natural increase over two years, has kept the unemployment rate from rising to intolerable levels. Job seekers unable to find work in the province have moved to Alberta and British Columbia.

When they get to Alberta they say:

The high unemployment is attributed partly to an influx of job seekers from Saskatchewan. Alberta's population 1,614,000 on October 1 rose by a larger than normal 41,000 persons while Saskatchewan lost population.

Can we then be very proud of the fact that we must drive our people out of the province in order to keep unemployment from, in the words of the Globe and Mail, "rising to intolerable levels."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I suppose we should give the Government opposite credit where credit is due. They promised 80,000 new jobs for Saskatchewan people. We are sorry they are in Manitoba. We are sorry

they are in British Columbia. But I suppose it is better to have jobs there than nowhere and certainly there are none in Saskatchewan.

After considering all the facts, including the facts on unemployment, can anyone doubt that Prairie dwellers in Manitoba are faring better than their Saskatchewan cousins. Can anyone doubt that in Saskatchewan things are tough. Can anyone doubt that this province needs some new ideas. Can anyone doubt that this province needs some new ideas, some fresh approaches, like the ideas and approaches that Schreyer has brought to Manitoba.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Can anyone doubt that we need a new attack on the problems of Saskatchewan, a new deal for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I have attempted to outline some of the programs of the New Democratic party. We feel we owe to the people of Saskatchewan a general outline of our program for the four years following the next election so we published our program, a program which we feel will put Saskatchewan back on the high road again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — In that program we outlined the broad approach of the New Democratic party to the problems of Saskatchewan. That is not of course our election program. I and other party members will be elaborating on points of the program in dealing with areas not included in the program between now and election day.

I want to say this. We are proud of our program and we are convinced that the people of Saskatchewan like our program. And if ever I had any doubts about whether our program was going to be successful those doubts were swept away when I saw the reaction by the Government opposite and by the editorial writers of the Liberal press, a reaction which was almost paranoid in its approach. Liberals and Liberal editorial writers, like the Bourbon kings of old, have learned nothing and forgotten nothing. The only difference is that their thinking is a little more clouded than even that of the Bourbon kings.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — At any rate this is their penetrating analysis of our program after looking at it. The one said, "It is red, it is Communist," and the other said it should be headed, "Toward a Totalitarian State." And so they lash out in their childish display of frustration and spleen. Let me give you one example, our approach to the potash industry. New Democrats on many occasions have said that they are unhappy with the developments in the potash industry. We see an industry which once was prosperous but which now is producing at half capacity. We see hundreds of workers jobless. We see towns with houses empty, businesses bankrupt, or nearly so. And we see an industry regulated in almost every respect by the Government. They are told how much they can produce, told how much they can charge and, indeed, told how much they can pay their workers.

Over the weekend news reports tell us that the Trudeau Government has asked the Thatcher Government whether it is all right

for these potash companies to sell potash to Communist China.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — This, I am told, is free enterprise!

New Democrats want to see a healthier potash industry. We want to see more jobs. We want to see business in these potash towns booming again. We want to explore every possible way of doing this and one way might well be through public ownership.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — And let me say this. If we did own those industries I doubt that we could regulate them any more severely than the Government opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — Could close it up quick enough!

MR. BLAKENEY: — So in our program we say that we will "consider the feasibility of bringing the potash industry under public ownership."

This proposal produced a most remarkable reaction from the Government opposite and from the Sifton press. So inflexible of thought are the captives of free enterprise doctrine that they shout in the shrillest possible way that the people of Saskatchewan shouldn't even consider the possibility of public ownership in order to solve the problems of the potash industry.

In our program we did not say and we do not say that we will take the potash industry under public ownership. But we have no hesitation whatever in considering that possibility.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We have no hesitation in saying that we will look at public ownership. We will look at co-operative ownership. We will look at mixed ownership in order to see whether this industry can get rolling again. In considering what is best for Saskatchewan people we refuse to be bound by any outmoded notions of doctrinaire private enterprise.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I was amused because on the very page that the Leader Post editorial was written about the iniquities of even considering the public ownership of the potash industry — there beside the editorial was a cartoon referring to the nationalization by the Tory Government of that shining symbol of very private enterprise — the Rolls Royce Company!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Tories in Britain face the realities of the 1970s. Liberals in Saskatchewan and their apologists still cling to the hollow slogans of yesteryear.

Liberal spokesmen offer no solutions to the problems of towns like Esterhazy, no solutions to the problems of towns like Lanigan where businesses are in trouble, where houses are empty. They offer no solutions to the problems of hundreds of potash workers who are laid off as a result of this deal between our Premier and ex-Governor Cargo; the deal whereby New Mexico mines were assured continued capacity production and from which our chief benefit is apparently the distinction of our Premier being made an honorary colonel in the United States army.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The plaque was up on the Premier's wall and he can hardly complain if we refer to it:

Reposing special trust and confidence in the ability and the patriotism of the Hon. Ross Thatcher, I do hereby appoint and commission him Colonel, Aide-de-Camp on the staff of the Governor of the State of New Mexico. Who is therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duties of said office by doing and performing all manner of things thereunto belonging in compliance with law, the orders of his superior officers and the usage and discipline of the United States army.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — So the Premier is a colonel in the United States army. That's fine. But how about the potash workers and how about the potash towns? The potash workers and the potash towns they are taking it from the colonel and they are taking it on the chin.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — In Saskatoon too, the Pow Town — they are taking it on the chin — pow, from the colonel! The whole potash industry is taking it from the colonel and they are taking it on the chin.

In seven years Liberals have brought this developing and highly promising industry to the edge of bankruptcy. In seven years they have reduced fast developing towns to the position of grimly hanging on. In seven years they have shown that Liberals don't have any answers. In seven years they have shown that for potash workers and for potash towns, Liberal times are hard times.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Liberals have shown that we need a new deal and a new approach to potash. We need a new deal for potash towns and we need a new deal for businessmen in potash towns. We need a new deal for potash workers and we need a new deal for the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, these problems which I have been talking about are partly caused by, and partly the cause of, a veritable exodus of people from Saskatchewan.

During the decade of the 1950s Saskatchewan's population increased over 9,000 a year — admittedly somewhat less than the natural increase. But while we were increasing by the rate of 9,000 per year and losing a few thousand of our natural increase the Premier used to talk about this loss of a small number of our natural increase as the greatest exodus since Moses. He was particularly fond of that comment when he was speaking in Los Angeles, Chicago or New Orleans.

Now speaking of Moses, we have already delved into the Book of Genesis to take instruction about the seven years of pestilence and the seven years of locusts and the seven years when the farmers of Egypt suffered and endured. Now let us move on to the Book of Exodus and follow the flight of the Jews from Egypt to the Promised Land.

There is a historical dispute over what tyrant ruling Egypt caused the Children of Israel to leave Egypt and look for better things. But there is no dispute whatever about who has caused the people of our province to leave Saskatchewan to look for better things.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Our very own Premier! I am sure he repeated the comparison with Moses so often that it began to rankle with him. Greatest exodus since Moses. I am sure that you can hear him say, "The greatest exodus since Moses. Now what's with this Moses? Surely I can do better than Moses."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Moses led his people into the desert, a land where few people lived. A land where no crops grew and where the people had to rely on manna from Heaven. And we can almost hear the Premier saying to himself, "Oh, I'll make Saskatchewan a land where few people live. My Task Force friends will help me if I can't succeed. And I will arrange with my buddies, Trudeau and Lang, to make Saskatchewan a land where no crops grow. We will give Saskatchewan a LIFT. We'll do Moses one better."

And, Mr. Speaker, they have had considerable success. All that I can say is that I hope the manna falls because I don't know what else the people of Saskatchewan are going to live on in the next few months.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier seems to have lost interest in his old vision of a verdant Saskatchewan alive with a vibrant and growing population. But it wasn't always so. Immediately after his election in 1964 he gave this as the reason for his success:

Our people decided that they wanted a government which could get some new industries, provide jobs right here in Saskatchewan and keep our young people at home.

In another favorite phrase of his in the House in 1964 he said: "I say that population figures are the acid test of growth." And in yet another phrase he said: "... how does our progress compare with Alberta and Manitoba. We say this is the acid test."

The Premier was fond of acid. . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: —. . . and I don't know whether this accounts for some of the more fanciful of his pronouncements and policies. But let us apply his acid test to population. And I am not talking about LSD although that may now mean 'Long Since Departed'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I am talking about the Dominion Bureau of Statistics acid test. In 1969 Saskatchewan lost 13,000 people net according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, far more than any other province, measured in numbers or percentage-wise or any other way that you want to do it. And In 1970 things got worse. We lost a further 22,000 people net, far more than any other province. Compare this with Manitoba. And I invite the Premier to compare it with Manitoba where the population increased by 6,000 and Alberta where it went up by a full 77,000. But this 35,000 doesn't cover the whole story. The natural increase, the difference between births and deaths, was more than 10,000 in 1969 and another 9,000 in 1970. 19,000 in two years. This means that in the last two years we have lost our natural increase of 19,000, the amount by which the population went down — 35,000, making a total of 54,000 people who have left Saskatchewan.

In 1970 alone we lost in this way 31,000 people and that is a staggering figure. No Canadian province, large or small, since Confederation has ever suffered such a population hemorrhage. In 1970 well over 2,500 a month. Eighty-five people a day! Just think of it. A town like Bengough goes in nine days. A town like Watrous goes in 19 days. A city like Moose Jaw goes in one year. Even the once proud city of Saskatoon, third fastest growing city in Canada back in those so-called dark days of stagnation, is losing population. An actual decline in population. The first time in the history of the city.

The province is losing 85 people a day, week in and week out. The prairie sun as it sets silhouettes against the sky at sunset, not only the grain elevators which we have always seen, that symbol of prairie fertility, but also sets on the moving vans — the symbol of Liberal incompetence, as it transports the effects of yet another family to Alberta or British Columbia. And the prairie sun which rises in the east etches against the horizon not only elevators, but once again the symbol of Liberal incompetence, the moving van as it moves yet another family to Manitoba or Ontario.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, for many of us this is a melancholy sight. Yes, Mr. Speaker, if you had any hopes, any dreams of seeing Saskatchewan grow, of seeing your son or your daughter staying in this province and finding opportunity, of seeing other young people staying in this province and making their contribution to building it, then for you and those like you who had this hope and vision, for you and for them, Liberal times are hard times.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — For you and all like you, for all of these young

people, the students, the unemployed, for business people, surely there is a need for a new approach, a new awakening, a new vision of Saskatchewan and its future. There is a need for a new deal for people and the New Democratic party of Saskatchewan will give to the people of Saskatchewan a new deal.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, there is no recognition of these problems in the throne Speech. Since the Throne Speech does not recognize this need, since it fails to recognize the continued erosion of our way of life and the even greater threat that we face because of the policies of the Liberal Governments at Ottawa and at Regina, I move, seconded by Mr. R. Romanow (Saskatoon-Riversdale), that the following words be added to the motion:

but this Assembly regrets that the Government of Saskatchewan has failed to speak out on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan in opposition to those recommendations contained in the Report of the Task Force on Agriculture, which, if implemented, would destroy the family farm as the basic unit of agriculture and would gravely undermine the entire way of life in rural Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — Before I propose the amendment to the House, may I draw the attention of all Hon. Members to the fact that we are now operating under the new rules which the House adopted in the last session of the Legislature. Had we been operating under the old rules this motion would have required the Leave of the House before it could have proceeded because the Member made an adjournment motion yesterday.

However, under the new rules a Member can make an adjournment motion and follow that with an amendment provided that it is not another adjournment motion.

I should like to bring this to the attention of all Hon. Members because I thought that it would be of interest and for the better order of the House.

The debate continued on the motion and the amendment.

HON. W.R. THATCHER (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, it will be my great honor to participate in the Throne debate tomorrow. However, perhaps I could take 10 or 15 minutes now to comment briefly on the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Blakeney).

We on this side of the House listened with great interest to what the Leader of the Opposition would have to say. During his first speech since he became Leader, we wondered if he would have anything very devastating to put before the Legislature. We heard him talk about the need for a new deal, a new vision, new approaches and so on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — I say that the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon

did not put one solitary new idea in front of the people of Saskatchewan. We listened to him for two hours, two long hours. All he gave us was the same old worn-out platitudes, cliches and Socialist theories that we have listened to for decades. He failed to even discuss the Throne Speech. He made no comment on it as far as I heard, with one exception. When he began he said, "I am even more depressed today than I was yesterday." I don't blame him for being depressed because it is pretty evident, Mr. Speaker, and I get around this province day in and day out and week in and week out, that everywhere the Socialists are slipping. And more than anywhere else they are slipping in the rural areas. I thought it was significant, Mr. Speaker, that for the first half hour the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Blakeney) talked about the Prince Albert pulp mill. We obtained that one four years ago. The Liberals won an election with that pulp mill. Yet today, four years later, he brings it up. He criticized Parsons and Whittemore. He intimated that they are a United States company stealing our resources. For two decades the Socialists tried to get some American company to come up here and build a pulp mill. They were not successful. The Prince Albert pulp mill is like a thorn in their sides. Thus they try to disparage it whenever they can. My friend, the Leader of the Opposition, says, "We don't want these outsiders coming up and taking our resources away from us." But I point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that Ed Schreyer in Manitoba doesn't think that way. He wasn't a Premier two weeks until he went down to New York. Ever since that time he has been saying, "We need and want American capital." And then my friend, the Leader of the Opposition, today said that Mr. Karl Landegger was a promoter and he went on really to intimate that he was really nothing less than a pirate up here stealing our resources. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Leader of the Opposition, I ask the people of Saskatchewan that if Karl Landegger was this type of citizen why is it that Premier Schreyer is begging him to take over the Manitoba mill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Day after day, and week after week, Premier Schreyer has been on the telephone. Or he has sent Ministers down there or officials, begging them to take over the Manitoba pulp mill that they had made such a mess of.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — I say that Karl Landegger has done as much for the Province of Saskatchewan in developing it as probably any other man. We in this country, this province, are fortunate there are men like Karl Landegger.

Today, four years later, the Leader of the Opposition said, "Oh, the Liberals made a terrible financial deal with the Prince Albert mill." Mr. Speaker, if we wanted to tomorrow morning, we could sell the government equity, that we paid \$1.5 million for, for between \$15 and \$20 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — If such a possible profit is a poor financial deal, let the Member for Prince Albert East Cumberland (Mr. Berezowsky) say so. He contends that we shouldn't sell our equity. He claims it would be a shame if we sold out to the Americans.

MR. R. ROMANOW (Saskatoon-Riversdale): — I figure it's worth \$50 million.

MR. THATCHER: — It could be worth more than that. You know, Mr. Speaker, when a mill of this kind is established, they must pay sales tax on all construction materials, they must pay stumpage fees. If they do make a profit, all of 52 per cent of the profits go to the respective federal and provincial governments. So I say again that the Prince Albert pulp mill has been a magnificent success. It is making a substantial profit. But what is most important, it is employing 1,000 people in the mill and in the woods.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — The Socialists say that the Prince Albert mill was a poor deal. If they had been on their toes, they would have talked today about the new pulp mill that is coming here. It is half as big again. We heard a lot of criticism today. The Socialists say this Government isn't doing anything about employment. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the mill we announced this morning will employ more men than all the manufacturing companies the Socialists obtained during the 20 years they were in office.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — And the investment in this one company will be greater than the Socialists obtained in manufacturing companies during all the years they were in office. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Blakeney) this afternoon was completely negative. Anyone can be critical, anyone can be destructive. But what we need in Saskatchewan today are people who have tangible solutions to our problems.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — This is why we announced another new pulp mill today. Small wonder, Mr. Speaker, that even Don Mitchell, the leader of the Wafflers, made this statement on February 4th:

There is no consensus as to whether this negative strategy of the NDP will be successful in electoral results.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — For once I agree with the Wafflers.

All afternoon the Leader of the Opposition was negative — no new ideas. He made his initial remarks yesterday. According to the Prince Albert Herald, I quote:

Blakeney doubts election will be called this year.

He went on to say:

On the basis of that speech, I don't think the Government would go to the people.

He suggested that because there weren't enough goodies in the Throne Speech, we probably wouldn't be calling an election. Mr. Speaker, this Government doesn't put bribes in their various Throne Speeches.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — We expect to be around after this election and anything we promise we intend to carry out. But as the Hon. Members opposite learned this morning, we don't put everything in the Throne Speech. We may have a few more surprises before the Session is over. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition again yesterday said, "I think an election will be a long time coming." Well he is entitled to wishful thinking if he wishes. But I will say that whenever the election comes, the Liberals will take an additional 10 or 12 seats.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether the reason for some of the ineffective remarks made this afternoon by the Leader of the Opposition was because of the advice he is getting. Recently I noticed that he had hired the Rev. Gerald Wilson, former CBC announcer. Now as I understand it, Mr. Wilson is chiefly noted for a TV program on which he has been the "Devil's Advocate". We are happy to know at last whom Mr. Wilson is working for.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — The Leader of the Opposition has been claiming around the province that this Government is doing little about unemployment. Yet month after month we have had the lowest unemployment of any province in Canada — substantially lower than they have had in Socialist Manitoba. I say again today that if Premier Schreyer and his NDP have the answer to unemployment why haven't they done something about it in Manitoba. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition made the claim that the Government, "Punished the poor in terms of unemployment." Well as I said today, we made an announcement of a corporation that will provide 1,600 new jobs directly, and about 4,000 indirectly. There will be a whole new townsite, a railroad, new schools and so on. Actually we do something about providing jobs, while the Socialists talk about the subject.

Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Blakeney) made another intriguing statement, "If policies had been introduced to control prices, rents, interests, profit, professional fees and wages, jobs could be provided for virtually all people." I say again today what I said yesterday, if it is so easy to end unemployment, why hasn't Premier Schreyer found the solution in Manitoba. That province has more serious unemployment than we have over here.

That statement was nonsense, and the Leader of the Opposition knows that it was nonsense.

He can peddle that garbage around the hustings where there is no one to answer him, but he can't get away with it in the Legislature.

The Leader of the Opposition, as I say, never did comment on the Throne Speech and I don't blame him. But he did talk a little about the NDP platform. That was an amazing document. As I say, when the Liberals heard that a new program was being announced we had expected a fresh approach. We had expected new ideas — imaginative programs.

All we received were pious hopes, cliches, platitudes, theories. Really we got nothing. I must tell this Legislature, and I am going to tell the people of Saskatchewan that I have participated in elections for 25 years and I have never seen a program which was quite as weak, quite as ineffective. I will go further. I say that the NDP platform is an insult to the intelligence of the people of Saskatchewan. I wish I had time now, and we shall have later in the Session, to go into to program. However, there are three or four planks I just can't refrain from saying a few words about. First of all, and note the positive approach, the Socialists claim that an NDP government will abolish the Indian and Metis Department. For all the years they were in office, the Socialists did absolutely nothing — nothing for our native people. They had no programs for them, they had no interest in them, they were perfectly prepared to see them starve to death if necessary.

Oh, they gave them liquor around election time but that's all they did for them.

Then upon taking office, the Liberals embarked on a far-reaching program to help our natives. We set up a special department to correlate those activities, and in particular we tried to provide them with job opportunities. Our special Indian branch has employed more than 7,000 natives. We are proud of the part we have played in persuading our Highway Department, our many building contractors, and our hospitals, to hire natives. Of course we are not satisfied with overall results. But we have made major strides. Mr. Speaker, I want to remind you today that when this Government took office in 1964, there were four Indian Reserves in Saskatchewan that had electricity. Today there are 64.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — At the same time we brought telephones, we commenced educational programs, we commenced building roads on reserves. Yet the Socialists throw out the only provincial Indian branch that exists in the Dominion of Canada. That kind of negative program will antagonize every native in this province.

Another plank, Mr. Speaker — this one really is a dandy — is that the NDP will promote viable family farms. Of course everyone is in favor of family farms, it's like motherhood. However, the trend towards larger farm units has been worldwide for decades. When they were in office, how did the Socialists promote the family farm? In 1944 there were 132,000 family farms — that was the year they took office. In 1964, the year the Socialists left office, there were 88,000 farms, a loss of 44,000. Now they say they will restore the family farm. What nonsense! Mr. Speaker, the NDP had no answer to the family farm when they were in office. They have no answer today. I say that such a plank is an insult to the intelligence of the farmer. No wonder the NDP are losing all their farm support.

There is one more plank I must comment on. The NDP are going to throw out the Essential Services Emergency Act. Now why was that Bill introduced? The Bill was introduced to protect the citizens of Saskatchewan, the farmers of Saskatchewan, the workers of Saskatchewan from catastrophic strikes, and I emphasize catastrophic strikes. For years The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour has done everything in their power to defeat this Government. I don't suppose it is very difficult to find why, when my good friend, the Member for Moose Jaw South (Mr. Davies), and my good friend from Regina North East (Mr. Smishek), are leaders of The Federation of Labour. What they want in this province are not "trade unions" they want "political unions".

And I suppose that this plank is the payoff. They say, "Elect us and we'll throw it out." Liberals say that the public interest must be protected where major strikes are concerned. And we say that the public is fed up with strikes in essential industry, Bill 2 protects the public against those strikes. Even Tommy Douglas arrived at that opinion about eight years ago. I want to quote Mr. Douglas, May 2nd, 1962, the Globe and Mail:

T.C. Douglas, National Leader of the New Democratic party said today that the use of strikes as a weapon in labour negotiations is obsolete.

It is an obsolete weapon, he told reports at a press conference. The role of labor has changed over the years. Strikes no longer serve the purpose for which they were intended. If the Socialists don't want Bill 2, every farmer in this province, at least, will want to know what they're going to substitute.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Another completely negative plank. In point four of their platform they say they're going to reduce taxes. On the one hand they make promises that would take perhaps about \$2 billion and on the other hand they promise to cut taxes. What did they do in Manitoba when Ed Schreyer formed the government? When the election was on, he ran all over the province. He said, "These health taxes are terrible. Elect us and we'll either eliminate the head tax, or at least drastically reduce it." What did they do when they took office? Oh, they reduced it a little. They got down the family head tax to \$99.60, 40 per cent more than the head tax in Saskatchewan, which is \$72.00. And they reduced the single head tax to \$49.80, 40 per cent more than the similar tax in Saskatchewan. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, bold Ed who was going to reduce taxes, introduced the highest income taxes, the highest corporation taxes in all of Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, let the Leader of the Opposition not try and kid people. If more services are given by any government, somebody has to pay for them. Government's can't print money. I say that the financial promises of the Socialist program are nonsense. No one knows it better than the Leader of the Opposition, who, after all, has a little experience in economic matters, which is more than can be said for his colleagues.

In another plank, and it was referred to by the Leader of

the Opposition this afternoon — nationalization of the potash industry was promised. That election promise has to be the silliest ever made in the history of this province. Of course, it was made in order to appease the Wafflers. These are the people who couldn't run a box factory. These are the people who went broke in the leather tannery. These are the people who bankrupted a woollen mill. They're the ones who lost their shirt running a brick plant. They're the people who have deficits year after year running an airline, and many other companies. Yet now, they're going to nationalize an \$800 million potash industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — I wonder who would run the potash industry. Would it be the Member for Touchwood (Mr. Meakes)? Would it be the Member for Wadena (Mr. Dewhurst)? Maybe the Member for The Battlefords (Mr. Kramer).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — It would certainly have to be someone with great intelligence. Apart from being silly, Mr. Speaker, that promise is dangerous. Saskatchewan could lose her potash markets overnight.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — If any government tried to expropriate the industry, several thousand workers could lose their jobs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — And I say that even if the NDP by some miracle did form a government, they wouldn't dare to proceed with that plan — they wouldn't dare.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You should have said that. . .

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Minerals will speak later about the way this Government has saved the potash industry and saved thousands of jobs in it. The potash workers don't want any Socialists fiddling around with their livelihood. Well then, what are the Socialists going to do about the student-teacher ratio? They're going to save the teachers. You know, Mr. Speaker, I have student ratios in front of me. In the interest of the taxpayer we have increased the student-teacher ratio by an average of two across the province. But you know, it is still substantially lower than it was when the Socialists were in power in this province. I want the people of this province to know that in the year when the Socialists left office the student-teacher ratio was 23.1. Even with our adjustment, it's still only 21.4. And we have one of the lowest student-teacher ratios in Western Canada. We are trying to put education on a sound financial basis, and we will do it, despite my hon. friends across the way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, as I say, I wish I had time to go over some more of the planks but I lack the time. I suggest that their platform is completely bankrupt of any new ideas that might help the Province in this period of economic difficulty.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — There is only one aspect that I like about that Socialist program. I believe it absolutely ensures the return of the Liberal Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — After listening to the Leader of the Opposition today, I say, I'm positive of that fact.

Mr. Speaker, I move for permission to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:55 o'clock p.m.